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Working with the Poor: Selected Passages from Ellen G. White on Social Responsibility

Rudi Maier

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Working with the Poor

Selected Passages from Ellen G. White on
Social Responsibility

Compiled and introduced by
Rudi Maier

With assistance from
Randy Warkentin

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ANDREWS UNIVERSITY MISSION STUDIES—V

Working with the Poor

Selected Passages from Ellen G. White on
Social Responsibility

Compiled and introduced by
Rudi Maier

With assistance from
Randy Warkentin

Department of World Mission
Andrews University
Berrien Springs, Michigan
2007

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Perhaps young people are not attracted so much by a church that tries to entertain them as they are attracted to a church that challenges them to do things for others. If your [Adventist] church provided concrete ways for young people to minister to the needs of others and to effect social change in the world, they would find your church very attractive. Young people just may be looking for a church that appeals to their latent idealism by calling them to be agents of God's revolution and to be part of His movement to bring healing and justice to His broken world.

Tony Campolo

Much of the suffering in the world is caused because of want of food, want of clothes, but it is caused even more because of the want of love. Many people are hungry not for bread only, they are hungry for love. Many people are not naked for a piece of clothes, they are naked without human dignity that has been stolen from them.

Mother Teresa

A Brief Note of Explanation

In this compilation we have included two useful tools in order to make this work as “user friendly” as possible. They are as follows: (1) Abbreviations to the Writings of Ellen G. White and (2) two Scripture Indexes (one by texts and one by subjects).

Also, at the end of each article and/or quotation, you will find the book code and document identification number in bold print. Included in many of the quotations you will find biblical references in brackets ([]). These were often inserted by the compilers of this document. For example:

[Jer 9:23-24; Isa 1:16-17] RH 12-18-94 (Doc 135833).

This means that the compilers of this document inserted the texts [Jer 9:23-24; Isa 1:16-17], that the quote was taken from the *Review and Herald*, December 18, 1894, and that it is document number 135833 on the CD-ROM of Ellen G. White’s published writings.

At the end of many articles, at the bottom of the page, you may find Additional References (if any were available).

Contents

Preface	1
Evangelism and Development—Friends or Foes?	6
God’s Word in a Hungry World	19
Food for Thought: Key Passages from Ellen G. White	32

Section One: Introduction

Chapter 1 – The Fast that God has Chosen	39
Chapter 2 – Go and Do Thou Likewise	43

Section Two: Our Christian Duty

Chapter 3 – Widows	49
Chapter 4 – Orphans	78
Chapter 5 – Poor	110
Chapter 6 – Poor and Afflicted	211
Chapter 7 – Unfortunate	216
Chapter 8 – World	225
Chapter 9 – Household of Faith	231

Working with the Poor

Section Three: Causes of Poverty

Chapter 10 – Oppression	245
Chapter 11 – Dishonesty and Injustice	287
Chapter 12 – Test from God	306
Chapter 13 – Disregard of God’s Law	308
Chapter 14 – Human Pride	315
Chapter 15 – Prejudice	317

Section Four: True Help

Chapter 16 – Teach Self-reliance	323
Chapter 17 – Industrial and Business Training	332
Chapter 18 – Train to Serve	344
Chapter 19 – Relieve Necessities	354
Chapter 20 – Teach Discipline	357
Chapter 21 – Practical Training	361

Section Five: Attachments

Chapter 22 – Abbreviations to the Writings of Ellen G. White	365
Chapter 23 – Scripture Index by Texts and Subjects	377

Working with the Poor

Selected Passages from Ellen G. White on Social Responsibility



PREFACE

The world in which we live has been filled with an epidemic of crime. We hardly are able to open the newspaper or turn on the television without being confronted by the most horrible evils of our days. As Christians, we stand aghast as we see the corruption that prevails in our society.

It is not only violence, corruption, and political strife which make this world a dangerous place in which to live, but poverty and human suffering come dangerously close to our own doors.

By the year 2000, 60 million abandoned street children lived in major city ghettos in Latin America. Two billion people suffered from chronic malnutrition. The gap between the very rich and the very poor widens by the day. Today the richest 20 percent of the world's people are at least 150 times richer than the poorest 20 percent. The countries where the richest 20 percent of the world's people live have increased their share of the gross world production from 70 percent to 83 percent since 1960 (Bryant Myers, *Exploring World Mission: Context and Challenges*, 2003).

Even North America has a poverty problem. Children are the poorest Americans. Thirteen million children live in poverty. Twenty-four percent of American children under the age of six are poor. One of the most devastating impacts of poverty is the infant mortality rate (IMR). The IMR measures deaths of children (one year of age or younger) per 1,000 live births. Similar shocking statistics could be quoted on the elderly, the homeless, the working poor, as well as the rural poor.

These indicators and events make Christians aware of the power of the devil who is increasingly working to destroy and corrupt our minds, as well as defile and destroy our bodies. Were it not for God's message in sacred Scripture about care for the weak, the vulnerable, and the dispossessed, many Christians simply would retreat. But God's message calls Christians to meet, not to escape from, the challenges of the world.

"And while the world is filled with these evils," Mrs. White writes (and that was more than 100 years ago in the "good old days"),

2 *Working with the Poor*

the gospel is too often presented in so indifferent a manner as to make but little impression upon the consciences or the lives of men. Everywhere there are hearts crying out for something which they have not. They long for a power that will give them mastery over sin, a power that will deliver them from the bondage of evil, a power that will give them health and life and peace (MH 143).

It is in this context that Ellen White appeals to “all who are united with Christ” and “have received from Him the bread of life” to “impart it to others” (MH 49). We as “His disciples are the appointed means of communication between Christ and the people” (ibid.).

A Revelation of Christ

In this age of decline, “the world needs today what it needed nineteen hundred years ago—a revelation of Christ. A great work of reform is demanded, and it is only through the grace of Christ that this work of restoration, physical, mental, and spiritual, can be accomplished” (ibid., p. 143). This is clearly an appeal to what we would call today “holistic ministry,” in which Christians are invited to aid in the restoration of the whole being. Too many times the church has promoted very unbiblical concepts by assigning the physical restoration of people merely to health professions, the mental part to educators, while the pastors and evangelists are expected to deal with the restoration of the spiritual part of a person. This is a very convenient arrangement, but unbiblical because a person cannot be divided into these parts. A person is a whole human being.

The example of Jesus in His work of restoring people is worthy of our attention, because “Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people” (ibid.).

Christ revealed God to His disciples in a way that performed in their hearts a special work, such as He desires to do in our hearts. There are many who, in dwelling too largely upon theory, have lost sight of the living power of the Saviour’s example. They have lost sight of Him as the humble, self-denying worker. What they need is to behold Jesus. Daily we need the fresh revealing renunciation and self-sacrifice (ibid, p. 457).

“The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good” (ibid., p. 143). His life was full of sacrifices for the benefit of others. He had “compassion” for them when He taught them (Mark 6:34), or fed them after His sermon (Matt. 15:32). He healed them from their miseries. Mrs. White describes Christ’s fourfold approach in His work with people:

- [1] He showed His sympathy for them,
- [2] ministered to their needs, and
- [3] won their confidence.
- [4] Then He bade them, “Follow Me” (ibid., p. 143).

Today “there is nothing that the world needs so much as a knowledge of the gospel’s saving power revealed in Christlike lives” (ibid, p. 133). Indeed, “the strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian” (ibid., p. 470).

No doubt such a life is not easy. “To live such a life, to exert such an influence, costs at every step effort, self-sacrifice, discipline” (ibid., p. 470). It might not even bring forth the “success” which we often demand for promotion and recognition. But let us not forget that “the Lord has no place in His work for those who have a greater desire to win the crown than to bear the cross. He wants men who are more intent upon doing their duty than upon receiving their reward—men who are more solicitous for principles than for promotion” (ibid., pp. 476-7).

Christ’s Method

By following the four steps quoted above we are following the principles of Jesus in His own ministry. The first three steps—showing sympathy, ministering to needs, and winning confidence—are the preparatory steps to the ultimate call of surrender to Jesus. Often we wonder in confusion why people turn away from the “simple gospel” in unbelief and from our call to accept Jesus. Maybe they have not been cared for..

There is need of coming closer to the people by personal effort. If less time were given to sermonizing, and more time were spent in personal ministry, greater results would be seen. The poor are to be relieved, the sick cared for, the sorrowing and the bereaved comforted, the ignorant instructed, the inexperienced counseled. We are to weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those that rejoice. Accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, this work will not, cannot, be without fruit (ibid., pp. 143-4).

The Adventist church has been successful in baptizing people to join the church. How much greater our success could be if we would follow Christ’s method.

The following compilation of Ellen G. White’s writings offers suggestions for ministering to the needs of the physically poor in a biblical setting. The Bible is full of clear guidelines on how to deal with poverty and justice. The

4 *Working with the Poor*

enclosed scripture index shows how often Ellen G. White referred to those passages.

The enclosed material does not claim to be exhaustive or authoritative. It has been collected for use in a number of classes I teach at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. These classes deal mainly with the mission of the Adventist church. In these classes I do not like to distinguish between “foreign mission” and “ministry at home.” We are dealing here with a mission of God who in “leaving Jerusalem” came down to Jericho (this world) to rescue all those who fell among the “robbers” (Luke 10:30-37). The story of the compassionate Samaritan concludes with the call “to go and do the same” (v. 37). In this parable Jesus is not only the “Good Samaritan,” but He also represents the one who was “attacked by the bandits.”

At the anointing of Jesus at the home of Simon the Leper by a woman of questionable reputation, Jesus reminds His distracters that the poor will always with them (Matt. 26:11). In the chapter preceding that story, Jesus says our behavior toward the poor will be an indication of how much we love Him. At the end of time, when Jesus will “separate the sheep from the goats,” He will invite the “sheep” on His right hand “to inherit the kingdom, prepared for them from the beginning of Creation” (Matt. 25:34). The reward will come, according to Jesus, because “I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in. I needed clothes and you clothed me. I was sick and you looked after me. I was in prison and you came to visit me” (vv. 35-36).

The righteous will be perplexed because they will not remember when they did such things for Jesus. But “the king will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me’” (v. 40).

Working for the poor is truly ministry. “Disinterested benevolence” is what Christians are called upon to perform. “Holistic ministry” is what Christ has taught us to do. Listen to Christ’s words to the “goats”:

Then he will say to those on his left, “Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink. I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me. They will also answer, “Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?” He will reply, “I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these,

you did not do for me.” Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life. (vv. 41-46).

This compilation has been prepared with the assistance of Randy Warkentin who started working on the project as a research assistant in 1997 while still a student at the Seminary. The book has been out of print for a number of years. It has now been redesigned to become part of the Andrews University Mission Studies Series.

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November 2007

EVANGELISM AND DEVELOPMENT— FRIENDS OR FOES?

BY RUDI MAIER

Jesus said, “Go, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you, and surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt. 28:19-20).

Where the gospel has gone, people’s lives are changing and churches are being established. But there are many groups of people who have not had an opportunity to hear that God loves them. That is the challenge before us.

Jesus sent His disciples into the world in the same manner that the Father sent Him into the world. Through the centuries His Church has responded to that command in different ways and to varying degrees. In recent years, some in the church have been attempting to broaden their understanding of the church’s responsibility in the world and to respond as Christ would have responded. Committed Christians cannot ignore the reality that there is a remarkable overlap between the poorest countries of the world and those which are the least evangelized.

Every day the world is becoming much more complex and urbanized. By the year 2000, more than one quarter of the world’s population was urban poor. Many of these people must live off garbage thrown away by others. These people are poor physically, and they are poor spiritually. Take Mexico City, for example. It has a population of 17.3 million. That is larger than the individual populations of 134 countries.

People who live on the garbage dumps of Mexico City represent just a small part of the human need that exists worldwide. Squatter and slum communities have become a fact of life in most major cities of the developing world.

Evangelism and Development—Friends or Foes? 7

Manila has an estimated two million squatters scattered across the city in 415 communities, while in Bangkok there are 1,042 slum neighborhoods. Similar circumstances exist in Cairo, Calcutta, Bombay, Jakarta, and any number of other cities in the world.

Extreme human need is not confined only to cities. There are 18 million poor and needy people living in refugee camps around the world, and millions of people in East Africa are precariously poised on the verge of starvation as ravaging famine stalks that area of the world.

Human need is not confined to the developing world either. In Western cities people live and die on the streets. New York City has over 75,000 people who survive by rummaging through trashcans for food. Drive through the streets of downtown Washington, DC, or Los Angeles on any night and you will see row upon row of homeless people sleeping on the sidewalks. Less visible but equally devastating are such areas of human need as domestic violence, child abuse, drug and alcohol addiction, and prostitution.

I could go on giving examples and statistics, but most of us are well aware of the vast human need that exists in our world. We have only to watch television or read a newspaper to see the images of human suffering: pathetic, skinny human skeletons slowly starving; people mutilated and tormented by war and injustice; whole families living in bus depots, subways, and condemned buildings of our cities.

How can we win such people for the Lord and disciple them if we don't minister to them physically as well? Each one is a person to whom the church must respond, because "the sufferings of every man are the suffering of God's child, and those who reach out no helping hand to their perishing fellow beings provoke His righteous anger" (*Desire of Ages*, p. 825). Jesus was touched by human need and responded to it with acts of mercy. He left us the parable of the Good Samaritan as an example of how He expects Christians to respond to human suffering and misfortune. As Christians, we can do no less than follow the example He has left us in word and deed. In fact, "true worship consists in working together with Christ. Prayers, exhortation, and talk are cheap fruits, which are frequently tied on; but the fruits that are manifested in good works, in caring for the needy, the fatherless, and widows, are genuine fruits, and grow naturally upon a good tree" (*Christian Service*, p. 96).

It is this concept of the Good Samaritan that has inspired many Christian organizations to get involved in "development work." Our own Seventh-day Adventist Church started in the aftermath of the Second World War to provide

“humanitarian assistance” to victims of war-torn Europe. The *Seventh-day Adventist Welfare Service* (SAWS) soon saw that assistance should also be extended to countries in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. In 1973 SAWS became the *Seventh-day Adventist World Service*. Today the church is working through ADRA (the Adventist Development and Relief Agency) in more than 100 countries worldwide. What is the role of the church in doing “development work”? What does development work have to do with the “mission” of the church? Before returning to these questions we will have to understand what “development” work really means.

1. A Theoretical Framework for Development

“Development” is a very elusive term. It has a plurality of meaning in this day and age, inside as well as outside the development community. Meanings range from “downtown development” to “community development” to “hydro-electric development.”

Development is basically a Western concept. As early as 1957 the then existing South East Asia Conference of Churches declared that “development is not our word.” The word *development* has been hijacked by the powers that be to equate it with economic growth. The prevailing concept of development is filled with materialism, paternalism, and triumphalism, and is seen as universally applicable.

In the last few decades various international organizations have risen as champions of progress and socioeconomic advancement of the poor, especially of the people in the South (the developing countries). Many of these initiatives have projected into their activities ideas, aspirations, and experiences that clearly reflect a modern Western worldview. In doing so they have neglected, even ignored, the quite different social, economic, and political aspirations of other people. This in turn has often caused them to fail to recognize the knowledge of rural people themselves. Social anthropologists have made the endeavor to understand and experience other cultures from the inside. They have tried to learn and understand the values and knowledge of these cultures. They have discovered a complex variety of valid indigenous knowledge systems.

2. Historical Perspective of Progress and Development

In the context of Western culture, progress has been seen in the technical mastery over nature. Technical progress in this context has often brought forth

the desire to transfer Western values, knowledge and forms of social behavior and institutions to other cultures. Our obsession with technical progress has created a crusading spirit in many to spread “progress” to the uttermost parts of the world.

But faith in technical progress is fading. People are beginning to recognize that every invention of technology brings with it unexpected consequences. By pushing improved technologies we have learned to exploit more and more natural wealth; and along with this we are destroying the global environment. In addition to these obvious effects, people are coming to realize that the new technologies do not necessarily bring greater happiness. The world is learning that progress, even when it encompasses individual morality and the quality of social relations as well as material comforts, can have adverse effects upon society and can cause political conflict and social change. We have learned in the last few decades that “progress” is a “contradictory bundle of myth.”

In the past, planned development processes have strongly been dominated by economics. Although it is recognized that economic development is only one aspect of societal development, major disagreements arise over the relationship between economic and non-economic factors in development.

Western development is a child of the European and American Enlightenment. It is based in the implicit belief that human society is inevitably progressing toward the attainment of a temporal, materialistic kingdom. In fact, the certain belief that unending economic and social progress is a natural condition of free persons has become the secular religion of the West.

This Western model proposes what one would call a “catching-up theory” (often referred to as the “trickle-down theory”). This model asks underdeveloped countries (“developing countries”), which are “backward” in comparison with the rich countries, to go through various stages of growth.

The world’s confidence in progress carries with it the idea of progressing toward “pure, universal values and one right way of knowing” in which all “thought [of] greed and hate would fade away.” In such a context non-Western, non-Judeo-Christian cultures were obviously seen as irrational and not on the path of progress; hence their demise could be rightfully hastened. It is in this context that we must understand many “development” initiatives that occurred during the nineteenth century. These initiatives were acted upon in the context of their times; other cultures were examined in comparison to Western “progress.”

During the Renaissance, Western thought and the expansion of colonial

10 *Working with the Poor*

empires added an economic and geopolitical legitimacy to the image of a successful cultural system. The picture was further developed by the decline of the Western feudal society and the birth of capitalism. Material progress was associated with the development of better technologies, which in turn were able to “exploit nature” and produce products for easier living.

Implicit in this progressive view of the future was the firm conviction that economic progress would automatically result in social and moral progress. This view of a better future is primarily economic, focusing largely on human activities of production and consumption. Progress became synonymous with the ability to produce and consume ever-increasing quantities of goods and services.

These theories had far-reaching implications for an understanding of development, where the failure of development programs were seen in terms of socio-psychological restraints. Lack of development is the “fault” of Third World countries’ socioeconomic systems, and the “primitive” (restrictive) social values created by them. “Development” was measured and compared to their “degree of modernity” as reflected by their relative position on social, cultural, and political indicators, including urbanization, educational growth, the development of mass media, increased political awareness, business opportunities, and secularization.

By the 1970s modernization theories had lost their position of dominance. A number of reasons and explanations have been given. In general it can be concluded that the modernization theory is a too-simplistic picture of what development is all about. Historically it ignores the fact that economic growth is not simply the displacement of “traditions,” values, systems and institutions with “modern” ones.

Today only few believe in the inevitability of economic, technological, and social progress. The dream of the Enlightenment, that humanity could achieve utopia here on earth, died in the seventies.

John Sommers, in his classical book *Beyond Charity: U.S. Voluntary Aid for a Changing Third World* (1977), already argued that “the measuring of development on the materialistic basis of per capita gross national product is inadequate and often misleading.” He advocates that development should be defined in spiritual and cultural terms as well as economic.

The concept of “development” must be enlarged in order to be realistic. Development is not mere economic growth—increase in per capita income, or in national income, or in agricultural and/or industrial production. No

doubt, economic growth is very essential for development, but it cannot be an end in itself. It should be a means to something, i.e., promoting the good of every person and of the *whole person*. We cannot separate economic growth from human growth, nor should we separate development from the society in which it exists. What is projected here is the shift from development as a mere economic phenomenon to development as a more inclusive and comprehensive concept. Such a “holistic” form of development would include not only material but also spiritual as well as cultural elements which have been important in many societies.

3. Values and Development

Underlying the various theories of socioeconomic change were the socio-psychological theories of behavioral change, which explained the failure of development programs in terms of socio-psychological restraints. Thus the individual’s social values were perceived as the main hindrance to development. It was argued that the recipient’s fatalistic attitudes often did not allow them to accept technological progress; consequently the project failed. Indigenous factors were taken as barriers to the implementation of progress and were viewed as causes of failure. Therefore, traditional culture was viewed by planners as an impediment to be removed before significant development could be achieved.

An essential part of any process of development is a consideration of human values. By definition, development means growth and change, implying an aim and direction. The definition of objectives is fundamental to success in human life, both individually and collectively. For example, we all may agree that education is good. But what is education to be about, and toward what objective will it be directed? We have agreed only on the means, not the desired ends. As we are warned in the ancient words of Proverbs: “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (29:18).

From where does a society get vision? It may come from political figures or other leaders of thought, from ideologies imported from abroad, or from grassroots movements. A successful vision, however, must touch a chord in the culture and values of a people. It must both complement and stimulate their existing views and aspirations.

As we study the ministry of Jesus—His incarnation and work among people during His time here on earth—we realize that this was His model of ministry. An example of this is found in the gospel of Mark (6:30, 34-44). The story of

the multiplication of the loaves has served me a great deal in understanding the idea of mission. The account of the multiplication of the loaves at the Lake of Galilee completes the account of the encounter of Jesus with the woman in the desert of Samaria. If the gospel of the Samaritan woman stresses mission as conversion and personal experience, (and at the same time helps carry out evangelization), the gospel of the loaves and fish stresses the collective, “social dimension,” and thereby the other dimension of the same mission. We should never separate these two accounts.

4. Christian Mercy is the Moving Power of Mission

The story of the multiplication of the loaves shows us Jesus’ attitude toward the people: mercy (Mark 6:34). Out of mercy, Jesus takes time to teach them; and out of mercy He feeds them until they are filled. This attitude of Jesus is not occasional; it is fundamental in His missionary work. His work of salvation is a work of mercy, and the kingdom which He brings is the fruit of that mercy; in turn He demands mercy of those who wish to enter His kingdom (Matt. 5:7; 25:31ff; Luke 20:25ff).

The mercy of God as revealed in the Scriptures seeks to free all from their needs and all forms of misery. There are spiritual miseries (which come from all forms of sin, producing blindness and enslaving the spirits, and which dehumanize); and there are the material miseries (which spring from all forms of poverty and human oppression, also dehumanizing and enslaving, though in a different way).

God is a God of mercy. He entered history in order to set humanity free from **all** miseries, including sin and death. His mercy is the moving power of His mission. Jesus manifests His mercy especially to sinners (those in “spiritual” misery), forgiving them; and to the poor (those in “material” misery), freeing them. The mission of Jesus is one of forgiveness and one that brings total freedom.

Let us go back to the gospel story. Jesus is moved to pity “since they were like sheep without a shepherd” (Mark 6:34), that is, disoriented people, without hope, far from God’s truth, and hungry and suffering besides, after a long march (verses 32-33). And here the mercy of Jesus is made effective, and He begins “teaching them many things” (verse 34b).

5. Mission Frees from all Human Miseries

Here now Jesus shows people the way to God, revealing their blindness and their inner slavery.

At the end of the day the people were hungry. It had been a long time since they had eaten. This need could no longer be postponed, and the disciples asked Jesus to take notice of it: “Why do you not send them away so they can go to the crossroads and villages around here and buy themselves something to eat?” (Mark 6:36). This was as though to tell Him: “You have finished your mission. You have done your part to help the people; you gave them the spiritual message. Now it is necessary to let them go that they may solve their material problems.”

Jesus’ answer is surprising: “You give them something to eat” (verse 37). It was as if He was telling them: “My mission has not yet ended. We cannot reduce it to my message and preaching. We cannot be oblivious to the hunger of the people and their material miseries. We cannot abandon them. So, then, give them food; free them from their material misery. This is also part of our mission, which is complete freedom.”

With this attitude, Jesus rises above all dualisms and reductionisms, which are the usual pitfalls of evangelization. Jesus transcends the dualism of separating “spiritual” mercy from “material” mercy, of separating “salvation of the soul” from providing deliverance from all corporal servitude, of separating evangelization from human development. Surely these separations have been made and are still being made in relation to mission. Two things are done—preaching of the gospel and development/healing/education (service for human deliverance)—but separately. Thus one and the other dimension are not reinforced mutually, nor one aspect unduly accentuated over the other. There is a very strong relationship between evangelization and “human promotion” in the mission of the church.

The missionary vision of Jesus does not concentrate only on giving people spiritual food, nor is He a purely material benefactor. This miracle story has to be understood in the context of the kingdom of God and of conversion, since “man does not live by bread alone” (Luke 4:4), and since it would profit nothing for a “man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul” (Mark 8:36). For Jesus, evangelization is not limited to material means; the popular well-being; or the rise of the poor to wealth, power, and knowledge. For Him, mission implies faith, love, the conversion from all sin and egoism, and the searching for eternity.

But neither is evangelization for Jesus limited to a message of eternal life and inner freedom, disinterested in the human condition of people. He was the one who taught “*the sheep without a shepherd*” the merciful love of God and the kingdom of life and freedom which it brings, and He wants to free them from the hunger they are suffering from.

The question which is usually asked with respect to mission is whether human promotion and social service (and development work) are evangelization. Jesus’ answer is definitive: Social service and human promotion are not evangelization, since evangelization implies the explicit announcement of His kingdom and the call to faith and conversion. However, human promotion and social service are integrated in evangelization. They are a part of God’s project for total freedom of all people and thereby an important component of mission.

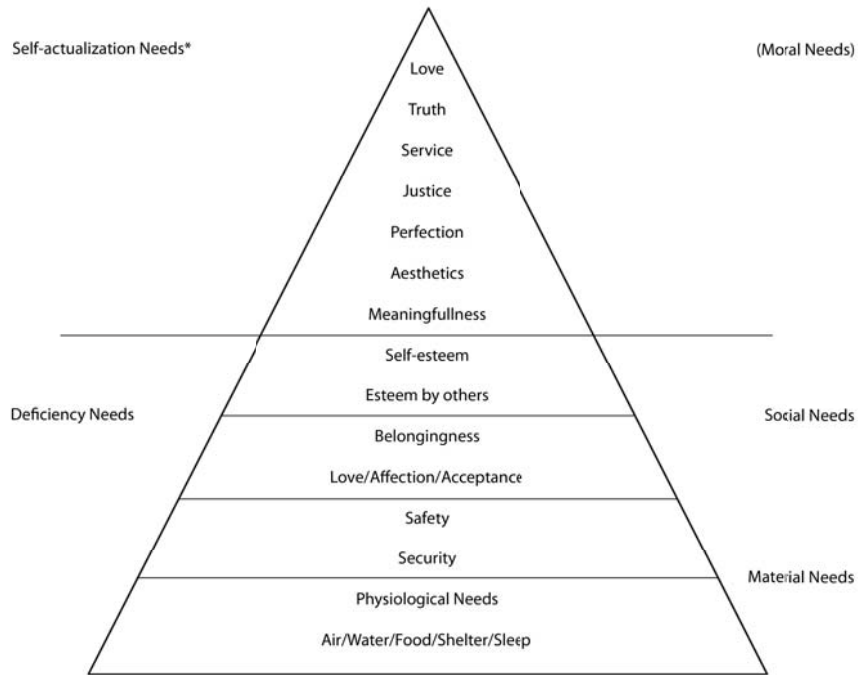
6. The Work of God is “Holistic”

We are all familiar with “Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs.” As committed Christians we have to recognize that there are a variety of levels of needs in the lives of the people around us. Maslow calls them “Material Needs,” “Social Needs,” and “Moral Needs.” I often ask students on what level they see their involvement in ministry. Without fail most of them feel prepared for the “highest one” dealing with the spiritual truths of love, perfection, righteousness, maybe even grace. Please don’t misunderstand me—these are beautiful issues of God’s truth to us human beings. But it reminds me about the starving man who told the missionary who wanted to share the gospel with him, “I can’t hear you. I am too hungry.”

To us as Christians, a person’s spiritual needs may be the most pressing and obvious, but we can never effectively minister to those until we have first dealt with the immediate needs the individual is feeling, be that for food, shelter, medical care, or simple respect. Meet these needs first and the person is more likely to lend a listening ear to the gospel message we have to share. Through this approach, not only do we have the chance to tell them about Jesus, but we also have the opportunity to portray His love actively for them. “A Christlike life is the most powerful argument that can be advanced in favor of Christianity” (*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 21).

Evangelism and Development—Friends or Foes? 15

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



*Self-actualization Needs are of equal importance (not hierarchical)

We tend to see people only in terms of physical and spiritual needs (in other words, we reduce people's problems to one or two types). But Christ ministered to people through all their needs. Clearly, the eternal salvation of people is our highest priority, but we must bring them the whole gospel. Salvation, in the biblical sense, has to do with all dimensions of our lives.

In separating a human's spiritual needs from physical needs we also make a sharp distinction between evangelism and social concerns. Adventists too often see themselves as ministering in one or the other of these spheres. Preachers often limit their concern to eternal salvation. But broken, suffering, and lost people listen to those who meet them where they hurt. And so the preacher's message often seems irrelevant at the moment. We are reminded that "many can be reached only through acts of disinterested kindness. Their

physical wants must first be relieved. As they see evidence of our unselfish love, it is easier for them to believe in the love of Christ” (*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 84). Sadly, I have heard people in the church say, “Jesus told us the poor and the needy would always be with us; therefore, He does not want us to be too concerned about their condition. After all, no amount of effort is going to solve the problem.” The people who say this have failed to see the example of Jesus. He spent His life responding and ministering to human needs. He did not erase poverty, but that did not deter Him from reaching out in love and ministering to people. Neither will we single-handedly solve the problems of the poor and the needy. We’re not trying to build a utopian world. Indeed, such thinking is what Jesus was warning us about. We will not solve all humankind’s problems, regardless of how much effort we apply. However, neither can we sit back and do nothing about the plight of the poor and the powerless. It was Jesus who told us that in ministering to the poor we are in fact ministering to Him (Matt. 2:4). The world needs a revelation of Jesus anew. Ellen G. White reminds us “that Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me’” (*Ministry of Healing*, p. 143).

Such an approach is what God wants us to follow. “There is need of coming close to the people by personal efforts. If less time were given to sermonizing, and more time were spent in personal ministry, greater results would be seen” (*ibid.*). Ellen White continues to describe such personal efforts as relieving the poor, caring for the sick, comforting the sorrowing and bereaved, instructing the ignorant, and counseling the inexperienced. If such work is “accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, this work will not, cannot, be without fruit” (*ibid.*).

I remember in my own ministry in Sri Lanka, we lived at a beautiful place. The name of that school was “Lakpahana,” the “Light of Sri Lanka.” I have seen many Lakpahanas around the world—Adventist schools and churches established to be the light on a darkened globe. But too often we have pulled that bushel over our flame. Instead of shining to the world so that they can see the beauty of Jesus, we have become isolated, self-centered, and often self-righteous.

We wanted to make a difference to the people in our little community. But the first and the most important step for us was to become a part of that community and the lives of the people. Christian ministry begins with

Evangelism and Development—Friends or Foes? 17

relationships. We had relationships with the people before, but they were bad relationships. I remember sitting in a village council meeting under the coconut trees. We told the community leaders that we wanted to work together with them to solve some of their health problems. A village leader wanted to know if this was a new way we were trying to make them Christians. No, I don't think that was a new way. It was an old way—a way Jesus had taught us, but which we have often forgotten.

But in becoming a part of the community, we will see their problems, and will experience what it means to suffer. Hopefully we will suffer with them. That is what incarnation meant for Jesus. Such a ministry will lead to a transformation of people and community, and such a ministry will lead to a change in our church and us.

At the end of our stay, I was walking with the headman through the village reviewing our stay and work together. We had built toilets and water systems together. We had fed the hungry. We had shared in the joy and in the pain together. Then he turned to me, and with the dignity that only a chief can have, he told me that for 32 years (the length of time our school had been established there) they had been afraid of us as Seventh-day Adventists because they thought that we would make them and their children Christians. “But now we have seen Christianity,” he said, “and we like it.”

We must dispel the impression that as Christians we are only interested in saving souls and building grandiose churches. It is time for us to rise up and take the love and compassion of Jesus to the poor and needy in this world. The world does not need more fancy evangelists trumpeting their message of gospel truth mixed with slick consumerism. Ellen White reminds us not to try to become preachers “but ministers for God” (*Christian Service*, p. 92). What the world needs is an army of caring Christians who, through mercy and love, will demonstrate Christ to the poor and needy of this world, people who will sit and listen, who will respect the poor and needy enough to learn from them, and who will respond to them in a way that affirms their dignity and value to God.

I am wondering how many of us have truly experienced Christ coming down, not only into this world, but especially into our lives and our hearts. How many of us have experienced His touch that changed us and made us whole?

In Luke 10, Jesus is asking “the expert of the law” who had come to “test Jesus” (verse 25). “Which of these three [the priest, the Levite or the Samaritan]

18 *Working with the Poor*

was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” (verse 36).

“The expert of the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him” (verse 37).

He was not only a good lawyer, but also a good exegete.

“Jesus told him, ‘Go and do likewise” (verse 38).

I wonder if that only applied to the lawyer. Maybe those words of Jesus still have meaning and application for us today.

The gospel is a two-handed gospel. (Mrs. White speaks about the health message being the right arm of the gospel ministry. I am afraid that in regard to worldwide needs we have seen that arm far too limited). We cannot evangelize effectively in many parts of the world where people are living in poverty unless we reach out in mercy and love. I believe that if we reach out with the two hands of the gospel we will see the doors of a multitude of hearts swing open to the good news of salvation in places where today the door is apparently closed. “If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 189).

GOD'S WORD IN A HUNGRY WORLD

BY ROBERT PARHAM

By the year 2000, 60 million abandoned street children will live in major city ghettos in Latin America. Two billion people will suffer from chronic malnutrition. The gap between the very rich and very poor will become a chasm. The world's wood stock will decline 47 percent, deserts will claim greater stretches of cropland, and water supplies will diminish drastically.¹

The forecast is grim. The world is hungry, and it may become even hungrier. Were it not for God's message in sacred Scripture about care for the weak, the vulnerable, and the dispossessed, many Christians simply would retreat. But God's message calls Christians into, not to escape from, the challenges of the world.

Studying what the Bible says about hunger is a prerequisite for Christian action in the world, for the bible is a treasure chest of divine instruction. The Bible points out that hunger has always been part of the drama of sinful humanity. It says that the covenant community has a responsibility for the weakest members of society, many of whom are either ignored or trampled on by the people of God. It shows that God's only Son fed the hungry, associated with the poor, and set up a new economic lif-style. It discloses that even the new Israel was stalked by hunger.

Jack Nelson, author of *Hunger for Justice: the Politics of Food and Faith*, has written: "Despite a disparity of several thousand years, the description of the economic roots of hunger in the Bible is helpful in shaping our understanding of the present world food crisis."² Indeed the Bible remains as relevant about social problems today as it did yesterday.

Source:

Robert Parham, *What shall we do in a hungry world?* Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 1988:11-22.
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Who Were the Hungry in Biblical Times?

The Bible offers two descriptions of hunger: one is famine, the other is chronic hunger which exists day in and day out.

Famine

Famine occurred over and over again in biblical times. Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Ruth, numerous kings, and early Christians felt the scorching heat of severe hunger. The author of Lamentations captured the dreadful experience of starvation when he wrote: "Our skin is hot as an oven with the burning heat of famine" (Lam. 5:10).

Part of the early story of God's chosen people revolved around recurring famine. Abram escaped the harsh famine conditions with a sojourn to Egypt (Gen. 12:10). Much later his great-grand-son Joseph interpreted the dream of Pharaoh which forewarned about seven years of famine and enabled the Egyptians to prepare for the coming food crisis (Gen. 41:25-36). Learning of the food reserves, Jacob told his sons: "Behold, I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down and buy grain for us thee, that we may live, and not die" (Gen. 42:2). The obedience of his sons placed in motion events which would lead to Jacob's family settling in the land of Goshen.

Famine scorched the land in the days of the kings. Once a drought was so severe in Samaria that King Ahab told his servant Obadiah to "go through the land to all the springs of water and to all the valleys; perhaps we may find grass and save the horses and mules alive, and not lose some of the animals" (1 Kings 18:5).

On another occasion, war caused famine. When King Benhadad of Syria encircled Samaria, he cut off the food supply: "And there was a great famine in Samaria, as they besieged it, until an ass's head was sold for eighty shekels of silver, and the fourth part of a kab of dove's dung for five shekels of silver" (2 Kings 6:25). This desperate situation resulted in cannibalism, as evidenced by the starving woman who cried to the king of Israel: "We boiled my son, and ate him" (2 Kings 6:29).

The horrible siege and destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. created a famine: "Happier were the victims of the sword than the victims of hunger, who pined away, stricken by want of the fruits of the field. The hands of compassionate women have boiled their own children; they became their food in the destruction of the daughter of my people" (Lam. 4:9-10).

Famine was just one description of hunger in biblical times. It arose from drought and war, and it affected everyone, the rich and the poor. Another description was that of chronic hunger arising from poverty. The biblical writers recognized that the poor were those most vulnerable to hunger.

Chronic Hunger

The sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow were among the people most at risk to poverty and consequently to hunger. Their plight arose from the fact that they had no legal status. The sojourner was a foreigner living in Israel; the orphan and the widow had no protector or provider.

Seeing their vulnerability, Moses repeatedly told the people to care for them. His rationale was simple: As God had heard the cries of the slaves in Egypt and had come to their rescue, so too does God deliver other who suffer, and expects the covenant people to do likewise.

“He [God] executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing,” Moses said. “Love the sojourner therefore; for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt” (Deut. 10:18-19). Again, Moses urged: “You shall not pervert the justice due to the sojourner or to the fatherless, or take widow’s garment in pledge; but you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from there” (Deut. 24:17-18).

The consequence of ignoring the weak was severe. “Cursed be he,” Moses said, “who perverts the justice due to the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow: (Deut. 27:29). Elsewhere Moses warned: “You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall not afflict any widow or orphan. If you do afflict them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry; and my wrath will burn.” (Ex. 22:21-23).

Moses left a deep imprint on Israel. Again and again, the biblical authors identified the same list of needy people and called repeatedly for their care. The biblical writers reminded the people that God looked after orphans and widows (Psalm 68:5-6) and did not want them mistreated (Jer. 22:1-5 and Zech. 7:8-14).

Like the Old Testament, the New Testament links poverty and hunger. One biblical scholar, Wolfgang Stegemann, believes that in the New Testament “poverty is synonymous with being hungry.”³ He contends: “The face of poverty . . . is basically this: the poor are destitute, always close to starvation, often identified along with the disabled and the severely ill, poorly clothed, and

22 *Working with the Poor*

dependent on the help of strangers.”⁴

Indeed, the poor frequently faced hunger. One Sabbath as the disciples walked through the grain fields, their hunger compelled them to pluck, sift, and eat the grain. Apparently they were too impoverished to have prepared food for the Sabbath as was the custom (Luke 6:1-6). On another occasion, the disciples and a crowd of followers faced a lack of food (Luke 9:10-17). On other occasions, Jesus saw that the poor, maimed, lame, blind (Luke 14:12-14), and beggars (Luke 16:19-31) were among the hungry.

Even members of the early church were poverty stricken. The widows in the Jerusalem church needed a daily distribution of food (Acts 6:1). In fact, the entire Jerusalem church was so poor that Paul collected an offering for them from among the Gentile Christian churches (Gal. 2:10; Rom. 15:22-33; 1 Cor. 16:1-4; and 2 Cor. 8-9).

Again and again, the community of faith is assigned the task of feeding the hungry and helping the hungry feed themselves.

What Does the Old Testament Say About Feeding the Hungry?

The Old Testament urges the covenant people to look after the hungry in concrete ways. One of the most straightforward set of instructions for the prevention of hunger is the law of gleaning; another is the observance of the sabbatical year; a third is the pursuit of justice.

The Law of Gleaning

The laws of gleaning prevented the Hebrew farmer from taking all the produce out of his fields, vineyard, or orchard. When harvest time came, the reapers worked their way through the field gathering the produce. Behind them followed the poor, picking up what was left behind. The leftovers belonged to the poor, for the law instructed the owner of the farm not to pick the field clean.

Moses instructed the people: “When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field to its very border, neither shall you gather the gleanings after you harvest. And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the sojourner: I am the Lord your God” (Lev. 19:9-10).

Another set of similar yet more explicit instructions were also offered in

Deuteronomy 24:19-21.

The best known biblical account of gleaning involved Ruth (Ruth 2:2-23). When Naomi and Ruth went to Bethlehem at the beginning harvest-time, they faced hunger. So Ruth volunteered to go into the fields to collect the stalks of grain left behind.

The law of gleaning was clearly in effect (Ruth 2:2). Yet Ruth asked the foreman at dawn: "Pray, let me glean and gather among the sheaves after the reapers" (Ruth 2:7). Why did she ask for permission to follow the law? Did her request indicate that some hard-hearted farmers refused to let the poor glean their fields? Did certain landlords try to squeeze every bit of profit out of their fields? Did some farmers break the law and thereby contribute to poverty and hunger?

If some landowners were breaking the law of gleaning, Boaz's foreman was not. He granted Ruth permission, and she gleaned from sunup to sunset. At the end of the day, she had an ephah, or a bushel, of barley. The law of gleaning had enabled the great-grandmother of King David to avoid hunger.

The Sabbatical Year

Another concrete program to prevent poverty was the sabbatical year (Deut. 15:1-18). It was an effort to protect the poor, ensuring the welfare of all within the covenant community.

At the end of a cycle of seven years came the "year of dropping:" or "year of cancellation." Creditors were to release debts (Deut. 15:1-11) and slaveholders were to free slaves (Deut. 15:12-18). If God's law was obeyed, Moses said, "there will be no poor among you" (Deut. 15:4) and the entire nation would be blessed.

The first feature of the sabbatical year was the cancellation of debt. "Every creditor shall release what he has lent to his neighbor" (Deut. 15:2), Moses instructed. He warned creditors against pressing hard to collect debts. The justification for such an economic program was simple: God had proclaimed it.

Moses added that discrimination against the poor was unacceptable: "If there is among you a poor man . . . you shall not harden your heart or shut you hand against your poor brother, but you shall open your hand to him, and lend him sufficient for his need" (Deut. 15:7-8). Risk was not to be a reason to refuse making a loan. Neither was the approach of the sabbatical year a justification for refusing to lend to a needy man (Deut. 15:9).

24 *Working with the Poor*

The attitude of the lender was another concern: “Take heed lest there be a base thought in your heart” (Deut. 15:9), and “your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him” (Deut. 15:10). The people of the covenant were to care genuinely for the poor, not just obey the law.

The second feature of the sabbatical year was the release of slaves. In biblical times people fell into slavery for many reasons, one of which was economic failure. If an Israelite became a slave, he labored for six years and was set free on the seventh.

A slave was not just set free. He was freed and given the resources to look after himself: “And when you let him go free from you, you shall not let him go empty-handed.” Instead the slaveholder was instructed, “you shall furnish him liberally out of your flock, out of your threshing floor, and out of your wine press” (Deut. 15:13-14).

The reason for such action was straightforward. The economic wellbeing of the former slave contributed to the economic wellbeing of the entire nation. When the nation prospered, the former slaveowner would experience God’s blessing (Deut. 15:18).

When Moses set forth his antipoverty program, he said that if the sabbatical year was followed, then the nation would be void of poverty (Deut. 15:4). He envisioned a nation without hunger. Yet Moses knew the effects of human sinfulness and social evil. He recognized the entrenched, long-lasting nature of poverty (Deut. 15:11). The reality of poverty demanded a continuous effort to eliminate it.

Accompanying the law of the Sabbath was the year of jubilee (Lev. 25:10-24). Every 50 years, liberty was proclaimed “through-out the land to all its inhabitants.” Enslaved Israelites were released; property was returned to its original owner. Such leveling of the economic system assured that the poor would be able to look after themselves (Luke 4:19).

The sabbatical year, as well as the year of jubilee, existed so that “the poor . . . people may eat” (Ex. 23:10-11). As often was the case, however, the people of Israel ignored the law of Moses. Their failure to keep the law of the sabbatical year resulted in poverty. It eventually contributed to the captivity in Babylon (Jer. 34:8-22 and 2 Chron. 36:20-21).

Pursuit of Justice

The Old Testament writers were painfully aware of social injustice. Many saw its harmful impact. Some even experienced its crushing hand. All knew

that social injustice stood against the God of justice.

Indeed, God was portrayed as “a God of justice” (Isa. 30:18). “The Lord loves justice” (Isa. 61:8). (See also Psalms 33:5; 37:28). Other biblical authors wrote that god heard the cries of those treated unjustly (Psalm 109:21), executed justice for the needy (Psalm 140:13), and called the whole nation to pursue justice (Deut. 16:20). The first part of Micah’s answer to his classical question about what the Lord required was straightforward: “Do justice” (Micah 6:8).

The Old Testament writers knew of both the nature of God and social injustice. Amos, for example, saw that social injustice caused hunger. He knew what was happening in the marketplace. He knew that the wealthy sold “the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes” (Amos 2:6). He saw that the poor were trampled “into the dust of the earth” (Amos 2:7). He recognized that the greedy appetites of wealthy women cause great suffering (Amos 4:1).

As a herdsman and picker of sycamore fruit (a food of the poor), Amos had firsthand experience in the marketplace. He caught on that in the market the wealthy cheated poor farmers out of their wheat, then built expensive homes for themselves (Amos 5:11). He figured out that the scales were fixed, that the poor paid more for less food, and that the quality of food was marginal (Amos 8:6). Undoubtedly, Amos realized that lavish life-styles of a few ground down the poor.⁵

Other prophets also pointed out injustice. “Like the partridge that gathers a brood which she did not hatch,” Jeremiah wrote, “so is he who gets riches but not by right” (Jer. 17:11).

The counterbalance to the destructive nature of social injustice was justice. Thus, Moses, for example, gave a legal code which urged the people not to steal, not to deal falsely, and not to oppress a neighbor, as well as to pay a worker his rightful wages and to be fair (Lev. 19:11-18). Knowing of the deceitful heart of humanity, Moses spoke against cheating in the marketplace: “You shall do no wrong in judgment, in measures of length or weight or quantity. You shall have just balances, just weighs, a just ephah, and a just hin” (Lev. 19:35-36). His desire for fairness in the market echoed through the ages (Deut 25:13-16; Prov. 11:1; 16:11; Amos 8:5).

Besides speaking against injustice, the biblical writers stressed the benefits of social justice. They pointed out that justice made for social stability (Prov. 29:4), governmental stability (Prov. 16:12; 29:14), and social prosperity (Psalm 72:2, 4, 16). The pursuit of justice was in the self-interest of the entire nation.

More importantly, social justice evidenced a right relationship with God.

Moses, Amos, and Isaiah all believed that justice and right worship were different sides of the same coin. In Moses' farewell speech to the tribes of Israel, he reminded the people about rejoicing before the Lord (a form of worship) and following "justice, and only justice" (Deut. 16:10-20).

Amos made a similar link between worship and justice. Speaking for the Lord, Amos said: "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies" (Amos 5:21). Rather than false worship, what the Lord wanted, Amos said, was that "justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" (Amos 5:24).

The prophet Isaiah also harnessed right worship and justice (Isa. 1:1-17). He shared a vision in which the Lord said: "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of he-goats" (Isa. 1:11). God no longer found the worship of the people acceptable (Isa. 1:14-17).

Isaiah's vision from God clearly tied right living with right worship. The vision condemned the pious who offered all the right signs of worship, except for a genuine care for the poor. Such religious people engaged in false worship (Isa. 58:1-9).

What Does the New Testament Say About Feeding the Hungry?

The New Testament evidences greater concern about poverty and hunger than is generally acknowledges. Certainly, Jesus addresses and meets human needs. And the early church follows His path through the practice of hunger aid within and between churches.

The Life and Words of Jesus

Poverty surrounded Jesus from the very start. He was born into a hungry world, but in a town whose very name means "house of bread." And Mary's miraculous conception of Him paled in the filthy conditions in which she delivered Jesus.

Adding to the picture of poverty was the event of consecration. When time came to dedicate Jesus to the service of God and for the cleansing of Mary, his parents were too poor to afford a respectable offering (Luke 2:21-24). They had to make a poor man's offering of "two turtledoves" (Lev. 12:6-8).

Poverty remained an integral feature of Jesus' life. Even Jesus' first

temptation in the wilderness mocked His life in poverty. The Devil's temptation was for Jesus to look after His own needs first by turning stones to bread. But Jesus resisted. He knew the importance of bread for human life, as well as the importance of obedience to God, even if it involved physical hunger (Luke 4:1-4). In all likelihood, Jesus' early beginnings and hunger pangs in the wilderness deepened His desire to provide a banquet for the hungry (Deut. 8:3).

Jesus' first recorded sermon in the synagogue of Nazareth disclosed His mission: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18-19).

The congregation responded with amazement. They were unable to believe that this man had come to restart the year of jubilee. The Jewish community had long since stopped practicing the sabbatical year and the year of jubilee. Debts were no longer cancelled and slaves were no longer freed (Lev. 25).

At first, the people were struck by the vision of jubilee. But as the weight of His message hit home, their attitude changed. To return the economic system to the Mosaic ideals was too threatening. The people did not want the existing economic order overturned, even if it meant helping the downtrodden. Not surprisingly, their response was unfavorable (Luke 4:20-30).

As Jesus moved through the country, He continued to address hunger needs (Luke 6:1-5, 20-21; 11:3; and 14:12-14). Nowhere was this relationship more vividly illustrated than in the feeding of the 5,000. By the time of this event, Jesus was attracting a large following. Many of them were poor and handicapped (Matt. 15:30). Their inability to feed themselves troubled the disciples to the point of trying to persuade Jesus to send them away to look after themselves. Jesus refused.

"You give them something to eat," He said to the disciples (Luke 9:13). They responded with complaints of limited resources. Yet Jesus rejected their excuses with the message that He wanted the hungry to receive food (Luke 9:10-17).

Accompanying Jesus' message about love of neighbor was a word about judgment. Jesus painted a picture of a man named Lazarus who died outside the residence of a wealthy man. Apparently, the wealthy man did nothing to help the beggar beyond throwing him a few scraps. The rich man was judged for neglecting Lazarus's needs (Luke 16:19-31).

Another aspect of Jesus' message concerned conversion. True conversion

resulted in care for others, including economic care. When a rich ruler, who had kept the commandments, wanted to know the key to eternal life, Jesus said: “Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, . . . and come, follow me” (Luke 18:22).

Contrasting the rich man’s rejection was the conversion of Zacchaeus. His conversion led to acts of economic sharing, as well as to the correction of economic injustice: “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded any one of anything, I restore it fourfold.” To which Jesus replied: “Today salvation has come to this house” (Luke 19:1-10).

One final indication of the importance of food appeared in the closing days of Jesus’ ministry. On the road to Emmaus, He broke bread with two men (Luke 24:13-15). Only with the sharing of food did they know the risen Lord (Luke 24:31).

Again and again, the breaking of bread is tied with love for one another. Sharing bread and sharing hospitality are signs of the Christian community. Notice that in the feeding of the 5,000 (Luke 9:10-17), the Last Supper (Luke 22:14-20), and the experience on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35), the breaking of bread and the revelation of Who Jesus really is are bound together. Could it be that the world knows who we are by how we respond to the hungry?

Intrachurch Aid

The early Christian church knew well about the life and teachings of Jesus. The first Christians tried to follow in His footsteps. They maintained Jesus’ concern about breaking bread and sharing hospitality. They retained a strong sense of mutual responsibility for one another. The very nature of the first Christian community copied the pattern of economic sharing which Jesus introduced.

At Pentecost, 3,000 people joined the apostles through the experience of conversion (Acts 2:41-42). This new community in Jerusalem “had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need” (Acts 2:44-45). It was an economic community where everyone “partook of food with glad and generous hearts” (Acts 4:34), a remarkable feat, considering the widespread poverty.

However, not everyone in the early community was poor. A few members were wealthy. And they occasionally sold property with the proceeds being distributed “to each as any had need” (Acts 4:34-35).

Two experiences disclosed more about the true nature of this new economic community. In the first story, Barnabas “sold a field which belonged to him, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles’ feet” (Acts 4:36-37). In the second story, Ananias and Sapphira sold property but lied about the price, only to suffer the consequences (Acts 5:1-11). Genuine economic sharing was held up as the model to follow, while deceptive generosity was rejected.

Interchurch Aid

Not only did Christians within the same church share, but churches shared with one another. Aid between churches was common.

The first example of aid between churches took place during the reign of Claudius Caesar. Upon hearing of a hunger crisis in Judea, the Christians in Antioch readily responded. They “determined, every one according to his ability, to send relief to the brethren who lived in Judea; and they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul” (Acts 11:29-30).

Another example of a hunger relief expedition was the Jerusalem offering. Paul devoted a great deal of time to the gathering of donations from among the Gentile Christian churches for the poor in the Jerusalem church (Gal. 2:10). His goal was to feed the hungry, meeting human needs and making peace within the church.

Writing to the Christians in Rome, Paul shared more information about his hunger offering (Rom. 15:22-33). He wrote that the Christians in Macedonia and Achaia had already made “some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem” (Rom. 15:26). Their contributions grew out of a sense of fellowship. The Jewish Christians had shared with the Gentile Christians the message of Jesus Christ. Now the Gentile Christians were pleased to share their material blessings with the Jewish Christians (Rom. 15:27). This mission was so important that Paul postponed his long-desired missions trip to Rome on the way to Spain (Rom. 15:25). Bringing about reconciliation within the church was crucial.

The words and actions of Jesus, plus the examples of intrachurch and interchurch hunger aid, tell us how important caring for the hungry is. Jesus expresses concern for the total person. He calls His followers to exercise similar concern. The actions of the early church show that Jesus’ call was heard and followed.

What are Some Biblical Principles in a Hungry World?

From the Bible, we can draw principles which guide involvement in today's world. These principles direct Christians to set the banquet table, but leave the details about how to set the table to us. We know that God wants justice to "roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream" (Amos 5:24), yet God leaves the building of the irrigation system to us.

Little likelihood exists that American society, for example, could literally reinstate the law of gleaning. America is no longer an agrarian society. Nevertheless, gleaning offers a model which can be used in harvesting edible food from farm fields and grocery stores (see the chapter entitled "What Shall We Do About Hunger?" for the discussion on gleaning).

Art Simon, executive director of Bread for the World, points out that "there is a clear biblical word regarding the obligation of a country such as ours to see that children do not go hungry. We do not, however, have a clear biblical word telling us that food stamps or the WIC program (nutrition program for women, infants, and children) is the way to feed them."⁵ Thus, Christians must use their intelligence to translate the biblical message into tangible programs.

This exercise can be an act of loving God. Loving God with all our minds means that we use our intelligence and common sense to do what God wants. Love of God does not mean that we shut down our minds. Instead, calculating analysis, bold planning, and careful implementation reveal love for God.

Here are just a few biblical principles which give Christians a sense of direction. First, God's desire is that poverty and hunger not exist. Yet, the sinful nature of humanity and social evil means that human suffering is part of the fabric of fallen creation. Only with a thorough understanding of the desire of God against the backdrop of human brokenness can we appreciate fully the task before us.

Second, God's covenant people have a special responsibility to offer a hand of help with the right attitude to the hungry. God is more concerned about the covenant community caring for the needy than practicing self-serving, shallow religion. Right worship and right action are inseparable.

Third, we care for the hungry in a variety of ways. One is through acts of charity, such as what the church in Antioch did for the church in Jerusalem (Acts 11:27-30). Another way is through the pursuit of justice, removing barriers which keep people poor and building bridges which lead to opportunities. The story of Zacchaeus, for example, tells us that he had obtained his wealth

through taxation at the expense of the poor and that he pursued justice when he restored fourfold what he had obtained wrongly. When we read the prophets, we see that they called for fairness in the marketplace.

A third way is through programs which offer a hand up to self-reliance. Such is the case with Moses' instructions to slaveholders when they freed slaves during the sabbatical year: "You shall open your hand to him, and lend him sufficient for his need" (Deut 15:8).

References:

- ¹John Cheyne, "A.D. 2000: A Formidable Challenge to Christian Witness and Ministry," *Light*, August/September 1987, 1, 3.
- ²Jack Nelson, *Hunger for Justice: The Politics of Food and Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1980), 1.
- ³Wolfgang Stegemann, *The Gospel and the Poor* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1984), 17.
- ⁴*Ibid.*, 3.
- ⁵Art Simon, "Art to Art," *Seeds*, August 1987, 23.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT **Key Passages from Ellen G. White**

Personal Ministries

The world must be warned of the soon coming of the Lord. We have but a little time in which to work. Years have passed into eternity that might have been improved in seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and in diffusing the light to others. God now calls upon His people who have great light and are established in the truth, having had much labor bestowed upon them, to work for themselves and for others as they have never done before. Make use of every ability; bring into exercise every power, every entrusted talent; use all the light that God has given you to do others good. Do not try to become preachers, but become ministers for God.

Christian Service, p. 92 (*Southern Watchman*, June 20, 1905)

There is need of coming closer to the people by personal efforts. If less time were given to sermonizing, and more time were spent in personal ministry, greater results would be seen.

Ministry of Healing, p. 143

Divine love has been stirred to its unfathomable depths for the sake of men, and angels marvel to behold in the recipients of so great love a mere surface gratitude. Angels marvel at man's shallow appreciation of the love of God. Heaven stands indignant at the neglect shown to the souls of men. Would we know how God regards it? How would a father and mother feel, did they know that their child, lost in the cold and the snow, had been passed by, and left to perish, by those who might have saved it? Would they not be terribly grieved, wildly indignant? Would they not denounce those murderers with

wrath hot as their tears, intense as their love? The sufferings of every man are the sufferings of God's child, and those who reach out no helping hand to their perishing fellow beings provoke His righteous anger.

Desire of Ages, p. 825

True worship consists in working together with Christ. Prayers, exhortation, and talk are cheap fruits, which are frequently tied on; but fruits that are manifested in good works, in caring for the needy, the fatherless, and widows, are genuine fruits, and grow naturally upon a good tree.

Review and Herald, Aug. 16, 1881

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” [James 1:27]

What is pure religion? Christ has told us that pure religion is the exercise of pity, sympathy, and love in the home, in the church, and in the world. This is the kind of religion to teach to the children, and is the genuine article. Teach them that they are not to center their thoughts upon themselves, but that wherever there is human need and suffering, there is a need for missionary work

There are many who ask, as did the lawyer, “Who is my neighbor?” The answer comes down to us in the circumstances that happened near Jericho, when the priest and the Levite passed by on the other side, and left the poor, bruised, and wounded stranger to be taken care of by the good Samaritan. Everyone who is in suffering need is our neighbor. Every straying son and daughter of Adam, who has been ensnared by the enemy of souls, and bound in slavery of wrong habits that blight the God-given manhood or womanhood, is my neighbor

Would that children might be educated from their babyhood, through their childhood and youth, to understand what is the missionary work to be done right around them. Let the home be made a place for religious instruction. Let parents become mouthpieces of the Lord God of Israel, to teach the precepts of true Christianity, and let them be examples of what the principles of love can make men and women

We are to think and care for others who need our love, our tenderness, and care. We should ever remember that we are representatives of Christ, and that we are to share the blessings that He gives, not with those who can recompense

us again, but with those who will appreciate the gifts that will supply their temporal and spiritual necessities. Those who give feasts for the purpose of helping those who have but little pleasure, for the purpose of bringing brightness into their dreary lives, for the purpose of relieving their poverty and distress, are acting unselfishly and in harmony with the instruction of Christ.

Review and Herald, Nov. 12, 1895

A Revelation of Christ

The world needs today what it needed nineteen hundred years ago-- a revelation of Christ. A great work of reform is demanded, and it is only through the grace of Christ that the work of restoration, physical, mental, and spiritual, can be accomplished.

Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me."

There is need of coming close to the people by personal effort. If less time were given to sermonizing, and more time were spent in personal ministry, greater results would be seen. The poor are to be relieved, the sick cared for, the sorrowing and the bereaved comforted, the ignorant instructed, the inexperienced counseled. We are to weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those that rejoice. Accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, this work will not, cannot, be without fruit.

The Ministry of Healing, pp. 143-44

All who are consecrated to God will be channels of light. God makes them His agents to communicate to others the riches of His grace Our influence upon others depends not so much upon what we say, as upon what we are. Men may combat and defy our logic, they may resist our appeals; but a life of disinterested love is an argument they cannot gainsay. A consistent life, characterized by the meekness of Christ is a power in the world.

Desire of Ages, pp. 141, 142

A Christlike life is the most powerful argument that can be advanced in favor of Christianity.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 21

Food for Thought—Key Passages from Ellen G. White 35

Not all the books written can serve the purpose of a holy life. Men will believe, not what the minister preaches, but what the church lives. Too often the influence of the sermon preached from the pulpit is counteracted by the sermon preached in the lives of those who claim to be advocates of truth.

Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 21

It is the privilege of every soul to be a living channel through which God can communicate to the world the treasures of His grace, the unreachable riches of Christ. 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, p. 419

Many can be reached only through acts of disinterested kindness. Their physical wants must first be relieved. As they see evidence of our unselfish love, it will be easier for them to believe in the love of Christ.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, p. 84

There is need of coming closer to the people by personal efforts.

If less time were given to sermonizing, and more time were spent in personal ministry, greater results would be seen.

Ministry of Healing, p. 143

The world will be convinced, not by what the pulpit teaches, but what the church lives. The minister in the desk announces the theory of the gospel; the practical piety of the church demonstrates its power."

Testimonies, vol. 7, p. 16 (*Christian Service*, p. 67)

It is not only by preaching the truth, not only by distributing literature, that we are to witness for God. Let us remember that a Christlike life is the most powerful argument that can be advanced in favor of Christianity, and that a cheap Christian character works more harm in the world than the character of a worldling.

Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 21

36 *Working with the Poor*

If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one. But, though professing to be converted, we carry around us a bundle of self that we regard as altogether too precious to give up. It is our privilege to lay this burden at the feet of Christ and in its place take the character and similitude of Christ. The Saviour is waiting to do this.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 189

All who are consecrated to God will be channels of light. God makes them His agents to communicate to others the riches of His grace Our influence upon others depends not so much upon what we say, as upon what we are. Men may combat and defy our logic, they may resist our appeals; but a life of disinterested love is an argument they cannot gainsay. A consistent life, characterized by the meekness of Christ is a power in the world.

Desire of Ages, pp. 141, 142

The disciples of Christ had a deep sense of their own inefficiency, and with humility and prayer they joined their weakness to His strength, and their ignorance to His wisdom, their unworthiness to His righteousness, their poverty to His exhaustless wealth. Thus strengthened and equipped, they hesitated not to press forward in the service of the Master.

Acts of the Apostles, p. 57

Those who have been most successful in soul-winning were men and women who did not pride themselves on their ability, but who in humility and faith sought to help those about them. Jesus did this very work. He came close to those whom He desired to reach.

Gospel Workers, p. 194

“If your Christianity is all in your head and not in your hands,
then it isn't worth much.”

Section 1

INTRODUCTION

Working with the Poor

Selected Passages from Ellen G. White on Social Responsibility



Chapter 1

* * *

THE FAST THAT GOD HAS CHOSEN

“For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering” Psa 51:16

“Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” [1 Sam 15:22] Forms of devotion without true sincerity of heart are an abomination unto the Lord. He says: “Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear. . . . Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when

thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" [Isa 1:14-17; 58:6-7]

The voice of God is speaking to us in clear, distinct utterances. He would see the works of righteousness in our lives. Instead of pleasing ourselves the Lord would have us do deeds of mercy, manifest tender forethought to those who are pressed down with burdens, cramped with poverty, who are hungry and naked and destitute. If you can do no more, he would have you speak words of life, of courage and hope, and give tender sympathy to those who suffer.

