

Chapter 13

Dealing with Impure Thoughts and Suggestions

Need for Clear Spiritual Eyesight—Never was there a time when Christian men and women, in all walks of life, were in so great need of clear spiritual eyesight as now. It is not safe to lose sight of Christ for one moment. His followers must pray, and believe, and love Him fervently.

A very thorough work must be done in cleansing the soul temple from its natural depravity. The Christian must be wide awake to resist the increeping of a spirit of licentiousness among those who claim to be sanctified. When our hearts are clean, washed, and made white by the blood of the Lamb, the work will go forward in our experience that was outlined in the wonderful prayer of Christ: “For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth” [John 17:19].

What shall be said regarding the man who has been greatly blessed as a teacher of righteousness, yet who in time of temptation is betrayed into a sinful course? Satan in the form of a heavenly angel has come to him as he approached Christ in the wilderness of temptation, and he has gained the victory....

Satan's Disguise as an Angel of Light—It is those who have had the most light that Satan most assiduously seeks to ensnare. He knows that if he can deceive them, they will, under his control, clothe sin with garments of righteousness, and lead many astray. I say to all, Be on your guard; for as an angel of light, Satan is walking in every assembly of Christian workers, and in every church, trying to win the members to his side. I am bidden to give to the people of God the warning, “Be not deceived: God is not mocked.”—The Review and Herald, May 14, 1908.

The Curse of Transgression—Oh, that men and women would consider and inquire what is to

be gained by transgressing God's law! At all times and in all places, under any and every circumstance, transgression is a terrible mistake, a dishonor to God and a curse to man. We must regard it thus, however fair its guise and by whomsoever it is committed. As Christ's ambassador I entreat of you who profess present truth to promptly resent any approach to impurity, and forsake the society of those who intimate or breathe an impure suggestion. Loathe these defiling sins with the most intense hatred. Fly from those who would even in conversation let their minds run in such a channel, "for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Shun them as you would the leprosy.

I call upon all who have had any confidence in these pretenders whose lives are not elevated and whose conversation is not pure, to measure them by the gospel rule: "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). Let the mirror of God's Word reflect upon them, and discern the defects in their moral character.

Offensive Character of Sin—We are in an age of the world when there is a fascinating, mesmeric power in all that class who would gloss over sin, secretly insinuating impure thoughts and coming as angels of light while they are the servants of sin. They do not sense the offensive character of sin or the retributive justice of God that will fall upon the sinner. I tremble for those who are not fully upon their guard, and who will be in danger of being deceived and corrupted. As a servant of Jesus Christ I warn you to shun the company of this class. Let them not into your houses, neither bid them Godspeed. Separate yourselves from their company, for they corrupt the very atmosphere you breathe....

As Moses called to Israel that they leave the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, we would call for all to leave these corrupt men alone to suffer the disgrace and punishment of their crimes.

Satan in the Form of a Man—As God has shown me how abhorrent in His sight are these

defiling sins, and as they are steadily increasing in our world and would intrude into our churches, I warn you to give no place to the devil. Fly from the seducer. Though a minister, he is Satan in the form of a man. He has borrowed the livery of heaven that he may serve his master and deceive souls. You should not for one moment give place to an impure, covert suggestion. Grant no indulgence. Rebuke them. Associate not with them, no not so much as to eat [with them]. Regard with no complaisance the words that would tarnish your soul's purity. Even listening to an impure suggestion will stain the soul, as foul, impure water will defile the channel through which it passes.

Clear as the Light of the Sun—Choose poverty, separation from friends, losses, reproaches, or any suffering, rather than to defile the soul with sin. Death before dishonor or the transgression of God's law, should be the motto of every Christian. As a people professing to be reformers, treasuring the most sacred, solemn, purifying truths of God's Word, we must elevate the standard far higher than it is at the present time.

Sin and sinners in the church must be promptly dealt with, that others may fear God. Truth and purity require that we make more thorough work to cleanse the camp of the Achans.

