

Seventh-day Adventist Church Standards

Upholding Biblical Standards

The doctrines and standards which the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy teach should be taught and upheld by the church, and adherence to these standards should be required of the individual members and of those desiring admittance to membership.

“The God of heaven is a God of order, and He requires all His followers to have rules and regulations, and to preserve order. All should have a perfect understanding of God's work.” 5T 274

“On the church has been conferred the power to act in Christ's stead. It is God's instrumentality for the preservation of order and discipline among His people. To it the Lord has delegated the power to settle all questions respecting its prosperity, purity, and order.” GW 501, 502

“Christ would have His followers brought together in church capacity, observing order, having rules and discipline, and all subject one to another.... Union and confidence are essential to the prosperity of the church. If each member of the church feels at liberty to move independently of the others, taking his own peculiar course, how can the church be in any safety in the hour of danger and peril? The prosperity and very existence of a church depend upon the prompt, united action and mutual confidence of its members. When, at a critical time, one sounds the alarm of danger, there is need of prompt and active work...

“God wants His people to be united in the closest bonds of Christian fellowship...; union of action is important in a religious crisis....Jesus would have His followers subject one to another; then God can use them as instruments to save one another; for one may not discern the dangers which another's eye is quick to perceive; but if the undiscerning will in confidence obey the warning, they may be saved great perplexities and trials....

“The apostle Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians exhorts them to unity: 'Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.'

“God is leading a people out from the world upon the exalted platform of eternal truth, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. He will discipline and fit up His people. They will not be at variance, one believing one thing, and another having faith and views entirely opposite, each moving independently of the body. Through the diversity of the gifts and governments that He has placed in the church, they will all come to the unity of the faith.” 3T 445- 447

“The world's Redeemer has invested great power with His church....

“If there were no church discipline and government, the church would go to fragments; it could not hold together as a body.” 3T 428

“A few persons may be as blind as the one in error, but the majority of the church is a power which should control its individual members....

“Unless the advice and counsel of the church can be respected, it is indeed powerless. God has placed a voice in the church which must control its members.” 5T 107, 108

“Satan well knows that success can only attend order and harmonious action. He well knows that everything connected with heaven is in perfect order, that subjection and thorough discipline mark the movements of the angelic host. It is his studied effort to lead professed Christians just as far from heaven's arrangement as he can; therefore he deceives even the professed people of God and makes them believe that order and discipline are enemies to spirituality, that the only safety for them is to let each pursue his own course, and to remain especially distinct from bodies of Christians who are united and are laboring to establish discipline and harmony of action. All the efforts made to establish order are considered dangerous, a restriction of rightful liberty, and hence are feared as popery. These deceived souls consider it a virtue to boast of their freedom to think and act independently. They will

not take any man's say-so. They are amenable to no man." 1T 650

"Shunning to declare the straight truths which shut out the lovers of pleasure and friends of the world, she [the Christian church] gradually lost her power." EW 226

"All should be taught to be neat, clean, and orderly in their dress, but not to indulge in that external adorning which is wholly inappropriate for the sanctuary. There should be no display of the apparel; for this encourages irreverence....The parading of bows and ribbons, ruffles and feathers, and gold and silver ornaments is a species of idolatry and is wholly inappropriate for the sacred service of God, where the eye of every worshiper should be single to His glory. All matters of dress should be strictly guarded, following closely the Bible rule. Fashion has been the goddess who has ruled the outside world, and she often insinuates herself into the church. The church should make the word of God her standard, and parents should think intelligently upon this subject. When they see their children inclined to follow worldly fashions, they should, like Abraham, resolutely command their households after them. Instead of uniting them with the world, connect them with God. Let none dishonor God's sanctuary by their showy apparel. God and angels are there. The Holy One of Israel has spoken through His apostle: 'Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.'

"When a church has been raised up and left uninstructed on these points, the minister has neglected his duty and will have to give an account to God for the impressions he allowed to prevail. Unless correct ideas of true worship and true reverence are impressed upon the people, there will be a growing tendency to place the sacred and eternal on a level with common things, and those professing the truth will be an offense to God and a disgrace to religion....

"Paul describes the work of God's ambassadors as that by which every man shall be presented perfect in Christ Jesus.... This is an age famous for surface work, for easy methods, for boasted holiness aside from the standard of character that God has erected. All short routes, all cutoff tracks, all teaching which fails to exalt the law of God as the standard of religious character, is spurious." 5T 499, 500

"Christ is ashamed of His professed followers. Wherein do we bear any resemblance to Him? Wherein does our dress conform to the Bible requirements? I do not want the sins of the people upon me, and I will give the trumpet a certain sound. For years I have borne a plain and decided testimony upon this subject, in print and upon the speaker's stand. I have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. I must be clear of the blood of all. The fact that worldliness and pride bear almost universal sway is no excuse for one Christian to do as others do. God has said: 'Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.' ...

"Fashion is deteriorating the intellect and eating out the spirituality of our people. Obedience to fashion is pervading our Seventh-day Adventist churches and is doing more than any other power to separate our people from God. I have been shown that our church rules are very deficient. All exhibitions of pride in dress, which is forbidden in the word of God, should be sufficient reason for church discipline. If there is a continuance, in face of warnings and appeals and entreaties, to still follow the perverse will, it may be regarded as proof that the heart is in no way assimilated to Christ. Self, and only self, is the object of adoration, and one such professed Christian will lead many away from God.

"There is a terrible sin upon us as a people, that we have permitted our church members to dress in a manner inconsistent with their faith. We must arise at once and close the door against the allurements of fashion. Unless we do this, our churches will become demoralized." 4T 647, 648

There must be regular, frequent, systematic instruction in the practical points of our faith. The pastor and elders are responsible to warn all who are weakening toward worldliness and sin.

"From His servants today God requires fearlessness in preaching the word and in carrying out

its precepts. The minister of Christ is not to present to the people only those truths that are the most pleasing, while he withholds others that might cause them pain. He should watch with deep solicitude the development of character. If he sees that any of his flock are cherishing sin he must as a faithful shepherd give them from God's word the instruction that is applicable to their case. Should he permit them in their self-confidence to go on unwarned, he would be held responsible for their souls. The pastor who fulfills his high commission must give his people faithful instruction on every point of the Christian faith, showing them what they must be and do in order to stand perfect in the day of God. He only who is a faithful teacher of the truth will at the close of his work be able to say with Paul, 'I am pure from the blood of all men.'" AA 393, 394

"These are perilous times for the church of God, and the greatest danger now is that of self-deception. Individuals professing to believe the truth are blind to their own danger and wrongs. They reach the standard of piety which has been set up by their friends and themselves, they are fellowshipped by their brethren, and are satisfied, while they entirely fail to reach the gospel standard set up by our divine Lord. If they regard iniquity in their hearts, the Lord will not hear them. But with many it is not only regarded in the heart, but openly carried out in the life; yet in many cases the wrongdoers receive no rebuke." 1T 214

"If they [ministers] will stand together, sustain one another, and faithfully reprove and rebuke wrong, they will soon cause it to wither." 1T 213

"Unless the minister shall fearlessly declare the whole truth...he will be accounted an unfaithful watchman....

"When God raises up men to do His work, they are false to their trust if they allow their testimony to be shaped to please the minds of the unconsecrated. He will prepare men for the times. They will be humble, God-fearing men, not conservative, not policy men; but men who have moral independence and will move forward in the fear of the Lord. They will be kind, noble, courteous; yet they will not be swayed from the right path, but will proclaim the truth in righteousness whether men will hear or whether they will forbear." 5T 263

"In this fearful time, just before Christ is to come the second time, God's faithful preachers will have to bear a still more pointed testimony than was borne by John the Baptist. A responsible, important work is before them; and those who speak smooth things, God will not acknowledge as His shepherds. A fearful woe is upon them." 1T 321

"Whom do we find among the active ones, that feel the burden for the church? Whom do we see that God is especially using, working by and through them to elevate the standard, and to bring the church up to it, that they may prove the Lord and see if He will not pour them out a blessing?

"I have waited anxiously, hoping that God would put His Spirit upon some and use them as instruments of righteousness to awaken and set in order His church. I have almost despaired as I have seen, year after year, a greater departure from that simplicity which God has shown me should characterize the life of His followers.... I ask: Wherein have those who profess confidence in the Testimonies sought to live according to the light given in them? Wherein have they regarded the warnings given? Wherein have they heeded the instructions they have received?" 2T 484

New Members

A suitable period of study, church attendance, and adoption of principles held by the church, should be encouraged for candidates desiring baptism and church membership. This includes practicing dress and lifestyle reform and other standards, and evidencing a good understanding of the pillars of our faith.

Our beliefs and standards must be openly explained to any desiring church membership.

They should be counseled with prior to admittance, to ensure that they are likeminded in all important areas of faith and practice. The findings should be clearly communicated to the membership. This is the only way in which church members can, with clear conscience, vote for their acceptance to membership. Those desiring church membership, whether currently Seventh-day Adventists or not, should make confession of faith in the teachings espoused by the church at the time of admittance to membership.

“There is not enough careful, prayerful, painstaking investigation in accepting members into the church. We cannot follow the example of the world, or allow their criticisms to sway us from the path of duty....There is one thing that we have no right to do, and that is to judge another man's heart or impugn his motives. But when a person presents himself as a candidate for church membership, we are to examine the fruit of his life, and leave the responsibility of his motive with himself. But great care should be exercised in accepting members into the church; for Satan has his specious devices through which he purposes to crowd false brethren into the church, through whom he can work more successfully to weaken the cause of God.” RH, January 10, 1893

“Church members are under a solemn pledge to form characters different in every way from the characters of worldlings. If a change does not take place in them prior to their union with the church, there is danger that, though they have joined the church, they will assimilate with worldlings. Satan triumphs when he sees the leaven of the world working in the church, to the destruction of its purity and holiness.” Manuscript 27a, April 19, 1900 (Quoted in UL 123)

“These souls brought forth fruit meet for repentance. They believed and were baptized, and rose to walk in newness of life--new creatures in Christ Jesus; not to fashion themselves according to the former lusts, but by the faith of the Son of God to follow in His steps, to reflect His character, and to purify themselves even as He is pure. The things they once hated they now loved, and the things they once loved they hated....The vain fashions of the world were laid aside. Christians sought not the ‘outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but . . . the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.’ 1 Peter 3:3, 4.” GC 461, 462

“The preparation for baptism is a matter that needs to be carefully considered. The new converts to the truth should be faithfully instructed in the plain ‘Thus saith the Lord.’ The Word of the Lord is to be read and explained to them point by point.

“All who enter upon the new life should understand, prior to their baptism, that the Lord requires the undivided affections. . . . The practicing of the truth is essential. The bearing of fruit testifies to the character of the tree. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit. The line of demarcation will be plain and distinct between those who love God and keep His commandments and those who love Him not and disregard His precepts. There is need of a thorough conversion to the truth.” Ev 308

“All who join the church should reveal a transformation of character which shows their reverence for holy things. Their whole life should be moulded after the refinement of Christ Jesus. Those who join the church are to be humble enough to receive instruction on the points wherein they are remiss, and wherein they can and must change. They must exert a Christian influence. Those who make no change in words or deportment, in their dress or in their homes, are living unto themselves and not unto Christ. They have not been created anew in Christ Jesus, unto the purifying of the heart and the outward surroundings.” TSA 87

“There is need of a more thorough preparation on the part of candidates for baptism. They are in need of more faithful instruction than has usually been given them. The principles of the Christian life should be made plain to those who have newly come to the truth. None can depend upon their profession of faith as proof that they have a saving connection with Christ. We are not only to say, ‘I believe,’ but to practice the truth. It is by conformity to the will of God in our words, our deportment,

our character, that we prove our connection with Him. Whenever one renounces sin, which is the transgression of the law, his life will be brought into conformity to the law, into perfect obedience. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. The light of the word carefully studied, the voice of conscience, the strivings of the Spirit, produce in the heart genuine love for Christ, who gave Himself a whole sacrifice to redeem the whole person, body, soul, and spirit. And love is manifested in obedience. The line of demarcation will be plain and distinct between those who love God and keep His commandments, and those who love Him not and disregard His precepts.

“Faithful Christian men and women should have an intense interest to bring the convicted soul to a correct knowledge of righteousness in Christ Jesus. If any have allowed the desire for selfish indulgence to become supreme in their life, the faithful believers should watch for these souls as they that must give an account. They must not neglect the faithful, tender, loving instruction so essential to the young converts that there may be no halfhearted work. The very first experience should be right.

“Satan does not want anyone to see the necessity of an entire surrender to God. When the soul fails to make this surrender, sin is not forsaken; the appetites and passions are striving for the mastery; temptations confuse the conscience, so that true conversion does not take place....

“...the pastor of the church has a duty to do for these souls. Have they wrong habits and practices? It is the duty of the pastor to have special meetings with them. Give them Bible readings, converse and pray with them, and plainly show the claims of the Lord upon them. Read to them the teaching of the Bible in regard to conversion. Show what is the fruit of conversion, the evidence that they love God....Evil habits are to be given up....

“The test of discipleship is not brought to bear as closely as it should be upon those who present themselves for baptism. It should be understood whether they are simply taking the name of Seventh-day Adventists, or whether they are taking their stand on the Lord's side, to come out from the world and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing. Before baptism there should be a thorough inquiry as to the experience of the candidates. Let this inquiry be made, not in a cold and distant way, but kindly, tenderly, pointing the new converts to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Bring the requirements of the gospel to bear upon the candidates for baptism.

“One of the points upon which those newly come to the faith will need instruction is the subject of dress. Let the new converts be faithfully dealt with. Are they vain in dress? Do they cherish pride of heart? The idolatry of dress is a moral disease. It must not be taken over into the new life. In most cases, submission to the gospel requirements will demand a decided change in the dress....

“The words of Scripture in regard to dress should be carefully considered. We need to understand that which the Lord of heaven appreciates in even the dressing of the body. All who are in earnest in seeking for the grace of Christ will heed the precious words of instruction inspired by God. Even the style of the apparel will express the truth of the gospel....

“In these thoroughly converted souls the world is to have a witness to the sanctifying power of truth upon the human character.” 6T 91-97

“Some ministers and churches are so desirous of securing an increase of numbers that they do not bear faithful testimony against unchristian habits and practices. Those who accept the truth are not taught that they cannot safely be worldlings in conduct while they are Christians in name. Heretofore they were Satan's subjects; henceforth they are to be subjects of Christ. The life must testify to the change of leaders. Public opinion favors a profession of Christianity. Little self-denial or self-sacrifice is required in order to put on a form of godliness and to have one's name enrolled upon the church book. Hence many join the church without first becoming united to Christ. In this Satan triumphs. Such converts are his most efficient agents....It is in vain that men seek to make the Christian's path broad and pleasant for worldlings. God has not smoothed or widened the rugged, narrow way. If we would enter into life, we must follow the same path which Jesus and His disciples trod--the path of humility,

self-denial, and sacrifice.” 5T 172

“I saw that when the messengers enter a new place, their labor is worse than lost unless they bear a plain, pointed testimony. They should keep up the distinction between the church of Christ, and formal, dead professors. There was a failure in this respect in -----. Elder N was fearful of offending, fearful lest the peculiarities of our faith should appear; the standard was lowered to meet the people. It should have been urged upon them that we possess truths of vital importance, and that their eternal interest depended upon the decision they there made; that in order to be sanctified through the truth, their idols would have to be given up, their sins be confessed, and they bring forth fruit meet for repentance.

“Those who engage in the solemn work of bearing the third angel's message must move out decidedly, and in the Spirit and power of God fearlessly preach the truth and let it cut. They should elevate the standard of truth and urge the people to come up to it. It has too frequently been lowered to meet the people in their condition of darkness and sin. It is the pointed testimony that will bring them up to decide. A peaceful testimony will not do this. The people have the privilege of listening to this kind of teaching from popular pulpits; but those servants to whom God has entrusted the solemn, fearful message which is to bring out and fit up a people for the coming of Christ should bear a plain, pointed testimony. Our truth is as much more solemn than that of nominal professors, as the heavens are higher than the earth....

“God's servants must bear a pointed testimony, which will cut the natural heart and develop character....Ministers of the nominal churches do enough cringing, and wrapping up of the pointed truths which rebuke sin.

“Unless persons embrace the message aright, and their hearts are prepared to receive it, they would better let it entirely alone. I was shown that the church in ----- have an experience to obtain; but it will be much harder for them to obtain it now than if the pointed testimony had been given them at the very commencement, when they first discovered that they were in error.” 1T 248, 249

“I myself cannot put confidence in you as a Christian, and under present developments, I could not give my consent for you to become a member of any church.” MR926 68 [Written to a man neglecting his family and acting with inappropriate familiarity.]

“Until the heart is purified, a person is unfit to have any part in the fellowship of the saints.” 5T 536

“A deep and thorough work of reform is needed in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The world is not to be allowed to corrupt the principles of God's commandment-keeping people. Believers are to exert an influence that bears witness to the power of heavenly principles. Those who unite with the church must give evidence of a change of principle. Unless this is done, unless the line of demarcation between the church and the world is carefully preserved, assimilation to the world will be the result.” MS 78, 1905 (Quoted in 2MCP 559)

Selection of Church Officers

Members should be chosen for church office who fully support the fundamental teachings and Christian standards upheld by the church. Parents who neglect their duty to command their children in God's ways should not be chosen for office.