The prophet asks, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed 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? . . . Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable? Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights? For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth." "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? . . . For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward: he doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment." [Micah 6:6-8, 10-12; Deut 10:12-13, 17-18]

"O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? For your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away. Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth. For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings. But they like men have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me." [Hos 6:4-7]

If we fail in doing works of mercy, in manifesting true love and sympathy, in helping and blessing others, whatever else we may do, we shall fail of

pleasing God. But to those who regard every Christian duty, and manifest kindness and love to the sorrowing, the poor, and the afflicted, for Christ's sake, the promises are rich and abundant. He says, "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward." [Isa 58:8] When ancient Israel journeyed, the ark of the covenant went before them. Beneath the mercy-seat, which was the cover of the ark, were the tables of the law. The ark was a symbol of the presence of God; and the glory of the Lord, which is his righteousness, shall be the rearward of his people. The Lord says to those who carry out his injunctions: "Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer: thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger [as an accuser, as a fault-finder, as a judge of others, and speaking vanity [lifting up the soul in self-esteem, in self-righteousness as though your own life was above fault]; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." [Isa 58:9-11]

The Lord has laid upon us the duty of blessing others, and we cannot do this without a close connection with him. God cannot look upon us with favor while we are wholly absorbed in our own selfish interest, neglecting to acquire a knowledge of his word, that we may give that knowledge to others, and win souls to the Master. In the judgment every case will be decided by what was done, or what was not done, in this life. Every deed is registered in the book of life, and according as we have treated others, it will be registered we have treated the King of kings. Jesus will say, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." [Mt 25:40]

The Lord has placed in the care of the church the poor, the widow, and the fatherless. The character of your Christianity will be shown by the way in which you treat the Lord's representative. The best evidence you can give of love for Christ will be shown by your tenderness and liberality for those about you who need your help. Then let us stop doubting and murmuring, and become doers of the word of God. If you become laborers together with God, you will have a vital interest in others, and self will drop out of sight. The Lord has given in trust to us talents by which we may impart blessings to others, and thus become richer and more joyful ourselves. Our characters may become

42 *Working with the Poor*

fragrant with good works; for by practice the living principles of righteousness will pass into the character, and unfold in beauty and purity of life.

The disobedient, rebellious children of the human family have long tried the experiment of ruling the world after the imagination of their own heart; but under the rule of the human will, the earth has languished and grown corrupt. The time will soon come when the Lord will take matters into his own hand; for he has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man which he has ordained, and it will be demonstrated who is able to govern the heavens and the earth.

“The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.” [Joel 3:16] His people are those who have not lifted up their souls unto vanity; who have it not in their hearts to condemn others, or to make a man an offender for a word. They do not wrestle for their own rights, nor seek to avenge themselves when they have been mistreated. They have hidden themselves with Christ in God. Like Moses, whom God commendeth, they endure “as seeing him who is invisible,” [Heb 11:27] and “by beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed in the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” [2 Cor 3:18] **RH 02-20-94 (Docs 135416-24)**

Chapter 2

* * *

GO AND DO THOU LIKEWISE

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”
Gal 6:2

“Behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor? [Lk 10:25-29]

“And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. [Lk 10:30-32]

“But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his

wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, go, and do thou likewise." [Lk 10:33-37]

Here the conditions of inheriting eternal life are plainly stated by our Saviour in the most simple manner. The man robbed and wounded represents those who are objects of our interest, sympathy, and charity. If we neglect to care for the needy and unfortunate, whoever they may be; if because they are no kith or kin to us we are not pitiful and compassionate to humanity, we do not answer the claims that God has upon us; and how can we have a firm assurance of eternal life?

Every one must give to God an account of himself, whether he is faithful or otherwise. Great principles have been laid down in the Divine Word, which are sufficient to guide us in our Christian walk and general deportment. But those have never kept the principles of the law of God who have never felt the burden of the duty of man toward his fellow men. Those who do not open their hearts to the wants and sufferings of humanity, will not open their hearts to the claims of God stated in the first four precepts of the decalogue. Idols claim the heart's affections, and God does not reign supreme.

The simplicity of the Word will ever lead us to feel a sympathy for the woes of others. We need to cultivate sympathy and love. The exercise of these traits is a part of the life work which Christ has assigned to us all. And when the cases of all come in review before God, the question asked will not be, What have they professed? but, What have they done? Have they been doers of the Word? Have they lived for themselves? or have they been exercised in works of benevolence, in deeds of kindness, denying themselves that they might bless others? If the record shows that their characters have been marked with tenderness, self denial, and benevolence, they will receive from Christ the benediction, "Well done!" "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." [Mt 25:21, 34]

Many times our best efforts may seem to be disregarded and lost upon others, and we may be disappointed in the results; but this should not lead us to become weary in well doing, and indifferent to the woes of others. How often is Christ disappointed in his children, yet he has given them unmistakable

evidences of his love. What if he had refused to bear our iniquity because he was rejected by many, and so few appreciated the infinite blessings he came to bring them? We need to encourage painstaking effort. We are in the world to do work for the Master. Why, then, should we become discouraged and give up when we do not see the immediate results we desire?

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ,” [Gal 6:2] the apostle exhorts us. Keeping the commandments requires of us self denial for the good of others, not that good works alone can save us; but we surely cannot be saved without good works. After we have done all that we are capable of doing, we are still unprofitable servants; and Christ must be our righteousness and the crown of our rejoicing. **SW 08-25-08 (Docs 169193-200)**



Section 2

OUR CHRISTIAN DUTY

Working with the Poor

Selected Passages from Ellen G. White on Social Responsibility



Chapter 3

* * *

WIDOWS

“Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.” Ex 22:22-24

The churches that retain members who are connected with this liquor business, make themselves responsible for the transactions that occur through the drink traffic. The drunkard has no knowledge of what he is doing when under the influence of the maddening draught, and yet he who sells him that which makes him irresponsible, is protected by the law in his work of destruction. It is legal for him to rob the widow of the food she requires to sustain life. It is legal for him to entail starvation upon the family of his victim, to send helpless children into the streets to beg for a penny or to beseech for a morsel of bread. Day by day, month by month, year by year, these shameful scenes are reenacted, until the conscience of the liquor dealer is seared as with a red hot iron. The tears of suffering children, the agonized cry of the mother, only serve to exasperate the rum seller. He knows not, nor cares, that the Lord has an account to settle with him. And when his victim is dead, his heart of stone is unmoved. He has not heeded the instruction. “Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child.

50 *Working with the Poor*

If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless." [Ex 22:22-24] **RH 05-15-94 (Doc 135549)**

God's Sentence on the Liquor Seller – He knows not, nor cares, that the Lord has an account to settle with him. And when his victim is dead, his heart of stone is unmoved.

He has not heeded the instruction, "Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto Me, I will surely hear their cry; and My wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless." [Ex 22:22-24] *Review and Herald*, May 15, 1894. **Te p. 41 (Docs 78192-93)**

Abraham regards the claims of justice and humanity. He obeys the rule, "As ye would that others should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." [Mt 7:12] He says to the king of Sodom: "I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of Heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldst say, I have made Abram rich." [Gen 14:22-23] This is an example worthy of imitation; it illustrates the Christian maxim, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." [Lev 19:18; Mt 19:19]

He that "speaketh the truth in his heart." [Psa 15:2] Some, when their feet once diverge from the right path, go on and on in moral degradation. The fact may be concealed from every one else, but the man himself knows that he is no longer walking uprightly. His advertisements are deceptive; he is exacting in his deal with his workmen. He clutches his coin with a miserly grasp; for has he not sacrificed everything that was worth living for to obtain it? Others, in their eager desire for gain, practice secret fraud, act a lie; and they do not see that their course is sinful if they are not detected. But God reads men's hearts as an open book, and the record of their deeds will be made manifest before all men. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." [Gal 6:7] Some success may seem to attend this dishonest policy for a time; but will it pay? Will you part with rectitude and a clear conscience for a little worldly wealth?

"He that putteth not out his money to usury." [Psa 15:5] Exacting usury is directly opposed to God's rule as given in Ex. 22:21-26: "Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye

shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in anywise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless. If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as a usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury. If thou at all take thy neighbor's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down." Deut. 23:19-20: "Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury. Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it."

Thus God commanded his people not to take advantage of the necessities of the poor, to enrich themselves by impoverishing their poorer brethren. Of Gentiles they might take usury; but they were not permitted to be exorbitant or oppressive. God is the rightful king of the universe. And he inquires of Israel, "What nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" [Deut 4:8] To day he might make the same challenge. The laws he gave to his ancient people were wiser, better, and more humane than those of the most civilized nations of the earth. The laws of the nations bear marks of the infirmities and passions of the unrenewed heart; but God's laws bear the stamp of the divine, and if they are obeyed, they will lead to a tender regard for the rights and privileges of others. The Lord appeals to man's compassion for his fellow man. His watchful care is over all the interests of his children, and he declares he will undertake the cause of the afflicted and the oppressed. If they cry unto him, he says, "I will hear, for I am gracious." [Ex 22:27]

A man of means, if he possesses strict integrity, and loves and fears God, may be a benefactor to the poor. He can help them, and take no more interest than can be mercifully exacted. He thus meets with no loss himself, and his unfortunate neighbor is greatly benefited, for he is saved from the hands of the dishonest schemer. The principles of the Golden Rule are not to be lost sight of for a moment in any business transaction. Every man who lends money at ten or twelve per cent. interest is a robber in the sight of God. Although the laws of man may justify him, the law of God condemns him. He is dealing unjustly; and God will reward him according to his deeds. God never designed that one man should prey upon another. He jealously guards the rights of his children,

52 *Working with the Poor*

and in the books of Heaven great loss is set down on the side of the unjust dealer.

In the Holy Scriptures fearful denunciations are pronounced against the sin of covetousness. “No covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.” [Eph 5:5] The psalmist says, “The wicked boasteth of his heart’s desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.” [Psa 10:3] Paul ranks covetous men with idolaters, adulterers, thieves, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners, none of whom shall inherit the kingdom of God. These are the fruits of a corrupt tree, and God is dishonored by them. We are not to make the customs and maxims of the world our criterion. Reforms must take place; all injustice must be put away. **ST 02-07-84 (Docs 156778-83)**

Additional References:

WM p. 217 (Doc 102472); RH 05-01-94 (Doc 135529); Te p. 53 (Doc 78234); ST 11-20-07 (Doc 166954); PP p. 310 (Doc 52465)

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*“He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow,
and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.” Deut
10:18*

The Lord Jesus spoke from the pillar of cloud, “And now, Israel, what doth the Lord require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?” “For the Lord your God is a God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh regards: he doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, and giveth him food and raiment.” [Deut 10:12-13, 17-18] Compare this with the words of Christ in the New Testament: “A certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law, how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind;

and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." "A father of the fatherless and a judge of the widow is God in his holy habitation." "The Lord preserveth the strangers: he relieveth the fatherless and the widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down." "If thy brother be waxen poor, and falleth into decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him; yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee; Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God. Thou shalt not rule over him with vigor, but shall fear thy God." [Lk 10:25-28; Psa 68:5; 146:9; Lev 25:35-38, 43; See also Deut 15:7-11; 24:14, 15, 19-21; Lev. 19:32-37] "Owe no man anything, but to love one another." The oppression of the poor, which is nothing less than actual robbery, is not punishable by human course, except in very extreme cases; but it is marked by the God of heaven as the abhorred practice which he would in no case tolerate. **PC pp. 412-13 (Doc 22195)**

The angels of heaven look upon the distress of God's family upon the earth, and they are prepared to co operate with men in relieving oppression and suffering. God in His providence had brought the priest and the Levite along the road where the wounded sufferer lay, that they might see his need of mercy and help. All heaven watched to see if the hearts of these men would be touched with pity for human woe. The Saviour was the One who had instructed the Hebrews in the wilderness; from the pillar of cloud and of fire He had taught a very different lesson from that which the people were now receiving from their priests and teachers. The merciful provisions of the law extended even to the lower animals, which cannot express in words their want and suffering. Directions had been given to Moses for the children of Israel to this effect: "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him." [Ex. 23:4-5] But in the man wounded by robbers, Jesus presented the case of a brother in suffering. How much more should their hearts have been moved with pity for him than for a beast of burden! The message had been given them through Moses that the Lord their God, "a great God, a mighty, and a terrible," "doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger." Wherefore He commanded, "Love ye therefore the stranger." "Thou shalt love him as thyself." [Deut. 10:17-19; Lev 19:34] **DA p. 500 (Doc 17771)**

“Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” [1 Sam 15:22] Forms of devotion without true sincerity of heart are an abomination unto the Lord. He says: “Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear. . . . Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?” [Isa 1:14-17; 58:6-7]

The voice of God is speaking to us in clear, distinct utterances. He would see the works of righteousness in our lives. Instead of pleasing ourselves the Lord would have us do deeds of mercy, manifest tender forethought to those who are pressed down with burdens, cramped with poverty, who are hungry and naked and destitute. If you can do no more, he would have you speak words of life, of courage and hope, and give tender sympathy to those who suffer.

The prophet asks, “Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed 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? . . . Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable? Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights? For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.” “And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? . . . For the

Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward: he doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.” “O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? For your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away. Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth. For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. But they like men have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me.” [Micah 6:6-8, 10-12; Deut 10:12-13, 17-18; Hos 6:4-7]

If we fail in doing works of mercy, in manifesting true love and sympathy, in helping and blessing others, whatever else we may do, we shall fail of pleasing God. But to those who regard every Christian duty, and manifest kindness and love to the sorrowing, the poor, and the afflicted, for Christ's sake, the promises are rich and abundant. He says, “Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward.” [Isa 58:8] When ancient Israel journeyed, the ark of the covenant went before them. Beneath the mercy seat, which was the cover of the ark, were the tables of the law. The ark was a symbol of the presence of God; and the glory of the Lord, which is his righteousness, shall be the rearward of his people. The Lord says to those who carry out his injunctions: “Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer: thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger [as an accuser, as a fault finder, as a judge of others], and speaking vanity [lifting up the soul in self esteem, in self righteousness as though your own life was above fault]; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.” [Isa 58:9-11]

The Lord has laid upon us the duty of blessing others, and we cannot do this without a close connection with him. God cannot look upon us with favor while we are wholly absorbed in our own selfish interest, neglecting to acquire a knowledge of his word, that we may give that knowledge to others, and win souls to the Master. In the judgment every case will be decided by what was

done, or what was not done, in this life. Every deed is registered in the book of life, and according as we have treated others, it will be registered we have treated the King of kings. Jesus will say, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." [Mt 25:40]

The Lord has placed in the care of the church the poor, the widow, and the fatherless. The character of your Christianity will be shown by the way in which you treat the Lord's representative. The best evidence you can give of love for Christ will be shown by your tenderness and liberality for those about you who need your help. Then let us stop doubting and murmuring, and become doers of the word of God. If you become laborers together with God, you will have a vital interest in others, and self will drop out of sight. The Lord has given in trust to us talents by which we may impart blessings to others, and thus become richer and more joyful ourselves. Our characters may become fragrant with good works; for by practice the living principles of righteousness will pass into the character, and unfold in beauty and purity of life. **RH 02-20-94 (Docs 135416-22)**

Additional References:

FE p. 477 (Doc 26523); ST 06-23-94 (Doc 161369)

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"At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates: And the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest." Deut 14:28-29

In choosing the guests for his feast, the Pharisee had consulted his own selfish interest. Christ said to him, "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." [Lk 14:12-14]

Christ was here repeating the instruction He had given to Israel through Moses. At their sacred feasts the Lord had directed that “the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat, and be satisfied.” [Deut 14:29] These gatherings were to be as object lessons to Israel. Being thus taught the joy of true hospitality, the people were throughout the year to care for the bereaved and the poor. And these feasts had a wider lesson. The spiritual blessings given to Israel were not for themselves alone. God had given the bread of life to them, that they might break it to the world. **COL p. 220 (Docs 5335-36)**

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“Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow’s raiment to pledge: When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.” Deut 24: 17-21

“Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small. . . . But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have; that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. For all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the Lord thy God.” “Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates; at his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it; lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee. . . . Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow’s raiment to pledge. . . . When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all

the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.” [Deut 25:13, 15; 24:14-15, 17, 19-21]

In every action of life the true Christian is just what he desires those around him to think he is. He is guided by truth and uprightness. He does not scheme; therefore he has nothing to gloss over. He may be criticized, he may be tested; but through all, his unbending integrity shines out like pure gold. He is a friend and benefactor to all connected with him; and his fellow men place confidence in him; for he is trustworthy. Does he employ laborers to gather in his harvest? He does not keep back their hard earned money. Has he means for which he has no immediate use? He relieves the necessities of his less fortunate brother. He does not seek to enlarge his possessions by taking advantage of the untoward circumstances of his neighbor. He accepts only a fair price for that which he sells. If there are defects in the articles sold, he frankly tells the buyer, even though by so doing he may seem to work against his own pecuniary interests. **ST 02-19-02 (Docs 165331-32)**

The lessons he had taught to Israel in the Old Testament he repeated in the New Testament. He enjoined upon them the exercise of mercy, compassion, and love toward all with whom they came in contact. . . . “When thou cuttest down thy harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.” [Deut 24:19-20]

To leave the suffering neighbor unrelieved, is a breach of the law of God. God brought the priest along that way in order that with his own eyes he might see a case that needed mercy and help; but the priest though holding a high office, whose work it was to bestow mercy and to do good, passed by on the other side. His character was exhibited in its true nature before the angels of God. For a pretense he could make long prayers. **PG 310 GCDB 03-18-97 (Docs 12052, 54)**

“If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in

that which he wanted. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him naught; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land." [Deut 15:7-11]

In the Old Testament the very same principles were revealed as those which Christ gave in his sermon on the mount. The scribes and Pharisees knew so little of these principles through every day practice, that Christ's sermon on the mount was as a new revelation to them, and sounded like heresy to their ears. They had misinterpreted the Scripture, and regarded the maxims and sayings of men that had passed to them from rabbi to rabbi, as having the sanctity of inspiration. But the commands of men were not like the divine commands, and better suited their carnal hearts. Jesus, who had instituted the law, knew just how far these professedly pious teachers had departed from the law, and how far they had made it void by their traditions. They had worshipped God in vain, "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." [Mk 7:7]

Jesus revealed to them the far reaching principles of the law of God. That which had been said by the rabbis of old time, though it had been oft repeated, and was hoary with age, though it was regarded by men as on a par with divine authority, was put in contrast with his own divine principle. The lessons he had taught to Israel in the Old Testament he repeated in the New Testament. He enjoined upon them the exercise of mercy, compassion, and love toward all with whom they came in contact. Had the Israelites practiced the lessons which Christ spoke from the pillar of cloud, there would have been no oppression by man of his fellow men. Jesus had said in the Old Testament: "Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take the widow's raiment to pledge; but thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee thence; therefore I command thee to do this thing. When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, for the

60 *Working with the Poor*

fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt; therefore I command thee to do this thing.” [Deut 24:17-22] **RH 12-25-94 (Docs 135837-39)**

Additional References:

PP p. 757 (Doc 53832); MH p. 186-87 (Docs 46030-35); PP p. 531 (Doc 53147); RH 09-17-89 (Docs 132986-87)

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“Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, Amen.”
Deut 27:19

I was shown, in Brother E’s case, that those who would in any way deal unjustly with him and discourage him in his efforts to help himself, or who, coveting the poor blind man’s prosperity, would advantage themselves to his disadvantage, will bring upon themselves the curse of God, who is the blind man’s friend. Special injunctions were given to the children of Israel in reference to the blind: “Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the Lord Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor.” “Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor’s landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, Amen.” [Lev 19:13-15; Deut 27:17-19]

It is strange that professed Christian men should disregard the plain, positive teachings of the word of God and feel no compunctions of conscience. God places upon them the responsibility of caring for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the widow, and the fatherless; but many make no effort to regard it. In

order to save such, God frequently brings them under the rod of affliction and places them in positions similar to those occupied by the persons who were in need of their help and sympathy, but who did not receive it at their hands. **3T p. 516-17 (Docs 83787-88)**

Here is genuine religion defined. The same consideration that should be given to the widow and fatherless, God requires to be given to the blind and those suffering under the affliction of physical infirmities. Disinterested benevolence is very rare in this age of the world.

Special instructions were given to the children of Israel in reference to these things: "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him; the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear thy God; I am the Lord. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor; nor honor the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor." "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor's landmark; and all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way; and all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow; and all the people shall say, Amen." [Lev 19:13-15; Deut 27:17-19]

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." [Mt 25:40-46]

Here Christ identifies himself with suffering humanity, and plainly impresses upon us all, in his sermon, that indifference or injustice done to the least of his saints is done to him. Here is the Lord's side, and whoever will be on the Lord's side, let him come over with us. In the heavenly records Christ preserves, as done to himself, all acts of mercy and benevolence done for the unfortunate, the lame, the blind, the sick and the needy. On the other hand, a

62 *Working with the Poor*

record will be written in the book against those who manifest the indifference of the priest and Levite for the unfortunate, and those who take any advantage of the misfortunes of others and increase their affliction in order to selfishly advantage themselves. God will surely repay every act of injustice, and every manifestation of careless indifference and neglect of the afflicted. Every one will finally be rewarded as his works have been. **ST 08-03-76 (Docs 152657-58,61-62)**

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*“The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me:
and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy.” Job 29:13*

In the fast that God has chosen, mercy, tenderness, and compassion will be exercised. Avarice will be put away, and fraud and oppression will be repented of and renounced. All the authority and influence will be used to help the poor and oppressed. If this were the condition of the world, it would no more be a proverb, “Truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter;” “he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey.” But with Job we might say, “I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help me: and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.” [Isa 59:14-15; Job 29:12-16] Again he says, “If I did despise the cause of my man-servant or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God riseth up? And when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? . . . If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; . . . if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.” [Job 31:13-14; 31:16-17, 19-23] If this same fear, and this love of righteousness, were in our churches now, what a transformation there would be! **RH 10-13-91 (Doc 134163)**

The Lord Jesus said, “Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.” [Mt 5:7] There never was a time when there was greater need for the exercise of mercy than to-day. The poor are all around us, the distressed, the afflicted, the sorrowing, and those who are ready to perish. Those who have acquired riches have acquired them through the exercise of the talents that were given them of God; but these talents for the acquiring of property were given to them that they might relieve those who are in poverty. These gifts were bestowed upon men by Him who maketh His sun to shine and His rain to fall upon the just and the unjust, that by the fruitfulness of the earth men might have abundant supplies for all their need. The fields have been blessed of God, and “of his goodness he hath prepared for the poor.” [Psa 68:10] In the providence of God events have been so ordered that the poor are always with us, in order that there may be a constant exercise in the human heart of the attributes of mercy and love. Man is to cultivate the tenderness and compassion of Christ; he is not to separate himself from the sorrowing, the afflicted, the needy, and the distressed. Job declares: “When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me; because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy.” [Job 29:11-13] **ST 06-13-92 (Doc 160546)**

Additional References:

7T p. 238 (Doc 90128); Ed p. 142 (Doc 19931); MB p. 22 (Doc 98143), HM 07-01-91 (Doc 133477-90)

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“If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail: . . . then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone.” Job 31:16-22

In the fast that God has chosen, mercy, tenderness, and compassion will be exercised. Avarice will be put away, and fraud and oppression will be repented of and renounced. All the authority and influence will be used to help the poor and oppressed. If this were the condition of the world, it would no more be

64 *Working with the Poor*

a proverb, "Truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter;" "he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey." [Isa 59:14-15] But with Job we might say, "I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out." [Job 29:12-16] Again he says, "If I did despise the cause of my man-servant or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God riseth up? And when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? . . . If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; . . . if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not wormed with the fleece of my sheep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure." [Job 31:13-14, 16-17, 19-23] If this same fear, and this love of righteousness, were in our churches now, what a transformation there would be! **RH 10-13-91 (Doc 134163)**

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"A father of the fatherless, and judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation." Psa 68:5

The Lord Jesus spoke from the pillar of cloud, "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? For the Lord your God is a God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God a might, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh regards: he doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, and giveth him food and raiment." [Deut 10:12-13, 17-18] Compare this with the words of Christ in the New Testament: "A certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit

eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law, how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy sould, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." "A father of the fatherless and a judge of the widow is god in his holy habitation." "the Lord preserveth the strangers: he relieveth the fatherless and the widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down." "If thy brother be waxen poor, and falleth into decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him; yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee; Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. I am the Lord you God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God. Thou shalt not rule over him with vigor, but shall fear thy God." [Lk 10:25-28; Psa 68:15; 146:9; Lev 25:25; See also Deut 15:7-11; 24:14-15, 19-21; Lev 19:32-37] "Owe no man anything, but to love one another." [Rom 13:8] The oppression of the poor, which is nothing less than actual robbery, is not punishable by human course, except in very extreme cases; but it is marked by the God of heaven as the abhorred practice which he would in no case tolerate. **PC pp. 412-13 (Doc 229195)**

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"The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down."
Psa 146:9

The Lord Jesus spoke from the pillar of cloud, "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? For the Lord your God is a God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God a might, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh regards: he doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, and giveth him food and raiment." [Deut 10:12-13, 17-18] Compare this with the words of Christ in the New Testament: "A certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law, how readest thou?"

And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." "A father of the fatherless and a judge of the widow is God in his holy habitation." "The Lord preserveth the stranger: he relieveth the fatherless and the widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down." "If thy brother waxen poor, and falleth into decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him; yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee; Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God. Thou shalt not rule over him with vigor, but shall fear thy God." [Lk 10:25-28; Psa 68:15; 146:9; Lev 25:25; See also Deut 15:7-11; 24:14-15, 19-21; Lev 19:32-37] "Owe no man anything, but to love one another." [Rom 13:8] The oppression of the poor, which is nothing less than actual robbery, is not punishable by human course, except in very extreme cases; but it is marked by the God of heaven as the abhorred practice which he would in no case tolerate. **PC pp. 412-13 (Doc 229195)**

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"Learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." Isa 1:17

In the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah the work that the people of God are to do in Christ's lines is clearly set forth. They are to break every yoke, they are to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked. [Isa 58:6-8] . . . If they carry out the principles of the law of God in acts of mercy and love, they will represent the character of God to the world, and receive the richest blessings of Heaven.

Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. [Isa. 1:17]

Jesus, the precious Saviour, the pattern man, was firm as a rock where truth and duty were concerned. And His life was a perfect illustration of true courtesy. Kindness and gentleness gave fragrance to His character. He had ever a kind look and word of comfort and consolation for the needy and oppressed. . . .

Let not men allow their business dealing to rob the of their humaneness. .

. . Kind words, pleasant looks, a condescending demeanor, are of great value. There is a charm in the intercourse of men who are truly courteous . . . How restoring and uplifting the influence of such dealing upon men who are poor and depressed, borne down to the earth by sickness and poverty! Shall we withhold from them the balm that such dealing brings? **ML p. 241-42 (Docs 49108-12)**

“Seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” “Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and Thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.” “He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again.” [Isa 1:17; Psa 41:1-2; Prov 19:17]

He who makes this investment lays up double treasure. Besides that which, however wisely improved, he must leave at last, he is amassing wealth for eternity, that treasure of character which is the most valuable possession of earth or heaven. **Ed p. 41 (Doc 46832)**

It is not enough for you to avoid the appearance of evil [1 Thess 5:22], you must go farther than this; you must “learn to do well.” [Isa 1:17] You must represent Christ to the world. It must be your daily study how you can learn to work the works of God. His followers are to be living epistles, “known and read of all men.” [2 Cor 3:2] **MYP p. 348**

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“Woe unto them that decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!”
Isa 10:1-2

“Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!” [Isa 10:1-2] In what contrast is the work of Christ set forth! “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of

Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.” [Isa 11:1-4] Brethren, take heed to these words, for they are of deep importance to every soul connected with the great work to be accomplished in these last days. Unless our eyes, our ears, our tongues, are under the control of the Holy Spirit, and guided by divine power, they cannot be trusted. They will surely mingle the thread of selfishness and the chaff of vanity with the work of God, and commingle with it that which is marred by unsanctified and ambitious projects, and the work will not bear the signature of Heaven’ for it will not represent the principles of the law of God, which is a transcript of his character. **RH 08-13-95 (Doc 136155)**

The outlook was particularly discouraging as regards the social conditions of the people. In their desire for gain, men were adding house to house and field to field. [See Isaiah 5:8] Justice was perverted, and no pity was shown the poor. Of these evils God declared, “The spoil of the poor is in your houses.” “Ye beat My people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor.” [Isa 3:14-15] Even the magistrates, whose duty it was to protect the helpless, turned a deaf ear to the cries of the poor and needy, the widows and the fatherless. [See Isa 10:1-2]

With oppression and wealth came pride and love of display, gross drunkenness, and a spirit of revelry **PK p. 306**

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“If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt: Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.”
Jer 7:6-7

“Hath a nation changed their gods which are yet no gods? But my people

have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” “Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord are these. For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor if ye oppress not the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt; then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave your fathers, for ever and ever. Behold ye trust in lying words that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? Is this house, which is call by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the Lord.” “Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm. And whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, and to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.” “Now there fore, go to, speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I frame evil against you, and device a device against you: return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good. And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart. Therefore thus saith the Lord; Ask ye now among the heathen, who hath heard such things: the virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing. Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon, which cometh from the rock of the field or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place,

be forsaken? Because my people hath forsaken me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up.” [Jer 2:12-13; 7:3-11; 17:6-10; 18:11-15] **1888 pp. 1289-90 (Doc 221346)**

“Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and you doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these. For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor; if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt: then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, forever and ever.” [Jer 7:2-7] **PK p. 413 (Doc 55032)**

The Jews flattered themselves that in spite of departure from him, the Lord would protect from injury their temple and those who worshipped in it. They put their trust in outward advantages, and overlooked the necessity of purity of character, which alone God could bless. “Trust ye not in lying words,” the prophet declared, “saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these. For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor; if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt: then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, forever and ever.” [Jer 7:5-7] **RH 04-02-08 (Doc 146971)**

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“Thus saith the LORD, Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, no the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place.” Jer 22:3

This judge was a man appointed by the law to give decisions upon cases that were brought before him. He had no love or reverence for God, and there

fore no unselfish love for his neighbor. He had no regard for the rights of men. Judges were required to show a special attention to widows; but this man cared nothing for the rights of any. The Lord gave instruction through the prophet Jeremiah as to what judges should do for those who called upon them. “Thus saith the Lord: Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, and do no wrong; do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place.” The widow and the fatherless were objects of the Lord’s special care, but those who feared not God, who had no regard for their fellow-men, took advantage of the cases of those who were helpless and destitute. A judge unfaithful to his trust suffered might to triumph over right. **ST 05-21-96 (Doc 162132)**

“Thus saith the Lord: Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor; and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. For if ye do this thing indeed, then there shall enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and he is servants, and his people. But if ye will not hear these words, I swear by Myself, saith the Lord, that this house shall become a desolation.” [Jer 22:3-5] **ST 11-30-04 (Doc 166320)**

“Thus saith the Lord; Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David, thou, and thy servants, and thy people that enter in by these gates: Thus saith the Lord; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place.” [Jer 22:1-3] **14MR p. 343 (Doc 203508)**

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“Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me. Jer 49:11

The widow and the fatherless are the objects of the Lord’s special care.

72 *Working with the Poor*

“A Father of the fatherless, and a Judge of the widows,
Is God in His holy habitation.”

“Thy Maker is thy husband;
Jehovah of hosts is His name:
And the Holy One of Israel is thy Redeemer;
The God of the whole earth shall He be called.”

“Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive;
And let thy widows trust in Me.”

[Psa 68:5; Isa 54:5, A.R.V.; Jer 49:11] **MH p. 202 (Doc 46884)**

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*“And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor
the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in
your heart. Zech 7:10*

“And the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassions every man to his brother: and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the strange, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.” [Zech 7:8-10] This is the word of the Lord to us also. **6T p. 460 (Doc 89290)**

The Bible demands that right principles be observed in all business transactions. In the strongest terms it condemns false dealing, and calls for purity in thought and word and action. “Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassion every man to his neighbor. And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in his heart.” “What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” [Zech 7:9-10; Micah 6:8] **ST 12-17-96 (Doc 162440)**

These promises were conditional on obedience. The sins that had characterized the Israelites prior to the captivity, were not to be repeated. “Execute

true judgment,” the Lord exhorted those who were engaged in rebuilding; “and show mercy and compassions every man to his brother: and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother.” “Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbor; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates.” [Zech 7:9, 10; 8:16] **PK p. 204 (Doc 55744)**

Additional References:

HM 07-01-91 (Doc 122489); PH008 p. 13 (Doc 177166); 6MR p. 375 (Doc 194093)

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“And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts. Mal 3:5

“And I will come near to you to judgment: and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts.” [Mal 3:5] All the sins here specified have been coming in among the people who claim to be the people of God; and it is high time that there was a reformation, a transformation, of character. Who among us, who are called commandment-keepers, have been “partial in the law,” [Mal 2:9] neglecting the living principles which are a transcript of the character of God? Has not the imperfect example of those who have departed from the law of god caused many to stumble at the law? “Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law.” [Mal 2:9] **RH 12-01-96 (Doc 136893)**

“And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the father-

less, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts.” [Mal 3:5] There are those who have obtained means by dishonest practices or by oppression of the poor, and then to ease their conscience they bring an offering to God. In so doing they dishonor the Lord. He cannot accept their gifts. The prophet Micah declares: “Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offering, with calves of a year old? will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed 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?” “Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable? Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?” [Micah 6:6-8, 10-11] Money acquired by doing wrong to your neighbor, whether believer or unbeliever, is registered in the books of heaven as unlawful gain. And those who think to make a compromise with God by bringing this means to his treasury are deceiving their own souls. **RH 05-09-93 (Doc 134985)**

It is the selfishness, the unsanctified thoughts and works, that have grieved the Lord, and have turned away his blessing from his people. The third chapter of Malachi is one of weighty importance to all who live upon the earth; for here is plainly revealed the will and purpose of God, and the turning away of those who claim to be the people of the Lord into false and forbidden paths. Will you take your Bible and read this carefully and solemnly, under the influence of the Holy Spirit of god. Make an application to yourself of these decisive words. Verse 5 is applicable to many: “I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of Hosts.” [Mal 3:5] There is a work of restoration to be done before God will accept the repentance, or heal the wounds that sin has made. “For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed [in your evil doings]. Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?” [Mal 3:6-7] **PH087 pp. 4-5 (Doc 183221)**

Additional References:

SW 01-15-07 (Doc 168824); GC11 .p. 425 (Doc 31351); GC88 p. 425 (Doc 106520); SW 01-24-05 (Doc 168431); GCB 04-08-01 (Doc 118743); RH 01-17-07 (Doc 146081); ST 01-06-90 (Doc 159768); SW 01 17 05 (Doc 168423); 2SP pp. 291-92 (Doc 74188); 7Red p. 28 (Doc 181004); 13MR p. 187 (Doc 201817); AA p. 87 (Doc 195); RH 02-16-11 (Doc 148942)

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“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” James 1:27

I was shown that God requires His people to be far more pitiful and considerate of the unfortunate than they are. “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” [James 1:27] Here genuine religion is defined. God requires that the same consideration which should be given to the widow and fatherless be given to the blind and to those suffering under the affliction of other physical infirmities. Disinterested benevolence is very rare in this age of the world. **3T p. 516 (Doc 83786)**

The plan of Systematic Benevolence is pleasing to God. I was pointed back to the days of the apostles, and saw that God laid the plan by the descent of his Holy Spirit, and by the gift of prophecy counseled his people in regard to a system of benevolence. All were to share in this work of imparting of their carnal things to those who ministered unto them in spiritual things. They were also taught that the widows and fatherless had a claim upon their charity. Pure and undefiled religion is defined, to visit the widows and fatherless in their affliction, and to keep unspotted from the world. I saw it was not merely to sympathize with them in their affliction by comforting words, but to aid them, if needy, with their substance. God has given health to young men and women, and they can obtain a great blessing by aiding the widow and fatherless in their affliction. I saw that God required young men to sacrifice more for the good of others. He claims more of them than they are willing to perform. If they keep

themselves unspotted from the world, cease to follow its fashions, and lay by that which the lovers of pleasure spend in useless articles to gratify pride, and give it to the worthy afflicted ones, and to sustain the cause, they will have the approval of Him who says, "I know thy works." [Rev 3:8] **2SG pp. 230-31 (Doc 76354)**

Pure religion and undefiled before the Father is this: "To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." [James 1:27] Good deeds are the fruit that Christ requires us to bear: kind words, deeds of benevolence, of tender regard for the poor, the needy, the afflicted. When hearts sympathize with hearts burdened with discouragement and grief, when the hand dispenses to the needy, when the naked are clothed, the stranger made welcome to a seat in your parlor and a place in your heart, angels are coming very near, and an answering strain is responded to in heaven. Every act of justice, mercy, and benevolence makes melody in heaven. The Father from His throne beholds those who do these acts of mercy, and numbers them with His most precious treasures. "And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels." [Mal 3:17] Every merciful act to the needy, the suffering, is regarded as though done to Jesus. When you succor the poor, sympathize with the afflicted and oppressed, and befriend the orphan, you bring yourselves into a closer relationship to Jesus. **2T p. 25 (Doc 80912)**

Additional References:

TDG p. 370 (Doc 98054); FE p. 461 (Doc 26483); RH 07-11-99 (Doc 223061); 2SAT p. 24 (Doc 215757); WM p. 240 (Doc 102538); YI 08-31-93 (Doc 170193); 1T pp. 190-91 (Doc 79649); 2T p. 252-53 (Doc 81382); HR 03-01-21 (Doc 121508); RH 03-12-72 (Doc 126247); CH p. 629 (Doc 12954); TM p. 125 (Doc 93363); GCB 04-23-01 (Doc 118983); GCDB 03-07-99 (Doc 120481); RH 05-04-97 (137216); RH 01-25-98 (Doc 137765); ST 10-23-84 (Doc 157170); ST 02-23-90 (Doc 159821); PH086 p. 18 (Doc 183281); SpM p. 139 (Doc 229830); CS p. 163 (Doc 13373); FLB p. 239 (Doc 24711); MH p. 205 (Doc 46895); ML p. 239 (Doc 49093); BC p. 161 (58187); RC p. 252 (Doc 58789); 4bSG p. 75 (Doc 77591); 1T p. 285 (Doc 79869); 4T p. 494 (Doc 85344); 6T p. 263 (Doc 88669); 6T p. 281 (Doc 88722); WM p. 35 (Doc 101949); WM p. 214 (Doc 102242); GCDB 03-18-97 (Doc 120242); GS 02-01-60 (Doc 120520); HM 11-

Widows 77

01-89 (Doc 122408); HM 07-01-91 (Doc 122476); RH 06-25-61 (Doc 125491); RH 11-26-61 (Doc 125542); RH 07-05-75 (Doc 126931); RH 08-16-81 (Doc 128302); RH 04-20-86 (Doc 130922); RH 02-10-91 (Doc 133797); RH 06-27-93 (Doc 135084); RH 11-12-95 (Doc 136274); RH 04-10-00 (Doc 139737); ST 08-03-76 (Doc 152656); ST 02-17-87 (Doc 158272); ST 08-03-91 (Doc 160207); ST 08-08-95 (Doc 161847); ST 12-27-99 (Doc 164183); SW 08-04-08 (Doc 169169); PH146 p. 27 (Doc 181536); 6MR p. 199 (Doc 193541); 7 MR p. 219 (Doc 194848); 12 MR p. 229 (Doc 200785); 13MR p. 340 (Doc 202242); 5pM p. 137 (Doc 229819)

Chapter 4

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ORPHANS

“Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and you children fatherless.” Ex 22:22-24

“Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning! Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness.” “It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.” [Eccl 10:16-17; Prov 31:4-5] These words of warning and command are pointed and decided, and let those in positions of public trust take heed, lest through wine and strong drink they forget the law and pervert judgment. Let rulers and judges be in a condition to fulfil the instruction of the Lord: “Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.” [Ex 22:22-24] **RH 05-01-94 (Doc 135529)**

These words of warning and command are pointed and decided. Let those in positions of public trust take heed lest through wine and strong drink they

forget the law, and pervert judgment. Rulers and judges should ever be in a condition to fulfill the instruction of the Lord: “Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto Me, I will surely hear their cry; and My wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.” [Ex 22:22-24] **Te p. 53 (Doc 78234)**

“He that putteth not out his money to usury.” [Psa 15:5] Exacting usury is directly opposed to God’s rule as given in Ex. 22:21-26: “Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in anywise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless. If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as a usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury. If thou at all take thy neighbor’s raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down.” Deut. 23:19-20: “Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury. Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it.” **ST 02-07-84 (Doc 156780)**

Additional References:

WM p. 217 (Doc 102472); RH 05-15-94 (Doc 135549); Te p. 41 (Doc 78193); ST 11-20-07 (Doc 166954)

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“He [God] doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.”
Deut 10:18

The Lord Jesus spoke from the pillar of cloud, “And now, Israel, what doth the Lord require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways,

and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? For the Lord your God is a God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh regards: he doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, and giveth him food and raiment.” [Deut 10:12-13, 17-19] Compare this with the words of Christ in the New Testament: “A certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law, how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.” “A father of the fatherless and a judge of the widow is God in his holy habitation.” “The Lord preserveth the strangers: he relieveth the fatherless and the widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.” “If thy brother be waxen poor, and falleth into decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him; yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee; Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God. Thou shalt not rule over him with vigor, but shall fear thy God.” [Lk 10:25-28; Psa 68:5; 146:9; Lev 25:35-38; See also Deut 15:7-11; 24:14-15, 19-21; Lev 19:32-37] “Owe no man anything, but to love one another.” [Rom 13:8] The oppression of the poor, which is nothing less than actual robbery, is not punishable by human course, except in very extreme cases; but it is marked by the God of heaven as the abhorred practice which he would in no case tolerate. **PC p. 412-13 (Doc 229195)**

In the parable Jesus presented a stranger, a neighbor, a brother in suffering, wounded and dying. How much more should their hearts have been moved with pity for him than for a beast of burden! But, though priests and scribes had read the law, they had not brought it into their practical life. They had read: “For The Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward; he doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.” “And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your

land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God.” [Deut 10:17-19; Lev 19:33-34] **ST 06-23-94 (Doc 161369)**

The angels of heaven look upon the distress of God’s family upon the earth, and they are prepared to co operate with men in relieving oppression and suffering. God in His providence had brought the priest and the Levite along the road where the wounded sufferer lay, that they might see his need of mercy and help. All heaven watched to see if the hearts of these men would be touched with pity for human woe. The Saviour was the One who had instructed the Hebrews in the wilderness; from the pillar of cloud and of fire He had taught a very different lesson from that which the people were now receiving from their priests and teachers. The merciful provisions of the law extended even to the lower animals, which cannot express in words their want and suffering. Directions had been given to Moses for the children of Israel to this effect: “If thou meet thine enemy’s ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him.” [Ex. 23:4, 5] But in the man wounded by robbers, Jesus presented the case of a brother in suffering. How much more should their hearts have been moved with pity for him than for a beast of burden! The message had been given them through Moses that the Lord their God, “a great God, a mighty, and a terrible,” “doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger.” Wherefore He commanded, “Love ye therefore the stranger.” “Thou shalt love him as thyself.” [Deut 10:17-19; Lev 19:34] **DA p. 500 (Doc 17771)**

Additional References:

Fe p. 477 (Doc 26523); RH 02-20-94 (Doc 135418); PC pp. 412-13 (Doc 229195)

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82 Working with the Poor

“And the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.” Deut 14:29

Christ was here repeating the instruction He had given to Israel through Moses. At their sacred feasts the Lord had directed that “the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat, and be satisfied.” Deut 14:29. These gatherings were to be as object lessons to Israel. Being thus taught the joy of true hospitality, the people were throughout the year to care for the bereaved and the poor. And these feasts had a wider lesson. The spiritual blessings given to Israel were not for themselves alone. God had given the bread of life to them, that they might break it to the world. COL p. 220-21 (Doc 5226)

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“Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow’s raiment to pledge: But thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing. When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.” Deut 24:17-21

Jesus revealed to them the far reaching principles of the law of God. That which had been said by the rabbis of old time, though it had been oft repeated, and was hoary with age, though it was regarded by men as on a par with divine

authority, was put in contrast with his own divine principle. The lessons he had taught to Israel in the Old Testament he repeated in the New Testament. He enjoined upon them the exercise of mercy, compassion, and love toward all with whom they came in contact. Had the Israelites practiced the lessons which Christ spoke from the pillar of cloud, there would have been no oppression by man of his fellow men. Jesus had said in the Old Testament: "Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take the widow's raiment to pledge; but thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee thence; therefore I command thee to do this thing. When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt; therefore I command thee to do this thing." [Deut 24:17-22] **RH 12-25-94 (Doc 135839)**

"Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small. . . . But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have; that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. For all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the Lord thy God." "Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates; at his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it; lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee. . . . Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow's raiment to pledge. . . . When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard,

84 *Working with the Poor*

thou shalt not glean it afterward; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.” [Deut 25:13-16; 24:14-15, 17, 19-20] **ST 02-19-02 (Doc 165331)**

From these facts we may conclude that the Sabbath was one of the things in which they could not serve the Lord in Egypt; and when Moses and Aaron came with the message of God (Exodus 4:29-31), they attempted a reform, which only increased the oppressions. The Israelites were delivered that they might observe the statutes of the Lord, including the fourth commandment, and this placed upon them an additional obligation to keep the Sabbath strictly, as well as to keep all the commandments. Thus in Deuteronomy 24:17,18 the fact of their deliverance from Egypt is cited as placing them under special obligation to show kindness to the widow and the fatherless: “Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow’s raiment to pledge: but thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing.” **PP p. 757 (Doc 53832)**

Additional References:

MH p. 187 (Doc 46833)

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“When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled; Then thou shalt say before the LORD thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me: I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them.” Deut 26:12-13

“When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the

third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled; then thou shalt say before the Lord thy God.” [Deut 26:12-13]

“I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded. I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them. I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I taken aught thereof for the dead; but I have hearkened to the voice of the Lord my God, and have done according to all that thou hast commanded me.” [Deut 26:13-14]

The Lord God of Israel will not accept halfway work. The true penitent does not put his past sins from his remembrance. He does not, as soon as he has obtained peace, grow unconcerned in regard to the mistakes he has made. He thinks how many have been led into evil by his wrong course, and he tries in every possible way to help any whom he has led into false paths. The clearer the light that he has entered into by returning to the Lord, the stronger his desire to set the feet of others in the right way. He does not gloss over his wayward course, making his wrong a light thing, but lifts the danger signal, that others may take warning. He walks humbly and carefully, his eyes fixed on his Leader. **SW 02-16-04 (Docs 168100-03)**

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“Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, Amen.”
Deut 27:19

I was shown, in Brother E’s case, that those who would in any way deal unjustly with him and discourage him in his efforts to help himself, or who, coveting the poor blind man’s prosperity, would advantage themselves to his disadvantage, will bring upon themselves the curse of God, who is the blind man’s friend. Special injunctions were given to the children of Israel in reference to the blind: “Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the

blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the Lord Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor.” “Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor’s landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, Amen.” [Lev 19:13-15; Deut 27:17-19]

It is strange that professed Christian men should disregard the plain, positive teachings of the word of God and feel no compunctions of conscience. God places upon them the responsibility of caring for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the widow, and the fatherless; but many make no effort to regard it. In order to save such, God frequently brings them under the rod of affliction and places them in positions similar to those occupied by the persons who were in need of their help and sympathy, but who did not receive it at their hands.

God will hold the church at responsible, as a body, for the wrong course of its members. If a selfish and unsympathizing spirit is allowed to exist in any of its members toward the unfortunate, the widow, the orphan, the blind, the lame, or those who are sick in body or mind, He will hide His face from His people until they do their duty and remove the wrong from among them. If any professing the name of Christ so far misrepresent their Saviour as to be unmindful of their duty to the afflicted, or if they in any way seek to advantage themselves to the injury of the unfortunate and thus rob them of means, the Lord holds the church accountable for the sin of its members until they have done all they can to remedy the existing evil. He will not hearken to the prayer of His people while the orphan, the fatherless, the lame, the blind, and the sick are neglected among them. **3T pp. 516-18 (Docs 83787-89)**

Special instructions were given to the children of Israel in reference to these things: “Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him; the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear thy God; I am the Lord. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor; nor honor the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor.” “Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor’s landmark; and all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way; and all the people

shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow; and all the people shall say, Amen.” [Lev 19:13-15; Deut 27:17-19] **ST 08-03-76 (Doc 152658)**

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“Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy.” Job 29:12-13

In the fast that God has chosen, mercy, tenderness, and compassion will be exercised. Avarice will be put away, and fraud and oppression will be repented of and renounced. All the authority and influence will be used to help the poor and oppressed. If this were the condition of the world, it would no more be a proverb, “Truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter;” “he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey.” [Isa 59:14-15] But with Job we might say, “I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.” [Job 29:12-16] Again he says, “If I did despise the cause of my man servant or of my maid servant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? . . . If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; . . . if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.” [Job 31:13-14, 16-17, 19-23] If this same fear, and this love of righteousness, were in our churches now, what a transformation there would be! **RH 10-13-91 (Doc 134163)**

The Lord Jesus said, “Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.” [Mt 5:7] There never was a time when there was greater need for the exercise of mercy than to day. The poor are all around us, the distressed, the afflicted, the sorrowing, and those who are ready to perish. Those who have acquired riches have acquired them through the exercise of the talents that were given them of God; but these talents for the acquiring of property were given to them that they might relieve those who are in poverty. These gifts were bestowed upon men by Him who maketh His sun to shine and His rain to fall upon the just and the unjust, that by the fruitfulness of the earth men might have abundant supplies for all their need. The fields have been blessed of God, and “of his goodness he hath prepared for the poor.” [Psa 68:10] In the providence of God events have been so ordered that the poor are always with us, in order that there may be a constant exercise in the human heart of the attributes of mercy and love. Man is to cultivate the tenderness and compassion of Christ; he is not to separate himself from the sorrowing, the afflicted, the needy, and the distressed. Job declares: “When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me; because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy.” [Job 29:11-13] **ST 06-13-92 (Doc 160546)**

The merciful are those who manifest compassion to the poor, the suffering, and the oppressed. Job declares, “I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.” [Job 29:12-16] **MB pp. 22-23 (Doc 98143)**

Additional References:

Ed p. 142 (Doc 19931)

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“If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; Or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; (For from my youth he was brought up with me, as with a father, and I have guided her from my mother’s womb;) If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; If his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: Then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone.” Job 31:16-22

Job says, “If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of my maidservant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? . . . If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; . . . if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sleep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.” [Job 31:13-14, 16-17, 19-23] If this same fear, and this love of righteousness were in our churches and in all our institutions, what a transformation would take place! “He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he repay him again.” “Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.” [Prov 19:17; Psa 41:1-3] **HM 07-0-91 (Doc 122490)**

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“A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation.” Psa 68:5

90 *Working with the Poor*

The widow and the fatherless are the objects of the Lord's special care.

“A Father of the fatherless, and a Judge of the widows,
Is God in His holy habitation.”

“Thy Maker is thy husband;
Jehovah of hosts is His name:
And the Holy One of Israel is thy Redeemer;
The God of the whole earth shall He be called.”

“Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive;
And let thy widows trust in Me.”

[Psa 68:5; Isa 54:5, A.R.V.; Jer 49:11] **MH p. 202 (Doc 46884)**

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*“Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and
needy.” Psa 82:3*

In his careful safeguarding of the rights and liberties of his subjects, Jehoshaphat emphasized the consideration that every member of the human family receives from the God of justice, who rules over all. “God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; He judgeth among the gods.” And those who are appointed to act as judges under Him, are to “defend the poor and fatherless;” they are to “do justice to the afflicted and needy;” and “rid them out of the hand of the wicked.” [Psa 82:1, 3-4] **PK p. 198 (Doc 54510)**

In his careful safeguarding of the rights and liberties of his subjects, Jehoshaphat emphasized the consideration that every member of the human family receives from the God of justice, who rules over all. “God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.” [Psa 82:1] And those who are appointed to act as judges, under him, are to “defend the poor and fatherless;” they are to “do justice to the afflicted and needy;” and “rid them out of the hand of the wicked.” [Psa 82:3-4] **RH 12-25-13 (Doc 150939)**

When the family of Brother I see the work before them, and do the work God has left them to do, they will not be so widely separated from Brother and

Sister O and Sister N, and those who are working in union with the Master. It may take time to attain perfect submission to God's will, but we can never stop short of it and be fitted for heaven. True religion will lead its possessor on to perfection. Your thoughts, your words, and your actions, as well as your appetites and passions, must be brought into subjection to the will of God. You must bear fruit unto holiness. Then you will be led to defend the poor, the fatherless, the motherless, and the afflicted. You will do justice to the widow and will relieve the needy. You will deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God. **3T pp. 538-39 (Doc 83839)**

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"Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless: For their redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee." Prov 23:10-11

"Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless: for their Redeemer is mighty; He shall plead their cause with thee." "He that oppreseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want." "Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him." [Prov 23:10, 11; 22:16; 26:27]

These are the principles with which are bound up the well-being of society, of both secular and religious associations. It is these principles that give security to property and life. For all that makes confidence and co-operation possible, the world is indebted to the law of God, as given in His word, and as still traced, in lines often obscure and well-nigh obliterated, in the hearts of men. **Ed p. 136 (Docs 19907-08)**

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"Learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." Isa 1:17

The last six precepts of the decalogue reveal the duty of man to his fellow men; and those who render obedience to the first four commandments will also carry out the injunctions of the last six. We are commanded to love our

neighbors as ourselves. This command is not that we shall simply love those who think and believe exactly as we think and believe. Christ illustrated the meaning of the commandment by the parable of the good Samaritan. But how strangely these precious words are neglected, and how frequently men oppress their fellow men, and lift up their souls unto vanity. Men glory in themselves and exalt themselves above their brethren. “Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.” “Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” [Jer 9:23-24; Isa 1:16-17] **RH 12-18-94 (Doc 135831)**

In the fifty eighth chapter of Isaiah the work that the people of God are to do in Christ’s lines is dearly set forth. They are to break every yoke, they are to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked. . . . If they carry out the principles of the law of God in acts of mercy and love, they will represent the character of God to the world, and receive the richest blessings of Heaven.

“Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” [Isa 1:17] **ML p. 241 (Docs 49108-09)**

Let no one say, “How doth God know? and is there understanding with the Most High?” [Psa 73:11] for the Lord knows even the secret thoughts of the heart. Those who neglect the poor and needy, transgress the commandments of God. “Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes cease to do evil; learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” “Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.” [Isa 1:16-17; 58:8] **HM 07-01-91 (Doc 122491)**

Additional References:

SpTEd pp. 201-2 (Doc 111263); RH 04-28-96 (Doc 136502); RH 05-08-94 (Doc 135539); RH 02-20-94 (Doc 135416); DA p. 590 (Doc 18043); Fe p. 221 (Doc

26014); 3SP p. 22 (Doc 73565); SC p. 39 (Doc 77865); 2T p. 36 (Doc 77865); 2T p. 36 (Doc 80934); 5T p. 630 (Doc 87571); SpTEd p. 182 (Doc111232); RH 08-04-91 (Doc 134054); RH 08-01-99 (Doc 139070); RH 04-24-13 (Doc 150491); ST 02-26-94 (Doc 161196); ST 04-02-02 (Doc 165395); YI 02-15-94 (Doc 170313); SpTBO7 pp. 8-9 (Doc 175351); PH141 p. 8 (Doc 178879); 1888 p. 938 (Doc 220459); 1888 p. 1279 (Doc 221323); RH 05-08-94 (Doc 135539)

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“Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!” Isa 10:1-2

“Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!” [Isa 10:1-2] In what contrast is the work of Christ set forth! “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.” [Isa 11:1-4] Brethren, take heed to these words, for they are of deep importance to every soul connected with the great work to be accomplished in these last days. Unless our eyes, our ears, our tongues, are under the control of the Holy Spirit, and guided by divine power, they cannot be trusted. They will surely mingle the thread of selfishness and the chaff of vanity with the work of God, and commingle with it that which is marred by unsanctified and ambitious projects, and the work will not bear the signature of Heaven; for it will not represent the principles of the law of God, which is a transcript of his character. **RH 08-13-95 (Doc 136155)**

“Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.”
Isa 1:23

“How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers. Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water: thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.” [Isa 1:21-23]

I am alarmed for you at Battle Creek. Teachers are very exact in visiting with denunciation and punishments those students who violate the slight rules, not from any vicious purpose, but heedlessly; or circumstances occur which make it no sin for them to deviate from rules which should not be held with inflexibility if transgressed, and yet the person in fault is treated as if he had grievously sinned. Now I want you to consider, teachers, where you stand, and deal with yourselves and pronounce judgment against yourselves; for you have not only infringed the rules, but you have been so sharp, so severe upon students; and more than this, there is a controversy between you and God. You have not made straight paths for your feet lest the lame be turned out of the way. You have departed from safe paths. **FE p. 222 (Docs 26015, 17)**

“Come now, and let us reason together saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers. Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water; thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves; every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards; they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.” [Isa 1:18-23] **ST 04-02-02 (Doc 165393)**

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“They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper, and the right of the needy do they not judge.”
Jer 5:28

O, how many pleasure lovers there are who spend their thousands to please and amuse themselves, and to gratify their fancies, while the world is full of distress and poverty. The prophet thus describes their course: “Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you. For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit; therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. They are waxen fat, they shine; yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?” [Jer 5:25-29] **BEcho 01-08-95 (Doc 116466)**

The drunkard is capable of better things. God has intrusted to him talents with which to glorify God; but his fellow men have laid a snare for his soul, and built themselves up out of his property. They have lived in luxury while their poor brethren whom they have robbed, lived in poverty and degradation. But God will require for all this at the hand of him who has helped to speed the drunkard on the way to ruin. O, how many pleasure lovers there are who spend their thousands of dollars to please and amuse themselves and to gratify their fancies, while the world is full of distress and poverty. The prophet describes these co laborers with Satan, who are degrading those whom God is seeking to uplift. He says: “Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you. For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great and waxen rich. They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means;

and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?”
 “Thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine; turn back thine hand as a grape gatherer into the baskets. To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it. Therefore I am full of the fury of the Lord; I am weary with holding in: I will pour it out upon the children abroad, and upon the assembly of young men together: for even the husband with the wife shall be taken, the aged with him that is full of days. And their houses shall be turned unto others, with their fields and wives together: for I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the Lord. For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.” [Jer 5:25-31; 6:9-13] **RH 05-22-94 (Doc 13561)**

The drunkard is capable of better things. God has intrusted to him talents with which he was to glorify God; but his fellow men have laid a snare for his soul, and built themselves up out of his ruin. They have lived in luxury, while their poor brethren whom they have robbed, lived in poverty and degradation. O, how many pleasure lovers there are, who spend their thousands of pounds to please and amuse themselves, and to gratify their fancies, while the world is full of distress and poverty! The prophet describes these co labourers with Satan, who are degrading those whom God is seeking to uplift. He says, “They lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit; therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. They are waxen fat, they shine; yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked; they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge.” [Jer 5:26-28] **PH141 p. 6 (Doc 178876)**

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“If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt: Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.” Jer 7:6-7

“Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these. For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor; if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt: then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, forever and ever.” [Jeremiah 7:2-7] **PK p. 413 (Doc 55032)**

The Jews flattered themselves that in spite of departure from him, the Lord would protect from injury their temple and those who worshiped in it. They put their trust in outward advantages, and overlooked the necessity of purity of character, which alone God could bless. “Trust ye not in lying words,” the prophet declared, “saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these. For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor; if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt: then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, forever and ever.” [Jer 7:4-7] **RH 04-02-08 (Doc 146971)**

“Hath a nation changed their gods which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” “Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord are these. For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor if ye oppress not the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt; then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave your fathers, for ever and ever.” [Jer 2:11-13; 7:3-7] **1888 p. 1289 (Doc 221346)**

“Thus saith the LORD; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place.” Jer 22:3

This judge was a man appointed by the law to give decisions upon cases that were brought before him. He had no love or reverence for God, and therefore no unselfish love for his neighbor. He had no regard for the rights of men. Judges were required to show a special attention to widows; but this man cared nothing for the rights of any. The Lord gave instruction through the prophet Jeremiah as to what judges should do for those who called upon them. “Thus saith the Lord: Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, and do no wrong; do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place.” [Jer 22:3] The widow and the fatherless were objects of the Lord’s special care, but those who feared not God, who had no regard for their fellow men, took advantage of the cases of those who were helpless and destitute. A judge unfaithful to his trust suffered might to triumph over right. **ST 05-21-96 (Doc 162132)**

“Thus saith the Lord: Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor; and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. For if ye do this thing indeed, then there shall enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people. But if ye will not hear these words, I swear by Myself, saith the Lord, that this house shall become a desolation.” [Jer 22:3-5] **ST 11-30-04 (Doc 166320)**

“Thus saith the Lord; Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David, thou, and thy servants, and thy people that enter in by these gates: Thus saith the Lord; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place.” [Jer 22:1-3] **14MR p. 343 (Doc 203508)**

“Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me.” Jer 49:11

The widow and the fatherless are the objects of the Lord’s special care.

“A Father of the fatherless, and a Judge of the widows,
Is God in His holy habitation.”

“Thy Maker is thy husband;
Jehovah of hosts is His name:
And the Holy One of Israel is thy Redeemer;
The God of the whole earth shall He be called.”

“Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive;
And let thy widows trust in Me.”

[Psa 68:5; Isa 54:5, A.R.V.; Jer 49:11] **MH p. 202 (Doc 46884)**

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“Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.” Hosea 14:3

God looks with pleasure upon the man, woman, youth, or child who will fear and love him, and refuse to be enticed amid a world of corruption. Through his prophet he has said: “O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord; say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the calves of our lips. Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses; neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods; for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy. I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow

100 *Working with the Poor*

as the vine; the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him; I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found. Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein." [Hos 14:1-9] **Mrs. E. G. White. ST 08-26-97 (Doc 162918)**

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"Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother: And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor, and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart." Zech 7:9-10

These promises were conditional on obedience. The sins that had characterized the Israelites prior to the captivity, were not to be repeated. "Execute true judgment," the Lord exhorted those who were engaged in rebuilding; "and show mercy and compassions every man to his brother: and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother." "Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbor; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates." [Zech 7:9-10; 8:16] **PK p. 704 (Doc 55744)**

"And the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassions every man to his brother: and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart." Zech 7:8-10. This is the word of the Lord to us also. **6T p. 460 (Doc 89290)**

The Bible demands that right principles be observed in all business transactions. In the strongest terms it condemns false dealing, and calls for purity in thought and word and action. "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassion every man to his neighbor. And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger,

nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in his heart.”
“What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk
humbly with thy God?” [Zech 7:9-10; Micah 6:8] **ST 12-17-96 (Doc 162440)**

Additional References:

HM 07-01-91 (Doc 122489); PH008 p. 13 (Doc 17716); 6MR p. 375 (Doc 194093).

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“And I will come near to you to judgment and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.” Mal 3:5

Besides the coming of the Lord to His temple, Malachi also foretells His second advent, His coming for the execution of the judgment, in these words:

“And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not Me, saith the Lord of hosts.” [Mal 3:5] Jude refers to the same scene when he says, “Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds.” [Jude 14, 15] This coming, and the coming of the Lord to His temple, are distinct and separate events. **GC11 p. 425-26 (Doc 31351)**

Besides the coming of the Lord to his temple, Malachi also foretells his second advent, his coming for the execution of the judgment, in these words: “And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts.” [Mal. 3:5] Jude refers to the same scene when he says, “Behold, the Lord

102 *Working with the Poor*

cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds." [Jude 14-15] This coming, and the coming of the Lord to his temple, are distinct and separate events. **GC88 p. 425 (Doc 106520)**

Besides the coming of the Lord to his temple, Malachi also foretells his second advent, his coming for the execution of the judgment, in these words: "And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts." [Mal 3:5] Jude refers to the same scene when he says, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds." [Jude 14-15] This coming, and the coming of the Lord to his temple, are distinct and separate events. **SW 01-24-05 (Doc 168431)**

Additional References:

GCB 04-08-01 (Doc 118743); RH 05-09-93 (Doc 134985); RH 12-01096 (Doc 136893); RH 01-17-07 (Doc 146081); ST 01-06-90 (Doc 159768); SW 01-17-05 (Doc 168423); SW 01-15-07 (Doc 168824); PH087 pp. 4-5 (Doc 183221)

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*"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this,
To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep
himself unspotted from the world." James 1:27*

True worship consists in working together with Christ. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." [James 1:27] The love of Christ dwelling in the heart, will be manifested in earnest effort to accomplish the work which Jesus came to do. Kind words, deeds of benevolence, of tender care for the needy and the afflicted, this is the fruit that grows naturally upon the good tree.

