

END OF TIME SERIES

An Expanded Spirit of Prophecy Study

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- VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS - BEERSBEBE SPRINGS, TN 37305

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END OF TIME SERIES - PART SIX

PERFECTION OF CHARACTER

Perfection of character is an aspect in last-day events. This major section should actually be placed prior to the church-state union and the national Sunday law-for that is when it occurs, –but, by locating it here, you will be better able to compare it with five closely related topics: *the seal of God, the passing of the judgment to the living, the blotting out of sin, the marriage, and the latter rain*. Because all six topics are very closely intertwined and ought to be studied together, they have been placed close together in these last-day event studies.

First comes perfection of character. It is an ongoing process which is occurring now. Then, after the church-state union and the national Sunday law enactment which produces the formation of the image, the judgment passes to the living as men and women make their intelligent decisions to sacredly observe the Bible Sabbath or bow to the child of the papacy. Then, simultaneously for the righteous, comes the seal of God, blotting out of sin, the marriage in the most holy place, and the latter rain. In contrast, at the same time the wicked make their decision and receive the mark of the beast, an even greater outpouring of satanic zeal and hatred than they had earlier possessed.

Perfection of character is a much-maligned concept, which simply means "obedience to the laws of God through the enabling merits of Jesus Christ." Those who do not want to fully obey God's laws, ridicule the idea as "perfectionism." They want to cling to their cherished sins, and stifle the convictions of the Spirit to forsake them, by declaring that perfect obedience is merely a fanatical idea. For them it is too great a

sacrifice to forsake sin for their Lord. They would rather live with the self-deception that they can have both salvation and sin.

But there are others who are very content to cling to Jesus and do all that He asks in His holy Word. That group, in happy submission to their Saviour, is putting away their sins by faith in the empowering grace of Jesus Christ.

There are four errors in regard to the overcoming of sin, which should be mentioned here:

(1) *The error that we can resist or overcome sin in our own strength.*

(2) *The error that we cannot resist or overcome sin in this life –prior to the second advent of Christ. There are those who reason that we can happily continue on in our sins and lusts until Jesus returns in the skies and calls His people up into the air to meet Him! They imagine that the translation process (by which the bodies of the faithful are glorified) will, without any effort or self-denial on their part, also include a magical removal of their evil passions, vicious habits, adulteries, gluttony, and deceptive ways. Unfortunately, at this time, this is the unofficial teaching of many leaders.*

Here is the reply to both errors:

Apart from the moment-by-moment help of Jesus Christ our only Saviour, we cannot resist temptation, much less put away cherished sin. Of ourselves we can do nothing. But, in and through Christ, we can do all things that He asks of us in His holy Word. Christ is our victory. Looking in faith to Him, we can do all that He asks. At each step He strengthens us for the immediate duty, as we keep our eyes of faith fixed upon Him.

Jesus died to save us from sin. He does this by the impartation of His grace. But He does not give grace today for tomorrow's need. The grace comes as we accept Him and abide in Him. We must receive Him and live in Him right now –in order to have His grace right now.

There are two sides to the grace of Christ, just as there are two sides on each coin. Jesus gives us forgiving grace and enabling grace.

Forgiving grace justifies. As we plead humbly, sincerely in prayer for it, our past sin is forgiven, and we are made right in the presence of God just now. Because we are looking to God for forgiveness through Jesus Christ His Son, and because we do it with the earnest, sincere intention to forsake that sin and have nothing more to do with it –we are forgiven, and we know it.

Then we arise and live under empowering grace. Enabling grace sanctifies; it empowers us to live right, obey God's Word, resist sin, and live kindly, helpful, unselfish lives –right now.

Will Christ's enabling grace, given now, help us in the future? No, His grace is like the manna; we cannot save it for tomorrow's needs. Tomorrow we must obtain it fresh from Him as we give ourselves anew to Him tomorrow and live in Him tomorrow. Christianity is a Now experience. That is why we are told that none should ever be taught to feel or think they are "saved." We can be in Christ right now, because that is a Now experience. But we cannot be saved right now, because that is a death or end-of-probation experience. The future is not ours; only the present. Live the present right, and you need not concern yourself about the future. That is the message of Matthew 6:34. The act of salvation or redemption does not come until the end –if, in Christ, we have been faithful to the end. There is only one path to heaven, and it is by way of the cross and the sanctuary. Daily we pick up our cross, trust and obey (which is obey by trust),

and follow Christ into the sanctuary in heaven where He ministers His grace anew to us.

It should be noted here that those who want to remain in their sins use a fallacious argument in condemning those who are seeking, in Christ, to put theirs away. The false argument (found today in certain denominational books) is that no one can resist or put away sin prior to the Second Advent (when Christ will instantly, totally eradicate them), because Jesus helps no one do it before then, and those who try to do it are doing so in their own strength –and are therefore legalists, reprobate, and condemned of God for attempting to do so.

That is a vicious, evil theory. Because some professed Christians love sin, they devise theories to explain away their bondage in sin –in a futile attempt to make it appear a godly pursuit to indulge wickedness. In order to excuse their own chains as "spiritual links to Christ," they would try to bind everyone else hopelessly in sin. Yet the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy teach the importance of putting away sin now, and the means through Christ by which it can be done now.

(3) *The error that we can continue in our sins until the latter rain magically removes them.* But it is NOW that we are to put away our sins, not some magical later time. Over the years, many have erred in supposing that their sins would mysteriously be removed when the latter rain fell. This false hope is clearly rejected in the *Early Writings*, 71 statement. Carefully read the entire page.

(4) *The error our sins cannot be put away until the judgment passes to the cases of living, at which time –If we are continuing In repentance –our sins will be removed. A group in the early 1960s believed that their sins would be removed when the judgment passed to the living, and, prior to then, they need only "pray for repentance" and await the forthcoming removal of their sins in the twinkling of an eye.* That concept is a serious error.

Now it is true that the record of the sins of the faithful will be cancelled when the investigative judgment passes to their names. But that occurs only because those individuals had, in the strength of Christ, earlier put away the sin. It is now that we are to put away sin, in preparation for that time when our cases will come up in the judgment.

God's Word is very clear on when sin must be removed from our lives. Spirit of Prophecy statements, as given in two of our earlier tracts, clearly disprove the errors. *You Can Overcome [IC-1]* clearly reveal that our sins CAN be eliminated and that it is NOW that we must put them away. *The Center of the Crisis [IC-2]* show that they must be put away prior to the sealing, latter rain, close of probation, and second advent of Christ.

