

Reclaiming Backsliders – Day 34 April 24 2021

Guard Against Apostasy—Care should be exercised to educate the young converts. They are not to be left to themselves, to be led away by false presentations, to walk in a false way. Let the watchmen be constantly on guard, lest souls shall be beguiled by soft words and fair speech and sophistry. Teach faithfully all that Christ has commanded. Everyone who receives Christ is to be trained to act some part in the great work to be accomplished in our world.—[Letter 279, 1905](#). Ev 367.1

Cause for Backsliding by New Members—Upon all new converts should be impressed the truth that abiding knowledge can be gained only by earnest labor and persevering study. As a rule, those who are converted to the truth we preach have not previously been diligent students of the Scriptures; for in the popular churches there is little real study of the Word of God. The people look to the ministers to search the Scriptures for them and to explain what they teach. Ev 367.2

Many accept the truth without digging down deep to understand its foundation principles; and when it is opposed, they forget the arguments and evidences that sustain it. They have been led to believe the truth, but have not been fully instructed as to what truth is, or carried forward from point to point in the knowledge of Christ. Too often their piety degenerates into a form, and when the appeals that first aroused them are no longer heard, they become spiritually dead.—[Gospel Workers, 368 \(1915\)](#). Ev 367.3

Dealing With Backsliders—Those who are sent by God to do a special work will be called to rebuke heresies and errors. They should exercise Bible charity toward all men, presenting the truth as it is in Jesus. Some will be most earnest and zealous in their resistance to the truth; but while their faults must be exposed unflinchingly and their evil practices condemned, long-suffering, patience, and forbearance must be exercised toward them. “And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garments spotted by the flesh.” Ev 368.1

The church may be called upon to dismiss from their fellowship those who will not be corrected. It is a painful duty that has to be done. Sad indeed is such a step, and it should not be taken until every other means of correcting and saving the one in error has failed. Ev 368.2

Christ never made peace by anything like compromise. The hearts of God's servants will overflow with love and sympathy for the erring, as represented by the parable of the lost sheep; but they will have no soft words for sin. They show the truest friendship who reprove error and sin without partiality and without hypocrisy. Jesus lived in the midst of a sinful and perverse generation. He could not be at peace with the world unless He left them unwarned, unreprieved, and this would not be in accordance with the plan of salvation.—[Letter 12, 1890](#). Ev 368.3

Dealing With Wrongs in God's Way—God is not pleased with the slothful work done in the churches. He expects His stewards to be true and faithful in giving reproof and correction. They are to expel wrong after the rule God has given in His Word, not according to their own ideas and impulses. No harsh means must be used, no unfair, hasty, impulsive work done. The efforts made to cleanse the church from moral uncleanness must be made in God's way. There must be no partiality, no hypocrisy. There must be no favorites, whose sins are regarded as less sinful than those of others. Oh, how much we all need the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Then we shall always work with the mind of Christ, with kindness,

compassion, and sympathy, showing love for the sinner while hating sin with a perfect hatred.—
[Manuscript 8a, 1888](#). Ev 368.4

How Paul Corrected Wrongs—Contentions in the body of believers are not after the order of God. They result from the manifestation of the attributes of the natural heart. To all who bring in disorder and disunion, the words of Paul are applicable: “I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.” Paul here addressed a people whose advancement was not proportionate to their privileges and opportunities. They ought to have been able to bear the hearing of the plain Word of God, but they were in the position in which the disciples were when Christ said to them, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.” They ought to have been far advanced in spiritual knowledge, able to comprehend and practice the higher truths of the Word; but they were unsanctified. They had forgotten that they must be purged from their hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong, and that they must not cherish carnal attributes. Ev 369.1

It was impossible for the apostle to reprove wrongdoing without some who claimed to believe the truth becoming offended. The inspired testimony could do these no good; for they had lost their spiritual discernment. Jealousy, evil surmising, and accusing closed the door to the working of the Holy Spirit. Paul would gladly have dwelt upon higher and more difficult truths, truths which were rich in nourishment, but his instruction would have cut directly across their tendencies to jealousy, and would not have been received. The divine mysteries of godliness, which would have enabled them to grasp the truths necessary for that time, could not be spoken. The apostle must select lessons, which, like milk, could be taken without irritating the digestive organs. Truths of the deepest interest could not be spoken, because the hearers would misapply and misappropriate them, presenting them to young converts who needed only the more simple truths of the Word.... Ev 370.1

Holiness to God through Christ is required of Christians. If there are wrongs in the church, they should receive immediate attention. Some may have to be sharply rebuked. This is not doing the erring one any wrong. The faithful physician of the soul cuts deep, that no pestilent matter may be left to burst forth again. After the reproof has been given, then comes repentance and confession, and God will freely pardon and heal. He always pardons when confession is made.—[The Review and Herald, December 11, 1900](#). Ev 370.2

Troublers of Zion—There are in our churches those who profess the truth who are only hindrances to the work of reform. They are clogs to the wheels of the car of salvation. This class are frequently in trial. Doubts, jealousies, and suspicion are the fruits of selfishness, and seem to be interwoven with their very natures. I shall name this class chronic church grumblers. They do more harm in a church than two ministers can undo. They are a tax to the church and a great weight to the ministers of Christ. They live in an atmosphere of doubts, jealousies, and surmisings. Much time and labor of the ambassadors of Christ are required to undo their work of evil, and restore harmony and union in the church. This takes from the courage and strength of God's servants and unfits them for the work He has for them to do in saving perishing souls from ruin. God will reward these troublers of Zion according to their works. Ev 370.3

The ministers of Christ should take their position, and not be hindered in their work by these agents of Satan. There will be enough of these to question, and quibble, and criticize, to keep the ministers of God

constantly busy, if they will allow themselves to be detained from the great work of giving the last saving message of warning to the world. If the church has no strength to stand against the unsanctified, rebellious feelings of church grumblers, it is better to let church and grumblers go overboard together than lose the opportunity of saving hundreds who would make better churches, and have the elements existing within themselves of strength and union and power. Ev 371.1

The very best way for ministers and churches is to let this faultfinding, crooked class fall back into their own element, and pull away from the shore, launch out into the deep, and cast out the gospel net again for fish that may pay for the labor bestowed upon them. Satan exults when men and women embrace the truth who are naturally faultfinding and who will throw all the darkness and hindrance they can against the advancement of the work of God. Ministers cannot now in this important period of the work be detained to prop up men and women who see and have felt once the force of the truth. They should fasten believing Christians on Christ, who is able to hold them up and preserve them blameless unto His appearing, while they go forth to new fields of labor.—[The True Missionary, February, 1874](#). Ev 371.2