Such was the fruit manifest in the life of that righteous man of whom God himself declared, "There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man." Job says, "I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out." [Job 1:8; 29:12-16]

The Saviour invites us to become patient toilers in a field which calls for self-denying labor; but it is a glorious work, and one that God smiles upon. When one's heart sympathizes with others burdened with grief and discouragement; when his hand clothes the naked, and the stranger is made welcome to a seat at his fireside and at his board, then heaven comes very near. Brethren and sisters, when you open your doors to Christ's needy and suffering ones, you welcome with them unseen angels, who minister to these children of want and sorrow. You are inviting the companionship of heavenly beings. They bring with them a heavenly atmosphere of joy and peace. They come with praises upon their lips, and an answering strain is heard in heaven. Every deed of mercy and benevolence makes music there. The Father from his throne beholds and numbers the unselfish laborers among his most precious treasures. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." [Mal 3:17] **HM 07-01-91 (Docs 122476-78)**

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." [James 1:27] Good deeds are the fruit that Christ requires us to bear, kind words, deeds of benevolence, tender regard for the poor, the needy, the afflicted. When hearts sympathize with hearts burdened with discouragement and grief, when the hand dispenses to the needy, when the naked are clothed, the stranger made welcome to a seat in your parlor and a place in your heart, angels are coming very near, and an answering strain is responded to in heaven. Every act of justice, mercy, and benevolence, makes melody in heaven. The Father from his throne beholds those who do these acts of mercy, and numbers them with his most precious treasures. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." [Mal 3:17] Every merciful act to the needy and the suffering, is regarded as though done to Jesus. When you succor the poor, sympathize with the afflicted and oppressed, and befriend the

orphan, you bring yourselves into a closer relationship to Jesus. **HM 11-01-89 (Doc 122408)**

There is a disposition among some Sabbath keepers to rejoice that they have truths that can be sustained by the word of God, and that the unbeliever can not gainsay, and they rest satisfied. They make no advancement in the divine life; their faith is not made perfect by works; they do not feel their lack of spirituality, but boast that they have the truth, and they sometimes advocate it in an unbecoming manner. They feel rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and know not that they are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. What stronger delusion can deceive the human mind than that which makes us believe we are on the right foundation, and God accepts our works, when we are not conforming to his will, and when we mistake the form of godliness for the spirit and power thereof, supposing we need nothing when we need all things. Please read James 1:27. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." **RH 11-26-61 (Doc 125542)**

Additional References:

TDG p. 370 (Doc 98054); 2SG pp. 230-31 (Doc 76354); 1T pp. 190-91 (Doc 79649); FE p. 461 (Doc 26483); RH 07-11-99 (Doc 138994); KC pp. 65-66 (Doc 223061); ML p. 239 (Doc 49093); 3T p. 516 (Doc 83786); WM p. 240 (Doc 102538); WM p. 214 (Doc 102462); YI 08-31-93 (Doc 170193); 2T pp. 252-53 (Doc 81382); 4T pp. 494-95 (Doc 85344); HR 03-01-72 (Doc 121508); RH 03-12-72 (Doc 126247); CH p. 629 (Doc 12954); SC p. 163 (Doc 13373); 6T p. 281 (Doc 88722); TM p. 125 (Doc 93363); GCB 04-23-01 (Doc 118983); GCDB 03-18-97 (Doc 120242); GCDB 03-07-99 (Doc 120481); RH 06-27-93 (Doc 135083); RH 05-04-97 (Doc 137216); RH 01-25-98 (Doc 137765); ST 10-23-84 (Doc 157170); ST 02-24-90 (Doc 159821); PH086 p. 18 (Doc 183281); FLB p. 239 (Doc 24711); MH p. 205 (Doc 46895); RC p. 161 (Doc 58187); RC p. 252 (Doc 58789); 4bSG p. 75 (Doc 77591); 1T p. 285 (Doc 79869); 2T p. 25 (Doc 80912); 6T pp. 263-64 (Doc 88669); WM p. 35 (Doc 101949); GS 02-01-60 (Doc 120520); HM 07-01-91 (Doc 122476); RH 06-25-61 (Doc 125491); RH 07-05-75 (Doc 126931); RH 08-16-81 (Doc 128302); RH 04-20-86 (Doc 130922); RH 02-10-91 (Doc 133797); RH 11-12-95 (Doc 136274); RH 04-10-00 (Doc

139737); ST 08-03-76 (Doc 152656); ST 08-03-91 (Doc 160207); ST 08-08-95 (Doc 161847); ST 12-27-99 (Doc 164183); SW 08-04-08 (Doc 169169); PH146 p. 26 (Doc 181536); 6MR p. 199 (Doc 193541); 7MR p. 219 (Doc 194848); 12MR p. 229 (Doc 200785); 13MR p. 340 (Doc 202242)

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“Pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” James 1:27

Among all whose needs demand our interest, the widow and the fatherless have the strongest claims upon our tender sympathy. They are the objects of the Lord's special care. They are lent to Christians in trust for God. “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” [James 1:27]

Many a father who has died in the faith, resting upon the eternal promise of God, has left his loved ones in full trust that the Lord would care for them. And how does the Lord provide for these bereaved ones? He does not work a miracle in sending manna from heaven; He does not send ravens to bring them food; but He works a miracle upon human hearts, expelling selfishness from the soul and unsealing the fountains of benevolence. He tests the love of His professed followers by committing to their tender mercies the afflicted and bereaved ones.

Let those who have the love of God open their hearts and homes to take in these children. It is not the best plan to care for the orphans in large institutions. If they have no relatives able to provide for them, the members of our churches should either adopt these little ones into their families or find suitable homes for them in other households.

These children are in a special sense the ones whom Christ looks upon, whom it is an offense to Him to neglect. Every kind act done to them in the name of Jesus is accepted by Him as done to Himself.

Those who in any way rob them of the means they should have, those who regard their wants with indifference, will be dealt with by the Judge of all the earth. “Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them, I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.”

“He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy.” [Luke 18:7-8; James 2:13] The Lord bids us: “Bring the poor that are cast out to thy house.” [Isa 58:7] Christianity must supply fathers and mothers and homes for these destitute ones. Compassion for the widow and orphan, manifested in prayers and corresponding deeds, will come up in remembrance before God, to be rewarded by and by.

There is a wide field of usefulness before all who will work for the Master in caring for these children and youth who have been deprived of the watchful guidance of parents and the subduing influence of a Christian home. Many of them have inherited evil traits of character; and if left to grow up in ignorance, they will drift into associations that lead to vice and crime. These unpromising children need to be placed in a position favorable for the formation of a right character, that they may become children of God.

Are you who profess to be children of God acting your part in teaching these, who so much need to be patiently taught how to come to the Saviour? Are you acting your part as faithful servants of Christ? Are these unformed, perhaps ill-balanced, minds cared for with that love which Christ has manifested for us? The souls of children and youth are in deadly peril if left to themselves. They need patient instruction, love, and tender Christian care.

Were there no revelation to point out our duty, the very sight of our eyes, and what we know of the inevitable working of cause and effect, should arouse us to rescue these unfortunate ones. If the members of the church would bring into this work the same energy and tact and skill that they employ in the common business relations of life, if they would seek wisdom from God and earnestly study how to mold these undisciplined mind, many souls that are ready to perish might be rescued.

If parents would feel the solicitude for the salvation of their own children that they should feel, if they would bear them in their prayers to the throne of grace and live out their prayers, knowing that God would co-operate with them, they might become successful workers for children outside of their own family, and especially for those who do not have parental counsel and guidance. The Lord calls upon every member of the church to do his duty to these orphans.

A CHRISTLIKE WORK

In caring for the children we should not work from the standpoint of duty merely, but from love, because Christ died for their salvation. Christ has purchased these souls who need our care, and He expects us to love them as He

has loved us in our sins and waywardness. Love is the agency through which God works to draw the heart to Him, for "God is love." [1 Jn 4:8] In every enterprise of mercy this principle alone can give efficiency; the finite must untie with the Infinite.

This work for others will require effort, self-denial, and self-sacrifice. But what is the little sacrifice that we can make in comparison with the sacrifice which God has made for us in the gift of His only-begotten Son?

God imparts His blessing to us that we may impart to others. When we ask Him for our daily bread, [Mt 6:11] He looks into our hearts to see if we will share the same with those more needy than ourselves. When we pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner," [Lk 18:13] He watches to see if we will manifest compassion toward those with whom we associate. This is the evidence of our connection with God, that we are merciful even as our Father in heaven is merciful.

God is always giving; and upon whom are His gifts bestowed? Upon those who are faultless in character? "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." [Mt 5:45] Notwithstanding the sinfulness of humanity, notwithstanding that we so often grieve the heart of Christ and prove ourselves most undeserving, yet when we ask His forgiveness, He does not turn us away. His love is freely extended to us, and He bids us: Love one another as I have loved you. [Jn 13:34]

Brethren and sisters, I ask you to consider this matter carefully. Think of the wants of the fatherless and motherless. Are not your hearts stirred as you witness their sufferings? See if something cannot be done for the care of these helpless ones. As far as lies in your power, make a home for the homeless. Let everyone stand ready to act a part in helping forward this work. The Lord said to Peter: "Feed My lambs." [Jn 21:15] This command is to us, and by opening our homes for the orphans we aid in its fulfillment. Let not Jesus be disappointed in you.

Take these children and present them to God as a fragrant offering. Asks His blessing upon them, and then mold and fashion them according to Christ's order. Will our people accept this holy trust? Because of our shallow piety and worldly ambition, shall those for whom Christ has died be left to suffer, to go in wrong paths?

The word of God abounds with instruction as to how we should treat the widow, the fatherless, and the needy, suffering poor. If all would obey this instruction, the widow's heart would sing for joy; hungry little children would

be fed; the destitute would be clothed; and those ready to perish would be revived. Heavenly intelligences are looking on, and when, imbued with zeal for Christ's honor, we place ourselves in the channel of God's providence, these heavenly messengers will impart to us a new spiritual power so that we shall be able to combat difficulties and triumph over obstacles.

And what a blessing would reward the workers! To many who are now indolent, selfish, and self-centered, it would be as life from the dead. There would be among us a revival of heavenly charity and wisdom and zeal.

MINISTERS' WIVES ADOPTING ORPHANS

The question has been asked whether a minister's wife should adopt infant children. I answer: if she has no inclination or fitness to engage in missionary work outside her home, and feels it her duty to take orphan children and care for them, she may do a good work. But let the choice of children be first made from among those who have been left orphans by Sabbathkeeping parents. God will bless men and women as they with willing hearts share their homes with these homeless ones. But if the minister's wife can herself act a part in the work of education others, she should consecrate her powers to God as a Christian worker. She should be a true helper to her husband, assisting him in his work, improving her intellect, and helping to give the message. The way is open for humble, consecrated women, dignified by the grace of Christ, to visit those in need of help, and shed light into discouraged souls. They can lift up the bowed down by praying with them and pointing them to Christ. Such should not devote their tie and strength to one helpless little mortal that requires constant care and attention. They should not thus voluntarily tie their hands.

ORPHANS' HOMES

When all is done that can be done in providing for orphans in our own homes, there will still be many needy ones in the world who should be cared for. They may be ragged, uncouth, and seemingly in every way unattractive; but they are bought with a price, and are just as precious in the sight of God as are our own little ones. They are God's property, for whom Christians are responsible. Their souls, God says, "will I require at thine hand." [Eze 3:18-20]

To care for these needy ones is a good work; yet in this age of the world the Lord does not give us as a people directions to establish large and expensive institutions for this purpose. If, however, there are among us individuals who

feel called of God to establish institutions for the care of orphan children, let them follow out their convictions of duty. But in caring for the world's poor they should appeal to the world for support. They are not to draw upon the people to whom the Lord has given the most important work ever given to men, the work of bringing the last message of mercy before all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people. The Lord's treasury must have a surplus to sustain the work of the gospel in "regions beyond."

Let those who feel the burden of establishing these institutions have wise solicitors to present their necessities and raise funds. Let the people of the world be aroused, let the denominational churches be canvassed by men who feel the necessity that something be done in behalf of the poor and orphans. In every church there are those who fear God. Let these be appealed to, for to them God has given this work.

The institutions that have been established by our people to care for orphans and the infirm and aged among us, should be sustained. Let not these be left to languish and bring a reproach upon the cause of God. To aid in the support of these institutions should be looked upon not merely as a duty, but as a precious privilege. Instead of making needless gifts to one another, let us bestow our gifts upon the poor and helpless. When the Lord sees that we are doing our best for the relief of these needy ones, He will move upon others to aid in this good work.

The design of an orphans' home should be not merely to provide the children with food and clothing, but to place them under the care of Christian teachers who will educate them in the knowledge of God and His Son. Those who work in this line should be men and women who are largehearted and inspired with enthusiasm at the cross of Calvary. They should be men and women who are cultured and self-sacrificing, who will work as Christ worked, for the cause of God and the cause of humanity.

As these homeless ones are placed where they can obtain knowledge and happiness and virtue, and become sons and daughters of the heavenly King, they will be prepared to act a Christlike part in society. They are to be so educated that they in their turn will help others. Thus the good work will be extended and perpetuated.

What mother ever loved her child as Jesus loves His children? He looks upon the marred character with grief deeper, keener than any mother's. He sees the future retribution of an evil course of action. Then let everything be done that can be done for the neglected soul. **6T pp. 281-88 (Docs 88721-45)**

Chapter 5

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POOR

“If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury. If thou at all take thy neighbour’s raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down: For that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep? and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear, for I am gracious.” Ex 22:25-27

God had also instructed through Moses: “If thou lend money to any of My people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer.” “Thou shalt no lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury.” [Ex 22:25; Deut 23:19] Again He had said, “If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.” “For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.” [Deut 15:7, 8, 11] **PK p. 647 (Doc 55616)**

“He that putteth not out his money to usury.” [Psa 15:5] Exacting usury is directly opposed to God’s rule as given in Ex 22:21-26: “Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in anywise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless. If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as a usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury. If thou at all take thy neighbor’s raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down.” Deut 23:19-20: “Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury. Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it.”

Thus God commanded his people not to take advantage of the necessities of the poor, to enrich themselves by impoverishing their poorer brethren. Of Gentiles they might take usury; but they were not permitted to be exorbitant or oppressive. God is the rightful king of the universe. And he inquires of Israel, “What nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?” [Deut 4:8] To-day he might make the same challenge. The laws he gave to his ancient people were wiser, better, and more humane than those of the most civilized nations of the earth. The laws of the nations bear marks of the infirmities and passions of the unrenewed heart; but God’s laws bear the stamp of the divine, and if they are obeyed, they will lead to a tender regard for the rights and privileges of others. The Lord appeals to man’s compassion for his fellow-man. His watchful care is over all the interests of his children, and he declares he will undertake the cause of the afflicted and the oppressed. If they cry unto him, he says, “I will hear, for I am gracious.” [Ex 22:27] **ST 02-07-84 (Docs 156780-81)**

Some had brought upon themselves financial embarrassment by their own mismanagement and want of foresight; but this was not a sufficient reason for oppressing them, and those who took this advantage were revealing their true character. They were going directly contrary to the letter and spirit of God’s command: “If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as a usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.”

112 *Working with the Poor*

“Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother: usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury.” [Ex 22:25; Deut 23:19]

Nehemiah entered upon the work of reforming these wrongs with characteristic energy and promptness. He says: “And I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words. Then I consulted with myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them. And I said unto them, We, after our ability, have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us? Then held they their peace, and found nothing to answer. Also I said, It is not good that ye do; ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?” [Neh 5:6-9] **RH 03-11-84 (Docs 129433-34)**

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“Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause.” Ex 23:6

Intemperate men should not by vote of the people be placed in positions of trust. Their influence corrupts others, and grave responsibilities are involved. With brain and nerve narcotized by tobacco and stimulus they make a law of their nature, and when the immediate influence is gone there is a collapse. Frequently human life is hanging in the balance; on the decision of men in these positions of trust depends life and liberty, or bondage and despair. How necessary that all who take part in these transactions should be men proved, men of self-culture, men of honesty and truth, of stanch integrity, who will spurn a bribe, who will not allow their judgment or convictions of right to be swerved by partiality or prejudice. Thus saith the Lord, “Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause. Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked. And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous.” [Ex 23:6-8] — *Signs of the Times*, July 8, 1880. **Te p. 47 (Doc 78212)**

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With brain and nerve narcotized by tobacco and stimulus they make a law of their nature, and when the immediate influence is gone there is a collapse. Frequently human life is hanging in the balance; on the decision of men in these positions of trust, depends life and liberty, or bondage and despair. How necessary that all who take part in these transactions should be men proved, men of self-culture, men of honesty and truth, of stanch integrity, who will spurn a bribe, who will not allow their judgment or convictions of right to be swerved by partiality or prejudice. Thus saith the Lord, "Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of the poor in his cause. Keep thee from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay them not, for I will not justify the wicked. And thou shalt take no gift; for the gift blindeth the wise and perverteth the words of the righteous." [Ex 23:6-8] **ST 07-08-80 (Doc 154234)**

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"And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God...Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour."
Lev 19:9-15

In the Old Testament are recorded the laws which God gave for the guidance of his people. He would have his people to-day study these laws. "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy. . . . When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the Lord your God. Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another. . . . Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor

114 *Working with the Poor*

put a stumbling-block before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the Lord. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor. Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbor: I am the Lord. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord.” [Lev 19:1-2, 9-11, 13-18] **GCB 07-01-00 (Doc 118521)**

The instruction given to ancient Israel was to the same effect as that given by Christ to his disciples upon the mount. Both were intended to counteract selfishness and encourage benevolence. God ever remembers the poor, and gives directions to his people to remember them. “And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.” [Lev 19:9] Again he says, “Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.” [Lev 19:13] **ST 07-22-80 (Doc 154260)**

In the Old Testament are recorded the laws which the Lord gave for the guidance of his people. He would have his people today study these laws. “The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy. . . . When ye reap the harvest of your land, ye shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vintage, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and the stranger; I am the Lord. Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another. . . . Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him; the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shalt fear the Lord thy God; I am the Lord. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor. Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale bearer among thy people; neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbor; I am the Lord. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart;

thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself; I am the Lord.” [Lev 19:1-2, 9-11, 13-18] **KC p. 110 (Doc 223300)**

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“If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold. And if the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it; Then let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the overplus unto the man to whom he sold it; that he may return unto his possession. But if he be not able to restore it to him, then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of jubile: and in the jubile it shall go out, and he shall return unto his possession.” Lev 25:25-28

None need fear that their liberality would bring them to want. Obedience to God’s commandments would surely result in prosperity. “For this thing,” God said, “the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.” “Thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.” [Deut 15:10, 6] **MH p. 186 (Docs 46829-31)**

To the poor, the seventh year was a year of release from debt. The Hebrews were enjoined at all times to assist their needy brethren by lending them money without interest. To take usury from a poor man was expressly forbidden: “If thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.” [Lev 25:35-37] If the debt remained unpaid until the year of release, the principal itself could not be recovered. The people were expressly warned against withholding from their brethren needed assistance on account of this: “If there be among you a poor man of one of

116 *Working with the Poor*

thy brethren, . . . thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother. . . . Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee.” “The poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land,” “and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.” [Deut 15:7-9, 11, 8] **PP pp. 532-33 (Doc 53154)**

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“And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant: But as an hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubile. And then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return. For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as bondmen. Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but shalt fear thy God.” Lev 25:35-43

The faithful laborers for God have for Christ’s sake given up worldly prospects, choosing poverty rather than pleasure or riches; and when they are no longer able to labor, and have not means for their own support, it is but just that their wants and the needs of those dependent upon them should be provided for. When sickness or infirmity comes upon them, let not our ministers be burdened with the thought, “What will become of my wife and little ones, now that I am no longer able to supply their necessities?” **MM 07-01-91 (Docs 123220-21)**

“If thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him; yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase; but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee.” [Lev 25:35] How tenderly the Lord regards all who are suffering and in want! They are to be helped, not to be oppressed. “Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God.” [Lev 25:37-38]

It would be well if every church would read in its assemblies from the Old Testament the lessons which Christ gave to the people. The Spirit and character of our Heavenly Father in his dealings with men are revealed through these lessons. **RH 12-18-94 (Docs 135835-36)**

Before Zacchaeus had looked upon the face of Christ, he had begun the work that made him manifest as a true penitent. Before being accused by man, he had confessed his sin. He had yielded to the conviction of the Holy Spirit, and had begun to carry out the teaching of the words written for ancient Israel as well as for ourselves. The Lord had said long before, “If thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.” “Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God.” [Lev 25:35-37, 17] These words had been spoken by Christ Himself when He was enshrouded in the pillar of cloud, and the very first response of Zacchaeus to the love of Christ was in manifesting compassion toward the poor and suffering. **DA p. 555 (Doc 17930)**

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“If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: But thou shall open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked

118 *Working with the Poor*

heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putteth thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.” Deut 15:7-11

Wherever a church is established, its members are to do a faithful work for the needy believers. But they are not to stop here. They are also to aid others, irrespective of their faith. As the result of such effort, some of these will receive the special truths for this time.

“If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren . . . , thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putteth thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.” [Deut 15:7-11]

Through circumstances some who love and obey God become poor. Some are not careful; they do not know how to manage. Others are poor through sickness and misfortune. Whatever the cause, they are in need, and to help them is an important line of missionary work.

All our churches should have a care for their own poor. Our love for God is to be expressed in doing good to the needy and suffering of the household of faith whose necessities come to our knowledge and require our care. Every soul is under special obligation to God to notice His worthy poor with particular compassion. Under no consideration are these to be passed by. **6T pp. 270-71 (Docs 88686-89)**

There are sins among us as a people. Love is not cherished as it should be. A cold, selfish, indifferent hard-heartedness is increasing, and this has separated us from our God. There are reasons why the Lord does not favor us with his presence and love; there is great need of sharp, pointed testimonies, for selfishness has eaten out the love of God from our hearts. Hear what the Lord says to his people: "If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him naught; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor and to thy needy, in thy land." [Deut 15:7-11] **RH 03-11-84 (Doc 129437)**

"If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanted. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him naught; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land." [Deut 15:7-11]

In the Old Testament the very same principles were revealed as those which Christ gave in his sermon on the mount. The scribes and Pharisees knew so little of these principles through every-day practice, that Christ's sermon on the mount was as a new revelation to them, and sounded like heresy to their ears.

They had misinterpreted the Scripture, and regarded the maxims and sayings of men that had passed to them from rabbi to rabbi, as having the sanctity of inspiration. But the commands of men were not like the divine commands, and better suited their carnal hearts. Jesus, who had instituted the law, knew just how far these professedly pious teachers had departed from the law, and how far they had made it void by their traditions. They had worshipped God in vain, “teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” [Mt 15:9]

Jesus revealed to them the far-reaching principles of the law of God. That which had been said by the rabbis of old time, though it had been oft repeated, and was hoary with age, though it was regarded by men as on a par with divine authority, was put in contrast with his own divine principle. The lessons he had taught to Israel in the Old Testament he repeated in the New Testament. He enjoined upon them the exercise of mercy, compassion, and love toward all with whom they came in contact. Had the Israelites practiced the lessons which Christ spoke from the pillar of cloud, there would have been no oppression by man of his fellow-men. Jesus had said in the Old Testament: “Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take the widow’s raiment to pledge; but thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee thence; therefore I command thee to do this thing. When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive-tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt; therefore I command thee to do this thing.” [Deut 24:17-22] **RH 12-25-94 (Docs 135837-39)**

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*“And if the man be poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge:
In any case thou shalt deliver him the pledge again when the
sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own raiment, and bless
thee: and it shall be righteousness unto thee before the LORD*

thy God. Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in the land within thy gates: At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the LORD, and it be sin unto thee...Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow's raiment to pledge...I command thee to do this thing. When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow." Deut 24:12-21

The hire of a laborer was to be promptly paid: "Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land: . . . at his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it." [Deut 24:14, 15] **PP p. 532 (Doc 53152)**

The hire of the laborer was to be promptly paid: "Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land. . . . At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it." [Deut 24:14-15] **RH 09-17-89 (Doc 132991)**

"Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small. . . . But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have; that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. For all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the Lord thy God." "Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates; at his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it; lest

he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee. . . . Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow's raiment to pledge. . . . When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow." [Deut 25:13, 15-16; 24:14-15, 17, 19-21]

In every action of life the true Christian is just what he desires those around him to think he is. He is guided by truth and uprightness. He does not scheme; therefore he has nothing to gloss over. He may be criticized, he may be tested; but through all, his unbending integrity shines out like pure gold. He is a friend and benefactor to all connected with him; and his fellow-men place confidence in him; for he is trustworthy. Does he employ laborers to gather in his harvest? He does not keep back their hard-earned money. Has he means for which he has no immediate use? He relieves the necessities of his less fortunate brother. He does not seek to enlarge his possessions by taking advantage of the untoward circumstances of his neighbor. He accepts only a fair price for that which he sells. If there are defects in the articles sold, he frankly tells the buyer, even tho by so doing he may seem to work against his own pecuniary interests. **ST 02-19-02 (Docs 165331-32)**

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"When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out." Job 29:11-16

The Lord Jesus said, "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy." [Mt 5:7] There never was a time when there was greater need for the exercise of mercy than to-day. The poor are all around us, the distressed, the afflicted,

the sorrowing, and those who are ready to perish. Those who have acquired riches have acquired them through the exercise of the talents that were given them of God; but these talents for the acquiring of property were given to them that they might relieve those who are in poverty. These gifts were bestowed upon men by Him who maketh His sun to shine and His rain to fall upon the just and the unjust, that by the fruitfulness of the earth men might have abundant supplies for all their need. The fields have been blessed of God, and “of his goodness he hath prepared for the poor.” [Psa 68:10] In the providence of God events have been so ordered that the poor are always with us, in order that there may be a constant exercise in the human heart of the attributes of mercy and love. Man is to cultivate the tenderness and compassion of Christ; he is not to separate himself from the sorrowing, the afflicted, the needy, and the distressed. Job declares: “When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me; because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy.” [Job 29:11-13] **ST 06-13-92 (Doc 160546)**

God would have every soul copy the pattern; as he was in the world, so are his followers to be. It is not in the order of God that men should be harsh, unsympathetic, without the grace of love and patience, without true affection for others. Paul says, “Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ.” [2 Cor 10:1] Said Job, “Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? Was not my soul grieved for the poor?” [Job 30:25] We only can let our light shine to the glory of God when we manifest the goodness and mercy of Christ, not only toward those who please us, but toward those who are faulty and erring and sinful. Let all our works be wrought in God, and if we have unamiable traits of character, let us overcome these unsavory representatives, and cease to dishonor God and bring the truth into disrepute. **RH 07-14-91 (Doc 134015)**

In the fast that God has chosen, mercy, tenderness, and compassion will be exercised. Avarice will be put away, and fraud and oppression will be repented of and renounced. All the authority and influence will be used to help the poor and oppressed. If this were the condition of the world, it would no more be a proverb, “Truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter;” “he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey.” [Isa 59:14-15] But with Job we

might say, "I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out." [Job 29:12-16] Again he says, "If I did despise the cause of my man-servant or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? . . . If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; . . . if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure." [Job 31:13-14, 16-17, 19-23] If this same fear, and this love of righteousness, were in our churches now, what a transformation there would be! **RH 10-13-91 (Doc 134163)**

Additional References:

HM 07-01091 (Doc 122477); MB pp. 22-23 (Doc 98143); Ed p. 142 (Doc 19931); PH089 pp. 28-29 (Doc 183619)

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"If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; Or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; (For from my youth he was brought up with me, as with a father, and I have guided her from my mother's womb;) If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; If his loins have not blessed me and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: Then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone." Job 31:16-22

Job says, "If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of my maidservant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? . . . If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; . . . if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sleep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure." [Job 31:13-14, 16-17, 19-23] If this same fear, and this love of righteousness were in our churches and in all our institutions, what a transformation would take place! "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he repay him again." "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness." [Prov 19:17; Psa 41:1] **HM 07-01-91 (Doc 122490)**

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"Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness." Psa 41:1-3

God Blesses Those Who Consider the Poor

Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. Psa 41:1.

We are God's servants, doing His service. Into the great web of life we are to draw no thread of selfishness; for this would spoil the pattern. But, oh, how thoughtless men are apt to be! How seldom do they make the interest of God's suffering ones their own. The poor are all around them, but they pass

on, thoughtless and indifferent, regardless of the widows and orphans who, left without resources, suffer, but do not tell their need. If the rich would place a small fund in the bank, at the disposal of the needy ones, how much suffering would be saved. The holy love of God should lead every one to see that it is his duty to care for some other one, and thus keep alive the spirit of benevolence. . . . He honors us by making us His helping hand. Instead of complaining, let us rejoice that we have the privilege of serving under so good and merciful a Master. **SD p. 272 (Docs 71119-20)**

Many are God's promises to those who minister to His afflicted ones. He says: "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and Thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness." "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." [Psa 41:1-3; 37:3.] "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again." "The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." [Prov 3:9-10; 11:24; 19:17; 11:25.] **GW15 p. 514 (Doc 30190)**

Many exceeding great and precious promises has the Lord made to the liberal: "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth; and Thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing; Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness." [Psa 41:1-3] **PUR 11-14-07 (Docs 124694-95)**

Additional References:

6T pp. 306-07 (Doc 88799); RH 07-11-12 (Doc 150163)

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“Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.” Psa 82:3-4

When the family of Brother I see the work before them, and do the work God has left them to do, they will not be so widely separated from Brother and Sister O and Sister N, and those who are working in union with the Master. It may take time to attain perfect submission to God’s will, but we can never stop short of it and be fitted for heaven. True religion will lead its possessor on to perfection. Your thoughts, your words, and your actions, as well as your appetites and passions, must be brought into subjection to the will of God. You must bear fruit unto holiness. Then you will be led to defend the poor, the fatherless, the motherless, and the afflicted. You will do justice to the widow and will relieve the needy. You will deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God. **3T pp. 538-39 (Doc 83839)**

In his careful safeguarding of the rights and liberties of his subjects, Jehoshaphat emphasized the consideration that every member of the human family receives from the God of justice, who rules over all. “God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; He judgeth among the gods.” And those who are appointed to act as judges under Him, are to “defend the poor and fatherless;” they are to “do justice to the afflicted and needy,” and “rid them out of the hand of the wicked.” [Psa 82:1, 3-4] **PK p. 198 (Doc 54510)**

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“Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous. A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with

discretion He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour.” Psa 112:4-9

Though the night of sorrow gathered dark about these followers of Jesus, yet were they not forsaken. Saith the prophet: “When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me. . . . He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold His righteousness.” “Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee.” God hath spoken: “Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.” “I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.” [Micah 7:8, 9; Psa 139:12; 112:4; Isa 42:16] **GC11 p. 346 (Doc 31149)**

Spiritual Darkness Result of Separation From God –The spiritual darkness that covers the earth is the result of a separation from God. Christ is the light and life of the world. “Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness” (Psalm 112:4). All sin in darkness. When Christ came to this world, the Jewish rulers refused to accept His words. Wise in their own conceit, they declared that they knew all about the law of God. But Christ said to them, “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God” [Matt. 22:29]. Darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people. [Isa 60:2] The human family, and even the Lord’s chosen people, had to a large extent lost the knowledge of God. The Jewish priests were teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. [Mk 7:7] God was misrepresented. False ideas prevailed in regard to His character and attributes. Christ came to this world, and the light shone forth into the darkness, but the darkness comprehended it not. [Jn 1:5] **12MR p. 140 (Doc 200561)**

“Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God!” [Psalm 146:5] “Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope!” [Zechariah 9:12] Unto all the honest in heart in heathen lands–“the upright” in the sight of Heaven–“there ariseth light in the darkness.” [Psalm 112:4] God hath spoken: “I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.” [Isaiah 42:16] **PK p. 378 (Doc 54968)**

Additional References:

GC88 p. 246 (Doc 106321)

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“Much food is in the tillage of the poor: but there is that is destroyed for want of judgment.” Prov 13:23

By instruction in practical lines we can often help the poor most effectively. As a rule, those who have not been trained to work do not have habits of industry, perseverance, economy, and self-denial. They do not know how to manage. Often through lack of carefulness and right judgment there is wasted that which would maintain their families in decency and comfort if it were carefully and economically used. “Much food is in the tillage of the poor: but there is that is destroyed for want of judgment.” [Prov 13:23] **MH p. 194 (Doc 46857)**

We may give to the poor, and harm them, by teaching them to be dependent Real charity helps men to help themselves. . . . True beneficence means more than mere gifts. It means a genuine interest in the welfare of others. We should seek to understand the needs of the poor and distressed, and to give them the help that will benefit them most. To give thought and time and personal effort costs far more than merely to give money. But it is the truest charity. — *Ibid.*, pp. 194, 195. **WM p. 99 (Docs 102425-26)**

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“He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.” Prov 14:31

God’s character is expressed in his law, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” [Mt 19:19] He has expressed this love in giving his only begotten Son to a life of humiliation, of poverty, of shame, of denial, of rejection, mockery, and anguish. He expressed this love when he permitted Christ to be brought before

the priests and the rulers and before the maddened multitudes, and placed beside Barabbas. Barabbas was a noted robber and murderer, and Christ was the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; but when Pilate asked, "Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you?" the hoarse voice of the mob shrieked out, "Barabbas!" [Mt 27:21] They had been instructed to make this choice by the priests and the rulers, and all heaven witnessed the result of their moral taste in the choice which they had made. They had what they desired. Barabbas, with all the stamp of crime and debasement upon him, was released unto them. When Pilate asked, "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?" their voices were heard like the bellowing of wild beasts, "Let him be crucified!" When the governor asked, "Why, what evil hath he done?" they cried out the more, saying, "Let him be crucified!" [Mt 27:22-23] When Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" (now listen, O heaven, and be astonished, O earth, at the answer), they said, "We have no king but Caesar." [Jn 19:15] They virtually said, "We will not have this man to reign over us." But the sacrifice that God made to redeem the fallen sons of Adam will one day appear in its true significance before those who have refused the Son of God, and rejected his invitation to come to the marriage supper. God proved that he loved his neighbor as himself [Mt 19:19] by giving his only begotten Son to die for the world. [Jn 3:16] We also are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves. Some may ask, as did the lawyer, "Who is my neighbor?" [Lk 10:29] The Lord Jesus has made it plain that every one who is temporal or spiritual need is our neighbor. He has revealed the fact that it is our duty to make straight paths for our feet, lest by precept or example we lead others in the path of transgression. But the poor are never to cease out of the land. The poor are God's legacy to those who are more favorably situated. "He that oppreseth the poor reproacheth his Maker." [Prov 14:31] The Lord has left the poor to the mercy of his church, not to be neglected, not to be despised and scorned, but to be treated as the Lord's inheritance. There will always be those who will need to be ministered unto. How inconsistent it is for the professed followers of Christ to furnish their own tables with everything that appetite shall dictate, while they neglect to consider the poor as the Lord has bidden them to do. **RH 10-15-95 (Doc 136241)**

From this parable God would have us learn to respect the cause of the poor. "Ye shall not respect persons in judgment," He declares; "but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the

judgment is God's." "He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker; but he that honoureth Him hath mercy on the poor." [Deut 1:17; Prov 14:31] This is one of the lessons we are to learn from the parable of the unjust judge. It is an admonition to all who claim to be righteous. "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise," God says. "Therefore turn thou to thy God; keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually." [Psa 12:5; Hos 12:6] Those who fear God, who accept Christ as a personal Saviour, will reveal a Christlike character. The character of God will speak through them in vindication of truth. **ST 09-15-98 (Doc 163554)**

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"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again." Prov 19:17

Many are God's promises to those who minister to His afflicted ones. He says: "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and Thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness." "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." [Psa. 41:1-3; 37:3] "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again." "The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." [Prov 3:9, 10; 11:24; 19:17; 11:25] **GW15 p. 514 (Doc 30190)**

Many are God's promises to those who minister to His afflicted ones. He says: "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and Thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness." "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou

132 *Working with the Poor*

dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.” [Psalms 41:1-3; 37:3] “Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.” “There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.” “He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again.” “The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.” [Prov 3:9-10; 11:24; 19:17; 11:25] **6T pp. 306-07 (Doc 88799)**

Many are God’s promises to those who minister to his afflicted ones. He says: “Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.” “Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.” “Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.” “There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.” “He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.” “The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.” [Prov 3:9-10; 11:24; 19:17; 11:25] **RH 07-11-12 (Doc 150163)**

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“The rich and poor meet together: the LORD is the maker of them all.” Prov 22:2

Caste is hateful to God. He ignores everything of this character. In His sight the souls of all men are of equal value. He “hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us.” Without distinction of age, or rank, or nationality, or religious privilege, all are invited to come unto Him and live. “Whosoever

believeth on Him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference.” “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free.” “The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the Maker of them all.” “The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” [Acts 17:26, 27; Gal 3:28; Prov 22:2; Rom 10:11-13] **DA p. 403 (Doc 17455)**

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“He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.” Prov 22:9

“He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for He giveth of his bread to the poor.” [Prov 22:9]

The Spirit of God is grieved when those church members who have means withhold the offerings that would help the work to be carried forward rapidly and extensively. Will not our church members become intelligent in regard to the needs of the missionary fields, and respond to the efforts that are being made to secure help for those workers who are laboring in difficult places? Who with Paul will seek to stir up the churches to a spirit of liberality for these needy fields? Not only in the South but in many places the work is hard to carry, and the workers are compelled, as it were, to make brick without straw. **PUR 11-14-07 (Docs 124699, 124704)**

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“For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.” Prov 23:21

There is no branch of legitimate business for which the Bible does not afford an essential preparation. Its principles of diligence, honesty, thrift, temperance, and purity are the secret of true success. These principles, as set forth in the Book of Proverbs, constitute a treasury of practical wisdom. Where can the merchant, the artisan, the director of men in any department of business, find better maxims for himself or for his employees than are found in these words of the wise man: . . . “The drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and

134 *Working with the Poor*

drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.” . . . [Prov 23:21] **AH p. 391 (Docs 2651, 55)**

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“The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it.” Prov 29:7

The true worshipers of God will work the works of Christ. They will be liberal to the needy; they will not turn the poor from his right, nor frame an excuse to avoid helping those who need help; they will love their neighbors as themselves, [Mt 19:19] not hiding themselves from their own flesh, [Lev 19:18] but considering the condition of the poor, the fatherless, and the widow; they will not appropriate to themselves any portion of the just earnings of those who may be under their control. “Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates: at his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.” “The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it.” [Deut 24:14-15; Prov 29:7] **HM 07-01-91 (Doc 122488)**

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“She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.” Prov 31:20

Let the children and youth learn from the Bible how God has honored the work of the everyday toiler. . . . Let them read of Jesus the carpenter, and Paul the tent-maker, who with the toil of the craftsman linked the highest ministry, human and divine. Let them read of the lad whose five loaves were used by the Saviour in that wonderful miracle for the feeding of the multitude; of Dorcas the seamstress, called back from death, that she might continue to make garments for the poor; of the wise woman described in the Proverbs, who “seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.” . . . who “stretcheth out her

hand to the poor; yea, . . . reacheth forth her hands to the needy.” [Prov 31:13, 20] **CC p. 333 (Doc 9455)**

Let the children and youth learn from the Bible how God has honored the work of the everyday toiler. Let them read of “the sons of the prophets” [2 Kings 6:1-7], students at school, who were building a house for themselves, and for whom a miracle was wrought to save from loss the ax that was borrowed. Let them read of Jesus the carpenter, and Paul the tentmaker, who with the toil of the craftsman linked the highest ministry, human and divine. Let them read of the lad whose five loaves were used by the Saviour in that wonderful miracle for the feeding of the multitude; of Dorcas the seamstress, called back from death, that she might continue to make garments for the poor; of the wise woman described in the Proverbs, who “seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands;” who “giveth meat to her household, and their task to her maidens;” who “planteth a vineyard,” and strengtheneth her arms;” who “stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, . . . reacheth forth her hands to the needy;” who “looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.” [Prov 31:13, 15, R.V.; 31:16, 17, 20, 27] **Ed p. 217 (Doc 20183)**

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“Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” Isa 1:17

“Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” [1 Sam 15:22] Forms of devotion without true sincerity of heart are an abomination unto the Lord. He says: “Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear. . . . Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the

oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" [Isa 1:14-17; 58:6-7]

The voice of God is speaking to us in clear, distinct utterances. He would see the works of righteousness in our lives. Instead of pleasing ourselves the Lord would have us do deeds of mercy, manifest tender forethought to those who are pressed down with burdens, cramped with poverty, who are hungry and naked and destitute. If you can do no more, he would have you speak words of life, of courage and hope, and give tender sympathy to those who suffer.

The prophet asks, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed 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? . . . Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable? Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights? For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth." "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? . . . For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward: he doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment." [Micah 6:6-8, 10-12; Deut 10:12-13, 17-18]

If we fail in doing works of mercy, in manifesting true love and sympathy, in helping and blessing others, whatever else we may do, we shall fail of pleasing God. But to those who regard every Christian duty, and manifest kindness and love to the sorrowing, the poor, and the afflicted, for Christ's sake, the promises are rich and abundant. He says, "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward."

[Isa 58:8] When ancient Israel journeyed, the ark of the covenant went before them. Beneath the mercy-seat, which was the cover of the ark, were the tables of the law. The ark was a symbol of the presence of God; and the glory of the Lord, which is his righteousness, shall be the rearward of his people. The Lord says to those who carry out his injunctions: “Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer: thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger [as an accuser, as a fault-finder, as a judge of others], and speaking vanity [lifting up the soul in self-esteem, in self-righteousness as though your own life was above fault]; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.” [Isa 58:9-11] **RH 02-20-94 (Docs 135416-20)**

The last six precepts of the decalogue reveal the duty of man to his fellow-men; and those who render obedience to the first four commandments will also carry out the injunctions of the last six. We are commanded to love our neighbors as ourselves. This command is not that we shall simply love those who think and believe exactly as we think and believe. Christ illustrated the meaning of the commandment by the parable of the good Samaritan. But how strangely these precious words are neglected, and how frequently men oppress their fellow-men, and lift up their souls unto vanity. Men glory in themselves and exalt themselves above their brethren. “Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.” “Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” [Jer 9:23-24; Isa 1:16-17] **RH 12-18-94 (Doc 135831)**

“Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” [Isa 1:16-17] This word is for the managers in all our institutions, for all ministers who are over the flock, for all

138 *Working with the Poor*

who have any connection whatever with the cause of God. Let them give heed unto it; then will the Lord sanctify, and cleanse, and bless, and prosperity shall attend the workers. **1888 p. 1279 (Doc 221323-24)**

Additional References:

RH 05-08-94 (Doc 134439); ML p. 242 (Docs 49109-10); SpTEd pp. 201-02 (Doc 111263); RH 04-28-96 (Doc 136502); 5T pp. 630-31 (Doc 18043); FE p. 221 (Doc 26014); 3SP p. 22 (Doc 73565); SC p. 39 (Doc 77865); 2T p. 36 (Doc 80934); SpTEd p. 182 (Doc 111232); HM 07-01-91 (Doc 122491); RH 08-04-91 (Doc 134054); RH 08-01-99 (Doc 139070); RH 04-24-13 (Doc 150491); ST 02-26-94 (Doc 161196); ST 04-02-02 (Doc 165395); YI 02-15-94 (Doc 170313); SpTB07 pp. 8-9 (Doc 175351); PH141 p. 8 (Doc 178879); 1888 p. 938 (Doc 220459); 1888 p. 1279 (Docs 221323-24)

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“Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?...And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day.” Isa 58:7-10

After relating the parable, Christ said, “The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.” [Lk 6:8] That is, worldly-wise men display more wisdom and earnestness in serving themselves than do the professed children of God in their service to Him. So it was in Christ’s day. So it is now. Look at the life of many who claim to be Christians. The Lord has endowed them with capabilities, and power, and influence; He has entrusted them with money, that they may be co-workers with Him in the great redemption. All His gifts are to be used in blessing humanity, in relieving the suffering and the needy. We are to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to care for the widow and the fatherless, to minister to the distressed and downtrodden. God never meant that the widespread misery in the world should exist. He never meant that one man should have an abundance of the

luxuries of life, while the children of others should cry for bread. The means over and above the actual necessities of life are entrusted to man to do good, to bless humanity. The Lord says, "Sell that ye have, and give alms." Lk 12:33. Be "ready to distribute, willing to communicate." [1 Tim 6:18] "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind." Lk 14:13. "Loose the bands of wickedness," "undo the heavy burdens," "let the oppressed go free," "break every yoke." "Deal thy bread to the hungry," "bring the poor that are cast out to thy house." "When thou seest the naked, . . . cover him." "Satisfy the afflicted soul." [Isa. 58:6, 7, 10] "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." [Mark 16:15] These are the Lord's commands. Are the great body of professed Christians doing this work? **COL pp. 370-71 (Doc 5771)**

All His gifts are to be used in blessing humanity, in relieving the suffering and the needy. We are to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to care for the widow and the fatherless, to minister to the distressed and downtrodden. God never meant that the widespread misery in the world should exist. He never meant that one man should have an abundance of the luxuries of life, while the children of others should cry for bread. The means over and above the actual necessities of life are entrusted to man to do good, to bless humanity. The Lord says, "Sell that ye have, and give alms." [Lk 12:33] Be "ready to distribute, willing to communicate." 1 Tim 6:18] "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind." [Lk 14:13] "Loose the bands of wickedness," "undo the heavy burdens," "let the oppressed go free," "break every yoke." "Deal thy bread to the hungry," "bring the poor that are cast out to thy house." "When thou seest the naked, . . . cover him." "Satisfy the afflicted soul." [Isa 58:6-7, 10] "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." [Mk 16:15] These are the Lord's commands. Are the great body of professed Christians doing this work? — *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 370, 371. **ChS p. 187 (Doc 6958)**

He bids all whom He has entrusted with temporal blessings to follow His example. Jesus says, "Ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good." [Mk 14:7] The want and wretchedness in the world are constantly appealing to our compassion and sympathy, and the Saviour declares that ministry to the afflicted and suffering is the service most pleasing to Him. "Is it not," He says, "to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that

thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" [Isa 58:7]
We are to minister to the sick, to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, and to
instruct the ignorant. **CS p. 161 (Doc 13368)**

Additional References:

RH 06-20-93 (Doc 135080); MH pp. 256-57 (Doc 47035); 2T pp. 33-34 (Doc 80929); 2T pp. 145-46 (Doc 81147); 4T p. 60 (Doc 84107); MB p. 82 (Doc 98300); WM pp. 29-30 (Doc 101937); BEcho 01-14-01 (Doc 117339); GosHealth 09-01-98 (Doc 121116); RH 08-16-81 (Doc 128316); RH 05-18-94 (Doc 135542); RH 06-26-94 (Doc 135614); RH 01-22-95 (Doc 135871); RH 08-11-96 (Docs 136635,41); RH 01-12-97 (Doc 136999); RH 05-04-97 (Doc 137216); RH 06-08-97 (Doc 137295); RH 05-14-01 (Doc 140728); RH 01-28-02 (Doc 141353); RH 02-17-03 (Docs 142295,302); RH 06-06-07 (Doc 146322); ST 02-26-94 (Doc 161194); ST 07-22-97 (Doc 162848); ST 08-12-97 (Doc 162890); ST 07-14-98 (Doc 163465); SpTA07 p. 58 (Doc 173871); PH097 pp. 57-58 (Doc 184248); 2MR pp. 282-83 (Doc 188508); COL p. 417 (Doc 5894); CH p. 520 (Doc 12634); DA p. 369 (Doc 17344); HP p. 110 (Doc 32972); PK p. 718 (Doc 55782); 1SM p. 99 (Doc 60826); 1T pp. 256-57 (Doc 79797); 2T p. 156 (Doc 81169); 2T pp. 331-32 (Doc 81583); 6T p. 266 (Doc 88674); 8T p. 159 (Doc 90781); WM pp. 263-64 (Doc 102592); WM p. 309 (Doc 102721); CME p. 25 (Doc 103096); GCB 05-31-09 (Doc 119640); GH 04-01-05 (Doc 120787); GH 04-01-05 (Docs 120787,93,806-807); MM 06-01-91 (Doc 123200); PUR 07-21-04 (Doc 124432); RH 10-13-91 (Doc 134162); RH 02-20-94 (Doc 135416,20); RH 06-25-01 (Docs 140830-32); RH 03-18-09 (Doc 147737); RH 03-17-10 (Doc 148429); RH 06-06-12 (Doc 150094); ST 06-15-82 (Doc 155694); ST 09-15-98 (Docs 163555-56); ST 05-30-00 (Doc 164476); ST 07-14-09 (Doc 167219); SF Echo 06-01-09 (Docs 167578,81); SpTA10 p. 3 (Doc 174144); 2MR pp. 83-84 (Doc 187862,65); 5MR pp. 33-34 (Doc 191688); 5MR p. 39 (Doc 191699); 1SAT p. 322 (Doc 215373); 2SAT p. 250 (Doc 216874); INL p. 69 (Doc 226575); 5 MR pp. 43-44 (Doc 191705); MH pp. 256-57 (Doc 47035); 2T pp. 33-34 (Doc 80929); WM pp. 302-3 (Doc 102705); RH 08-04-91 (Doc 134062); RH 12-16-84 (Doc 130052); 2T pp. 684-85 (Doc 82381); TM p. 126-27 (Doc 93368); GCB 05-31-09 (Doc 119641); HM 06-01-97 (Doc 122757); RH 03-18-09 (Doc 147742); ST 10-07-97 (Doc 162996); PH086 p. 20 (Doc 183286); RH 05-01-13 (Doc 150499); ML p. 246 (Doc 49131); PK p. 132 (Doc 54351); PK p. 327 (Doc 54845); 8T p. 134 (Doc 90710); 8T pp. 218-19 (Doc 90960); UL p. 133 (Doc 99172); HM 07-01-91 (Doc 122485); RH 08-20-95 (Doc 136163);

RH 12-29-10 (Doc 148819); RH 08-28-16 (Doc 150686); Rh 04-08-15 (Doc 151531); 2SAT p. 256 (Doc 216907); 1888 pp. 441-42 (Doc 219063); UL p. 56 (Doc 98725); TDG p. 299 (Doc 97732); RC p. 233 (Doc 58662); GH 04-01-05 (Doc 120791); PH048 p. 43 (Doc 179067); 2SAT p. 108 (Doc 216183)

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“He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know me? saith the LORD.” Jer 22:16

The wrath of the prophet was aroused, and he was inspired to pronounce judgment upon the faithless ruler. “Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong,” he declared; “that useth his neighbor’s service without wages, and giveth him not for his work. . . . Shalt thou reign, because thou closest thyself in cedar? Did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, and then it was well with him? He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know Me? saith the Lord. But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do it. [Jer 22:13, 15-17] **PK pp. 429-30 (Doc 55072)**

“Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbor’s service without wages, and giveth him not for his work; that saith, I will build me a wide house and large chambers, and cutteth him out windows; and it is ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermilion. Shalt thou reign, because thou closest thyself in cedar? did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, and then it was well with him? He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know me? saith the Lord. But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do it.” [Jer 22:13-17] **RH 05-01-94 (Doc 135522)**

“Shalt thou reign, because thou closest thyself in cedar? did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, and then it was well with him? He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know Me? saith the Lord. But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for

142 *Working with the Poor*

thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do it" [Jer 22:15-17] **14MR p. 344 (Doc 203515)**

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"Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." Eze 16:49

The greatest curse following in the train of wealth is the fashionable idea that work is degrading. "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy" (Eze. 16:49). Here are presented before us, in the words of Holy Writ, the terrible results of idleness. It was this that caused the ruin of the cities of the plain. Idleness enfeebles the mind, debases the soul, and perverts the understanding, turning into a curse that which was given as a blessing. — *Signs of the Times*, May 4, 1882. **TEG p. 333 (Doc 96979)**

Among the evils resulting from wealth, one of the greatest is the fashionable idea that work is degrading. The prophet Ezekiel declares: "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." [Eze 16:49] Here are presented before us the terrible results of idleness, which enfeebles the mind, debases the soul, and perverts the understanding, making a curse of that which was given as a blessing. It is the working man or woman who sees something great and good in life, and who is willing to bear its responsibilities with faith and hope. **RH 10-03-12 (Doc 150312)**

Among the evils resulting from wealth, one of the greatest is the fashionable idea that work is degrading. The prophet Ezekiel declares: "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." [Eze 16:49] Here are presented before us the terrible

results of idleness, which enfeebles the mind, debases the soul, and perverts the understanding, making a curse of that which was given as a blessing. It is the working man or woman who sees something great and good in life, and who is willing to bear its responsibilities with faith and hope. **PH086 p. 12 (Doc 179467)**

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“And hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment.” Eze 18:7

“Behold all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth it shall die. But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right. . . . and hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment; he that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man, hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God.” [Eze 18:4-5, 7-9]

Old Testament history agrees perfectly with the New. After light has come to us through the Scripture, we are inexcusable if we do not walk in the light; for an unseen influence is drawing the soul to obedience, that it may bear witness to the truth. . . . **PH086 p. 12 (Docs 183263-64)**

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“Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquility.” Dan 4:27

The dream and its meaning filled Daniel with astonishment, and “his thoughts troubled him.” [Dan 4:19] But he faithfully told the king that the fate of the tree was emblematic of his own downfall; that he would lose his reason,

and, forsaking the abodes of men, would find a home with the beasts of the field, and that he would remain in this condition for seven years. He urged the proud monarch to repent and turn to God, and by good works avert the threatened calamity. “Wherefore, O king,” he said, “let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquility.” [Dan 4:27] **7MR p. 67 (Doc 194412)**

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“And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.” Zech 7:10

“And the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassions every man to his brother: and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.” [Zechariah 7:8-10] This is the word of the Lord to us also. **6T p. 460 (Doc 89290)**

The Bible demands that right principles be observed in all business transactions. In the strongest terms it condemns false dealing, and calls for purity in thought and word and action. “Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassion every man to his neighbor. And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in his heart.” “What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” [Zech 7:9-10; Micah 6:8] **ST 12-17-96 (Doc 162440)**

“And the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassions every man to his brother: and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.” [Zech 7:8-10] This is the word of the Lord. **PH008 p. 13 (Doc 177166)**

Additional References:

HM 07-01-91 (Doc 122489); 6MR p. 375 (Doc 194093)

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“Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.” Matt 19:21

Some who are wealthy do not withhold from ministers. They keep up their systematic benevolence exactly and pride themselves upon their punctuality and generosity, and think their duty ends here. This is well as far as it goes, but their duty does not cease here. God has claims upon them that they do not realize. Society has claims upon them; their fellow men have claims upon them. Every member of their family has claims upon them. All these claims should be regarded; not one should be overlooked or neglected. Some men give to ministers and put into the treasury with as much satisfaction as though it would entitle them to heaven. Some think that they can do nothing to aid the cause of God unless they constantly have a large increase. They feel that they can in nowise touch the principal. Should our Saviour speak the same words to them that He did to the certain ruler, “Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me,” [Mt 19:21] they would go away sorrowful, choosing like him to run the risk of retaining their idols, riches, rather than to part with them to secure treasure in heaven. This ruler claimed that he had kept all the commandments of God from his youth up, and confident in his fidelity and righteousness, and thinking that he was perfect, he asks: “What lack I yet?” [Mt 19:20] Jesus immediately tears off his sense of security by referring to his idols, his possessions. He had other gods before the Lord, which were of greater value to him than eternal life. Supreme love to God was lacking. Thus it is with some who profess to believe the truth. They think they are perfect, think that there is no lack, when they are far from perfection and are cherishing idols which will shut them out of heaven. **1T pp. 483-84 (Doc 80318)**

“One thing thou lackest,” Jesus said. “If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven;”

“and come, take up the cross, and follow me.” [Mk 10:21] Christ read the ruler’s heart. He laid his hand upon his idol,—his earthly possessions,—which he must renounce before he could be found wanting in nothing. The possessions that he called his own were the Lord’s, entrusted to him to be used for the very purpose that Christ has pointed out,— for the help of the poor and needy, for the relief of suffering humanity, to clothe the naked and feed the hungry. **RH 01-12-05 (Doc 144158)**

The time is at hand when the judgment will sit, and the books will be opened, and every one will be judged according to the deeds that have been done in the body. What an hour that will be! What human depravity will come to light even among those who claim to be Christians, but whose practical life has testified that they had not a saving knowledge of Christ! To-day many of these are members of the church, and are fellowshipped as Christians; but they are self-deceived, as was the young man who came to Christ asking what he should do to inherit eternal life. Jesus answered, “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, which? Jesus said: Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up, what lack I yet?” [Mt 19:17-20] Jesus looked upon the young man, and loved him, knowing that he was sincere, and had no knowledge of his own defects. This young man had preserved an unblemished outward character; for he had not been tried by circumstances to bring out the selfishness of his heart. And he verily thought his life perfect, as he asked, “What lack I yet?” Then Jesus touched the plague spot of his heart, saying, “If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.” **RH 01-10-93 (Doc 134757)**

Additional References:

ST 08-01-95 (Doc 161836); 4T p. 49 (Doc 84078); RH 11-28-82 (Doc 128923); CS p. 210 (Doc 13484); RH 03-221-78 (Doc 127448); RH 06-23-85 (Doc

130377); SpTB12 pp. 14-15 (Doc 176020); FW p. 112 (Doc 23235); 1SM p. 378 (Doc 61639); RH 09-16-84 (Doc 129810); RH 03-28-93 (Doc 134905); 1888 p. 1165 (Doc 221100); INL p. 63 (Doc 226539); 2SG pp. 239-40 (Doc 76367); 1T pp. 170-71 (Doc 79602); ST 07-07-90 (Doc 159964); 3MR p. 66 (Doc 188946); 13MR p. 21 (Doc 201376); DA p. 519 (Doc 17828); RH 11-26-57 (Doc 125399); RH 09-11-00 (Doc 140068); SpTB12 p. 13 (Doc 176015)

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“For I was hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me...For I was and hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.” Matt 25:35-45

In the last great day we shall be judged in accordance with what we have done. Christ will say, “I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?” [Mt 25:42-44] Christ will then say, “Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me” [verse 45]. And Christ will say, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” [verse 41]. **UL p. 374 (Doc 100655)**

Christ makes the necessities of His children His own personal interest. He regards any slight or neglect of His brethren as a slight to Himself, and a benefit conferred upon the humblest of them as if it were conferred upon Himself. He says, “I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in. . . . Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” [verses 35-40]. **HP p. 315 (Doc 34112)**

By our churches there is a work to be done of which many have little idea, a work as yet almost untouched. “I was an hungered,” Christ says, “and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.” [Mt 25:35, 36] Some think that if they give money to this work, it is all they are required to do, but this is an error. Donations of money cannot take the place of personal ministry. It is right to give our means, and many more should do this; but according to their strength and opportunities, personal service is required of all. **WM p. 189 (Doc 102387)**

Additional References:

SW p. (Doc 71675); WM p. 39 (Doc 101963); 21MR p. 223 (Doc 212327); FW p. 44 (Doc 23041); HP p. 324 (Doc 34104); SD p. 364 (Doc 71569); TMK p. 335 (Doc 96246); WM p. 318 (Doc 102751); CME pp. 22-23 (Doc 103089)

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“And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.” Mk 12:43-44

The act of the widow who cast two mites—all that she had—into the treasury, is placed on record for the encouragement of those who, struggling with poverty, still desire by their gifts to aid the cause of God. Christ called the attention of the disciples to this woman, who had given “all her living.” [Mk 12:44] He esteemed her gift of more value than the large offerings of those whose alms did not call for self-denial. From their abundance they had given a small portion. To make her offering, the widow had deprived herself of even the necessities of life, trusting God to supply her needs for the morrow. Of her the Saviour declared, “Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury.” [Verse 43] Thus He taught that the value of the gift is estimated not by the amount, but by the proportion that is given and the motive that actuates the giver. **AA p. 342 (Doc 879)**

All should do something. The case of the widow who cast in her two mites is placed upon record for the benefit of others. Christ commended her for the sacrifice she made and called the attention of His disciples to the act: "Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living." [Mk 12:43-44] Christ esteemed her gift more valuable than the large offerings of the most wealthy. They gave of their abundance. They would not feel the least privation because of their offerings. But the widow had deprived herself of even the necessities of life to make her little offering. She could not see how her future wants were to be supplied. She had no husband to support her in want. She trusted God for the morrow. The value of the gift is not estimated so much by the amount that is given as by the proportion and by the motive which prompts the gift. When Christ shall come, whose reward is with Him, He will give every man according as his work shall be. **2T p. 666 (Doc 82377)**

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"He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise." Luke 3:11

The Jews were experiencing the fulfillment of the curse of God for their departure from him, and for their iniquity. Yet they did not lay these things to heart, and afflict their souls before God. A people that hated them ruled over them. Yet they were claiming the blessings of God promised to confer upon a people who were obedient and faithful, at the very time they were suffering under the curse of God because of disobedience. John declared to them that unless they bore fruit, they would be hewn down and cast into the fire. The people were convicted, and "asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content

with your wages.” [Lk 3:10-14] The people were in expectation of Christ’s soon appearing, and they questioned whether this prophet were not the Messiah. “John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.” [Mt 3:11-12; Lk 3:16-17] **1Red p. 41 (Doc 179603)**

John called every class to repentance. He met sin with open rebuke in men of humble occupation and in men of high degree. He declared the truth to kings and nobles, whether they would hear or reject it. And kings and nobles, Pharisees and Sadducees, Roman soldiers, officers trained in all court etiquette, and wily, calculating tax-gatherers and world-renowned men listened to his words. They had confidence in his plain statements, and were convicted of sin.