“In selecting officers from time to time, be sure that personal preferences do not rule, but place in positions of trust those whom you are convinced love and fear God, and who will make God their counselor....But, above everything else, select those who, in the simplicity of their souls, are walking in the truth, who love and fear God, and take their lessons in His school.” TSS 84

“Every teacher in the Sabbath-school should be a follower of Christ, and those who have not

identified themselves as the disciples of Christ, showing by a consistent life that they are Christians, should not be invited to become teachers in the Sabbath-school, for they have need that some one first teach them the foundation principles of the love and fear of God. "Without Me," Christ says, "ye can do nothing." Then of what value would be the teaching of one who knew nothing by personal experience of the power of Christ? It would be a great inconsistency to urge such a one to take a class in the Sabbath-school, but it is even worse to permit a class to be under the influence of a teacher whose dress and deportment deny the Saviour, whom they profess to serve." TSS 54

"The truly converted laborer in the Sabbath-school will not be moulded after the customs and practises of the world, but will stand in moral independence. He will set an example that will be consistent with his profession, coming out from the world, and maintaining a separation from its spirit and fashions. He will not be turned in the least from his steadfast purpose to be one with Christ, nor yield an iota from his stand of fidelity to God, in opposition to pride, to indulgence in selfish amusement, to expenditure of means for the gratification of inclination or love of display, but will be an example in spirit, deportment, and dress." TSS 45

"The apostle Paul writes to Titus: 'Set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God.' It would be well for all our ministers to give heed to these words and not to hurry men into office without due consideration and much prayer that God would designate by His Holy Spirit whom He will accept." 5T 617

"Said the inspired apostle: 'Lay hands suddenly on no man.' In some of our churches the work of organizing and of ordaining elders has been premature; the Bible rule has been disregarded, and consequently grievous trouble has been brought upon the church. There should not be so great haste in electing leaders as to ordain men who are in no way fitted for the responsible work--men who need to be converted, elevated, ennobled, and refined before they can serve the cause of God in any capacity." 5T 617, 618

"The men who act as presidents of state conferences should be carefully selected. Then let these men bear the responsibilities of the conference in a most thorough, earnest, God-fearing manner. If they are not qualified to do the work thoroughly and successfully, do not keep them in that position." Special Testimonies to Ministers and Workers, Series A, No. 8, 1897 (Quoted in TM 322)

"He who is selected as the president of the General Conference, should, in the fear of God, stand in his lot and place, without partiality, and with unselfish interests....If any man evidences that the love and fear of God is kept away from the center of his being lest the truth should control his life practice, while worldly things are made all and in all, he is not the man, even for local elder." Special Testimonies to Ministers and Workers, Series A, No. 8, 1897 (Quoted in TM 322, 323)

"Great care should be exercised in selecting officers for the new churches. Let them be men and women who are thoroughly converted. Let those be chosen who are best qualified to give instruction, those who can minister both in word and in deed." 6T 85

"God will teach His people to move carefully and to make wise choice of men who will not betray sacred trusts. If in Christ's day the believers needed to be guarded in their choice of men for positions of responsibility, we who are living in this time certainly need to move with great discretion. We are to present every case before God and in earnest prayer ask Him to choose for us....

"Those who are chosen to bear burdens in the work of God are not to be rash or self-confident or selfish. Never is their example or influence to strengthen evil. The Lord has not given men or women liberty to advance ideas that will bring commonness into His work, removing the sacredness that should ever surround it....The health of the general work depends upon the faithfulness of the men appointed to carry out the will of God in the churches." 9T 264

“The president of the General Conference should act upon the light given, not contrary to this light. If men close their eyes to the testimonies God has been pleased to give, and think it wisdom to walk in the light of the sparks of their own kindling, it will spoil the church. Such men are not qualified to become either ministers or presidents of conferences; they have not taken counsel from the Source of all wisdom.” Special Testimonies to Ministers and Workers, Series A, No. 8, 1897 (Quoted in TM 327)

“In this age, he has given his people much light and instruction in regard to how his work is to be carried forward.... Only those who, feeling their own inefficiency, obey implicitly the Lord's commands, can be retained in his service....

“When men feel that it is unimportant to obey a ‘Thus saith the Lord’ in carrying forward his work, but that their own plans should be followed, they thereby evidence unfitness for any position of trust in his cause.” RH, September 14, 1905

“However high any minister may have stood in the favor of God, if he neglects to follow out the light given him of God, if he refuses to be taught as a little child, he will go into darkness and satanic delusions and will lead others in the same path.” 5T 214

“If those connected with the work of God will not hear His voice and do His will, they should be separated entirely from the work. God does not need the influence of such men. I speak plainly; for it is time that things were called by their right name.” The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, 1573

“Ministers who are neglectful of the duties devolving on a faithful pastor give evidence that they are not sanctified by the truths they present to others and should not be sustained as laborers in the vineyard of the Lord till they have a high sense of the sacredness of the work of a minister of Christ.” 3T 232

“Much of the preaching of late begets a false security. Important interests in the cause of God cannot be wisely managed by those who have had so little real connection with God as some of our ministers have had. To entrust the work to such men is like setting children to manage great vessels at sea.” 5T 104

“Much that has no part in Christ is allowed a place among us. Unconsecrated ministers, professors, and teachers assist Satan to plant his banner in our very strongholds.” 5T 12

“As there are woes for those who preach the truth while they are unsanctified in heart and life, so there are woes for those who receive and maintain the unsanctified in the position which they cannot fill.” 2T 552

Church Discipline

Thorough instruction in the doctrines and standards of the church should be a regular part of church life. Support from Inspiration must be amply presented for every belief we hold. God's truth must not be weakened or withheld from fear of offending any. If a member is weak in regard to some area of Christian conduct or standards, he should be lovingly and patiently worked with by mature Christian leadership in the local church. He needs counsel, kindness, and thorough instruction.

The church as a body is responsible for the purity of the church. When a member is in sin or error, the procedure Jesus gave is to be followed. Approach the sinner alone, then with one or two more present, and if repentance and reformation still does not happen, it must be brought before the church business meeting. If the sinner persistently refuses to repent, eventually he must be removed from church membership. However, the members should continue to try to win him back in the love of Christ.

“God has selected a people in these last days whom He has made the depositaries of His law, and this people will ever have disagreeable tasks to perform. I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy

patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for My name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted.' It will require much diligence and a continual struggle to keep evil out of our churches. There must be rigid, impartial discipline exercised; for some who have a semblance of religion will seek to undermine the faith of others and will privily work to exalt themselves." 5T 538

"According to the light that God has given me in vision, wickedness and deception are increasing among God's people who profess to keep His commandments. Spiritual discernment to see sin as it exists, and then to put it out of the camp, is decreasing among God's people; and spiritual blindness is fast coming upon them. The straight testimony must be revived, and it will separate those from Israel who have ever been at war with the means that God has ordained to keep corruptions out of the church. Wrongs must be called wrongs. Grievous sins must be called by their right name. All of God's people should come nearer to Him and wash their robes of character in the blood of the Lamb. Then will they see sin in the true light and will realize how offensive it is in the sight of God." 3T 324

"The church is in a great degree responsible for the sins of her members. She gives countenance to evil if she fails to lift her voice against it." PK 651

"We are just as accountable for evils that we might have checked in others, by reproof, by warning, by exercise of parental or pastoral authority, as if we were guilty of the acts ourselves." 4T 516

"God is not pleased with the slothful work done in the churches. He expects His stewards to be true and faithful in giving reproof and correction. They are to expel wrong after the rule God has given in His Word... The efforts made to cleanse the church from moral uncleanness must be made in God's way.... There must be no favorites, whose sins are regarded as less sinful than those of others." The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, 144

"Toward those who fall into sin, the church has a duty, to warn, to instruct, and if possible to restore.... Deal faithfully with wrongdoing. Warn every soul that is in danger. Leave none to deceive themselves. Call sin by its right name. Declare what God has said in regard to lying, Sabbathbreaking, stealing, idolatry, and every other evil.... If they persist in sin, the judgment you have declared from God's word is pronounced upon them in heaven. In choosing to sin, they disown Christ; the church must show that she does not sanction their deeds, or she herself dishonors her Lord. She must say about sin what God says about it. She must deal with it as God directs.... He who despises the authority of the church despises the authority of Christ Himself." DA 805, 806

"In the case of the sin of Achan, God has shown how he regards sin among those who profess to be his commandment-keeping people.... God would teach his people that disobedience and sin are exceedingly offensive to him, and not to be lightly regarded. He shows us that when his people are found in sin, they should at once take decided measures to put the sin from them, that his frown should not rest upon all his people. But if those in responsible positions pass over the sins of the people, his frown will be upon them, and the people of God, as a body, will be held responsible for the sins that exist in their midst. God, in his dealings with his people in the past, shows the necessity of purifying the church from wrongs that exist among them. One sinner may diffuse darkness which will exclude the light of God from the entire congregation. When the people realize that darkness is settling upon them, and they do not know the cause, then they should earnestly seek God in great humility and self-abasement, until the wrongs which grieve God's Spirit are searched out and put away from among them.

"If wrongs exist among the people, and the servants of God pass on indifferent to them, they virtually sustain and justify the sinner, and are guilty alike with the sinner, and will receive the displeasure of God just as surely as the sinner; for they will be made responsible for the sins of the

guilty. Those men who have excused wrongs have been thought by the people to be very amiable, and of lovely disposition, simply because they shunned to discharge a plain and scriptural, duty. The task was not agreeable to their feelings; therefore they avoided it....

“The true people of God, who have the spirit of the work of the Lord and the salvation of souls at heart, will ever view sin in its real, sinful character. They will always be on the side of faithful and plain dealing with sins which easily beset the people of God. Especially in the closing work for the church, in the sealing time of the one hundred and forty-four thousand, who are to stand without fault before the throne of God, will they feel most deeply the wrongs of God's professed people. This is forcibly set forth by the prophet's illustration of the last work under the figure of the men, each having a slaughter weapon in his hand. One man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side. ‘And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.’

“Who are standing in the counsel of God at this time? Is it those who virtually excuse wrongs among the professed people of God, and murmur in their hearts, if not openly, against those who would reprove sin? Is it those who take their stand against them, and sympathize with those who commit wrong? No, indeed! These, unless they repent, and leave the work of Satan in oppressing those who have the burden of the work, and holding up the hands of sinners in Zion, will never receive the mark of God's sealing approval. They will fall in the general destruction of all the wicked, represented by the five men bearing slaughter weapons. Mark this point with care: Those who receive the pure mark of truth, wrought in them by the power of the Holy Ghost, represented by a mark by the man in linen, are those ‘that sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done’ in the church. Their love for purity and the honor and glory of God is such, and they have so clear a view of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, that they are represented as being in an agony, even sighing and crying. Read Ezekiel, chapter nine.

“But the general slaughter of all those who do not thus see the wide contrast between sin and righteousness, and do not feel as those do who stand in the counsel of God and receive the mark, is described in the order to the five men with slaughter weapons: ‘Go ye after him through the city, and smite; let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity; slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary.’

“God said to Joshua (in the case of Achan's sins), ‘Neither will I be with you any more except ye destroy the accursed from among you.’ How does this instance compare with the course pursued by those who will not raise their voice against sin and wrong; but whose sympathies are ever found with those who trouble the camp of Israel with their sins? Said God to Joshua, ‘Thou canst not stand before thine enemies until ye take away the accursed thing from among you.’...

“God is a sin-hating God. And those who will encourage the sinner, saying, It is well with thee, God will curse.” RH, September 23, 1873

“In the spirit of meekness..., go to the erring one, and ‘tell him his fault between thee and him alone.’ Do not put him to shame by exposing his fault to others, nor bring dishonor upon Christ by making public the sin or error of one who bears His name. Often the truth must be plainly spoken to the erring; he must be led to see his error, that he may reform. But you are not to judge or to condemn.... Let all your effort be for his recovery. In treating the wounds of the soul, there is need of the most delicate touch... With pitying tenderness, let brother deal with brother, knowing that if you succeed, you will ‘save a soul from death,’ and ‘hide a multitude of sins.’ James 5:20.

“But even this effort may be unavailing. Then, said Jesus, ‘take with thee one or two more.’ It may be that their united influence will prevail where that of the first was unsuccessful....

“If he will not hear them, then, and not till then, the matter is to be brought before the whole body of believers. Let the members of the church, as the representatives of Christ, unite in prayer and

loving entreaty that the offender may be restored. The Holy Spirit will speak through His servants, pleading with the wanderer to return to God.... He who rejects this united overture has broken the tie that binds him to Christ, and thus has severed himself from the fellowship of the church. Henceforth, said Jesus, 'let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.' But he is not to be regarded as cut off from the mercy of God. Let him not be despised or neglected by his former brethren, but be treated with tenderness and compassion, as one of the lost sheep that Christ is still seeking to bring to His fold.

"Christ's instruction as to the treatment of the erring repeats in more specific form the teaching given to Israel through Moses: 'Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in anywise rebuke thy neighbor, that thou bear not sin for him.' Lev. 19:17, margin. That is, if one neglects the duty Christ has enjoined, of trying to restore those who are in error and sin, he becomes a partaker in the sin. For evils that we might have checked, we are just as responsible as if we were guilty of the acts ourselves.

"But it is to the wrongdoer himself that we are to present the wrong. We are not to make it a matter of comment and criticism among ourselves; nor even after it is told to the church, are we at liberty to repeat it to others.... While we seek to correct the errors of a brother, the Spirit of Christ will lead us to shield him, as far as possible, from the criticism of even his own brethren...." DA 440-442

"And if he shall neglect to hear them,' what then shall be done? Shall a few persons in a board meeting take upon themselves the responsibility of disfellowshipping the erring one? 'If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church.' Let the church take action in regard to its members.

"But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.' If he will not heed the voice of the church, if he refuses all the efforts made to reclaim him, upon the church rests the responsibility of separating him from fellowship. His name should then be stricken from the books.

"No church officer should advise, no committee should recommend, nor should any church vote, that the name of a wrong-doer shall be removed from the church books, until the instruction given by Christ has been faithfully followed. When this has been done, the church has cleared herself before God. The evil must then be made to appear as it is, and must be removed, that it may not become more and more widespread. The health and purity of the church must be preserved, that she may stand before God unsullied, clad in the robes of Christ's righteousness.

"If the erring one repents and submits to Christ's discipline, he is to be given another trial. And even if he does not repent, even if he stands outside the church, God's servants still have a work to do for him. They are to seek earnestly to win him to repentance. And however aggravated may have been his offense, if he yields to the striving of the Holy Spirit, and by confessing and forsaking his sin gives evidence of repentance, he is to be forgiven and welcomed to the fold again. His brethren are to encourage him in the right way, treating him as they would wish to be treated were they in his place, considering themselves, lest they also be tempted.

"Verily I say unto you,' Christ continued, 'Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.'

"This statement holds its force in all ages. On the church has been conferred the power to act in Christ's stead. It is God's instrumentality for the preservation of order and discipline among His people. To it the Lord has delegated the power to settle all questions respecting its prosperity, purity, and order. Upon it rests the responsibility of excluding from its fellowship those who are unworthy, who by their unchristlike conduct would bring dishonor on the truth. Whatever the church does that is in accordance with the directions given in God's word, will be ratified in heaven." GW 498-502

"The church may be called upon to dismiss from their fellowship those who will not be corrected. It is a painful duty that has to be done. Sad indeed is such a step, and it should not be taken until every other means of correcting and saving the one in error has failed." Letter 12, 1890 (Quoted in

EV 368)

“As a people professing to be reformers, treasuring the most 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 not be contaminated. Truth and purity require that we make more thorough work to cleanse the camp from 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.” 5T 147

“The names of those who sin and refuse to repent should not be retained on the church books, lest the saints be held accountable for their evil deeds. Those who pursue a course of transgression should be visited and labored with, and if they then refuse to repent, they should be separated from church fellowship, in accordance with the rules laid down in the Word of God. . . .

“Those who refuse to hear the admonitions and warnings given by God's faithful messengers are not to be retained in the church. They are to be disfellowshipped; for they will be as Achan in the camp of Israel--deceived and deceiving.

“Who, after reading the record of Achan's sin and punishment, can think it according to the will of God that those who do wickedly, refusing to repent, are to be retained in the church? To retain them would be an insult to the God of heaven.” Letter 215, 1902 (Quoted in 5BC 1096)

“ In regard to the case of the injured sister A. G., we would say...that it is a feature in the cases of most who have been overtaken in sin, as her husband has, that they have no real sense of their villainy. Some, however, do, and are restored to the church; but not till they have merited the confidence of the people of God by unqualified confessions, and a period of sincere repentance....

“Why will not those who are overtaken in crime manifest repentance proportionate to the enormity of their crime, and fly to Christ for mercy, and heal, as far as possible, the wounds they have made?” RH, March 24, 1868

Dress and Appearance

Clothing is to be neat and clean.