In contrast to these errors, in this present study, below, it is quite clear that, in the strength of Christ, our sins must be put away NOW –before the Sunday law crisis begins. This is a daily work, and, frankly, it is a sweet work. Our happiest hours are when we live in conscious approval by our kind heavenly Father. He is so good to us, and we are so happy to please the One we love so much. The wicked can denounce us as "legalists," but we are quite content to live close to Jesus, and dwell in the cleft of such a mighty Rock of protection and enabling.

(5) In contrast with the above four errors, which postpone separation from sin to some later time, there is a fifth error: *There are those who claim they have perfection of character and have not sinned for so many months or years. Some in this group travel from place to place, and teach that all present and future sin can instantly be put away –never to return. All that is necessary to have temptation removed forever from your life is to believe the speaker standing before you –and therefore it is so immediately, that*

night!

But BEWARE OF SUCH PEOPLE! The Spirit of Prophecy statements are clear that the closer we come Christ, the more we will sense our inadequacies, frailness, and great need of His enabling grace. We are told that those who live the closest to God are the last to parade their virtues or tell men they are sinless.

God's people can draw very close to God as His trusting children, and then be deluded into accepting this false teaching that they are now perfect. Instantly, Satan enters their mind. We know of instances in which Christian wives accept this teaching and, within a week, leave their husbands and have sexual relations with the itinerant "perfect man" who took over their minds. They were deluded into forsaking Scripture and trust in Christ, and instead placing their faith in the words of a "holy man" they had never met before.

Friend, apart from Christ you are nothing! Apart from Him you are lost and a captive of Satan. In Christ, you are His obedient child. Only through His strength can you depart from a single sin; only by His continual help can you resist a single temptation. Do not forsake Christ and humble, ongoing obedience to His Word-because someone comes along and supposedly offers you a quicker, easier way. In turning to follow him, you have forsaken the cross and the sanctuary. You have lain down the cross of ongoing resistance of sin, and you have left the heavenly sanctuary where your High Priest strengthens you moment-by-moment for the battle to cling to Him.

What is genuine Christian experience like? It is like the three-year-old child which clings close to its mother's side, holding tightly to her hand, as together they cross a busy street in heavy traffic.

No one, NO ONE who is a genuine disciple of Christ will ever speak of his sinlessness or tell others they can instantly put away their sins forever. Would you know the true road to heaven? Then spend time each day reading in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, and you will not be misled.

When you find yourself in a group where error is being taught, get out of there as quickly as you can! But utter a warning before you leave; plead with your friends and loved ones to leave also. LOR is one of the groups teaching the error of instant removal of sin (see our tracts on LOR). Those accepting that teaching have their minds captured by Satan that very night. Ellen White confronted such teachers early in her ministry. She found that such people were deeply involved in secret adulteries with those they were not married to. Recently a LOR group (which said they were not from LOR) came to a small East Coast town. They captured several faithful Advent believers, and, shortly after, one of them (a man who had left his own wife and child in Georgia several years before) had sexual relations with one of the captured wives. We know of other experiences elsewhere. When a man tries to become his own god, he becomes a hopeless captive of Satan.

The following material has been excerpted from two tracts compiled by the present author in the spring of 1980: *You Can Overcome IIC-1]* and *Center of the Crisis IIC-2]*.

The central issue in the coming crisis is not Sunday-keeping, nor is it the Sabbath. It is obedience to the Word of God. You will find the following study to be intensely interesting.

-1 -

CHRIST IS WAITING FOR US TO COOPERATE WITH HIM IN DOING A SPECIAL WORK IN PREPARATION FOR HIS SECOND COMING

" *When the fruit is brought forth, immediately He putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.*' Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. *When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced In His people,* then He will come to claim them as His own.

"It is the privilege of every Christian *not only to look for but to hasten* the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Peter 3:12, margin. Were all who profess His name *bearing fruit* to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, *and Christ would* come to gather the precious grain."-Christ's *Object Lesson*, 69:1-2.

It is clear that the truth is that Christ is waiting for us to put away our sins. In strong contrast, the error being taught by many today is that Christ is waiting for us to accept the fact that sin cannot be put away in this life. By doing so, we will become "righteous in Christ" and prepared for the Second Advent.

The truth is that the righteousness of Christ does not cover known, unforsaken sins! Yes, only Christ can take away our sins, but He will not do it without our cooperation. We must strive against temptation –and put our will to the task. But, without a total dedication to Jesus, that striving and willing is useless. It is the cooperative venture that succeeds; Jesus will not do it for us without our willingness and effort, and we can never, never do it without His mighty power. The part that Jesus does is infinitely great, and the part we do is infinitely small; yet without that our small part, victory and purity will not be obtained.

- 2 -

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE IS IN GREAT CONTROVERSY 423-424

2 - A most powerful passage –one of the most important in *Great Controversy* –is found on pages 423-425 of that book. It explains our special work, and the reason for the delay. You will want to read it carefully:

"The subject of the Sanctuary was the key which unlocked the mystery of the disappointment of 1844. It opened to view a complete system of truth, connected and harmonious, showing that God's hand had directed the great advent movement and revealing present duty as it brought to light the position and work of His people. . Light from the Sanctuary illumined the past, the present, and the future. .

"But the people were not yet ready to meet their Lord. There was still a work of preparation to be accomplished for them. Light was to be given, directing their minds to the temple of God in heaven; and as they should by faith follow their High Priest in His ministration there, new duties would be revealed. Another message of warning and instruction was to be given to the church.

"Says the prophet: 'Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.' Malachi 3:2, 3. Those who are living upon the earth *when the Intercession of Christ shall cease* in the sanctuary above *are to stand in the sight of* a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, *their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling.* Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort *they must be conquerors in the baffle with evil.* While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, *there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin,* among God's people upon

earth. This work is more clearly presented in the *messages of Revelation 14*.

"When this work shall have been accomplished, the followers of Christ *will be ready* for His appearing. 'Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.' Malachi 3:4. Then the church which our Lord at His coming is to receive to Himself will be a 'glorious church, *not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing*.' Ephesians 5:27. Then she will look 'forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.' Song of Solomon 6:10." -*Great Controversy*, 423:1, 424:4, 425:2.