“And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.” [Lk 3:10-11] . . . Did the Baptist say, Leave your toil and custom-houses?—No; he said to them, “Exact no more than that which is appointed you.” [Lk 3:13] If they were tax-gatherers still, they could hold just weights and balances of truth in their hands. They could reform in those things that savored of dishonesty and oppression. **RH 08-02-98 (Docs 138203-05)**

The worked of reformation here brought to view by John, the purging of heart and mind and should, is one that is needed by many who to-day profess to have the faith of Christ. Wrong practices that have been indulged in need to be put away; the crooked paths need to be made straight, and the rough places smooth. The mountains and hills of self-esteem and pride need to be brought low. **RH 04-22-09 (Doc 147819)**

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“Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.” Luke 12:33

It was the work of the seventy disciples to give publicity to his work. They were his delegated forerunners, sent forth to create an interest in him, and to bear their message heralding his approach. The Saviour gave them special instruction as to how they were to conduct themselves, and what preliminary work must be done by them. The instruction was after the same order as he gave to the twelve when he sent them forth. "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth." [Lk 12:33] They were not to keep their goods, bind them up in a napkin, and hide them in the earth. The Lord would have them put to use the talents he had given them, and put them out to the exchangers, by using every ability of money, mind, or influence in furthering the communication of the light of truth to souls who sat in darkness. **ST 12-10-94 (Doc 161559)**

The time has come for those who have a large amount of means invested in houses and lands, to begin to dispose of their possessions. "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." [Lk 12:33] **6MR p. 137 (Doc 193363)**

The Lord bids us: "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for the Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not." [Lk 12:33-40] **PH004 p. 10 (Doc 176885)**

Additional References:

ST 06-11-94 (Doc 161312); 1T pp. 169-70 (Doc 79597); TDG p. 130 (Doc 96961)

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“Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.” Luke 14:12-14

All His gifts are to be used in blessing humanity, in relieving the suffering and the needy. We are to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to care for the widow and the fatherless, to minister to the distressed and downtrodden. God never meant that the widespread misery in the world should exist. He never meant that one man should have an abundance of the luxuries of life, while the children of others should cry for bread. The means over and above the actual necessities of life are intrusted to man to do good, to bless humanity. The Lord says, “Sell that ye have, and give alms.” Be “ready to distribute, willing to communicate.” “When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind.” “Loose the bands of wickedness,” “undo the heavy burdens,” “let the oppressed go free,” “break every yoke.” “Deal thy bread to the hungry,” “bring the poor that are cast out to thy house.” “When thou seest the naked, . . . cover him.” “Satisfy the afflicted soul.” “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” [Lk 12:33; 1 Tim 6:18; Lk 14:13; Isa 58:6-7; 58:10; Mk 16:15] These are the Lord’s commands. Are the great body of professed Christians doing this work? — *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 370, 371. **ChS p. 187 (Doc 6958)**

How many in the Christian world will upon this Thanksgiving obey the injunction of Christ, “When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.” [Lk 14:13-14] Instead of inviting those who have many good things in this life, and who

cannot appreciate the favors of a feast, invite to your homes the needy, the poor, the widow, the fatherless. To the ones who have an abundance we have shown honor; but the ones who were really in need, who would esteem our favors as of great value, we neglect because they are poor, as though they did not belong to the Lord's family. The poor as well as the rich are under God's care. Then let us keep Thanksgiving in God's own way, and no longer follow the customs of the world, selfishly heaping our favors upon a few favorites, and neglecting the ones precious in the sight of the Lord, though slighted and neglected by those who profess to be the children of God. **RH 11-18-84 (Doc 129978)**

What a different state of things would we see in the earth if all who profess to believe in Jesus Christ should conscientiously live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God! How many hearts would be gladdened if the instruction of Christ was carried out, when he says, "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed." "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee." [Lk 14:13-14, 12] We are to realize that the poor and the suffering have claims upon us; for they are God's children. Christ said, "All ye are brethren." [Mt 23:8]

The very same principles which were given to the children of Israel for their guidance, by Christ, their invisible Leader, are the principles that he gave upon the mount for the benefit not only of those who were there assembled, but for our admonition to the very close of time. The poor are left within our gates as our legacy. The poor are our brethren, and God has said they shall never cease out of the land. God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being." [Acts 17:26-28] God has made all nations of one blood, and this tells the great truth of the kinship of men. Every man is related to his fellow-men both by creation and redemption. This was the truth that Christ constantly sought to keep before his disciples and before men. The feast at the house of the Pharisee was made an occasion for presenting lessons of our individual responsibility to the human race, and for pointing out the duties that are enjoined upon man to his fellow-men. Christ gave this lesson at the feast, and it will not lose its force

through all time. Its results will be as far-reaching as eternity. Christ himself has told us what constitutes true Christianity. He has shown what are the duties of brothers to brothers, of humanity to humanity, as subjects of his kingdom. His instruction to men is stamped with the seal of Heaven. The question is, Shall we walk in the light? shall we practice his words? When you make a dinner or a supper, will you pass by your friends, your brethren, your kinsmen, your wealthy neighbors, lest they bid you again, and recompense you, and call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, that you may be blessed? for they cannot recompense you, but you will be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. **RH 11-12-95 (Docs 136272-73)**

Additional References:

ST 04-04-95 (Doc 161694); DA pp. 495-96 (Doc 17758); GW15 p. 341 (Doc 29703); 5T p. 465 (Doc 87160); 6T p. 453 (Doc 89270); GW92 p. 199 (Doc 104669); MM 09-01-92 (Doc 123264); RH 12-06-87 (Doc 131889); RH 01-08-89 (Doc 132638); RH 01-21-90 (Doc 133152); RH 05-29-00 (Doc 139842); RH 05-27-02 (Doc 141678); RH 12-24-03 (Doc 143188); ST 05-14-96 (Doc 162124); RH 12-23-84 (Doc 130071); RH 03-03-96 (Doc 136424); COL p. 220 (Doc 5335); COL p. 370 (Doc 5771); ChS p. 187 (Doc 6958); MB pp. 111-12 (Doc 98384); WM p. 269 (Doc 102606); RH 10-15-95 (Doc 136236); ST 05-14-96 (Doc 162130); AH p. 448 (Doc 2843); GW15 p. 512 (Doc 30184); MH p. 353 (Doc 47304); ML p. 201 (Doc 48897); RC p. 257 (Doc 58822); 6T p. 305 (Doc 88792); RH 07-11-12 (Doc 150158); ST 08-03-91 (Doc 160210); ST 05-14-96 (Doc 162125); SpTA11 p. 15 (Doc 174263); 21MR p. 222 (Doc 212322)

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“And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.” Luke 16:20-21

In his teaching, Christ illustrated this condition of selfishness by a parable. He said: “There was a certain rich man which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with

the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table." [Lk 16:19-21] Self is here represented by the rich man living in a mansion, clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day, while the suffering cause of God is allowed to lie at the gate, fed from the crumbs which fall from the rich man's table.

Why is it that there are not more missionaries in the field to-day? Why are the calls that come in from every land for men to spread a knowledge of the truth, passed by unheeded?—It is because there are none to send. The laymen, though they have the precious light of truth, excuse themselves on the plea that they cannot preach. But this excuse will not avail. Laymen can minister. It is their privilege to lay hold of divine power with one hand, and with the other to reach forth to save humanity. **RH 10-13-96 (Docs 136749,51)**

"There was a certain rich man," Christ said, "which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table." [Lk 16:19-21]

The rich man did not belong to the class represented by the unjust judge, who openly declared his disregard for God and man. He claimed to be a son of Abraham. He did not treat the beggar with violence or require him to go away because the sight of him was disagreeable. If the poor, loathsome specimen of humanity could be comforted by beholding him as he entered his gates, the rich man was willing that he should remain. But he was selfishly indifferent to the needs of his suffering brother.

There were then no hospitals in which the sick might be cared for. The suffering and needy were brought to the notice of those to whom the Lord had entrusted wealth, that they might receive help and sympathy. Thus it was with the beggar and the rich man. Lazarus was in great need of help; for he was without friends, home, money, or food. Yet he was allowed to remain in this condition day after day, while the wealthy nobleman had every want supplied. The one who was abundantly able to relieve the sufferings of his fellow creature, lived to himself, as many live today.

There are today close beside us many who are hungry, naked, and homeless. A neglect to impart of our means to these needy, suffering ones places upon us a burden of guilt which we shall one day fear to meet. All covetousness is condemned as idolatry. All selfish indulgence is an offense in God's sight. **COL pp. 260-61 (Docs 5430-33)**

“This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.”
John 12:6

Judas was treasurer for the disciples, and from their little store he had secretly drawn for his own use, thus narrowing down their resources to a meager pittance. He was eager to put into the bag all that he could obtain. The treasure in the bag was often drawn upon to relieve the poor; and when something that Judas did not think essential was bought, he would say, Why is this waste? why was not the cost of this put into the bag that I carry for the poor? Now the act of Mary was in such marked contrast to his selfishness that he was put to shame; and according to his custom, he sought to assign a worthy motive for his objection to her gift. Turning to the disciples, he asked, “Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.” [Jn 12:5] Judas had no heart for the poor. Had Mary’s ointment been sold, and the proceeds fallen into his possession, the poor would have received no benefit. **DA p. 559 (Doc 17946)**

General principles touching his case had been laid down by the Great Teacher, but Judas had not profited by these instructions. Instead, his selfishness had strengthened. This had tainted and corrupted the whole man. When Mary made her offering to the Saviour, Judas talked about the poor, “not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.” [Jn 12:6] He who was about to sell his Master for thirty pieces of silver had no heart for the poor. He who stole from the treasure in the bag was capable only of cruel, mean actions. He carried blasphemy in his heart. Had Mary’s ointment been sold, and the proceeds fallen into Judas’ possession, not one particle improved would have been the condition of the poor. **RH 08-07-00 (Doc 140004)**

Mary’s act displeased Judas. “Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?” he asked angrily. “This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.” [Jn 12:5-6] He put a price upon all his actions, and paid himself according to his own selfish estimate. **20MR p. 146 (Doc 210114)**

“I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.” Acts 20:35

Hoarded wealth is not merely useless, it is a curse. In this life it is a snare to the soul, drawing the affections away from the heavenly treasure. In the great day of God its witness to unused talents and neglected opportunities will condemn its possessor . . . He who realizes that his money is a latent from God will use it economically, and will feel it a duty to save that he may give. **FLB p. 162 (Doc 24237)**

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“Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness...Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality...Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shall heap coals of fire on his head.” Rom 12:8-20

“Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.” “Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.” [Rom 12:13-16; 13:1-3] Angels in the form of men have come as strangers to the dwellings of the righteous, to preserve them in times of peril, to protect them from the plans the enemy had laid to destroy them. Angels, as travelers, visited Abraham, and his courtesy to them, whom he supposed to be men like himself, was rewarded with the promise from God that Sarah should have a son. Lot, also, urging the strangers to abide with him because it was unsafe to remain in the street, entertained angels, and was blessed by being delivered from the city that was doomed to destruction. **ST 08-03-91 (Doc 160208)**

Again he says: "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality." [Rom 12:9-13]

This admonition has been strangely neglected: "Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality." [Rom 12:13] Plans have been devised by which the loving attentions shown in hospitality and visiting, a work which should bind heart to heart, are cut off. Let not methods and plans be invented which will give no opportunity for brotherly love to live. The spirit of covetousness, O, let it die! Our Heavenly Father gives us of his bounty freely, and for his sake who gave his life for us we should entertain our brethren and sisters. **RH 07-04-99 (Docs 138971-72)**

Additional References:

19MR p. 204 (Doc 208834); ST 10-20-98 (Doc 163596); 11MR pp. 278-79 (Doc 199900); 1T pp. 692-93 (Doc 80800); 3T p. 224 (Doc 83000); BEcho 01-14-01 (Doc 117335); RH 05-14-01 (Doc 140726); RH 06-06-07 (Doc 146320); RH 08-12-09 (Doc 147961); LLM p. 50 (Doc 223965)

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"And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." 1 Cor 13:3

But God would not have rich or poor entertain the idea for a moment that he is dependent upon them, nor that their liberalities can in any case supply defects of Christian character. Liberality is but one of the traits which are characteristic of a Christian. The inspired apostle says, "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity [love], it profiteth me nothing." [1 Cor 13:3] Charity is thus defined: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh

not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth.” [1 Cor 13:4-7] The character of a tree bearing all these fruits may be readily discerned. For “by their fruits ye shall know them.” [Mt 7:20] As followers of Jesus Christ, we must be wide awake to discern with heavenly eyesight the devices of Satan. God has given us his word as a chart to mark out our way to the eternal shore. With the Bible for our guide, aided by our own reason kept clear by strictly temperate habits, we may be able to acquit ourselves like servants of the Master who have duties to perform and eternal interests to secure. **RH 10-31-78 (Doc 27494)**

Without a living faith in Christ as a personal Saviour it is impossible to make our influence felt in a skeptical world. We cannot give to others that which we do not ourselves possess. It is in proportion to our own devotion and consecration to Christ that we exert an influence for the blessing and uplifting of mankind. If there is no actual service, no genuine love, no reality of experience, there is no power to help, no connection with heaven, no savor of Christ in the life. Unless the Holy Spirit can use us as agents through whom to communicate to the world the truth as it is in Jesus, we are as salt that has lost its savor and is entirely worthless. By our lack of the grace of Christ we testify to the world that the truth which we claim to believe has no sanctifying power; and thus, so far as our influence goes, we make of no effect the word of God. “If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing.” [1 Cor 13:1-3, A.R.V] **MB pp. 37-38 (Doc 98181)**

It is upon Christlike love that brotherhood depends. Without this love nothing can be done toward fulfilling God’s purpose for humanity. Without it all effort is without avail. Paul declares: “If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. . . . And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing. . . . Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it

shall be done away. . . . But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.” [1 Cor 13:1, 3, 8, 13] **RH 07-21-10 (Doc 148615)**

Additional References:

RC p. 268 (Doc 58902); RH 02-09-86 (Doc 130775); ST 01-21-86 (Doc 157619); ST 08-10-91 (Doc 160216); AA p. 318 (Doc 819); 5T p. 168 (Doc 86322); AUCR 10-15-03 (Doc 115461); HM 01-01-92 (Doc 122506); RH 11-17-96 (Doc 136820); RH 05-14-01 (Doc 140729); RH 03-11-02 (Doc 141468); RH 07-21-04 (Doc 143720); RH 06-06-07 (Doc 146323); ST 02-01-83 (Doc 156012); SW 01-01-01 (Doc 167659); 15MR p. 177 (Doc 204075)

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“Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”
1 Cor 16:1-2

This matter of giving is not left to impulse. God has given us definite instruction in regard to it. He has specified tithes and offerings as the measure of our obligation. And He desires us to give regularly and systematically. Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, “Concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.” [1 Cor 16:1-2] Let each regularly examine his income, which is all a blessing from God, and set apart the tithe as a separate fund, to be sacredly the Lord’s. This fund should not in any case be devoted to any other use; it is to be devoted solely to support the ministry of the gospel. After the tithe is set apart, let gifts and offering be apportioned, “as God hath prospered” [1 Cor 16:2] you. — *Review and Herald*, May 9, 1893. **CSW pp. 129-30 (Doc 14067)**

The plan of systematic benevolence does not press heavily upon any one man. “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every

one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.” [1 Cor 16:1-2] The poor are not excluded from the privilege of giving. They, as well as the wealthy, may act a part in this work. The lesson that Christ gave in regard to the widow’s two mites shows us that the smallest willing offerings of the poor, if given from a heart of love, are as acceptable as the largest donations of the rich. **3T p. 398 (Doc 83460)**

The apostle Paul has something to say on the subject of system in giving: “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.” [1 Cor 16:1-2] **BEcho 12-09-95 (Doc 116858)**

Additional References:

RH 12-15-74 (Doc 126759); RH 05-09-93 (Doc 134991)

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“As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.” 2 Cor 6:10

“By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things.” [2 Cor 6:6-10]

Read these words carefully, and ask yourselves if you have not been leaving undone much that God expects you to do, much that you should do as those who have the light of truth. Will you not be thoroughly converted, that you may shine brightly for the Lord amidst the moral darkness of the world? **AUCR 12-15-03 (Docs 115479-80)**

“We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee; behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.) Giving no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed; but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.” [2 Cor 6:1-10]

Let every man who engages in the work of the ministry not merely read, but study the instruction that the apostle Paul has written under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, and then practice the same. The life that Paul describes was also the life of our Pattern, the Majesty of heaven, who clothed his divinity with humanity, and came to our world to associate with and to save those who are lost, to lift up the fallen, saying, “Follow me. I am your Redeemer, I am your Restorer. I will restore you.” **RH 12-11-94 (Docs 135822-23)**

Liberality both in spiritual and in temporal things is taught in the lesson of seed sowing. The Lord says, “Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters.” [Isa 32:20] “This I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.” [2 Cor. 9:6] To sow beside all waters means a continual imparting of God’s gifts. It means giving wherever the cause of God or the needs of humanity demand our aid. This will not tend to poverty. “He which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.” [2 Cor 9:6] The sower multiplies his seed by casting it away. So it is with those who are faithful in distributing God’s gifts. By imparting they increase their blessings. God has promised them a sufficiency that they may continue to give. “Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom.” [Lk 6:38] **COL pp. 85-6 (Doc 4981)**

Additional References:

Ed p. 68 (Doc 19686); FE p. 533 (Doc 26690); SD p. 96 (Doc 70261); RH 11-11-09 (Doc 148094); ST 07-20-04 (Docs 166256-57); ST 08-30-05 (Doc 166605); 1MR p. 64 (Doc 186476); LLM pp. 404-05); SpM p. 441 (Docs 231398,400)

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“Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness. But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.” 2 Cor 9:5-7

Let every one closely investigate his expenditures, and see how he can deny himself and help the needy. There is a home in preparation for the aged poor. This is a precious object to which to give a portion of God’s entrusted goods. “Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not of covetousness.” [2 Cor 9:5] Now hear the words of inspiration, “But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.” [2 Cor 9:6] Do we believe God? I believe every word spoken by the prophets and apostles inspired by the Holy Spirit. “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.” [2 Cor 9:7] Now hear the assurance that God has given to those who would follow out his instruction: “God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work (as it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth forever. Now he that ministereth seed to the sower [which is our heavenly Father] both minister bread for your food, and multiply

your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness): being enriched in everything to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God. For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God; while by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men: and by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.” [2 Cor 9:8-15] **MM 11-01-94 (Doc 123292)**

Through the grace of Christ our efforts to bless others are not only the means of our growth in grace, but they will enhance our future, eternal happiness. To those who have been co-workers with Christ it will be said, “Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” [Mt 25:23] Although we have no merit in ourselves, in the great goodness and love of God we are rewarded as if the merit were our own. When we have done all the good we can possibly do, we are still unprofitable servants. We have done only what as our duty. What we have accomplished has been wrought solely through the grace of Christ, and no reward is due to us from God on the ground of our merit. But through the merit of our Saviour, every promise that God has made will be fulfilled, and every man will be rewarded according to his deeds. The precious rewards of the future will be proportioned to the work of faith and labor of love in the present life. “He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.” [2 Cor 9:6] We should be most grateful that now in probationary time through the infinite mercy of God, we are permitted to sow the seed for our future harvest. We should carefully consider what the harvest will be. Whether the crown of our eternal rejoicing shall be bright or dim depends upon our own course of action. We may make our calling and election sure, and may come into possession of the rich inheritance, or we may defraud ourselves of the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. **RH 06-27-93 (Doc 135096)**

I spoke from the words, “He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.” [2 Cor 9:6] The manner in which the sowing was to be done, is presented in the following words: “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him

give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." [2 Cor 9:7] No selfish man is a Christian. Jesus says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." [Lk 9:23] Genuine self-denial will be practiced by all who follow Christ.

The apostle plainly declares what is the duty of the individual members of the church. He says, "Let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." [2 Cor 9:7] The promise of God is that "he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." [2 Cor 9:6] The Lord will not forget your labors of love. In this country, times are very hard, and money is very scarce. Some will learn lessons of economy at this time, who never knew what economy was before. Yet we should not forget that we are in the service of God, and that he owns us, and he owns the world. Though we are all poor and unable to do large things, the Lord calls upon every soul to practice self-denial in this time of scarcity, and be able to give, not grudgingly nor of necessity, but with cheerful gratitude for God's unspeakable gift. We are to engage in this work seriously, remembering that now is the time to lay up treasure in heaven, and to send it on beforehand. We shall have to do this through strict self-denial; but every man, woman, and youth, who claims to be the property of Christ, has a work to do in building up the kingdom of God. Now is the sowing time, the reaping time is in the future. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you. If you do your best, if you impart to others that which you have, God will see your labor of love, and will know the measure of every act of self-denial for his name's sake. You will be tested and proved, that it may be made manifest how deep and genuine is your love for Christ and your neighbor, and these tests will come closer and closer upon us. Churches must be erected. Wherever there is a little flock, it must be fed with meat in due season. The last message of mercy is to be given to the world even to the uttermost part of the earth. Those who have physical strength are to employ that strength in the service of God. They are to labor with their hands, and earn means to use in the cause of God. Those who can obtain work are to work faithfully, and to improve the opportunities they see to help those who cannot obtain labor. God is able to make his grace abound toward you, giving you a heart of tenderness and love for the souls of those for whom Christ has paid the ransom of his own life. "That ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work; (as it is written, He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness remaineth forever. Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister

bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;) being enriched in everything to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.” [2 Cor 9:8-11] **RH 08-21-94 (Docs 135681,86)**

Additional References:

AA p. 342 (Doc 880); CH p. 311 (Doc 12025); CS p. 171 (Docs 13386-88); CS p. 199 (Doc 13458); ED p. 109 (Doc 19824); ML p. 116 (Docs 48391,94); PP p. 528 (Doc 53138); 5T p. 735 (Doc 87860); 6T p. 481 (Doc 89370); 8T p. 139 (Doc 90723); MB p. 112 (Doc 98385); UL p. 113 (Docs 99044-45); WM pp. 316-17 (Doc 102346); GCDB 03-02-99 (Doc 120420); HM 10-01-94 (Doc 122652); HM 12-01-94 (Doc 122664); PUR 11-14-07 (Doc 124691); RH 09-10-89 (Doc 132976); RH 03-16-93 (Doc 134999); RH 01-15-95 (Doc 135866)

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“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” 2 Cor 8:9

God has made man his brother’s keeper, and will hold him responsible for this great trust. God has taken man into union with himself, and he has planned that men shall work in harmony with him. He has provided the system of beneficence, that man whom he has made in his image may be self-denying in character, like Him whose infinite nature is love. He has appointed man as his almoner to distribute the blessings he has given him. “Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” [2 Cor 8:9] God has done for our good all that a kind Heavenly Father could do. He appeals to humanity whether he has failed in a single instance to do all that he could do for the highest interest of man. “Judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?” [Isa 5:3] **RH 10-31-78 (Doc 27498)**

The psalmist says: “The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire

of every living thing.” [Psa 145:15] The Lord has claims upon every living soul, and those whom he blesses with means should help those who are not thus blessed. “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes, he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” [2 Cor 8:9] The followers of Jesus are required to practice self-denial, to cultivate the same beneficent spirit that characterized our Lord. They are to remember the poor, and be kind and sympathetic to the sorrowing, and thus show that they are following in the footsteps of Jesus. “For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. . . . Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” [Mt 5:45, 48] **RH 06-26-94 (Doc 135611)**

Dear Brethren and Sisters in America: I would appeal to you in behalf of the Southern field. If we consulted our own ease and pleasure, we would not desire to enter this field; but we are not to consult our own ease. “Even Christ pleased not himself”; [Rom 15:3] but we are to consider the fact that that field is no more discouraging to those who would be laborers together with God than was the field of the world as it presented itself before the only-begotten Son of God. When He came to earth to seek and to save that which was lost, He did not consult His own ease or pleasure. He left His high command, He laid aside His heavenly honor and glory, He laid off His glorious diadem and royal robe, and left the royal courts, in order that He might come to earth to save fallen man. Though He possessed eternal riches, yet for our sakes He became poor, that He might enrich the human race. By accepting the Son of God as their Redeemer, by exercising faith in Him, the sons and the daughters of Adam may become heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. The apostle says: “Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” Christ was willing to come to a world that was all marred and seared with the curse--the result of Adam’s transgression of the law of God. He was willing to undertake the case of fallen beings who had lost their original holiness, and who were in ignorance of the perfection of God’s character. He was willing to come to bring back to loyalty those who were not subject to God’s moral government. In the grand counsels of Heaven it was found that it was positively necessary that there should be a revelation of God to man in the person of His only-begotten Son. He came to earth to be “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” [Jn 1:9] **SW p. 25 (Doc 71650)**

Additional References:

LHU p. 278 (Doc 38888); 5T p. 730 (Doc 87847); RH 09-03-95 (Doc 136176); RH 10-22-08 (Doc 147401); ST 05-09-92 (Doc 160517); RH 02-27-94 (Doc 135433); RH 09-04-94 (Doc 135706); RH 07-25-12 (Doc 150188); RH 11-26-95 (Doc 136289); RH 12-14-97 (Doc 137665); RH 02-18-02 (Doc 141423); AA p. 519 (Doc 1333); RH 05-03-92 (Doc 134424); ST 05-14-02 (Doc 165454); ApG56 08-01-98 (Doc 185508); BEcho 10-08-94 (Doc 116676); RH 04-09-95 (Doc 135972); ST 02-03-88 (Doc 158888); TSA p. 38 (Doc 94517); ST 07-29-89 (Doc 159580); RH 05-15-00 (Doc 139809); AUCR 07-21-99 (Doc 114886); PH152 p. 42 (Doc 182783); Ev p. 240 (Doc 21325); RH 12-06-87 (Doc 131894); MB pp. 6-7 (Doc 98096); AA pp. 332-33 (Doc 854); CS p. 19 (Doc 12993); GW15 p. 293 (Doc 29558); HP p. 40 (Doc 32581); LHU p. 38 (Doc 37442); LHU p. 247 (Doc 38709); MH p. 501 (Doc 47771); 4T p. 457 (Doc 85246); TMK p. 44 (Doc 94885); AU Gleaner 12-19-06 (Doc 114739); AU Gleaner 09-25-07 (Doc 114752); HM 06-01-97 (Doc 122751); PUR 07-14-04 (Doc 124423); PUR 10-31-07 (Doc 124680); RH 07-09-95 (Docs 136101,103)

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“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” Gal 6:10

“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” [Galatians 6:10]

In a special sense, Christ has laid upon His church the duty of caring for the needy among its own members. He suffers His poor to be in the borders of every church. They are always to be among us, and He places upon the members of the church a personal responsibility to care for them.

As the members of a true family care for one another, ministering to the sick, supporting the weak, teaching the ignorant, training the inexperienced, so is “the household of faith” to care for its needy and helpless ones. Upon no consideration are these to be passed by. **MH p. 201 (Docs 46881-83)**

“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” [Gal. 6:10]

In the Lord's plan human beings have been made necessary to one another. If all would do their utmost to help those who need their help, their unselfish sympathy and love, what a blessed work might be done. To every one God has entrusted talents. These talents we are to use to help one another to walk in the narrow path. In this work each one is connected with the other, and all are united with Christ. It is by unselfish service that we improve and increase our talents.

The members of the church of God on this earth are as the different parts of a machine, all closely related to one another, and all closely related to and dependent on one great center. There is to be unity in diversity. No member of the Lord's firm can work successfully in independence, detached from the others. . . . All are to use their entrusted capabilities in His service, that each may minister to the perfection of the whole. Each is to work under the supervision of God. **OHC p. 182 (Docs 50683-85)**

The Needy of the Household of Faith. — Our love for God is to be expressed in doing good to the needy and suffering of the household of faith whose necessities come to our knowledge and require our care. Every soul is under special obligation to God to notice His worthy poor with particular compassion. Under no consideration are these to be passed by. — **Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 271.**

“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” [Gal 6:10]

In a special sense Christ has laid upon His church the duty of caring for the needy among its own members. He suffers His poor to be in the borders of every church. They are always to be among us, and He places upon the members of the church a personal responsibility to care for them.

As the members of a true family care for one another, ministering to the sick, supporting the weak, teaching the ignorant, training the inexperienced, so is the “household of faith” to care for its needy and helpless ones. — *Ministry of Healing*, p. 201. **WM p. 178 (Docs 102351-54)**

Additional References:

FE pp. 249-50 (Doc 26063); ML p. 245 (Docs 49124-26); UL p. 92 (Doc 98932); AUCR 01-01-00 (Doc 115091); RH 01-23-94 (Doc 135378); ST 11-14-92 (Doc 160721); SW 01-15-01 (Doc 167669)

170 *Working with the Poor*

“Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.” Eph 4:28

There are those who come in to enjoy the privileges of the banquet of truth who have not eaten the flesh and drunk the blood of the Son of God. They claim to believe and teach the word to others, but they work the works of unrighteousness. “But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” [Eph 4:20-32] **RH 05-08-00 (Doc 139788)**

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“Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.”
Heb 13:3

“Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.” “Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain

strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body." [Rom 12:13-16; Heb 13:1-3] Angels in the form of men have come as strangers to the dwellings of the righteous, to preserve them in times of peril, to protect them from the plans the enemy had laid to destroy them. Angels, as travelers, visited Abraham, and his courtesy to them, whom he supposed to be men like himself, was rewarded with the promise from God that Sarah should have a son. Lot, also, urging the strangers to abide with him because it was unsafe to remain in the street, entertained angels, and was blessed by being delivered from the city that was doomed to destruction. **ST 08-03-91 (Doc 160208)**

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"Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away." James 1:9-10

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways. Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted; but the rich, in that he is made low; because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth; so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." [James 1:5-12] **GVB 04-04-01 (Doc 118643)**

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. Let the brother

172 *Working with the Poor*

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Let us take in the idea of the privilege we have. There are so many who, when they are in trouble, forget the invitation God has given, and begin to look for human help. They go to human beings for aid, and this is the way in which their experience becomes feeble. In all our trials we will seek the Lord most earnestly, remembering that we are His property, His children by adoption, and we shall receive help. We are His by creation, we are His by redemption. By the cords of divine love we are bound to the Source of all power and strength. If we will only make God our dependence, asking Him for what we want as a little child asks his father for what he wants, we shall obtain a rich experience. We shall learn that God is the source of all strength and power. **2SAT p. 163 (Docs 216443-44)**

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"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." James 1:27

The plan of Systematic Benevolence is pleasing to God. I was pointed back to the days of the apostles, and saw that God laid the plan by the descent of his Holy Spirit, and by the gift of prophecy counseled his people in regard to a system of benevolence. All were to share in this work of imparting of their carnal things to those who ministered unto them in spiritual things. They were also taught that the widows and fatherless had a claim upon their charity. Pure and undefiled religion is defined, to visit the widows and fatherless in their affliction, and to keep unspotted from the world. I saw it was not merely to sympathize with them in their affliction by comforting words, but to aid them, if needy, with their substance. God has given health to young men and women, and they can obtain a great blessing by aiding the widow and fatherless in their affliction. I saw that God required young men to sacrifice more for the good of

others. He claims more of them than they are willing to perform. If they keep themselves unspotted from the world, cease to follow its fashions, and lay by that which the lovers of pleasure spend in useless articles to gratify pride, and give it to the worthy afflicted ones, and to sustain the cause, they will have the approval of Him who says, "I know thy works." [Rev 2:2, 9, 13, 19; 3:1, 8, 15] **TDG p. 370 (Doc 98054)**

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"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world". [James 1:27]

Among all whose needs demand our interest, the widow and the fatherless have the strongest claims upon our tender sympathy and care. . . . The father who has died in the faith, resting upon the eternal promise of God, left his loved ones in full trust that the Lord would care for them. And how does the Lord provide for these bereaved ones? He does not work a miracle in sending manna from heaven, He does not send ravens to bring them food; but He works a miracle upon human hearts, He expels selfishness from the soul, He unseals the fountain of benevolence. He tests the love of His professed followers by

committing to their tender mercies the afflicted and bereaved ones, the poor and the orphan. **ML p. 239 (Docs 49093-95)**

Additional References:

TDG p. 370 (Doc 98054); FE p. 461 (Doc 26483); RH 07-11-99 (Doc 138994); KC pp. 65-66 (Doc 223061); 3T p. 516 (Doc 83786); WM p. 240 (Doc 102538); WM p. 214 (Doc 102462); YI 08-331-93 (Doc 170193); 2T pp. 252-53 (Doc 81382); 4T pp. 494-95 (Doc 85344); HR 03-01-72 (Doc 121508); RH 03-12-72 (Doc 126247); CH p. 629 (Doc 12954); CS p. 163 (Doc 13373); 6T p. 281 (Doc 88722); TM p. 125 (Doc 93363); GCB 04-23-01 (Doc 118983); GCDB 03-18-97 (Doc 120242); GCDB 03-07-99 (Doc 120481); RJ 06-27-93 (Doc 135083); RH 05-04-97 (Doc 137216); RH 01-25-98 (Doc 137765); ST 10-23-84 (Doc 157170); ST 02-24-90 (Doc 159821); PH086 p. 18 (Doc 183281); FLB p. 239 (Docs 24711-12); MH p. 205 (Docs 46895-96); RC p. 161 (Doc 58187); RC p. 252 (Docs 58789-92); 4BSG p. 75 (Doc 77591); 1T p. 285 (Doc 79869); 2T p. 25 (Doc 80912); 6T p. 263 (Doc 88669); WM p. 35 (Doc 101949); GS 02-01-60 (Docs 120520-22); HM 11-01-89 (Doc 122408); HM 07-01-91 (Doc 122476); RH 06-25-61 (Doc 125491); RH 11-26-61 (Doc 125542); RH 07-05-75 (Doc 126931); RH 08-16-81 (Doc 128302); RH 04-20-86 (Doc 130922); RH 02-10-91 (Doc 133797); RH 11-12-95 (Doc 136274); RH 04-10-00 (Docs 139737-38); ST 08-03-76 (Docs 152655-56); ST 08-03-91 (Docs 160207-09); ST 08-08095 (Doc 161847); ST 12-27-99 (Doc 164183); SW 08-04-08 (Doc 169169); PH146 p. 27 (Doc 181536); 6MR p. 199 (Doc 193541); 7MR p. 219 (Doc 194848); 12MR p. 229 (Doc 200785); 13MR p. 340 (Doc 202242); RH 10-06-91 (Doc 134150)

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“For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath no God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath

promised them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.” James 2:2-9

“For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?” [James 2:2-5]

Although Christ was rich in the heavenly courts, yet He became poor that we through His poverty might be made rich. [2 Cor 8:9] Jesus honored the poor by sharing their humble condition. From the history of His life we are to learn how to treat the poor. Some carry the duty of beneficence to extremes, and really hurt the needy by doing too much for them. The poor do not always exert themselves as they should. While they are not to be neglected and left to suffer, they must be taught to help themselves. **CH p. 228 (Docs 11798-99)**

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exert themselves as they should. While they are not to be neglected and left to suffer, they must be taught to help themselves.

The cause of God should not be overlooked that the poor may receive our first attention. Christ once gave His disciples a very important lesson on this point. When Mary poured the ointment on the head of Jesus, covetous Judas made a plea in behalf of the poor, murmuring at what he considered a waste of money. But Jesus vindicated the act, saying: "Why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on Me." "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." [Mt 26:10, 13] By this we are taught that Christ is to be honored in the consecration of the best of our substance. Should our whole attention be directed to relieving the wants of the poor, God's cause would be neglected. Neither will suffer if His stewards do their duty, but the cause of Christ should come first.

The poor should be treated with as much interest and attention as the rich. The practice of honoring the rich and slighting and neglecting the poor is a crime in the sight of God. Those who are surrounded with all the comforts of life, or who are petted and pampered by the world because they are rich, do not feel the need of sympathy and tender consideration as do persons whose lives have been one long struggle with poverty. The latter have but little in this life to make them happy or cheerful, and they will appreciate sympathy and love. Physicians and helpers should in no case neglect this class, for by so doing they may neglect Christ in the person of His saints. **4T pp. 550-51 (Docs 85509-12)**

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Our Sanitarium was erected to benefit suffering humanity, rich and poor, the world over. Many of our churches have but little interest in this institution, notwithstanding they have sufficient evidence that it is one of the instrumentalities designed of God to bring men and women under the influence of truth, and to save many souls. The churches that have the poor among them should not neglect their stewardship, and throw the burden of the poor and sick upon the Sanitarium. All the members of the several churches are responsible before God for their afflicted ones. They should bear their own burdens. If they have sick persons among them, whom they wish to be benefited by treatment, they should, if able, send them to the Sanitarium. In doing this, they will not only be patronizing the institution which God has established, but will be helping those who need help,—caring for the poor as God requires us to do.

It was not the purpose of God that poverty should ever leave the world. The ranks of society were never to be equalized; for the diversity of condition which characterizes our race is one of the means by which God has designed to prove and develop character. Many have urged with great enthusiasm that all men should have an equal share in the temporal blessings of God; but this was not the purpose of the Creator. Christ has said that we shall have the poor always with us. The poor, as well as the rich, are the purchase of his blood; and among his professed followers, in nine cases out of ten, the former serve him with singleness of purpose, while the latter are constantly fastening their affections on their earthly treasures, and Christ is forgotten. The cares of this life and the greed for riches eclipse the glory of the eternal world. It would be the greatest misfortune that has ever befallen mankind, if all were to be placed upon an equality in worldly possessions. **PH100 pp. 9-12 (Docs 184658-63)**

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“If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?” James 2:15-16

You have lost much that you can never regain. You have not improved your opportunities for doing good, and your unfaithfulness has been entered upon the books of heaven. The life of Christ was characterized by self-denial, self-sacrifice, and disinterested benevolence. You do not take a right view of the preparation necessary for the kingdom of God. Your ideas are altogether too meager. Talk is cheap stuff; it does not cost much. Works, fruits, will determine the character of the tree. What fruits have you borne? The apostle James exhorts his brethren: “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; What doth it profit?” [James 2:14-16] Your good wishes, my brother, will not supply the need. Works must testify to the sincerity of your sympathy and love. How many times have you carried the above representation out to the letter? **2T p. 685-86 (Doc 82382)**

“Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him? But ye have despised the poor.” “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.” [James 2:5-6, 14-17] You may believe all the truth; yet if its principles are not carried out in your lives, your profession will not save you. Satan believes and trembles. [James 2:19] He works. He knows his time is short, and he has come down in great power to do his evil works according to his faith. But God’s professed people do not support their faith by their works. They believe in the shortness of time, yet grasp just as eagerly after this world’s goods as though the world were to stand a thousand years as it now is.

Selfishness marks the course of many. “But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in *deed* and in *truth*. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.” [1 Jn 3:17-22] **2T pp. 160-61 (Docs 81178-79)**

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Any neglect of duty to the needy and to the afflicted is a neglect of duty to Christ in the person of His saints. When the cases of all come in review before God, the question What did they profess? is never asked, but, What have they

180 *Working with the Poor*

done? Have they been doers of the Word? Have they lived for themselves? or have they been exercised in works of benevolence, in deeds of kindness, in love preferring others before themselves, and denying themselves that they might bless others? If the record shows that this has been their life, that their characters have been marked with tenderness, self-denial, and benevolence, they will receive the blessed assurance and benediction from Christ, "Well done" . . . [Mt 25:21] **TMK p. 334 (Docs 96241-42)**

Additional References:

MM pp. 251-52 (Doc 42073); WM p. 32 (Docs 101942-43); RH 12-18-94 (Docs 135824-25); RH 01-19-97 (Doc 137006); RH 12-24-01 (Doc 141246); RH 03-04-02 (Doc 141461)

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"Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth." James 5:4

The Scriptures describe the condition of the world just before Christ's second coming. James the apostle pictures the greed and oppression that will prevail. He says, "Go to now, ye rich men, . . . ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton. Ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you." [James 5:1-6] This is a picture of what exists today. By every species of oppression and extortion, men are piling up colossal fortunes, while the cries of starving humanity are coming up before God. **COL p. 170 (Doc 5199)**

Hoarded wealth is not merely useless, it is a curse. In this life it is a snare to the soul, drawing the affections away from the heavenly treasure. In the great day of God its witness to unused talents and neglected opportunities will condemn its possessor. The Scripture says, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted,

and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall bear witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.” [James 5:1-4] **COL p. 352 (Doc 5709)**

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“But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.” 1 John 3:17-19

The Lord saw that it was essential for us to be surrounded with the poor, who in their helplessness and need would lay claim to our ministrations. They would be an aid to us in perfecting Christian character; for in providing food for their tables and clothing for their bodies, we would cultivate the attributes of the character of Christ. If we had not the poor among us, we would lose much; for in order to perfect Christian character, we must deny self, take up the cross, and follow where Christ, our Example, leads the way. Those who extravagantly expend means in pleasing themselves in the gratification of appetite or in any other way, make self an idol, and sacrifice at the altar of self that which would give bread to the hungry, provide comfortable clothing for the naked, furnish homes for the homeless, and relieve the sorrows of the poor. The Lord says, “I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.” [Mt 9:13] Let us at once seek to realize what is our obligation to the Lord’s human family, and do our duty to as many as possible. We may minister to few or many, but if we do our best, it is all the Lord requires. The King will say to such, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?” [Mt 25:40;

182 *Working with the Poor*

1 Jn 3:16-17] Christ himself became poor for our sake, that we, through his poverty, might come into possession of eternal riches. He has adopted the poor and the suffering as his own peculiar treasure, and has left them to the care of his church. His disciples are to be stewards of his gifts, and to use his bounties in relieving suffering humanity. They are to feed and clothe and shelter those who have need. Parents are to present to their children the example of being God's almoners, in order that they in turn may become missionaries, may be tenderhearted, pitiful, kind, patient laborers together with God. They are to work as co-partners with Christ to restore, to heal, to save those who are perishing. **RH 10-15-95 (Doc 136242)**

God's people should exercise faith, bringing practical religion into the home, the neighborhood, the church, and the institutions that have been created to advance the work of God on this earth. There should be a far more genuine practice of faith in the every-day life. God's people must reveal the attributes of Christ,—the meekness, the generosity, the tenderness, that He always exercised in behalf of the poor, the distressed, and the needy. “Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?” [1 Jh 3:17] Let there be no shutting up of the bowels of compassion; for those who do this are weakened, and deprived of the Spirit of God. **1888 pp. 1767-68 (Doc 222464)**

Those who have the love of Christ in their hearts will care for the needy and afflicted. “But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.” [1 Jn 3:17] The principles of the last six of God's commandments are summed up in the words, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” [Lev 19:18; Mt 19:19] **YI 12-09-97 (Doc 171119)**

Additional References:

HM 08-01-96 (Doc 122709); RH 04-03-00 (Docs 139724-25); RH 02-10-91 (Doc 133801); 1888 pp. 135-36 (Doc 218208); ST 10-20-98 (Doc 163601); WB 09-09-02 (Docs 13937-39); 7MR p. 232 (Doc 194881); 1888 p. 1780 (Doc 222498); 2T p. 161 (Doc 81179); RH 10-06-96 (Doc 136743)

“When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him.”
Job 29:11-12

The Lord Jesus said, “Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.” [Mt 5:7] There never was a time when there was greater need for, the exercise of mercy than to-day. The poor are all around us, the distressed, the afflicted, the sorrowing, and those who are ready to perish. Those who have acquired riches have acquired them through the exercise of the talents that were given them of God; but these talents for the acquiring of property were given to them that they might relieve those who are in poverty. These gifts were bestowed upon men by Him who maketh His sun to shine and His rain to fall upon the just and the unjust, that by the fruitfulness of the earth men might have abundant supplies for all their need. The fields have been blessed of God, and “of his goodness he hath prepared for the poor.” [Psa 68:10] In the providence of God events have been so ordered that the poor are always with us, in order that there may be a constant exercise in the human heart of the attributes of mercy and love. Man is to cultivate the tenderness and compassion of Christ; he is not to separate himself from the sorrowing, the afflicted, the needy, and the distressed. Job declares: “When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me; because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy.” [Job 29:11-13]

How many there are who claim to be followers of Christ, yet who do not follow him in truth. They do not manifest the sympathy and love of Christ by being merciful and compassionate. They do not make the widow’s heart sing for joy; they treat the fatherless with coldness, indifference, or contempt. Said Job: “I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor; and the cause which I knew not I searched out.” [Job 29:14] This was an evidence that Job had righteousness that was after Christ’s order. Through Jesus men may possess a spirit of tender pity toward the needy and distressed. They may have the mind of Christ. He was the Son of God, rich in heavenly treasures, yet for our sake he became poor, he descended to the lowest humiliation and was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,

that he might exalt us to be joint heirs with himself. The whole world was in need of that which Christ alone could give them. He did not withdraw himself from those who called upon him for help. He did not do as many now do, say, "I wish they would not trouble me with their affairs, I want to hoard up my means, to invest it in houses and lands." Jesus, the Majesty of heaven, turned from the splendor of his heavenly home, and in the gracious purpose of his heart he demonstrated the character of God to men throughout the world. The requirement of God from those who claim to be his children is that they be doers of his word, that they follow his example, represent the life of Christ in tender, pitying love to the world; that they reflect his image.

Jesus says, "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father which is in heaven is merciful." [Lk 6:36] To pursue the course that Jesus did, to follow in his divine footsteps, is not in harmony with the feelings of the natural heart; but if we are Christians, we shall practice the words and works of Christ, who gave himself in order to ransom an apostate race. The root of selfishness has a firm growth in many hearts, and worldliness and pride spring from this root; but selfishness is not a Christian characteristic; it is an attribute of the great apostate. No one can live for himself and at the same time be united with Christ. Conformity to the world, attachment to the world, manifests a decided denial of Christ.

The rich are not to be favored above the poor. How inconsistent is it to make favorites of men because the Lord has intrusted his goods to them to be wisely dispensed to those who are needy. Unless the rich manifest the spirit that moved Christ to come to our world to seek and to save that which was lost, they are none of his. They are training under another general. The important question is not, "Is a man rich?" But the important question is, "What use does he make of his riches?" The value and character of a man is determined by the use to which he puts his intrusted talents. Does he do good in this life? Does he seek to bless humanity, to build up the kingdom of Christ in the world? Shut away the rich from the poor in large and costly dwellings, make churches too splendid for the entrance of the poor, so that the rich man may not be brought in contact with the distressing needs of the fatherless and the widow, and the result will be that his sympathies will be withered, mercy will not be exercised, and the rich man will be in imminent danger of losing his soul.

Christ says, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." [Lk 10:23] Unless the grace of Christ controls the heart, the tendency of the rich man is to grow more proud, more self-sufficient, more self-righteous. He acts as if he were made of better flesh and more costly blood

than his poorer brother. But Christ looks on, and says, "All ye are brethren." There is no respect of persons with God. The rich man has plenty, and makes no effort to put himself in the poor man's place; but because he does not consider the poor, he becomes unfeeling, indifferent, and hard-hearted. He does not try to understand the conflicts, temptations, and struggles of his poor brethren, and mercy dries up in his heart.

The poor are robbed daily of the education and training they should have concerning the tender mercies with which the Lord would have them regarded; for he has made ample provision that they should be comforted with the necessities of life. They are compelled to feel the poverty that narrows life, and they are often tempted to become envious, jealous, and full of evil surmisings. Their sympathies are alienated from their more prosperous neighbors; but when men are born again, when they are truly converted, old things pass away, and behold, all things become new. A new moral taste is created, and he that was exalted because God had intrusted him with means will seek to aid and exalt others. His responsibilities will seem weighty upon him and will humble his heart before God; for he will realize that his goods are intrusted of the Lord, that he may relieve the needy, comfort the distressed, feed the fatherless, and make the widow's heart sing for joy. But instead of using their means for the Master, how many embezzle it, invest it for themselves, furnishing their homes with rich carpets, fine furniture, and multiplying lands and houses to glorify themselves in the earth, while the needy call upon them in vain. If they do anything for the poor, they call them paupers, and look upon them with contempt. They do not consider from whence comes their intrusted capital, and that they are all the time receiving unnumbered blessings from God. If he should withhold his beneficence, they would be numbered with the poor. We are all dependent upon the benevolence of a gracious God. The day will come when those who have cherished selfishness and covetousness, who have defrauded the poor, who have withdrawn mercy and love from them, will be made manifest. **ST 06-13-92 (Docs 160546-52)**

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"Am I my brother's keeper?" Genesis 4:9

God has placed property in the hands of men in order that they may learn to be merciful, to be his almoners to relieve the suffering of his fallen creatures.

Further than this, they are to consider the wants of the cause of God, and keep his treasury supplied according to the gifts bestowed upon them. Satan has had power to make men haughty and like himself in character, so that the money given them of God has been used for the gratification of self, and the cry of the poor has reached unto God against them; for they have been unmerciful in their conduct toward the needy. Whatever we spend for that which is not necessary for health and godliness will be charged as robbery against God; because all that was spent for the gratification of self someone needed to obtain necessary food and clothing.

Those who have the Spirit of Christ will see all men through the eyes of divine compassion. No matter what may be the social position, no matter what his wealth or how high his education, if a man is in Christ, he will not be unkind, uncourteous, hard-hearted, and merciless. Since every soul is entirely dependent upon God for every blessing he enjoys, how patient, how merciful, we should be to every creature. God looked upon man in his lost condition, in his degradation and guilt, and paid the same price for the ransom of the poor and the outcast that he paid to ransom the rich with all his intrusted talents. There is no respect of persons with God. All are candidates for heaven or hell. All need to be taught every hour of God, to be diligent students, that in their time they may make a wise use of their intrusted ability, that they may be living agencies to cooperate with the heavenly intelligences for the saving of men's souls, that with tender hearts, overflowing with mercy and true goodness, they may work as Christ worked. The apostle says, "Ye are laborers together with God." [1 Cor 3:9] You are to look after the poor, you are to look after the fatherless ones, who need your wisdom, your care, your love, and help. You are to look after the widow. You are to look after those who go in want, in hunger, in rags, who are depraved in principle; for Jesus came to seek and to save that which is lost. God cares for the outcast, and do you think yourself too good, too honorable, to bear the yoke with Christ, in seeking to save the perishing? Will you despise your fellow-men? Will you become an offense to God by slighting and despising his image in man? In distinct lines Christ has revealed the relation of man to his fellow-man. Jesus, the only-begotten Son of God, has settled that question forever in the example he has set to the world. Ask yourself: "Am I my brother's keeper?" And "who is my neighbor?" [Gen 4:9; Lk 10:29]

There is in society an increasing tendency to separate the rich from the poor, to set them apart in distinct, definite classes; but this is not at all after God's

order, but after the policy of Satan. Heaven looks with pain and amazement upon the scenes that are daily enacted among those who are called Christians. Many cannot read the meaning of the great plan of redemption because Satan has cast his shadow upon their pathway. Many who could be as lights in the world, as the salt of the earth, who command great resources for doing good to their fellow-men, are not in union and sympathy with Christ, that they may be laborers together with God. They have felt that a high value was set upon them, that they were placed above their brethren, and even above their own flesh and blood. They have expended their Lord's goods in lifting up their souls unto vanity, in cultivating pride, envy, self-exaltation. They have surrounded themselves with costly luxuries, and placed themselves in a position which it was impossible for their brethren to reach, and they have left the poor in their poverty to get along as they could without sympathy and love. God looks down from heaven, and hates all these pretensions. He calls for men who have intellect, men who have property, men who have moral worth, to change this order of things.

Let every leader of the people associate with the people; for they really need his help, so that sympathy shall not congeal in the human breast.

No church should become so lifted up that its members shall feel above the poor, and the poor feel that they cannot enter freely into the house of God. A church that is too rich for the poor to feel at home in is too aristocratic for Jesus to make one in its assembly. This narrow exclusiveness that shuts man away from his brother is an abomination in the sight of God. When men are converted, they will have an abiding sense of the fact that they have been bought with a price. Whatever may be the sum of our talents, whether one, two, or five, not a farthing of our money is to be squandered upon vanity, pride or selfishness. Every dollar of our accumulation is stamped with the image and superscription of God. As long as there are hungry ones in God's world to be fed, naked ones to be clothed, souls perishing for the bread and water of salvation, every unnecessary indulgence, every overplus of capital, pleads for the poor and the naked. It is no light thing to be intrusted with riches, although men treat their position and property as though they were not accountable to anyone, as though it was by their own virtue that they had these things. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." [Mt 19:24] Those who consecrate themselves to God, with their riches, becoming laborers together with him, are the only ones to whom the King of glory will give the benediction: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared

for you from the foundation of the world.” “Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things.” [Mt 25:34, 21] **ST 06-20-92 (Docs 160553-57)**

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“Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me . . . Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” Mt 25:34-40

The blessed of the Father are those who have been ministering to Christ in the person of his afflicted ones, those who have been partakers with the Saviour in his work for the uplifting and blessing of fallen and suffering humanity. “The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.” He says, “I am among you as he that serveth.” And pointing to his own example, he declares to his followers, “Whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant.” [Matt. 20:26, 27 (Revised Version)]

True worship consists in working together with Christ. “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” The love of Christ dwelling in the heart, will be manifested in earnest effort to accomplish the work which Jesus came to do. Kind words, deeds of benevolence, of tender care for the needy and the afflicted,—this is the fruit that grows naturally upon the good tree.

Such was the fruit manifest in the life of that righteous man of whom God himself declared, “There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man.” [Job 1:8] Job says, “I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a Father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.” [Job 29:12-16]

The Saviour invites us to become patient toilers in a field which calls for self-denying labor; but it is a glorious work, and one that God smiles upon. When one's heart sympathizes with others burdened with grief and discouragement; when his hand clothes the naked, and the stranger is made welcome to a seat at his fireside and at his board, then heaven comes very near. Brethren and sisters, when you open your doors to Christ's needy and suffering ones, you welcome with them unseen angels, who minister to these children of want and sorrow. You are inviting the companionship of heavenly beings. They bring with them a heavenly atmosphere of joy and peace. They come with praises upon their lips, and an answering strain is heard in heaven. Every deed of mercy and benevolence makes music there. The Father from his throne beholds and numbers the unselfish laborers among his most precious treasures. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." [Mal 3:17]

Whoever succors the poor, or sympathizes with the afflicted and oppressed, or befriends the orphan, is brought into closer relationship with the pitying Saviour. He who is the Source of all blessing, has granted to men the privilege of becoming partakers of the divine nature, and in their turn, of diffusing blessings to their fellow-men. This is the highest honor, the greatest joy, which it is possible for God to bestow upon men. Those who thus become participants in labors of love are brought nearest to their Redeemer. He who refuses to become a laborer together with God, the man who for the sake of selfish indulgence ignores the wants of his fellow-men, is withholding from himself the richest blessings that God could give him. He shows that he has no connection with Jesus; for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." [Rom 8:9]

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. . . . Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." [Mt 25:41-45]

Jesus identifies himself with his suffering people. *I was hungry and thirsty; I was a stranger; I was naked; I was sick; I was in prison.* [Mt 25:35-36] While you were enjoying the food from your bountifully spread tables, I was famishing with hunger in the hovel or street not far from you. When you closed your doors against me while your well-furnished rooms were unoccupied, I had not

where to lay my head. While your wardrobes were filled with changeable suits of apparel, upon which means had been squandered that you might have given to the needy, I was destitute of comfortable raiment. When you were enjoying health, I was sick. Misfortune cast me into prison and bound me with fetters, bowing down my spirit depriving me of freedom and hope, while you roamed at liberty.

What a oneness Jesus here represents as existing between himself and his suffering disciples! He makes their case his own. He represents himself as being, in their person, the very sufferer. Mark this, selfish Christian; every neglect on your part to care for the needy and to sympathize with those in distress, is a neglect of Jesus in the person of his saints. Our heavenly Father has blessings disguised in our pathway. Angels are waiting to see if we embrace opportunities within our reach of doing good,—waiting to see if we will bless others, that they in their turn may bless us. The Lord himself has made us to differ, some poor, some rich, some afflicted, that all may have an opportunity of developing character. The poor are purposely permitted to be thus by God, that we may be tested and proved, and develop what is in our hearts.

The Father has manifested his love in giving to the world his only begotten Son, that all who believe in him should not perish, but have eternal life. In view of this infinite sacrifice to bless men, to make them happy, what self-denial and self-sacrifice are we willing to make as laborers together with God in the great plan of redemption? If the Lord bows his ear to hear your cry, to relieve you in trial, to comfort you in bereavement, to bind up your wounds, to sustain you in all your heart-trying tribulations, you know it is because he loves you. With such an example before you, how can you, as Christians, be heartless, selfish, unsympathetic? We have the pledge that while sin and want and misery shall exist, God, who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, will with him freely give us all things, [Rom 8:32]—all things essential to his glory and our good. Then let us examine ourselves closely in the light of the revealed word of God, to see whether we are in the love of God, whether we are working for others as Christ has worked for us.

All who have put on Christ, and are workers together with God, are like faithful minute men, ever ready to say, “Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth.” [1 Sam 3:10] They do not call anything they possess their own, whether it be wealth, position, influence, talent, or learning; but they regard themselves as stewards of the grace of God, and servants of the church for Christ’s sake. Their hearts are bound up with the heart of Christ. They are not cold and

unimpressible, but their ears are quick to hear every cry from the fatherless, the widow, and those in need; and they never hear in vain. Be they laymen or ministers, they are messengers of God's mercy.

In the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah are brought to view those who in the last days shall stand as reformers, who shall turn away their foot from the Sabbath, and repair the breach in the law of God. To them the Lord declares, "If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." [Isa 58:10-11]

"Those who stand as reformers, bearing the banner of the third angel's message, are the ones who are to draw out the soul to the hungry, [Isa 58:10] and satisfy the afflicted soul. They are to do the work of Christ with hearts full of compassion for the widow and the orphan. But how strangely has this work been neglected! Other denominations have provided homes for the homeless; why were we not, years ago, planning to care for these needy ones whom Christ has committed to us, and whom he declares to be representatives of himself?

Why have our people been so slow to hear the earnest appeals for help? The grief and affliction of the widow and orphan should be our grief. Why have not the hearts of those who should be to them messengers of mercy, been stirred to relieve distress, to impart sympathy and consolation and counsel to those who hunger for it? Those who close their ears to the cries of the needy, will one day call, and the Lord will be deaf to their pleadings. But to those who exercise the tenderness and love of Jesus toward the poor and unfortunate, to those who are not eaten up with selfishness, whose souls are drawn out in pity and grief for the woes of others, the promise is given, "Thou shalt call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am [What will you have? What shall I do for you?]." [Isa 58:9] The Lord has help all ready for those whose compassion is exercised toward the oppressed and the sorrowing. Our God is gracious, full of compassion and tender pity. Let us be like him. Those who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb will, through the spirit given them by God, do all in their power to comfort the broken-hearted and the tempted, to relieve the oppressed, and to accomplish the work Christ has left them to do.

There has been coming in among Seventh-day Adventists a disposition to be close and exacting with the poor, to be indifferent to their distress, to turn away impatiently from their appeals, when the Lord has made it our duty to be

192 *Working with the Poor*

pitiful, kind, and courteous to the needy and the suffering.

The true worshipers of God will work the works of Christ. They will be liberal to the needy; they will not turn the poor from his right, nor frame an excuse to avoid helping those who need help; they will love their neighbors as themselves, [Mt 19:19; Lev 19:18] not hiding themselves from their own flesh, but considering the condition of the poor, the fatherless, and the widow; they will not appropriate to themselves any portion of the just earnings of those who may be under their control. “Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates: at his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.” “The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it.” [Deut 24:14; Prov 29:7]

“And the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassion every man to his brother: and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.” [Zech 7:9-10]

Job says, “If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of my maidservant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? . . . If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; . . . if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.” [Job 31:13-14, 16-17, 19-23] If this same fear, and this love of righteousness were in our churches and in all our institutions, what a transformation would take place! “He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he repay him again.” “Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in

his sickness.” [Prov 19:17; Psa 41:1]

Let no one say, “How doth God know? and is there understanding with the Most High?” [Psa 73:11] for the Lord knows even the secret thoughts of the heart. Those who neglect the poor and needy, transgress the commandments of God. “Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes cease to do evil; learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” “Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.” [Isa 1:16-17; 58:8]

The heart of the Christian is ever filled with gratitude to God, for he realizes that he is under immeasurable obligations to his Creator, that all his powers are under tribute; his works will testify of his loyalty to him who has done everything for him. A sincere Christian is not unappreciative of the mercies and blessings daily given him; and he longs to work in blessing others. He is constantly seeking for ways to be of service to the Master, to make his Saviour’s name a praise in all the earth.

All who will work as Christ worked, will see of the salvation of God, and will diffuse heavenly light and glory. At the foot of the cross they learn that piety which is ever seeking to bless humanity, to shed light and gladness and hope upon the hearts of all who are perplexed and sorrowful, to comfort the cast down, to relieve the oppressed, to sweeten the bitter waters of affliction which many are compelled to drink. In this way our words and works are representing Jesus, and through him the Father, to the world, thus increasing the knowledge of God and of his Son in the earth. **HM 07-01-91 (Docs 122474-93)**

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“And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left. And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not: And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not.” Ruth 2:14-16, 23

The Bible is a revelation of the divine will and purpose of God. Those who follow its teachings are doers of the words of Christ, and by this means they bring solid timbers into their character building. Let us heed the words of inspiration, which exhort us to “be pitiful, be courteous.” [1 Pet 3:8] Boaz represented the character of the Christian gentleman. Like Abraham, he commanded his household after him to keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment. He showed courtesy to all his servants, and as he passed among his workmen in the field, he said unto the reapers, “The Lord be with you. And they answered him, The Lord bless thee.” [Ruth 2:4] Here is a lesson for both masters and servants, for employers and the employed. The servants are strengthened in their hearts to do righteously, to be faithful to masters who manifest respectful kindness and courtesy towards them. Christians should be the most courteous people in the world. **HM 12-01-94 (Doc 122660)**

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“And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth...And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth.” 1 Kings 17:12-24

In response to Elijah’s request for food and drink, the widow said, “As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.” Elijah said to her: “Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.” [1 Kings 17:12-14] **CS p. 173 (Doc 13393)**

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No greater test of faith than this could have been required. The widow had hitherto treated all strangers with kindness and liberality. Now, regardless of the suffering that might result to herself and child, and trusting in the God of Israel to supply her every need, she met this supreme test of hospitality by doing "according to the saying of Elijah." [1 Kings 17:15] **PK pp. 130-31 (Docs 54344-45)**

Christ did not seek to attract men to Him by gratifying the desire for luxury. The simple fare He provided was an assurance not only of His power but of His love, of His tender care for them in the common needs of life. And while He fed them with the barley loaves, He gave them also to eat of the bread of life. Here is our example. Our fare may be plain and even scanty. Our lot may be shut in with poverty. Our resources may be no greater than were those of the disciples with the five loaves and the two fishes. Yet as we come in contact with those in need, Christ bids us: "Give ye them to eat." [Mt 14:16] We are to impart of that which we have; and as we give, Christ will see that our lack is supplied.