“The ten commandments spoken by Jehovah from Sinai cannot live in the hearts of persons of disorderly, filthy habits. If ancient Israel could not so much as listen to the proclamation of that holy law, unless they had obeyed the injunction of Jehovah, and had cleansed their clothing, how can that sacred law be written upon the hearts of persons who are not cleanly in person, in clothing, or in their houses? It is impossible. Their profession may be as high as Heaven, yet it is not worth a straw. Their influence disgusts unbelievers. Better if they had ever remained outside the ranks of God's loyal people. The house of God is dishonored by such professors....” *How to Live*, No. 6 (Quoted in 2SM 474-476)

We are to portray simplicity and puritan plainness.

“Puritan plainness and simplicity should mark the dwellings and apparel of all who believe the solemn truths for this time.” 5T 189

“My sisters, dress as Christians should dress,-- simply, plainly; adorn yourselves as becometh women professing godliness, with good works.” RH December 6, 1881

“We are nearing the close of this world's history. A plain, direct testimony is now needed, as given in the Word of God, in regard to the plainness of dress. This should be our burden.” SpM 90, 91

“Simple, plain, unpretending dress will be a recommendation to my youthful sisters. In no better way can you let your light shine to others than in your simplicity of dress and deportment.” 3T 376

“Let our sisters dress plainly, as many do, having the dress of good, durable material, appropriate for this age, and let not the dress question fill the mind. Our sisters should dress with

simplicity. They should clothe themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety. Give to the world a living illustration of the inward adorning of the grace of God.” Manuscript 167, 1897 (Quoted in 3SM 242)

“When you learn to do this, to dress with conscientious plainness, then you will have no excuse for being novices in the Scriptures.” RH November 28, 1878

“We who claim to be in the light, and who take prominent positions to instruct others in children's meetings, need to be severely plain, yet tidy and tasteful, in dress; we should not give a semblance of excuse to any for patterning after the worldly, changing fashions of this corrupt age.” MR926 23

“Some have said: ‘After I wear out this dress, I will make the next plainer.’ Now, if conformity to the fashions of the world is right and pleasing to God, where is the need of making a change at all? But if it is wrong, is it best to continue in the wrong any longer than is positively necessary to make the change? Right here we would remind you of the zeal and earnestness, the skill and perseverance, you manifested in preparing your dress according to the fashion. Would it not be praiseworthy to manifest at least equal earnestness to make it conform to the Bible standard? Precious, God-given time and means were used in fashioning those garments; and now what are you willing to sacrifice to correct the wrong example you have been giving to others?” 4T 640

“Our faith, if carried out, will lead us to be so plain in dress, and zealous of good works, that we shall be marked as peculiar.” 1T 275

We should be free from showy decoration of hair, clothing, accessories such as handbags, and shoes. Nothing unnecessary that attracts attention, such as decorative hairclips, showy belts or handbags, fashionable shoes, sporty or faddish eyeglasses, ornamental pins, or glossy or showy fabric, should be worn.

“The outside appearance is an index to the heart. True refinement does not find satisfaction in the adorning of the body for display. A modest, godly woman will dress modestly. Simplicity of apparel always makes a sensible woman appear to the best advantage. A refined, cultured mind will be revealed in the choice of simple and appropriate attire. In the sanctified heart there is no place for thoughts of needless adornment.” CTBH 93

“Self-denial in dress is a part of our Christian duty. To dress plainly, abstaining from display of jewelry and ornaments of every kind, is in keeping with our faith.” 3T 366

“And they will have no need to be adorned with artificials, for these are always expressive of an absence of the inward adorning of true moral worth.” ST December 9, 1875

“Let the wearing of useless trimmings and adornments be discarded. Extravagance should never be indulged in to gratify pride. Our dress may be of good quality, made up with plainness and simplicity, for durability rather than for display.” HL 120

“Any device designed to attract attention to the wearer or to excite admiration, is excluded from the modest apparel which God's word enjoins.” MH 287

“Dear youth, a disposition in you to dress according to the fashion, and to wear lace and gold and artificials for display, will not recommend to others your religion or the truth that you profess. People of discernment will look upon your attempts to beautify the external as proof of weak minds and proud hearts.” 3T 376

“The parading of bows and ribbons, ruffles and feathers, and gold and silver ornaments is a species of idolatry and is wholly inappropriate for the sacred service of God, where the eye of every worshiper should be single to His glory.” 5T 499

“The question has often been asked me if I believed it wrong to wear plain linen collars. My answer has always been no. Some have taken the extreme meaning of what I have written about collars, and have maintained that it is wrong to wear one of any description. I was shown expensively wrought

collars, and expensive and unnecessary ribbons and laces, which some Sabbathkeepers have worn, and still wear for the sake of show and fashion. In mentioning collars, I did not design to be understood that nothing like a collar should be worn, or, in mentioning ribbons, that no ribbons at all should be worn.” 1T 137

“Our ministers and their wives should be an example in plainness of dress; they should dress neatly, comfortably, wearing good material, but avoiding anything like extravagance and trimmings, even if not expensive; for these things tell to our disadvantage. We should educate the youth to simplicity of dress, plainness with neatness. Let the extra trimmings be left out, even though the cost be but a trifle.” SpTA03 5

Avoid clothing with large, bold prints, pictures, or stripes. Avoid shirts with words or slogans.

“When figured material is used, figures that are large and fiery, showing vanity and shallow pride in those who choose them, should be avoided.” HL 120

“But I certainly do not, in all respects, approve of your style of dress. I felt rather sad and ashamed when you stood upon the platform before the large crowd under the tent, with that light, large-figured dress. It was not appropriate for the occasion. Your judgment in the matter of dress may be much improved, and I hope you will not consult your dress-maker but those who are of sensible minds and who will not flatter you or have any guile in their mouths as to suitable clothing that will make a proper impression upon the minds of both believers and unbelievers. We who claim to be in the light, and who take prominent positions to instruct others in children's meetings, need to be severely plain, yet tidy and tasteful, in dress; we should not give a semblance of excuse to any for patterning after the worldly, changing fashions of this corrupt age.” MR926 23

“The material should be free from large plaids and figures, and plain in color.” 4T 640

Bright or loud colors should be avoided, and plain, modest colors chosen.

“But our clothing, while modest and simple, should be of good quality, of becoming colors, and suited for service.” MH 288

“Taste should be manifested as to colors. Uniformity in this respect is desirable so far as convenient. Complexion, however, may be taken into account. Modest colors should be sought for... And a fantastic taste in putting on different colors is bad.” HL 120

“Fannie, wherever you go, wherever you may be, you need to study that the colors and material and style of your dress should be adapted to, and correspond with, your age and to the faith you profess... Ever have your dress of good, durable material, and modest colors; let it be made plainly, without adornment. You certainly need to improve in your style of dress.” MR926 23

“The material should be...plain in color.” 4T 640

“It would be pleasing to God if there was greater uniformity in dress among believers. The style of dress formerly adopted by the Friends, is the least objectionable. Many of them have backslidden, and although they may preserve the uniformity of color, yet they have indulged in pride and extravagance, and their dress has been of the most expensive material. Still their selection of plain colors, and the modest and neat arrangement of their clothing, is worthy of imitation by Christians.” *Healthful Living*, No. 6 (Quoted in 2SM 473)

No makeup, nail polish, jewelry, or decorative items resembling jewelry, such as fancy watches, should be worn. (Using cosmetics to cover up obvious blemishes may be acceptable.)

“Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window.” 2 Kings 9:30

“Some time before, I had received a present of a little open-faced, gold watch.... I carried it because it was a good timekeeper. But in order to avoid all occasion for any to stumble, I sold the watch, and I would recommend that others follow a similar course. This is in harmony with the

teaching of the apostle Paul, who says: 'Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.'" HS 123

"Have not our sisters sufficient zeal and moral courage to place themselves without excuse upon the Bible platform? The apostle has given most explicit directions on this point: I will therefore . . . that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.' Here the Lord, through His apostle, speaks expressly against the wearing of gold. Let those who have had experience see to it that they do not lead others astray on this point by their example. That ring encircling your finger may be very plain, but it is useless, and the wearing of it has a wrong influence upon others." 4T 630

"But many who profess to be children of God feel no scruples against conforming to the customs of the world in the wearing of gold and pearls and costly array. Those who are too conscientious to wear these things are regarded as narrow-minded, superstitious, and even fanatical. But it is God who condescends to give us these instructions; they are the declarations of Infinite Wisdom, and those who disregard them do so at their own peril and loss. Those who cling to the ornaments forbidden in God's word cherish pride and vanity in the heart. They desire to attract attention. Their dress says: Look at me; admire me. Thus the vanity inherent in human nature is steadily increasing by indulgence. When the mind is fixed upon pleasing God alone, all the needless embellishments of the person disappear." 4T 644

"Before accepting the truth, she had followed the fashions of the world in her dress, and had worn costly jewelry and other ornaments; but upon deciding to obey the word of God, she felt that its teachings required her to lay aside all extravagant and superfluous adorning. She was taught that Seventh-day Adventists did not wear jewelry, gold, silver, or precious stones, and that they did not conform to worldly fashions in their dress. When she saw among those who profess the faith such a wide departure from Bible simplicity, she felt bewildered. Had they not the same Bible which she had been studying, and to which she had endeavored to conform her life? Had her past experience been mere fanaticism? Had she misinterpreted the words of the apostle, 'The friendship of the world is enmity with God, for whosoever will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God'?

"Mrs. D., a lady occupying a position in the institution, was visiting at Sr.-----'s room one day, when the latter took out of her trunk a gold necklace and chain, and said she wished to dispose of this jewelry and put the proceeds into the Lord's treasury. Said the other, 'Why do you sell it? I would wear it if it was mine.' 'Why,' she replied Sr.-----, 'when I received the truth, I was taught that all these things must be laid aside. Surely they are contrary to the teachings of God's word.' And she cited her hearer to the words of the apostles, Paul and Peter, upon this point, 'In like manner, also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but, as becometh women professing godliness, with good works.' 'Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel. But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.'

"In answer, the lady displayed a gold ring on her finger, given her by an unbeliever, and said she thought it no harm to wear such ornaments. 'We are not so particular,' said she, 'as formerly. Our people have been over- scrupulous in their opinions upon the subject of dress. The ladies of this institution wear gold watches and gold chains, and dress like other people. It is not good policy to be singular in our dress; for we cannot exert so much influence.'

"We inquire, Is this in accordance with the teachings of Christ? Are we to follow the word of God, or the customs of the world? Our sister decided that it was safest to adhere to the Bible standard. Will Mrs. D. and others who pursue a similar course be pleased to meet the result of their influence, in

that day when every man shall receive according to his works?

“God's word is plain. Its teachings cannot be mistaken. Shall we obey it, just as he has given it to us, or shall we seek to find how far we can digress and yet be saved?...”

“Conformity to the world is a sin which is sapping the spirituality of our people, and seriously interfering with their usefulness. It is idle to proclaim the warning message to the world, while we deny it in the transactions of daily life.” RH, March 28, 1882

Clothing of men and women is to be modest.

“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel....” 1 Timothy 2:9

“My sisters, avoid even the appearance of evil. In this fast age reeking with corruption, you are not safe unless you stand guarded. Virtue and modesty are rare. I appeal to you as followers of Jesus Christ, making a high and exalted profession, to cherish this precious, priceless gem, modesty. This will guard virtue. If you have any hope of being finally exalted to join company with the pure, sinless angels, and live in an atmosphere where there is not the least taint of sin, cherish modesty and virtue. Nothing but purity, sacred purity, will abide the day of God, stand the grand review, and be received into a pure and holy Heaven....

“I feel impelled by the Spirit of the Lord to urge my sisters who profess godliness to cherish modesty of deportment and a becoming reserve, with shamefacedness and sobriety. The liberties taken in this age of corruption should be no criterion for Christ's followers. These fashionable exhibitions of familiarity should not exist among Christians fitting for immortality. If lasciviousness, pollution, adultery, crime, and murder is the order of the day among those who know not the truth, and who refuse to be controlled by the principles of God's word, how important that the class professing to be followers of Christ, closely allied to God and angels, should show them a better and nobler way. How important that their chastity and virtue stand in marked contrast to that of the class who are controlled by brute passions.” PH011 27-29

“When one commandment of the decalogue is broken, the downward steps are almost certain. When once the barriers of female modesty are removed, the basest licentiousness does not appear exceeding sinful. Alas, what terrible results of woman's influence for evil may be witnessed in the world today! Through the allurements of ‘strange women,’ thousands are incarcerated in prison cells, many take their own lives, and many cut short the lives of others. How true the words of Inspiration, ‘Her feet go down to death, her steps take hold on hell.’” ST, December 30, 1880

We are not to dress in conformity to fashion.

“In every age, a majority of the professed followers of Christ have disregarded those precepts which enjoin self-denial and humility, which require modesty and simplicity of conversation, deportment, and apparel. The result has ever been the same,--departure from the teachings of the gospel leads to the adoption of the fashions, customs, and principles of the world. Vital godliness gives place to a dead formalism. The presence and power of God, withdrawn from those world-loving circles, are found with a class of humbler worshipers, who are willing to obey the teachings of the Sacred Word. Through successive generations, this course has been pursued. One after another, different denominations have risen, and, yielding their simplicity, have lost, in a great measure, their early power.” RH, December 6, 1881

“As I have seen many Sabbathkeeping Adventists becoming worldly in thought, conversation, and dress, my heart has been saddened. The people who claim to believe that they have the last message of mercy to give to the world, are attracted by worldly fashions, and make great exertions to follow them as far as they think their profession of faith allows them to go. Worldly dress among our people is so noticeable that unbelievers frequently remark, ‘In their dress you cannot distinguish them from the world.’ This we know to be true, although there are many exceptions.

“Those who meet the world's standard are not few in numbers. We are grieved to see that they

are exerting an influence, leading others to follow their example. When I see those who have named the name of Christ, aping the fashions introduced by worldlings, I have the most painful reflections. Their lack of Christlikeness is apparent to all....

“We warn our Christian sisters against the tendency to make their dresses according to worldly styles, thus attracting attention....

“In forming the fashions of the day, he [Satan] has a fixed purpose. He knows that time and money which are devoted to meet the demands of fashion will not be used for higher, holier objects. Precious time is wasted in keeping pace with ever-changing and never-satisfying fashions. No sooner is one style introduced than new styles are devised, and then, in order for fashionable persons to remain fashionable, the dress must be remodeled....

“This entirely unnecessary burden is taken up and willingly borne by our sisters. Half of their burdens come from an attempt to follow the fashions; yet they eagerly accept the yoke, because fashion is the god they worship. They are as truly held in shackles of bondage as is the veriest slave; and yet they talk of independence! They do not know the first principles of independence. They have no mind or taste or judgment of their own.

“Satan is wonderfully successful in infatuating minds with the ever-varying styles of dress. He knows that while the minds of women are continually filled with a feverish desire to follow fashion, their moral sensibilities are weak, and they cannot be aroused to realize their true spiritual condition. They are worldly, without God, without hope....

“Young ladies who break away from slavery to fashion will be ornaments in society. The one who is simple and unpretending in her dress and in her manners shows that she understands that a true lady is characterized by moral worth.” Manuscript 106, 1901 (Quoted in 3SM 243-245)

“Not a few of our people are backsliding. They are imitating the fashions of the world. Their spirituality is dying. Step by step they are approaching world-loving.... Some who were once zealous reformers are now indifferent. Sisters who were once plain in dress are now conforming to fashion. God expects his commandment-keeping people to be distinct from worldlings, but in many instances the line of demarcation is hardly discernible.” RH, November 17, 1904

“The very class that have been presented before me as imitating the fashions of the world have been very slow, and the last, to be affected or reformed.” 1T 275

“Sabbath-keepers, remember that the outside appearance is an index to the heart, and while you are so anxious to imitate the fashions of the world; while your heart is in these things, you are like them, you have their spirit, and have lost the truth out of your heart. While you study your appearance to look as near like the world as possible, remember your Redeemer. Upon his head was a crown of thorns. The greatest concern some Sabbath-keepers have is their outward appearance. They are fostering pride, and will perish with their pride unless they entirely reform.” 2SG 286, 287

“As soon as any have a desire to imitate the fashions of the world that they do not immediately subdue, just so soon God ceases to acknowledge them as his children.” 1T 137

However, we may use contemporary clothing if it is plain, modest, healthful, and does not appear fashionable or stylish.

“We do not adopt this style of dress to be odd, that we may attract notice. We do not differ from the common style of fashionable dress for any such object. We choose to agree with others in theory and in practice, if we can do so, and at the same time be in harmony with the law of God, and with the laws of our being. We believe it wrong to differ from others, unless it be necessary to differ in order to be right. In bearing the cross of adopting the reform dress, we are led by a sense of duty.” HR, May 1, 1872

“Christians should not take pains to make themselves gazing-stocks by dressing differently from the world. But if, in accordance with their faith and duty in respect to their dressing modestly and

healthfully, they find themselves out of fashion, they should not change their dress in order to be like the world. But they should manifest a noble independence, and moral courage to be right, if all the world differ from them. If the world introduce a modest, convenient, and healthful mode of dress, which is in accordance with the Bible, it will not change our relation to God, or to the world to adopt such a style of dress. Christians should follow Christ, and conform their dress to God's word. They should shun extremes. They should humbly pursue a straightforward course, irrespective of applause or of censure, and should cling to the right, because of its own merits." *How to Live*, No. 6 (Quoted in 2SM 476, 477)

Sisters' Clothing

Though no one precise pattern has been given by which all church sisters must make their dresses, the general style of dress which God gave Seventh-day Adventists includes a dress with a long skirt and loose fitting jacket or bodice.

