

Who Shall Be Saved?

NP

December 1888

Previously unpublished.

“Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? and he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.” Luke 13:23, 24. 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 1

This is a mournful statement. There are those who will fail to enter in at the strait gate because they only seek to enter in and do not strive. Those who make a success in overcoming will have to make a persevering effort. Christ prayed that His disciples might be sanctified through the truth. “Thy word,” said He, “is truth.” [John 17:17.] While error is prevailing to such an alarming extent our land, we want to know what truth is because we cannot be sanctified by error. The better we know the truth, the better we shall know how to sanctify our lives through God’s Word. We are in this world as probationers, and God is giving us an opportunity to hear and obey His truth. 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 2

It is a very solemn thing to live in this age of the world, and we should not be satisfied unless we have a living connection with the God of heaven. We should have a sense of our accountability to Him every day of our lives. God requires that we should improve all our God-given talents to His glory. We cannot press against the tide of moral evil that is in our world unless we have the grace that comes from Christ. 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 3

We see that the customs and practices of many who profess to be God’s children do not correspond with their profession; but God requires us to be true to principle, to work the works of Christ, and to stand out against every evil thing. A great and solemn responsibility rests upon us, who profess to obey God’s commandments, to show to the world that we are bending our steps heavenward and that we are pressing against the current that seems to be bearing all before it down to perdition. We should realize for what object we are striving. We are pressing “toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” [Philippians 3:14.] We cannot remain in listless indifference and yet gain the prize. We must run the race with patience if we would win the crown of life. 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 4

If we are indeed the privileged people to whom God has entrusted His precious truth, He would have us in that position where we can reflect this light to the world. Many are inclined to think that all this great work of preparation is to be done by the preachers, and for this reason every individual member of the church does not let his light shine. But it is the duty of every soul who has been a partaker of the blessing of Jesus Christ and has received the blessed light, to try to show others the way of life. We are not to be silent, but show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. When the Lord has laid before us the rich promises of heaven, how deficient we show ourselves if we do not grasp these blessings by earnest faith. It is only because we have not living faith that we do not receive this light, walk in its rays, and reflect it to others; for those who partake of this great salvation cannot keep it to themselves. They see a darkened world perishing for want of Jesus Christ. They cannot be satisfied in drinking alone at the fountain of life, but they are constantly desirous that others shall also receive the heavenly benefits and come and drink. 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 5

Christ said, "I will be in you a well of water springing up into everlasting life." [John 4:14.] And how is this constant springing up accomplished? By receiving a continual supply, they refresh others. There is not one person in our midst, having reasoning faculties, who is excused from coming to Christ and bringing others with him. 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 6

There are temptations that will come upon every one of us. We all have different dispositions to overcome, and we may thank our Lord that we are not all of the same temperament, that we are not all cast in the same mold. God designs that we shall cultivate esteem for others who differ with us, but [if] all [are] united with the Living Vine, there will be unity in diversity. If all draw nourishment from the root, there will be harmony in fruit-bearing. 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 7

There is need of constant watchfulness to keep from our hearts self-esteem, self-love, self-exaltation, and everything which will bear the least appearance of envy, evil-surmisings, and evil-speaking. Satan stands ready to give a false coloring to everything. He will misconstrue things in our mind, placing them in a wrong light. We may be sound in doctrine but destitute of saving faith. Peter addresses his brethren in these words: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently, being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." [1 Peter 1:22, 23.] 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 8

How important then that those who embrace unpopular truths should be close students of the Word of God. They have been born again by the Word of God in obeying the truth. They must have an intelligent knowledge of it. They must comprehend it in order to obey its teachings. With heart and mind enlisted in the truth, the Christian will be purified through the truth, learning more and more of the truth daily. Through diligent search, he is growing in grace and the knowledge of the truth, and when tests and trials come through false doctrines, he is not tossed to and fro, for he has become established, rooted, and grounded in the truth, and he will not be moved away from the faith. He will grow up into the living Head, which is Christ. 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 9

How are we to know that we are doing this essential work day by day? We must look into the mirror, God's holy law, and there discover the defects in our character. It is very difficult for one to understand his own errors, and so we must examine very closely to see if there is something we are cherishing that must be laid aside—something that is not in accordance with God's holy rule of righteousness. Then as we strive diligently to put away every sin, our precious Saviour will work in us to do His will and own good pleasure. Divine help is imparted, combining with human effort in the work of overcoming. If Christ is abiding in the heart by faith, we will love the souls for whom Christ died. We will have a burden for the perishing souls around us. We will remember that every ray of light that comes from Jesus is not for us to enjoy alone, but for us to reveal to those who are in darkness. 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 10