In this connection read the story of the widow of Sarepta. To this woman in a heathen land God sent His servant in time of famine to ask for food. "And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah." [1 Kings 17:12-15]

Wonderful was the hospitality shown to God's prophet by this Phoenician woman, and wonderfully were her faith and generosity rewarded. "She, and he,

and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which He spake by Elijah. And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore that there was no breath left in him. And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son? And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. . . . And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord. . . . And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth. And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth.”[1 Kings 17:15-24] **6T pp. 345-46 (Docs 88919-21)**

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“When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.” Job 29:11-16

In the fast that God has chosen, mercy, tenderness, and compassion will be exercised. Avarice will be put away, and fraud and oppression will be repented of and renounced. All the authority and influence will be used to help the poor and oppressed. If this were the condition of the world, it would no more be a proverb, “Truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter;” “he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey.” [Isa 59:14-15] But with Job we might say, “I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it

clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.” [Job 11:12-16] Again he says, “If I did despise the cause of my man-servant or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? . . . If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; . . . if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.” [Job 31:13-14, 16-17, 19-23] If this same fear, and this love of righteousness, were in our churches now, what a transformation there would be! **RH 10-13-91 (Doc 134163)**

The Lord Jesus said, “Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.” [Mt 5:7] There never was a time when there was greater need for the exercise of mercy than to-day. The poor are all around us, the distressed, the afflicted, the sorrowing, and those who are ready to perish. Those who have acquired riches have acquired them through the exercise of the talents that were given them of God; but these talents for the acquiring of property were given to them that they might relieve those who are in poverty. These gifts were bestowed upon men by Him who maketh His sun to shine and His rain to fall upon the just and the unjust, that by the fruitfulness of the earth men might have abundant supplies for all their need. The fields have been blessed of God, and “of his goodness he hath prepared for the poor.” [Psa 68:10] In the providence of God events have been so ordered that the poor are always with us, in order that there may be a constant exercise in the human heart of the attributes of mercy and love. Man is to cultivate the tenderness and compassion of Christ; he is not to separate himself from the sorrowing, the afflicted, the needy, and the distressed. Job declares: “When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me; because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy.” [Job 29:11-13] **ST 06-13-96 (Doc 160546)**

The merciful are those who manifest compassion to the poor, the suffering,

and the oppressed. Job declares, “I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.” [Job 29:12-16] **MB pp. 22-23 (Doc 98143)**

Additional References:

HM 07-01-91 (Docs 122477, 90); Ed p. 142 (Doc 19931)

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“But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him. And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou sendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.” Luke 10:33-35

Let us notice the answer that the Divine Teacher gave to the lawyer who asked, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” “He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.” “Thou hast answered right,” Christ said, “this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?” [Lk 10:25-29] In answer Christ gave the parable of the good Samaritan, relating an incident which had actually taken place. “A certain man,” He said, “went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and

looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him: and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him which fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise." [Lk 10:30-37] In this parable are summed up all the principles contained in the law of God. On every hand we can see the terrible results of the selfishness which led Adam to transgress God's law. The taking of the forbidden fruit, seemingly so small a matter, resulted in opening the floodgates of woe upon the world. To this transgression can be traced all the violence and the crime now existing. And when in this age of the world the principles of justice and mercy are in any way violated in word or deed there is committed a sin of far greater magnitude than the sin that was committed in Eden; for sin was a new thing to our first parents. **WB 09-09-02 (Doc 169490)**

The Southern race has been neglected. Men have passed by on the other side, as the priest and the Levite passed by the wounded, robbed, bruised, and beaten one. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed that way, not only saw him, but he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, set him on his own beast, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. How many have left the colored race to perish by the wayside? Since the slaves gained their freedom at terrible loss of life both to the North and to the South, they have been greatly neglected by those who professed to know God, and as a result thousands of them have failed to gain spiritual freedom. But shall this indifference continue? Shall not decided efforts be made to save them? Sin has degraded and corrupted the human family, but Christ did not leave men to perish in their degradation. He who was one with the Father came to our world to bridge the gulf that sin had made, which separated man from God because of transgression. Christ, the brightness of His Father's glory, beheld humanity in its wretchedness and sinfulness, beheld souls tainted with corruption, depraved and deformed. He knew that the fallen race tended more to evil than to good, and practiced the most hateful vices. The heavenly hosts looked upon the world as undeserving of the sympathy and love of God. Angels marveled

200 *Working with the Poor*

that Christ should undertake to save man in his lost, and as it seemed to them, hopeless condition. They marveled that God could tolerate a race so foul with sin as to be a blot upon His creation. They could see no room for love, but Christ saw that souls must perish unless an arm strong to deliver was reached forth to save. **SW p. 26 (Doc 71652)**

“But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.” [Lk 10:33-35]

In giving this lesson, Christ presented the principles of the law of God in a direct, forcible way, showing his hearers that they had neglected to carry out these principles. His words were so definite and pointed that the listeners found no opportunity to cavil or raise objections. The lawyer found nothing in the lesson that he could criticize. His prejudice in regard to Christ was removed. But he had not overcome his national dislike sufficiently to give credit to the Samaritan by name. When Christ asked, “Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves?” he answered, “He that showed mercy on him.” “Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.” [Lk 10:36-37] Show the same tender kindness to those in need. Thus you will give evidence that you keep the whole law. **RH 10-10-99 (Docs 139290-92)**

Additional References:

7 MR p. 237 (Doc 194897); 1888 (Doc 222514); RH 07-13-86 (Doc 131070); RH 01-01-95 (Doc 135844); ST 07-07-90 (Doc 159961); ST 07-02-94 (Doc 161349); 3T pp. 523-24 (Doc 83805); HM 10-01-97 (Doc 122817); ST 01-07-97 (Doc 162452); ST 02-28-00 (Doc 164304); ST 07-14-09 (Docs 167213-14); 1888 pp. 1769-70 (Doc 222468-69); LHU p. 155 (Doc 38167); SW p. 26 (Doc 71652); RH 11-26-95 (Doc 136291); RH 08-13-01 (Docs 140964-66); RH 08-27-01 (Docs 141002-4); RH 09-02-02 (Docs 141932-34); RH 09-13-06 (Docs 145779-81); RH 04-09-08 (Docs 146985-87); ST 06-23-94 (Docs 161370-74); SW 08-25-08 (Docs 169196-99); COL pp. 378-9 (Doc 5792); DA pp. 488, 503-05 (Docs 17732, 17773-83); Ev p. 567 (Docs 22478-81); MH p. 172 (Docs

46778-80); SD p. 52 (Docs 70043-45); 1T p. 150 (Doc 79543); 3T pp. 512-44 (Docs 83776-849); 4T pp. 57-58, 226-27 (Docs 84098-99, 84631); 5T p. 604 (Doc 87506); 6T pp. 261, 276, 295 (Docs 88660-65, 88703, 88764); WM pp. 42-49, 332 (Docs 101965-97, 102795-97)

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"And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord: Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold."

Luke 19:8

Already he had begun thus to retrace his steps, when the news sounded through Jericho that Jesus was entering the town. Zacchaeus determined to see Him. . . . In the presence of the multitude, "Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord: Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house." [Lk 19:8-9]

There are those who have had very meager opportunities, who have walked in ways of error because they knew no better way, to whom beams of light will come. As the word of Christ came to Zacchaeus, "Today I must abide at thy house," [Lk 19:5] so the word will come to them; and those who were supposed to be hardened sinners will be found to have hearts as tender as a child's because Christ has deigned to notice them. Many will come from the grossest error and sin, and will take the place of others who have had opportunities and privileges but have not prized them. They will be accounted the chosen of God, elect, precious; and when Christ shall come into His kingdom, they will stand next His throne.

"If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die." [Eze 33:15]

Every converted soul will, like Zacchaeus, signalize the entrance of Christ into his heart by an abandonment of the unrighteous practices that have marked his life. Like the chief publican, he will give proof of his sincerity by making restitution. . . . If we have injured others through any unjust business transaction, . . . we should confess our wrong, and make restitution as far as lies in our power. It is right for us to restore not only that which we have taken, but

202 *Working with the Poor*

all that it would have accumulated if put to a right and wise use during the time it has been in our possession. **CC pp. 301-02 (Docs 9286-91)**

Zacchaeus declared: "If I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." [Lk 19:8] You could at least have made efforts to correct your acts of injustice to your fellow men. You cannot make every case right, for some whom you have injured have gone into their graves, and the account stands registered against you. In these cases the best you can do is to bring a trespass offering to the altar of the Lord, and He will accept and pardon you. But where you can, you should make reparation to the wronged ones. **5T p. 339 (Doc 86836)**

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"And days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of in those the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations." Acts 6:1

"And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations." [Acts 6:1] These Grecians were residents of other countries, where the Greek language was spoken. By far the larger number of converts were Jews who spoke Hebrew; but these had lived in the Roman Empire, and spoke only Greek. Murmurings began to rise among them that the Grecian widows were not so liberally supplied as the needy among the Hebrews. Any partiality of this kind would have been grievous to God; and prompt measures were taken to restore peace and harmony to the believers.

The Holy Spirit suggested a method whereby the apostles might be relieved from the task of apportioning to the poor, and similar burdens, so that they could be left free to preach Christ. "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." [Acts 6:2-4]

The church accordingly selected seven men full of faith and the wisdom of

the Spirit of God, to attend to the business pertaining to the cause. Stephen was chosen first; he was a Jew by birth and religion, but spoke the Greek language, and was conversant with the customs and manners of the Greeks. He was therefore considered the most proper person to stand at the head, and have supervision of the disbursement of the funds appropriated to the widows, orphans, and the worthy poor. This selection met the minds of all, and the dissatisfaction and murmuring were quieted.

This choosing of men to transact the business of the church, so that the apostles could be left free for their special work of teaching the truth, was greatly blessed of God. The church advanced in numbers and strength. "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." [Acts 6:7]

It is necessary that the same order and system should be maintained in the church now as in the days of the apostles. The prosperity of the cause depends very largely upon its various departments being conducted by men of ability, who are qualified for their positions. Those who are chosen of God to be leaders in the cause of God, having the general oversight of the spiritual interest of the church, should be relieved, as far as possible, from cares and perplexities of a temporal nature. Those whom God has called to minister in word and doctrine should have time for meditation, prayer, and study of the Scriptures. Their clear spiritual discernment is dimmed by entering into the lesser details of business, and dealing with the various temperaments of those who meet together in church capacity. It is proper for all matters of a temporal nature to come before the proper officers, and be by them adjusted. But if they are of so difficult a character as to baffle their wisdom, they should be carried into the council of those who have the oversight of the entire church. **3SP pp. 291-94 (Docs 74188-93)**

"In those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration." [Acts 6:1]

The early church was made up of many classes of people, of various nationalities. At the time of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, "there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven." Acts 2:5. Among those of the Hebrew faith who were gathered at Jerusalem were some commonly known as Grecians, between whom and the Jews of Palestine there had long existed distrust and even antagonism.

The hearts of those who had been converted under the labors of the apostles, were softened and united by Christian love. Despite former prejudices, all were in harmony with one another. Satan knew that so long as this union continued to exist, he would be powerless to check the progress of gospel truth; and he sought to take advantage of former habits of thought, in the hope that thereby he might be able to introduce into the church elements of disunion.

Thus it came to pass that as disciples were multiplied, the enemy succeeded in arousing the suspicions of some who had formerly been in the habit of looking with jealousy on their brethren in the faith and of finding fault with their spiritual leaders, and so “there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews.” [Acts 6:1] The cause of complaint was an alleged neglect of the Greek widows in the daily distribution of assistance. Any inequality would have been contrary to the spirit of the gospel, yet Satan had succeeded in arousing suspicion. Prompt measures must now be taken to remove all occasion for dissatisfaction, lest the enemy triumph in his effort to bring about a division among the believers.

The disciples of Jesus had reached a crisis in their experience. Under the wise leadership of the apostles, who labored unitedly in the power of the Holy Spirit, the work committed to the gospel messengers was developing rapidly. The church was continually enlarging, and this growth in membership brought increasingly heavy burdens upon those in charge. No one man, or even one set of men, could continue to bear these burdens alone, without imperiling the future prosperity of the church. There was necessity for a further distribution of the responsibilities which had been borne so faithfully by a few during the earlier days of the church. The apostles must now take an important step in the perfecting of gospel order in the church by laying upon others some of the burdens thus far borne by themselves. Summoning a meeting of the believers, the apostles were led by the Holy Spirit to outline a plan for the better organization of all the working forces of the church.

The time had come, the apostles stated, when the spiritual leaders having the oversight of the church should be relieved from the task of distributing to the poor and from similar burdens, so that they might be free to carry forward the work of preaching the gospel. “Wherefore, brethren,” they said, “look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.” [Acts 6:3-4] This advice was followed, and by prayer and the laying on of hands, seven chosen men were

solemnly set apart for their duties as deacons.

The appointment of the seven to take the oversight of special lines of work, proved a great blessing to the church. These officers gave careful consideration to individual needs as well as to the general financial interests of the church, and by their prudent management and their godly example they were an important aid to their fellow officers in binding together the various interests of the church into a united whole.

That this step was in the order of God, is revealed in the immediate results for good that were seen. “The word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.” [Acts 6:7] This ingathering of souls was due both to the greater freedom secured by the apostles and to the zeal and power shown by the seven deacons. The fact that these brethren had been ordained for the special work of looking after the needs of the poor, did not exclude them from teaching the faith. On the contrary, they were fully qualified to instruct others in the truth, and they engaged in the work with great earnestness and success. **AA pp. 87-90 (Docs 195-202)**

Additional References:

7Red pp. 28-29 (Docs 181004-06); 13MR p. 187 (Doc 201827); RH 02-16-11 (Docs 148942-46); SR pp. 259-61; WM p. 275 (Docs 102621-23)

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“Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.” Acts 9:36

Let the children and youth learn from the Bible how God has honored the work of the everyday toiler. Let them read of “the sons of the prophets” . . . [2 Kings 2:3, 5] of Dorcas the seamstress, called back from death, that she might continue to make garments for the poor **Ed p. 217 (Doc 20183)**

Joppa was near Lydda, and at that time Tabitha—called Dorcas by interpretation—lay there dead. She had been a worthy disciple of Jesus Christ, and her life had been characterized by deeds of charity and kindness to the

206 *Working with the Poor*

poor and sorrowful, and by zeal in the cause of truth. Her death was a great loss; the infant church could not well spare her noble efforts **SR p. 281**

In Joppa there was a Dorcas, whose skillful fingers were more active than her tongue. She knew who needed comfortable clothing and who needed sympathy, and she freely ministered to the wants of both classes. And when Dorcas died, the church in Joppa realized their loss. It is no wonder that they mourned and lamented, nor that warm teardrops fell upon the inanimate clay. She was of so great value that by the power of God she was brought back from the land of the enemy, that her skill and energy might still be a blessing to others.

Such patient, prayerful, and persevering fidelity as was possessed by these saints of God is rare; yet the church cannot prosper without it. It is needed in the church, in the Sabbath school, and in society. **5T p. 304 (Doc 86740)**

Additional References:

WM p. 67 (Doc 102034); CC p. 333 (Docs 9451-55)

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"Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul." Acts 11:29-30

The apostle Paul had a special work to present before his Corinthian brethren. There was a famine in Jerusalem, and the disciples, "every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea." [Acts 11:29] They presented the need to the churches, expecting to receive a small sum for the relief of the needy saints; and in prayer they presented before the Lord the necessity. But the Macedonian brethren, moved by the Spirit of God, first made an entire consecration of themselves to God, and then gave all that they had. They felt it a privilege thus to give expression to their trust in God. The Macedonian brethren were poor, but they did not have to be urged to give. They rejoiced that they had opportunity to contribute of their means. Of themselves they came forward and made the offering, in their Christlike simplicity, their integrity and love for their brethren, denying

themselves of food and clothing in cases where they had no money. And when the apostles would have restrained them, they importuned them to receive the contribution, and carry it to the afflicted saints. **RH 05-15-00 (Doc 139807)**

Through circumstances some who love and obey God become poor. Some are not careful; they do not know how to manage. Others are poor through sickness and misfortune. Whatever the cause, they are in need, and to help them is an important line of missionary work.

All our churches should have a care for their own poor. Our love for God is to be expressed in doing good to the needy and suffering of the household of faith whose necessities come to our knowledge and require our care. Every soul is under special obligation to God to notice His worthy poor with particular compassion. Under no consideration are these to be passed by. **6T p. 271 (Docs 88678-88)**

Additional References:

2TT p. 509; WM p. 205 (Docs 102442-44)

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“Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.” 2 Cor 8:1-5

It was the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia that resulted in liberality and unselfishness. Paul writes of their benevolence, saying, “How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.” He says: “For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of

themselves; praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.” [2 Cor 8:2-5] The people of whom Paul writes were under the oppressive hand of poverty, but even “their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.” [2 Cor 8:2] The Holy Spirit wrought great changes in the character of those who sought after truth as for hidden treasure. The church of Macedonia became representative of what a church may be when enlightened by the word of God. They had tasted of the heavenly manna, and had been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and were transformed into the likeness of Christ. But the grace of God is able to do the same transforming work for the human character today. Paul says: “And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work (as it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor; his righteousness remaineth forever. Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness); being enriched in everything to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God. For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God.” [2 Cor 9:8-11] **ST 01-23-96 (Doc 162022)**

The Lord has instructed me that we can have a Sanitarium here if everyone will do as I was reading this morning in the eighth and ninth chapters of Second Corinthians. “Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.” [2 Cor 8:1-2] What was their trial? – After the death of Stephen, the Christians were driven from Jerusalem and scattered to different places, and some of them came to Macedonia. How many of us have been brought into such straits? They had to flee from their homes. It had been prophesied that there would be a famine in Jerusalem. This famine had come, and now the ones who had been driven from Jerusalem must have help. “Their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality; for to their power I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves.” [2 Cor 8:2-3] Some who had no money gave part of their wearing apparel. Some divided the store of food they had, living poorly, that those who were

suffering in Jerusalem might be fed. “Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift.” [2 Cor 8:4] Because of their poverty the apostle tried to restrain them, but they prayed him to receive the gift. They did not know how to get their gift to Jerusalem, but Paul and Barnabas were going there, and they rejoiced to think they could send their gift by them. **AUCR 07-21-99 (Doc 114882)**

Nearly all the Macedonian believers were poor in this world’s goods, but their hearts were overflowing with love for God and His truth, and they gladly gave for the support of the gospel. When general collections were taken up in the Gentile churches for the relief of the Jewish believers, the liberality of the converts in Macedonia was held up as an example to other churches. Writing to the Corinthian believers, the apostle called their attention to “the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, . . . yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.” [2 Cor 8:1-4] **AA p. 343 (Doc 881)**

Additional References:

CS p. 171 (Doc 13387); RH 01-04-81 (Doc 127990); HP p. 304 (Doc 34002); LP p. 174 (Doc 69450); 3T p. 413 (Doc 83501); 5T p. 734 (Doc 87859); 6T p. 271 (Doc 88690); WM p. 205 (Docs 102443-45); IR 04-26-05 (Doc 122945); PUR 10-31-07 (Doc 124670); RH 01-01-75 (Doc 126803); RH 05-09-93 (Doc 134981); RH 09-04-94 (Docs 135702-04); RH 12-14-97 (Doc 137665); RH 05-15-00 (Doc 139808); RH 02-18-02 (Doc 141423); San 01-01-00 (Doc 152225); PH055 p. 48 (Doc 179235); 4BIO p. 431 (Doc 242752)



Chapter 6

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POOR AND AFFLICTED

“If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?” James 2:15-16

“Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? . . . If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?” [James 2:5, 15-16]

I appeal to my brethren in faith, and urge them to cultivate tenderness of heart. Whatever may be your calling or position, if you cherish selfishness and covetousness, the displeasure of the Lord will be upon you. Do not make the work and cause of God an excuse for dealing closely and selfishly with any one, even if transacting business that has to do with his work. God will accept nothing in the line of gain that is brought into his treasury through selfish transactions. Every act in connection with his work is to bear divine inspection. Every sharp transaction, every attempt to take advantage of a man who is under pressure of circumstances, every plan to purchase his land or

212 *Working with the Poor*

property for a sum beneath its value, will not be acceptable to God, even though the money gained is made an offering to his cause. The price of the blood of the only begotten Son of God has been paid for every man, and it is necessary to deal honestly, to deal with equity with everyman, in order to carry out the principles of the law of God.

The great principles contained in that law enjoin upon us the duty of loving God supremely and our neighbors as ourselves. Those who love God will keep the first four precepts of the decalogue, which define the duty of man to his Creator. But in carrying out this principle through the grace of Christ, we shall express in our characters the divine attributes, and shall work out the love of God in all our dealing with our fellow-men. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." [Jn 3:16] God gave his best gift to the world, and whosoever has the attributes of God will love his fellow-men with the same love wherewith God has loved him. The Spirit of God dwelling in the heart will be manifested in love to others.

In keeping the first four commandments, which reveal the duty of man to his God, the worshiper of God will find that he cannot cherish one fiber of the root of selfishness. He cannot do his duty to his God, and practice oppression toward his fellow-men. The second principle of the law is like unto the first, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "This do, and thou shalt live." [Mt 22:39; Lk 10:28] These are the words of Jesus Christ, from which there can be no departure on the part of any man, woman, or youth who would be a true Christian. It is obedience to the principles of the commandments of God, that molds the character after the divine similitude. Those who render this obedience through the grace of Christ, possess the attributes of the Saviour's character, and are partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. [2 Pet 1:4] The word "lust" here includes not only licentiousness, but covetousness, desire for position, love of money, and that which leads to false dealings and unjust practices.

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward."

[Psa 19:7-11] The people who keep God's commandments are to bring the law of God into their lives, and reveal its value in their characters; they are to be Christlike and show forth true charity.

“Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates; at his day shalt thou give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it; lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.” “Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him; the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until morning.” [Deut 24:14-15; Lev 19:13]

The Lord Jesus gave these commandments from the pillar of cloud, and Moses repeated them to the children of Israel and wrote them in a book, that they might not depart from righteousness. We are under obligation to fulfill these specifications; for in so doing we fulfill the specifications of the law of God. If a brother who has labored disinterestedly for the cause of God, becomes enfeebled in body, and is unable to do his work, let him not be dismissed and be obliged to get along the best way he can. Give him wages sufficient to support him; for remember he belongs to God's family, and that you are all brethren. In the New Testament the world's Redeemer has specified what constitutes pure religion in our dealings with our fellow-men. Obeying the first four commandments with the whole soul causes us to render supreme love to God, and to become co-workers with God in carrying out the will of God toward our fellow-men. Keeping the first four commandments makes us one with Christ, who gave his life as a ransom to deliver all from the thralldom of sin, and to make us free men and women in him. The value of man is to be estimated at the price paid for his redemption.

The last six precepts of the decalogue reveal the duty of man to his fellow-men; and those who render obedience to the first four commandments will also carry out the injunctions of the last six. We are commanded to love our neighbors as ourselves. [Mt 22:39] This command is not that we shall simply love those who think and believe exactly as we think and believe. Christ illustrated the meaning of the commandment by the parable of the good Samaritan. But how strangely these precious words are neglected, and how frequently men oppress their fellow-men, and lift up their souls unto vanity. Men glory in themselves and exalt themselves above their brethren. “Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him

that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." "Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." [Jer 9:23; Isa 1:16-17]

Can we wonder that the curse of God is upon the earth, upon man and beast, when his law is set aside as a thing of naught, and men are following the imagination of their own hearts, as did the inhabitants of the world before the flood? All this foretells the coming of Christ and the end of all things. "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." [Mt 24:37] Through selfish pride, through selfish gratification, the blessing of God has been shut away from men and from his professed people, because they have despised his words, and have failed to relieve the sufferings of humanity. "Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God; for I am the Lord your God. Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety. And all the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety." [Lev 24:17-19]

That those who are doers of the words of Christ, prosperity is insured. In obeying his words, you become workers together with God in uplifting, in blessing, and strengthening the sons of men, cultivating good impulses, and uprooting that which is evil. Christ said, "Make the tree good, and his fruit good." [Mt 12:33] It is only practical piety that is of value. No spurious religionist will enter into the kingdom of heaven, and those who are genuine will bring forth the fruit that is found upon the Christian tree. The fruit found upon the tree is in harmony with its nature. This law prevails throughout the natural kingdom, and illustrates the truth found in the spiritual kingdom. When there is a decided change from a life of sin to one of purity, there will be a corresponding change in words and actions. Those who exercise faith dwell in the presence of purity, and are one with Christ. Their life is hid with Christ in God.

"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." [Mt 5:8] The pure in heart ever keep before them their invisible Lord, and they catch his Spirit;

they love their Lord with all the heart, and exercise in their lives the love that God has manifested toward all human beings. But “he that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.” [1 Jn 2:4, 6] Let all read and understand these words of John, in order that they may make no mistake. To what commandments is John referring? He says, “Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you; because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth. He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him?” [1 Jn 2:7-10]

“If thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him; yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase; but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee.” [Lev 25:35] How tenderly the Lord regards all who are suffering and in want! They are to be helped, not to be oppressed. “Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God.” [Lev 25:37-38]

It would be well if every church would read in its assemblies from the Old Testament the lessons which Christ gave to the people. The Spirit and character of our Heavenly Father in his dealings with men are revealed through these lessons. **RH 12-18-94 (Docs 135824-36)**

Chapter 7

* * *

UNFORTUNATE

“Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.” Lev 19:13

I have been shown some things in reference to our duty to the unfortunate which I feel it my duty to write at this time.

I saw that it is in the providence of God that widows and orphans, the blind, the deaf, the lame, and persons afflicted in a variety of ways, have been placed in close Christian relationship to His church; it is to prove His people and develop their true character. Angels of God are watching to see how we treat these persons who need our sympathy, love, and disinterested benevolence. This is God's test of our character. If we have the true religion of the Bible we shall feel that a debt of love, kindness, and interest is due to Christ in behalf of His brethren; and we can do no less than to show our gratitude for His immeasurable love to us while we were sinners unworthy of His grace, by having a deep interest and unselfish love for those who are our brethren and who are less fortunate than ourselves.

The two great principles of the law of God are supreme love to God and unselfish love to our neighbor. The first four commandments and the last six hang upon, or grow out of, these two principles. Christ explained to the lawyer

who his neighbor was in the illustration of the man who was traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho and who fell among thieves and was robbed and beaten and left half dead. The priest and the Levite saw this man suffering, but their hearts did not respond to his wants. They avoided him by passing by on the other side. The Samaritan came that way, and when he saw the stranger's need of help he did not question whether he was a relative or was of his country or creed; but he went to work to help the sufferer because there was work which needed to be done. He relieved him as best he could, put him upon his own beast, and carried him to an inn and made provision for his wants at his own expense. This Samaritan, said Christ, was neighbor to him who fell among thieves. The Levite and the priest represent a class in the church who manifest an indifference to the very ones who need their sympathy and help. This class, notwithstanding their position in the church, are commandment breakers. The Samaritan represents a class who are true helpers with Christ and who are imitating His example in doing good.

Those who have pity for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the afflicted, the widows, the orphans, and the needy, Christ represents as commandment keepers, who shall have eternal life. There is in ----- a great lack of personal religion and of a sense of individual obligation to feel for others' woes and to work with disinterested benevolence for the prosperity of the unfortunate and afflicted. Some have no experience in these duties. They have all their lives been like the Levite and the priest, who passed by on the other side. There is a work for the church to do, which, if left undone, will bring darkness upon them. The church as a whole and individually should bring their motives under faithful examination and compare their lives with the life and teachings of the only correct Pattern. Christ regards all acts of mercy, benevolence, and thoughtful consideration for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the sick, the widow, and the orphan as done to Himself; and these works are preserved in the heavenly records and will be rewarded. On the other hand, a record will be written in the book against those who manifest the indifference of the priest and the Levite to the unfortunate, and those who take any advantage of the misfortunes of others and increase their affliction in order to selfishly advantage themselves. God will surely repay every act of injustice and every manifestation of careless indifference to and neglect of the afflicted among us. Everyone will finally be rewarded as his works have been.

I was shown in regard to Brother E that he has not been dealt justly with by his brethren. Brethren F, G, and others pursued a course toward him which

was displeasing to God. Brother F had no special interest in Brother E, only so far as he thought he could advantage himself through him. I was shown that some looked upon Brother E as being penurious and dishonest. God is displeased with this judgment. Brother E would have had no trouble and would have had means to abundantly sustain himself had it not been for the selfish course of his brethren who had eyesight and property, and who worked against him by seeking to turn his abilities to their own selfish interest. Those who take advantage of the hard study of a blind man and seek to benefit themselves with his inventions, commit robbery and are virtually commandment breakers.

There are some in the church who profess to be keeping the law of Jehovah, but who are transgressors of that law. There are men who do not discern their own defects. They possess a selfish, penurious spirit and blind their own eyes to their sin of covetousness, which the Bible defines as idolatry. Men of this character may have been esteemed by their brethren as most exemplary Christians; but the eye of God reads the heart and discerns the motives. He sees that which man cannot see in the thoughts and character. In His providence He brings these persons into positions which will in time reveal the defects in their character, that if they wish to see and correct them they can do so. There are some who have all their lives studied their own interest and been swallowed up in their own selfish plans and who have been anxious to advantage themselves without much thought whether others would be distressed or perplexed by any plans or actions of theirs. Selfish interest overbears mercy and the love of God. The Lord some times permits this class to go on in their selfish course in spiritual blindness until their defects are apparent to all who have spiritual discernment and they evidence by their works that they are not genuine Christians.

Men who have property and a measure of health, and who enjoy the inestimable blessing of sight, have every advantage over a blind man. Many ways are open to them in their business career that are closed to a man who has lost his sight. Persons enjoying the use of all their faculties should not look to their own selfish interest and deprive a blind brother of one iota of his opportunity to gain means. Brother E is a poor man. He is a feeble man; he is also a blind man. He has had an earnest desire to help himself, and, although living under a weight of discouraging infirmities, his affliction has not dried up the generous impulses of his soul. In his limited circumstances he has had a heart to do and has done more in the sight of God for those who were in need of help than many of his brethren who are blessed with sight and who have a

good property. Brother E has a capital in his business calculation and inventive faculty. He has worked earnestly with high hopes of inventing a business by which he might support him self and not be dependent upon his brethren.

I wish that we might all see as God sees. I wish all could realize how God looks upon those men who profess to be followers of Christ, who have the blessing of sight and the advantage of means in their favor, and who yet envy the little prosperity enjoyed by a poor blind man and would benefit themselves, increase their stock of means, at the disadvantage of their afflicted brother. This is regarded of God as the most criminal selfishness and robbery, and is an aggravating sin, which He will surely punish. God never forgets. He does not look upon these things with human eyes and with cold, unfeeling, human judgment. He views things, not from the worldling's standpoint, but from the standpoint of mercy, pity, and infinite love.

Brother H tried to help Brother E, but not with unselfish motives. At first his pity was excited. He saw that Brother E needed help. But soon he lost his interest, and selfish feelings gathered strength, until the course of his brethren resulted in Brother E's being disadvantaged rather than benefited. These things have greatly discouraged Brother E and have had a tendency to shake his confidence in his brethren. They have resulted in involving him in debts which he could not pay. As he has realized the selfish feelings exercised toward him by some of his brethren, it has grieved him and sometimes stirred him. His feelings at times have been almost uncontrollable as he has realized his helpless condition, without sight, without means, without health, and with some of his brethren working against him. This has added greatly to his affliction and told fearfully upon his health.

I was shown that Brother E has some good qualities of mind which would be better appreciated if he had greater power of self-control and would not become excited. Every exhibition of impatience and fretfulness tells against him, and is made the most of by some who are guilty of much more grievous sins in the sight of God, Brother E's principles are good. He has integrity. He is not a dishonest man. He would not knowingly defraud any man. But he has faults and sins which must be overcome. He, as well as other men, has to deal with human nature. He is too often impatient and is sometimes overbearing. He should cherish a more kindly, courteous spirit and should cultivate gratitude of heart toward those who have felt an interest in his case. Naturally he has an impetuous temper when suddenly aroused or unreasonably provoked. But, notwithstanding this, he has a heart to do right, and he feels sincere repentance

toward God when he reflects upon his wrongs.

If he sees his brethren inclined to do him justice he will be generous to forgive and humble enough to desire peace, even if he has to make great sacrifices to obtain it. But he is easily excited; he is of a nervous temperament. He has need of the subduing influence of the Spirit of God. If those who are ready to censure him would consider their own wrongs and kindly overlook his faults as generously as they should, they would manifest the spirit of Christ. Brother E has a work to do to overcome. His words and deportment to others should be gentle, kind, and pleasant. He should strictly guard against every thing which savors of a dictatorial spirit or of overbearing manners or words.

While God is a friend to the blind and the unfortunate, He does not excuse their sins. He requires them to overcome and to perfect Christian character in the name of Jesus, who overcame in their behalf. But Jesus pities our weakness, and He is ready to give strength to bear up in trial and to resist the temptations of Satan, if we will cast our burden upon Him. Angels are sent to minister to the children of God who are physically blind. Angels guard their steps and save them from a thousand dangers, which, unknown to them, beset their path. But His Spirit will not attend them unless they cherish a spirit of kindness and seek earnestly to have control over their natures and to bring their passions and every power into submission to God. They must cultivate a spirit of love and control their words and actions.

I was shown that God requires His people to be far more pitiful and considerate of the unfortunate than they are. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." [James 1:27] Here genuine religion is defined. God requires that the same consideration which should be given to the widow and fatherless be given to the blind and to those suffering under the affliction of other physical infirmities. Disinterested benevolence is very rare in this age of the world.

I was shown, in Brother E's case, that those who would in any way deal unjustly with him and discourage him in his efforts to help himself, or who, coveting the poor blind man's prosperity, would advantage themselves to his disadvantage, will bring upon themselves the curse of God, who is the blind man's friend. Special injunctions were given to the children of Israel in reference to the blind: "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the

blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the Lord Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor.” “Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor’s landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, Amen.” [Lev 19:13-15; Deut 27:17-19]

It is strange that professed Christian men should disregard the plain, positive teachings of the word of God and feel no compunctions of conscience. God places upon them the responsibility of caring for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the widow, and the fatherless; but many make no effort to regard it. In order to save such, God frequently brings them under the rod of affliction and places them in positions similar to those occupied by the persons who were in need of their help and sympathy, but who did not receive it at their hands.

God will hold the church at ----- responsible, as a body, for the wrong course of its members. If a selfish and unsympathizing spirit is allowed to exist in any of its members toward the unfortunate, the widow, the orphan, the blind, the lame, or those who are sick in body or mind, He will hide His face from His people until they do their duty and remove the wrong from among them. If any professing the name of Christ so far misrepresent their Saviour as to be unmindful of their duty to the afflicted, or if they in any way seek to advantage themselves to the injury of the unfortunate and thus rob them of means, the Lord holds the church accountable for the sin of its members until they have done all they can to remedy the existing evil. He will not hearken to the prayer of His people while the orphan, the fatherless, the lame, the blind, and the sick are neglected among them.

There is more meant by “being on the Lord’s side” than merely saying so in meeting. The Lord’s side is ever the side of mercy, pity, and sympathy for the suffering, as will be seen by the example given us in the life of Jesus. We are required to imitate His example. But there are some who are not on the Lord’s side in regard to these things; they are on the side of the enemy. In giving to His hearers an illustration of this subject, Jesus said:

“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me. Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and

his angels: for I was anhungered, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee anhungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." [Mt 25:40-46]

Here in His sermon Christ identifies Himself with suffering humanity and plainly impresses upon us all that indifference or injustice done to the least of His saints is done to Him. Here is the Lord's side, and whoever will be on the Lord's side, let him come over with us. The dear Saviour is wounded when we wound one of His humble saints.

Righteous Job moans because of his afflictions and pleads his own cause when unjustly accused by one of his comforters. He says: "I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out. And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth." [Job 29:15-17]

The sin of one man discomfited the entire army of Israel. A wrong course pursued by one toward his brother will turn the light of God from His people until the wrong is searched out and the cause of the oppressed is vindicated. God requires His people to be tender in their feelings and discriminations, while their hearts should be enlarged, their feelings should be broad and deep, not narrow, selfish, and penurious. Noble sympathy, largeness of soul, and disinterested benevolence are needed. Then can the church triumph in God. But just as long as the church suffer selfishness to dry up kindly sympathy and tender, thoughtful love and interest for their brethren, every virtue will be corroded. Isaiah's fast should be studied and close self-examination made with a spirit to discern whether there is in them the principles which God's people are required to possess in order that they may receive the rich blessings promised.

God requires that His people should not allow the poor and afflicted to be oppressed. If they break every yoke and release the oppressed, and are unselfish and kindly considerate of the needy, then shall the blessings promised be theirs. If there are those in the church who would cause the blind to stumble, they should be brought to justice; for God has made us guardians of the blind, the afflicted, the widows, and the fatherless. The stumbling block referred to in

the word of God does not mean a block of wood placed before the feet of the blind to cause him to stumble, but it means much more than this. It means any course that may be pursued to injure the influence of their blind brother, to work against his interest, or to hinder his prosperity.

A brother who is blind and poor and diseased, and who is making every exertion to help himself that he may not be dependent, should be encouraged by his brethren in every way possible. But those who profess to be his brethren, who have the use of all their faculties, who are not dependent, but who so far forget their duty to the blind as to perplex and distress and hedge up his way, are doing a work which will require repentance and restoration before God will accept their prayers. And the church of God who have permitted their unfortunate brother to be wronged will be guilty of sin until they do all in their power to have the wrong righted.

All are doubtless familiar with Achan's case. It is recorded in sacred history for all generations, but more especially for those upon whom the ends of the world are come. Joshua lay moaning upon his face before God because the people were obliged to make a disgraceful retreat before their enemies. The Lord bade Joshua arise: "Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?" [Josh 7:10] Have I humbled without cause by removing My presence from thee? Does God forsake His people without a cause? No; He tells Joshua that there is a work for him to do before his prayer can be answered. "Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also." He declares: "Neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you." [Josh 7:11-12]

Here in this example we have some idea of the responsibility resting upon the church and the work that God requires them to do in order to have His presence. It is a sin in any church not to search for the cause of their darkness and of the afflictions which have been in the midst of them. The church in ----- cannot be a living, prosperous church until they are more awake to the wrongs among them, which hinder the blessing of God from coming upon them. The church should not suffer their brethren in affliction to be wronged. These are the very ones that should awaken the sympathy of all hearts and call into exercise noble, benevolent feelings from all the followers of Christ. The true disciples of Christ will work in harmony with Him and, following His example will help those who need help. Brother E's blindness is a terrible affliction, and all should seek to be eyes for the blind and thus make him feel

his loss as little as possible. There are some who improve their eyes by watching opportunities to work for their own advantage to get gain, but God may bring confusion upon them in a manner they do not expect.

If God in His mercy has given the blind man inventive faculties that he can use for his own good, God forbid that any one should grudge him this privilege and rob him of the benefits he might derive from God's gift to him. The blind man has disadvantages to meet on every side in the loss of his sight. That heart in which pity and sympathy are not excited at seeing a blind man groping his way in a world clothed to him in darkness, is hard indeed and must be softened by the grace of God. Not a face can the blind man look upon and there read kindly sympathy and true benevolence. He cannot look upon the beauties of nature and trace the finger of God in His created works. Their cheering gladness does not speak to him to comfort and to bless when despondency broods over him. How quickly would he exchange his blindness and every temporal blessing for the blessing of sight. But he is shut up to a world of darkness, and his God-given rights have been trampled upon that others might get gain. **3T pp. 511-21 (Docs 83774-99)**

Chapter 8

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WORLD

“For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.” Matthew 25:35-36

“God so loved the world, that He gave His onlybegotten Son.” He “sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.” [Jh 3:16-17] The love of God embraces all mankind. Christ, in giving the commission to the disciples, said: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” [Mk 16:15]

Christ intended that a greater work should be done in behalf of men that we have yet seen. He did not intend that such large numbers should choose to stand under the banner of Satan and be enrolled as rebels against the government of God. The world’s Redeemer did not design that His purchased inheritance should live and die in their sins. Why, then, are so few reached and saved? It is because so many of those who profess to be Christians are working in the same lines as the great apostate. Thousands who know not God might today be rejoicing in His love if those who claim to serve Him would work as Christ worked.

The blessings of salvation, temporal as well as spiritual, are for all mankind. There are many who complain of God because the world is so full of want and suffering; but God never meant that this misery should exist. He never

meant that one man should have an abundance of the luxuries of life, while the children of others cry for bread. The Lord is a God of benevolence. He has made ample provision for the wants of all, and through His representatives, to whom He has entrusted His good, He designs that the needs of all His creatures shall be supplied.

Let those who believe the word of the Lord read the instruction contained in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. There they will learn what kind of education was given to the families of Israel. While God's chosen people were to stand forth distinct and holy, separated from the nations that knew Him not, they were to treat the stranger kindly. He was not to be looked down upon because he was not of Israel. The Israelites were to love the stranger because Christ died as verily to save him as He did to save Israel. At their feasts of thanksgiving, when they recounted the mercies of God, the stranger was to be made welcome. At the time of harvest they were to leave in the field a portion for the stranger and the poor. So the strangers were to share also in God's spiritual blessings. The Lord God of Israel commanded that they should be received if they chose the society of those who knew and acknowledged Him. In this way they would learn the law of Jehovah and glorify Him by their obedience.

So today God desires His children, both in spiritual and in temporal things, to impart blessings to the world. For every disciple of Christ in every age were spoken those precious words of the Saviour: Out of him "shall flow rivers of living water." [Jn 7:38]

But instead of imparting the gifts of God, many who profess to be Christians are wrapped up in their own narrow interests, and they selfishly withhold God's blessings from their fellow men.

While God in His providence has laden the earth with His bounties and filled its storehouses with the comforts of life, want and misery are on every hand. A liberal Providence has placed in the hands of His human agents an abundance to supply the necessities of all, but the stewards of God are unfaithful. In the professed Christian world there is enough expended in extravagant display to supply the wants of all the hungry and to clothe the naked. Many who have taken upon themselves the name of Christ are spending His money for selfish pleasure, for the gratification of appetite, for strong drink and rich dainties, for extravagant houses and furniture and dress, while to suffering human beings they give scarcely a look of pity or a word of sympathy.

What misery exists in the very heart of our so-called Christian countries! Think of the condition of the poor in our large cities. In these cities there are

multitudes of human beings who do not receive as much care and consideration as are given to the brutes. There are thousands of wretched children, ragged and half starved, with vice and depravity written on their faces. Families are herded together in miserable tenements, many of them dark cellars reeking with dampness and filth. Children are born in these terrible places. Infancy and youth behold nothing attractive, nothing of the beauty of natural things that God has created to delight the senses. These children are left to grow up molded and fashioned in character by the low precepts, the wretchedness, and the wicked example around them. They hear the name of God only in profanity. Impure words, the fumes of liquor and tobacco, moral degradation of every kind, meets the eye and perverts the senses. And from these abodes of wretchedness piteous cries for food and clothing are sent out by many who know nothing about prayer.

By our churches there is a work to be done of which many have little idea, a work as yet almost untouched. "I was anhungered," Christ says, "and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came unto Me." [Mt 25:35-36] Some think that if they give money to this work, it is all they are required to do; but this is an error. Donations of money cannot take the place of personal ministry. It is right to give our means, and many moire should do this; but according to their strength and opportunities, personal service is required of all

The work of gathering in the needy, the oppressed, the suffering, the destitute, is the very work which every church that believes the truth for this time should long since have been doing. We are to show the tender sympathy of the Samaritan in supplying physical necessities, feeding the hungry, bringing the poor that are cast out to our homes, gathering from God every day grace and strength that will enable us to reach to the very depths of human misery and help those who cannot possibly help themselves. In doing this work we have a favorable opportunity to set forth Christ the crucified One.

Every church member should feel it his special duty to labor for those living in his neighborhood. Study how you can best help those who take no interest in religious things. As you visit your friends and neighbors, show an interest in their spiritual as well as in their temporal welfare. Present Christ as a sin-pardoning Saviour. Invite your neighbors to your home, and read with them from the precious Bible and form books that explain its truths. This, united with simple songs and fervent prayers, will touch their hearts. Let

church members educate themselves to do this work. This is just as essential as to save the benighted souls in foreign countries. While some feel the burden of souls afar off, let the many who are at home feel the burden of precious souls around them and work just as diligently for their salvation.

The hours so often spent in amusement that refreshes neither body nor soul should be spent in visiting the poor, the sick, and the suffering, or in seeking to help someone who is in need.

In trying to help the poor, the despised, the forsaken, do not work for them mounted on the stilts of your dignity and superiority, for in this way you will accomplish nothing. Become truly converted, and learn of Him who is meek and lowly in heart. We must set the Lord always before us. As servants of Christ, keep saying, lest you forget it: "I am bought with a price." [1 Cor 7:23]

God calls not only for your benevolence, but for your cheerful countenance, your hopeful words, the grasp of your hand. As you visit the Lord's afflicted ones, you will find some from whom hope has departed; bring back the sunshine to them. There are those who need the bread of life; read to them from the word of God. Upon others there is a soul sickness that no earthly balm can reach or physician heal; pray for these, and bring them to Jesus.

On special occasions some indulge in sentimental feelings which lead to impulsive movements. They may think that in this way they are doing great service of Christ, but they are not. Their zeal soon dies, and then Christ's service is neglected. It is not fitful service that God accepts; it is not by emotional spasms of activity that we can do good to our fellow men. Spasmodic efforts to do good often result in more injury than benefit.

Methods of helping the needy should be carefully and prayerfully considered. We are to seek God for wisdom, for He knows better than shortsighted mortals how to care for the creatures He has made. There are some who give indiscriminately to everyone who solicits their aid. In this they err. In trying to help the needy, we should be careful to give the right kind of help. There are those who when helped will continue to make themselves special objects of need. They will be dependent as long as they see anything on which to depend. By giving undue time and attention to these, we may encourage idleness, helplessness, extravagance, and intemperance.

When we give to the poor we should consider: "Am I encouraging prodigality? Am I helping or injuring them?" No man who can earn his own livelihood has a right to depend on others.

The proverb, "The world owes me a living," has in it the essence of falsehood, fraud, and robbery. The world owes no man a living who is able to work and gain a living for himself. But if one comes to our door and asks for food, we should not turn him away hungry. His poverty may be the result of misfortune.

We should help those who with large families to support have constantly to battle with feebleness and poverty. Many a widowed mother with her fatherless children is working far beyond her strength in order to keep her little ones with her, and provide them with food and clothing. Many such mothers have died from overexertion. Every widow needs the comfort of hopeful, encouraging, words, and there are very many who should have substantial aid.

Men and women of God, persons of discernment and wisdom, should be appointed to look after the poor and needy, the household of faith first. These should report to the church and counsel as to what should be done.

Instead of encouraging the poor to think that they can have their eating and drinking provided free or nearly so, we should place them where they can help themselves. We should endeavor to provide them with work, and if necessary teach them how to work. Let the members of poor households be taught how to cook, how to make and mend their own clothing, how to care properly for the home. Let boys and girls be thoroughly taught some useful trade or occupation. We are to educate the poor to become self-reliant. This will be true help, for it will not only make them self-sustaining, but will enable them to help others.

It is God's purpose that the rich and the poor shall be closely bound together by the ties of sympathy and helpfulness. He bids us interest ourselves in every case of suffering and need that shall come to our knowledge.

Think it not lowering to your dignity to minister to suffering humanity. Look not with indifference and contempt upon those who have laid the temple of the soul in ruins. These are objects of divine compassion. He who created all, cares for all. Even those who have fallen the lowest are not beyond the reach of His love and pity. If we are truly His disciples, we shall manifest the same spirit. The love that is inspired by our love for Jesus will see in every soul, rich or poor, a value that cannot be measured by human estimate. Let your life reveal a love that is higher than you can possibly express in words.

Often the hearts of men will harden under rebuke, but they cannot withstand the love expressed toward them in Christ. We should bid the sinner not to feel himself an outcast from God. Bid the sinner look to Christ, who

alone can heal the soul leprous with sin. Reveal to the desperate, discouraged sufferer that he is a prisoner of hope. Let your message be: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." [Jn 1:29]

I have been instructed that the medical missionary work will discover, in the very depths of degradation, men who, though they have given themselves up to intemperate, dissolute habits, will respond to the right kind of labor. But they need to be recognized and encouraged. Firm, patient, earnest effort will be required in order to lift them up. They cannot restore themselves. They may hear Christ's call, but their ears are too dull to take in its meaning; their eyes are too blind to see anything good in store for them. They are dead in trespasses and sins. Yet even these are not to be excluded from the gospel feast. They are to receive the invitation: "Come." Though they may feel unworthy, the Lord says: "Compel them to come in." [Lk 14:23] Listen to no excuse. By love and kindness lay right hold of them. "Ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire." [Jude 20-23] Press home upon the conscience the terrible results of the transgression of God's law. Show that it is not God who causes pain and suffering, but that man through his own ignorance and sin has brought this condition upon himself.

This work, properly conducted, will save many a poor sinner who has been neglected by the churches. Many not of our faith are longing for the very help that Christians are in duty bound to give. If God's people would show a genuine interest in their neighbors, many would be reached by the special truths for this time. Nothing will or ever can give character to the work like helping the people just where they are. Thousands might today be rejoicing in the message if those who claim to love God and keep His commandments would work as Christ worked.

When the medical missionary work thus wins men and women to saving knowledge of Christ and His truth, money and earnest labor may safely be invested in it, for it is a work that will endure. **6T pp. 273-280 (Docs 88694-721)**

Chapter 9

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HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH

“If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.” Deut 15:7-8

New Sabbathkeepers

There are two classes of poor whom we have always within our borders—those who ruin themselves by their own independent course of action and continue in their transgression, and those who for the truth’s sake have been brought into straitened circumstances. We are to love our neighbor as ourselves, and then toward both these classes we shall do the right thing under the guidance and counsel of sound wisdom.

There is no question in regard to the Lord’s poor. They are to be helped in every case where it will be for their benefit.

God wants His people to reveal to a sinful world that He has not left them to perish. Special pains should be taken to help those who for the truth’s sake

are cast out from their homes and are obliged to suffer. More and more there will be need of large, open, generous hearts, those who will deny self and will take hold of the cases of these very ones whom the Lord loves. The poor among God's people must not be left without provision for their wants. Some way must be found whereby they may obtain a livelihood. Some will need to be taught to work. Others who work hard and are taxed to the utmost of their ability to support their families will need special assistance. We should take an interest in these cases and help them to secure employment. There should be a fund to aid such worthy poor families who love God and keep His commandments.

Care must be taken that the means needed for this work shall not be diverted into other channels. It makes a difference whether we help the poor who through keeping God's commandments are reduced to want and suffering, or whether we neglect these in order to help blasphemers who tread underfoot the commandments of God. And God regards the difference. Sabbathkeepers should not pass by the Lord's suffering, needy ones to take upon themselves the burden of supporting those who continue in transgression of God's law, those who are educated to look for help to anyone who will sustain them. This is not the right kind of missionary work. It is not in harmony with the Lord's plan.

Wherever a church is established, its members are to do a faithful work for the needy believers. But they are not to stop here. They are also to aid others, irrespective of their faith. As the result of such effort, some of these will receive the special truths for this time.

The Poor, the Sick and the Aged

“If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to

thy needy, in thy land.” [Deut 15:7-11]

Through circumstances some who love and obey God become poor. Some are not careful; they do not know how to manage. Others are poor through sickness an misfortune. Whatever the cause, they are in need, and to help them is an important line of missionary work.

All our churches should have a care for their own poor. Our love for God is to be expressed in doing good to the needy and suffering of the household of faith whose necessities come to our knowledge and require our care. Every soul is under special obligation to God to notice His worthy poor with particular compassion. Under no consideration are these to be passed by.

Paul wrote to the Corinthian church: “Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God. Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.” [1 Cor 8:1-6]

There had been a famine at Jerusalem and Paul knew that many of the Christians had been scattered abroad and that those who remained would be likely to be deprived of human sympathy and exposed to religious enmity. therefore he exhorted the churches to send pecuniary assistance to their brethren to Jerusalem. The amount raised by the churches exceeded the expectation of the apostles. Constrained by the love of Christ, the believers gave liberally, and they were filled with joy because they should thus express their gratitude to the Redeemer and their love for the brethren. This is the true basis of charity according to God’s word.

The matter of caring for our aged brethren and sisters who have no homes is constantly being urged. What can be done for them? The light which the Lord has given me has been repeated: It is no best to establish institutions for the care of the aged, that they may be in a company together. Nor should they be sent away from home to received care. Let the members of very family minister to their own relatives. When this is not possible, the work belongs tot he church, and it should be accepted both as a duty and as a privilege. All who have Christ’s spirit will regard the feeble and aged with special respect and

tenderness.

God suffers His poor to be in the borders of every church. They are always to be among us, and the Lord places upon the members of every church a personal responsibility to care for them. We are not to lay our responsibility upon others. Toward those within our own borders we are to manifest the same love and sympathy that Christ would manifest were He in our place. Thus we are to be disciplined, that we may be prepared to work in Christ's lines.

The minister should educate the various families and strengthen the church to care for its own sick and poor. He should set at work the God-given faculties of the people, and if one church is overtaxed in this line, other churches should come to its assistance. Let the church members exercise tact and ingenuity in caring for these, the Lord's people. Let them deny themselves luxuries and needless ornaments, that they may make the suffering needy ones comfortable. In doing this they practice the instruction given in the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, and the blessing there pronounced will be theirs. **6T pp. 269-72 (Docs 88681-93)**

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“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” Gal 6:10

The Needy of the Household of Faith. — Our love for God is to be expressed in doing good to the needy and suffering of the household of faith whose necessities come to our knowledge and require our care. Every soul is under special obligation to God to notice His worthy poor with particular compassion. Under no consideration are these to be passed by. — *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 271.

“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” [Gal 6:10]

In a special sense Christ has laid upon His church the duty of caring for the needy among its own members. He suffers His poor to be in the borders of every church. They are always to be among us, and He places upon the members of the church a personal responsibility to care for them.

As the members of a true family care for one another, ministering to the

sick, supporting the weak, teaching the ignorant, training the inexperienced, so is the “household of faith” [Gal 6:10] to care for its needy and helpless ones. — *Ministry of Healing*, p. 201.

Two Classes to Care For. — There are two classes of poor whom we have always within our borders—those who ruin themselves by their own independent course of action and continue in their transgression, and those who for the truth’s sake have been brought into straitened circumstances. We are to love our neighbor as ourselves, and then toward both these classes we shall do the right thing under the guidance and counsel of sound wisdom.

There is no question in regard to the Lord’s poor. They are to be helped in every case where it will be for their benefit. God wants His people to reveal to a sinful world that He has not left them to perish. Special pains should be taken to help those who for the truth’s sake are cast out from their homes and are obliged to suffer. More and more there will be need of large, open, generous hearts, those who will deny self and will take hold of the cases of these very ones whom the Lord loves. The poor among God’s people must not be left without provision for their wants. Some way must be found whereby they may obtain a livelihood. Some will need to be taught to work. Others who work hard, and are taxed to the utmost of their ability to support their families, will need special assistance. We should take an interest in these cases and help them to secure employment. There should be a fund to aid such worthy poor families who love God and keep His commandments.

Care must be taken that the means needed for this work shall not be diverted into other channels. It makes a difference whether we help the poor who through keeping God’s commandments are reduced to want and suffering, or whether we neglect these in order to help blasphemers who tread underfoot the commandments of God. And God regards the difference. Sabbathkeepers should not pass by the Lord’s suffering, needy ones to take upon themselves the burden of supporting those who continue in transgression of God’s law, those who are educated to look for help to anyone who will sustain them. This is not the right kind of missionary work. It is not in harmony with the Lord’s plan.

Wherever a church is established its members are to do a faithful work for the needy believers. But they are not to stop here. They are also to aid others, irrespective of their faith. As the result of such effort some of these will receive the special truths for this time.

“If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of

thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.” [Deut 15:7-11]

Through circumstances some who love and obey God become poor. Some are not careful; they do not know how to manage. Others are poor through sickness and misfortune. Whatever the cause they are in need, and to help them is an important line of missionary work. — *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 269-271.

Poverty May Result From Adverse Circumstance. — It has not always been regarded as a mark of inefficiency when through adverse circumstances pinching want has made it necessity for a brother to incur debts or suffer for food and clothing even though he was unable to lift these debts, struggle as hard as he might. A helping hand has been reached out to such ones, to place them upon their feet, free from embarrassment, that they might do their work in the vineyard of the Lord and not be oppressed with the thought that a cloud of debt was hanging over them. — Manuscript 34, 1894.

The Responsibility of the Church or Churches. — It is the duty of each Church to make careful, judicious arrangements for the care of its poor and sick. — Letter 169, 1901.

God suffers His poor to be in the borders of every church. They are always to be among us, and the Lord places upon the members of every church a personal responsibility to care for them. We are not to lay our responsibility upon others. Toward those within our own borders we are to manifest the same love and sympathy that Christ would manifest were He in our place. Thus we are to be disciplined, that we may be prepared to work in Christ’s lines.

The minister should educate the various families and strengthen the Church to care for its own sick and poor. He should set at work the God-given faculties

of the people, and if one church is overtaxed in this line, other churches should come to its assistance. Let the church members exercise tact and ingenuity in caring for these, the Lord's people. Let them deny themselves luxuries and needless ornaments, that they may make the suffering needy ones comfortable. In doing this they practice the instruction given in the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, and the blessing there pronounced will be theirs. — *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 272.

Every church Member to Do His Part. — The Lord's people are to be as true as steel to principle. He has pointed out the work devolving on every church member. He declares that the church members are faithfully to do their duty to those within their own borders. They are generously to support their own poor. They are to engage in systematic missionary work, teaching their children to keep the way of the Lord and to do judgment and justice.

But the light which for years has been before the churches has been disregarded. The work that ought to have been done for suffering humanity in every church has not been done. Church members have failed to heed the word of the Lord, and this has deprived them of an experience they should have gained in gospel work. — *Review and Herald*, March 4, 1902.

The poor and the needy are to be cared for. These must not be neglected, at whatever cost or sacrifice to ourselves. — *Youth's Instructor*, Aug. 26, 1897.

The church to Bear the Burden. — The churches that have the poor among them should not neglect their stewardship and throw the burden of the poor and sick upon the sanitarium. All the members of the several churches are responsible before God for their afflicted ones. They should bear their own burdens. If they have sick persons among them, whom they wish to be benefited by treatment, they should, if able, send them to the sanitarium. In doing this they will not only be patronizing the institution which God has established but will be helping those who need help, caring for the poor as God requires us to do. — *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 551.

When the Lord's poor Are Neglected. — When the Lord's poor are neglected and forgotten or greeted with cold looks and cruel words, let the guilty one bear in mind that he is neglecting Christ in the person of His saints. Our Saviour identifies His interest with that of suffering humanity. As the heart of the parent yearns with pitying tenderness over the suffering one of her little

flock, so the heart of our Redeemer sympathizes with the poorest and lowliest of His earthly children. He has placed them among us to awaken in our hearts that love which He feels toward the suffering and oppressed, and He will let His judgments fall upon anyone who wrongs, slights, or abuses them. — *Ibid.*, p. 620.

Search Out the Needs. — Your good wishes we will thank you for, but the poor cannot keep comfortable on good wishes alone. They must have tangible proofs of your kindness in food and clothing. God does not mean that any of His followers should beg for bread. He has given you an abundance that you may supply those of their necessities which by industry and economy they are not able to supply. Do not wait for them to call your attention to their needs. Act as did Job. The thing that he knew not he searched out. Go on an inspecting tour and learn what is needed and how it can be best supplied. — *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 151.

Do Not Wait for Them to Come to Us. — Poverty and distress in families will come to our knowledge, and afflicted and suffering ones will have to be relieved. . . . Do not wait for them to come to you. Examine their wearing apparel and help them if they need help. We should invest means to help young men and young women to obtain an education in sending the gospel to the poor, in aiding those who have ventured by faith to take their position upon the platform of eternal truth, when by so doing they have placed themselves in an embarrassing situation. Where there are cases of special need the minister must be prepared to relieve those who are in poverty for the truth's sake. — Manuscript 25, 1894.

Help for New Converts out of Employment. — In our benevolent work special help should be given to those who, through the presentation of the truth, are convicted and converted. We must have a care for those who have the moral courage to accept the truth, who lose their situations in consequence, and are refused work by which to support their families. Provision should be made to aid the worthy poor and to furnish employment for those who love God and keep His commandments. They should not be left without help, to feel that they are forced to work on the Sabbath or starve. Those who take their position on the Lord's side are to see in Seventh-day Adventists a warmhearted, self-denying, self-sacrificing people, who cheerfully and gladly minister to their

brethren in need. It is of this class especially that the Lord speaks when He says: "Bring the poor that are cast out to thy house." [Isaiah 58:7] — *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 85.

Provide Land for poor Families. — Where the school is established [in Australia] there must be land for orchards and gardens, that students may have physical exercise combined with mental taxation, and half and some wholly pay their way at school. Also ground must be purchased, that families that cannot obtain work in the cities because of the observance of the Sabbath may buy small farms and make their own living. This is a positive necessity in this country. Education must be given in regard to tilling the soil, and we must expect that the Lord will bless this effort. — Manuscript 23, 1894.

Our Duty to poor Families. — Inquiries are often made in regard to our duty to the poor who embrace the third message; and we ourselves have long been anxious to know how to manage with discretion the cases of poor families who embrace the Sabbath. But while at Roosevelt, New York, August 3, 1861, I was shown some things in regard to the poor.

God does not require our brethren to take charge of every poor family that shall embrace this message. If they should do this, the ministers must cease to enter new fields, for the funds would be exhausted. Many are poor from their own lack of diligence and economy; they know not how to use means aright. If they should be helped, it would hurt them. Some will always be poor. If they should have the very best advantages, their cases would not be helped. They have not good calculation, and would use all the means they could obtain, were it much or little.

Some know nothing of denying self and economizing to keep out of debt and to get a little ahead for a time of need. If the church should help such individuals instead of leaving them to rely upon their own resources, it would injure them in the end, for they look to the church and expect to receive help from them and do not practice self-denial and economy when they are well provided for. And if they do not receive help every time, Satan tempts them, and they become jealous and very conscientious for their brethren, fearing they will fail to do all their duty to them. The mistake is on their own part. They are deceived. They are not the Lord's poor.

The instructions given in the Word of God in regard to helping the poor do not touch such cases, but are for the unfortunate and afflicted. God in His

providence has afflicted individuals to test and prove others. Widows and invalids are in the church to prove a blessing to the church. They are a part of the means which God has chosen to develop the true character of Christ's professed followers and to call into exercise the precious traits of character manifested by our compassionate Redeemer.

Many who can but barely live when they are single choose to marry and raise a family when they know they have nothing with which to support them. And worse than this, they have no family government. Their whole course in their family is marked with their loose, slack habits. They have but little control over themselves, and are passionate, impatient, and fretful. When such embrace the message they feel that they are entitled to assistance from their more wealthy brethren; and if their expectations are not met, they complain of the church and accuse them of not living out their faith? Who must be the sufferers in this case? Must the cause of God be sapped, and the treasury in different places exhausted, to take care of these large families of poor? No. The parents must be the sufferers. They will not, as a general thing, suffer any greater lack after they embrace the Sabbath than they did before.

There is an evil among some of the poor which will certainly prove their ruin unless they overcome it. They have embraced the truth with their coarse, rough, uncultivated habits, and it takes some time for them to see and realize their coarseness, and that it is not in accordance with the character of Christ. They look upon others who are more orderly and refined as being proud, and you may hear them say: "The truth brings us all down upon a level." But it is an entire mistake to think that the truth brings the receiver down. It brings him up, refines his taste, sanctifies his judgment, and, if lived out, is continually fitting him for the society of holy angels in the city of God. The truth is designed to bring us all up upon a level.

The more able should ever act a noble, generous part in their deal with their poorer brethren, and should also give them good advice, and then leave them to fight life's battles through. But I was shown that a most solemn duty rests upon the church to have an especial care for the destitute widows, orphans, and invalids. — *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 272-274.

Counsel Regarding a Balanced Work. — Christ has not bidden us bestow all our labor and all our gifts upon the poor. We have a work to do in behalf of those who are fulfilling His commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." [Mk 16:15] The increase of the ministry will

require an increase of means

When you expend money consider, "Am I encouraging prodigality?" When you give to the poor and wretched consider, "Am I helping them, or hurting them?" . . .

Think of the necessities of our mission fields throughout the world The present time is burdened with eternal interests. We are to unfurl the standard of truth before a world perishing in error. God calls for men to rally under Christ's blood-stained banner, give the Bible to the people, multiply camp meetings in different localities, warn the cities, and send the warning far and near in the highways and byways of the world. — Manuscript 4, 1899. **WM pp. 178-87 (Docs 102351-83)**

Section 3

CAUSES OF POVERTY

Working with the Poor

Selected Passages from Ellen G. White on Social Responsibility



Chapter 10

* * *

OPPRESSION

“And there was a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren the Jews. for there were that said, We, our sons, and our daughters, are many; therefore we take up corn for them, that we may eat, and live. Some also there were that said, We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we might buy corn, because of the dearth. There were also that said, We have borrowed money for the king’s tribute, and that upon our lands and vineyards. Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children: and, lo, we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and some of our daughters are brought unto bondage already: neither is it in our power to redeem them; for other men have our lands and vineyards. And I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words. Then I consulted with myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them. And I said unto them, We after our ability have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us? Then held

they their peace, and found nothing to answer. also I said, It is not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies? I likewise, and my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn: I pray your, let us leave off this usury. Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their oliveyards, and their houses, also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them. Then said they, We will restore them, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest. Then I called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise. Also I shook my lap, and said, So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out, and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen, and praised the LORD. And the people did according to this promise.” Neh 5:1-13

While under his direction the people were rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, and at the same time defending themselves against their enemies, they suffered many privations. They had no courage to plant or sow, for they were sure of nothing. And the sabbatical year, which God had commanded them to keep, increased their difficulties by shortening their supplies. Many who had large families were unable to buy necessary food except on credit. “And there was a great cry of the people and their wives against their brethren the Jews. For there were that said, We, our sons, and our daughters, are many; therefore we mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we might buy corn, because of the dearth. There were also that said, We have borrowed money for the king’s tribute, and that upon our lands and vineyards. Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children; and, lo, we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and some of our daughters are brought into bondage already; neither is it in our power to redeem them; for other men have our lands and vineyards.” [Neh 5:1-5]

Now was the time for the wealthy Jews to carry out the principles of the law of God, and show that they loved their neighbor as themselves. Did they do this? No; they saw that they had an opportunity to enrich themselves at the disadvantage of their neighbor, and they improved it. The Lord had

commanded that every third year a tithe be raised for the benefit of the poor,—a tithe in addition to, and entirely distinct from, that given every year for the service of God. But instead of observing this law of kindness, love, and mercy, they took advantage of the necessities of the poor to charge exorbitant prices, nearly double what an article was really worth.