"If all our sisters would adopt a simple, unadorned dress of modest length, the uniformity thus established would be far more pleasing to God, and would exert a more salutary influence on the world, than the diversity presented four years ago. As our sisters would not generally accept the reform dress as it should be worn, another, less objectionable style is now presented. It is free from needless trimmings, free from the looped-up, tied back overskirts. It consists of a plain sack [jacket] or loose-fitting basque [bodice], and skirt, the latter short enough to avoid the mud and filth of the streets. The material should be free from large plaids and figures, and plain in color. The same attention should be given to the clothing of the limbs as with the short dress.

"Will my sisters accept this style of dress and refuse to imitate the fashions that are devised by Satan and continually changing? No one can tell what freak fashion will take next. Worldlings whose only care is, 'What shall we eat, and what shall we wear?' should not be our criterion." 4T 640

"The dress of our people should be made most simple. The skirt and sacque [jacket] I have mentioned may be used-- not that just that pattern and nothing else should be established, but a simple style as was represented in that dress. Some have supposed that the very pattern given was the pattern that all were to adopt. This is not so. But something as simple as this would be the best we could adopt under the circumstances. No one precise style has been given me as the exact rule to guide all in their dress. . . .

"Simple dresses should be worn. Try your talent, my sisters, in this essential reform." Letter 19, 1897 (Quoted in 3SM 254)

The dress should come down near to the ankle, and the legs should not be exposed. Plain, opaque stockings or neatly made matching pants should always be worn under dresses in public, for modesty. Sheer or conspicuous legwear (such as light-colored nylons or stockings with catchy patterns) is not modest. With loose pants, somewhat shorter dresses can be worn for work, but should not be shorter than mid-calf length.

"If women would wear their dresses so as to clear the filth of the streets an inch or two, their dresses would be modest, and they could be kept clean much more easily, and would wear longer. Such a dress would be in accordance with our faith." 1T 424

"The dress should reach somewhat below the top of the boot; but should be short enough to clear the filth of the sidewalk and street, without being raised by the hand. A still shorter dress than this would be proper, convenient, and healthful for females, when doing their housework, and especially, for those women who are obliged to perform more or less out-of-door labor. . . . Whatever may be the length of the dress, females should clothe their limbs as thoroughly as the males. This may be done by wearing lined pants gathered into a band and fastened about the ankle, or made full and tapering at the

bottom; and these should come down long enough to meet the shoe.” *How to Live*, No. 6 (Quoted in 2SM 478, 479)

“Some have contended that by the top of the boot, I meant the top of such boots as men usually wear. But by ‘the top of the boot,’ I designed to be understood the top of a boot, or gaiter shoe, usually worn by women....

“In speaking of the length of the dress, had I referred to high-topped boots reaching nearly to the knee, why should I have added, ‘but [the dress] should be short enough to clear the filth of the sidewalk and street, without being raised by the hand’? If high-topped boots were meant, the dress would most certainly be short enough to keep clear of the filth of the street without being raised, and would be sufficiently short for all working purposes....

“In regard to my wearing the short dress, I would say, I have but one short dress, which is not more than a finger's length shorter than the dresses I usually wear. I have worn this short dress occasionally. In the winter I rose early, and putting on my short dress, which did not require to be raised by my hands to keep it from dragging in the snow, I walked briskly from one to two miles before breakfast. I have worn it several times to the office, when obliged to walk through light snow, or when it was very wet or muddy. Four or five sisters of the Battle Creek church have prepared for themselves a short dress to wear while doing their washing and house cleaning. A short dress has not been worn in the streets of the city of Battle Creek, and has never been worn to meeting. My views were calculated to correct the present fashion, the extreme long dress, trailing upon the ground, and also to correct the extreme short dress, reaching about to the knees, which is worn by a certain class. I was shown that we should shun both extremes. By wearing the dress reaching about to the top of a woman's gaiter boot we shall escape the evils of the extreme long dress, and shall also shun the evils and notoriety of the extreme short dress.” 1T 462-464

“Uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers. Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen.” Isaiah 47:2, 3.

“We advocate that the limbs of women should not be exposed, but sensibly, neatly, and comfortably, clad.” HR, May 1, 1872

“Your girls should wear the waists of their dresses perfectly loose, and they should have a style of dress convenient, comfortable and modest. In cold weather they should wear warm flannel or cotton drawers, which can be placed inside the stockings. Over these should be warm lined pants.... Their dress should reach below the knee....

“It is a sin in the sight of Heaven for parents to dress their children as they do. The only excuse that they can make is, it is fashion. They cannot plead modesty to thus expose the limbs of their children with only one covering drawn tight over them.” *How to Live*, No. 5 (Quoted in 2SM 471, 472)

“They should be clothed with warm, lined pants, meeting the instep. In no case should the pants be formed so as to be pulled up out of sight by the children, leaving any part of their limbs exposed. I inquire, Is it reasonable, or even modest, to see the limbs of your daughters exposed, to the bend of the knee, without any covering, except a cotton stocking in summer, and flannel, in winter? Why should not mothers clothe their daughters sensibly, modestly, and healthfully, irrespective of prevailing fashions?” HR Nov 1, 1870

“We cannot, if we would, conceal the fact that women have feet and limbs that were made for use. But in regard to the exposure, this is on the other side of the question. We have traveled extensively the past twenty-five years, and have been eye-witnesses to many indecent exposures of the limbs. But the most common exposure is seen upon the streets in light snow, or wet and mud. Both hands are required to elevate the dress, that it may clear the wet and filth. It is a common thing to see the dress raised one-half of a yard, exposing an almost unclad ankle to the sight of gentlemen, but no one seems to blush at this immodest exposure. No one's sensitive modesty seems shocked for the

reason that this is customary. It is fashion, and for this reason it is endured. No outcry of immodesty is heard, although it is so in the fullest sense.” HR, May 1, 1872

Skirts should be full and modest, without slits, and allowing for a full stride. Skirts that cling to the shape of the hips, or narrow skirts that reveal the shape of the legs, should not be worn. Choose material with enough body to conceal the form, and a cut of skirt with plenty of fullness for modesty when sitting, standing, or walking.

“Our sisters need not wear many skirts to distend the dress. It appears much more becoming falling about the form naturally over one or two light skirts. Moreen is excellent material for outside skirts; it retains its stiffness and is durable.” 1T 523

Women’s blouses or bodices should conceal the shape of the form. Woven fabrics or loose sweaters are preferable to knit tops, which tend to drape the figure. Necklines should come near the neck, all around, to preserve modesty. If short sleeves are worn, they should come no higher than the elbow. Three-quarter-length sleeves are even more modest. No sheer or see-through clothing, or tight, form-fitting clothing should be worn.

Clothing is to be distinctly feminine in appearance. Pants and mannish-appearing shirts, jackets, shoes, or hats should not be worn.

“There is still another style of dress which will be adopted by a class of so-called dress reformers. They will imitate the opposite sex, as nearly as possible. They will wear the cap, pants, vest, coat, and boots, the last of which is the most sensible part of the costume. Those who adopt and advocate this style of dress, are carrying the so-called dress reform to very objectionable lengths. Confusion will be the result. Some who adopt this costume may be correct in their views in general upon the health question, and they could be instrumental in accomplishing vastly more good if they did not carry the matter of dress to such extremes.

“In this style of dress God's order has been reversed, and his special directions disregarded. Deut. xxii, 5. ‘The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God.’ This style of dress, God would not have his people adopt. It is not modest apparel, and is not at all fitting for modest, humble females who profess to be Christ's followers. God's prohibitions are lightly regarded by all who would advocate the doing away of the distinction of dress between males and females. The extreme positions taken by some dress-reformers upon this subject cripple their influence.

“God designed there should be a plain distinction between male and female dress, and has considered the matter of sufficient importance to give explicit directions in regard to it; for the same dress worn by both sexes would cause confusion, and great increase of crime. St. Paul would utter a rebuke, were he alive, and should behold females professing Godliness with this style of dress. ‘In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing Godliness) with good works.’ The mass of professed Christians utterly disregard the teachings of the Apostles, and wear gold, pearls and costly array.” *How to Live*, No. 6 (Quoted in 2SM 478)

“I saw that God's order has been reversed, and His special directions disregarded, by those who adopt the American costume [loose pants and a short skirt]. I was referred to Deuteronomy 22:5: ‘The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God.’ God would not have His people adopt the so-called reform dress. It is immodest apparel, wholly unfitted for the modest, humble followers of Christ.

“There is an increasing tendency to have women in their dress and appearance as near like the other sex as possible, and to fashion their dress very much like that of men, but God pronounces it abomination. ‘In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety.’ 1 Timothy 2:9.

“Those who feel called out to join the movement in favor of woman's rights and the so-called dress reform might as well sever all connection with the third angel's message. The spirit which attends the one cannot be in harmony with the other. The Scriptures are plain upon the relations and rights of men and women....

“With the so-called dress reform there goes a spirit of levity and boldness just in keeping with the dress. Modesty and reserve seem to depart from many as they adopt that style of dress.” 1T 421, 422

“In wide contrast with this modest dress is the so-called American costume, resembling very nearly the dress worn by men. It consists of a vest, pants, and a dress resembling a coat and reaching about halfway from the hip to the knee. This dress I have opposed, from what has been shown me as in harmony with the word of God....” 1T 465

“We do not think it in accordance with our faith to dress in the American costume....” 1T 424

Shoes should be chosen that are simple and comfortable rather than fashionable. High heels should not be worn. To be modest, shoes should not reveal the bare foot.

“If the feet are clothed with good-sized, thick-soled, warm boots or shoes, for comfort rather than for fashion, the blood will be induced to circulate freely in the limbs and feet, as well as in other portions of the body.” HR April 1, 1871

“We cannot, if we would, conceal the fact that women have feet and limbs that were made for use. But in regard to the exposure, this is on the other side of the question.... It is a common thing to see the dress raised one-half of a yard, exposing an almost unclad ankle to the sight of gentlemen, but no one seems to blush at this immodest exposure.... No outcry of immodesty is heard, although it is so in the fullest sense.” HR, May 1, 1872

A few examples of fashionable styles to avoid include purposely faded denim, sportswear, sweaters or jackets reaching only halfway to the waist, bell bottom skirts, hip-hugging skirts, A-line skirts without enough fullness to portray modesty, shoes with pointed-toes, open-toed sandals, baseball caps, and newsboy caps.

Brethren's Attire

No tight clothing, sleeveless shirts, low necklines, or short pants should be worn, as they do not preserve modesty and Christian dignity. Sleeves should come at least to the elbow. No casual apparel is to be worn in church (jeans, polo shirts, brightly colored shirts, etcetera). Ties, if worn, should not be showy or attention-getting. Shoes should be simple, not showy or faddish.

“We would not by any means encourage carelessness in dress. Let the attire be appropriate and becoming.” HL 120

“And some men who profess to be Christians view the matter of dress in the same light. These persons assemble with God's people upon the Sabbath, with their clothing dusty and soiled, and even with gaping rents in their garments, which are placed upon their persons in a slovenly manner.

“Many need instruction as to how they should appear in the assembly for worship on the Sabbath. They are not to enter the presence of God in the common clothing worn during the week. All should have a special Sabbath suit, to be worn when attending service in God's house. While we should not conform to worldly fashions, we are not to be indifferent in regard to our outward appearance. We are to be neat and trim, though without adornment.” 6T 355

“Our ministers and their wives should be an example in plainness of dress; they should dress neatly, comfortably, wearing good material, but avoiding anything like extravagance and trimmings, even if not expensive; for these things tell to our disadvantage.” SpTA03 5

“Black or dark material is more becoming to a minister in the desk and will make a better

impression upon the people than would be made by a combination of two or three different colors in his apparel.” 2T 610

Children’s Clothing

Children are to be dressed for comfort and health, not for fashion, and without showy decorations. Nothing should be done to encourage vanity and pride in the little ones. No clothing imitating worldly styles, or appearing overly mature for the child's age, should be worn (i.e., heeled boots, leather jackets, short skirts, etc.).

“It is our duty to dress ourselves plainly and to clothe our children neatly, without useless ornamentation, embroidery, or display, taking care not to foster in them a love of dress that will prove their ruin, but seeking rather to cultivate the Christian graces.” 4T 72, 73

“Nor should they be dressed in an expensive or showy manner. This encourages pride in them and awakens envy in the hearts of their companions. Teach the children that the true adorning is not outward.” *Special Testimonies on Education* (Quoted in CT 141, 142)

Hair

Men’s hair should be neatly groomed and cut short, avoiding all fashionable styles. It should not hang partly down the neck, or appear shaggy over the ears or forehead. Women’s hair should be at least shoulder-length. All short or mannish cuts must be avoided. Layering, curling, and coloring of hair encourage vanity and pride. Decorative styling of hair corresponds to the Bible’s prohibition of “broided hair.” Women's hair should be neatly combed and may be bunned, tied, or hanging long, but avoid styles such as puffing, teasing, curling, or gelling. Hair should not hang over the eyes.

“The hair should be carefully arranged. Our appearance in every respect should be characterized by neatness, modesty, and purity.” 6MR 158, 159

“Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair...” 1 Peter 3:3

“Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.” 1 Corinthians 11:14, 15

“The pure religion of Jesus requires of its followers the simplicity of natural beauty and the polish of natural refinement and elevated purity, rather than the artificial and false.” 3T 375

“The outside appearance is an index to the heart. True refinement does not find satisfaction in the adorning of the body for display.... In the sanctified heart there is no place for thoughts of needless adornment....” CTBH 93

Houses and Property

The principles of simplicity and economy should guide us in the building and furnishing of our homes, and landscaping of our lands. We should practice self-denial so that we can share with the needs of God’s work. Expensively or highly decorated homes, expensive pieces of artwork, and unnecessarily expensive furniture are not in harmony with these principles.

Cars should be selected which are not showy or needlessly expensive. Avoid sports cars and bright red, pink, or other loud-colored cars. Avoid gaudy or inappropriate bumper stickers or decorations.

“There should be no extravagance, in building fine homes, in buying costly furniture, in indulging in worldly dress, or in providing luxurious food; but in everything let us think of the souls for whom Christ has died. Let selfishness and pride die. Let none continue to expend means to multiply

pictures to be sent to their friends. Let us save every dollar that can be saved, that the matchless charms of Christ may be presented before the souls of the perishing. Satan will suggest many ways in which you may expend money. But if it is spent for self-gratification,--for unnecessary things, no matter how trifling their cost,--it is not spent for the glory of God. Let us look well to this matter, and see if we are denying ourselves as we should. Are we making sacrifices, that we may send the light of truth to the lost?" RH, January 27, 1891

"Elaborate and expensive furnishings are a waste not only of money, but of that which is a thousandfold more precious. They bring into the home a heavy burden of care and labor and perplexity....

"Furnish your home with things plain and simple, things that will bear handling, that can be easily kept clean, and that can be replaced without great expense. By exercising taste, you can make a very simple home attractive and inviting, if love and contentment are there." MH 367-370

"The time you waste in moving and dusting the multitudinous ornaments in your house, spend in writing a few lines to your friends, in sending papers or leaflets or little books to some one who knows not the truth." RH, May 14, 1901

"In view of the terrible crisis before us what are those doing who profess to believe the truth? I was called by my Guide, who said, 'Follow Me,' and I was shown things among our people that were not in accordance with their faith. There seemed to be a bicycle craze. Money was spent to gratify an enthusiasm in this direction that might better, far better, have been invested in building houses of worship where they are greatly needed....Satan works with intensity of purpose to induce our people to invest their time and money in gratifying supposed wants. This is a species of idolatry....

"Will God say to those who are selfishly pleasing their own imagination and gratifying their own desires: 'Well done, good and faithful servant;...enter thou into the joy of thy Lord?'" 8T 50, 51

Country Living

Members are encouraged to live in the country. Those living in cities should make earnest efforts to locate in the country if possible, where they can engage in agriculture and protect themselves and their families from the influences of the world.