Note: The above three pages contains the heart of the message of the book, *Great Controversy*. It is clear from the above passage that the "special duty" of the Advent people is to OBEY THE LAW OF GOD. That is what "character perfection" is all about. But that is understandable, –for that is the basic issue in the great controversy between Christ and Satan. There is nothing complicated here, nothing confusing. It is simply a matter of obeying the words of God, as given in His Inspired Writings. We would do well to read the above passage over and over again.

- 3 -

PERFECTION OF CHARACTER IS THE AIM SET BEFORE US

"None need fail of attaining, in his sphere, to perfection of Christian character. By the sacrifice of Christ, provision has been made for the believer to receive all things that pertain to life and godliness. *God calls upon us to reach the standard of perfection and places before us the example of Christ's character*. In His humanity, perfected by a life of constant resistance of evil, the Saviour showed that *through co-operation with Divinity, human beings may in this life attain to perfection of character*. This is God's assurance to us that we, too, may obtain complete victory." -*Acts of the Apostles*, 531:2

"We are not yet perfect; but it is our privilege to cut away from the entanglements of self and sin, and advance to perfection. *Great possibilities, high and holy attainments, are placed within the reach of all*." -*Acts of Apostles*, 565:01.

"Christ came that He might recreate the image of God in *man*." -*Desire of Ages*, 478:2.

"God will accept only those who are determined to aim high. He places every human agent under obligation to do his best. *Moral perfection is required of all. Never should we lower the standard of righteousness in order to accommodate inherited or cultivated tendencies to wrongdoing. We need to understand that imperfection of character is sin*. All righteous attributes of character dwell in God as a perfect, harmonious whole, and every one who receives Christ as a personal Saviour is privileged to possess these *attributes*." - *Christ Object Lessons*, 330:2.

- 4 -

ALL PREPARED FOR THE SECOND ADVENT WILL HAVE PERFECTION OF CHARACTER

"As was *Enoch's* must be their *holiness of character* who shall be redeemed from among men at the Lord's second coming," -*8 Testimonies*, 331:3.

"We can never see our Lord in peace, unless our souls are spotless. *We must bear the perfect Image of Christ*. . We shall never attain to this condition *without earnest effort*. We must strive daily against outward evil and inward sin, if we would reach the

perfection of Christian character."- Review, May 30, 1882, para. 1.

"When Christ shall come, *our vile bodies* are to be changed, and made like His glorious body; *but the vile character will not be made holy* then. The transformation of character must take place *before His coming*. Our natures must be *pure and holy*; we must have the mind of Christ, that He may behold with pleasure His image reflected upon our souls."-*Our High Calling*, 278:3.

- 5 -

IT MUST BE OBTAINED NOW DURING THESE HOURS OF PROBATION

"*When He comes He is not to cleanse us of our sins, to remove from us the defects in our characters, or to cure us of the infirmities of our tempers and dispositions. If wrought for us at all, this work will all be accomplished before that time.* When the Lord comes, those who are holy will be holy still. Those who have preserved their bodies and spirits in holiness, in sanctification and honor, will then receive the finishing touch of immortality. But those who are unjust, unsanctified, and filthy will remain so forever. No work will then be done for them to remove their defects and give them holy characters. The Refiner does not then sit to pursue His refining process and remove their sins and their corruption. *This is all to be done in these hours of probation. It is now that this work is to be accomplished for us.*" -2 *Testimonies* 355:1.

- 6 -

IT MUST BE ATTAINED NOW WHILE THE ATONEMENT CONTINUES THROUGH FAITH IN HIS ATONING BLOOD

"*Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ. Not even by a thought could our Saviour be brought to yield to the power of temptation. Satan finds in human hearts some point where he can gain a foothold; some sinful desire is cherished, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of Himself: 'The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.'* John 14:30. Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father's commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his advantage. *This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble.*

"*It is In this life that we are to separate sin from us, through faith in the atoning blood of Christ. . None can neglect or defer this work but at the most fearful peril to their souls.*"-*Great Controversy*, 623:1-2.

"*Had not Jacob previously repented of his sin in obtaining the birthright by fraud, God would not have heard his prayer and mercifully preserved his life. So, in the time of trouble, if the people of God had unconfessed sins to appear before them while tortured with fear and anguish, they would be overwhelmed; despair would cut off their faith, and they could not have confidence to plead with God for deliverance. But while they have a deep sense of their unworthiness, they have no concealed wrongs to reveal. Their sins have gone beforehand to judgment and have been blotted out, and they cannot bring them to remembrance,*" -*Great Controversy*, 620:1.

"Satan leads many to believe that God will overlook their unfaithfulness in the minor affairs of life; but the Lord shows in His dealings with Jacob that He will in no wise sanction or tolerate evil.' *All who endeavor to excuse or conceal their sins, and permit them to remain upon the books of heaven, unconfessed and unforgiven, will be*

overcome by Satan. The more exalted their profession and the more honourable the position which they hold, the more grievous is their course in the sight of God and the more sure the triumph of their great adversary. *Those who delay a preparation for the day of God cannot obtain it in the time of trouble or at any subsequent time.* The case of all such is hopeless." -*Great Controversy*, 620:2.

"The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. . *All who receive the seal must be without spot before God.*" -5 *Testimonies*, 216:2.

"What are you doing, brethren, in the great work of preparation? Those who are uniting with the world are receiving the worldly mold and preparing for the mark of the beast. Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth, these are receiving the heavenly mold and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads. When the decree goes forth and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity.

"Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God –candidates for heaven." -5 *Testimonies*, 216:2. [*Carefully read the following passages for a clearer understanding of the experience of the people of God at this time: 5 Testimonies 207-216, 467-476, Early Writings 269-271.*]

- 7 -

THE SEAL WILL BE PLACED ON THOSE WHO OBTAIN IT

"Are we striving with all our power to attain to the stature of men and women in Christ? *Are we seeking for His fullness, ever pressing toward the mark set before us –the perfection of His character?* When the Lord's people reach this mark, *they will be sealed* in their foreheads. Filled with the Spirit, they will be complete in Christ, and the recording angel will declare, *'It is finished.'*" -*Our High Calling*, 150:6.

"Not one of us will ever receive *the seal of God* while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. *It is left with us to remedy the defects* in our characters, *to cleanse the soul temple* of every defilement. *Then the latter rain will fall* upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost. " -5 *Testimonies*, 214:2.