The poorer class of people were obliged to borrow money to pay their tribute to the king; and the wealthy, who loaned this money, exacted high rates of interest. They took mortgages on the lands of the poor, and finally added them to their own large possessions. Thus some became very wealthy, while others were in deep poverty. But the rich felt no compassion for their poorer brethren, not even when they were obliged to sell their sons and daughters into bondage, with no hope of being able to redeem them. Nothing but accumulating distress, perpetual want and bondage, seemed to be before them. There appeared to be no prospect of redress, no hope of redeeming children or lands. Yet these men were of the same nation and faith as their more wealthy and prosperous brethren; they too belonged to the chosen people of God.

Some had brought upon themselves financial embarrassment by their own mismanagement and want of foresight; but this was not a sufficient reason for oppressing them, and those who took this advantage were revealing their true character. They were going directly contrary to the letter and spirit of God's command: "If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as a usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury." "Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother: usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury." [Ex 22:25; Deut 23:19]

Nehemiah entered upon the work of reforming these wrongs with characteristic energy and promptness. He says: "And I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words. Then I consulted with myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them. And I said unto them, We, after our ability, have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us? Then held they their peace, and found nothing to answer. Also I said, It is not good that ye do; ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?" [Neh 5:6-9]

The people had departed from the word of the Lord, and were following the inclination of their own hearts. And the rulers in Israel, the very ones who should have carried out the expressed will of God in dealing compassionately

with the needy, who should have seen that no wrong was done, were themselves the worst oppressors. Nehemiah rebuked the rulers and the nobles for their unjust exaction. He set before them their course and its consequences, and their guilt in disobeying the command of God. He inquired, "Ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies? I likewise, and my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn; I pray you, let us leave off this usury. Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their oliveyards, and their houses, also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them. Then said they, We will restore them, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest. Then I called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise. Also I shook my lap, and said, So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labor, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out, and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen, and praised the Lord. And the people did according to this promise."

Here is important instruction for all who would walk in the fear of the Lord and in the way of his commandments. Some who profess to be so walking are acting over again the course pursued by the rulers and nobles in Israel. Because they have the power, they exact more than is just and honest, and thus become oppressors. The word of God must be the rule in deal. Those who profess to love God, and yet take advantage of the necessities of their brethren to exact large interest, perhaps ten or twelve per cent, may for a time appear to gain by this course; but they will finally learn that God can scatter. The Lord will judge and punish; he will hear the cry of the oppressed, and will repay the oppressor according to his deeds. **RH 03-11-84 (Docs 129430-36)**

In the days of Nehemiah "there was a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren the Jews. For there were that said, We, our sons, and our daughters, are many: therefore we take up corn for them, that we may eat, and live. Some also there were that said, We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we might buy corn, because of the dearth. . . . Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children; and, lo, we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and some of our daughters are brought into bondage already; neither is it in our power to redeem them; for other men have our lands and vineyards." "And," writes Nehemiah, "I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words" [Neh. 5:1-6].

I have heard from many the cry of unjust dealing, and, knowing something of the inward working of these matters, I have been stirred with indignation. For years men have been working contrary to God's word, ignoring judgment and justice. Shall we be compelled to follow the same course pursued by Nehemiah? We read of him, "I consulted with myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them." "Also I said, It is not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies? I likewise, and my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn: I pray you, let us leave off this usury." "The former governors that had been before me were chargeable unto the people, and had taken of them bread and wine, beside forty shekels of silver, . . . but so did not I, because of the fear of God" [Neh 5:7, 9, 10, 15]. **17MR pp. 191-92 (Docs 206378-79)**

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taken of them bread and wine, besides forty shekels of silver, . . . but so did not I, because of the fear of God.” [Neh 5:7, 9-10, 15]

Shall we call a halt? Shall we present the condition of things to the people? The most inconsistent plans have been devised by men whose minds were not moved by the Holy Spirit. Men have striven to bring their fellow-men under their jurisdiction, but we cannot endorse their actions; for God regards not those who practice oppression, who make man an offender for a word, and who lift up and cast down at their pleasure, placing men in close places that they may gain their own unjust ends. **1888 pp. 1589-91 (Docs 221932-34)**

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“He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want.” Prov 22:16

“He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want.” [Prov 22:16] This breaks up worldly policy, and sets aside worldly maxims. “That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee? Rob not the poor, because he is poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate.” Consider also these words: “For the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoil them. Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go.” Why?—“Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.” [Prov 22:19-25]

While distrust and alienation are pervading all classes of society, Christ’s disciples are to reveal the spirit that reigns in heaven. Because the world was ruined through sin, God gave his Son to draw men back to him. He “so loved the world, that he gave” [Jn 3:16] all that heaven could give for the saving of the lost. In every soul who receives that love it will manifest itself in like manner. God so loved that he gave. If we love with his love, we, too, shall give all. We shall be co-workers with him whose mission it is to “preach the gospel to the poor; . . . to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” [Lk 4:18-19] We shall do the work he has set

before us, —“to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke; . . . to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house; when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh.” [Isa 58:6-7]

Again the Lord says: “Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way: but let it rather be healed.” [Heb 12:12-13] All about us are souls that have gone out of the way,—souls that have been wounded and bruised by the enemy, and that feel a craving for help, for comfort, for sympathy. These souls, when brought in contact with us, should find a strong hand stretched out to clasp their hand,—a strong, living faith that will help them to put their trust in Jesus. **RH 08-11-96 (Docs 136634-36)**

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to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke; . . . to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house; when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh." . . . [Isa 58:6-7]

The Saviour marks all our work as though done unto himself; for he identifies his interest with that of suffering humanity. Every one who names the name of Jesus is called, so far as it lies in his power, to help every other soul in the heavenward way. But let none feel that Christ has placed them on the judgment-seat to pass judgment on a brother or sister who is unfortunate, or who falls into error. Many hearts are sorely stricken, to whom words fitly spoken might bring peace and rest. These souls are a test to their brethren and sisters, revealing what is in the heart. All heaven is looking to see how we treat those that need our help. It is this that reveals whether the glowing fire of the first love is still burning upon the altar of the heart. **SpTA07 pp. 57-58 (Docs 173870-72)**

“Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless: for their Redeemer is mighty; He shall plead their cause with thee.” “He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want.” “Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.” [Prov 23:10-11; 22:16; 26:27]

These are principles with which are bound up the well-being of society, of both secular and religious associations. It is these principles that give security to property and life. For all that makes confidence and co-operation possible, the world is indebted to the law of God, as given in His word, and as still traced, in lines often obscure and well-nigh obliterated, in the hearts of men. **Ed pp. 136-37 (Docs 19907-08)**

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“If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they. Ecclesiastes 5:8

The accounts of every business, the details of every transaction, pass the scrutiny of unseen auditors, agents of Him who never compromises with injustice, never overlooks evil, never palliates wrong.

“If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice, . . . marvel not at the matter: for He that is higher than the highest regardeth.” “There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.” [Eccl 5:8, Job 34:22] **Ed pp. 144 (Docs 19938-39)**

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“The LORD will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses. What man ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord GOD of hosts.” Isaiah 3:14-15

The outlook was particularly discouraging as regards the social conditions of the people. In their desire for gain, men were adding house to house and field to field. [See Isaiah 5:8] Justice was perverted, and no pity was shown the poor. Of these evils God declared, “The spoil of the poor is in your houses.” Ye beat My people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor.” [Isa 3:14-15] Even the magistrates, whose duty it was to protect the helpless, turned a deaf ear to the cries of the poor and needy, the widows and the fatherless. [Isa 10:1, 2]

With oppression and wealth came pride and love of display, gross drunkenness, and a spirit of revelry. [See Isa 2:11-12; 3:16, 18-23; 5:22, 11, 12] And in Isaiah’s day idolatry itself no longer provoked surprise. [See Isaiah 2:8, 9] Iniquitous practices had become so prevalent among all classes that the few who remained true to God were often tempted to lose heart and to give way to discouragement and despair. It seemed as if God’s purpose for Israel were about to fail and that the rebellious nation was to suffer a fate similar to that of Sodom and Gomorrah. **PK p. 306 (Docs 54798-99)**

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“Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; To turn a side the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!” Isa 10:1-2

An idol sabbath has been set up, as the golden image was set up in the plains of Dura. And as Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, issued a decree that all who would not bow down and worship this image should be killed, so a proclamation will be made that all who will not reverence the Sunday institution will be punished with imprisonment and death. Thus the Sabbath of the Lord is trampled underfoot. But the Lord has declared, “Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and write grievousness which they have prescribed” [Isa. 10:1; Zeph 1:14-18; 2:1-3, quoted.] **14MR p. 91 (Doc 202719)**

“Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!” [Isa 10:1-2] In what contrast is the work of Christ set forth! “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.” [Isa 11:1-4] Brethren, take heed to these words, for they are of deep importance to every soul connected with the great work to be accomplished in these last

days. Unless our eyes, our ears, our tongues, are under the control of the Holy Spirit, and guided by divine power, they cannot be trusted. They will surely mingle the thread of selfishness and the chaff of vanity with the work of God, and commingle with it that which is marred by unsanctified and ambitious projects, and the work will not bear the signature of Heaven; for it will not represent the principles of the law of God, which is a transcript of his character. **RH 08-13-95 (Doc 136155)**

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“The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.” Eze 22:29

Ezekiel declares: “Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they showed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. . . . And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord has not spoken. The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully. And I have sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.” [Eze 22:26, 28-30] In his sermon on the mount, Christ spoke as though he knew that the scribes and Pharisees believed the Old Testament. They were in that gathering, and the disciples were close beside their beloved Teacher. There Christ declared, “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” [Jn 5:20] By his words he condemned their formalism and hypocrisy. And though applying directly to those before him, these words apply also to those of this age who do not the will of God. They are far-reaching, and come sounding down the ages to our time. **RH 05-18-97 (Doc 137249)**

The keynote of his teaching was struck in the words that he spoke to the

woman at Samaria, when he said: “The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” [Jn 4:23] Christ declared to his disciples, in the company of the scribes and Pharisees, the manner of standard they must reach in order to be acceptable worshipers. He said, “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” [Mt 5:20] The words of the prophet Ezekiel applied to the religious teachers of that day: “Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things; they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they showed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain. And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord hath not spoken. The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy; yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.” [Eze 22:26-29] **SSW 12-01-94 (Doc 152143)**

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“Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes; That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the meek: and a man and his father will go in unto the same maid, to profane my holy name: And they lay themselves down upon clothes laid to pledge by every altar, and they drink the wine of the condemned in the house of their god.” Amos 2:6-8

Thus it was with Israel. Those who might have stood as spiritual leaders among the nations, having set aside the statutes of God, fell a helpless prey to the evil passions of the human heart. Their times were marked by oppression, gross injustice, luxury and extravagance, riotous feasting and drunkenness,

licentiousness and debauchery. “They hate him that rebuketh in the gate,” Amos declared, “and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.” “They afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.” Amos 5:10, 12. These transgressors “sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes.” [Amos 2:6] **RH 01-29-14 (Doc 151012)**

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“Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them. For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.” Amos 5:11-12

Thus it was with Israel. Those who might have stood as spiritual leaders among the nations, having set aside the statutes of God, fell a helpless prey to the evil passions of the human heart. Their times were marked by oppression, gross injustice, luxury and extravagance, riotous feasting and drunkenness, licentiousness and debauchery. “They hate him that rebuketh in the gate,” Amos declared, “and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.” “They afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.” [Amos 5:10, 12] These transgressors “sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes.” **RH 01-29-14 (Doc 151012)**

Against the marked oppression, the flagrant injustice, the unwonted luxury and extravagance, the shameless feasting and drunkenness, the gross licentiousness and debauchery, of their age, the prophets lifted their voices; but in vain were their protests, in vain their denunciation of sin. “Him that rebuketh in the gate,” declared Amos, “they hate, . . . and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.” “They afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.” [Amos 5:10, 12] **PK p. 282 (Doc 54745)**

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258 *Working with the Poor*

“Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?” Amos 8:4-6

God tests men by their daily life. But many who make high professions of service to him, can not bear this test. In their eagerness for gain they use false weights and deceitful balances. The Bible is not made their rule of life, and therefore they do not see the necessity of strict integrity and faithfulness. Anxious to amass wealth, they allow scheming dishonesty to come into their work. The world watches their conduct, and is not slow to measure their Christian worth by their business dealings. God sees their dishonesty, too, and he asks: “Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?” “Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth, wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? that we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat? The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works.” “A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is his delight.” [Micah 6:11; Amos 8:4-7; Prov 11:1] **ST 12-17-96 (Doc 162442)**

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“But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?” James 2:6

All who are living in daily communion with Christ, will place his estimate upon men. They will reverence the good and pure, although these are poor in this world's goods. James says, “My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my foot-stool: are ye not then partial

in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? If ye fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." [James 2:1-10] **RH 10-06-91 (Doc 134150)**

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"Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widow, and your children fatherless." Ex 22:21-24

"He that putteth not out his money to usury." Exacting usury is directly opposed to God's rule as given in Ex 22:21-26: "Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in anywise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless. If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as a usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury. If thou at all take thy neighbor's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down." Deut 23:19, 20: "Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury. Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it." **ST 02-07-84 (Doc 156780)**

260 *Working with the Poor*

The rights of widows and orphans were especially guarded, and a tender regard for their helpless condition was enjoined. “If thou afflict them in any wise,” the Lord declared, “and they cry at all unto Me, I will surely hear their cry; and My wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.” [Ex 22:23-24] Aliens who united themselves with Israel were to be protected from wrong or oppression. “Thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.” [Ex 23:9] **PP pp. 310-11 (Doc 52465)**

These words of warning and command are pointed and decided. Let those in positions of public trust take heed lest through wine and strong drink they forget the law, and pervert judgment. Rulers and judges should ever be in a condition to fulfill the instruction of the Lord: “Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto Me, I will surely hear their cry; and My wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.” **Te p. 53 (Doc 78234)**

Additional References:

WM p. 217 (Doc 102472); Te p. 41 (Doc 78193); RH 05-01-94 (Doc 135529); ST 02-07-84 (Doc 156780); ST 11-20-07 (Doc 166954); RH 05-15-94 (Doc 135549)

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“Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee: He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it liketh him best: thou shalt not oppress him.”
Deut 23:15-16

Special directions were also given concerning the treatment of fugitives from service: “Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee. He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it liketh him best:

thou shalt not oppress him.” [Deut 23:15, 16]

To the poor, the seventh year was a year of release from debt. The Hebrews were enjoined at all times to assist their needy brethren by lending them money without interest. To take usury from a poor man was expressly forbidden: “If thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.” [Lev 25:35-37] If the debt remained unpaid until the year of release, the principal itself could not be recovered. The people were expressly warned against withholding from their brethren needed assistance on account of this: “If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren, . . . thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother . . . Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him naught; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee.” “The poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land;” “and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.” [Deut 15:7-9, 11, 8] **PP p. 532 (Docs 53153-54)**

Special directions were also given concerning the treatment of fugitives from service: “Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee. He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it liketh him best; thou shalt not oppress him.” [Deut 23:15-16] **RH 09-17-89 (Doc 132992)**

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“Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates: At his day thou shalt give his him hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the LORD, and it be sin unto thee.” Deut 24:14-15

The true worshipers of God will work the works of Christ. They will be liberal to the needy; they will not turn the poor from his right, nor frame an excuse to avoid helping those who need help; they will love their neighbors as themselves, not hiding themselves from their own flesh, but considering the condition of the poor, the fatherless, and the widow; they will not appropriate to themselves any portion of the just earnings of those who may be under their control. “Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates: at his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.” “The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it.” [Deut 24:14-15; Prov 29:7] **HM 07-01-91 (Doc 122488)**

“Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small. . . . But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have; that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. For all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the Lord thy God.” “Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates; at his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it; lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee. . . . Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow’s raiment to pledge. . . . When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.” [Deut 25:13, 15-16; 24:14-15, 17, 19-20]

In every action of life the true Christian is just what he desires those around him to think he is. He is guided by truth and uprightness. He does not scheme; therefore he has nothing to gloss over. He may be criticized, he may be tested; but through all, his unbending integrity shines out like pure gold. He is a friend and benefactor to all connected with him; and his fellow-men place

confidence in him; for he is trustworthy. Does he employ laborers to gather in his harvest? He does not keep back their hard-earned money. Has he means for which he has no immediate use? He relieves the necessities of his less fortunate brother. He does not seek to enlarge his possessions by taking advantage of the untoward circumstances of his neighbor. He accepts only a fair price for that which he sells. If there are defects in the articles sold, he frankly tells the buyer, even tho by so doing he may seem to work against his own pecuniary interests. **ST 02-19-02 (Docs 165331-32)**

The true worshipers of God will work the works of Christ. They will be liberal to the needy; they will not turn the poor from his right, nor frame an excuse to avoid helping those who need help; they will love their neighbors as themselves, not hiding themselves from their own flesh, but considering the condition of the poor, the fatherless, and the widow; they will not appropriate to themselves any portion of the just earnings of those who may be under their control. "Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates: at his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee." "The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it." [Deut 24:14-15; Prov 29:7] **HM 07-01-91 (Doc 122488)**

Additional References:

RH 12-18-94 (Doc 135829)

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"I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out." Job 29:12-16

The merciful are those who manifest compassion to the poor, the suffering, and the oppressed. Job declares, “I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.” [Job 29:12-16] **MB pp. 22-23 (Doc 98143)**

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“The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.” Psa 9:9

“The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. And they that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee: for Thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek Thee.” [Psa 9:9-10]

The compassion that God manifests toward us, He bids us manifest toward others. Let the impulsive, the self-sufficient, the revengeful, behold the meek and lowly One, let as a lamb to the slaughter, unretaliating as a sheep dumb before her shearers. Let them look upon Him whom our sins have pierced and our sorrows burdened, and they will learn to endure, to forbear, and to forgive. **Ed p. 257 (Docs 20330-31)**

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“For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the need, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.” Psa 12:5

From this parable God would have us learn to respect the cause of the poor. “Ye shall not respect persons in judgment,” He declares; “but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God’s.” “He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker; but he

that honoreth Him hath mercy on the poor.” This is one of the lessons we are to learn from the parable of the unjust judge. It is an admonition to all who claim to be righteous. “For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise,” God says. “Therefore turn thou to thy God; keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.” [Deut 1:17; Psa 12:5; Prov 14:31; Hos 13:6] Those who fear God, who accept Christ as a personal Saviour, will reveal a Christlike character. The character of God will speak through them in vindication of truth. **ST 09-15-98 (Doc 163554)**

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“He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.” Prov 14:31

From this parable God would have us learn to respect the cause of the poor. “Ye shall not respect persons in judgment,” He declares; “but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God’s.” “He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker; but he that honoreth Him hath mercy on the poor.” [Deut 1:17; Prov 14:31] This is one of the lessons we are to learn from the parable of the unjust judge. It is an admonition to all who claim to be righteous. “For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise,” God says. “Therefore turn thou to thy God; keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.” [Psa 12:5; Hos 12:6] Those who fear God, who accept Christ as a personal Saviour, will reveal a Christlike character. The character of God will speak through them in vindication of truth. **ST 09-15-98 (Doc 163554)**

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“He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want...Rob not the poor, because he is poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate.” Prov 22:16, 22

In our large cities there exists an appalling condition of poverty. Multitudes are destitute of food, clothing, or shelter fit for a human being. In the same cities are men of wealth, who have more than heart could wish; who live luxuriously, spending their money upon richly furnished houses and personal adornment; or worse, upon the gratification of the sensual appetites,—upon tobacco, liquors, and other things that destroy the power of the brain, unbalance the mind, and debase the soul. While they are thus selfishly indulging themselves, all heaven is looking down upon these unfaithful stewards. God and angels mark how the means given to men with which to honor the Creator by blessing the world, is turned to the gratification of self, to the dishonor of God, and the neglect of his heritage. [Amos 6:3-8]

The Lord declares: “Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near; that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; that chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music, like David; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph. Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed. The Lord God hath sworn by himself, saith the Lord the God of hosts, I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces: therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein.”

“He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want.” [Prov 22:16] This breaks up worldly policy, and sets aside worldly maxims. “That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee? Rob not the poor, because he is poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate.” [Prov 22:19-22] Consider also these words: “For the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoil them. Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go.” Why?—“Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.” [Prov 22:23-25]

While distrust and alienation are pervading all classes of society, Christ's disciples are to reveal the spirit that reigns in heaven. Because the world was ruined through sin, God gave his Son to draw men back to him. He “so loved the world, that he gave” [Jn 3:16] all that heaven could give for the saving of the

lost. In every soul who receives that love it will manifest itself in like manner. God so loved that he gave. If we love with his love, we, too, shall give all. We shall be co-workers with him whose mission it is to “preach the gospel to the poor; . . . to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” [Lk 4:18-19] We shall do the work he has set before us,—“to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke; . . . to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house; when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh.” [Isa 58:6-7]

Again the Lord says: “Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way: but let it rather be healed.” [Heb 12:12-13] All about us are souls that have gone out of the way,—souls that have been wounded and bruised by the enemy, and that feel a craving for help, for comfort, for sympathy. These souls, when brought in contact with us, should find a strong hand stretched out to clasp their hand,—a strong, living faith that will help them to put their trust in Jesus.

All who pray in sincerity, “Be thou my pattern,” will work in Christ’s lines; they will reveal that they themselves are striving to follow Christ, and as the natural result, they will lead others to seek the higher life. The power of speech is a precious gift of God, and if used in speaking words of hope and courage to the oppressed, it will be a savor of life unto life. But it may be a savor of death unto death. Harsh or even thoughtless words may be a great hindrance to the struggling, fainting soul. They may sting and bruise until the soul shall be driven upon Satan’s ground, never again to listen to the voice of Christ. **RH 08-11-96 (Docs 13630-37)**

“Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless: for their Redeemer is mighty; He shall plead their cause with thee.” “He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want.” “Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.” [Prov 23:10, 11; 22:16; 26:27] **Ed p. 136 (Doc 19907)**

“He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want.” [Prov 22:16] This breaks up worldly policy,

and sets aside worldly maxims. “That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee? Rob not the poor, because he is poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate.” [Prov 22:19-22] Consider also these words: “For the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them. Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go.” Why? — “Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.” [Prov 22:23-25] **SpTA07 pp. 57-58 (Doc 73870)**

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“If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they.” Eccl 5:8

“If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice, . . . marvel not at the matter: for He that is higher than the highest regardeth.” “There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.” [Eccl 5:8, Job 34:22] **Ed p. 144 (Doc 19939)**

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“Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” Isa 1:17

Let no one say, “How doth God know? and is there understanding with the Most High?” [Psa 73:11] for the Lord knows even the secret thoughts of the heart. Those who neglect the poor and needy, transgress the commandments of God. “Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes cease to do evil; learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” “Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy

righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.” [Isa 1:16-17; 58:8] **HM 07-01-91 (Doc 122491)**

The last six precepts of the decalogue reveal the duty of man to his fellow-men; and those who render obedience to the first four commandments will also carry out the injunctions of the last six. We are commanded to love our neighbors as ourselves. This command is not that we shall simply love those who think and believe exactly as we think and believe. Christ illustrated the meaning of the commandment by the parable of the good Samaritan. But how strangely these precious words are neglected, and how frequently men oppress their fellow-men, and lift up their souls unto vanity. Men glory in themselves and exalt themselves above their brethren. “Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.” “Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” [Jer 9:24; Isa 1:16-17] **RH 12-18-94 (Doc 135831)**

“Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” [Isa 1:16] This word is for the managers in all our institutions, for all ministers who are over the flock, for all who have any connection whatever with the cause of God. Let them give heed unto it; then will the Lord sanctify, and cleanse, and bless, and prosperity shall attend the workers. **1888 p. 1279 (Doc 221323)**

Additional References:

RH 05-08-94 (Doc 135539); ML p. 242 (Doc 49109); SpTEd pp. 201-02 (Doc 111263); RH 02-20-94 (Doc 135416); RH 04-28-96 (Doc 136502); DA p. 590 (Doc 18043); Ed p. 141 (Doc 19927); FE p. 221 (Doc 26014); 3SP p. 22 (Doc 73565); SC p. 39 (Doc 77865); 2T p. 36 (Doc 80934); 5T pp. 630-31 (Doc 87571); SpTEd p. 182 (Doc 111232); RH 08-04-91 (Doc 134054); RH 08-01-99 (Doc 139070); RH 04-24-13 (Doc 150491); ST 02-26-94 (Doc 161196)

270 *Working with the Poor*

“What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?” Isa 5:4

God does not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men. With tearful utterance the husbandman says, “What more could I do for my vineyard that I have not done in it?” [Isa 5:4] The unrivaled mercies and blessings of God have been showered upon our nation, it has been a land of liberty, and the glory of the whole earth. But instead of returning gratitude to God, instead of honoring God and his law, the professed Christians of America have become leavened with pride, covetousness, and self-sufficiency. The love of money, which is the root of all evil, has had a large place in their hearts. Many whose names are upon the church records have oppressed the poor, and grasped every possible advantage over those who were under them. They have lived to gratify appetite, to make extravagant display; and pride is fast making a Sodom of our world. But God is keeping his reckoning. The treatment of the poor, the robbery of the widow and the fatherless by those who are lifted up against the weak and helpless, is all written in the book of heaven. The cries of those who are oppressed have reached the ears of him who judgeth righteously. **RH 05-02-93 (Doc 134973)**

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“He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.” Isa 33:15-16

The words of Christ are plain: “Strive [agonize] to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.” [Lk 13:24] Not all professed Christians are Christians at heart. There are sinners in Zion now, as there were anciently. Isaiah speaks of them in referring to the day of God: “The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among

us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly, he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.” [Isa 33:14-16] **2T p. 446 (Doc 81849)**

“The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.” [Isa 32:17] From the beginning to the end of the history of the church, Christ will be to his people all that these words express, if they will heed the invitation, “Come unto me, all ye that labor 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.” [Mt 11:29-30] Christ is to his people life and strength, efficiency and power, wisdom and holiness. When we realize this as we should, the prayer will go forth from unfeigned lips, “The Lord is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness. And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the Lord is his treasure. . . . The sinners of Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his water shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.” [Isa 33:5-6, 14-17] **GCB 07-01-00 (Doc 118556)**

In that day only the righteous are promised deliverance. “The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.” [Isa 33:14-16] **PK p. 725 (Doc 55802)**

Additional References:

CW p. 113 (Doc 15933); RH 05-05-85 (Doc 130264); RH 09-07-86 (Doc 131160); RH 09-24-03 (Doc 142871); RH 11-24-04 (Doc 144047); RH 03-19-08 (Doc 146939); RH 07-01-15 (Doc 151686); ST 10-22-94 (Doc 161502); PH011 p. 10-11 (Doc 177382); 17MR p. 162 (Doc 206302)

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“Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?” Isa 58:6

When the mind of Christ becomes our mind, and His works our works, we shall be able to keep the fast described by the prophet Isaiah: “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens?” [Isa 58:6] Find out what the poor and suffering are in need of, and then, in love and tenderness, help them to courage and hope and confidence by sharing with them the good things that God has given you. Thus you will be doing the very work that God means you to do. “Let the oppressed go free.” [Isa 58:6] Do not rest until you break every yoke. It is not possible for you to neglect this and yet obey God. **PUR 07-21-04 (Doc 124431)**

Christians Not a Band of Mourners. — We have everything to be thankful for. Never ought Christians to move along like a band of mourners in a funeral train. God does not require this of His followers. He does not ask them to spread sackcloth and ashes under them. “Is it such a fast that I have chosen?” He asks; “a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?” God tells us what kind of fast He has chosen. “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?” [Isa 58:6] This is the fast He wishes us to observe. [Isa. 58:7 quoted.] In these words our duty is outlined. God shows us where we should place our treasures. As we follow in the path of self-denial and self sacrifice, helping the needy and suffering, we shall lay up treasure before the throne of God (MS 31, 1901). **4BC p. 1150 (Doc 66208)**

Man is not to presume to put aside God's great moral standard and erect a standard according to his own finite judgment. It is because men are measuring themselves among themselves and living according to their own standard that iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold. Contempt is shown to the law of God, and because of this many presume to transgress, and even those who have had the light of truth are wavering in their allegiance to the law of God. Will the current of evil that is setting so strongly toward perdition sweep them away? or will they, with courage and fidelity, stem the tide and maintain loyalty to God amid the prevailing evil? Will they not with zeal and pure-hearted devotion say, "I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his judgments were before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me. I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity?" [Psa 18:21-23] The Lord has plainly stated what kind of devotion is acceptable unto him. He says, "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?" [Isa 58:6] Those who profess to serve God are to do the work of relieving the oppressed. They are to bear the fruit of the good tree. Those who are truly Christ's will not bring oppression in the home or in the church. Parents who are following the Lord will diligently teach their children the statutes and commandments of God; but they will not do it in such a way that the service of God will become repulsive to their children. Where parents love God with all their hearts, the truth as it is in Jesus will be practiced and taught in the home. Fretfulness and impatience will be avoided, because they shut away the light of the Sun of righteousness from the soul. Those who manifest impatience, who are faultfinders, exacters, and accusers will have to be converted and become as little children, or they will never enter the kingdom of heaven. **RH 06-12-94 (Doc 135596)**

Additional References:

1T p. 258 (Doc 79799); 1SAT p. 322 (Doc 215373); 1T pp. 256-57 (Doc 79797); 2T pp. 33-34 (Doc 80929); WM pp. 29-30 (Doc 101937); RH 08-16-81 (Doc 128316); ST 07-14-98 (Doc 163465); RH 10-13-91 (Doc 134162); DA p. 278 (Doc 17051); RH 02-20-94 (Doc 135416); SF Echo 06-01-09 (Doc 167578); 2MR p. 83 (Doc 187862); 1NL p. 69 (Doc 226575); CH p. 520 (Doc 12634); HP p. 110 (Doc 32972); 1SM p 99 (Doc 60826); 2T P. 145-46 (Doc 81147); 2T p. 156 (Doc 81169); 2T p. 331-32 (Doc 81583); 4T p. 60 (Doc 81407); 6T p. 266 (Doc 88674); 8T p. 159 (Doc 90781); 8T p. 218-19 (Doc 90960); TDG p.

274 *Working with the Poor*

224 (Doc 97397); UL p. 56 (Doc 98721); UL p. 264 (Doc 99973); CME p. 25 (Doc 103096); BEcho 01-31-09 (Doc 117339); GCB 05-31-09 (Doc 119640); GH 04-01-05 (Doc 120787); GH 04-01-05 (Doc 120806); GosHealth 09-01-98 (Doc 121116); MM 06-01-91 (Doc 123199); PUR 06-19-02 (Doc 124066); PUR 11-19-03 (Doc 124323); RH 05-08-94 (Doc 135542); RH 06-26-94 (Doc 135614); RH 01-22-95 (Doc 135871); RH 01-12-97 (Doc 136999); RH 05-01-97 (Doc 137216); RH 06-08-97 (Doc 137295); RH 05-14-01 (Doc 140728); RH 06-25-01 (Doc 140830); RH 01-28-02 (Doc 141353); 07-22-02 (Doc 141840); RH 12-10-03 (Doc 143138); RH 06-06-07 (Doc 146322); RH 03-18-09 (Docs 147736-37); RH 03-17-10 (Doc 148429); RH 06-06-12 (Doc 150094); ST 02-26-94 (Doc 161194); ST 07-22-97 (Doc 162848); ST 08-12-97 (Doc 162890); ST 09-15-98 (Doc 163555); ST 05-30-00 (Doc 164476); ST 07-14-09 (Doc 167219); SpTA10 p. 3 (Doc 17414); PH097 pp. 57-58 (Doc 184248); 2MR pp. 282-83 (Doc 188508); 5MR p. 33 (Doc 191688)

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“The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.” Eze 22:29

Ezekiel declares: “Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they showed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. . . . And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord has not spoken. The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully. And I have sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.” [Eze 22:26-30] In his sermon on the mount, Christ spoke as though he knew that the scribes and Pharisees believed the Old Testament. They were in that gathering, and the disciples were close beside their beloved Teacher. There Christ declared, “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter

into the kingdom of heaven.” [Mt 5:20] By his words he condemned their formalism and hypocrisy. And though applying directly to those before him, these words apply also to those of this age who do not the will of God. They are far-reaching, and come sounding down the ages to our time. **RH 05-18-97 (Doc 137249)**

The keynote of his teaching was struck in the words that he spoke to the woman at Samaria, when he said: “The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” [Jn 4:23-24] Christ declared to his disciples, in the company of the scribes and Pharisees, the manner of standard they must reach in order to be acceptable worshipers. He said, “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” [Mt 5:20] The words of the prophet Ezekiel applied to the religious teachers of that day: “Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things; they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they showed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain. And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord hath not spoken. The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy; yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.” [Eze 22:26-30] **SSW 12-01-94 (Doc 152143)**

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“Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them. For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right. Amos 5:11-12

Thus it was with Israel. Those who might have stood as spiritual leaders among the nations, having set aside the statutes of God, fell a helpless prey to the evil passions of the human heart. Their times were marked by oppression, gross injustice, luxury and extravagance, riotous feasting and drunkenness, licentiousness and debauchery. “They hate him that rebuketh in the gate,” Amos declared, “and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.” “They afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.” [Amos 5:10, 12] These transgressors “sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes.” **RH 01-29-14 (Doc 151012)**

The Bible shows also the result of a departure from right principles in our dealing both with God and with one another. To those who are entrusted with His gifts but indifferent to His claims, God says:

“Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes. . . . Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it.” “When one came to an heap of twenty measures, there were but ten: when one came to the pressfat for to draw out fifty vessels out of the press, there were but twenty.” “Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of Mine house that is waste.” “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings.” “Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit.” [Hag 1:5-9; 2:16; Mal 3:8; Hag 1:10]

“Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor, . . . ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them.” “The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto.” “Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another, . . . and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day long: and there shall be no might in thine hand.” [Amos 5:11; Deut 28:20, 32]

“He that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.” [Jeremiah 17:11]

The accounts of every business, the details of every transaction, pass the scrutiny of unseen auditors, agents of Him who never compromises with injustice, never overlooks evil, never palliates wrong. **Ed p. 143-44 (Docs 19934-38)**

Against the marked oppression, the flagrant injustice, the unwonted luxury and extravagance, the shameless feasting and drunkenness, the gross licentiousness and debauchery, of their age, the prophets lifted their voices; but in vain were their protests, in vain their denunciation of sin. "Him that rebuketh in the gate," declared Amos, "they hate, . . . and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly." "They afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right." [Amos 5:10, 12] **PK p. 282 (Doc 54745)**

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"Shall horses run upon the rock? will one plow there with oxen? for ye have turned judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock." Amos 6:12

Israel had transgressed the law, violated the Sabbath, and oppressed the poor, turning away the stranger from his right. They had given themselves to indulgence of appetite, to wine-drinking, and to similar things. The Lord put his rebuke upon them, and foretold their degradation. Through indulgence in wine and strong drink, they were confusing their judgment, and deteriorating their character. "Shall horses run upon the rock? will one plow there with oxen? for ye have turned judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock: ye which rejoice in a thing of naught, which say, Have we not taken to us horns by our own strength? But, behold, I will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel, saith the Lord the God of hosts; and they shall afflict you from the entering in of Hemath unto the river of the wilderness." [Amos 6:12] This whole prophecy presents lessons upon temperance, reproving selfishness, luxurious living, indulgence in those things that pervert the senses, and lead to extravagance and sin. **RH 08-11-96 (Doc 136632)**

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"Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set

forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?” Amos 8:4-6

God tests men by their daily life. But many who make high professions of service to him, can not bear this test. In their eagerness for gain they use false weights and deceitful balances. The Bible is not made their rule of life, and therefore they do not see the necessity of strict integrity and faithfulness. Anxious to amass wealth, they allow scheming dishonesty to come into their work. The world watches their conduct, and is not slow to measure their Christian worth by their business dealings. God sees their dishonesty, too, and he asks: “Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?” “Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth, wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? that we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat? The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works.” “A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is his delight.” [Micah 6:11; Amos 8:4-7; Prov 11:1] **ST 12-17-96 (Doc 162442)**

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“Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people: Shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him. and say, Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay...Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil!” Hab 2:5-9

We are living in a time when there should be deep thought and solemn consideration. What shall be the end of these things? What profit is there under the sun? “Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: . . . yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people: shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay! . . . Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil. . . . Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken.” [Hab 2:4-6, 9, 15] **RH 03-06-94 (Doc 135440)**

“Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high. . . . Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken.” “Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbour’s service without wages, and giveth him not for his work; that saith, I will build me a wide house and large chambers, and cutteth him out windows; and it is ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermilion. Shalt thou reign because thou closest thyself in cedar? . . . Thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do it.” [Hab 2:9, 15; Jer 22:13-14, 17]

In every phase of the liquor-selling business, there is dishonesty and violence. The houses of liquor-dealers are built with the wages of unrighteousness, and upheld by violence and oppression. Those who deal in liquor, and those who sustain the traffic, are working in co-partnership with Satan. Through this business they are doing a greater work to perpetuate human woe than are men through any other business in the world. Christians cannot use intoxicating liquors, nor connect themselves in the least degree with any business that leads to the degradation and downfall of humanity. **PH132 p. 1 (Docs 178022-23)**

We are living in a time when there should be deep thought and solemn consideration. What shall be the end of these things? What profit is there under the sun? “Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: . . . yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at

home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people: shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay! . . . Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil. . . . Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken.” [Hab 2:4-6, 15]
RH 03-06-94 (Doc 135440)

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“And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.” Zech 7:10

“And the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassions every man to his brother: and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.” [Zech 7:8-10] This is the word of the Lord to us also. **6T p. 460 (Doc 89290)**

Those who stand as reformers, bearing the banner of the third angel’s message, are the ones who are to draw out the soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul. They are to do the work of Christ with hearts full of compassion for the widow and the orphan. But how strangely has this work been neglected! Other denominations have provided homes for the homeless; why were we not, years ago, planning to care for these needy ones whom Christ has committed to us, and whom he declares to be representatives of himself? Why have our people been so slow to hear the earnest appeals for help? The grief and affliction of the widow and orphan should be our grief. Why have not the hearts of those who should be to them messengers of mercy, been stirred to relieve distress, to impart sympathy and consolation and counsel to those who hunger for it? Those who close their ears to the cries of the needy, will one day call, and the Lord will be deaf to their pleadings. But to those who exercise the tenderness

and love of Jesus toward the poor and unfortunate, to those who are not eaten up with selfishness, whose souls are drawn out in pity and grief for the woes of others, the promise is given, "Thou shalt call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am [What will you have? What shall I do for you?]" [Isa 58:9] The Lord has help all ready for those whose compassion is exercised toward the oppressed and the sorrowing. Our God is gracious, full of compassion and tender pity. Let us be like him. Those who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb will, through the spirit given them by God, do all in their power to comfort the broken-hearted and the tempted, to relieve the oppressed, and to accomplish the work Christ has left them to do.

There has been coming in among Seventh-day Adventists a disposition to be close and exacting with the poor, to be indifferent to their distress, to turn away impatiently from their appeals, when the Lord has made it our duty to be pitiful, kind, and courteous to the needy and the suffering.

The true worshipers of God will work the works of Christ. They will be liberal to the needy; they will not turn the poor from his right, nor frame an excuse to avoid helping those who need help; they will love their neighbors as themselves, not hiding themselves from their own flesh, but considering the condition of the poor, the fatherless, and the widow; they will not appropriate to themselves any portion of the just earnings of those who may be under their control. "Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates: at his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee." "The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it." [Deut 24:14-15; Prov 29:7]

"And the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassion every man to his brother: and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart." [Zech 7:9-10]

Job says, "If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of my maidservant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? . . . If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; . . . if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins

have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sleep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.” [Job 31:13-14, 16-17, 19-23] If this same fear, and this love of righteousness were in our churches and in all our institutions, what a transformation would take place! “He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he repay him again.” “Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.” [Prov 19:17; Psa 41:1-3]

Let no one say, “How doth God know? and is there understanding with the Most High?” [Psa 73:11] for the Lord knows even the secret thoughts of the heart. Those who neglect the poor and needy, transgress the commandments of God. “Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes cease to do evil; learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” “Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.” [Isa 1:16-17; 58:8]

The heart of the Christian is ever filled with gratitude to God, for he realizes that he is under immeasurable obligations to his Creator, that all his powers are under tribute; his works will testify of his loyalty to him who has done everything for him. A sincere Christian is not unappreciative of the mercies and blessings daily given him; and he longs to work in blessing others. He is constantly seeking for ways to be of service to the Master, to make his Saviour’s name a praise in all the earth.

All who will work as Christ worked, will see of the salvation of God, and will diffuse heavenly light and glory. At the foot of the cross they learn that piety which is ever seeking to bless humanity, to shed light and gladness and hope upon the hearts of all who are perplexed and sorrowful, to comfort the cast down, to relieve the oppressed, to sweeten the bitter waters of affliction which many are compelled to drink. In this way our words and works are representing Jesus, and through him the Father, to the world, thus increasing the knowledge of God and of his Son in the earth. **HM 07-01-91 (Docs 122486-93)**

The Bible demands that right principles be observed in all business transactions. In the strongest terms it condemns false dealing, and calls for purity in thought and word and action. "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassion every man to his neighbor. And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in his heart." "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" [Zech 7:9-10; Micah 6:8]

"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you," said Christ, "do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." [Mt 7:12] These words are of the highest importance, and should be our rule of life. But do we carry out this divine principle? Do we, when brought into contact with our fellow men, deal with them just as we would desire them to deal with us in similar circumstances? **ST 12-17-96 (Docs 162440-41)**

Additional References:

PH008 p. 13 (Doc 177166); 6MR p. 375 (Docs 194092-94)

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"For we are labourers together with God." 1 Cor 3:9

Any measure that is of such a nature as to oppress the poor and afflicted, bring neglect upon the widow and the orphan, is leading us away from the example given us in the life of Christ, and misrepresenting the principles of God's law. Representative men connected with the work and cause of God will bring a heavy retribution upon themselves if they mislead the people by their spirit and action, and misrepresent the principles of the law of Jehovah. If they weave into the work that which springs from their own natural temperament, and mar the cause by disorders of their own natural disposition, they will cause to appear in the work of God the attributes of the fallen foe and his confederate angels, rather than the attributes of Jesus Christ. The fashion of the work coming forth from every soul that is born of God has been clearly pictured before us. He who is truly a child of God will experience the transforming power of grace

upon mind and heart, and his character will develop after the divine similitude. The description of the work of Christ will be the description of the work of every one who is born of God, who walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The apostle says of such, "Ye are laborers together with God," [1 Cor 3:9] representing the holy law of God to heaven, to worlds unfallen, and to the fallen world. Representing the law of God in its true character arouses the enmity of Satan. Those who love God with all the heart, will love the law of his kingdom. They will not only profess to be guided by its principles, but they will actually live them out, even in a world that is no more favorable to the development of Christian principles than were the inhabitants of the world before the flood, of whom it is written that the thoughts and imaginations of their hearts were evil, and only evil continually. A similar condition of society exists in our world to-day, and if those who claim to be God's commandment-keeping people do not put in practice the principles of the law which Christ came to our world to vindicate, pronouncing it holy, just, and good, they misrepresent the character and mission of their professed Master. They mislead men in regard to the requirements of the law, and will be stumbling-blocks in the way of sinners. The Lord of hosts has warned us that we shall take heed not to misrepresent the law of his government by any unmerciful action on our part toward our fellow-men. Neither are we to rob God in tithes and in offerings; for the remnant people of God are to be representatives to the world of the character of Christ. Not a thread of selfishness is to be woven into their practices. The law of God is to be lived out. Thus in the character of God's people a living testimony will be borne that will contradict the fallacy of Satan, who has declared that the law of Jehovah is arbitrary, and holds its subjects under a cruel bondage. **RH 08-13-95 (Doc 136157)**

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*"But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you,
and draw you before the judgment seats?" James 2:6*

All who are living in daily communion with Christ, will place his estimate upon men. They will reverence the good and pure, although these are poor in this world's goods. James says, "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto

your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my foot-stool: are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? If ye fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." [James 2:1-10] **RH 10-06-91 (Doc 134150)**

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Miscellaneous EGW Quotation

I was shown that those who have been united with the Office for years, have received correct ideas in regard to how God would have things managed; it should not be according to a worldly policy. There should be no selfishness exhibited there. All engaged in the work should have a special care for the widow and fatherless, and labor unselfishly for their good, even disadvantaging themselves to advantage the needy and oppressed. Bro. White set the example the Lord had shown that all his people should imitate, in being interested in the cases of others, helping those who need help, without any profit to self, to love his neighbor as himself. Brn. Smith and Amadon have seen the course he has pursued. They have the same experience and views with himself. They have heard the commendation God has given of those who pursued this course, and the curse which God has pronounced upon those who are too much swallowed up in their own interests to have a care for their neighbors as themselves. Brn. Smith and Amadon have had a long experience in connection with the Office. The Lord has given much light in regard to the course his people should pursue

286 *Working with the Poor*

in order to glorify him. They have witnessed the special work of God, and have received his teachings, showing our duty to those around us. They have been so long united with the cause of God that it has become, as it were, a part of them. They know no other interest, and to separate them from the work, would be like parting with their life. The voice of these brethren should be heard. Their judgment is nearer in accordance with the will of God than that of Bro. Aldrich. He has much to learn before God can entrust him with all that responsibility that his brethren have given him in the things mentioned.
PH097 pp. 29-30 (Doc 184221)

Chapter 11

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DISHONESTY AND INJUSTICE

“Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.” Ex 22:21-24

“He that putteth not out his money to usury.” [Psa 15:5] Exacting usury is directly opposed to God’s rule as given in Ex 22:21-26: “Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in anywise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless. If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as a usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury. If thou at all take thy neighbor’s raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down.” Deut 23:19, 20: “Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything

that is lent upon usury. Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it.”

Thus God commanded his people not to take advantage of the necessities of the poor, to enrich themselves by impoverishing their poorer brethren. Of Gentiles they might take usury; but they were not permitted to be exorbitant or oppressive. God is the rightful king of the universe. And he inquires of Israel, “What nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?” [Deut 4:8] To-day he might make the same challenge. The laws he gave to his ancient people were wiser, better, and more humane than those of the most civilized nations of the earth. The laws of the nations bear marks of the infirmities and passions of the unrenewed heart; but God’s laws bear the stamp of the divine, and if they are obeyed, they will lead to a tender regard for the rights and privileges of others. The Lord appeals to man’s compassion for his fellow-man. His watchful care is over all the interests of his children, and he declares he will undertake the cause of the afflicted and the oppressed. If they cry unto him, he says, “I will hear, for I am gracious.” [Ex 22:27]

A man of means, if he possesses strict integrity, and loves and fears God, may be a benefactor to the poor. He can help them, and take no more interest than can be mercifully exacted. He thus meets with no loss himself, and his unfortunate neighbor is greatly benefited, for he is saved from the hands of the dishonest schemer. The principles of the Golden Rule are not to be lost sight of for a moment in any business transaction. Every man who lends money at ten or twelve per cent. interest is a robber in the sight of God. Although the laws of man may justify him, the law of God condemns him. He is dealing unjustly; and God will reward him according to his deeds. God never designed that one man should prey upon another. He jealously guards the rights of his children, and in the books of Heaven great loss is set down on the side of the unjust dealer. **ST 02-17-84 (Docs 156780-82)**

God Hears Widow’s Prayer. — The laws given to Israel guard especially the interests of those who need help. “Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto Me, I will surely hear their cry; and My wrath shall wax hot, and I will

kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless." [Ex 22:21-24]

Let those in our churches and those who stand in position of responsibility in our institutions learn from these words how carefully the Lord guards the interests of those who cannot help themselves. He hears the cry of the widow for her fatherless children. He will surely bring into judgment those who disregard the rules that He has laid down to shield them from harm.

An yet, in spite of the warnings that God has given, there are those who are not afraid to do injustice to the widow and the fatherless. The word of the Lord has come to them, but they would not change their course in order to help the needy. They turned their ears away from the plea of the fatherless. The tears and prayers of the widow were nothing to them. — Manuscript 117, 1903.

Visiting the Widow. — Visiting the widow and the fatherless which the apostle enjoined is to have a Christian, sanctified sympathy with them in their affliction. They are to sacredly guard their interests, to work for them, to put themselves to inconvenience to do them a favor. They are to give them Christlike counsel; they are to unite with them in prayer and to ever bear in mind that Jesus Christ is present in all these visits, and that a faithful record is kept of the object and the work accomplished. Christians will give evidence that they are converted men and women. They will show that they are Bible readers, Bible believers, and they obey every injunction of the Word of God. They will not seek to create sympathy for themselves by speaking in disfavor of wife or husband. They will not become self-centered, but they will have a heart to do others good and to be a blessing to humanity, for this is Christlike. They will walk circumspectly and reveal the character of Christ. They will in all their dealings with widows and the fatherless do just as they would wish others to do by wife and children were they to leave them husbandless and fatherless.

The facts should be borne in mind by all who claim to be children of God, that there is a Watcher in every business transaction who records every act and deed of the transactor and that this record will stand just as it is written until the great day when every man shall receive according as his works have been, unless their wrongs shall have been repented of and blotted out. Any injustice done to saint or sinner will then be rewarded accordingly. Christ identifies His interest in all the afflictions of his people. God will avenge those who shall treat the widow or the fatherless with oppression, or who shall rob them in any way. — Letter 36, 1888.

No Decrease in Responsibility. — Every poor, tried soul needs light, needs tender, sympathizing, hopeful words. Every widow needs the comfort of helpful and encouraging words that others can bestow. **WM pp. 217-19 (Docs 102472-77)**

“Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning! Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness.” “It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.” [Eccl 10:16-17; Prov 31:4-5] These words of warning and command are pointed and decided, and let those in positions of public trust take heed, lest through wine and strong drink they forget the law and pervert judgment. Let rulers and judges be in a condition to fulfil the instruction of the Lord: “Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.” [Ex 22:22-24] **RH 05-15-94 (Doc 135549)**

Additional References:

RH 05-15-94 (Doc 135549); Te p. 41 (Doc 78193); Te p. 53 (Doc 78234); Te p. 33; WM pp. 216-17; ST 11-20-07 (Doc 166954)

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“Thou shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment: Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause. If thou meet thine enemy’s ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldst forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him. Thou shalt not wrest the judgement of thy poor in his cause. Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay

thou not: for I will not justify the wicked. And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous. Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.” Ex 23:1-9

Intemperate men should not by vote of the people be placed in positions of trust. Their influence corrupts others, and grave responsibilities are involved. With brain and nerve narcotized by tobacco and stimulus they make a law of their nature, and when the immediate influence is gone there is a collapse. Frequently human life is hanging in the balance; on the decision of men in these positions of trust depends life and liberty, or bondage and despair. How necessary that all who take part in these transactions should be men proved, men of self-culture, men of honesty and truth, of stanch integrity, who will spurn a bribe, who will not allow their judgment or convictions of right to be swerved by partiality or prejudice. Thus saith the Lord, “Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause. Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked. And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous.” [Ex 23:6-8] — *Signs of the Times*, July 8, 1880. **Te p. 47 (Doc 78212)**

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God has given in His word a picture of a prosperous man—one whose life was in the truest sense a success, a man whom both heaven and earth delighted to honor. Of his experiences Job himself says:

“In the ripeness of my days,
When the secret of God was upon my tent;
When the Almighty was yet with me,
And my children were about me; . . .
When I went forth to the gate unto the city,
When I prepared my seat in the broad place [margin],
The young men saw me and hid themselves,
And the aged rose up and stood;
The princes refrained talking,
And laid their hand on their mouth;
The voice of the nobles was hushed. . . .

“For when the ear heard me, then it blessed me;
And when the eye saw me, it gave witness unto me;
Because I delivered the poor that cried,
The fatherless also, and him [margin], that had none to help him.
“The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me;
And I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy.
I put on righteousness, and it clothed me:
My justice was as a robe and a diadem.
I was eyes to the blind,
And feet was I to the lame.
I was a father to the needy:
And the cause of him that I knew not I searched out.”
“The stranger did not lodge in the street:
But I opened my doors to the traveler.”
“Unto me men gave ear, and waited. . . .
And the light of my countenance they cast not down.
I chose out their way, and sat chief,
And dwelt as a king in the army,
As one that *comforteth the mourners.*”

[Job 29:4, 5, 7, 10; R.V.; 31:32; 29:21-25]

Ed p. 142 (Doc 19931)

Additional References:

PP p. 311; CT p. 221 (MYP p. 411); 4T p. 647 (1TT p. 600); 9T 230 (3TT p. 394); TM p. 63; UL p. 3315 (Doc 100286)

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"Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the LORD. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour."
Lev 19:13-15

I was shown, in Brother E's case, that those who would in any way deal unjustly with him and discourage him in his efforts to help himself, or who, coveting the poor blind man's prosperity, would advantage themselves to his disadvantage, will bring upon themselves the curse of God, who is the blind man's friend. Special injunctions were given to the children of Israel in reference to the blind: "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the Lord Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor." "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor's landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, Amen." [Lev 19:13-15; Deut 27:17-19] **3T pp. 516-17 (Doc 83787)**

In the Old Testament are recorded the laws which God gave for the guidance of his people. He would have his people to-day study these laws. "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto all the congregation of the children of

Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy. . . . When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the Lord your God. Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another. . . . Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the Lord. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor. Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbor: I am the Lord. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord.” [Lev 19:1, 9-11, 13-18] **GCB 07-01-00 (Doc 118521)**

In Leviticus 19 are recorded words given by Christ to Moses to speak to the children of Israel. Read what the people of God in ancient times were commanded to do, and what not to do; for these are the principles contained in the royal law:

“Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor.” [Lev 19:15] Personal preferences and partiality are not to appear in the life-practice of the Christian. **RH 12-01-96 (Doc 136889)**

Additional References:

ChS p. 215 (WM pp. 212-13, 240-41); KC p. 110 (Doc 223300); RH 10-01-95 (Doc 136221); ST 08-03-76 (Doc 152658); 13MR p. 234 (Doc 201972)

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“Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure.” Lev 19:35

The Ruler of the universe has protested against the greed of the natural heart, saying, “He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.” [Prov 28:20] God records them as guilty of fraud and transgression. “Nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.” [1 Tim 6:17] “Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure.” [Lev 19:35] “By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches and honor and life.” [Prov 22:4] “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” [Heb 13:5] “He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loveth abundance with increase.” [Eccl. 5:10] He who says to gold, “Thou art my confidence,” [Job 31:24] shall find himself “pierced through with many sorrows.” [1 Tim 6:10] “What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” [Mark 8:36] **15 MR p. 74 (Doc 203776)**

The refuge of lies will fail. God will strike a blow to deliver His oppressed people. He will raise up humble men to do His will. He who rules among the nations calls upon those at the heart of the work to “be still, and know that I am God.” [Psa 46:10] Men will find ere long that they cannot trample on God’s holy precepts without incurring the punishment. The Lord will not be slow to punish those who have had great light and yet have betrayed Him. His eye has been reading the transactions that have been stealing through the unconsecrated elements in councils and board meetings in our institutions. “Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment,” He says, “in meteyard, in weight, and in measure.” [Lev 19:35] “By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honor, and life.” [Prov 22:4] “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” [Heb 13:5] **17 MR p. 231 (Doc 206497)**

An honest man, according to Christ’s measurement, is one who will manifest unbending integrity. Deceitful weights and false balances, with which many seek to advance their interests in the world, are abomination in the sight of God yet many who profess to keep the commandments of God are dealing with false weights and false balances. **4T p. 310**

Additional References:

MH p. 188; CG pp. 152-3; 1TT p. 508

"Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow's raiment to pledge: But thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing." Deut 24:17-18

Jesus revealed to them the far-reaching principles of the law of God. That which had been said by the rabbis of old time, though it had been oft repeated, and was hoary with age, though it was regarded by men as on a par with divine authority, was put in contrast with his own divine principle. The lessons he had taught to Israel in the Old Testament he repeated in the New Testament. He enjoined upon them the exercise of mercy, compassion, and love toward all with whom they came in contact. Had the Israelites practiced the lessons which Christ spoke from the pillar of cloud, there would have been no oppression by man of his fellow-men. Jesus had said in the Old Testament: "Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take the widow's raiment to pledge; but thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee thence; therefore I command thee to do this thing. When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive-tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt; therefore I command thee to do this thing." [Deut 24:17-22] **RH 12-25-94 (Doc 135839)**

From these facts we may conclude that the Sabbath was one of the things in which they could not serve the LORD in Egypt; and when Moses and Aaron came with the message of God [Ex 4:29-30], they attempted a reform, which only increased the oppression. The Israelites were delivered that they might observe the statutes of the LORD, including the fourth commandment, and this placed upon them an additional obligation to keep the Sabbath strictly, as well as to keep all the commandments. Thus in Deuteronomy 24:17,18 the fact of their deliverance from Egypt is cited as placing them under special obligation

to show kindness to the widow and the fatherless: “Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow’s raiment to pledge: but thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing.” **PP p. 737 (Doc 53832)**

God’s word sanctions no policy that will enrich one class by the oppression and suffering of another. In all our business transactions it teaches us to put ourselves in the place of those with whom we are dealing, to look not only on our own things, but also on the things of others. He who would take advantage of another’s misfortunes in order to benefit himself, or who seeks to profit himself through another’s weakness or incompetence, is a transgressor both of the principles and of the precepts of the word of God. “Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow’s raiment to pledge.” “When thou dost lend thy brother anything, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge. Thou shalt stand abroad, and the man to whom thou dost lend shall bring out the pledge abroad unto thee. And if the man be poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge.” “If thou at all take thy neighbor’s raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down: for that is his covering only: . . . wherein shall he sleep? and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto Me, that I will hear; for I am gracious.” “If thou sell aught unto thy neighbor, or buyest aught of thy neighbor’s hand, ye shall not oppress one another.” [Deut 24:17, 10-12; Ex 22;26, 27; Lev 25:14] **MH pp. 187-88 (Doc 46833)**

Additional References:

ST 02-19-02 (Doc 165331)

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“If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of my maidservant, when they contended with me; What then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?” Job 31:13-15

Job says, “If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of my maidservant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God riseth up? and

when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? . . . If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; . . . if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.” [Job 31:13-14, 16-17; 19-23] If this same fear, and this love of righteousness were in our churches and in all our institutions, what a transformation would take place! “He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he repay him again.” “Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.” [Prov 19:17; Psa 41:1-3] **HM 07-01-91 (Doc 122490)**

In the fast that God has chosen, mercy, tenderness, and compassion will be exercised. Avarice will be put away, and fraud and oppression will be repented of and renounced. All the authority and influence will be used to help the poor and oppressed. If this were the condition of the world, it would no more be a proverb, “Truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter;” “he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey.” [Isa 59:14-15] But with Job we might say, “I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.” [Job 29:12-16] Again he says, “If I did despise the cause of my man-servant or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? . . . If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; . . . if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless,

when I saw my help in the gate: then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure." [Job 31:13-14, 16-17, 19-23] If this same fear, and this love of righteousness, were in our churches now, what a transformation there would be! **RH 10-13-91 (Doc 134163)**

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"For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from his that puffeth at him." Psa 12:5

From this parable God would have us learn to respect the cause of the poor. "Ye shall not respect persons in judgment," [Deut 1:17] He declares; "but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's." "He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker; but he that honoreth Him hath mercy on the poor." [Prov 14:31] This is one of the lessons we are to learn from the parable of the unjust judge. It is an admonition to all who claim to be righteous. "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise," God says. "Therefore turn thou to thy God; keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually." [Psa 12:5; Hos 12:6] Those who fear God, who accept Christ as a personal Saviour, will reveal a Christlike character. The character of God will speak through them in vindication of truth. **ST 09-15-98 (Doc 163554)**

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"He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD." Prov 17:15

The feeling of dissatisfaction, with some, was carried to downright rebellion. The attachment of Brs. Lamson, Orton, and Andrews, and the Stevens family, was of that character to deceive and blind the eyes of all. Bro. Andrews' being in the ring was a stay and support to the whole. Repeated

300 *Working with the Poor*

testimonies of warning had been given, and, if Bro. Andrews had stood clear from the influence of these friends with whom he was connected, and to whom he gave his sympathy, he would have discerned the wiles of the enemy, and not been found at all with that class who were deceiving and being deceived. He was himself giving wrong impressions to others, and they were deceiving him. I was shown that “he that justifieth the wicked, and he which condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord.” [Prov 17:15] **PH159 pp. 176-77 (Doc 185205)**

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“It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.” Prov 31:4-5

“Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning! Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness.” “It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.” [Eccl 10:16-17; Prov 3:4-5] These words of warning and command are pointed and decided, and let those in positions of public trust take heed, lest through wine and strong drink they forget the law and pervert judgment. Let rulers and judges be in a condition to fulfil the instruction of the Lord: “Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.” [Ex 22:23-24] **RH 05-01-94 (Doc 135529)**

Additional References:

Te p. 53-4 (Docs 78233-34); ST 11-20-07 (Docs 166953-54)

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"If thou seest the oppression of the of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he poor, and violent perverting that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they." Eccl 5:8

The accounts of every business, the details of every transaction, pass the scrutiny of unseen auditors, agents of Him who never compromises with injustice, never overlooks evil, never palliates wrong . . . marvel not at the matter: for He that is higher than the highest regardeth." "There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves." [Eccl 5:8, Job 34:22] "They set their mouth against the heavens. . . . And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High?" "These things hast thou done," God says, "and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes." [Psa 73:9-11; 50:21] **Ed p. 143 (Docs 19938-40)**

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"Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye shall have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them. For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right." Amos 5:11-12

The Bible shows also the result of a departure from right principles in our dealing both with God and with one another. To those who are entrusted with His gifts but indifferent to His claims, God says: . . . "Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor, . . . ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them." "The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto." "Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another, . . . and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day long: and there shall be no might in thine hand." [Amos 5:11; Deut 28:20, 32] **Ed p. 143 (Docs 19934-36)**

302 *Working with the Poor*

Thus it was with Israel. Those who might have stood as spiritual leaders among the nations, having set aside the statutes of God, fell a helpless prey to the evil passions of the human heart. Their times were marked by oppression, gross injustice, luxury and extravagance, riotous feasting and drunkenness, licentiousness and debauchery. “They hate him that rebuketh in the gate,” Amos declared, “and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.” “They afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.” [Amos 5:10, 12] These transgressors “sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes.” **RH 01-29-14 (Doc 151012)**

Against the marked oppression, the flagrant injustice, the unwonted luxury and extravagance, the shameless feasting and drunkenness, the gross licentiousness and debauchery, of their age, the prophets lifted their voices; but in vain were their protests, in vain their denunciation of sin. “Him that rebuketh in the gate,” declared Amos, “they hate, . . . and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.” “They afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.” [Amos 5:10, 12] **PK p. 282 (Doc 54745)**

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*“And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.”
Luke 3:14*

“And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. [Lk 3:10-11]

“Then came also the publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. [Lk 3:12-13]

“And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.” [Lk 3:14]

The work of reformation here brought to view by John, the purging of heart and mind and soul, is one that is needed by many who to-day profess

to have the faith of Christ. Wrong practices that have been indulged in need to be put away; the crooked paths need to be made straight, and the rough places smooth. The mountains and hills of self-esteem and pride need to be brought low. There is need of bringing forth “fruits meet for repentance.” [Mt 3:8] When this work is done in the experience of God’s believing people, “all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” [Lk 3:6] **RH 04-22-09 (Docs 147816-19)**

“Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?” [Lk 3:12] Did he say, Leave your toll and custom houses? No, he said to them, “Exact no more than that which is appointed you.” [Lk 3:13] If they were taxgatherers still, they could hold just weights and balances of truth in their hands. They could reform in those things that savored of dishonesty and oppression.

“And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.” [Lk 3:14]

Christ also spoke pointedly to every class of men. He reproved those who dominated over their fellow men, those whose passions and prejudices caused many to err and compelled men to blaspheme God. The sword of truth was blunted by apologies and suppositions; but Christ called things by their right names. The ax was laid to the root of the tree. He showed that all the religious forms of worship could not save the Jewish nation, because they did not behold and receive by faith the Lamb of God as their Saviour.