"Out of the cities, out of the cities!...this is the message the Lord has been giving me. The earthquakes will come; the floods will come; and we are not to establish ourselves in the wicked cities, where the enemy is served in every way, and where God is so often forgotten." LS 409, 410

"In harmony with the light given me, I am urging people to come out from the great centers of population. Our cities are increasing in wickedness, and it is becoming more and more evident that those who remain in them unnecessarily do so at the peril of their soul's salvation." Manuscript 115, 1907 (Quoted in CL 9)

"The cities are to be worked from outposts. Said the messenger of God, 'Shall not the cities be warned? Yes; not by God's people living in them, but by their visiting them, to warn them of what is coming upon the earth.'" Letter 182, 1902 (Quoted in CL 30)

"The Protestant world have set up an idol sabbath in the place where God's Sabbath should be, and they are treading in the footsteps of the Papacy. For this reason I see the necessity of the people of God moving out of the cities into retired country [places,] where they may cultivate the land and raise their own produce.... I see the necessity of making haste to get all things ready for the crisis." Letter 90, 1897 (Quoted in CL 21)

"Again and again the Lord has instructed that our people are to take their families away from the cities, into the country, where they can raise their own provisions; for in the future the problem of buying and selling will be a very serious one. We should now begin to heed the instruction given us

over and over again: Get out of the cities into rural districts, where the houses are not crowded closely together, and where you will be free from the interference of enemies.” Letter 5, 1904 (Quoted in CL 9, 10)

“Instead of dwelling where only the works of men can be seen, where the sights and sounds frequently suggest thoughts of evil, where turmoil and confusion bring weariness and disquietude, go where you can look upon the works of God. Find rest of spirit in the beauty and quietude and peace of nature. Let the eye rest on the green fields, the groves, and the hills. Look up to the blue sky, unobscured by the city's dust and smoke, and breathe the invigorating air of heaven. Go where, apart from the distractions and dissipations of city life, you can give your children your companionship, where you can teach them to learn of God through His works, and train them for lives of integrity and usefulness.” MH 367

Entertainment

Worldly entertainments such as card playing, gambling, lotteries, amusement parks, computer or internet games, and dancing are not to be engaged in by Christians. Checkers, chess, monopoly, or any shallow or silly games are inappropriate. So are amusement rides, bumper cars, paintball, worldly pleasure gatherings and parties, and other foolish, worldly amusements. We should hold uplifting social gatherings instead of parties.

“Worldly amusements and entertainments are to have no place in the life of the Christian.” RH October 24, 1907

“It cannot be harmless for servants of the heavenly King to engage in the pleasures and amusements which Satan's servants engage in, even though they often repeat that such amusements are harmless. God has revealed sacred and holy truths to separate His people from the ungodly and purify them unto Himself. Seventh-day Adventists should live out their faith.” 1T 404, 405

“Many are eagerly participating in worldly, demoralizing amusements which God's word forbids. Thus they sever their connection with God and rank themselves with the pleasure lovers of the world. The sins that destroyed the antediluvians and the cities of the plain exist today--not merely in heathen lands, not only among popular professors of Christianity, but with some who profess to be looking for the coming of the Son of man. If God should present these sins before you as they appear in His sight, you would be filled with shame and terror.” 5T 218

“Pleasure-lovers may have their names upon the church-records, they may stand high as worldly-wise men; but they have no connection with Christ of Calvary.” 4SP 295

“The numerous socials, festivals, and picnics, to tempt the appetite to overindulgence, and the amusements which lead to levity and forgetfulness of God, can find no sanction in the example of Christ....

“The festal gatherings, the gluttonous feasts, the lotteries, tableau and theatrical performances, are doing a work that will bear a record with its burden of results to the Judgment.

“All these inconsistencies, sanctioned by professed Christians under a garb of Christian beneficence, to collect means to pay church expenses, have their influence with the youth to make them lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. They think if Christians can encourage and engage in these lotteries and scenes of festivities, and connect them with sacred things, why may not they be safe in taking an interest in lotteries, and in engaging in gambling to win money for special objects....

“And many who bear the name of Christ's followers are, through pride of heart, seeking popularity, and are drifting away from the established landmarks. The plain commands of God in his word are discarded because they are so plain and old-fashioned, while vain and vague theories attract the mind and please the fancy. In these scenes of church festivities, there is a union with the world that

the word of God does not justify. Christians and worldlings are united in them.” *Redemption; or The Temptation of Christ in The Wilderness*, 69, 70

This question was once put to Sister White: “Shall we understand by what you have said in your Testimonies in favor of recreation, that you approbate such vain amusements as chess, checkers, charades, back-gammon, hunt-the-whistle, and blind-man's buff?

“It is generally reported in this conference...that you play checkers, and carry a checkerboard with you as you visit the brethren from place to place.” RH October 8, 1867

Her answer follows, in part: “Since I professed to be a follower of Christ at the age of twelve years, I have never engaged in any such simple plays and amusements as named above. Neither have I at any time given my influence in their favor. I do not know how to play at checkers, chess, back-gammon, fox-and-geese, or any thing of the kind....

““There are amusements which we cannot approve, because Heaven condemns them,--such as dancing, card-playing, chess, checkers, &c. These amusements open the door for great evil. Their tendencies are not beneficial, but their influence upon the mind is to excite and produce in some minds a passion for those plays which lead to gambling, and dissolute lives. All such plays should be condemned by Christians. ”” RH, October 8, 1867

“Card playing should be prohibited. The associations and tendencies are dangerous. The prince of the powers of darkness presides in the gaming room and wherever there is card playing. Evil angels are familiar guests in these places.” 4T 652

“The true Christian....will not be found at the theater, the billiard hall, or the bowling saloon.... The blessing of God would not be invoked upon the hour spent at the theater or in the dance. No Christian would wish to meet death in such a place. No one would wish to be found there when Christ shall come...

“In many religious families, dancing and card-playing are made a parlor pastime. It is urged that these are quiet home amusements, which may be safely enjoyed under the parental eye....

“The amusement of dancing, as conducted at the present day, is a school of depravity, a fearful curse to society. If all in our great cities who are yearly ruined by this means could be brought together, what histories of wrecked lives would be revealed.” RH, February 28, 1882

“Parties for frivolous, worldly pleasure, gatherings for eating, drinking, and singing, are inspired by a spirit that is from beneath. They are an oblation to Satan.” 8T 66

“Between the associations of the followers of Christ for Christian recreation, and worldly gatherings for pleasure and amusement, will exist a marked contrast. Instead of prayer and the mentioning of Christ and sacred things, will be heard from the lips of worldlings the silly laugh and the trifling conversation. Their idea is to have a general high time. Their amusements commence in folly and end in vanity. We want in our gatherings to have them so conducted, and to so conduct ourselves, that when we return to our homes we can have a conscience void of offense toward God and man; a consciousness that we have not wounded nor injured in any manner those with whom we have been associated, or had an injurious influence over them.” RH, May 25, 1886

“Young men and young women should not think that their sports, their evening parties and musical entertainments, as usually conducted, are acceptable to Christ.

“Light has been given me, again and again, that all our gatherings should be characterized by a decided religious influence. If our young people would assemble to read and understand the Scriptures, asking, "What shall I do that I may have eternal life?" and then place themselves unitedly upon the side of truth, the Lord Jesus would let his blessing come into their hearts.” RH, July 19, 1906

Viewing and Reading Material

We should, as far as possible, cut off worldly influences and avenues of temptation. There is to be no cinema or theater attendance, nor performance nor watching of theatrical or dramatized productions. Televisions are not to be in the homes of members, because of the large amount of sinful material portrayed. We recognize that even without a television in the home, it is possible to be exposed to on-screen viewing material in many other ways (on the internet, on DVDs, at work, in others' homes, in waiting rooms, etc.). Thus the following principles apply.

The following are unacceptable to be watched at any time: movies; dramatized TV programs; cartoons; or media portraying war, violence, immorality, or inappropriate behavior. News, documentary, or other such video material that does not portray war, violence, or wickedness can be acceptable in moderation, but watching of even profitable video material should not be carried to excess.

Reading of fiction, novels, romances, worldly magazines, or material glorifying sin or crime is unacceptable. So are books regarding occult, magic, myths, or fairy tales.

“We are in the world' they say, 'and we can not get out of it.' But, parents, we can get a good way out of the world, if we choose to do so, we can avoid seeing many of the evils that are multiplying so fast in these last day. We can avoid hearing about much of the wickedness and crime that exist.

“Everything that can be done should be done to place ourselves and our children where we shall not see the iniquity that is practiced in the world. We should carefully guard the sight of our eyes and the hearing of our ears, so that these awful things shall not enter our minds.” SpM 243

“From their infancy the youth need to have a firm barrier built up between them and the world, that its corrupting influence may not affect them. Parents must exercise unceasing watchfulness, that their children be not lost to God. The vows of David, recorded in the 101st psalm, should be the vows of all upon whom rest the responsibilities of guarding the influences of the home. The psalmist declares: ‘I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me....’ ” CT 119

“Those who profess to love God and reverence sacred things, and yet allow the mind to come down to the superficial and unreal, are placing themselves on Satan's ground, and are doing his work.” RH, January 11, 1881

“Love stories, frivolous and exciting tales, and even that class of books called religious novels,--books in which the author attaches to his story a moral lesson,--are a curse to the readers. Religious sentiments may be woven all through a story book, but, in most cases, Satan is but clothed in angel- robes, the more effectively to deceive and allure. None are so confirmed in right principles, none so secure from temptation, that they are safe in reading these stories.

“The readers of fiction are indulging an evil that destroys spirituality, eclipsing the beauty of the sacred page. It creates an unhealthy excitement, fevers the imagination, unfits the mind for usefulness, weans the soul from prayer, and disqualifies it for any spiritual exercise....

“Can you, after such reading, open the Bible and read with interest the words of life? Do you not find the Book of God uninteresting? The charm of that love story is upon the mind, destroying its healthy tone, and making it impossible for you to fix the attention upon the important, solemn truths that concern your eternal welfare.” YI, October 9, 1902

“Mere children in years are old in a knowledge of crime. They are incited to evil by the tales they read. In imagination they act over the deeds portrayed, until their ambition is aroused to see what they can do in committing crime and evading punishment.

“To the active minds of children and youth the scenes pictured in imaginary revelations of the future are realities. As revolutions are predicted and all manner of proceedings described that break

down the barriers of law and self-restraint, many catch the spirit of these representations. They are led to the commission of crimes even worse, if possible, than these sensational writers depict. Through such influences as these, society is becoming demoralized....None need marvel that a harvest of crime is the result....

“There are works of fiction that were written for the purpose of teaching truth or exposing some great evil. Some of these works have accomplished good. Yet they have also wrought untold harm. They contain statements and highly wrought pen pictures that excite the imagination and give rise to a train of thought which is full of danger, especially to the youth. The scenes described are lived over and over again in their thoughts. Such reading unfits the mind for usefulness and disqualifies it for spiritual exercise. It destroys interest in the Bible.... As the mind dwells upon the scenes of impurity portrayed, passion is aroused, and the end is sin.

“Even fiction which contains no suggestion of impurity, and which may be intended to teach excellent principles, is harmful....

“By fostering love for mere amusement, the reading of fiction creates a distaste for life's practical duties....

“In the education of children and youth, fairy tales, myths, and fictitious stories are now given a large place.... How can Christian parents permit their children to use books so filled with falsehood? When the children ask the meaning of stories so contrary to the teaching of their parents, the answer is that the stories are not true; but this does not do away with the evil results of their use. The ideas presented in these books mislead the children. They impart false views of life and beget and foster a desire for the unreal.

“The widespread use of such books at this time is one of the cunning devices of Satan...

“Never should books containing a perversion of truth be placed in the hands of children or youth.” MH 444-447

“Do not permit upon your tables the magazines and newspapers in which are found love-stories.” RH, January 23, 1913

“Books upon Indian warfare and similar topics, published and circulated as a money-making scheme, might better never be read. There is Satanic fascination in such books. The heart-sickening relation of crimes and atrocities has a bewitching power upon many youth, exciting them to see what they can do to bring themselves into notice, even by the wickedest deeds. The enormities, the cruelties, the licentious practices, portrayed in more strictly historical writings, have acted as leaven in many minds, leading to the commission of similar acts. Books that delineate the Satanic acts of human beings are giving publicity to evil work. These wicked, horrible particulars need not be lived over, and none who believe the truth for this time should act a part in perpetuating the memory of them.” 6MR 272

“The press publishes the revolting details of vice, thus initiating others into the practice of fraud, robbery, and murder; and Satan exults in the success of his hellish schemes.” GC 586

“Their senses become so blunted on account of familiarity with sin that they do not abhor it, but view it as attractive.” 3T 473

“They hear and read so much of debasing crime that the once tender conscience, which would have recoiled with horror from such scenes, becomes hardened, and they dwell upon these things with greedy interest.” PP 459

“On the first page is an article on Shakespeare, a man who died a few days after a drunken carousal....

“We are to extol neither idolatry nor men who did not choose to serve God. Years ago, reproof was given our editors in regard to advocating the reading of even such books as ‘Uncle Tom's Cabin,’ ‘Aesop's Fables,’ and ‘Robinson Crusoe.’ Those who begin to read such works usually desire to continue to read novels. Through the reading of enticing stories they rapidly lose their spirituality.”

6MR 279-281

“You have no time to devote to the theater or the dance hall.... You have no time to attend shows.... Satan has devised it that one pleasure should crowd on the heels of another, a feverish excitement. No time to contemplate God, no time to think of heaven or heavenly things, no time to study the Bible, no time to put forth interested efforts for those that are out of Christ.” Manuscript 43, 1894 (Quoted in RC 247)

“Among the most dangerous resorts for pleasure is the theater. Instead of being a school of morality and virtue, as is so often claimed, it is the very hotbed of immorality. Vicious habits and sinful propensities are strengthened and confirmed by these entertainments. Low songs, lewd gestures, expressions, and attitudes, deprave the imagination and debase the morals. Every youth who habitually attends such exhibitions will be corrupted in principle. There is no influence in our land more powerful to poison the imagination, to destroy religious impressions, and to blunt the relish for the tranquil pleasures and sober realities of life than theatrical amusements. The love for these scenes increases with every indulgence, as the desire for intoxicating drinks strengthens with its use. The only safe course is to shun the theater, the circus, and every other questionable place of amusement.” 4T 652

“Picnics, church theatricals, church fairs, fine houses, personal display, have banished thoughts of God.” 4SP 294

“...they...recommend attendance at theaters and such places of worldly amusement, which is in direct opposition to the teachings of Christ and the apostles.” 1T 553

“...the theater going, the great importance placed upon holidays,-- all are a species of idolatry, a sacrifice upon idol altars.” SpTEd 87

“Many place themselves on the enchanted ground by frequenting scenes of amusement where fallen spirits congregate. Professing Christian, when you resort to the theater, remember that Satan is there, conducting the play as the master-actor. He is there to excite passion and glorify vice. The very atmosphere is permeated with licentiousness. Satan presides, also, at the masquerade and the dance; he throws around the card-table its bewitching power.” ST, May 18, 1882

“How can Christians call that innocent which is a snare to the soul, which has led thousands in the road to certain ruin? I cannot believe a true follower of Christ will touch a card for amusement, nor read novels, nor attend balls and theaters.” RH, February 20, 1866

“I have not been able to find one instance where he [Christ] educated his disciples to engage in...theatrical performances; and yet Christ was our pattern in all things.” SpTEd 192

“We are to keep as far from the theatrical and the extraordinary as Christ kept in His work.” Ev 396

“Not one jot or tittle of anything theatrical is to be brought into our work.... Let nothing of a theatrical nature be permitted, for this would spoil the sacredness of the work.

“In my very first labors, the message was given that all theatrical performances in connection with the preaching of present truth were to be discouraged and forbidden.” 19MR 125

“The man who is wholly absorbed in his counting room, the man who finds pleasure at the gaming table, the man who loves to indulge perverted appetite, the amusement lover, the frequenters of the theater and the ballroom, put eternity out of their reckoning.... They are not in the procession that is moving heavenward. They are led by the great apostate, and with him will be destroyed.” 6T 406, 407

Modern Technology

Internet and radio use should be guided by high Christian standards. Obviously, pornography or any sin-glorifying material is off-limits to the Christian. Some uses of technology inconsistent with Christian principles: unprofitable internet chatting, superfluous cell phone

messaging, use of cell phones in church, unnecessarily expensive technology, use of cell phones or other tools for pride or show, etc. Use of internet for pleasure should not be allowed to take up undue amounts of time.

“In the cars, photographs of females in a state of nudity are frequently circulated for sale.... This is an age when corruption is teeming everywhere.... The mind takes pleasure in contemplating scenes which awaken the lower and baser passions. These vile images, seen through defiled imagination, corrupt the morals and prepare the deluded, infatuated beings to give loose rein to lustful passions. Then follow sins and crimes which drag beings formed in the image of God down to a level with the beasts, sinking them at last in perdition. Avoid reading and seeing things which will suggest impure thoughts.” 2T 410

Music

Music should encourage uplifting thoughts and draw us nearer to God. Dance, jazz, rock, or other worldly music, including all music with a syncopated beat, is not to be used in any place. Worldly singing styles not acceptable include breathy, crooning, nightclub-style singing.

Music for worship should be reverent and impress the listeners with God’s holy character. All presentations of spiritual music should be characterized by humility, simplicity, modesty, and freedom from any display. Church singing should not imitate worldly styles: dramatic looks, closing eyes, bodily gestures. The church should prayerfully consider whether to have a practice of solo singing in religious meetings because of the temptation it may foster to personal pride.

“They have a keen ear for music, and Satan knows what organs to excite to animate, engross, and charm the mind so that Christ is not desired....