"I saw that *none could share the 'refreshing' unless they obtain the victory over every besetment*, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action." *Early Writings*, 71:2.

"Those who come up to every point, and stand every test and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation." -1 *Testimonies*, 187:1.

- 8 -

IT MUST NOT BE NEGLECTED UNTIL AFTER THE LATTER RAIN AND SEALING

"I also saw that many do not realize what they must be in order to live in the sight of the Lord without a high priest in the sanctuary through the time of trouble. *Those who receive the seal of the living God and are protected in the time of trouble must reflect the*

Image of Jesus fully.

"I saw that *many were neglecting the preparation* so needful and were looking to the time of 'refreshing' and the 'latter rain' to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. *Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter!* They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God." - *Early Writings*, 71:1-2.

- 9 -

WE MUST PREPARE NOW FOR WHAT IS AHEAD

"We believe without a doubt that *Christ is soon coming. This is not a fable to us; it's a reality.* We have no doubt, neither have we had a doubt for years, that the doctrines we hold today are present truth, and that we are nearing the judgment. *We are preparing to meet Him* who, escorted by a retinue of holy angels, is to appear in the clouds of heaven to give the faithful and the just the finishing touch of immortality." -2 *Testimonies*, 355:1.

"*It is a solemn thing to die, but a far more solemn thing to live.* Every thought and word and deed of our lives will meet us again. *What we make of ourselves in probationary time, that we must remain to all eternity.* Death brings dissolution to the body, but makes no change in the character. *The coming of Christ does not change our characters; it only fixes them forever* beyond all change." -5 *Testimonies*, 466:2.

"Make your home atmosphere fragrant with tender thoughtfulness. If you have become estranged and have failed to be Bible Christians, be converted; *for the character you bear in probationary time will be the character you will have at the coming of Christ.* If you would be a saint in heaven, you must first be a saint on earth. *The traits of character you cherish in life* will not be changed by death or by the resurrection. You will come up from the grave with the same disposition you manifested in your home and in society. *Jesus does not change the character at His coming. The work of transformation must be done now.* Our daily lives are determining our destiny." -*Adventist Home*, 16:2.

"God's ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' This command is a promise. *The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin.* He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning. The ideal of Christian character is Christlikeness. As the Son of man was perfect in His life, so His followers are to be perfect in their life." -*Desire of Ages*, 311:2, 4.

"*He who enters heaven* must have a character that is without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. *Naught that defileth can ever enter there.* In all the redeemed host not one defect will be seen." -*Messages to Young People*, 144:2.

"God requires perfection of His children. *His law is a transcript of His own character, and it is the standard of all character.* This infinite standard is presented to all that there may be no mistake in regard to the kind of people whom God will have to compose His *kingdom.*" -*Christ Object Lessons*, 315:1.

"*The very Image of God* is to be reproduced in humanity. The honor of God, the honor of Christ, is involved in *the perfection of the character of His people.*" -*Desire of Ages*, 671:3.

"*Everyone who by faith obeys God's commandments,* will reach the condition of

sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression." -*Maranatha*, 224:5.

"Those only who through faith in Christ obey all of God's commandments will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression. They testify to their love of Christ by obeying all His precepts." -8 *Manuscript Releases*, 99:2.

"And while we cannot claim perfection of the flesh, we may have Christian perfection of the soul." -2 *Selected Messages*, 32:3.

- 10 -

WHEN WE ENTER THE JUDGMENT OF THE LIVING

"The law of God is the standard by which the characters and the lives of men will be tested in the judgment. . Every man's work passes in review before God, and is registered for faithfulness or unfaithfulness. Opposite each name in the books of heaven is entered, with terrible exactness, every wrong word, every selfish act, every unfulfilled duty, and every secret sin. . Jesus will appear as their advocate, to plead in their behalf before God. . 'Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.' "-*Great Controversy*, 482:2, 1,4.

"As the books of record are opened in the judgment, the lives of all who have believed on Jesus come in review before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, our Advocate presents the cases of each successive generation, and closes with the living. . When any have sins remaining upon the books of record, unrepented of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the book of life, and the record of their good deeds will be erased from the book of God's remembrance. The Lord declared to Moses: 'Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book.' Exodus 32:33." -*Great Controversy*, 483:1.

"All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be *In harmony with the law of God,---their sins will be blotted out*, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life. The Lord declares, . . 'I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions . .' Said Jesus, 'He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life.' "-*Great Controversy*, 483:2.

"The divine Intercessor presents the plea that *all who have overcome through faith in His blood* be forgiven their transgressions, that they be restored to their Eden home, and *crowned as Joint heirs with Himself* to 'the first dominion.' Micah 4:8. Satan in his efforts to deceive and tempt our race had thought to frustrate the divine plan in man's creation; *but Christ now asks that this plan be carried Into effect as if man had never fallen.*" -*Great Controversy*, 484:0.

- 11 -

JESUS IS PLEADING FOR US

"Jesus does not excuse their sins, but shows their penitence and faith, and, claiming for them forgiveness, He lifts His wounded hands before the Father and the holy angels, saying: I know them by name. I have graven them on the palms of My hands. . Thus will be realized the complete fulfillment of the new-covenant promise: 'I will

forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.' "-Great Controversy, 484:2-485:1.

"The work of the Investigative judgment and the blotting out of sin is to be accomplished before the second advent of the Lord. . Sins that have not been repented of and forsaken will not be pardoned and blotted out of the books of record, but will stand to witness against the sinner in the day of God."-Great Controversy, 485:2, 486:2.

- 12 -

WE MUST NOW PREPARE FOR THE INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT

"The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ's work in behalf of men. It concerns every soul living upon the earth. It opens to view the plan of redemption, bringing us down to the very close of time, and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin. . The Intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross.

By His death He began that work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven. *We must by faith enter within the veil, 'whither the forerunner is for us entered.'* Hebrews 6:20. There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected. There we may gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption. The salvation of man is accomplished at an infinite expense to heaven; the sacrifice made is equal to the broadest demands of the broken law of God. *Jesus has opened the way to the Father's throne, and through His mediation the sincere desire of all who come to Him in faith may be presented before God ..*

"If those who hide and excuse their faults could see how Satan exults over them, how he taunts Christ and holy angels with their course, they would make haste to confess their sins and to put them away. Through defects In the character, Satan works to gain control of the whole mind, and he knows that if these defects are cherished, he will succeed. Therefore he is constantly seeking to deceive the followers of Christ with his fatal sophistry that it is impossible for them to overcome. . Let none, then, regard their defects as incurable. God will give faith and grace to overcome them.