Let those in responsible positions not suffer sin in a brother. Show him that he must either put away his sins or be separated from the church. When the individual members of the church shall act as true followers of the meek and lowly Saviour, there will be less covering up and excusing of sin. All will strive to act at all times as if in God's presence. They will realize that the eye of God is ever upon them and that the most secret thought is known to Him. The character, the motives, the desires and purposes, are as clear as the light of the sun to the eye of the Omniscient.

Peril of Indulged Sin—By far the larger class do not bear this in mind because they do not cultivate spirituality and test their character by God's standard of right. They do not bear constantly in mind that a fearful account must be rendered at the bar of God by all the transgressors

of His law. The life must be ordered and fashioned as in the eye of the great Taskmaster. Can you who have professed to receive such great light in advance of every other people on the face of the earth, be content with a low level?

Oh, how earnestly and constantly should we seek for the Divine Presence, that there may be not only a profession but a realization of the solemn truth that the end of all things is at hand and that the Judge of all the earth standeth at the door! How can you disregard His just and holy requirements? How can you transgress in the very face of Jehovah? Can you pursue a course of sin in full view of the consequences? Can you cherish unholy thoughts and base passions in the full view of the pure angels and of the Redeemer, who gave Himself for you that He might redeem you from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works? Can we be guiltless and cherish sin in the sight of God? As you contemplate the matter in the light which shines from the cross of Christ, will not sin appear too mean, too perilous, too fearful, to indulge in?

Spotless and Undeiled Until the End—Sinful corruptions! How sinful at any time, but how much more so now, when standing upon the very borders of the eternal world! I speak to my people. If you draw close to Jesus and seek to adorn your profession by a well-ordered life and godly conversation, your feet will be kept from straying into forbidden paths. If you will only watch, continually watch, unto prayer; if you will do everything as if you were in the immediate presence of God, you will be saved from yielding to temptation and may hope to be kept pure, spotless, and undeiled unto the end.

If you hold the beginning of your confidence firm unto the end, all your way will be established in God, and what grace has begun glory shall crown in the kingdom of our God. “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law” [Galatians 5:22, 23]. If Christ be within us, we shall crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts.—Ms 9, 1880.

Purification of the Heart—By accepting Christ as his personal Saviour, man is brought into the same close relation to God, and enjoys His special favor, as does His own beloved Son. He is honored and glorified and intimately associated with God, his life being hid with Christ in God. Oh, what love, what wondrous love!

This is my teaching of moral purity—The opening of the blackness of impurity will not be one half as efficacious in uprooting sin as will the presentation of these grand and ennobling themes. The Lord has not given to women a message to assail men and charge them with their impurity and incontinence. They create sensuality in place of uprooting it. The Bible, and the Bible alone, has given the true lessons upon purity. Then preach the Word.

Christ, the Propitiation for Sin—Such is the grace of God, such the love wherewith He hath loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, enemies in our minds by wicked works,

serving divers lusts and pleasures, the slaves of debased appetites and passion, servants of sin and Satan. What depth of love is manifested in Christ, as He becomes the propitiation for our sins. Through the ministration of the Holy Spirit souls are led to find forgiveness of sins.

The purity, the holiness, of the life of Jesus as presented from the Word of God, possess more power to reform and transform the character than do all the efforts put forth in picturing the sins and crimes of men and the sure results. One steadfast look to the Saviour uplifted upon the cross will do more to purify the mind and heart from every defilement than will all the scientific explanations by the ablest tongue.

Forgiveness at the Cross—Before the cross the sinner sees his unlikeness of character to Christ. He sees the terrible consequences of transgression; he hates the sin that he has practiced, and he lays hold upon Jesus by living faith. He has judged his position of uncleanness in the light of the presence of God and the heavenly intelligences. He has

measured it by the standard of the cross. He has weighed it in the balances of the sanctuary. The purity of Christ has revealed to him his own impurity in its odious colors. He turns from the defiling sin; he looks to Jesus, and lives.

He finds an all-absorbing, commanding, attractive character in Jesus Christ, the One who died to deliver him from the deformity of sin, and with quivering lip and tearful eye he declares, “He shall not have died for me in vain.”—Letter 102, 1894.