“Frivolous songs and the popular sheet music of the day seem congenial to their taste.... Music, when not abused, is a great blessing; but when put to a wrong use, it is a terrible curse. It excites, but does not impart that strength and courage which the Christian can find only at the throne of grace....” 1T 497

“Christians are gathered there, but what is that you hear? It is a song, a frivolous ditty, fit for the dance hall. Behold the pure angels gather their light closer around them, and darkness envelops those in that dwelling. The angels are moving from the scene. Sadness is upon their countenances. Behold, they are weeping. This I saw repeated a number of times all through the ranks of Sabbathkeepers.... Music is the idol which many professed Sabbathkeeping Christians worship. Satan has no objection to music if he can make that a channel through which to gain access to the minds of the youth.... When turned to good account, music is a blessing; but it is often made one of Satan's most attractive agencies to ensnare souls. When abused, it leads the unconsecrated to pride, vanity, and folly.... Young persons assemble to sing, and, although professed Christians, frequently dishonor God and their faith by their frivolous conversation and their choice of music. Sacred music is not congenial to their taste.” 1T 505

“The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with music and dancing. The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit.

“The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, in such a bedlam of noise. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time. Better never have the worship of God blended with music than to use musical instruments to do the work which last January was represented to me would be brought into our camp meetings. The truth for this time needs nothing of this kind in its work of converting souls. A bedlam of noise shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright

might be a blessing. The powers of satanic agencies blend with the din and noise, to have a carnival, and this is termed the Holy Spirit's working." 21MR 128, 129

"Display is not religion nor sanctification. There is nothing more offensive in God's sight than a display of instrumental music when those taking part are not consecrated, are not making melody in their hearts to the Lord....

"We have no time now to spend in seeking those things that only please the senses." RH Nov. 14, 1899

"In some of our churches I have heard solos that were altogether unsuitable for the service of the Lord's house. The long-drawn-out notes, and the peculiar sounds common in operatic singing, are not pleasing to the angels. They delight to hear the simple songs of praise sung in a natural tone. The songs in which every word is uttered clearly, in a musical tone, are the songs that they join us in singing." *Sermons and Talks*, vol. 2, 246

Sports and Games

There should be no participation in, attendance at, or watching of competitive sports, games, or races. Rather, we are to build a spirit of cooperation and care for others. While a simple family playing of ball or tag can be beneficial for the children's sake, even this should be in moderation. Games are not encouraged for Christian adults, as they do not lead our minds to God, but rather absorb the interest and distract from useful work. Any form of recreation that involves needless physical danger, or requires the participants to dress immodestly, or produces empty, worldly excitement, is not appropriate for Christians.

"Thus Satan and his angels...are working upon the minds of teachers and students to induce them to engage in exercises and amusements which become intensely absorbing, and which are of a character to strengthen the lower passions, and to create appetites and passions that will counteract the operations of the Spirit of God upon human hearts.

"All the teachers in a school need exercise, a change of employment. God has pointed out what this should be,--useful, practical work. But many have turned away from God's plan to follow human inventions, to the detriment of spiritual life. Amusements are doing more to counteract the working of the Holy Spirit than anything else, and the Lord is grieved. . . .

"Those students who allow their minds to be deeply excited over games are not in the best condition to receive the instruction, the counsel, the reproof, most essential for them." CT 281-283

"After the meeting, the remainder of the day was spent by the students in various games and sports, some of which were frivolous, rude, and grotesque.

"During the following night I seemed to be witnessing the performances of the afternoon. The scene was clearly laid out before me, and I was given a message for the manager and teachers of the school....

"The students who engaged in the grotesque mimicry that was seen, acted out the mind of the enemy, some in a very unbecoming manner. A view of things was presented before me in which the students were playing games of tennis and cricket. Then I was given instruction regarding the character of these amusements. They were presented to me as a species of idolatry, like the idols of the nations....

"Satan and his angels were there, making impressions on human minds....The forces of the enemy gained a decided victory, and God was dishonored. He who gave His life to refine, ennoble, and sanctify human beings was grieved at the performance....

"The Lord God of Israel is not glorified in the school. If at this time the Lord should permit your life to end, many would be lost, eternally separated from God and the righteous.'

"Serious is the consequence of even one such departure from the instruction that God has given

concerning our schools. Once the barriers are broken down, the advance of the enemy will be marked, unless the Lord shall humble hearts and convert minds.” CT 348-352

“What force of powers is put into your games of football and your other inventions after the way of the Gentiles -- exercises which bless no one! Just put the same powers into exercise in doing useful labor, and would not your record be more pleasing to meet in the great day of God?...

“I cannot find an instance in the life of Christ where he devoted time to play and amusement. He was the great Educator for the present and the future life. I have not been able to find one instance where he educated his disciples to engage in amusement of football or pugilistic games, to obtain physical exercise, or in theatrical performances; and yet Christ was our pattern in all things.” SpTED 191, 192

“We can occupy our minds and our time profitably without trying to devise methods for amusing ourselves. Instead of spending time in playing the games that so many students play, strive to do something for the Master.” CT 549

“I do not condemn the simple exercise of playing ball; but this, even in its simplicity, may be overdone. I shrink always from the almost sure result which follows in the wake of these amusements.... The amusements and expenditures of means for self-pleasing, which lead on step by step to self-glorifying, and the educating in these games for pleasure, produce a love and passion for such things that is not favorable to the perfection of Christian character.

“The way that they have been conducted at the college does not bear the impress of heaven. It does not strengthen the intellect. It does not refine and purify the character. There are threads leading out through the habits and customs and worldly practices, and the actors become so engrossed and infatuated that they are pronounced in heaven, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God....

“Is the eye single to the glory of God in these games? I know that this is not so. There is a losing sight of God's way and His purposes.... The Lord God of heaven protests against the burning passion cultivated for supremacy in the games that are so engrossing.” Letter 17a, 1893 (Quoted in 2SM 322-324)

“Some of the most popular amusements, such as football and boxing, have become schools of brutality. They are developing the same characteristics as did the games of ancient Rome. The love of domination, the pride in mere brute force, the reckless disregard of life, are exerting upon the youth a power to demoralize that is appalling.

“Other athletic games, though not so brutalizing, are scarcely less objectionable because of the excess to which they are carried. They stimulate the love of pleasure and excitement, thus fostering a distaste for useful labor, a disposition to shun practical duties and responsibilities. They tend to destroy a relish for life's sober realities and its tranquil enjoyments. Thus the door is opened to dissipation and lawlessness, with their terrible results.” Ed 210, 211

“I was told by my Guide: ‘Look ye, and behold the idolatry of My people, to whom I have been speaking, rising up early, and presenting to them their dangers. I looked that they should bring forth fruit.’ There were some who were striving for the mastery, each trying to excel the other in the swift running of their bicycles. There was a spirit of strife and contention among them as to which should be the greatest. The spirit was similar to that manifested in the baseball games on the college ground. Said my Guide: ‘These things are an offense to God....’

“Is this investment of means and this spinning of bicycles through the streets of Battle Creek giving evidence of the genuineness of your faith in the last solemn warning to be given to human beings standing on the very verge of the eternal world?” 8T 52

“The world is full of excitement. Men act as though they had gone mad over low, cheap, unsatisfying things. How excited have I seen them over the result of a cricket match! I have seen the streets in Sydney densely crowded for blocks and, on inquiring what was the occasion of the

excitement, was told that some expert player of cricket had won the game. I felt disgusted.” CT 343, 344

“Turn to another scene. In the streets of the city is a party gathered for a bicycle race. In this company also are those who profess to know God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. But who that looks upon the exciting race would think that those who were thus exhibiting themselves were the followers of Christ? Who would suppose that any of that party felt their need of Christ? Who would think they realized the value of their time and their physical powers as gifts from God, to be preserved for His service? Who thinks of the danger of accident, or that death may be the result of their wild chase? Who have prayed for the presence of Jesus, and the protection of the ministering angels? Is God glorified by these performances? Satan is playing the game of life for these souls, and he is well pleased with that which he sees and hears.

“The once earnest Christian who enters into these sports is on the downgrade. He has left the region pervaded by the vital atmosphere of heaven, and has plunged into an atmosphere of mist and fog. It may be some humble believer is induced to join in these sports. But if he maintains his connection with Christ, he cannot in heart participate in the exciting scene. The words he hears are not congenial, for they are not the language of Canaan. The speakers do not give evidence that they are making melody in their hearts to God. But there is unmistakable evidence that God is forgotten. He is not in all their thoughts. These parties of pleasure and gatherings for exciting sports, made up of those who profess to be Christians, are a profanation of religion and the name of God.” *Special Testimony to Battle Creek Church*, 1896 (Quoted in TM 83, 84)

“But many have pursued a course of action inconsistent with the knowledge of truth.... Great sin and loss resulted from the neglect to walk in the light from heaven. In plunging into amusements, match games, pugilistic performances, they declared to the world that Christ was not their leader in any of these things.” SpTEd 219

Special Occasions

Weddings should be primarily spiritual and should exemplify Christian principles of modesty, simplicity, and economy. No silliness, display, or worldliness should be involved.

Appropriate holidays, such as Thanksgiving, should be made profitable spiritual occasions, not patterning after the indulgence and intemperance of the world.

Birthdays should not be spent in partying or worldly amusements and self-pleasing.

“It has always seemed to me so very inappropriate to see the marriage ordinance associated with hilarity and glee and a pretense of something. No; it is an ordinance ordained of God, to be looked upon with the greatest solemnity. As the family relation is formed here below, it is to give a demonstration of what they shall be, the family in heaven above. The glory of God is ever to be made first.” *Sermons and Talks*, vol. 2, 270

“So it is at the present day; marriage ceremonies are made matters of display, extravagance, and self-indulgence. But if the contracting parties are agreed in religious belief and practice, and everything is consistent, and the ceremony be conducted without display and extravagance, marriage at this time need not be displeasing to God.” RH, September 25, 1888

“On this occasion there were no light jests or foolish sayings. Everything was solemn and sacred in connection with this marriage. Everything was of an elevating character and deeply impressive.” 10MR 197

“I saw that our holidays should not be spent in patterning after the world, yet they should not be passed by unnoticed, for this will bring dissatisfaction to our children. On these days when there is danger that our children will be exposed to evil influences and become corrupted by the pleasures and

excitement of the world, let the parents study to get up something to take the place of more dangerous amusements....

“Our object has been to keep them away from scenes of amusement among unbelievers.” AH 472

“Our Thanksgivings may be made seasons of great profit to our own souls as well as to others, if we improve this opportunity to remember the poor among us....

“Brethren and sisters, eat a plain dinner on Thanksgiving day, and with the money you would spend in extras with which to indulge the appetite, make a thank-offering to God....

“Employ your powers to a better purpose than in cooking a variety of food with which to gratify your appetites. Employ that time in becoming missionaries for God's cause...” RH November 18, 1884

“The twenty-fifth of December is supposed to be the day of the birth of Jesus Christ, and its observance has become customary and popular. But yet there is no certainty that we are keeping the veritable day of our Saviour's birth. History gives us no certain assurance of this. The Bible does not give us the precise time. Had the Lord deemed this knowledge essential to our salvation, he would have spoken through his prophets and apostles, that we might know all about the matter. But the silence of the Scriptures upon this point evidences to us that it is hidden from us for the wisest purposes. ...he has concealed the precise day of Christ's birth; that the day should not receive the honor that should be given to Christ as the Redeemer of the world...” RH December 9, 1884

“Even Christmas, the day observed professedly in honor of the birthday of Christ, has been made a most effective means of turning the mind away from Christ, away from his glory. If Christmas is kept at all, it should be kept in a way that will be in harmony with its significance.” RH, December 9, 1890

“The holiday season is fast approaching with its interchange of gifts....

“While urging upon all the duty of first bringing their offerings to God, I would not wholly condemn the practice of making Christmas and New Years gifts to our friends. It is right to bestow upon one another tokens of love and remembrance if we do not in this forget God, our best friend. We should make our gifts such as will prove a real benefit to the receiver. I would recommend such books as will be an aid in understanding the word of God, or that will increase our love for its precepts.” RH December 26, 1882

“God would be well pleased if on Christmas, each church would have a Christmas tree on which shall be hung offerings, great and small, for these houses of worship. Letters of inquiry have come to us asking, Shall we have a Christmas tree? will it not be like the world? We answer, You can make it like the world if you have a disposition to do so, or you can make it as unlike the world as possible. There is no particular sin in selecting a fragrant evergreen, and placing it in our churches; but the sin lies in the motive which prompts to action, and the use which is made of the gifts placed upon the tree.” RH, December 11, 1879

“Now we see parents taking special pains to present gifts to their children upon their birthdays; they make this an occasion of honoring the child, as though honor were due to the human being. Satan has had his own way in these things; he has diverted the minds and the gifts to human beings; thus the thoughts of the children are turned to themselves, as if they were to be made the objects of special favor. That which should flow back to God in offerings to bless the needy and carry the light of truth to the world, is turned from the right channel, and frequently does more harm than good, encouraging vanity, pride, and self-importance. On birthday occasions the children should be taught that they have reason for gratitude to God for his loving-kindness in preserving their lives for another year. ...it is due to God to recognize his gifts, and to present our offerings of gratitude to our greatest benefactor. These birthday gifts are recognized of Heaven.” RH December 9, 1890

The Sabbath

The Sabbath is to be kept holy from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. The day is to be spent in worship, rest, Bible study, time in nature, and spiritual ministry to others. Buying, selling, and any other business transactions, working, unnecessary food preparation, pleasure-seeking, attendance at secular events (graduations, weddings, rallies) or secular places (museums, malls), reading or talking about topics not appropriate for the Sabbath, unnecessary traveling, and bathing should not be done on the Sabbath hours. Necessary work in caring for the sick is appropriate for the Sabbath.

“In establishing new churches, ministers should give careful instruction as to the proper observance of the Sabbath. We must be guarded, lest the lax practices that prevail among Sundaykeepers shall be followed by those who profess to observe God's holy rest day. The line of demarcation is to be made clear and distinct between those who bear the mark of God's kingdom and those who bear the sign of the kingdom of rebellion.

“Far more sacredness is attached to the Sabbath than is given it by many professed Sabbathkeepers. The Lord has been greatly dishonored by those who have not kept the Sabbath according to the commandment, either in the letter or in the spirit. He calls for a reform in the observance of the Sabbath....

“While preparation for the Sabbath is to be made all through the week, Friday is to be the special preparation day. Through Moses the Lord said to the children of Israel: 'Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.'...

“On Friday let the preparation for the Sabbath be completed. See that all the clothing is in readiness and that all the cooking is done. Let the boots be blacked and the baths be taken. It is possible to do this. If you make it a rule you can do it. The Sabbath is not to be given to the repairing of garments, to the cooking of food, to pleasure seeking, or to any other worldly employment. Before the setting of the sun let all secular work be laid aside and all secular papers be put out of sight. Parents, explain your work and its purpose to your children, and let them share in your preparation to keep the Sabbath according to the commandment.

“We should jealously guard the edges of the Sabbath. Remember that every moment is consecrated, holy time. Whenever it is possible, employers should give their workers the hours from Friday noon until the beginning of the Sabbath. Give them time for preparation, that they may welcome the Lord's day with quietness of mind....

“Before the setting of the sun let the members of the family assemble to read God's word, to sing and pray. There is need of reform here, for many have been remiss. We need to confess to God and to one another. We should begin anew to make special arrangements that every member of the family may be prepared to honor the day which God has blessed and sanctified.

“Let not the precious hours of the Sabbath be wasted in bed. On Sabbath morning the family should be astir early. If they rise late, there is confusion and bustle in preparing for breakfast and Sabbath school. There is hurrying, jostling, and impatience. Thus unholy feelings come into the home....

“We should not provide for the Sabbath a more liberal supply or a greater variety of food than for other days. Instead of this the food should be more simple, and less should be eaten, in order that the mind may be clear and vigorous to comprehend spiritual things....By overeating on the Sabbath, many have done more than they think to dishonor God.

“While cooking upon the Sabbath should be avoided, it is not necessary to eat cold food. In cold weather let the food prepared the day before be heated. And let the meals, though simple, be palatable

and attractive. Provide something that will be regarded as a treat, something the family do not have every day....

“The Sabbath school and the meeting for worship occupy only a part of the Sabbath. The portion remaining to the family may be made the most sacred and precious season of all the Sabbath hours. Much of this time parents should spend with their children. In many families the younger children are left to themselves to find entertainment as best they can. Left alone, the children soon become restless and begin to play or engage in some kind of mischief. Thus the Sabbath has to them no sacred significance.

“In pleasant weather let parents walk with their children in the fields and groves. Amid the beautiful things of nature tell them the reason for the institution of the Sabbath. Describe to them God's great work of creation....

“As the sun goes down, let the voice of prayer and the hymn of praise mark the close of the sacred hours and invite God's presence through the cares of the week of labor....