"We are now living in the great day of atonement. In the typical service, while the high priest was making the atonement for Israel, all were required to afflict their souls by repentance of sin and humiliation before the Lord, lest they be cut off from among the people. In like manner, all who would have their names retained in the book of life should now, in the few remaining days of their probation, afflict their souls before God by sorrow for sin and true repentance. There must be deep, faithful searching of heart. . There is earnest warfare before all who would subdue the evil tendencies that strive for the mastery. The work of preparation is an individual work. We are not saved in groups. The purity and devotion of one will not offset the want of these qualities in another. Though all nations are to pass in judgment before God, yet He will examine the case of each Individual with as close and searching scrutiny as if there were not another being upon the earth. Everyone must be tested and found without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." -Great Controversy, 488:3-490:0.

- 13 -

THE CONTROVERSY BEGAN IN HEAVEN OVER OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW

The Controversy began in heaven over the issue of whether obedience to the law

was necessary or even possible. Here are but a few of the many statements pertaining to this:

"In Revelation 14, men are called upon the worship the Creator; and the prophecy brings to view a class that, as *the result of the threefold message, are keeping the commandments of God.*" -*Great Controversy*, 437:1.

"*In contrast to those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus, the third angel points to another class, against whose errors a solemn and fearful warning is uttered: 'If any man worship the beast and his Image, and receive his mark.'*" -*Great Controversy*, 438:1.

"*The special characteristic of the beast, and therefore of his image, is the breaking of God's commandments.*" -*Great Controversy*, 446:1.

"In the issue of the contest all Christendom will be divided into *two* great classes –those *who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus*, and those *who worship the beast and his Image* and receive his mark. Although church and state will unite their power to compel 'all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond' (Revelation 13:16), to receive 'the mark of the beast,' *yet the people of God will not receive it.*"-*Great Controversy*, 450:1.

"The spirit of the papacy [is] the *spirit of conformity to worldly customs, the veneration for human traditions above the commandments of God* that is permeating the Protestant churches and leading them on to do the same work of Sunday exaltation which the papacy has done before *them.*"-*Great Controversy*, 573:1.

"Jesus, looking down to the *last generation*, saw the world involved in a deception similar to that which caused the destruction of Jerusalem. The great sin of the Jews was their rejection of Christ; the *great sin of the Christian world would be their rejection of the law of God*, the foundation of His government in heaven and *earth.*"-*Great Controversy*, 22:2.

"*The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God.* Upon this battle we are now entering-a battle between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah." *Great Controversy*, 582:2.

The Crisis that began the great controversy is the one that will end it. You and I will have a part in that crisis! Will our decision be on God's side? Will we vindicate His perfect law? Or will we listen to those who love sin so much, they give sermons and write books excusing it? When the crisis is over and the controversy is ended, then eternity will begin. It is an eternity that you and I want a part in.

"*The cross of Calvary, while it declares the law Immutable, proclaims to the universe that the wages of sin is death.* In the Saviour's expiring cry, 'It is finished,' the death knell of Satan was rung. The great controversy which had been so long in progress was then decided, and the final eradication of evil was made certain. , When 'the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; . . all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.' Malachi 4:1.

"The whole universe will have become witnesses to *the nature and results of sin.* And its utter extermination, which in the beginning would have brought fear to angels and dishonor to God, *will now vindicate His love and establish His honor* before the universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law. Never will evil again be manifest. Says the word of God: 'Affliction shall not rise up the second time.' Nahum 1 :9. *The law of God*, which Satan has reproached as the yoke of

bondage, *will be honored as the law of liberty*. A tested and proved creation will never again be turned from allegiance to Him whose character has been fully manifested before them as fathomless love and infinite *wisdom*."-*Great Controversy, 503:3-504:1*.

The future is bright, as long as we cling to Jesus. He has a wonderful eternity awaiting us. He will lead His flock down through countless ages of peace and happiness. Life without end! Oh, my friend, we must be there!

Just now it is our task to learn the ways of heaven. Later, we will live there forever. Loyalty and obedience to our God is what that eternity will all be about. Those who do not want it will not be there. Yet it is the only way to be genuinely happy!

I know you want it! May God help us –each one –to be faithful to the end.

- 2 -

IN CHRIST YOU CAN OVERCOME

1 - The following statements explain how we can resist temptation and overcome sin in the strength of Christ. These statements are self-explanatory and need little introduction. Yes, the requirements are very high, but the enabling is just as high! Sufficient to the day's needs, will be the amount of grace given. But it is only imparted to those who are pressing close –every moment –to the side of Christ, and looking solely to Him for help, wisdom, and strength. Through the empowering grace of Christ we can obey all that God asks of us in His Inspired Books.

"By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness." -*Christ's Object Lessons, 312:0*.

"And how this is accomplished, Christ has shown us. *By what means did He overcome in 'the conflict with Satan? –By the word of God*. Only by the word could He resist temptation. 'It is written,' He said. And *unto us are given 'exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.'* (2 Peter 1:4.) *Every promise in God's word is ours*. 'By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God' as we to live. When assailed by temptation, look not to circumstances or to the weakness of self, but to *the power of the word*. All its strength is yours. 'Thy word,' says the psalmist, 'have I hid in mine heart, *that I might not sin against Thee*. ' 'By the words of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.' "-*The Desire of Ages, 123:4*.

"Christ is our tower of strength, and Satan can have no power over the soul that walks with God in humility of mind. The promise, 'Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me: and he shall make peace with Me.' *In Christ there is perfect and complete help for every tempted soul*. Dangers beset every path, but the whole universe of heaven is standing on guard, *that none may be tempted above that which he is able to bear*. Some have strong traits of character, that will need to be constantly repressed. If kept under the control of the Spirit of God, these traits will be a blessing: but if not, they will prove a curse. . If we will give ourselves unselfishly to the work, *never swerving in the least from principle*, the Lord will throw about us the everlasting arms, and will prove a mighty helper. *If we will look to Jesus as the One in whom we may trust, He will never fail us in any emergency.*" -*My Life Today, 316:4*

"It is not necessary that anyone should yield to the temptations of Satan and thus

violate his conscience and grieve the Holy Spirit. *Every provision* has been made in the word of God whereby all may have divine help in their endeavors to overcome. *If they keep Jesus before them they will become changed into His Image.* "-5 Testimonies, 574:2.