Just such a work and message as that of John will be carried on in these last days. The Lord has been giving messages to His people, through the instruments He has chosen, and He would have all take heed to the admonitions and warnings He sends. **2SM p. 150 (Docs 62182-85)**

He specified the fruit they were required to bear in order to become the subjects of Christ’s kingdom; which were works of love, mercy, and benevolence. They must have virtuous characters. These fruits would be the result of genuine repentance and faith. If blessed with plenty, and they saw others destitute, they should divide with them. They must be workers. “He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we

do? And he said unto them, do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages." [Lk 3:11-14] **2SP pp. 55-56 (Doc 72761)**

Additional References:

RH 01-14-73 (Doc 126348); RH 08-02-98 (Docs 138205-06); 1Red p. 41-42

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"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." Luke 16:10

In every matter of deal between men, the conduct of each is a fair transcript of his character. If a man is upright in the sight of God, his dealings will be upright in the sight of his fellow-men. His integrity is not a matter of doubt; it shines forth as purest gold refined by fire. Has he money for which he has no immediate use? He does not take advantage of the necessities of his poorer brother to require more than a fair compensation. He will not require exorbitant interest because he can take advantage of the situation. A truly honest man will never take advantage of the distress of another to add to his own store; for in the end it would be a great loss. As far as principle is concerned, it would be just as criminal in the sight of God as for him to enter his neighbor's house and steal so much gold or silver. The customs and maxims of the world are not to be our criterion, unless by the word of God we can prove them to be right. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." [Lk 16:10] It is not the greatness or insignificance of an action that makes it honest or dishonest. God requires that in all our transactions we pursue the straight line of duty. **RH 12-16-84 (Doc 130046)**

The Lord permits misfortunes to come to men, poverty to press upon them, adversity to try them, that he may thus test those whom he has placed in more favored circumstances; and if those to whom he has entrusted his goods are faithful, he declares them to be worthy to walk with him in white, to become kings and priests unto God. "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much, and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much." [Lk 16:10] **1888 p. 1601 (Doc 221964)**

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Rev 22:11

Many pity the Southern slaves because they are bound down to labor, while slavery exists in their own families. Mothers and children are allowed to toil from morning till night; they have no recreation. A ceaseless round of labor is before them and crowded upon them. They profess to be Christ's followers; but where is the time for them to meditate and pray, and obtain food for the intellect, that the mind, with which we serve God, may not be dwarfed in its growth? God calls upon every individual to use the talents He has committed to them to His glory, and by thus improving them to gain others also. God has laid obligations upon us to benefit others. Our work in this world for the good of others is not done until Christ shall say in heaven: "It is done." "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." [Rev 16:17; 22:11] **1T p. 484 (Doc 80319)**

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"A false balance is abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight." Prov 11:1

A false balance is a symbol of all unfair dealing, all devices to conceal selfishness and injustice under an appearance of fairness and equity. God will not in the slightest degree favor such practices. He hates every false way. He abhors all selfishness and covetousness. Unmerciful dealing He will not tolerate, but will repay in kind. God can give prosperity to the working men whose means are acquired honestly. But His curse rests upon all that is gained by selfish practices.

When one indulges in selfishness or sharp dealing, he shows that he does not fear the Lord or reverence His name. Those who are connected with God will not only shun all injustice, but will manifest His mercy and goodness toward all with whom they have to do. The Lord will sanction no respect of person; but He will not approve the course of those who make no difference in favor of the poor, the widow, and the orphan. **3BC pp. 1158-59 [(Letter 20a, 1893) Docs 66051-52]**

Chapter 12

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TEST FROM GOD

“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.” Luke 16:10

The Lord has permitted misfortunes to come to men, poverty to press upon them, adversity to try them, that He may thus test those whom He has placed in more favored circumstances; and if those to whom He has entrusted His goods are faithful, He declares them to be worthy to walk with Him in white, to become kings and priests unto God. “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.” [Lk 16:10]

“Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil-speaking, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual

house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe He is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” [1 Pet 2:1-9] **TM pp. 287-88 (Docs 93729-30)**

Chapter 13

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DISREGARD OF GOD'S LAW

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matthew 25:40

The two great principles of the law of God are supreme love to God and unselfish love to our neighbor. The first four commandments, and the last six, hang upon, or grow out of, these two principles. Christ explained to the lawyer who was his neighbor, in the illustration of the man who was traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves who robbed him, and beat him, and left him half dead. The priest and the Levite saw this man suffering, but their hearts did not respond to his wants. They avoided him by passing by on the other side. The Samaritan came that way, and when he saw the stranger's need of help, he did not question whether he was of their country, or of their creed, or a relative; but he went to work to help the sufferer because there was work which needed to be done. He relieved him as best he could, put him upon his own beast and carried him to an inn, and made provision for his wants at the expense of his own purse. The Samaritan, said Christ, was neighbor to him who fell among thieves. The Levite and the priest represent a class who manifest an indifference to the very ones who need their sympathy

and help. The Samaritan represents a class who are true helpers with Christ, and are imitating his example in doing good. This class Christ represents as commandment keepers, who shall have eternal life.

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” [James 1:27]

Here is genuine religion defined. The same consideration that should be given to the widow and fatherless, God requires to be given to the blind and those suffering under the affliction of physical infirmities. Disinterested benevolence is very rare in this age of the world.

Special instructions were given to the children of Israel in reference to these things: — “Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him; the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind, but shall fear thy God; I am the Lord. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor; nor honor the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor.” “Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor’s landmark; and all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way; and all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow; and all the people shall say, Amen.” [Lev 19:13-15; Deut 27:17-19]

Professed Christians often disregard the plain, positive teachings of the word of God, and feel no compunctions of conscience. In order to save such, God frequently brings them under the rod of affliction, and places them in similar positions to those who were in need of their help and sympathy, but who did not receive it at their hands.

Jesus said in giving to his hearers an illustration of this subject: — “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?” [Mt 26:40-44]

“Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall

310 *Working with the Poor*

go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.” [Mt 26:45-46]

Here Christ identifies himself with suffering humanity, and plainly impresses upon us all, in his sermon, that indifference or injustice done to the least of his saints is done to him. Here is the Lord’s side, and whoever will be on the Lord’s side, let him come over with us. In the heavenly records Christ preserves, as done to himself, all acts of mercy and benevolence done for the unfortunate, the lame, the blind, the sick and the needy. On the other hand, a record will be written in the book against those who manifest the indifference of the priest and Levite for the unfortunate, and those who take any advantage of the misfortunes of others and increase their affliction in order to selfishly advantage themselves. God will surely repay every act of injustice, and every manifestation of careless indifference and neglect of the afflicted. Every one will finally be rewarded as his works have been. **ST 08-03-76 (Docs 152655-62)**

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“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” Luke 4:18-19

When Christ was accused of eating with publicans and sinners, he said, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” [Mt 9:13] Again he said, “The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.” [Lk 19:10; Mt 9:12] In the synagogue at Nazareth he announced the character of his mission to the world and said, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” [Lk 4:18-19] He quoted from the prophecy of Isaiah where it is

said of him that he came “to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called Trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.” [Isa 61:2-4]

Brethren, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me. I would address myself to those who are sitting in council, who would mold and fashion the work which is so important, so significant, at this time. It will not answer for any man to act in official capacity at these council meetings where important decisions are to be made, unless he realizes the sacredness of the work, and is under the molding influence of the Holy Spirit. Every phase of the work of God should bear the imprint of the character of the principles of the commandments of God, which we as a people claim to observe and vindicate. Making this profession, we shall confuse minds in regard to the character of the law, unless in spirit and work we represent the principles of God's holy commandments, and thus make manifest to the world the character of God. While claiming to be commandment-keepers, we are in danger of becoming commandment-breakers.

Christ is to be our example. The mission of Christ was to live out the law of God. On one occasion when Jesus and his disciples went through the corn, they were hungry, “and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, THY disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day.” [Mt 12:1-2] Jesus immediately brought forward an illustration to vindicate his action, and showed that what they had done was incomplete harmony with the law of God. He said to the Pharisees: “But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.” “But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God; these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” [Mt 12:7; Lk 11:42] He sought to convince them that while they were so scrupulous in the performance of their ceremonies, they neglected the weightier matters of the law, and failed to exercise mercy, judgment, and the love of God.

“Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!” [Isa 10:1-2] In what contrast is the work of Christ set forth! “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse,

312 *Working with the Poor*

and a Branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth." [Isa 1:1-4] Brethren, take heed to these words, for they are of deep importance to every soul connected with the great work to be accomplished in these last days. Unless our eyes, our ears, our tongues, are under the control of the Holy Spirit, and guided by divine power, they cannot be trusted. They will surely mingle the thread of selfishness and the chaff of vanity with the work of God, and commingle with it that which is marred by unsanctified and ambitious projects, and the work will not bear the signature of Heaven; for it will not represent the principles of the law of God, which is a transcript of his character.

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. . . . He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." [Rev 2:5, 7] We are to imitate the pattern which Christ gave us to copy. "With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. . . . And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." [Isa 11:4-5] The great crisis is upon us, and it will be for our present and eternal good to make sure that the Spirit of God is prompting us to action.

Any measure that is of such a nature as to oppress the poor and afflicted, bring neglect upon the widow and the orphan, is leading us away from the example given us in the life of Christ, and misrepresenting the principles of God's law. Representative men connected with the work and cause of God will bring a heavy retribution upon themselves if they mislead the people by their spirit and action, and misrepresent the principles of the law of Jehovah. If they weave into the work that which springs from their own natural temperament, and mar the cause by disorders of their own natural disposition, they will cause to appear in the work of God the attributes of the fallen foe and his confederate angels, rather than the attributes of Jesus Christ. The fashion of the work coming forth from every soul that is born of God has been clearly pictured before us. He who is truly a child of God will experience the transforming power of grace upon mind and heart, and his character will develop after the divine similitude.

The description of the work of Christ will be the description of the work of every one who is born of God, who walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The apostle says of such, "Ye are laborers together with God," [1 Cor 3:9] representing the holy law of God to heaven, to worlds unfallen, and to the fallen world. Representing the law of God in its true character arouses the enmity of Satan. Those who love God with all the heart, will love the law of his kingdom. They will not only profess to be guided by its principles, but they will actually live them out, even in a world that is no more favorable to the development of Christian principles than were the inhabitants of the world before the flood, of whom it is written that the thoughts and imaginations of their hearts were evil, and only evil continually. A similar condition of society exists in our world to-day, and if those who claim to be God's commandment-keeping people do not put in practice the principles of the law which Christ came to our world to vindicate, pronouncing it holy, just, and good, they misrepresent the character and mission of their professed Master. They mislead men in regard to the requirements of the law, and will be stumbling-blocks in the way of sinners. The Lord of hosts has warned us that we shall take heed not to misrepresent the law of his government by any unmerciful action on our part toward our fellow-men. Neither are we to rob God in tithes and in offerings; for the remnant people of God are to be representatives to the world of the character of Christ. Not a thread of selfishness is to be woven into their practices. The law of God is to be lived out. Thus in the character of God's people a living testimony will be borne that will contradict the fallacy of Satan, who has declared that the law of Jehovah is arbitrary, and holds its subjects under a cruel bondage. **RH 08-13-95 (Docs 136152-57)**

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"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." Matt 23:23

God has in His wise providence placed the poor always with us, that while

we should witness the various forms of want and suffering in the world, we should be tested and proved, and brought into positions to develop Christian character. He has placed the poor among us to call out from us Christian sympathy and love.

Sinners, who are perishing for lack of knowledge, must be left in ignorance and darkness unless men carry to them the light of truth. God will not send angels from heaven to do the work which He has left for man to do. He has given all a work to do, for the very reason that He might prove them and that they might reveal their true character. Christ places the poor among us as His representatives. "I was an hungered," He says, "and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink." [Mt 25:42] Christ identifies Himself with suffering humanity in the persons of the suffering children of men. He makes their necessities His own and takes to His bosom their woes.

The moral darkness of a ruined world pleads to Christian men and women to put forth individual effort, to give of their means and of their influence, that they may be assimilated to the image of Him who, though He possessed infinite riches, yet for our sakes became poor. The Spirit of God cannot abide with those to whom He has sent the message of His truth but who need to be urged before they can have any sense of their duty to be co-workers with Christ. The apostle enforces the duty of giving from higher grounds than merely human sympathy because the feelings are moved. He enforces the principle that we should labor unselfishly with an eye single to the glory of God.

Christians are required by the Scriptures to enter upon a plan of active benevolence which will keep in constant exercise an interest in the salvation of their fellow men. The moral law enjoined the observance of the Sabbath, which was not a burden except when that law was transgressed and they were bound by the penalties involved in breaking it. The tithing system was no burden to those who did not depart from the plan. The system enjoined upon the Hebrews has not been repealed or relaxed by the One who originated it. Instead of being of no force now, it was to be more fully carried out and more extended, as salvation through Christ alone should be more fully brought to light in the Christian age. **3T pp. 391-92 (Docs 83436-39)**

Chapter 14

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HUMAN PRIDE

“And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man.”

Gen 6:3

On one occasion, when in New York City, I was in the night season called upon to behold buildings rising story after story toward heaven. These buildings were warranted to be fireproof, and they were erected to glorify the owners and builders. Higher and still higher these buildings rose, and in them the most costly material was used. Those to whom these buildings belonged were not asking themselves: “How can we best glorify God?” The Lord was not in their thoughts.

I thought: “Oh, that those who are thus investing their means could see their course as God sees it! They are piling up magnificent buildings, but how foolish in the sight of the Ruler of the universe is their planning and devising. They are not studying with all the powers of heart and mind how they may glorify God. They have lost sight of this, the first duty of man.”

As these lofty buildings went up, the owners rejoiced with ambitious pride that they had money to use in gratifying self and provoking the envy of their neighbors. Much of the money that they thus invested had been obtained through exaction, through grinding down the poor. They forgot that in heaven an account of every business transaction is kept; every unjust deal, every

316 *Working with the Poor*

fraudulent act, is there recorded. The time is coming when in their fraud and insolence men will reach a point that the Lord will not permit them to pass, and they will learn that there is a limit to the forbearance of Jehovah. **9T pp. 12-13 (Docs 91363-65)**

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“But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy sould shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?” Luke 12:20

The intense passion for money getting, the thirst for display, the luxury and extravagance—all are forces that, with the great mass of mankind, are turning the mind from life's true purpose. They are opening the door to a thousand evils. Many, absorbed in their interest in worldly treasures, become insensible to the claims of God and the needs of their fellow men. They regard their wealth as a means of glorifying self. They add house to house and land to land; they fill their homes with luxury, while all about them are human beings in misery and crime, in disease and death.

By every species of oppression and extortion, men are piling up colossal fortunes, while the cries of starving humanity are coming up before God. There are multitudes struggling with poverty, compelled to labor hard for small wages, unable to secure the barest necessities of life. Toil and deprivation, with no hope of better things, make their burden heavy. When pain and sickness are added, the burden is almost unbearable. Care-worn and oppressed, they know not where to turn for relief. **9T pp. 90-91 (Docs 91607-08)**

Chapter 15

* * *

PREJUDICE

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.” Luke 10:27

Every Christian should be determined that he will not, in word or action, dishonor the law of God. This law is an expression of the character of God, a revelation of what every minister of the Gospel, every teacher, every man, woman, and child, should be. The Christian will become excellent in wisdom, if he will surrender himself to the guidance of the principles of God's law. This is not to be an influence among many influences. God designs the heaven-born principles of His law to be the all-powerful influence in the lives of His children, sanctifying and purifying them. It is God's purpose that these principles shall be followed in our homes, our institutions, our churches. They are His everlasting truths, proclaimed in righteousness, mercy, and love.

Supreme love for God, and unselfish love for one another,—these are the two great arms on which hang all the law and the prophets. The greatest of all gifts, all talents, is true, Christlike love. It is the brightest evidence of the power of religion. By it, a daily witness for Christ is borne to the world. The Lord calls

upon His churches to manifest this love.

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.” This was the answer the lawyer gave when Christ asked, “What is written in the law? how readest thou?” And before priests and rulers Christ replied, “Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live.” Thus He forever settled the great question, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” [Lk 10:27, 26, 28, 25]

Christ has expressly enjoined His followers to respect and love one another. He says, “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.” [Jn 13:34-35]

He who takes the position of teacher, yet fails to show a tender regard for his brethren, might better cease his labors until the converting power of God teaches him the lessons he must learn in order to do successful work. He who really desires to be a vessel meet for the Master’s use must submit to the molding and polishing process carried on by the wheel of God’s providence, until all unshapeliness and roughness have vanished. Only thus can he become a vessel unto honor.

No man should take up the work of a minister of Jesus Christ until he has complied with the invitation, “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.” [Mt 11:29] God’s ministers are to show forth in their lives the unselfish love which Christ constantly taught and perfectly exemplified. Thus is to be shown the marked distinction between those who love God and keep His commandments, and those who are standing under the black banner of Satan.

No man can separate fellowship with God from a life of holiness. Sanctification takes in the whole being. To walk in the light is to know and obey the truth. To have fellowship with God is to treat one another as children of God. “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, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.” [1 Jn 1:6-7]

Many in this our day claim fellowship with God while by their lives they deny the claim. They do not love God supremely and their neighbor as themselves. They are not willing to do to others as they wish them to do to them. Selfishness is shown in the use of God’s money. Extravagance is seen where economy should be practiced in order that the cause of God may be

advanced. Man ventures to use for self-indulgence means which should be used for the Lord. This is entirely contrary to the lessons Christ has given. It is impossible to harmonized a selfish use of the Lord's money with the principles of Christ's life.

He whose mind is so filled with his own devisings that he has little time to study the Word of God, no time to find out, by looking into the Divine Mirror, what kind of character he is forming, should not think that he is fitted to hold forth the Word of life to others. Perhaps he catches a glimpse of the mistakes he is making. He sees that his building is unlike the design given him. But he is so absorbed in correcting others that he has no time to correct his own defects, and therefore continues to present before angels and men a miserable representation of Christ. He knows not what it is to feel the saving power of divine grace. He is too busy to act like a Christian, too busy to give expression by courteous words and kindly deeds to Christlike love. Angels veil their faces in sorrow. Men see that he is not what he professes to be, and they turn from him as a counterfeit.

The acceptance of Christ's atonement is the ground-work of true faith. To those who repent and confess their sins, the Holy Spirit, the Author of all sanctification, will give grace to speak kind, tender, respectful words. Those who will look long enough into the Divine Mirror to see and despise their unlikeness to the meek and lowly Saviour, will have strength to overcome. All who truly believe will confess and forsake their sins. They will co-operate with Christ in the work of bringing their hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong under the control of the Divine Will, so that sin shall not have dominion over them. Looking to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of their faith, they will be changed into His likeness. They will grow up to the full stature of men and women in Christ. **ST 10-02-01 (Docs 165143-52)**

Section 4

TRUE HELP

Working with the Poor

Selected Passages from Ellen G. White on Social Responsibility



Chapter 16

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TEACH SELF-RELIANCE

“Much food is in the tillage of the poor: but there is that is destroyed for want of judgement.” Proverbs 13:23

Educate the Poor to Be Self-reliant. — Men and women of God, persons of discernment and wisdom, should be appointed to look after the poor and needy, the household of faith first. These should report to the church and counsel as to what should be done.

Instead of encouraging the poor to think that they can have their eating and drinking provided free, or nearly so, we should place them where they can help themselves. We should endeavor to provide them with work, and if necessary, teach them how to work. Let the members of poor households be taught how to cook, how to make and mend their own clothing, how to care properly for the home. Let boys and girls be thoroughly taught some useful trade or occupation. We are to educate the poor to become self-reliant. This will be true help, for it will not only make them self-sustaining but will enable them to help others. — *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 278, 279.

A Call to Men of Thought and Means. — The question will often arise: What can be done where poverty prevails and is to be contended with at every step? Under these circumstances how can we impress minds with correct ideas of improvement? Certainly the work is difficult; and unless the teachers, the thinking men, and the men who have means will exercise their talents and will lift just as Christ would lift were He in their place an important work will be left undone. The necessary reformation will never be made unless men and women are helped by a power outside of themselves. Those who have talents and capabilities must use these gifts to bless their fellow men, laboring to place them upon a footing where they can help themselves. It is thus that the education gained at our schools should be put to the very best use.

God's entrusted talents are not to be hid under a bushel or under a bed. "Ye are the light of the world," Christ said. [Mt 5:14] As you see families living in hovels, with scant furniture and clothing, without tools, without books or other marks of refinement about their homes, will you become interested in them and endeavor to teach them how to put their energies to the very best use, that there may be improvement, and that their work may move forward? — *Ibid.*, pp. 188, 189.

God's Word Reveals the Solution to the Problem. — There are largehearted men and women who are anxiously considering the condition of the poor and what means can be found for their relief. How the unemployed and the homeless can be helped to secure the common blessings of God's providence and to live the life He intended man to live, is a question to which many are earnestly endeavoring to find an answer. . . .

If men would give more heed to the teaching of God's Word, they would find a solution of these problems that perplex them. Much might be learned from the Old Testament in regard to the labor question and the relief of the poor. In God's plan for Israel every family had a home on the land, with sufficient ground for tilling. Thus were provided both the means and the incentive for a useful, industrious, and self-supporting life. And no devising of men has ever improved upon that plan. To the world's departure from it is owing, to a large degree, the poverty and wretchedness that exist to-day. . . .

In Israel industrial training was regarded as a duty. Every father was required to teach his sons some useful trade. The greatest men in Israel were trained to industrial pursuits. A knowledge of the duties pertaining to housewifery was considered essential for every woman. And skill in these

duties was regarded as an honor to women of the highest station. Various industries were taught in the schools of the prophets, and many of the students sustained themselves by manual labor. . . .

The plan of life that God gave to Israel was intended as an object lesson for all mankind. If these principles were carried out to-day, what a different place this world would be! — *Ministry of Healing*, pp. 183-188.

Multitudes Might Find Homes on the Land. — Within the vast boundaries of nature there is still room for the suffering and needy to find a home. Within her bosom there are resources sufficient to provide them with food. Hidden in the depths of the earth are blessings for all who have courage and will and perseverance to gather her treasures. The tilling of the soil, the employment that God appointed to man in Eden, opens a field in which there is opportunity for multitudes to gain a subsistence. . . .

If the poor now crowded into the cities could find homes upon the land, they might not only earn a livelihood but find health and happiness now unknown to them. Hard work, simple fare, close economy, often hardship and privation, would be their lot. But what a blessing would be theirs in leaving the city, with its enticements to evil, its turmoil and crime, misery and foulness, for the country's quiet and peace and purity. . . .

If they ever become industrious and self-supporting, very many must have assistance, encouragement, and instruction. There are multitudes of poor families for whom no better missionary work could be done than to assist them in settling on the land and in learning how to make it yield them a livelihood.

The need for such help and instruction is not confined to the cities. Even in the country, with all its possibilities for a better life, multitudes of the poor are in great need. Whole communities are devoid of education in industrial and sanitary lines. . . .

Imbruted souls, bodies weak and ill-formed, reveal the results of evil heredity and of wrong habits. These people must be educated from the very foundation. They have led shiftless, idle, corrupt lives, and they need to be trained to correct habits.

How can they be awakened to the necessity of improvement? How can they be directed to a higher ideal of life? How can they be helped to rise? What can be done where poverty prevails, and is to be contended with at every step? — *Ibid.*, pp. 188-193.

A Work for Christian Farmers. — Christian farmers can do real missionary work in helping the poor to find homes on the land and in teaching them how to till the soil and make it productive. Teach them how to use the implements of agriculture, how to cultivate various crops, how to plant and care for orchards.

Many who till the soil fail to secure adequate returns because of their neglect. Their orchards are not properly cared for, the crops are not put in at the right time, and a mere surface work is done in cultivating the soil. Their ill success they charge to the unproductiveness of the land. False witness is often borne in condemning land that, if properly worked, would yield rich returns. The narrow plans, the little strength put forth, the little study as to the best methods, call loudly for reform. — *Ibid.*, p. 193.

Even the poorest can improve their surroundings by rising early and working diligently. . . . It is by diligent labor, by putting to the wisest use every capability, by learning to waste no time, that they will become successful in improving their premises and cultivating their land. — *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 188, 189.

Establishment of Industries. — Attention should be given to the establishment of various industries so that poor families can find employment. Carpenters, blacksmiths, and indeed everyone who understands some line of useful labor should feel a responsibility to teach and help the ignorant and the unemployed.

In ministry to the poor there is a wide field of service for women as well as for men. The efficient cook, the housekeeper, the seamstress, the nurse--the help of all is needed. . . .

Missionary families are needed to settle in the waste places. Let farmers, financiers, builders, and those who are skilled in various arts and crafts go to neglected fields to improve the land, to establish industries, to prepare humble homes for themselves, and to help their neighbors. — *Ministry of Healing*, p. 194.

Help Men to Help Themselves. — By instruction in practical lines we can often help the poor most effectively. As a rule those who have not been trained to work do not have habits of industry, perseverance, economy, and self-denial. They do not know how to manage. Often through lack of carefulness and right judgment there is wasted that which would maintain their families in decency

and comfort if it were carefully and economically used. "Much food is in the tillage of the poor: but there is that is destroyed for want of judgment." [Prov 13:23]

We may give to the poor, and harm them, by teaching them to be dependent. . . .

Real charity helps men to help themselves. . . . True beneficence means more than mere gifts. It means a genuine interest in the welfare of others. We should seek to understand the needs of the poor and distressed, and to give them the help that will benefit them most. To give thought and time and personal effort costs far more than merely to give money. But it is the truest charity. — *Ibid.*, pp. 194, 195.

Physical Effort and Moral Power Required. — Physical effort and moral power are to be united in our endeavors to regenerate and reform. We are to seek to gain knowledge in both temporal and spiritual lines, that we may communicate it to others. We are to seek to live out the gospel in all its bearings, that its temporal and spiritual blessings may be felt all around us. — *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 189.

Unwittingly Injured. — We may err in making gifts to the poor which are not a blessing to them, leading them to feel that they need not exert themselves and practice economy, for others will not permit them to suffer. We should not give countenance to indolence or encourage habits of self-gratification by affording means for indulgence. — *Historical Sketches*, p. 293.

You may give to the poor, and injure them, because you teach them to be dependent. Instead, teach them to support themselves. This will be true help. The needy must be placed in positions where they can help themselves. — Manuscript 46, 1898.

Not to Be Supported in Idleness. — The Word of God teaches that if a man will not work, neither shall he eat. The Lord does not require the hard-working man to support those who are not diligent. There is a waste of time, a lack of effort, which brings to poverty and want. If these faults are not seen and corrected by those who indulge them, all that might be done in their behalf is like putting treasure into a basket with holes. But there is an unavoidable poverty, and we are to manifest tenderness and compassion toward those who are unfortunate. — *Review and Herald*, Jan. 3, 1899.

Poor to Seek Counsel. — There is a class of poor brethren who are not free from temptation. They are poor managers, they have not wise judgment, they wish to obtain means without waiting the slow process of persevering toil. Some are in such haste to better their condition that they engage in various enterprises without consulting men of good judgment and experience. Their expectations are seldom realized; instead of gaining, they lose, and then come temptation and a disposition to envy the rich. They really want to be benefited by the wealth of their brethren, and feel tried because they are not. But they are not worthy of receiving special help. They have evidence that their efforts have been scattered. They have been changeable in business and full of anxiety and cares which bring but small returns. Such persons should listen to the counsel of those of experience. But frequently they are the last ones to seek advice. They think they have superior judgment and will not be taught.

These are often the very ones who are deceived by those sharp, shrewd peddlers of patent rights whose success depends upon the art of deception. These should learn that no confidence whatever can be put in such peddlers. But the brethren are credulous in regard to the very things they should suspect and shun. They do not take home the instruction of Paul to Timothy: “But godliness with contentment is great gain.” “And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.” [1 Tim 6:6, 8] Let not the poor think that the rich are the only covetous ones. While the rich hold what they have with a covetous grasp, and seek to obtain still more, the poor are in great danger of coveting the rich man’s wealth. — *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 480, 481.

To Be Willing to Receive Advice. — Many lack wise management and economy. They do not weigh matters well and move cautiously. Such should not trust to their own poor judgment, but counsel with their brethren who have experience. Those who lack good judgment and economy are often unwilling to seek counsel. They generally think that they understand how to conduct their temporal business, and are unwilling to follow advice. They make bad moves and suffer in consequence. Their brethren are grieved to see them suffer, and they help them out of difficulty. Their unwise management affects the church. It takes means from the treasury of God which should have been used to advance the cause of present truth.

If these poor brethren would take a humble course and be willing to be advised and counseled by their brethren, and then are brought into straitened places, their brethren should feel it their duty to cheerfully help them out of

difficulty. But if they choose their own course and rely upon their judgment, they should be left to feel the full consequences of their unwise course, and learn by dear experience that “in a multitude of counselors there is safety.” [Prov 11:14] God’s people should be subject one to another. They should counsel with each other, that the lack of one be supplied by the sufficiency of the other. — *Review and Herald*, April 18, 1871.

Most Poor Could Help Themselves. — There are very few in our land of plenty who are really so poor as to need help. If they would pursue a right course, they could in almost every case be above want. My appeal to the rich is, Deal liberally with your poor brethren, and use your means to advance the cause of God. The worthy poor, those who are made poor by misfortune and sickness, deserve your special care and help. “Finally be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous.” [1 Pet 3:8] — *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 481.

Observe the Golden Rule. — God often raises up someone who will shield the poor from being placed in positions that will be loss to them, even if it be given to their disadvantage. This is the duty of man toward his fellow man. To take advantage of a man’s ignorance because he cannot discern the outcome of a course of action is not right. It is the duty of his brother to personally set the matter plainly and faithfully before him, in all its bearings, lest he shall act blindly, and cripple the resources justly his. When men observe the golden rule, Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto the poor, many difficulties now existing would be quickly adjusted. — Letter 85, 1896. **WM pp. 194-202 (Docs 102403-36)**

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“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” 3 John 2

As nearly as I am able to judge, one half of the afflicted among our people who should spend weeks or months at the Institute are not able to pay the entire expense of the journey and tarry there. Shall poverty keep these friends of

our Lord from the blessings which He has so bountifully provided? Shall they be left to struggle on with the double burden of feebleness and poverty? The wealthy feeble ones, who have all the comforts and conveniences of life, and are able to hire their hard work done, may, with care and rest, by informing themselves and taking home treatment, enjoy a very comfortable state of health without going to the Institute. But what can our poor, feeble brethren or sisters do to recover health? They may do something, but poverty drives them to labor beyond what they are really able. They have not even all the comforts of life; and as for conveniences in houseroom, furniture, means of taking baths, and arrangements for good ventilation, they do not have them. Perhaps their only room is occupied by a cookstove, winter and summer; and it may be that all the books they have in the house, excepting the Bible, could be held between the thumb and finger. They have no money to buy books that they may read and learn how to live. These dear brethren are the very ones who need help. Many of them are humble Christians. They may have faults, and some of these may reach far back and be the cause of their present poverty and misery. And yet they may be living up to duty better than we who have the means to improve our own condition and that of others. These must be patiently taught and cheerfully helped.

But they must be willing and anxious to be taught. They must cherish a spirit of gratitude to God and their brethren for the help they receive. Such persons generally have no just ideas of the real expense of treatment, board, room, fuel, etc., at a Health Institute. They do not realize the magnitude of the great work of present truth and reform, and the many calls for the liberalities of our people. They may not be aware that the numbers of our poor are many times larger than the numbers of our rich. And they may not also feel the force of the frightful fact that a majority of these wealthy ones are holding on to their riches and are in the sure road to perdition.

These poor afflicted persons should be taught that when they murmur at their lot and against the wealthy on account of their covetousness, they commit a great sin in the sight of heaven. They should first understand that their sickness and poverty are misfortunes most generally caused by their own sins, follies, and wrongs; and if the Lord puts it into the hearts and minds of His people to help them, it should inspire in them feelings of humble gratitude to God and His people. They should do all in their power to help themselves. If they have relatives who can and will defray their expenses at the Institute, these should have the privilege.

And in view of the many poor and afflicted ones who must, to a greater or less extent, be objects of the charity of the Institute, and because of the lack of funds and the want of accommodations at the present time, the stay of such at the Institute must be brief. They should go there with the idea of obtaining, as fast and as far as possible, a practical knowledge of what they must do, and what they must not do, to recover health and to live healthfully. The lectures which they hear while at the Institute, and good books from which to learn how to live at home, must be the main reliance of such. They may find some relief during a few weeks spent at the Institute, but will realize more at home in carrying out the same principles. They must not rely on the physicians to cure them in a few weeks, but must learn so to live as to give nature a chance to work the cure. This may commence during a few weeks' stay at the Institute, and yet it may require years to complete the work by correct habits at home.

To such afflicted among our people I wish to say, Be not discouraged. God has not forsaken His people and His cause. Make known your state of health and your ability to meet the expenses of a stay at the Institute . . . But I must say again to the poor; At present but little can be done to help you . . . Do all you possibly can for yourselves, and others will help you some. **1T pp. 641-643 (Docs 80674-79)**

Chapter 17

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INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS TRAINING

“For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.”
Deuteronomy 15:11

There are largehearted men and women who are anxiously considering the condition of the poor and what means can be found for their relief. How the unemployed and the homeless can be helped to secure the common blessings of God's providence and to live the life He intended man to live, is a question to which many are earnestly endeavoring to find an answer. But there are not many, even among educators and statesmen, who comprehend the causes that underlie the present state of society. Those who hold the reins of government are unable to solve the problem of poverty, pauperism, and increasing crime. They are struggling in vain to place business operations on a more secure basis.

If men would give more heed to the teaching of God's word, they would find a solution of these problems that perplex them. Much might be learned from the Old Testament in regard to the labor question and the relief of the poor.

God's Plan for Israel

In God's plan for Israel every family had a home on the land, with sufficient ground for tilling. Thus were provided both the means and the incentive for a useful, industrious, and self-supporting life. And no devising of men has ever improved upon that plan. To the world's departure from it is owing, to a large degree, the poverty and wretchedness that exist today.

At the settlement of Israel in Canaan, the land was divided among the whole people, the Levites only, as ministers of the sanctuary, being excepted from the equal distribution. The tribes were numbered by families, and to each family, according to its numbers, was apportioned an inheritance.

And although one might for a time dispose of his possession, he could not permanently barter away the inheritance of his children. When able to redeem his land, he was at liberty at any time to do so. Debts were remitted every seventh year, and in the fiftieth, or year of jubilee, all landed property reverted to the original owner.

"The land shall not be sold forever," was the Lord's direction; "for the land is Mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with Me. And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land. If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold. And if the man . . . himself be able to redeem it; . . . he may return unto his possession. But if he be not able to restore it to him, then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of jubilee." [Lev 25:23-28]

"Ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family." Verse 10.

Thus every family was secured in its possession, and a safeguard was afforded against the extremes of either wealth or want.

Industrial Training

In Israel, industrial training was regarded as a duty. Every father was required to teach his sons some useful trade. The greatest men in Israel were trained to industrial pursuits. A knowledge of the duties pertaining to housewifery was considered essential for every woman. And skill in these duties was regarded as an honor to women of the highest station.

334 *Working with the Poor*

Various industries were taught in the schools of the prophets, and many of the students sustained themselves by manual labor.

Consideration for the Poor

These arrangements did not, however, wholly do away with poverty. It was not God's purpose that poverty should wholly cease. It is one of His means for the development of character. "The poor," He says, "shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land." [Deut 15:11]

"If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother. But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth." [Verses 7, 8]

"If thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee." [Lev 25:35]

"When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field." "When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it. . . . When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again. . . . When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow." [Lev 19:9; Deut 24:19-21]

None need fear that their liberality would bring them to want. Obedience to God's commandments would surely result in prosperity. "For this thing," God said, "the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putteth thine hand unto." "Thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee." [Deut 15:10, 6]

Business Principles

God's word sanctions no policy that will enrich one class by the oppression and suffering of another. In all our business transactions it teaches us to put ourselves in the place of those with whom we are dealing, to look not only on

our own things, but also on the things of others. He who would take advantage of another's misfortunes in order to benefit himself, or who seeks to profit himself through another's weakness or incompetence, is a transgressor both of the principles and of the precepts of the word of God.

"Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow's raiment to pledge." "When thou dost lend thy brother anything, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge. Thou shalt stand abroad, and the man to whom thou dost lend shall bring out the pledge abroad unto thee. And if the man be poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge." "If thou at all take thy neighbor's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down: for that is his covering only: . . . wherein shall he sleep? and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto Me, that I will hear; for I am gracious." "If thou sell aught unto thy neighbor, or buyest aught of thy neighbor's hand, ye shall not oppress one another." [Deut 24:17, 10-12; Ex 22:26-27; Lev 25:14]

"Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in measures of length, of weight, or of quantity." "Thou shalt not have in thy bag diverse weights, a great and a small. Thou shalt not have in thy house diverse measures, a great and a small." "Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have." [Lev 19:35, A.R.V.; Deut 25:13, 14; Lev 19:36, A.R.V.]

"Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." "The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous showeth mercy, and giveth." [Mt 5:42; Psa 37:21]

"Give counsel, execute justice; make thy shade as the night in the midst of the noonday; hide the outcasts; betray not the fugitive." "Let Mine outcasts dwell with thee; . . . be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler." [Isa 16:3 (A.R.V.), 4]

The plan of life that God gave to Israel was intended as an object lesson for all mankind. If these principles were carried out today, what a different place this world would be!

Within the vast boundaries of nature there is still room for the suffering and needy to find a home. Within her bosom there are resources sufficient to provide them with food. Hidden in the depths of the earth are blessings for all who have courage and will and perseverance to gather her treasures.

The tilling of the soil, the employment that God appointed to man in Eden, opens a field in which there is opportunity for multitudes to gain a subsistence.

“Trust in the Lord, and do good;
So shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou
shalt be fed.”

[Psa 37:3]

Thousands and tens of thousands might be working upon the soil who are crowded into the cities, watching for a chance to earn a trifle. In many cases this trifle is not spent for bread, but is put into the till of the liquor seller, to obtain that which destroys soul and body.

Many look upon labor as drudgery, and they try to obtain a livelihood by scheming rather than by honest toil. This desire to get a living without work opens the door to wretchedness and vice and crime almost without limit.

The City Slums

In the great cities are multitudes who receive less care and consideration than are given to dumb animals. Think of the families herded together in miserable tenements, many of them dark basements, reeking with dampness and filth. In these wretched places children are born and grow up and die. They see nothing of the beauty of natural things that God has created to delight the senses and uplift the soul. Ragged and half-starved, they live amid vice and depravity, molded in character by the wretchedness and sin that surround them. Children hear the name of God only in profanity. Foul speech, imprecations, and revilings fill their ears. The fumes of liquor and tobacco, sickening stench, moral degradation, pervert their senses. Thus multitudes are trained to become criminals, foes to society that has abandoned them to misery and degradation.

Not all the poor in the city slums are of this class. God-fearing men and women have been brought to the depths of poverty by illness or misfortune, often through the dishonest scheming of those who live by preying upon their fellows. Many who are upright and well-meaning become poor through lack of industrial training. Through ignorance they are unfitted to wrestle with the difficulties of life. Drifting into the cities, they are often unable to find employment. Surrounded by the sights and sounds of vice, they are subjected to terrible temptation. Herded and often classed with the vicious and degraded, it is only by a superhuman struggle, a more than finite power, that they can be preserved from sinking to the same depths. Many hold fast their integrity, choosing to suffer rather than to sin. This class especially demand help,

sympathy, and encouragement.

If the poor now crowded into the cities could find homes upon the land, they might not only earn a livelihood, but find health and happiness now unknown to them. Hard work, simple fare, close economy, often hardship and privation, would be their lot. But what a blessing would be theirs in leaving the city, with its enticements to evil, its turmoil and crime, misery and foulness, for the country's quiet and peace and purity.

To many of those living in the cities who have not a spot of green grass to set their feet upon, who year after year have looked out upon filthy courts and narrow alleys, brick walls and pavements, and skies clouded with dust and smoke--if these could be taken to some farming district, surrounded with the green fields, the woods and hills and brooks, the clear skies and the fresh, pure air of the country, it would seem almost like heaven.

Cut off to a great degree from contact with and dependence upon men, and separated from the world's corrupting maxims and customs and excitements, they would come nearer to the heart of nature. God's presence would be more real to them. Many would learn the lesson of dependence upon Him. Through nature they would hear His voice speaking to their hearts of His peace and love, and mind and soul and body would respond to the healing, life-giving power.

If they ever become industrious and self-supporting, very many must have assistance, encouragement, and instruction. There are multitudes of poor families for whom no better missionary work could be done than to assist them in settling on the land and in learning how to make it yield them a livelihood.

The need for such help and instruction is not confined to the cities. Even in the country, with all its possibilities for a better life, multitudes of the poor are in great need. Whole communities are devoid of education in industrial and sanitary lines. Families live in hovels, with scant furniture and clothing, without tools, without books, destitute both of comforts and conveniences and of means of culture. Imbruted souls, bodies weak and ill-formed, reveal the results of evil heredity and of wrong habits. These people must be educated from the very foundation. They have led shiftless, idle, corrupt lives, and they need to be trained to correct habits.

How can they be awakened to the necessity of improvement? How can they be directed to a higher ideal of life? How can they be helped to rise? What can be done where poverty prevails and is to be contended with at every step? Certainly the work is difficult. The necessary reformation will never be made unless men and women are assisted by a power outside of themselves.

It is God's purpose that the rich and the poor shall be closely bound together by the ties of sympathy and helpfulness. Those who have means, talents, and capabilities are to use these gifts in blessing their fellow men.

Christian farmers can do real missionary work in helping the poor to find homes on the land and in teaching them how to till the soil and make it productive. Teach them how to use the implements of agriculture, how to cultivate various crops, how to plant and care for orchards.

Many who till the soil fail to secure adequate returns because of their neglect. Their orchards are not properly cared for, the crops are not put in at the right time, and a mere surface work is done in cultivating the soil. Their ill success they charge to the unproductiveness of the land. False witness is often borne in condemning land that, if properly worked, would yield rich returns. The narrow plans, the little strength put forth, the little study as to the best methods, call loudly for reform.

Let proper methods be taught to all who are willing to learn. If any do not wish you to speak to them of advanced ideas, let the lessons be given silently. Keep up the culture of your own land. Drop a word to your neighbors when you can, and let the harvest be eloquent in favor of right methods. Demonstrate what can be done with the land when properly worked.

Attention should be given to the establishment of various industries so that poor families can find employment. Carpenters, blacksmiths, and indeed everyone who understands some line of useful labor, should feel a responsibility to teach and help the ignorant and the unemployed.

In ministry to the poor there is a wide field of service for women as well as for men. The efficient cook, the housekeeper, the seamstress, the nurse—the help of all is needed. Let the members of poor households be taught how to cook, how to make and mend their own clothing, how to nurse the sick, how to care properly for the home. Let boys and girls be thoroughly taught some useful trade or occupation.

Missionary Families

Missionary families are needed to settle in the waste places. Let farmers, financiers, builders, and those who are skilled in various arts and crafts, go to neglected fields, to improve the land, to establish industries, to prepare humble homes for themselves, and to help their neighbors.

The rough places of nature, the wild places, God has made attractive by

placing beautiful things among the most unsightly. This is the work we are called to do. Even the desert places of the earth, where the outlook appears to be forbidding, may become as the garden of God.

“In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book,
And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of
darkness.

The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord,
And the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.”

[Isa 29:18, 19]

By instruction in practical lines we can often help the poor most effectively. As a rule, those who have not been trained to work do not have habits of industry, perseverance, economy, and self-denial. They do not know how to manage. Often through lack of carefulness and right judgment there is wasted that which would maintain their families in decency and comfort if it were carefully and economically used. “Much food is in the tillage of the poor: but there is that is destroyed for want of judgment.” [Prov 13:23]

We may give to the poor, and harm them, by teaching them to be dependent. Such giving encourages selfishness and helplessness. Often it leads to idleness, extravagance, and intemperance. No man who can earn his own livelihood has a right to depend on others. The proverb “The world owes me a living” has in it the essence of falsehood, fraud, and robbery. The world owes no man a living who is able to work and gain a living for himself.

Real charity helps men to help themselves. If one comes to our door and asks for food, we should not turn him away hungry; his poverty may be the result of misfortune. But true beneficence means more than mere gifts. It means a genuine interest in the welfare of others. We should seek to understand the needs of the poor and distressed, and to give them the help that will benefit them most. To give thought and time and personal effort costs far more than merely to give money. But it is the truest charity.

Those who are taught to earn what they receive will more readily learn to make the most of it. And in learning to be self-reliant, they are acquiring that which will not only make them self-sustaining, but will enable them to help others. Teach the importance of life’s duties to those who are wasting their opportunities. Show them that Bible religion never makes men idlers. Christ always encouraged industry. “Why stand ye here all the day idle?” He said to the indolent. “I must work . . . while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.” [Mt 20:6; Jh 9:4]

It is the privilege of all to give to the world in their home life, in their customs and practices and order, an evidence of what the gospel can do for those who obey it. Christ came to our world to give us an example of what we may become. He expects His followers to be models of correctness in all the relations of life. He desires the divine touch to be seen upon outward things.

Our own homes and surroundings should be object lessons, teaching ways of improvement, so that industry, cleanliness, taste, and refinement may take the place of idleness, uncleanness, coarseness, and disorder. By our lives and example we can help others to discern that which is repulsive in their character or their surroundings, and with Christian courtesy we may encourage improvement. As we manifest an interest in them, we shall find opportunity to teach them how to put their energies to the best use.

Hope and Courage

We can do nothing without courage and perseverance. Speak words of hope and courage to the poor and the disheartened. If need be, give tangible proof of your interest by helping them when they come into strait places. Those who have had many advantages should remember that they themselves still err in many things, and that it is painful to them when their errors are pointed out and there is held up before them a comely pattern of what they should be. Remember that kindness will accomplish more than censure. As you try to teach others, let them see that you wish them to reach the highest standard, and that you are ready to give them help. If in some things they fail, be not quick to condemn them.

Simplicity, self-denial, economy, lessons so essential for the poor to learn, often seem to them difficult and unwelcome. The example and spirit of the world is constantly exciting and fostering pride, love of display, self-indulgence, prodigality, and idleness. These evils bring thousands to penury and prevent thousands more from rising out of degradation and wretchedness. Christians are to encourage the poor to resist these influences.

Jesus came to this world in humility. He was of lowly birth. The Majesty of heaven, the King of glory, the Commander of all the angel host, He humbled Himself to accept humanity, and then He chose a life of poverty and humiliation. He had no opportunities that the poor do not have. Toil, hardship, and privation were a part of every day's experience. "Foxes have holes," He said, "and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." [Lk 9:58]

Jesus did not seek the admiration or the applause of men. He commanded no army. He ruled no earthly kingdom. He did not court the favor of the wealthy and honored of the world. He did not claim a position among the leaders of the nation. He dwelt among the lowly. He set at nought the artificial distinctions of society. The aristocracy of birth, wealth, talent, learning, rank, He ignored.

He was the Prince of heaven, yet He did not choose His disciples from among the learned lawyers, the rulers, the scribes, or the Pharisees. He passed these by, because they prided themselves on their learning and position. They were fixed in their traditions and superstitions. He who could read all hearts chose humble fishermen who were willing to be taught. He ate with publicans and sinners, and mingled with the common people, not to become low and earthly with them, but in order by precept and example to present to them right principles, and to uplift them from their earthliness and debasement.

Jesus sought to correct the world's false standard of judging the value of men. He took His position with the poor, that He might lift from poverty the stigma that the world had attached to it. He has stripped from it forever the reproach of scorn, by blessing the poor, the inheritors of God's kingdom. He points us to the path He trod, saying, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." [Verse 23]

Christian workers are to meet the people where they are, and educate them, not in pride, but in character building. Teach them how Christ worked and denied Himself. Help them to learn from Him the lessons of self-denial and sacrifice. Teach them to beware of self-indulgence in conforming to fashion. Life is too valuable, too full of solemn, sacred responsibilities, to be wasted in pleasing self.

Life's Best Things

Men and women have hardly begun to understand the true object of life. They are attracted by glitter and show. They are ambitious for worldly pre-eminence. To this the true aims of life are sacrificed. Life's best things—simplicity, honesty, truthfulness, purity, integrity—cannot be bought or sold. They are as free to the ignorant as to the educated, to the humble laborer as to the honored statesman. For everyone God has provided pleasure that may be enjoyed by rich and poor alike—the pleasure found in cultivating pureness of thought and unselfishness of action, the pleasure that comes from speaking

sympathizing words and doing kindly deeds. From those who perform such service the light of Christ shines to brighten lives darkened by many shadows.

While helping the poor in temporal things, keep always in view their spiritual needs. Let your own life testify to the Saviour's keeping power. Let your character reveal the high standard to which all may attain. Teach the gospel in simple object lessons. Let everything with which you have to do be a lesson in character building.

In the humble round of toil, the very weakest, the most obscure, may be workers together with God and may have the comfort of His presence and sustaining grace. They are not to weary themselves with busy anxieties and needless cares. Let them work on from day to day, accomplishing faithfully the task that God's providence assigns, and He will care for them. He says:

"In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." [Phil 4:6, A.R.V.; 4:7]

The Lord's care is over all His creatures. He loves them all and makes no difference, except that He has the most tender pity for those who are called to bear life's heaviest burdens. God's children must meet trials and difficulties. But they should accept their lot with a cheerful spirit, remembering that for all that the world neglects to bestow, God Himself will make up to them in the best of favors.

It is when we come into difficult places that He reveals His power and wisdom in answer to humble prayer. Have confidence in Him as a prayer-hearing, prayer-answering God. He will reveal Himself to you as One who can help in every emergency. He who created man, who gave him his wonderful physical, mental, and spiritual faculties, will not withhold that which is necessary to sustain the life He has given. He who has given us His word—the leaves of the tree of life—will not withhold from us a knowledge of how to provide food for His needy children.

How can wisdom be obtained by him who holds the plow and drives the oxen? By seeking her as silver, and searching for her as for hid treasure. "For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him." [Isaiah 28:26] "This also cometh forth from Jehovah of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in wisdom." [Verse 29, A.R.V.]

He who taught Adam and Eve in Eden how to tend the garden, desires to instruct men today. There is wisdom for him who drives the plow and sows the

seed. Before those who trust and obey Him, God will open ways of advance. Let them move forward courageously, trusting in Him to supply their needs according to the riches of His goodness.

He who fed the multitude with five loaves and two small fishes is able today to give us the fruit of our labor. He who said to the fishers of Galilee, "Let down your nets for a draft," [Lk 5:4] and who, as they obeyed, filled their nets till they broke, desires His people to see in this an evidence of what He will do for them today. The God who in the wilderness gave the children of Israel manna from heaven still lives and reigns. He will guide His people and give skill and understanding in the work they are called to do. He will give wisdom to those who strive to do their duty conscientiously and intelligently. He who owns the world is rich in resources, and will bless everyone who is seeking to bless others.

We need to look heavenward in faith. We are not to be discouraged because of apparent failure, nor should we be disheartened by delay. We should work cheerfully, hopefully, gratefully, believing that the earth holds in her bosom rich treasures for the faithful worker to garner, stores richer than gold or silver. The mountains and hills are changing; the earth is waxing old like a garment; but the blessing of God, which spreads for His people a table in the wilderness, will never cease. **MH pp. 183-200 (Docs 46817-79)**

Chapter 18

* * *

TRAIN TO SERVE

“For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.” Mark 10:45

There is a great variety of work, adapted to different minds and varied capabilities. In the day of God not one will be excused for being shut up to his own selfish interests. And it is by working for others that you will keep your own souls alive Earnest, unselfish effort will garner sheaves for Jesus The Lord is a mighty helper.

Christ’s followers have been redeemed for service. Our Lord teaches that the true object of life is ministry. Christ Himself was a worker, and to all His followers He gives the law of service—service to God and to their fellow men. Here Christ has presented to the world a higher conception of life than they had ever known. By living to minister for others man is brought into connection with Christ. The law of service becomes the connecting link which binds us to God and to our fellow men.

Abound in Love at Home and Abroad

“Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you. And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you.” [1 Thess 3:11, 12]

The work specified in these words is the work God requires His people to do. It is a work of God’s own appointment. With the work of advocating the commandments of God and repairing the breach that has been made in the law of God, we are to mingle compassion for suffering humanity. We are to show supreme love to God; we are to exalt His memorial, which has been trodden down by unholy feet; and with this, we are to manifest mercy, benevolence, and the tenderest pity for the fallen race. “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” [Lev 19:18; Mt 19:19; 22:39; Mk 12:31] As a people we must take hold of this work. Love revealed for suffering humanity gives significance and power to the truth.

The evangelization of the world is the work that God has given to those who go forth in His name. They are to be co-laborers with Christ, revealing to those ready to perish His tender, pitying love. God calls for thousands to work for Him, not by preaching to those who know the truth, going over and over the same ground, but by warning those who have never heard the last message of mercy. Work, with a heart filled with an earnest longing for souls. Do medical missionary work. Thus you will gain access to the hearts of the people. The way will be prepared for more decided proclamation of the truth. You will find that relieving their physical suffering gives you opportunity to minister to their spiritual needs.

The Lord will give you success in this work; for the gospel is the power of God unto salvation when it is interwoven with the practical life, when it is lived and practiced. The union of Christlike work for the body and Christlike work for the soul is the true interpretation of the gospel.

Jesus Came to Serve

“Even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.” [Mark 10:45]

Many feel that it would be a great privilege to visit the scenes of Christ’s life on earth, to walk where He trod, to look upon the lake beside which He loved to teach, and the hills and valleys on which His eyes so often rested. But we

need not go to Nazareth, to Capernaum, or to Bethany, in order to walk in the steps of Jesus. We shall find His footprints beside the sickbed, in the hovels of poverty, in the crowded alleys of the great city, and in every place where there are human hearts in need of consolation. In doing as Jesus did when on earth, we shall walk in His steps

Millions upon millions of human souls ready to perish, bound in chains of ignorance and sin, have never so much as heard of Christ's love for them. Were our condition and theirs to be reversed, what would we desire them to do for us? All this, so far as lies in our power, we are under the most solemn obligation to do for them." Christ's rule of life, by which every one of us must stand or fall in the judgment, is, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." [Mt 7:12]

Christ established His temporary hospital on the green hill slopes of Galilee and in every other place where the sick and the suffering could be brought to Him. In every city, every town, every village through which He passed, with the tender compassion of a loving Father He laid His hand upon the afflicted ones, and made them whole. This same work Christ has empowered His church to do.

The Saviour's commission to the disciples includes all believers to the end of time Never has the world's need for teaching and healing been greater than it is today. The world is full of those who need to be ministered unto—the weak, the helpless, the ignorant, the degraded.

Jesus came in personal contact with men. He did not stand aloof and apart from those who needed His help. He entered the homes of men, comforted the mourner, healed the sick, aroused the careless, and went about doing good. And if we follow in the footsteps of Jesus, we must do as He did. We must give men the same kind of help that He did.

The children should be so educated that they will sympathize with the aged and afflicted and will seek to alleviate the sufferings of the poor and distressed. They should be taught to be diligent in missionary work; and from their earliest years self-denial and sacrifice for the good of others and the advancement of Christ's cause should be inculcated, that they may be laborers together with God.

Humble, gracious, tenderhearted, pitiful, He went about doing good, feeding the hungry, lifting up the bowed down, comforting the sorrowing. None who came to Him for aid went away unrelieved. Not a thread of selfishness was woven into the pattern He has left for His children to follow. He lived the life

that He would have all live who believe on Him. It was His meat and drink to do the will of His Father. To all who came to Him for help He brought faith and hope and life. Wherever He went He carried blessing.

The tender sympathies of our Saviour were aroused for fallen and suffering humanity. If you would be His followers, you must cultivate compassion and sympathy. Indifference to human woes must give place to lively interest in the sufferings of others. The widow, the orphan, the sick and the dying, will always need help. Here is an opportunity to proclaim the gospel—to hold up Jesus, the hope and consolation of all men. When the suffering body has been relieved, and you have shown a lively interest in the afflicted, the heart is opened, and you can pour in the heavenly balm. If you are looking to Jesus, and drawing from Him knowledge and strength and grace, you can impart His consolation to others, because the Comforter is with you.

Among the Jews the question, “Who is my neighbor?” [Lk 10:29] caused endless dispute. They had no doubt as to the heathen and the Samaritans. These were strangers and enemies. But where should the distinction be made among the people of their own nation, and among the different classes of society? . . . This question Christ answered in the parable of the good Samaritan. He showed that our neighbor does not mean merely one of the church or faith to which we belong. It has no reference to race, color, or class distinction. Our neighbor is every person who needs our help. Our neighbor is every soul who is wounded and bruised by the adversary. Our neighbor is every one who is the property of God.

Every one who is in suffering need is our neighbor. Every straying son and daughter of Adam, who has been ensnared by the enemy of souls and bound in the slavery of wrong habits that blight the God-given manhood or womanhood, is my neighbor.

Our neighbors are not merely our associates and special friends; they are not simply those who belong to our church, or who think as we do. Our neighbors are the whole human family. We are to do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. We are to give to the world an exhibition of what it means to carry out the law of God. We are to love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves.

Today God gives men opportunity to show whether they love their neighbor. He who truly loves God and his fellow man is he who shows mercy to the destitute, the suffering, the wounded, those who are ready to die. God calls upon every man to take up his neglected work, to seek to restore the moral image of the Creator in humanity.

Among all whose needs demand our interest, the widow and the fatherless have the strongest claims upon our tender sympathy and care

The father who has died in the faith, resting upon the eternal promise of God, left his loved ones in full trust that the Lord would care for them. And how does the Lord provide for these bereaved ones? He does not work a miracle in sending manna from heaven, He does not send ravens to bring them food; but He works a miracle upon human hearts, He expels selfishness from the soul, He unseals the fountain of benevolence. He tests the love of His professed followers by committing to their tender mercies the afflicted and bereaved ones, the poor and the orphan.

Many a widowed mother with her fatherless children is bravely striving to bear her double burden, often toiling far beyond her strength in order to keep her little ones with her and to provide for their needs. Little time has she for their training and instruction, little opportunity to surround them with influences that would brighten their lives. She needs encouragement, sympathy, and tangible help. God calls upon us to supply to these children, so far as we can, the want of a father's care Seek to aid the careworn mother.

In homes supplied with life's comforts, in bins and granaries filled with the yield of abundant harvests, in warehouses stocked with the products of the loom, and vaults stored with gold and silver, God has supplied means for the sustenance of these needy ones.

Those who have pity for the . . . widows, the orphans, and the needy, Christ represents as commandment keepers, who shall have eternal life.

Deal Thy Bread to the Hungry

"Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?" [Isa 58:7]

What is pure religion? Christ has told us that pure religion is the exercise of pity, sympathy, and love, in the home, in the church, and in the world

We are to think and care for others who need our love, our tenderness, and care. We should ever remember that we are representatives of Christ, and that we are to share the blessings that He gives, not with those who can recompense us again, but with those who will appreciate the gifts that will supply their temporal and spiritual necessities. Those who give feasts for the purpose of helping those who have but little pleasure, for the purpose of bringing brightness into their dreary lives, for the purpose of relieving their poverty and distress,

are acting unselfishly and in harmony with the instruction of Christ.

All around us we see want and suffering. Families are in need of food; little ones are crying for bread. The houses of the poor lack proper furniture and bedding. Many live in mere hovels which are almost destitute of conveniences. The cry of the poor reaches to heaven. God sees; God hears.

The work of gathering in the needy . . . is the very work which every church that believes the truth for this time should long since have been doing. We are to show the tender sympathy of the Samaritan in supplying physical necessities, feeding the hungry, bringing the poor that are cast out to our homes, gathering from God every day grace and strength that will enable us to reach to the very depths of human misery and help those who cannot possibly help themselves. In doing this work we have a favorable opportunity to set forth Christ the crucified One.

Clothe the Naked

"I was . . . naked, and ye clothed me." [Mt 25:35, 36]

Christ . . . says, It was I who was hungry and thirsty. It was I who was a stranger. It was I who was sick. It was I who was in prison While you crowded your wardrobe with rich apparel, I was destitute. While you pursued your pleasures, I languished in prison.

When you doled out the pittance of bread to the starving poor, when you gave those flimsy garments to shield them from the biting frost, did you remember that you were giving to the Lord of glory? All the days of your life I was near you in the person of these afflicted ones, but you did not seek Me. You would not enter into fellowship with Me.

In the professed Christian world there is enough expended in extravagant display, for jewels and ornaments, to supply the wants of all the hungry and clothe the naked in our towns and cities; and yet these professed followers of the meek and lowly Jesus need not deprive themselves of suitable food or comfortable clothing. What will these church members say when confronted in the day of God by the worthy poor, the afflicted, the widows and fatherless, who have known pinching want for the meager necessities of life, while there was expended by these professed followers of Christ, for superfluous clothing, and needless ornaments expressly forbidden in the Word of God, enough to supply all their wants?

In the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah the work that the people of God are to

do in Christ's lines is dearly set forth. They are to break every yoke, they are to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked . . . If they carry out the principles of the law of God in acts of mercy and love, they will represent the character of God to the world, and receive the richest blessings of Heaven.

Relieve the Oppressed

"Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." [Isa 1:17]

Jesus, the precious Saviour, the pattern man, was firm as a rock where truth and duty were concerned. And His life was a perfect illustration of true courtesy. Kindness and gentleness gave fragrance to His character. He had ever a kind look and a word of comfort and consolation for the needy and oppressed . . .

When you meet those who are careworn and oppressed, who know not which way to turn to find relief, put your hearts into the work of helping them. It is not God's purpose that His children shall shut themselves up to themselves, taking no interest in the welfare of those less fortunate than themselves. Remember that for them as well as for you Christ has died. Conciliation and kindness will open the way for you to help them, to win their confidence, to inspire them with hope and courage.

Let not men allow their business dealing to rob them of their humaneness . . . Kind words, pleasant looks, a condescending demeanor, are of great value. There is a charm in the intercourse of men who are truly courteous . . . How restoring and uplifting the influence of such dealing upon men who are poor and depressed, borne down to the earth by sickness and poverty! Shall we withhold from them the balm that such dealing brings?

Every act of justice, mercy, and benevolence makes melody in heaven. The Father from His throne beholds those who do these acts of mercy, and numbers them with His most precious treasures. "And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels." [Mal 3:17] Every merciful act to the needy, the suffering, is regarded as though done to Jesus. When you succor the poor, sympathize with the afflicted and oppressed, and befriend the orphan, you bring yourselves into a closer relationship to Jesus.

Be Eyes to the Blind; Feet to the Lame

"I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame." [Job 29:15]

Watch carefully, prayerfully, conscientiously, lest the mind become so engrossed with many important business transactions that true godliness is overlooked and love is quenched from the soul, notwithstanding the great and pitiful need of your being God's helping hand to the blind and to all others who are unfortunate. The most friendless demand the most attention. Use your time and strength in learning to be "fervent in spirit," to deal justly, and to love mercy, "serving the Lord." [Rom 12:11] Remember that Christ says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." [Mt 25:40]

God requires His people to be far more pitiful and considerate of the unfortunate than they are God requires that the same consideration which should be given to the widow and fatherless be given to the blind and to those suffering under the affliction of other physical infirmities. Disinterested benevolence is very rare in this age of the world It is strange that professed Christian men should disregard the plain, positive teachings of the Word of God and feel no compunction of conscience. God places upon them the responsibility of caring for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the widow, and the fatherless; but many make no effort to regard it.

There is a great work to be done in our world, and as we approach the close of earth's history, it does not lessen in the least degree; but when the perfect love of God is in the heart, wonderful things will be done.