“If we desire the blessing promised to the obedient, we must observe the Sabbath more strictly.... In harmony with the light which the Lord has given in regard to the observance of the Sabbath, we should be more careful about traveling on the boats or cars on this day....In order to reach the churches that need our help...it may be necessary for us to travel on the Sabbath; but so far as possible we should secure our tickets and make all necessary arrangements on some other day. When starting on a journey we should make every possible effort to plan so as to avoid reaching our destination on the Sabbath.” 6T 353-360

“The violation of the fourth commandment is not confined to the preparation of food. Many carelessly put off blacking their boots, and shaving, until after the beginning of the Sabbath. This should not be. If any neglect to do such work on a working day, they should have respect enough for God's holy time to let their beards remain unshaven, their boots rough and brown, until the Sabbath is past. This might help their memory, and make them more careful to do their own work on the six working days.” ST, May 25, 1882

“Acts of necessity and mercy are permitted on the Sabbath, the sick and suffering are at all times to be cared for; but unnecessary labor is to be strictly avoided. 'Turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and . . . honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure.' Isaiah 58:13. Nor does the prohibition end here. 'Nor speaking thine own words,' says the prophet. Those who discuss business matters or lay plans on the Sabbath are regarded by God as though engaged in the actual transaction of business. To keep the Sabbath holy, we should not even allow our minds to dwell upon things of a worldly character.” PP 307

“Parents, above every thing, take care of your children upon the Sabbath. Do not suffer them to violate God's holy day by playing in the house or out of doors. You may just as well break the Sabbath yourselves as to let your children do it, and when you suffer your children to wander about, and suffer them to play upon the Sabbath, God looks upon you as Sabbath-breakers.” RH, September 19, 1854

“When the Sabbath commences, we should place a guard upon ourselves, upon our acts and our words, lest we rob God by appropriating to our own use that time which is strictly the Lord's. We should not do ourselves, nor suffer our children to do, any manner of our own work for a livelihood, or anything which could have been done on the six working days....God requires not only that we refrain from physical labor upon the Sabbath, but that the mind be disciplined to dwell upon sacred themes. The fourth commandment is virtually transgressed by conversing upon worldly things or by engaging in light and trifling conversation. Talking upon anything or everything which may come into the mind is speaking our own words....

“You have been unguarded, and have upon the Sabbath joined with the unconsecrated in

conversation upon the common topics of the day, such as gains and losses, stocks, crops, and provisions....

“Those who are not fully converted to the truth frequently let their minds run freely upon worldly business, and, although they may rest from physical toil upon the Sabbath, their tongues speak out what is in their minds; hence these words concerning cattle, crops, losses, and gains. All this is Sabbath breaking....

“The example of ministers especially should be circumspect in this respect. Upon the Sabbath they should conscientiously restrict themselves to conversation upon religious themes--to present truth, present duty, the Christian's hopes and fears, trials, conflicts, and afflictions; to overcoming at last, and the reward to be received.

“Ministers of Jesus should stand as reprovers to those who fail to remember the Sabbath to keep it holy. They should kindly and solemnly reprove those who engage in worldly conversation upon the Sabbath and at the same time claim to be Sabbathkeepers. They should encourage devotion to God upon His holy day.

“None should feel at liberty to spend sanctified time in an unprofitable manner. It is displeasing to God for Sabbathkeepers to sleep during much of the Sabbath. They dishonor their Creator in so doing, and, by their example, say that the six days are too precious for them to spend in resting. They must make money, although it be by robbing themselves of needed sleep, which they make up by sleeping away holy time....They should devote their time and energies to spiritual exercises, that the divine influence resting upon the Sabbath may attend them through the week.” 2T 702-704

Worship Services

Worship services are to be characterized by reverence, orderliness, simplicity, and spirituality. Nothing should be done that will encourage pride, vanity, or display. Everything should focus the attention on God and spiritual themes. No worldly music, inappropriate dress, or irreverent attitude should be present. All participants should act with solemnity, dignity, and respect, realizing that they are in God's presence.

“There has been a great change, not for the better, but for the worse, in the habits and customs of the people in reference to religious worship. The precious, the sacred, things which connect us with God are fast losing their hold upon our minds and hearts, and are being brought down to the level of common things. The reverence which the people had anciently for the sanctuary where they met with God in sacred service has largely passed away. Nevertheless, God Himself gave the order of His service, exalting it high above everything of a temporal nature....

“There should be rules in regard to the time, the place, and the manner of worshiping....

“When the worshipers enter the place of meeting, they should do so with decorum, passing quietly to their seats. If there is a stove in the room, it is not proper to crowd about it in an indolent, careless attitude. Common talking, whispering, and laughing should not be permitted in the house of worship, either before or after the service....

“If some have to wait a few minutes before the meeting begins, let them maintain a true spirit of devotion by silent meditation, keeping the heart uplifted to God in prayer that the service may be of special benefit to their own hearts and lead to the conviction and conversion of other souls.... If when the people come into the house of worship, they have genuine reverence for the Lord and bear in mind that they are in His presence, there will be a sweet eloquence in silence....

“When the minister enters, it should be with dignified, solemn mien. He should bow down in silent prayer as soon as he steps into the pulpit, and earnestly ask help of God. What an impression this will make! There will be solemnity and awe upon the people....Every one of the congregation, also,

who fears God should with bowed head unite in silent prayer....When the meeting is opened by prayer, every knee should bow in the presence of the Holy One.... All the service should be conducted with solemnity and awe, as if in the visible presence of the Master of assemblies....

“Sometimes young men and women have so little reverence for the house and worship of God that they keep up a continual communication with each other during the sermon. Could these see the angels of God looking upon them and marking their doings, they would be filled with shame, with abhorrence of themselves....

“Let all pass out without jostling or loud talking, feeling that they are in the presence of God, that His eye is resting upon them, and that they must act as in His visible presence. Let there be no stopping in the aisles to visit or gossip, thus blocking them up so that others cannot pass out. The precincts of the church should be invested with a sacred reverence. It should not be made a place to meet old friends and visit and introduce common thoughts and worldly business transactions. These should be left outside the church. God and angels have been dishonored by the careless, noisy laughing and shuffling of feet heard in some places....

“All should be taught to be neat, clean, and orderly in their dress, but not to indulge in that external adorning which is wholly inappropriate for the sanctuary. There should be no display of the apparel; for this encourages irreverence. The attention of the people is often called to this or that fine article of dress, and thus thoughts are intruded that should have no place in the hearts of the worshipers. God is to be the subject of thought, the object of worship; and anything that attracts the mind from the solemn, sacred service is an offense to Him. The parading of bows and ribbons, ruffles and feathers, and gold and silver ornaments is a species of idolatry and is wholly inappropriate for the sacred service of God, where the eye of every worshiper should be single to His glory. All matters of dress should be strictly guarded, following closely the Bible rule. Fashion has been the goddess who has ruled the outside world, and she often insinuates herself into the church. The church should make the word of God her standard.... Let none dishonor God's sanctuary by their showy apparel.... The Holy One of Israel has spoken through His apostle: 'Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.'

“When a church has been raised up and left uninstructed on these points, the minister has neglected his duty and will have to give an account to God for the impressions he allowed to prevail. Unless correct ideas of true worship and true reverence are impressed upon the people, there will be a growing tendency to place the sacred and eternal on a level with common things, and those professing the truth will be an offense to God and a disgrace to religion.” 5T 491-500

The sermon should provide spiritual meat, and not be characterized by entertainment, relation of unprofitable anecdotes, or joking. Frequent sermons on practical, Christian lifestyle topics should be given.

“Our ministers are to preach in a way that will help people to grasp vital truth.... Help them to understand what is truth; break the bread of life to them; call their attention to vital questions....

“Do not lead your hearers into waste tracts, where they will be no nearer the fountain of living water than they were before hearing you. Present the truth as it is in Jesus, making plain the requirements of the law and the gospel. Present Christ, the way, the truth, and the life, and tell of His power to save all who come to Him....

“Flowery speeches, pleasing tales, or inappropriate anecdotes do not convict the sinner.” GW 154, 155

“Ministers are not to preach men's opinions, not to relate anecdotes, get up theatrical performances, not to exhibit self; but as though they were in the presence of God and of the Lord Jesus

Christ, they are to preach the Word. Let them not bring levity into the work of the ministry, but let them preach the Word in a manner that will leave a most solemn impression upon those who hear.” RH Sept. 28, 1897

“It is not enough for ministers to present theoretical subjects; they should also present those subjects which are practical. They need to study the practical lessons that Christ gave His disciples and make a close application of the same to their own souls and to the people.” 3T 257

“The Lord here shows us that the message to be borne to His people by ministers whom He has called to warn the people is not a peace-and-safety message. It is not merely theoretical, but practical in every particular.” 3T 252

“I was shown that the pointed testimony must live in the church. This alone will answer to the message to the Laodiceans. Wrongs must be reproved, sin must be called sin, and iniquity must be met promptly and decidedly, and put away from us as a people.” 3T 260

The Bible says that men should lead out in church services and conduct the teaching during these times. It also says women are to keep silence in the churches. First Corinthians 11 mentions women participating in prayer and prophesying. Sister White, in her special role as a prophet, relayed God's messages in churches. (See 1 Corinthians 11:5.)

“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church. What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 14:34-37

“Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.” 1 Timothy 2:11-14

“Frequently I do not anticipate saying the things I do say when I am speaking before the people. God may give me words of reproof, of warning, or encouragement as He sees fit, for the benefit of souls.” Letter 3, 1889 (Quoted in 3SM 81)

“When I am speaking to the people I say much that I have not premeditated. The Spirit of the Lord frequently comes upon me. I seem to be carried out of, and away from, myself; the life and character of different persons are clearly presented before my mind. I see their errors and dangers, and feel compelled to speak of what is thus brought before me. I dare not resist the Spirit of God.” 5T 677

“It is not right for you to suppose that I am striving to be first, striving for leadership. . . . I want it to be understood that I have no ambition to have the name of leader, or any other name that may be given me, except that of a messenger of God. I claim no other name or position.” 5MR 439

“I thank the Lord that He gave us the privilege of acting a part in the work from the beginning. But neither then nor since the work has grown to large proportions,...has anyone heard me claiming the leadership of this people.

“From the year 1844 till the present time I have received messages from the Lord and have given them to His people. This is my work--to give to the people the light that the Lord gives me. I am commissioned to receive and communicate His messages. I am not to appear before the people as holding any other position than that of a messenger with a message.” 8T 237

Church Meeting Houses

Meeting houses should be simple and plain, and not unnecessarily elegant, large, or expensive.

“The need for a meeting-house where there is a newly formed company of believers, has been presented before me in a panoramic view. I saw workmen building humble houses of worship.” GW 435

“A plain, neat, commodious building, of proper dimensions, would fill their hearts with gratitude, and would give those not of our faith an opportunity to come into our assemblies, and hear the words of life. There need be no costly organ, nothing for mere display; what is wanted is a house that can be dedicated to God...where the surroundings would be entirely in harmony with the faith we profess.” General Conference Daily Bulletin, January 28, 1893

“God has been pleased with the work that Brother [D. T.] Shireman has done in arousing an interest in educational work and in erecting church and school buildings in Hildebran [N. C.]. The Lord has accepted his efforts to trade upon his talents. As he has built his plain, unpretentious buildings, heavenly angels have been his helpers. It is this kind of work that makes a good impression on the minds of unbelievers in regard to our brother's abilities.” 9MR 382

Health Message

Members are not to consume alcohol, coffee, green or black tea, or recreational drugs, or use tobacco.

“Diseases of every stripe and type have been brought upon human beings by the use of tea and coffee and the narcotics, opium and tobacco. These hurtful indulgences must be given up, not only one, but all; for all are hurtful and ruinous to the physical, mental, and moral powers....” 15MR 277

“Never take tea, coffee, beer, wine, or any spirituous liquors.” RH, July 29, 1884

“Fruits, grains, and vegetables, prepared in a simple way, free from spice and grease of all kinds, make, with milk or cream, the most healthful diet. They impart nourishment to the body, and give a power of endurance and a vigor of intellect that are not produced by a stimulating diet.” CTBH 47

“Tell them that the time will soon come when there will be no safety in using eggs, milk, cream, or butter, because disease in animals is increasing in proportion to the increase of wickedness among men. The time is near when, because of the iniquity of the fallen race, the whole animal creation will groan under the diseases that curse our earth.” 7T 135

“The light given me is that it will not be very long before we shall have to give up any animal food. Even milk will have to be discarded. Disease is accumulating rapidly. The curse of God is upon the earth, because man has cursed it.” Australasian Union Conference Record, July 28, 1899 (Quoted in CD 357)

“We see that cattle are becoming greatly diseased, the earth itself is corrupted, and we know that the time will come when it will not be best to use milk and eggs. But that time has not yet come. We know that when it does come, the Lord will provide. The question is asked, meaning much to all concerned, Will God set a table in the wilderness? I think the answer may be made, Yea, God will provide food for His people.

“In all parts of the world provision will be made to supply the place of milk and eggs. And the Lord will let us know when the time comes to give up these articles....The Lord will give dietetic art and skill to His people in all parts of the world, teaching them how to use for the sustenance of life the products of the earth.” Letter 151, 1901 (Quoted in CD 359)

“We bear positive testimony against tobacco, spirituous liquors, snuff, tea, coffee, flesh meats, butter, spices, rich cakes, mince pies, a large amount of salt, and all exciting substances used as articles of food.” 3T 21

“Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord, meat-eating will eventually be done

away; flesh will cease to form a part of their diet.... All who are connected with our health institutions especially should be educating themselves to subsist on fruits, grains, and vegetables.” CTBH 119

“Condiments are injurious in their nature. Mustard, pepper, spices, pickles, and other things of a like character, irritate the stomach and make the blood feverish and impure. The inflamed condition of the drunkard’s stomach is often pictured as illustrating the effect of alcoholic liquors. A similarly inflamed condition is produced by the use of irritating condiments.” MH 325

“The salads are prepared with oil and vinegar, fermentation takes place in the stomach, and the food does not digest, but decays or putrefies.” 2MR 143

“Hot biscuit raised with soda or baking powder should never appear upon our tables. Such compounds are unfit to enter the stomach.” RH, May 8, 1883

“Far too much sugar is ordinarily used in food. Cakes, sweet puddings, pastries, jellies, jams, are active causes of indigestion.” MH 301

“The free use of sugar in any form tends to clog the system, and is not unfrequently a cause of disease.” CTBH 57

Divorce and Remarriage

Biblical grounds for divorce are adultery of one's partner, and personal innocence.

Divorce for any other reason is forbidden by Jesus. Biblical grounds for remarriage are death of one's partner, or a divorce in which one had biblical grounds, or a divorce in which one's partner deserts him or her and subsequently commits adultery or remarries.

“And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.” Matthew 19:9

“But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.” Matthew 5:32

“Nothing but the violation of the marriage bed can either break or annul the marriage vow....

“God gave only one cause why a wife should leave her husband, or the husband leave his wife, which was adultery. Let this ground be prayerfully considered. Marriage was from the creation, constituted by God, a divine ordinance.... Then let this, God's institution of marriage, stand before you as firm as the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.” 1MR 160, 161

“A woman may be legally divorced from her husband by the laws of the land, and yet not divorced in the sight of God and according to the higher law. There is only one sin, which is adultery, which can place the husband or wife in a position where they can be free from the marriage vow in the sight of God. Although the laws of the land may grant a divorce, yet they are husband and wife still in the Bible light, according to the laws of God.

“I saw that Sister _____, as yet, has no right to marry another man, but if she, or any other woman, should obtain a divorce legally on the ground that her husband was guilty of adultery, then she is free to be married to whom she chooses.” 1MR 159

“You are a married man, father of two children. If your wife has obtained a divorce from you that does not leave you free to marry again, as I read my Bible.” MR926 40, 41

Only the *innocent* party in a divorce with Scriptural grounds has a right to remarry; the provoking party does not.

“I consider that you have no moral right to marry _____; he has no moral right to marry you. He left his wife after giving her great provocation. He left her whom he had vowed before God to love and cherish while both should live. Before ever she obtained her divorce, when she was his lawful wife, he

left her for three years, and then left her in heart, and expressed his love to you. The matter has been negotiated largely between you and a married man, while he was legally bound to the wife he married, who has had two children by him.

“I see not a particle of leniency in the Scriptures given either of you to contract marriage, although his wife is divorced. From the provocation he has given her, it was largely his own course of action that has brought this result, and I cannot see in any more favorable light his having a legal right to link his interest with yours or you to link your interest with his. . . .” 1MR 163

If one who is innocent is divorced by their spouse, and that spouse *later* goes on to remarry or commit adultery, the innocent spouse could now feel free to remarry. Until that happens, the innocent spouse must conduct himself/herself with propriety as a married person. There is to be no undue familiarity or special friendship with anyone else of the opposite gender.

“A_____ did not put his wife away. She left him, and put him away, and married another man. I see nothing in the Scripture that forbids him to marry again in the Lord. He has a right to the affection of a woman....

“He did not leave her, she left him. He did not marry again until she had obtained a divorce. When B_____ divorced herself from A_____ he suffered most keenly, and it was not until B_____ had married another man that A_____ married again.” 1MR 162, 163

The guilty party in a divorce, or one who divorces or remarries without Biblical grounds, cannot be retained in church membership.

“I myself cannot put confidence in you as a Christian, and under present developments, I could not give my consent for you to become a member of any church.” MR926 68

Those who have committed sins may be readmitted to the church following discipline if there is a due period of *sincere* repentance and heartfelt confession. In many cases it is not best to break up the new union. However, the reinstated ones should not thereafter be placed in positions of responsibility such as being a credentialed minister. The church must make a decision about each individual case, if such a person later desires to become a worker in the church.

Sister White wrote about a man [M] in a second marriage who had been divorced years before. Now, years later, the man's father and brother were pushing for him to break up his present marriage.