"The enemy cannot overcome the humble learner of Christ, the one who walks prayerfully before the Lord. Christ interposes Himself as a shelter, a retreat, from the assaults of the wicked one.

"Satan was permitted to tempt the too confident Peter, as he had been permitted to tempt Job; *but when that work was done he had to retire.* Had Satan been suffered to have his way, there would have been no hope for Peter. He would have made complete shipwreck of faith. But the enemy dare not go one hairbreadth beyond his appointed sphere. *There is no power in the whole satanic force that can disable the soul that trusts, in simple confidence, in the wisdom that comes from God.* "-My Life Today, 316:2-3.

"In our own strength it is impossible for us to deny the clamors of our fallen nature. Through this channel Satan will bring temptation upon us. Christ knew that the enemy would come to every human being, to take advantage of hereditary weakness, and by his false insinuations to ensnare all whose trust is not in God. And by passing over the ground which man must travel, *our Lord has prepared the way for us to overcome.* It is not His will that we should be placed at a disadvantage in the conflict with Satan." -The Desire of Ages, 122:3.

"Let him who is struggling against the power of appetite, *look to the Saviour* in the wilderness of temptation. See Him in His agony upon the cross, as He exclaimed, 'I thirst.' He has endured all that it is possible for us to bear. *His victory is ours.*

"There was in Him nothing that responded to Satan's sophistry. He did not consent to sin. *Not even by a thought* did He yield to temptation. So *it may be with us.* Christ's humanity was united with divinity; He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And He came to make us partakers of the divine nature. So *long as we are united to Him by faith, sin has no more dominion over us.* God reaches for the hand of faith in us to direct it to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, *that we may attain to perfection of character.* "-The Desire of Ages, 122:4-123:3.

"Jesus does not desire those who have been purchased at such a cost to become the sport of the enemy's temptations. *He does not desire us to be overcome and perish.* He who curbed the lions in their den, and walked with His faithful witnesses amid the fiery flames, *is just as ready to work in our behalf to subdue every evil in our nature.* Today He is standing at the altar of mercy, *presenting before God the prayers of those who desire His help.* He turns no weeping, contrite one away. .

"The souls that turn to Him for refuge, Jesus lifts above the accusing and the strife of tongues. *No man or evil angel can impeach these souls.* Christ unites them to His own divine human nature." -The Ministry of Healing, 90:1-2.

"The condition of eternal life is now Just what It always has been, –just what it was in Paradise before the fall of our first parents, –perfect obedience to the law of God, perfect righteousness. If eternal life were granted on any condition short of this, then the happiness of the whole universe would be imperiled." -Steps to Christ, 62:1.

"Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law. . But Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, *and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness.* If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, *for His sake you are accounted*

righteous. Christ's character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God Just as If you had not sinned.

More than this, Christ changes the heart. He abides in your heart by faith. You are to maintain this connection with Christ by faith and the continual surrender of your will to Him; and so long as you do this, He will work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. So you may say, 'The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God. . . Then with Christ working in you, you will manifest the same spirit and do the same good works—works of righteousness, obedience.

"So we have nothing in ourselves of which to boast. We have no ground for self-exaltation. Our only ground of hope is in the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and in that wrought by His Spirit working in and through us." -Steps to Christ, 62:2-63:1.

"Christ prepared the way for the ransom of man by His own life of suffering, self-denial, and self-sacrifice, and by His humiliation and final death. He brought help to man that he might, by following Christ's example, overcome on his own account, as Christ has overcome for him."-3 Testimonies, 372:1.

"It is His purpose to bring them into so close connection with Himself that Satan shall have no opportunity to pervert their judgment or to overpower their conscience. He will reveal to them their defects of character, and bestow upon all who seek His aid, strength to correct their errors. Whatever may be man's besetting sin, whatever bitter or baleful passions struggle for the mastery, he may conquer, if he will watch and war against them in the name and strength of Israel's Helper.

"The children of God should cultivate a keen sensitiveness to sin. Here, as well as elsewhere, we should not despise the day of small things. It is one of Satan's most successful devices, to lead men to the commission of little sins, to blind the mind to the danger of little Indulgences, little digressions from the plainly stated requirements of God. Many who would shrink with horror from some great transgression, are led to look upon sin in little matters as of trifling consequence. But these little sins eat out the life of godliness in the soul.

"We must learn to distrust self and to rely wholly upon God for guidance and support, for a knowledge of His will, and for strength to perform it."-2 Bible Commentary, 1017:3-4.

"The child of God must search out the sin which he has petted and indulged himself in, and permit God to cut it out of his heart. He must overcome that one sin; for it is not a trifling matter in the sight of God. .

"The Lord has not given us a list of graded sins, so that we may reckon some as of little consequence, and say that they will do but little harm, while others are of greater magnitude and will do much harm.

"A chain is no stronger than is its weakest link . . . The work of overcoming is to be the study of every soul who enters the kingdom of God." Messages to Young People, 91:1-3.

"He does not palliate sin, nor lessen the sense of guilt. . . men hate the sinner, while they love the sin. Christ hates the sin, but loves the sinner."-Desire of Ages, 462:3-4.

"It should be made plain that the government of God knows no compromise with evil. .

"We should beware of treating sin as a light thing."-Education, 290:4, 291:1.

"Let none now tamper with sin, the source of every misery in our world. No longer remain in lethargy and stupid indifference. *Let not the destiny of your soul hang upon an uncertainty. Know that you are fully on the Lord's side.* .

"If you neglect or treat with indifference the warnings that God has given, if you cherish or excuse sin, you are sealing your soul's destiny. . *While mercy lingers, while the Saviour is making Intercession, let us make thorough work for eternity.*"-6 Testimonies, 404:3-405:2.

"Christ has power from His Father to give His divine grace and strength to man, *making it possible for him through His name to overcome.*

"All are personally exposed to the temptations that Christ overcame, *but strength is provided for them* in the all-powerful name of the great Conqueror. And all must, *for themselves, individually overcome.* "-My Life Today, 317:3.

"Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and *they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation.* "-1 Testimonies, 187:1 [The entire page is worth reading.]