A Father to the Poor

"I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out."
[Job 29:16]

This was an evidence that Job had righteousness that was after Christ's order. Through Jesus men may possess a spirit of tender pity toward the needy and distressed He descended to the lowest humiliation and was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, that He might exalt us to be joint heirs with Himself. The whole world was in need of that which Christ alone could give them. He did not withdraw Himself from those who called upon Him for help. He did not do as many now do, say, "I wish they would not trouble me with their affairs. I want to hoard up my means, to invest it in houses and lands." Jesus, the Majesty of heaven, turned from the splendor of His heavenly home, and in the gracious purpose of His heart He demonstrated the character of God to men throughout the world.

Take away poverty, and we should have no way of understanding the mercy and love of God, no way of knowing the compassionate and sympathetic heavenly Father.

First meet the temporal necessities of the needy and relieve their physical wants and sufferings, and you will then find an open avenue to the heart, where you may plant the good seeds of virtue and religion.

Never does the gospel put on an aspect of greater loveliness than when it is brought to the most needy and destitute regions . . . Truth from the Word of God enters the hovel of the peasant and lights up the rude cottages of the poor . . . Rays from the Sun of Righteousness bring gladness to the sick and suffering. Angels of God are there . . . Those who have been loathed and abandoned are raised through faith and pardon to the dignity of sons and daughters of God.

Christianity is the solace of the poor.

Remember Especially Needy Church Members

“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” [Gal 6:10]

In a special sense Christ has laid upon His church the duty of caring for the needy among its own members. He suffers His poor to be in the borders of every church. They are always to be among us, and He places upon the members of the church a personal responsibility to care for them. As the members of a true family care for one another, ministering to the sick, supporting the weak, teaching the ignorant, training the inexperienced, so is the “household of faith” to care for its needy and helpless ones.

It is the duty of each church to make careful, judicious arrangements for the care of its poor and sick.

Any neglect on the part of those who claim to be followers of Christ, a failure to relieve the necessities of a brother or a sister who is bearing the yoke of poverty and oppression, is registered in the books of heaven as shown to Christ in the person of His saints. What a reckoning the Lord will have with many, very many, who present the words of Christ to others but fail to manifest tender sympathy and regard for a brother in the faith who is less fortunate and successful than themselves.

A true Christian is the poor man’s friend. He deals with his perplexed and unfortunate brother as one would deal with a delicate, tender, sensitive plant. God wants His workers to move among the sick and suffering as messengers

of His love and mercy. He is looking upon us, to see how we are treating one another, whether we are Christlike in our dealing with all, high or low, rich or poor, free or bond.

There is no question in regard to the Lord's poor. They are to be helped in every case where it will be for their benefit.

My Spirituality Strengthened and Health Improves

“Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward.” [Isa 58:8]

Is not this what we all crave? Oh, there is health and peace in doing the will of our Heavenly Father. “Thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday; and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.” [Isa 58:8-11]

“If thou clothe the naked, and bring the poor . . . to thy house, and deal thy bread to the hungry, “then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily.” [Isa 58:7-8] Doing good is an excellent remedy for disease.

The pleasure of doing good to others imparts a glow to the feelings which flashes through the nerves, quickens the circulation of the blood, and induces mental and physical health. **ML pp. 220-46 (Docs 49000-133)**

Chapter 19

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RELIEVE NECESSITIES

“And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels . . . Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.” Mal 3:17-18

“And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” [Lk 10:25]

The occasion was one on which Christ was surrounded by a large company of people. In the crowd were Pharisees and Sadducees, priests and lawyers, there in the hope of catching something in Christ’s words that they might report to the Jewish authorities, and thus cause his work to cease. It was at the suggestion of these enemies that the lawyer asked the Saviour the question, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” [Lk 10:25]

As an open book Christ read the heart of the plotters, and looking at the lawyer, he asked, “What is written in the law? how readest thou?” And the lawyer answered, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.” “Thou hast answered right,” said Christ; “this do, and thou shalt live.” [Lk 10:26-28]

The lawyer had not obeyed this precept, and he knew it; but, desiring to justify himself, he asked, "Who is my neighbor?" [Lk 10:29]

In reply Christ related an incident with which many of those present were familiar. "A certain man," he said, "went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

"And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked at him, and passed by on the other side.

"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

"And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." [Lk 10:30-36]

In the word-picture which the Saviour draws for his hearers, a sharp contrast is drawn. A certain man in his journey is attacked by thieves, robbed and wounded, and then left by the roadside to die. A priest, passing that way, comes to the place where the man lies, and though seeing his need, passes on without rendering any aid. Another passes, a Levite, whose special office it was to care for the sick and suffering, but he, as he looks at the wounded man, does not think of his duty, but of self. He sees, where the clothing has been stripped from the man, that his naked body is bruised and bleeding; but instead of giving the help it is in his power to give, he hurries from the scene, leaving the sufferer to his misery.

Then a certain Samaritan comes to the place. And when he sees him, he has "compassion on him." [Lk 10:33] He binds up his wounds; and when he has done all that he can for the sufferer in such a place, he sets him on his own beast, and, walking beside, leads the way to the nearest tavern. There he cares for the sick man through the night, and in the morning, places him in the care of the keeper of the inn, asking him to care for him until his return, when he will surely repay him.

The Samaritan fulfilled his duty to his fellow man. The priest and the Levite, in whose hearts selfishness reigned, proved themselves unkind and unmerciful. Self is a hard tyrant, and while this power rules in the life, we can not do unto others as we would have them do to us. To fulfil the golden rule,

the life must be transformed, the human nature must become a partaker of the divine.

The people had listened with intense interest to the narrative, and when at its close the Saviour asked, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves?" Many joined with the lawyer in answering, "He that showed mercy on him." Then said Jesus to the lawyer, "Go, and do thou likewise." [Lk 10:36-37]

The parable of the good Samaritan outlines true missionary work, and in this work God's people are all to have a part. No one is excused who neglects the duty he owes to his fellow men. In doing this work we fulfil the law of God. The Lord has pledged himself to bless those who fulfil his command to love him supremely and their neighbor as themselves.

It is not talk, it is not profession, or claims to piety and godliness, that are of value with God, but it is the work of righteousness that reveals a Christlike character. To obey the law of God means to be quick to see the necessities of our fellow beings, and quick to help them without stopping to inquire, Do they believe the same doctrines that I believe? To obey God's law means to act as God's helping hand in relieving the necessities of suffering humanity, no matter what the religious belief of those in need. Those who do this work, and who are loyal to the principles of God's truth, are living the gospel.

The Lord takes careful notice of deeds of compassion and mercy shown by men to their fellow men. In his book of remembrance is written down every deed of mercy performed. "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. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." [Mal 3:17-18]

The Saviour devoted more time and labor to healing the afflicted of their maladies than to preaching. His last injunction to his apostles, his representatives on the earth, was that they lay hands on the sick that they might recover. When the Master shall come again, he will commend those who have visited the sick and relieved the necessities of the afflicted. "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat," he will say to those at his right hand. "I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. . . . Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the Least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." [Mt 25:35-36, 40] **RH 04-09-08 (Docs 146977-92)**

Chapter 20

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TEACH DISCIPLINE

“So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.” Prov 6:11

You fail to carry through what you undertake. You have not disciplined yourself to regularity. System is everything. Do but one thing at a time, and do that well, finishing it before you begin a second piece of work. You should have regular hours for rising, for praying, and for eating. Many waste hours of precious time in bed because it gratifies the natural inclination and to do otherwise requires an exertion. One hour wasted in the morning is lost never to be recovered. Says the wise man: “I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man.” [Prov 24:30-34] **5T p. 181 (Doc 86367)**

The word of God teaches that if a man will not work, neither shall he eat. The Lord does not require the hard-working man to support those who are not

diligent. There is a waste of time, a lack of effort, which brings to poverty and want. If these faults are not seen and corrected by those who indulge in them, all that might be done in their behalf is like putting treasure into a basket with holes. But there is an unavoidable poverty; and we are to manifest tenderness and compassion toward those who are unfortunate. **CS p. 122 (Doc 13269)**

Additional References:

WM p. 200 (Doc 102429)

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“Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.” Prov 30:8-9

The prayer of Agur is instructive: “Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me; lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.” [Prov 30:8-9]

Among the evils of this life, are extreme poverty, and great riches; either frequently deprives men and women of convenient food. The poor sometimes suffer from want of the plainest bread; while the rich suffer more from the ruinous effects of the indulgence of appetite.

The prayer of Agur should be our prayer. And as we pray, we should act our part in the answer of the prayer. **HR 12-01-70 (Doc 121210-12)**

“Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.” [Rom 12:11]

Christ said, “Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost.” [Jn 6:12] Let those who act any part in our institutions heed this instruction. Let them take care that there is no waste in the spiritual and temporal supplies which the Lord provides. Economy is to be learned by the educators and taught to the helpers. And by precept and example parents should teach their children the science of making a small amount go as far as possible. Many poor families are poor because they spend their money as soon as they receive it.

The one who occupies the position of cook in a sanitarium should be

trained to habits of economy. He should realize that no food is to be wasted.

The word of inspiration tells us that we are to be “not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.” [Rom 12:11] Let all who are connected with our sanitariums take hold of their work interestedly and earnestly. If helpers have not learned the science of being quick, let them begin at once to train themselves in this line, or else consent that their wages shall be proportionate to the amount of work done. Every day nurses and helpers should become more efficient, more all-round and helpful. They can individually help themselves to reach a higher and still higher standard as the Lord’s helping hand. Let those who are naturally slow train themselves day by day to do their work more quickly, and at the same time carefully **CS p. 269 (Docs 13630-32)**

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“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraieth not; and it shall be given him.”

James 1:5

When it is deemed expedient to invest means in school buildings, in sanitariums, or in homes for the poor in any country, in order to establish the work there, the Lord would have those who are living in that locality walk humbly before Him, and show that they realize their personal dependence upon Him, and that they believe in His willingness to help them to plan, to devise, to arrange intelligently for His work. He is as willing to give wisdom to those who feel the value of divine grace, as to give wisdom to some other mind, who will then, at great expense, communicate the same to you. Where is your faith? Will men turn from the God of wisdom to seek wisdom from finite men, sending for men from a long distance to come and help them out of perplexity? How does the Lord look upon this?

Each one may entertain the idea that he believes in God. You are working in one part of His great moral vineyard, and He has told you that if any man lack wisdom, he is to ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not. [James 1:5] This world is but a little atom in the vast domain over which God presides, and yet this little fallen world is more precious in His sight than the ninety and nine which went not astray from the fold. If we make will Him our trust, He will not leave us to become the sport of Satan’s

360 *Working with the Poor*

temptations. God would have every soul for whom Christ has died become a part of the vine, connected with the parent stock, drawing nourishment from it. Our dependence on God is absolute, and should keep us very humble; and because of our dependence on Him, our knowledge of Him should be greatly increased. God would have us put away every species of selfishness, and come to Him, not as the owner of ourselves, but as the Lord's purchased possession.

TM pp. 324-25 (Docs 93817-18)

Chapter 21

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PRACTICAL TRAINING

“Much food is in the tillage of the poor: but there is that is destroyed for want of judgment.” Prov 13:23

Attention should be given to the establishment of various industries so that poor families can find employment. Carpenters, blacksmiths, and indeed everyone who understands some line of useful labor, should feel a responsibility to teach and help the ignorant and the unemployed.

In ministry to the poor there is a wide field of service for women as well as for men. The efficient cook, the housekeeper, the seamstress, the nurse—the help of all is needed. Let the members of poor households be taught how to cook, how to make and mend their own clothing, how to nurse the sick, how to care properly for the home. Let boys and girls be thoroughly taught some useful trade or occupation.

Missionary Families

Missionary families are needed to settle in the waste places. Let farmers, financiers, builders, and those who are skilled in various arts and crafts, go to neglected fields, to improve the land, to establish industries, to prepare humble homes for themselves, and to help their neighbors.

362 *Working with the Poor*

The rough places of nature, the wild places, God has made attractive by placing beautiful things among the most unsightly. This is the work we are called to do. Even the desert places of the earth, where the outlook appears to be forbidding, may become as the garden of God.

“In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book,
And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of
darkness.
The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord,
And the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.”
[Isa 29:18, 19]

By instruction in practical lines we can often help the poor most effectively. As a rule, those who have not been trained to work do not have habits of industry, perseverance, economy, and self-denial. They do not know how to manage. Often through lack of carefulness and right judgment there is wasted that which would maintain their families in decency and comfort if it were carefully and economically used. “Much food is in the tillage of the poor: but there is that is destroyed for want of judgment.” [Prov 13:23] **MH pp. 194-95 (Docs 46853-57)**

Section 5

ATTACHMENTS

Working with the Poor

Selected Passages from Ellen G. White on Social Responsibility



Chapter 22

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**ABBREVIATIONS TO THE PUBLISHED WRITINGS
OF ELLEN G. WHITE**

On Compact Disk

- A. BOOKS
- B. PERIODICALS
- C. PAMPHLETS
- D. MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS AND BIOGRAPHICAL WORKS
- E. BOOK AND PAMPHLET TITLES NOT INCLUDED IN THE
BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

AA	<i>Acts of the Apostles</i>
AG	<i>God's Amazing Grace</i>
AH	<i>The Adventist Home</i>
ApM	<i>An Appeal to Mothers</i>
AY	<i>An Appeal to the Youth</i>
1BC, etc	<i>The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary: Ellen G. White Comments (7 vols.)</i>
CC	<i>Conflict and Courage</i>
CD	<i>Counsels on Diet and Foods</i>
CE	<i>Christian Education</i>
CG	<i>Child Guidance</i>
CH	<i>Counsels on Health</i>
ChS	<i>Christian Service</i>
CL	<i>Christian Leadership</i>
CLiv	<i>Country Living</i>
CME	<i>A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education</i>
COL	<i>Christ's Object Lessons</i>
CTBH	<i>Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene</i>
CM	<i>Colporteur Ministry</i>
CS	<i>Counsels on Stewardship</i>
CSW	<i>Counsels on Sabbath School Work</i>
CT	<i>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students</i>
CW	<i>Counsels to Writers and Editors</i>
DA	<i>The Desire of Ages</i>
Ed	<i>Education</i>
Ev	<i>Evangelism</i>
EW	<i>Early Writings of Ellen G. White</i>
ExV	<i>A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White</i>
ExV54	<i>Supplement to the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White</i>
FE	<i>Fundamentals of Christian Education</i>
FLB	<i>The Faith I Live By</i>
FW	<i>Faith and Works</i>
GC11	<i>The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan (1911)</i>

Abbreviations to the Published Writings of Ellen G. White 367

GC88	<i>The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan</i> (1888)
GW15	<i>Gospel Workers</i> (1915)
GW92	<i>Gospel Workers</i> (1892)
HFM	<i>The Health Food Ministry</i>
HL	<i>Healthful Living</i>
HS	<i>Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists</i>
HP	<i>In Heavenly Places</i>
LED	<i>Last Day Events</i>
LHU	<i>Lift Him Up</i>
LP	<i>Sketches From the Life of Paul</i>
LS80	<i>Life Sketches of James and Ellen White</i> (1880)
LS88	<i>Life Sketches of James and Ellen White</i> (1888)
LS	<i>Life Sketches of Ellen G. White</i>
LYL	<i>Letters to Young Lovers</i>
Mar	<i>Maranatha: The Lord Is Coming</i>
MB	<i>Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing</i>
MC	<i>Manual for Canvassers</i>
1MCP, etc	<i>Mind, Character, and Personality</i> (2 vols.)
MH	<i>The Ministry of Healing</i>
ML	<i>My Life Today</i>
MM	<i>Medical Ministry</i>
1MR, etc	<i>Manuscript Releases</i> (21 vols.)
MYP	<i>Messages to Young People</i>
OHC	<i>Our High Calling</i>
PCP	<i>Peter's Counsel to Parents</i>
PK	<i>Prophets and Kings</i>
PM	<i>The Publishing Ministry</i>
PP	<i>Patriarchs and Prophets</i>
RC	<i>Reflecting Christ</i>
RY	<i>The Retirement Years</i>
1SAT, etc	<i>Sermons and Talks</i> (2 vols.)
SA	<i>A Solemn Appeal</i>
SC	<i>Steps to Christ</i>
SD	<i>Sons and Daughters of God</i>
1SG, etc	<i>Spiritual Gifts</i> (4 vols.)
SJ	<i>Story of Jesus</i>

368 *Working with the Poor*

SL	<i>The Sanctified Life</i>
ISM, etc	<i>Selected Messages</i> (3 vols.)
ISP, etc	<i>The Spirit of Prophecy</i> (4 vols.)
SpTEd	<i>Special Testimonies on Education</i>
SW	<i>The Southern Work</i>
IT, etc	<i>Testimonies for the Church</i> (9 vols.)
TDG	<i>This Day With God</i>
Te	<i>Temperance</i>
TM	<i>Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers</i>
TMK	<i>That I May Know Him</i>
TSA	<i>Testimonies to Southern Africa</i>
TSB	<i>Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce</i>
TSS	<i>Testimonies on Sabbath-School Work</i>
TSDF	<i>Testimony Studies on Diet and Foods</i>
UL	<i>The Upward Look</i>
VSS	<i>The Voice in Speech and Song</i>
WLF	<i>A Word to the "Little Flock"</i>
WM	<i>Welfare Ministry</i>

PERIODICALS

Advance	<i>The Advance</i>
Advocate	<i>The Advocate (Training School Advocate)</i>
AustYouth	<i>Our Australasian and Sabbath-School Guide</i>
Au Gleaner	<i>Atlantic Union Gleaner</i>
AUCR	<i>The Australasian Union Conference Record (Australasian Record, Union Conference Record)</i>
BEcho	<i>The Australasian Signs of the Times (The Bible Echo)</i>
Broadside1	<i>To the Little Remnant Scattered Abroad</i>
Broadside2	<i>To Those Who Are Receiving the Seal of the Living God</i>
Broadside3	<i>A Vision</i>
BTS	<i>The Bible Training School</i>
Bulletin	<i>Church and Sabbath School Bulletin</i>
Canvasser	<i>The Atlantic Canvasser</i>
Caterer	<i>The Hygienic Caterer</i>
Central Advance	<i>The Central Advance</i>
Christian Education	<i>Christian Education</i>
Christian Educator	<i>The Christian Educator</i>
College Record	<i>The College Record</i>
CUM	<i>The Canadian Union Messenger</i>
East Michigan Banner	<i>East Michigan Banner</i>
Echoes	<i>Echoes From the Field</i>
Educational Messenger	<i>The Educational Messenger</i>
DS	<i>The Day-Star</i>
FPR	<i>Forest Park Reporter</i>
Gazette	<i>The Church Officers' Gazette</i>
GCB	<i>The General Conference Bulletin</i>
GCDB	<i>The General Conference Daily Bulletin</i>
GH	<i>The Gospel Herald (The Southern Missionary)</i>
GMM	<i>Gospel Medical Messenger</i>
GosHealth	<i>The Gospel of Health</i>
GS	<i>The Good Samaritan</i>
HM	<i>The Home Missionary</i>
HR	<i>Good Health (The Health Reformer)</i>
IR	<i>The Indiana Reporter</i>
LUH	<i>Lake Union Herald</i>

370 *Working with the Poor*

MedEV	<i>The Medical Evangelist</i>
Messenger	<i>The Messenger</i>
MinnWorker	<i>The Minnesota Worker</i>
MissWorker	<i>The Missionary Worker</i>
MM	<i>The Medical Missionary</i>
MMR	<i>Monthly Missionary Reading</i>
NebRep	<i>The Nebraska Reporter</i>
Needs	<i>The Needs of the Cause in Australasia</i>
NI Rec	<i>The Northern Illinois Recorder</i>
NPU Gleaner	<i>North Pacific Union Gleaner</i>
NU Reaper	<i>The Northern Union Reaper</i>
NYI	<i>The New York Indicator</i>
Outlook	<i>The Central Union Outlook</i>
OW	<i>The Oriental Watchman</i>
PHJ	<i>Pacific Health Journal (Life and Health)</i>
PrT	<i>The Present Truth (RH)</i>
PrT	<i>The Present Truth (British)</i>
PUR	<i>Pacific Union Recorder</i>
RH	<i>The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald (Present Truth, Review and Herald)</i>
RP	<i>Report of Progress</i>
San	<i>Sanitarium Announcement</i>
SF Echo	<i>Southern Field Echo</i>
SSW	<i>The Sabbath-School Worker</i>
ST	<i>The Signs of the Times</i>
SW	<i>The Southern Watchman (The Southern Review, The Watchman)</i>
Tidings	<i>Field Tidings</i>
True Miss	<i>The True Missionary</i>
Visitor	<i>The Columbia Union Visitor</i>
WB	<i>The Workers' Bulletin</i>
WI Messenger	<i>West Indian Messenger</i>
WM Herald	<i>The West Michigan Herald</i>
WR	<i>The Wisconsin Reporter</i>
YI	<i>The Youth's Instructor</i>

PAMPHLETS

1Red, etc	<i>The Redemption Series (8 nos.)</i>
ApG30	<i>Knowing and Obeying the Lord</i>
ApG56	<i>There Is Help In God</i>
BSL181	<i>Suggestions to Those Holding Missionary Conventions</i>
BSL182	<i>A View of the Conflict</i>
PH001	<i>An Appeal</i>
PH002	<i>Appeal and Suggestions to Conference Officers</i>
PH004	<i>An Appeal for Missions</i>
PH005	<i>An Appeal for Self-supporting Laborers</i>
PH007	<i>An Appeal to Our Churches in Behalf of Home Missionary Work</i>
PH008	<i>An Appeal in Behalf of Our Work in Scandinavia</i>
PH009	<i>An Appeal in Behalf of Our New Medical College</i>
PH010	<i>An Appeal to Ministers and Church Officers</i>
PH011	<i>Appeal to the Battle Creek Church</i>
PH012	<i>An Appeal to Seventh-day Adventists to Fulfil Their Duty to the South</i>
PH013	<i>Appeal to the Young</i>
PH014	<i>Appeals for Unity</i>
PH015	<i>Brother Aldrich</i>
PH019	<i>A Call to Service in the Master's Harvest Field</i>
PH020	<i>A Call to the Watchmen</i>
PH022	<i>Choice Thoughts on Dress</i>
PH026	<i>Do You Eat Flesh?</i>
PH028	<i>Elder Daniels and the Fresno Church</i>
PH029	<i>The Enlargement of Our Work</i>
PH030	<i>An Exposure of Fanaticism and Wickedness</i>
PH031	<i>Extracts From Unpublished Testimonies in Regard to Flesh Foods</i>
PH036	<i>Guiding Principles For the Young</i>
PH037	<i>Hillcrest School Farm</i>
PH038	<i>Important Testimony</i>
PH039	<i>An Important Testimony to Our Brethren and Sisters in New York</i>
PH040	<i>Instruction Concerning Education</i>

372 *Working with the Poor*

PH043	<i>The Judgment</i>
PH145	<i>Recreation</i>
PH048	<i>Living By Principle</i>
PH049	<i>Loma Linda's Work</i>
PH050	<i>Messages to Young People</i>
PH054	<i>I Will Guide Thee</i>
PH055	<i>Our Work in Washington D.C.</i>
PH058	<i>Perils Increase Till Jesus Comes</i>
PH061	<i>Progress of Work at Loma Linda</i>
PH066	<i>Health, Philanthropic, and Medical Missionary Work; Selections from the Unpublished Writings of Mrs. E. G. White</i>
PH067	<i>The Removal to Washington</i>
PH068	<i>Rolling Back the Reproach</i>
PH069	<i>The Sanitarium Patients at Goguac Lake</i>
PH078	<i>Sowing beside All Waters</i>
PH079	<i>Special Instruction Regarding Royalties</i>
PH080	<i>Special Instruction Relating to the Review and Herald Office, and the Work in Battle Creek</i>
PH081	<i>Special Testimonies on Church Schools</i>
PH082	<i>Special Testimonies Relating to Medical Missionary Work</i>
PH083	<i>Special Testimony relative to Tract and Missionary Societies and Our Preachers</i>
PH084	<i>Special Testimonies Relating to Various Matters in Battle Creek</i>
PH085	<i>Special Testimony for the Battle Creek Church</i>
PH087	<i>Special Testimony to Battle Creek Church</i>
PH086	<i>Special Testimony to Battle Creek Church</i>
PH088	<i>Special Testimony to the Managers and Workers in Our Institutions</i>
PH089	<i>Spiritual Advancement the Object of Camp-meetings</i>
PH090	<i>Statement and Appeal</i>
PH093	<i>The Temperance Work</i>
PH094	<i>Testimonies and Experiences Connected With The Loma Linda Sanitarium And College of Medical Evangelists</i>

Abbreviations to the Published Writings of Ellen G. White 373

- PH095 *Testimonies and Experiences Connected With The Loma Linda Sanitarium And College of Medical Evangelists*
- PH096 *Testimonies on the Case of Elder E.P. Daniels*
- PH097 *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*
- PH098 *Testimony for the Church at Olcott, N.Y.*
- PH099 *Testimony for the Churches at Allegan and Monterey*
- PH100 *Testimony for the Physicians and Helpers of the Sanitarium*
- PH101 *Testimony Relative to Marriage Duties, and Extremes in the Health Reform*
- PH102 *Testimonies on Fair Dealing and book Royalties*
- PH104 *Testimony to the Brethren in Western New York*
- PH107 *To Whom It May Concern*
- PH113 *Words of Encouragement to Self-Supporting Workers*
- PH114 *The Work Among the Jews*
- PH016 *To Brother J.N. Andrews and Sister H.N. Smith*
- PH116 *The Writing and Sending Out of the Testimonies to the Church*
- PH117 *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*
- PH118 *Address to Ministers*
- PH119 *An Appeal for the Madison School*
- PH120 *The Time and the Work*
- PH122 *To Our Bookmen*
- PH123 *Testimony to the Church at Battle Creek*
- PH124 *What Shall We Teach?*
- PH126 *And Their Cry Came Up Unto God*
- PH127 *An Appeal to Our People in America in Behalf of the Nashville Publishing House*
- PH128 *Backsliding in Health Reform*
- PH129 *A Big Surprise Party*
- PH130 *Camp-Meetings; Their Object, and How to Conduct Them*
- PH131 *Church Schools*
- PH132 *The Curse of the Liquor Traffic*
- PH133 *Danger in Adopting Worldly Policy in the Work of God*
- PH134 *The Dress Reform*

374 *Working with the Poor*

- PH135 *God's Plan for the Relief of Avondale School*
PH136 *Gospel Temperance Work*
PH137 *Health and Healing*
PH138 *The Health Reform and the Health Institute*
PH139 *The Relief of the Schools*
PH140 *Home and Church School Manual*
PH141 *The Liquor Traffic Working Counter to Christ*
PH142 *Notes on Health and Temperance Topics*
PH143 *The \$150,000 Fund*
PH144 *The Place of Herbs in Rational Therapy*
PH146 *Report of Special Meeting*
PH147 *The Sanitarium Must Not Be Cramped*
PH148 *The Second Tithe*
PH149 *Selections From Testimonies to the Managers and
Workers in Our Institutions*
PH150 *Selections From the Testimonies*
PH151 *Selections From the Testimonies for the Church*
PH152 *Special Testimonies Concerning the Work and Workers
in the Pacific Press*
PH153 *Special Testimony on Canvassing for "Christ's Object
Lessons"*
PH154 *Special Testimony to Battle Creek Church*
PH155 *Special Testimony to the Battle Creek Church*
PH156 *Special Testimony to the Brethren in Battle Creek*
PH157 *Special Testimony to the Oakland and Battle Creek
Churches*
PH159 *Testimony to the Church (No. 21, private)*
PH160 *To Conference Officers*
PH161 *To Conference Officers and Managers of Our School*
PH162 *To the Leading Men of Our Churches*
PH163 *To Those In Charge of the Colored Orphanage
Enterprise*
PH164 *Words of Encouragement to Workers in the Home
Missionary Field*
PH165 *Extracts From Recent Letters From Sister White
Relative to Medical Missionary Work*
PH166 *Special on Tithing*

Abbreviations to the Published Writings of Ellen G. White 375

PH167	<i>Counsels to Physicians and Medical Students</i>
PH168	<i>In Memoriam. A Sketch of the Last Sickness and Death of Elder James White</i>
PH070	<i>The Selection of Articles For Our Papers</i>
SpTA01a, etc	<i>Special Testimonies, Series A</i> (12 numbered pamphlets plus variants)
SpTB01, etc	<i>Special Testimonies, series B</i> (19 numbered pamphlets plus variants)

Chapter 23

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SCRIPTURE INDEX BY TEXTS AND SUBJECTS

SCRIPTURE INDEX BY TEXTS

Gen 4:9	187, 186	Lev 19:35	294,295,335
Gen 6:3	315	Lev 19:35-36	35
Gen 14:22-23	50	Lev 19:36	335
Gen 41:25-36	20	Lev 24:17-19	214
Gen 42:2	20	Lev 24:37-38	117
Ex 4:29-30	296	Lev 25	27
Ex 4:29-31	84	Lev 25:10-24	24
Ex 22:21-23	21	Lev 25:14	297
Ex 22:21-24	259,287,289	Lev 25:14	335
Ex 22:21-26	50,79,111,259,287	Lev 25:23-28	333
Ex 22:22-24	49,50,78,79,260,290,300	Lev 25:25	65, 66
Ex 22:25	110,112,247	Lev 25:25-28	115
Ex 22:25-27	110,297,335	Lev 25:35	117,215,334
Ex 22:27	51,111,288	Lev 25:35-37	115,261
Ex 23:1-9	291	Lev 25:35-37,17	117
Ex 23:4-5	53,81	Lev 25:35-38	80
Ex 23:6	112	Lev 25:35-38,43	53
Ex 23:6-8	112,113,291	Lev 25:35-43	116
Ex 23:9	260	Lev 25:37-38	117,215
Ex 23:10-11	24	Deut 1:17	131,265,299
Lev 12:6-8	26	Deut 4:8	51,111
Lev 19:1-2,9-11,13-18	114,115,294	Deut 8:3	27
Lev 19:9	114,334	Deut 10:12-13,17-18	40,52,55
Lev 19:9-10	22		64,65,80,136
Lev 19:9-15	113	Deut 10:17-19	53, 81
Lev 19:11-18	25	Deut 10:18	52,79
Lev 19:13	114,213,216	Deut 10:18-19	21
Lev 19:13-15	60,61,86,87,221	Deut 14:28-29	56
	293,309	Deut 14:29	57,82
Lev 19:15	264	Deut 15:1-18	23
Lev 19:18	50,182,192,345	Deut 15:4	23,24
Lev 19:32-37	53,65,66,80,81	Deut 15:7-8	231,334
Lev 19:34	53,81	Deut 15:7-8, 11	110

Scripture Index 379

Deut 15:7-9,11,8	116,261	Josh 7:10	223
Deut 15:7-11	53,59,65,66,80	Josh 7:11-12	223
	118,119,233,236	Ruth 2:2-23	23
Deut 15:8	31	Ruth 2:4	193
Deut 15:10, 6	115,334	Ruth 2:14-16	193
Deut 15:11	24,332,334	1 Sam 3:10	190
Deut 15:13-14	24	1 Sam 15:22	39,54,135
Deut 15:18	24	1 Kings 17:12-15	194,195
Deut 16:10-20	26	1 Kings 17:12-24	194,195
Deut 16:20	25	2 Kings 2:3, 5	205
Deut 23:15:16	269,261	2 Kings 6:1-7	135
Deut 23:19	110,112,247	2 Kings 6:25	20
Deut 23:19-20	51,79,111,259,287	2 Kings 6:29	20
Deut 24:12-21	121	2 Chron 36:20-21	24
Deut 24:14	192	Neh 5:1-5	246
Deut 24:14-15	121,213,261,262	Neh 5:1-6	248,249
	263,281	Neh 5:1-13	246
Deut 24:14-15,17,19-20	84,262	Neh 5:6-9	112,247
Deut 24:14-15,17,19-21	58,122	Neh 5:7,9-10,15	249,250
Deut 24:14-15,19-21	53,65,66,80	Job 1:8	103,188
Deut 24:17,10-12	297,335	Job 3:13-14,16-17	197
Deut 24:17-18	21,296	Job 29:4,5,7,10	292
Deut 24:17-18	84,296	Job 29:11-12	183
Deut 24:17-21	57,82	Job 29:11-13	63,88,123,183,197
Deut 24:17-22	60,83,120,296	Job 29:11-16	122, 196
Deut 24:19-20	58	Job 29:12-13	87
Deut 24:19-21	23,334	Job 29:12-16	62,64,87,88,103
Deut 25:13-14	335		124,188,198,263,264,298
Deut 25:13, 15	58	Job 29:13	62
Deut 25:13,15-16	122,262	Job 29:14	183
Deut 25:13-16	25,84	Job 29:15	350
Deut 26:12-13	84	Job 29:15-17	222
Deut 26:13-14	85	Job 29:16	351
Deut 27:17-19	60,61,86,87,	Job 29:21-25	292
	221, 93,309	Job 30:25	123
Deut 27:19	60,85	Job 31:13-14,16-17,19-23	62,64,87
Deut 28:20,32	276,301		89,124,125,192,197,282,298,299

380 *Working with the Poor*

Job 31:13-15	297	Psa 140:13	25
Job 31:16-22	63,89,124	Psa 145:15	167
Job 31:24	295	Psa 146:5	128
Job 31:32	292	Psa 146:9	53,65,66,80
Job 34:22	253,268,301	Prov 3:4-5	300
Psa 9:9	264	Prov 3:9-10	126,131,132
Psa 9:9-10	264	Prov 6:11	357
Psa 10:3	52	Prov 11:1	25,258,278,305
Psa 12:5	131,262,265,299	Prov 11:14	329
Psa 15:2	50	Prov 11:24	126,131,132
Psa 15:5	50,79,111,287	Prov 11:25	126,131,132
Psa 18:21-23	273	Prov 13:23	129,323,339,361,362
Psa 19:7-11	213	Prov 14:31	129,130,131,265,299
Psa 33:5	25	Prov 16:11	25
Psa 37:3	126,131,336	Prov 16:12	25
Psa 37:21	335	Prov 17:15	299,300
Psa 37:28	25	Prov 19:17	67,89,125,126,131
Psa 41:1	125,193		132,193,282,298
Psa 41:1-2	67	Prov 22:2	132,133
Psa 41:1-3	89,125,126,131,282,298	Prov 22:4	295
Psa 46:10	295	Prov 22:9	133
Psa 50:21	301	Prov 22:16	91,250,251,252,266,267
Psa 51:16	39	Prov 22:16, 22	265
Psa 68:5	53,64,72,80,89,90,99	Prov 23:10-11	91,267
Psa 68:5-6	21	Prov 22:19-22	266,268
Psa 68:10	63,123,183,197	Prov 22:19-25	250,251
Psa 68:15	65,66	Prov 22:23-25	266
Psa 72:2,4,16	25	Prov 23:10-11	252
Psa 73:9-11	301	Prov 23:21	133,134
Psa 73:11	92,193,268,282	Prov 23:23-25	268
Psa 82:1,3-4	90,127	Prov 24:30-34	357
Psa 82:3	90	Prov 26:27	91
Psa 82:3-4	90,127	Prov 26:27	252
Psa 109:21	25	Prov 26:27	267
Psa 112:4	128	Prov 28:20	295
Psa 112:4-9	128	Prov 29:4	25
Psa 139:12	128	Prov 29:7	134,192,262,262,281

Scripture Index 381

Prov 29:14	25	Isa 32:17	271
Prov 29:18	11	Isa 32:30	162
Prov 30:8-9	358	Isa 33:5-6,14-17	271
Prov 31:4-5	78,290,300	Isa 33:14-16	270,271
Prov 31:13,15-17, 20, 27	135	Isa 42:16	128
Prov 31:13, 20	135	Isa 54:5	72,90,99
Prov 31:20	134	Isa 58:1-9	26
Eccl 5:8	252,253,268,301	Isa 58:6	272,273
Eccl 5:10	295	Isa 58:6-7	40,54,136,152,251,267
Eccl 10:16-17	78,290,300	Isa 58:6-7,10	139
Isa 1:1-4	312	Isa 58:6-8	66
Isa 1:1-17	26	Isa 58:7	106,140,272,348,272
Isa 1:11	26	Isa 58:7-8	353
Isa 1:14-17	26,40,54,126	Isa 58:7-10	138
Isa 1:16	269	Isa 58:8	55,92,137,193,269
Isa 1:16-17	92,137,193,214,269,282		282,353
Isa 1:17	66,67,91,92,135,268,350	Isa 58:8-11	281,353
Isa 1:18-23	94	Isa 58:9	191,281
Isa 1:21-23	94	Isa 58:9-11	41,55,137
Isa 1:23	94	Isa 58:10-11	191
Isa 2:8-9	253	Isa 59:14-15	64,62,87,123,196,298
Isa 2:11-12	253	Isa 60:2	128
Isa 3:14-15	68,253,254	Isa 61:8	25
Isa 3:16,18-23	253	Isa 59:14-15	297
Isa 5:3	166	Isa 61:2-4	311
Isa 5:4	270	Jer 2:11-13	97
Isa 5:8	68,253,254	Jer 2:12-13	70
Isa 5:22,11-12	253	Jer 5:25-29	95
Isa 10:1	254	Jer 5:25-31	96
Isa 10:1-2	67,68,93,253,254,311	Jer 5:26	96
Isa 11:1-4	67,93,254	Jer 5:26-28	96
Isa 11:4-5	312	Jer 5:28	96
Isa 16:3	235	Jer 6:9-13	96
Isa 28:26	342	Jer 7:2-7	70,97
Isa 28:29	342	Jer 7:3-11	70
Isa 29:18-19	339,362	Jer 7:5-7	70,97
Isa 30:1	25	Jer 7:6-7	68,96

382 *Working with the Poor*

Jer 9:23	214	Amos 2:6-8	256
Jer 9:23-24	92,137	Amos 4:1	25
Jer 9:24	269	Amos 5:10,12	257,276,277, 301,302
Jer 17:6-10	70	Amos 5:11	25,276,301
Jer 17:11	25,276	Amos 5:11-12	257,275,301
Jer 18:11-15	70	Amos 5:21	26
Jer 22:1-3	71,98	Amos 5:24	26,30
Jer 22:1-5	21	Amos 6:3-8	266
Jer 22:3	70,98	Amos 6:12	277
Jer 22:3-5	71,98	Amos 8:5	25
Jer 22:13-14,17	279	Amos 8:6	25
Jer 22:13,15-17	141,142	Amos 8:4-6	258,278
Jer 22:13-17	141	Micah 6:6-6,10-12	55,40,136
Jer 22:16	141	Micah 6:6-8	136
Jer 34:8-22	24	Micah 6:6-8,10-11	74
Jer 49:11	71,72,90,99	Micah 6:8	25,72,101,144,283
Lam 4:9-10	20	Micah 6:11	258,278
Lam 5:10	20	Micah 7:8, 9	128
Eze 2:26-29	255	Hab 2:4-6,9,15	279
Eze 3:18-20	108	Hab 2:5-9	278
Eze 16:49	142	Hab 2:9,15	278
Eze 18:4-5,7-9	143	Zeph 1:14-18	254
Eze 18:7	143	Zeph 2:1-3	254
Eze 22:26,28-30	255	Hag 1:5-9	276
Eze 22:26-30	256,274,275	Hag 1:10	276
Eze 22:29	255,274	Hag 2:16	276
Eze 33:15	201	Zech 7:8-10	72,100,144,280
Dan 4:19	143	Zech 7:8-14	21
Dan 4:27	143,144	Zech 7:9-10	72,73,100,101,144
Hos 6:4-7	40,55		281,283,291
Hos 12:6	131,265,299	Zech 7:10	72,144,280
Hos 13:6	265	Zech 8:16	73,100
Hos 14:1-9	100	Zech 9:12	128
Hos 14:3	99	Mal 2:9	73
Joel 3:16	42	Mal 3:5	73,74,101,102
Amos 2:6	25,257	Mal 3:6-7	74
Amos 2:6-7	25	Mal 3:8	276

Scripture Index 383

Mal 3:17	76,103,189,189,350	Mt 25:21	180
Mal 3:17-18	354,356	Mt 25:21,34	44,188
Mt 2:4	16	Mt 25:23	164
Mt 3:8	303	Mt 25:31ff	12
Mt 5:7	12,63,88,183,197	Mt 25:34,21	188
Mt 5:8	214	Mt 25:34-36,40-46	4, 5
Mt 5:14	324	Mt 25:34-40	188
Mt 5:20	256,275	Mt 25:35-36	148,189,225,227,349
Mt 5:42	335	Mt 25:35-36,40	356
Mt 5:45	107	Mt 25:35-40	146
Mt 5:45, 48	167	Mt 25:35-45	146
Mt 6:11	107	Mt 25:40	41,56,181,308,351
Mt 7:12	50,283,346	Mt 25:40-46	61,222
Mt 7:20	159	Mt 25:41	147
Mt 9:12	310	Mt 25:41-45	147,189
Mt 9:13	181,310	Mt 25:42	314
Mt 11:29	318	Mt 25:43-44	147
Mt 11:29-30	271	Mt 26:10, 13	176
Mt 12:1-2	311	Mt 26:11	4
Mt 12:7	311	Mt 26:40-44	309
Mt 12:33	214	Mt 26:45-46	310
Mt 14:16	195	Mt 27:21	130
Mt 15:9	120	Mt 27:22-23	130
Mt 15:30	27	Mt 28:19-20	6
Mt 15:32	2	Mk 6:30,34-44	12
Mt 19:17-20	146	Mk 6:34	2,12
Mt 19:19	50,129,130,134	Mk 8:36	295
	182,192,345	Mk 10:21	146
Mt 19:20	145	Mk 7:7	59,128
Mt 19:21	145	Mk 8:36	13
Mt 20:6	339	Mk 10:45	344
Mt 20:26-27	188	Mk 12:31	345
Mt 22:29	128	Mk 12:43-44	148,149
Mt 22:39	212, 213, 345	Mk 14:7	139
Mt 23:23	313	Mk 16:15	139,152,225,240
Mt 23:8	153	Lk 2:21-24	26
Mt 24:37	214	Lk 3:6	303

384 *Working with the Poor*

Lk 3:10-11	150,302	Lk 19:33-37	44
Lk 3:10-14	150	Lk 10:36, 25,37-38	17, 18
Lk 3:11	149	Lk 10:36-37	200,356
Lk 3:11-14	304	Lk 11:3	27
Lk 3:12	303	Lk 11:42	311
Lk 3:12-13	302	Lk 12:20	316
Lk 3:13	150,303	Lk 12:33	139,150,151,152
Lk 3:14	302	Lk 12:33-40	151
Lk 4:1-4	27	Lk 13:24	270
Lk 4:4	13	Lk 14:12-14	22,27,56,152
Lk 4:18-19	27,250,251,267,310	Lk 14:13	139,152
Lk 4:19	24	Lk 14:13-14,12	152,153
Lk 4:20-30	27	Lk 14:23	230
Lk 5:4	343	Lk 16:10	304,306
Lk 6:1-5,20-21	27	Lk 16:19-21	155
Lk 6:1-6	22	Lk 16:19-31	22,27
Lk 6:8	138	Lk 16:20-21	154
Lk 6:38	162	Lk 18:7-8	106
Lk 9:10-17	22,27,28	Lk 18:13	107
Lk 9:13	27	Lk 18:22	28
Lk 9:23	165,341	Lk 19:1-10	28
Lk 9:58	340	Lk 19:5	201
Lk 10:23	184	Lk 19:8	201,202
Lk 10:25	354	Lk 19:8-9	201
Lk 10:25-28	53,65,66,80	Lk 19:10	310
Lk 10:25-29	198	Lk 20:25ff	12
Lk 10:25-37	43	Lk 20:32-34b	12
Lk 10:26-28	354	Lk 20:34	13
Lk 10:27	317	Lk 20:36	13
Lk 10:27,26,28,25	381	Lk 20:37	13
Lk 10:28	212	Lk 22:14-20	22
Lk 10:29	130,186,347,355	Lk 24:13-15	28
Lk 10:30-32	43	Lk 24:13-35	28
Lk 10:30-36	355	Lk 24:31	22
Lk 10:30-37	4,199	Jn 1:5	128
Lk 10:33	355	Jn 1:9	167
Lk 10:33-35	198,200	Jn 1:29	230

Scripture Index 385

Jn 3:16	212,250,266	Rom 12:11	351,358,359
Jn 3:16-17	225	Rom 12:13	158
Jn 4:23	256	Rom 12:13-16	157,171
Jn 4:23-24	275	Rom 13:1-3	157
Jn 5:20	255	Rom 13:8	66,80
Jn 6:12	358	Rom 15:3	167
Jn 7:38	226	Rom 15:22-33	22
Jn 9:4	339	Rom 15:22-33	29
Jn 12:5	156	Rom 15:25	29
Jn 12:6	156	Rom 15:26	29
Jn 13:34	107	Rom 15:27	29
Jn 19:15	130	1 Cor 3:9	283,284,313
Jn 21:15	107	1 Cor 7:23	228
Acts 2:5	203	1 Cor 8:1-6	233
Acts 2:41-42	28	1 Cor 13:1-3	159
Acts 2:44-45	28	1 Cor 13:1,3,8,13	160
Acts 2:46	28	1 Cor 13:3	158
Acts 4:34	28	1 Cor 13:4-7	159
Acts 4:34-25	28	1 Cor 16:1-2	160,161
Acts 4:36-37	29	1 Cor 16:1-4	22
Acts 5:1-11	29	2 Cor 3:2	67
Acts 6:1	22,202,203,204	2 Cor 3:18	42
Acts 6:2-4	202	2 Cor 6:1-10	162
Acts 6:3-4	204	2 Cor 6:6-10	161
Acts 6:7	203,205	2 Cor 6:10	161
Acts 9:36	205	2 Cor 8:1-2	208
Acts 11:27-30	30	2 Cor 8:1-4	209
Acts 11:29-30	29,206	2 Cor 8:1-5	207
Acts 17:26-27	133	2 Cor 8:2-3	208
Acts 17:26-28	153	2 Cor 8:2-5	208
Acts 20:35	157	2 Cor 8:4	208
Rom 8:9	189	2 Cor 8:9	166,167,175
Rom 8:32	190	2 Cor 8-9	176
Rom 10:11-13	133	2 Cor 9:5-7	163
Rom 12:4, 9-15,21	157	2 Cor 9:6	162,164,165
Rom 12:8-20	157	2 Cor 9:7	165
Rom 12:9-13	158	2 Cor 9:8-11	166,208

386 *Working with the Poor*

2 Cor 9:8-15	164	James 5:1-4	181
2 Cor 10:1	123	James 5:1-6	180
Gal 2:10	22, 29	James 5:4	180
Gal 3:28	133	1 Pet 2:1-9	307
Gal 6:2	43, 45	1 Pet 3:8	194,329
Gal 6:7	50	2 Pet 1:4	212
Gal 6:10	168,169,234,352	1 Jn 1:6-7	318
Eph 4:20-32	170	1 Jn 2:4, 6	215
Eph 4:28	170	1 Jn 2:7-10	215
Eph 5:5	52	1 Jn 3:16-17	182
Phil 4:6	342	1 Jn 3:17	182
Phil 4:7	342	1 Jn 3:17	182
1 Thess 3:11-12	345	1 Jn 3:17-19	181
1 Thess 5:22	67	1 Jn 3:17-22	179
1 Tim 6:6, 8	328	1 Jn 4:8	107
1 Tim 6:10	295	3 Jn 2	329
1 Tim 6:17	295	Jude 14-15	101,102
1 Tim 6:18	139,152	Jude 20-23	230
Heb 11:27	42	Rev 2:2,9,13,19	173
Heb 12:12-13	251,267	Rev 2:5, 7	312
Heb 13:1-3	171	Rev 3:1,8,15	173
Heb 13:3	170	Rev 3:8	76
Heb 13:5	295	Rev 16:17	305
James 1:5	359	Rev 22:11	305
James 1:27	33,75,76,102,103 104,105,172,173,309		
James 1:5-12	171,172		
James 1:9-10	171		
James 2:1-10	259,285		
James 2:2-5	175,176		
James 2:2-9	175		
James 2:5	211		
James 2:5-6,14-17	179		
James 2:6	258,284		
James 2:13	106		
James 2:14-16	178,179,211		
James 2:19	179		

SCRIPTURE INDEX BY SUBJECT

		Preface		Lev 19:11-18	25
Mt 15:32	2			Lev 19:35-36	25
Mt 25:34-36,40-46	4			Lev 25	27
Mt 26:11	4			Lev 25:10-24	24
Mk 6:34	2			Deut 8:3	27
Lk 10:30-37	4			Deut 10:18-19	21
				Deut 15:1-18	23
		Evangelism and Development:		Deut 15:4-18	24
		Friends or Foes?		Deut 15:8	31
Prov 29:18	11			Deut 16:10-20	26
Mt 2:4	16			Deut 16:20	25
Mt 5:7	12			Deut 24:17-18	21
Mt 25:31ff	12			Deut 24:19-21	22
Mt 28:19-20	6			Deut 25:13-16	25
Mk 6:30,34-44	12			Deut 27:19	21
Mk 6:34	12			Ruth 2:2-23	22
Mk 8:36	13			1 Kings 18:5	20
Lk 4:4	13			2 Kings 6:25	20
Lk 10:25,36	17			2 Kings 6:29	20
Lk 10:37-38	18			2 Chron 36:20-21	24
Lk 20:25ff	12			Psa 33:5	25
Lk 20:32-34b	12			Psa 37:28	25
Lk 20:34	12			Psa 68:5-6	21
Lk 20:36,37	13			Psa 72:2, 4,16	25
		God's Word in a Hungry World		Psa 109:21	25
Gen 12:10	20			Psa 140:13	25
Gen 41:25-36	20			Prov 11:1	25
Gen 42:2	20			Prov 16:11	25
Ex 22:21-23	21			Prov 16:12	25
Ex 23:10-11	24			Prov 29:4,14	25
Lev 12:6-8	26			Isa 1:1-17	26
Lev 19:9-10	22			Isa 30:18	25
				Isa 58:1-9	26
				Isa 61:8	25

388 *Working with the Poor*

Jer 17:11	25	Acts 11:29-30	29
Jer 22:1-5	21	Acts 11:27-30	30
Jer 34:8-22	24	Rom 15:22-33	22,29
Lam 4:9-10	20	1 Cor 16:1-4	22
Lam 5:10	20	2 Cor 8-9	22
Zech 7:8-14	21	Gal 2:10	22,29
Amos 2:6-7	25	James 1:27	33
Amos 4:1	25		
Amos 5:11	25	The Fast that God Has Chosen	
Amos 5:21,24	26	Deut 10:12-13,17-18	40
Amos 5:24	30	1 Sam 15:22	39
Amos 8:5,6	25	Psa 51:16	39
Micah 6:8	25	Isa 1:14-17	40
Mt 15:30	27	Isa 58:6-7	40
Lk 2:21-24	26	Isa 58:8-11	41
Lk 4:1-4	27	Hosea 6:4-7	40
Lk 4:18-19	27	Joel 3:16	42
Lk 4:19	24	Micah 6:6-8,10-12	40
Lk 4:20-30	27	Mt 25:40	41
Lk 6:1-6	22	2 Cor 3:18	42
Lk 6:1-5,20-21	27	Heb 11:27	42
Lk 9:10-17	22,27,28		
Lk 9:13	27	Go and Do Thou Likewise	
Lk 11:3	27	Mt 25:21,34	44
Lk 14:12-14	22,27	Lk 10:25-32	43
Lk 16:19-31	22,27	Lk 10:33-37	44
Lk 18:22	28	Gal 6:2	43,45
Lk 19:1-10	28		
Lk 22:14-20	28	Widows	
Lk 24:13-15	28	Gen 14:22-23	50
Lk 24:13-35	28	Ex 22:22-24	49
Lk 24:31	28	Ex 22:27	51
Acts 2:41-42,44-45	28	Ex 22:21-26	50
Acts 4:34-35	28	Ex 23:4-5	53
Acts 4:36-37	29	Lev 19:13-15	60,61
Acts 5:1-11	29	Lev 19:18	50
Acts 6:1	22		

Scripture Index 389

Lev 19:32-37	52,65,66	Isa 58:6-8	54,66
Lev 19:34	53	Isa 58:8-11	55
Lev 25:25	65,66	Isa 59:14-15	62,64
Lev 25:35-38,43	52	Jer 2:12-13	70
Deut 4:8	51	Jer 7:2-11	70
Deut 10:12-13,17-18	52,55,64,65	Jer 7:6-7	67
Deut 10:17-19	53	Jer 17:6-10	70
Deut 14:28-29	56	Jer 18:11-15	70
Deut 14:29	57	Jer 22:3	70
Deut 15:7-11	52,59,65,66	Jer 22:3-5	71
Deut 23:19-20	51	Jer 22:1-3	71
Deut 24:14-15,19-21	52,57,65,66	Jer 49:11	71,72
Deut 24:17-22	60	Hosea 6:4-7	55
Deut 24:19-20	58	Micah 6:6-8,10-12	55,74
Deut 25:13,15	57	Micah 6:8	72
Deut 27:17-19	60,61	Zech 7:8-10	72
Deut 27:19	60	Zech 8:16	73
1 Sam 15:22	54	Mal 2:9	73
Job 29:11-13	63	Mal 3:5	73,74
Job 29:12-16	62,64	Mal 3:6-7	74
Job 31:13-14,16-17,19-23	62,64	Mal 3:17	76
Job 31:16-22	63	Mt 5:7	63
Psa 10:3	52	Mt 7:12	50
Psa 15:2, 5	50	Mt 19:19	50
Psa 41:1-2	67	Mt 25:40	56
Psa 68:5	52,64,72	Mt 25:40-46	61
Psa 68:10	63	Mk 7:7	59
Psa 68:15	65,66	Lk 10:25-28	52,65,66
Psa 146:9	52,65,66	Lk 14:12-14	56
Prov 19:17	67	Rom 13:8	65,66
Isa 1:14-17	54	2 Cor 3:2	67
Isa 1:17	66,67	Gal 6:7	50
Isa 3:14-15	67	Eph 5:5	52
Isa 5:8	67	1 Thess 5:22	67
Isa 10:1-2	67	James 1:27	75,76
Isa 11:1-4	67	Rev 3:8	76
Isa 54:5	72		

390 *Working with the Poor*

Orphans			
		Psa 82:3	90
		Psa 146:9	80
Ex 4:29-31	84	Prov 19:17	89
Ex 22:21-26	79	Prov 22:16	91
Ex 22:22-24	78,79	Prov 23:10-11	91
Ex 23:4-5	81	Prov 26:27	91
Lev 19:13-15	86,87	Prov 31:4-5	78
Lev 19:32-37	80	Eccl 10:16-17	78
Lev 19:33-34	81	Isa 1:16-17	92
Lev 19:34	81	Isa 1:17	91
Lev 25:35-38	80	Isa 1:18-23	94
Deut 10:17-19	81	Isa 1:23	94
Deut 10:18	79	Isa 10:1-2	93
Deut 10:12-13,17-19	80	Isa 11:1-4	93
Deut 10:17-19	81	Isa 54:5	90,99
Deut 14:29	82	Isa 58:7	106
Deut 15:7-11	80	Isa 58:8	92
Deut 23:19-20	79	Isa 59:14-15	87
Deut 24:14-15,19-21	80,84	Jer 2:11-13	97
Deut 24:17-18	84	Jer 5:28	95
Deut 24:17-22	82, 83	Jer 5:25-29	95
Deut 25:13-16	84	Jer 5:25-31	96
Deut 26:12-13	84	Jer 5:26-28	96
Deut 26:12-14	84	Jer 6:9-13	96
Deut 27:19	85	Jer 7:3-7	97
Deut 27:17-19	86,87	Jer 7:4-7	97
Job 1:8	103	Jer 7:6-7	97
Job 29:11-13	88	Jer 9:23-24	92
Job 29:12-16	87,88,103	Jer 22:1-3	98
Job 31:13-14,16-17,19-23	87,89	Jer 22:3	98
Job 31:16-22	89	Jer 49:11	90,99
Psa 15:5	79	Eze 3:18-20	108
Psa 41:1-3	89	Hos 14:1-9	100
Psa 68:5	80,89,90,99	Hos 14:3	99
Psa 68:10	88	Zech 7:8-10	100
Psa 73:11	92	Zech 8:16	100
Psa 82:1,3-4	90	Micah 6:8	101

Scripture Index 391

Mal 3:5	101,102	Deut 23:19-20	111
Mal 3:17	103	Deut 23:19	112
Mt 5:7	88	Deut 24:12-21	121
Mt 5:45	107	Deut 25:13,15-16	122
Mt 6:11	107	Deut 24:14	192
Lk 10:25-28	80	Deut 24:14-15	134
Lk 18:13	107	Deut 24:14-15,17,19-21	122
Jn 13:34	107	Deut 24:17-22	120
Jn 21:15	107	Deut 26:12-13	86
Rom 13:8	80	Deut 26:13-14	86
Jude 14-15	101,102	Ruth 2:14-16,23	193
James 1:27	102,104,105	Ruth 2:4	194
James 2:13	106	1 Sam 3:10	190
1 Jn 4:8	107	1 Sam 15:22	135
		1 Kings 17:12-24	185,194,196
		2 Kings 2:3, 5	205
		2 Kings 6:1-7	135
		Neh 5:6-9	112
		Neh 8:3	87
		Neh 8:9-10	87
		Neh 8:10-12	87
		Job 1:8	188
		Job 11:12-16	197
		Job 29:11-16	122,123
			124,183,188,196
		Job 30:25	123
		Job 31:13-14,16-23	124
		Job 31:13-14,16-17,19-23	125
			192,197
		Psa 12:5	131
		Psa 15:5	111
		Psa 37:3	126,131,132
		Psa 41:1	125
		Psa 41:1-3	126,131,132
		Psa 41:11	193
		Psa 68:10	123,183,197
		Psa 73:11	193
The Poor			
Gen 4:9	186		
Ex 22:21-26	111		
Ex 22:25	112		
Ex 22:25-27	110		
Ex 23:6-8	112,113		
Lev 19:9-15	113		
Lev 19:1-2,9-11,13-18	112,113		
	115		
Lev 19:18	134,182,192		
Lev 25:25-28	115		
Lev 25:35-37	115		
Lev 25:35-43	116		
Lev 25:35	117		
Lev 25:35-38,17	117		
Deut 1:17	131		
Deut 4:8	111		
Deut 10:12-13,17-18	136		
Deut 15:7-8,11	110,116,118,119		
Deut 15:10	115		
Deut 23:19	110		

392 *Working with the Poor*

Psa 82:1,3-4	127	Dan 4:27	143,144
Psa 112:4-9	128	Dan 4:19	143
Psa 139:12	128	Hos 12:6	131
Psa 145:15	167	Micah 6:6-8	136,144
Psa 146:5	128	Micah 7:8-9	128
Prov 3:9-10	131,132,126	Zech 7:8-10	144,192
Prov 11:24	126,131,132	Zech 9:12	128
Prov 11:25	131,132	Mal 3:17	189
Prov 13:23	129	Mt 3:11-12	150
Prov 14:31	129,130,131	Mt 5:7	122,183,197
Prov 19:17	125,126,131,132,193	Mt 5:45,48	167
Prov 22:2	132	Mt 7:20	159
Prov 22:9	133	Mt 9:13	181
Prov 23:21	133,134	Mt 14:16	195
Prov 29:7	134,192	Mt 15:9	120
Prov 31:13,20	134,135	Mt 19:17-20	146
Prov 31:13,15-17,20,27	135	Mt 19:19	129,130,134,182,192
Isa 1:14-17	136	Mt 19:20-21	145
Isa 1:16-17	193	Mt 19:24	187
Isa 1:17	135	Mt 20:26,27	188
Isa 5:3	166	Mt 22:29	128
Isa 32:30	162	Mt 23:8	153
Isa 42:16	128	Mt 25:21,34-40	180,181,188
Isa 58:6-7	136	Mt 25:23	164
Isa 58:6-7,10	139,152	Mt 25:35-36,41-45	147,148,189
Isa 58:7	140	Mt 26:10,13	176,177
Isa 58:7-10	138	Mt 27:21	130
Isa 58:8	137,193	Mk 7:7	128
Isa 58:9-11	191	Mk 10:21	146
Isa 59:14-15	123,196	Mk 12:43-44	148,149
Isa 60:2	128	Mk 14:7	139
Jer 9:23-24	137	Mk 16:15	139,152
Jer 22:13-17	141	Lk 3:10-14,16,17	149,150
Jer 22:15-17	142	Lk 6:8	138
Eze 16:49	142	Lk 6:36	184
Eze 18:4-5,7-9	143	Lk 6:38	162
Eze 33:15	201	Lk 9:23	165

Amos 2:6-8	256,257	Lev 19:13-15	293
Amos 5:10-12	257,275,276,277	Lev 19:35	294
Amos 6:3-8	266	Lev 25:14	297
Amos 6:12	277	Deut 1:17	299
Amos 8:4-7	258,278	Deut 23:19-20	287
Micah 6:8	283	Deut 24:17,10-12	297
Micah 6:11	258,278	Deut 24:17-22	296
Hag 1:5-10	276	Deut 27:17-19	293
Hab 2:5-9	278	Deut 28:20, 32	301
Hab 2:4-6,9,15	279,280	Eccl 5:10	295
Hag 2:16	276	Eccl 10:16-17	290
Zeph 1:14-18	254	Job 29:4,5,7,10	292
Zeph 2:1-3	254	Job 29:12-16	298
Zech 7:8-10	280,281,283	Job 29:21-25	292
Mal 3:8	276	Job 31:13-15	297
Mt 5:20	256,275	Job 31:13-14,16-17,19-23	297,298
Mt 7:12	283	Job 31:24	295
Mt 11:29-30	271	Job 31:32	292
Lk 4:18-19	251,267	Job 34:22	301
Lk 13:24	270	Psa 12:5	299
Jn 3:16	250,266	Psa 15:5	287
Jn 4:23,24	256,275	Psa 41:1-3	298
Jn 5:20	255	Psa 46:10	295
1 Cor 3:9	283,284	Psa 50:21	301
James 2:1-10	258,284,285	Psa 73:9-11	301
Heb 12:12-13	267,251	Prov 3:4-5	300
		Prov 11:1	305
		Prov 14:31	299
		Prov 17:15	299,300
		Prov 19:17	298
		Prov 22:4	295
		Prov 28:20	295
		Prov 31:4-5	290,300
		Eccl 5:8	301
		Eccl 10:16-17	300
		Isa 59:14-15	298
		Hosea 12:6	299
Dishonesty and Injustice			
Ex 4:29-30	296		
Ex 22:21-24	289		
Ex 22:21-26	287		
Ex 22:22-24	290,300		
Ex 22:26-27	297		
Ex 22:27	288		
Ex 23:1-9	291		
Lev 19:1,9-11,13-18	294		

397

Psa 37:21 335
Prov 13:23 339
Isa 16:3 335
Isa 29:18-19 339
Mt 5:42 335
Mt 20:6 339
Lk 5:4 343
Lk 9:23 341
Lk 9:58 340
Jn 9:4 339
Phil 4:6 342

Lk 10:36-37 356
Mal 3:17-18 354,356

Teach Discipline

Prov 6:11 357
Prov 24:30-34 357
Prov 30:8-9 358
Jn 6:12 358
Rom 12:11 358,359
James 1:5 359

Train To Serve

Lev 19:18 345
Isa 1:17 350
Job 29:15 350
Job 29:16 351
Isa 58:7 348
Isa 58:7-11 353
Mal 3:17 350
Mt 7:12 346
Mt 19:19 345
Mt 22:39 345
Mt 25:35-36 349
Mt 25:40 351
Mk 10:45 344,345
Mk 12:31 345
Lk 10:29 347
Rom 12:11 351
Gal 6:10 352
1 Thess 3:11-12 345

Practical Training

Prov 13:23 361,361
Isa 29:18-19 362

Relieve Necessities

Mt 25:35-36,40 356
Lk 10:25-28 354
Lk 10:29 355