

Avoiding Display and the Sensational – Day 17 April 7, 2020

Success Not Dependent on Outward Display—Some ministers make the mistake of supposing that success depends on drawing a large congregation by outward display, and then delivering the message of truth in a theatrical style. But this is using common fire instead of the sacred fire of God's kindling. The Lord is not glorified by this manner of working. Not by startling notices and expensive display is His work to be carried to completion, but by following Christlike methods. “Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” It is the naked truth which, like a sharp, two-edged sword, cuts both ways, arousing to spiritual life those who are dead in trespasses and sins. Men will recognize the gospel when it is brought to them in a way that is in harmony with God's purposes.—[Gospel Workers, 383 \(1915\)](#). Ev 136.1

Methods of Sound Sense—There are persons that are ready to catch at something strange, which they can bring as a surprise upon the people, to awaken their fears and begin a strange work that will spoil the good work that has been begun right.... Ev 136.2

Those who are handling the great, grand, ennobling truths of the Word must ever reveal a spirit deep, earnest, fervent, but calm, and full of sound sense, that the mouths of gainsayers may be stopped. Encourage not a wave of fanaticism that will spoil a work begun as it should be, and carried on with the Word of God in your hands.... Ev 136.3

Those engaged in the work in New York are not to suppose that some strange thing must be brought in and mingled with their labor, as evidence of the supernatural character of the work, setting on it the seal that it is of God. Their work is to speak to the people in humble, trustful faith, asking counsel of God, not following their own ideas, not trusting to the bringing out of fanciful things to arouse the senses of those who are dead in trespasses and sins. The system of truth found in the Word of God is capable of making impressions such as the great Teacher desires to have made upon the intellect.—[Letter 17, 1902](#). Ev 136.4

Never Bring Truth to Low Level—Never bring the truth down to a low level in order to obtain converts, but seek to bring the sinful and corrupted up to the high standard of the law of God.—[Manuscript 7, 1900](#). Ev 137.1

Refrain From All Theatrical Display—I have a message for those in charge of our work. Do not encourage the men who are to engage in this work to think that they must proclaim the solemn, sacred message in a theatrical style. Not one jot or tittle of anything theatrical is to be brought into our work. God's cause is to have a sacred, heavenly mold. Let everything connected with the giving of the message for this time bear the divine impress. Let nothing of a theatrical nature be permitted, for this would spoil the sacredness of the work. Ev 137.2

I am instructed that we shall meet with all kinds of experiences and that men will try to bring strange performances into the work of God. We have met such things in many places. In my very first labors the message was given that all theatrical performances in connection with the preaching of present truth were to be discouraged and forbidden. Men who thought they had a wonderful work to do sought to adopt a strange deportment and manifested oddities in bodily exercise. The light given me was, “Give this no sanction.” These performances, which savored of the theatrical, were to have no place in the proclamation of the solemn messages entrusted to us. Ev 137.3

The enemy will watch closely and will take every advantage of circumstances to degrade the truth by the introduction of undignified demonstrations. None of these demonstrations are to be encouraged. The precious truths given us are to be spoken in all solemnity and with sacred awe.—[Manuscript 19, 1910](#). Ev 138.1

Danger of Sensational Teachings—You may be sure that pure and undefiled religion is not a sensational religion. God has not laid upon anyone the burden of encouraging an appetite for encouraging speculative doctrines and theories. My brethren, keep these things out of your teaching.—(Australasian) Union Conference Record, March 15, 1904. Ev 138.2

Avoid Fanaticism—We are not to encourage a spirit of enthusiasm that brings zeal for a while, but soon fades away, leaving discouragement and depression. We need the bread of life that comes down from heaven to give life to the soul. Study the Word of God. Do not be controlled by feeling. All who labor in the vineyard of the Lord must learn that feeling is not faith. To be always in a state of elevation is not required. But it is required that we have firm faith in the Word of God as the flesh and blood of Christ. Ev 138.3

Those who do the work of the Lord in our cities must close and bolt the doors firmly against excitement and fanaticism. The Word of God is our sanctification and righteousness, because it is spiritual food. To study it is to eat the leaves of the tree of life. Nothing is more uplifting to God's servants than to teach the Scriptures just as Christ taught them. The Word of God contains divine nourishment, which satisfies the appetite for spiritual food.—[Letter 17, 1902](#). Ev 138.4

Expensive and Peculiar Methods—You have chosen to work in a way that wears yourself out and absorbs a large amount of means. Ev 139.1

This expensive outlay of means has been presented before you in its true bearing, and you have been told that such a way of working is not in harmony with the will of God. Your expensive and peculiar methods of labor may appear at first to make a strong impression on the people, but they soon reach the conclusion that the display is made to call attention to yourself and your wife and children. The large expenditure of means is not in harmony with the solemn truths presented. Self has been placed on exhibition.—[Letter 205, 1904](#). Ev 139.2

Not to Ape the World—We are handling subjects which involve eternal interests, and we are not to ape the world in any respect. We are to follow closely the footsteps of Christ. He is a satisfying portion and can meet all our wants and necessities.—[Manuscript 96, 1898](#). Ev 139.3

Our success will depend on carrying forward the work in the simplicity in which Christ carried it forward, without any theatrical display.—[Letter 53, 1904](#).