"God's Ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. *'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.'* This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates *our complete recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin.* He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to *keep him from sinning.*

"The tempter's agency is not to be accounted an excuse for one wrong act. Satan is jubilant when he hears the professed followers of Christ *making* excuses for their deformity of character. It is these excuses that lead to sin. There is no excuse for sinning. A holy temper, a Christ-like life, is accessible to every repenting, believing child of God.

"The ideal of Christian character is Christlikeness. *As the Son of man was perfect in His life, so His followers are to be perfect in their life.* Jesus was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of man; yet He was the blameless Son of God, He was God in the flesh. *His character is to be ours.* The Lord says of those who believe in Him, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people,'

"Christ reaches us where we are. He took our nature and overcame, *that we through taking His nature might overcome.* . *by His divinity He lays hold upon the throne of heaven, while by His humanity He reaches us. He bids us by faith in Him attain to the glory of the character of God.* Therefore are we to be perfect, even as our 'Father which is in heaven is perfect.' "Desire of Ages, 311:2-312:0.

"God's word is the spiritual food by which the Christian must grow strong in spirit and in intellect, *that he may do battle* for truth and righteousness. The Bible teaches that every besetting sin must be *put away, that the warfare against evil must be waged until every wrong is overcome.*

"The true followers of Christ will serve God not only when it is in accordance with their inclinations, but also when it involves self-denial and cross-bearing. *Besetting sins* must be *battled with and overcome.* Objectionable traits of character, whether hereditary or cultivated, must be compared with the great rule of righteousness, and then conquered in the strength of Christ. "Counsels to Parents and Teachers, 449:1.

"We become overcomers by helping others to overcome, by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony. (Letter 236,1908)," -7 Bible Commentary, 974.

"Real piety begins when all compromise with sin is at an end. .

"Yielding to temptation begins in *permitting the mind to waver*, to be *Inconstant in your trust In God*. "-Mount of Blessing, 91:2, 92:1.

"How my heart goes out in rejoicing for *those who walk in humility of mind, who love and fear God*. They possess a *power* far more valuable than the learning or eloquence. . *His love and fear are like a thread of gold uniting the human agent to the divine*. Thus all the movements of life are simplified. When the children of God are struggling with temptation, battling against the passions of the natural heart, *faith connects the soul with the only One who can give help, and they are overcomers*. .

"Behold the cross of Calvary. There is Jesus, who gave His life, *not that men might continue in sin*, not that they may have license to break the law of God, but that through this infinite sacrifice *they may be saved from all sin*." Testimonies to Ministers, 161:1-2;162:0.

"We must overcome our besetting sins. *We should individually seek to obtain new victory every day*. We must learn to stand alone and depend wholly upon God. The sooner we learn this the better. *Let each one find out where he fails, and then faithfully watch* that his sins do not overcome him, but that he gets the victory over *them*."-Early Writings, 105:2.

"*Keep off from Satan's enchanted ground* and not allow your minds to be swayed from allegiance to God. Through Christ you may and should be happy and should acquire *habits of self-control*. Even your *thoughts* must be brought into subjection to the will of God and your *feelings* under the control of reason and religion. Your imagination was not given you to be allowed to run riot and have its own way without any effort at restraint or discipline. *If the thoughts are wrong the feelings will be wrong, and the thoughts and feelings combined make up the moral character*. When you decide that as Christians *you are not required* to restrain your thoughts and feelings you are brought under the influence of evil angels and invite their presence and their control."-5 Testimonies, 310:1.

"*Christ has made every provision for us to be strong*. He has given us His Holy Spirit, whose office is to bring to our remembrance all the promises that Christ has made, that we may have peace and a sweet sense of forgiveness. *If we will but keep our eyes fixed on the Saviour, and trust In His power*, we shall be filled with a sense of security; for the righteousness of Christ will become our righteousness. OJ-Messages to Young People, 107:1.

"We dishonor Him by talking of our inefficiency. *Instead of looking at ourselves, let us constantly behold Jesus*, daily becoming more and more like Him, more and more able to talk of Him, better prepared to avail ourselves of His kindness and helpfulness, and to receive the blessings offered us. OJ-Messages to Young People, 107:2.

"*As we thus live in communion with Him, we grow strong In His strength*, a help and a blessing to those around us. If we would only do as the Lord desires us to, our hearts would become as sacred harps, every chord of which would sound forth praise and gratitude to the Redeemer sent by God to take away the sin of the world."Messages to Young People, 107:3.

"*When you rise in the morning, do you feel your helplessness and your need of strength from God?* And do you humbly, heartily make known your wants to your heavenly Father? *If so, angels mark your prayers*, and when you are in danger of

unconsciously doing wrong and exerting an influence which will lead others to do wrong, *your guardian angel will be by your side, prompting you to a better course, choosing your words for you, and influencing your actions.*

"If you feel in no danger, and if you offer no prayer for help and strength to resist temptations, *you will be sure to go astray.*" -3 Testimonies, 364:1.

"The Lord is disappointed when His people place a low estimate upon themselves. He *desires His chosen heritage to value themselves according to the price He has placed upon them.* God wanted them, else He would not have sent His Son on such an expensive errand to redeem them. *He has a use for them, and He is well pleased when they make the very highest demands upon Him, that they may glorify His name.* They may expect large things if they have faith in His promises.

"*But to pray in Christ's name means much.* It means that we are to accept His character, manifest His spirit, and work His works. The Saviour's promise is given on condition. 'If ye love Me,' He says, 'keep My commandments.' *He saves men, not in sin, but from sin;* and those who love Him will show their love *by obedience.*

"*All true obedience comes from the heart.* It was heart-work with Christ. And *if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and alms, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will,* that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. *The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service.* When we know God, as it is our privilege to know Him, our *life will be a life of continual obedience.* Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, *sin will become hateful to us.*" -Desire of Ages, 668:1-3.

"The example of Christ shows us that *our only hope of victory is in continual resistance of Satan's attacks.* He who triumphed over the adversary of souls in the conflict of temptations understands Satan's power over the race, and has conquered him in our behalf. *As an overcomer, He has given us the advantage of His victory,* that in our efforts to resist the temptations of Satan *we may unite our weakness to His strength,* our worthlessness to His merits. And *sustained by His enduring might* under the strength of temptation, *we may resist in His all-powerful name, and overcome as He overcame.*" -Messages to Young People, 50:1.