As soon as we feel this spirit of labor for souls, we will feel the necessity of studying the oracles of God for greater light and praying for the Holy Spirit from the throne of grace as we never did before. We will look at souls for whom Christ died and say, "Let my light shine upon these souls, through my words and my deportment." If we make crooked paths for our feet—sometimes walking in the path, sometimes straying from it—we will turn the lame and weak out of the way. I feel deeply over this matter because I see so much that is objectionable in those in the churches who claim to believe the truth. Let the language of the heart be, "I must have the Spirit of Christ with me from morning until night, or I will be the means of turning some soul out of the way of obedience." 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 11

Christ will be ashamed to call many who claim to be Christians, His brethren; but when those who have born responsibilities in His cause strive to enter the strait gate, the pitying Saviour will stand by their side to help them. He would send every angel out of heaven rather than let the striving soul perish. Christ ever has

sympathy with the weak and will fight their battles for them. He knows just how to help them in all their strivings. How thankful ought we to be that we have as a Redeemer the Son of God. In Him dwelleth the Godhead bodily. He has infinite power. We cannot be too earnest in searching the Scriptures if we would be familiar with the exceeding great and precious promises which are found therein. 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 12

We have a peculiar and holy faith which makes us separate and distinct from the world. This line of demarcation will be plain, sharp, and clear. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." [Matthew 6:24.] We cannot have the pleasures of the world in view and be followers of Christ. In our efforts to overcome, we will meet with many temptations, but if we continue to strive, Christ will give us perfect success. We may be filled with all the fullness of God. The more serious the trials, the more precious the victory we may gain. If we will only flee to the Source of our strength, we will receive great blessings. We must learn to cast all our care on Jesus, Who careth for us. All our sorrows and griefs must be taken to the Lord in prayer. 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 13

It is a great thing to believe in Jesus. We hear many say "Believe, believe; all you have to do is to believe in Jesus." But it is our privilege to inquire what this belief comprehends. The statement is made in the Bible that the devils believe and tremble. They believe that Christ is the Son of God, but will this save them? No; because their belief leads not to love, but to hatred. There are many who do not bring their faith into their lives. They have only a nominal faith. Truth to them is not a saving principle because it is not in their hearts. We must have that faith that works by love and purifies the soul. True belief in Christ will lead us to put away everything that is offensive in His sight. Unless we have this faith, our profession will avail us nothing. You may admit that Christ is the Saviour of the world, but is He your Saviour? Do you believe, today, that He will give you power and strength to overcome every defect in your character? 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 14

There must be a greater striving among us to overcome every failure and sin and to stand right before God. There are many who might have been far in advance of what they now are had they had this faith. God wants us to be standing upon the platform of eternal truth and in such a position that our lives will preach to the world that they must love God and keep His commandments if they would ever enter heaven. We must grow up to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus if we would become living temples unto the Lord. And He says, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be by people." [2 Corinthians 6:16.] 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 15

What we want, brethren and sisters, is true religion. We want the Spirit of God purifying our souls. We want our faces constantly set as a flint heavenward. And when we see sin striving for the mastery in us, then we must fight most earnestly so that it shall not gain the victory. But if you do feel the wound and sting of sin, then cry to the great Physician to help you. We all have to learn this lesson of special trust in our Saviour. We are to trust Him as a little child trusts its earthly parents, to believe that He is working for our good in all things and that He hears every cry for help. If we call upon Him in faith, He will help us success fully through every temptation. 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 16

In the day of God we shall have no excuse to offer for not having served Christ, for abundant knowledge and power and grace have been provided us. We are to be partakers of the divine nature and to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. Christ says, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. ... For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." [John 6:53-55.] In explanation of these words, Christ said, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." [Verse 63.] We must take His Word and bring it into our nature and thus receive nourishment from Christ. As the worthless stalk becomes grafted into the living vine, receiving nourishment from the parent stalk and bearing rich clusters of fruit, so we are to connect with Christ if we would have a part with Him. We must live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 17

May the Lord help us to strive with all the powers that He has given us to enter in at the strait gate. But there must be more advancement, brethren and sisters, than there has been. You must so live that you will leave to the world around you a bright track heavenward. If at last you have the white robe and crown of life, will it not pay for all the trials you have endured? Then be not satisfied with a mere nominal belief of the truth, but let us have heart-work and a reformation at every step. Then we shall at last obtain the eternal reward. 5LtMs, Ms 19, 1888, par. 18