"*You lose much by not studying with greater earnestness and care the life of Christ.* There you may see the victories which you have to gain that you may win the precious white robe of a spotless character, and stand at last without fault before the throne of God." -Sons and Daughters of God pg. 371

"What an event was this when Christ placed Himself in the position of Adam, and endured the test where Adam had failed, and by this act placed man on a vantage ground, in favor with God, *where he might overcome on his own account through the merits of Jesus.* In His name, through His grace, *man may be an overcomer, even as Christ was an overcomer.* In Christ divinity and humanity were united, and *the only way in which man may be an overcomer* is through becoming a partaker of the divine nature. *Divinity and humanity are blended in him who has the spirit of Christ.*" -Sons and Daughters of God, 24:3.

"*Those who are indeed purifying their souls by obeying the truth* will have a most humble opinion of themselves. The more closely they view the spotless character of Christ, *the stronger will be their desire to be conformed to His Image,* and the less will they see of purity or holiness in themselves.

"*We should never be content with a sinful life.* It is a thought that should arouse Christians to greater zeal and earnestness in overcoming evil, that every defect in

character, every point in which they fail to meet the divine standard, is an *open door* by which Satan can enter to tempt and destroy them. . We are to exert every energy of the soul in the work of overcoming, and to look to Jesus for strength to do what we cannot do of ourselves. . *By repentance and faith we are enabled to render obedience to all the commandments of God, and are found without blame before Him,*"-5 Testimonies, 472:1.

"Do not put off the work of forsaking your sins and seeking purity of heart through Jesus. Here is where thousands upon thousands have erred to their eternal loss .. *There is a terrible danger –a danger not sufficiently understood –in delaying to yield to the pleading voice of God's Holy Spirit, in choosing to live in sin;* for such this delay really is. Sin, however small it may be esteemed, can be indulged in only at the peril of infinite loss. *What we do not overcome, will overcome us and work out our destruction.*" -Steps to Christ, 32:2-33:0.

"God has made ample provision for His people; and If they rely upon His strength, they will never become the sport of circumstances. *The strongest temptation cannot excuse sin.* However great the pressure brought to bear upon the soul, *transgression is our own act.* It is not in the power of earth or hell to compel anyone to do evil. Satan attacks us at our weak points, but we need not be overcome. However severe or unexpected the assault, God has provided help for us, and in His strength we may conquer." Messages to Young People, 62:2.

"All who will can be overcomers. Let us strive earnestly to reach the standard set before us. Christ knows our weakness, and to Him we can go daily for help. It is not necessary for us to gain strength a month ahead. We are to conquer from day to day." -7 Bible Commentary, 974:3.

"Our greatest strength is realized when we feel and acknowledge our weakness.

"Patience, faith, and love for duty are the lessons we must learn. Subduing self and looking to Jesus is an everyday work. The Lord will never forsake the soul that trusts in Him and seeks His aid. *The crown of life is placed only upon the brow of the overcomer.* There is, for everyone, earnest, solemn work for God while life lasts. .

"The word is: Go forward; discharge your individual duty, and leave all consequences in the hands of God. If we move forward where Jesus leads the way we shall see His triumph, we shall share His joy. *We must share the conflicts if we wear the crown of victory. Like Jesus, we must be made perfect through suffering.* . We can walk safely in the darkest path if we have the Light of the world for our guide." -5 Testimonies, 70:2-3, 71:0-2.

"All are personally exposed to the temptations that Christ overcame, but strength is provided for them in the all-powerful name of the great Conqueror. And all must, for themselves, individually overcome." -My Life Today, 317:3.

"The strongest temptation is no excuse for sin. However great the pressure brought to bear upon the soul, *transgression is our own act.* It is not in the power of earth or hell to compel anyone to sin. The will must consent, the heart must yield, or passion cannot overbear reason, nor iniquity triumph over righteousness." Maranatha 225:4.

"Everyone who by faith obeys God's commandments, will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression."-Maranatha, 224:5.

"Those who would overcome must put to the test every power of their being. They must agonize on their knees before God for divine power. Christ came to be our example, and to make known to us that we may be partakers of the divine nature. . Christ, by His own example, made it evident that man may stand in integrity. Men may have a power to resist evil –a power that neither earth, nor death, nor hell can master; a

power that will place them *where they may overcome as Christ overcame*. Divinity and humanity may be combined in them,"-5 *Bible Commentary, 1082:3*.

"The strongest temptation is no excuse for sin."-Adventist Home 331:1.

"He who has not sufficient faith in Christ to believe that He can keep him from sinning, has not the faith that will give him an entrance into the kingdom of God." -3 *Selected Messages, 360:4*.

Note: Inspiration is sprinkled with quotations such as these. They are like diamonds in a field. As you study, you will find them all through the inspired writings. Here are a few to get you started: 2 T 453:1-454:0,1 SM 219:2-280:2, COL 312:0, 1 SM 82:3, OHC 19:6, 4T 568:1, MM 112:1-113:0.

And keep in mind the balancing counsel that to get you started: 2 T 453:1-454:0,1 SM 279:2 280:2, COL 312:0, 1 SM 82:3, OHC 19:6, 4 T 568:1, MM 112:7-113:0.

And keep in mind the balancing counsel that though we are to seek perfect obedience, yet it is only maintained moment by moment in the strength of Christ—not in our own: AA 561:2, COL 158:2-160:3, SC 41, 1 SM 327-328, 6 BC 1105.

2 - Here are a number of Bible comments on this important topic:

"As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."-1 *Peter 1:15-16*.

"Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."-1 *John 3:3*.

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." -*Hebrews 12:14*.

"Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." -1 *Corinthians 15:57*.

"What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled In us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." -*Romans 8:3-4*.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin Is the servant of sin. . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." -*John 8:34, 36*.

"Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." -*John 5:40*.

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? . . . But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."-*Romans 6:16, 22*.

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace." -2 *Corinthians 13:11*.

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." *James 1:4*.

"If any man be In Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."-2 *Corinthians 5:17*.

"Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world." -1 *John 5:4*.

"Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." -

Matthew 1:21.

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin. "-1 John 3:9.

"Shall we continue in sin? . . God forbid. " Romans 6:1-2.

"Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ."-2 Corinthians 2:14.

"If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. "-Romans 6:8.

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. "-1 John 5:4.

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. " Philippians 2:12-13.

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."- 2 Peter 1:4.

"Sin shall not have dominion over you." Romans 6:14.