“I would say that his {M's} case cannot be improved by leaving the present wife. It would not better the case to go to the other woman in the question....

“May the Lord help these poor souls to remove spot and stain from their own characters, and repent of their wrongs, and leave M with the Lord.

“I am so sorry for the man; for his course is in such a shape that it will not answer to be meddled with, for there are difficulties upon difficulties. I would say that the Lord understands the situation, and if M will seek Him with all his heart, He will be found of him. If he will do his best, God will pardon and receive him....

“M may hope in God and do the best he can to serve God in all humility of mind, casting his helpless soul upon the great Sin Bearer....I would gladly do something to help poor M to make things right, but this cannot be done as matters are now situated, without someone's being wronged.” Letter 175, 1901 (Quoted in 2SM 341, 342)

Ellen White's son, W.C. White, later wrote about M's case: “Mother...says regarding Elder E as she has said regarding other men in a somewhat similar position, if they have thoroughly repented, if they are living such lives as convince their brethren that they are thoroughly in earnest, do not cut them off from fellowship, do not forbid their working for Christ in a humble capacity, but do not elevate them to positions of responsibility.

“From this I would understand that it would be unwise to renew his credentials and send him from place to place among the people, but if he has by a faithful Christian life won the confidence of

the church where he lives, do not stand in the way of his doing such work as that church may be responsible for. In fact, it may be the duty of his brethren to go farther and to pay him for faithful labor. In fact, I do not see how you could withhold from him a proper remuneration for faithful and judicious labor. But this would not be placing before him the same temptation as to give him credentials and send him forth in the conference as a traveling minister.

“Again I would say, as mother has said, this is a question which should be submitted to those who have had to deal with his case in the past. Please consider the opinions I have expressed only as suggestive.’

“At the close of this letter Ellen White personally inscribed the following words of endorsement: ‘This is correct advice in such cases. Let him walk humbly before God. I see no light in giving him responsibilities.’” TSB 230, 231

W.C. White wrote: “If persons living in the light of the third angel's message purpose to leave one companion for the sake of uniting with someone else, it is our duty to warn and reprove and discipline.

“If persons before embracing the message have entangled themselves, and afterwards have repented, confessed their sins, received forgiveness of God, and won the confidence of their brethren, it is better for both ministers and laymen to leave them alone, enjoying the forgiveness and justification which have been wrought through Christ, without undertaking to tear up existing relations.” TSB 220, 221

W.C. White stated: “Sister White did not sympathize with those who took the ground that a person who had separated from a companion on other than Scriptural ground, and married again, that this second marriage must be broken up if they were to be accepted or retained in an SDA church.

“Sister White fully recognized that these people in most cases had sinned, that some had sinned grievously, and that they should not be accepted into fellowship of our churches unless that sin was repented of. Sister White did not accept the contention that such repentance could not be genuine without breaking the new bond, and making an earnest effort to return to former companions. She recognized the fact that in most instances a reunion with the parties formerly connected with in marriage would be either impossible or exceedingly unprofitable. She also recognized that the vows entered into in the second marriage called for such an action as was most merciful and kind to the contracting parties.” TSB 223, 224

Purity and Morality

Adultery and fornication are prohibited by the Ten Commandments, and are cause for loss of church membership. All of our behavior should be characterized by purity, holiness, and abstinence from even the appearance of evil. Inappropriate familiarity, touching, or flirting between men and women is not permitted. There is to be no e-mailing, calling, chatting, etc. between married men and women other than for strictly business purposes. Any activities that encourage undue familiarity are not appropriate. Young people who are not out of their teens, or who are attending school, should not begin special friendships. Courtships should uphold high principles of modesty and purity.

“Cleanse the camp of this moral corruption, if it takes the highest men in the highest positions. God will not be trifled with. Fornication is in our ranks; I know it, for it has been shown me to be strengthening and extending its pollutions. There is much we will never know; but that which is revealed makes the church responsible and guilty unless they show a determined effort to eradicate the evil. Cleanse the camp, for there is an accursed thing in it.” TM 427, 428

“My sisters, avoid even the appearance of evil. In this fast age reeking with corruption, you are

not safe unless you stand guarded. Virtue and modesty are rare....If you have any hope of being finally exalted to join company with the pure, sinless angels, and live in an atmosphere where there is not the least taint of sin, cherish modesty and virtue. Nothing but purity, sacred purity, will abide the day of God, stand the grand review, and be received into a pure and holy Heaven....

“The liberties taken in this age of corruption should be no criterion for Christ's followers. These fashionable exhibitions of familiarity should not exist among Christians fitting for immortality. If lasciviousness, pollution, adultery, crime, and murder is the order of the day among those who know not the truth, and who refuse to be controlled by the principles of God's word, how important that the class professing to be followers of Christ, closely allied to God and angels, should show them a better and nobler way. How important that their chastity and virtue stand in marked contrast to that of the class who are controlled by brute passions....

“Satan is leading them [your daughters] on to be a proverb in the mouths of unbelievers, because of their boldness, lack of reserve and female modesty. The young boys are likewise left to have their own way. They have scarcely entered their teens before they are by the side of little girls about their own age, accompanying them home, and making love to them.” PH011 27-30

“This is a fast age, little boys and girls commence paying attentions to one another, when they should both be in the nursery, taking lessons in modesty of deportment. What does this common mixing up do? Does it increase chastity in the youth who thus gather together? No, indeed!...

“Parents are asleep. They don't know that Satan has planted his hellish banner right in their households....If a young girl just entering her teens is accosted with familiarity by a boy of her own age, or older, she should be taught to so resent this, that no such advances will ever be repeated. When a girl's company is frequently sought for by boys or young men, something is wrong. That young girl needs a mother to show her her place, or to restrain her, and teach her what belongs to a girl of her age.” PH011 66, 67

“I have been shown that Satan's specious temptations will come to the workers...to encourage familiarity, the men with the women. I write with a distressed heart, that the women in this age, both married and unmarried, too frequently do not maintain the reserve that is necessary. They act like coquettes. They encourage the attentions of single and married men, and those who are weak in moral power will be ensnared. These things, if allowed, deaden the moral senses, and blind the mind, so that crime does not appear sinful. Thoughts are awakened that would not have been if woman had kept her place in all modesty and sobriety. She may have had no unlawful purpose or motive herself, but she has given encouragement to men who are tempted, and who need all the help they can get from those associated with them. By being circumspect, reserved, taking no liberties, receiving no unwarrantable attentions, but preserving a high moral tone and becoming dignity, much evil might be avoided.

“A woman who will allow an unchaste word or hint to be uttered in her presence, is not as God would have her; one that will permit any undue familiarity or impure suggestion does not preserve her God-like womanhood.

“Some may think these warnings unnecessary; but God has shown me that they are necessary in every mission, in every college, in every institution that we have established.” PH167 37, 38

“When young men and women work together, a sympathy is created among them which frequently grows into sentimentalism. If the guardians are indifferent to this, lasting injury may be done to these souls, and the high moral tone of the institution will be compromised. If any, patients or helpers, continue their familiarity by deception after having had judicious instruction, they should not be retained in the institution, for their influence will affect those who are innocent and unsuspecting. Young girls will lose their maidenly modesty, and be led to act deceptively because their affections have become entangled. . . . The young should be taught to be frank, yet modest, in their associations. They should be taught to respect just rules and authority. If they refuse to do this, let them be

dismissed, no matter what position they occupy, for they will demoralize others. The forwardness of young girls in placing themselves in the company of young men, lingering around where they are at work, entering into conversation with them, talking common, idle talk, is belittling to womanhood. . . . Let not those who profess the religion of Christ descend to trifling conversation, to unbecoming familiarity with women of any class, whether married or single. Let them keep their proper places with all dignity. At the same time they should be sociable, kind, and courteous to all. Young ladies should be reserved and modest.... Those who give evidence that their thoughts run in a low channel, whose conversation tends to corrupt rather than to elevate, should be removed at once from any connection with the institution, for they will surely demoralize others.” PH 066 27, 28

“The young affections should be restrained until the period arrives when sufficient age and experience will make it honorable and safe to unfetter them.... A youth not out of his teens is a poor judge of the fitness of a person, as young as himself, to be his companion for life.” *A Solemn Appeal*, 52, 53

“While at school, students should not allow their minds to become confused by thoughts of courtship. They are there to gain a fitness to work for God, and this thought is ever to be uppermost.” CT 100

“Young people are sent to school by their parents to obtain an education, not to flirt with the opposite sex. The good of society, as well as the highest interest of the students, demands that they shall not attempt to select a life partner while their own character is yet undeveloped, their judgment immature, and while they are at the same time deprived of parental care and guidance.” FE 62

“The school is not to be regarded as a place for courtship or marriage, but as a place where the youth are to be educated and disciplined for practical life. Flirtation or special attentions between young ladies and young men cannot be permitted in the school. Were the rules so lax as to admit of this,...the school would become demoralized, and parents would feel no safety in sending their children to the school.” 13MR 145

“In all the deportment of one who possesses true love, the grace of God will be shown. Modesty, simplicity, sincerity, morality, and religion will characterize every step toward an alliance in marriage. Those who are thus controlled will not be absorbed in each other's society, at a loss of interest in the prayer-meeting and the religious service.” PH048 23

Child Training

Parents in the church must bring up their families in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, by setting a godly example, and in love commanding their households after them to keep the way of the Lord. Parents are responsible before God to shelter their children, as much as possible, from worldly influences. They should not be left unsupervised by their parents or other mature, godly guardians. Unless there is absolutely no other option, parents should not send children to public schools. They should be in homeschools or Christian schools. Toys that encourage violence, impurity, or other ungodly traits, or which have occult aspects, should not be allowed in the home. Examples include guns, Barbie dolls, war toys, competitive games, pokemon, toy jewelry, etc. Failure to perform the duties of a Christian parent is a cause for church discipline.

“But few parents realize that their children are what their example and discipline have made them, and that they are responsible for the characters their children develop.” 3T 144

“Upon fathers and mothers devolves the responsibility of giving a Christian education to the children entrusted to them....In no case are they to let any line of business to so absorb mind and time and talents that their children, who should be led in harmony with God, are allowed to drift until they

are separated far from Him. They are not to allow their children to slip out of their grasp into the hands of unbelievers. They are to do all in their power to keep them from imbibing the spirit of the world....

“Many years ago, in Oakland, my husband and I conversed with a public school teacher in regard to the public schools in the city. He said to us: 'If parents knew of the iniquity that is to our certain knowledge practiced in these schools, there would be a furor raised in regard to these schools such as neither you nor I can imagine. The young people are rotten; and what kind of homes they have is more than our teachers can tell.' This statement was made over twenty years ago. Have the conditions in our public schools improved since that time?

“Some fathers and mothers are so indifferent, so careless, that they think it makes no difference whether their children attend a church school or a public school. 'We are in the world,' they say, 'and we cannot get out of it.' But, parents, we can get a good way out of the world, if we choose to do so. We can avoid seeing many of the evils that are multiplying so fast in these last days. We can avoid hearing about much of the wickedness and crime that exist.

“Everything that can be done should be done to place ourselves and our children where we shall not see the iniquity that is practised in the world. We should carefully guard the sight of our eyes and the hearing of our ears, so that these awful things shall not enter our minds....

“Some of God's people permit their children to attend the public schools, where they mingle with those who are corrupt in morals. In these schools their children can neither study the Bible nor learn its principles. Christian parents, you must make provision for your children to be educated in Bible principles.” 3SM 210, 211

“The church should make the word of God her standard, and parents should think intelligently upon this subject. When they see their children inclined to follow worldly fashions, they should, like Abraham, resolutely command their households after them. Instead of uniting them with the world, connect them with God.” 5T 499

“Parents are responsible for the work coming from their hands. They should have wisdom and firmness to do their work faithfully and in the right spirit. They are to train their children for usefulness by developing their God-given talents. A failure to do this should not be winked at, but should be made a matter of church discipline, for it will bring the curse of God on the parents and a reproach and grievous trials and difficulties on the church. A moral leprosy that is contagious, polluting the bodies and souls of the youth, often results from a failure to discipline and restrain the young; and it is time that something was done to check its ravages.” 5T 327, 328

The Unequal Yoke

We are not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers in such connections as marriages, business partnerships, political parties, secret societies, and government support or accreditation for our Christian work or schools. We are not to take church troubles before the courts. We must not join labor unions. We may vote in support of right, but we are not to involve ourselves in politics. Members may not serve in political parties nor hold a government office as a member of a political party.

“He says, ‘Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?’ ‘Be ye not unequally yoked together,’ letting unbelievers into your secrets; for all alliances that give undue influence to those who do not love God over those who profess His name must be strictly avoided.

“All combinations with unbelievers that bind as a yoke must be broken. These words apply not only to making a marriage covenant with an unbeliever, but to the making of all unions where the worldly element can have a prevailing influence over believers. For ‘What concord hath Christ with

Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” 8MR 107, 108

“Any connection with infidels and unbelievers which would identify us with them is forbidden by the word. We are to come out from them and be separate. In no case are we to link ourselves with them in their plans or work.” FE 482

“The Lord's injunction, ‘Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers,’ refers not only to the marriage of Christians with the ungodly, but to all alliances in which the parties are brought into intimate association, and in which there is need of harmony in spirit and action. . . .” *Should Christians Be Members of Secret Societies?* (Quoted in EV 617)

“He calls for men who will not dare to resort to the arm of flesh by entering into partnership with worldlings in order to secure means for advancing his work--even for the building of institutions.” RH, February 1, 1906

“Any confederacy with the world is strictly forbidden by the Scriptures. God would have His people distinct from all worldly confederacy.

“If charity work is to be done, the church is its own almoner. We do not need to unite with societies of a worldly character in order to visit the sick, clothe the naked, or help the needy.... God does not design that we shall be placed in any subservience to the world in this regard, or that any communication shall be made by us to them that will give them an advantage over us.” 8MR 108

“To bind ourselves up by contracts or in partnerships or business associations with those not of our faith is not in the order of God.” RH Aug. 4, 1904

“When troubles arise in the church we should not go for help to lawyers not of our faith. God does not desire us to open church difficulties before those who do not fear Him....

“These men cast aside the counsel God has given, and do the very things He has bidden them not to do. They show that they have chosen the world as their judge, and in heaven their names are registered as one with unbelievers. Christ is crucified afresh, and put to open shame. Let these men know that God does not hear their prayers. They insult His holy name, and He will leave them to the buffetings of Satan until they shall see their folly and seek the Lord by confession of their sin.

“Matters connected with the church are to be kept within its own borders. If a Christian is abused, he is to take it patiently; if defrauded, he is not to appeal to courts of justice. Rather let him suffer loss and wrong.

“God will deal with the unworthy church member who defrauds his brother or the cause of God; the Christian need not contend for his rights.” 3SM 299, 300

“This action, of appealing to human courts, never before entered into by Seventh-day Adventists, has now been done. God has permitted this that you who have been deceived may understand what power is controlling those who have had entrusted to them great responsibilities.” 3SM 303

“Satanic agencies are in every city, busily organizing into parties those opposed to the law of God. Professed saints and avowed unbelievers take their stand with these parties.” 8T 42

“Those who stand under the bloodstained banner of Prince Immanuel cannot be united with the Free Masons or with any secret organization. The seal of the living God will not be placed upon anyone who maintains such a connection after the light of truth has shone upon his pathway.” Letter 21, 1893 (Quoted in 2SM 140)

“Others who are well acquainted with the Bible evidences that the seventh day is the Sabbath, enter into partnership with men who have no respect for God's holy day. A Sabbathkeeper cannot allow

men in his employ, paid by his money, to work on the Sabbath. If, for the sake of gain, he allows the business in which he has an interest to be carried on on the Sabbath by his unbelieving partner, he is equally guilty with the unbeliever; and it is his duty to dissolve the relation, however much he may lose by so doing. ” RH, March 18, 1884

“The trades unions and confederacies of the world are a snare. Keep out of them and away from them, brethren. Have nothing to do with them.” GCB, April 6, 1903

“Those who claim to be the children of God are in no case to bind up with the labor unions that are formed or that shall be formed. This the Lord forbids. Cannot those who study the prophecies see and understand what is before us?” Letter 201, 1902 (Quoted in 2SM 144)

“These unions are one of the signs of the last days. Men are binding up in bundles ready to be burned. They may be church members, but while they belong to these unions, they cannot possibly keep the commandments of God; for to belong to these unions means to disregard the entire Decalogue.

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself’ (Luke 10:27). These words sum up the whole duty of man. They mean the consecration of the whole being, body, soul, and spirit, to God’s service. How can men obey these words, and at the same time pledge themselves to support that which deprives their neighbors of freedom of action? And how can men obey these words, and form combinations that rob the poorer classes of the advantages which justly belong to them, preventing them from buying or selling, except under certain conditions?” Letter 26, 1903 (Quoted in 2SM 143)

“The Lord would have His people bury political questions. On these themes silence is eloquence.... We cannot with safety vote for political parties; for we do not know whom we are voting for. We cannot with safety take part in any political schemes. We cannot labor to please men who will use their influence to repress religious liberty, and to set in operation oppressive measures to lead or compel their fellow men to keep Sunday as the Sabbath. The first day of the week is not a day to be revered. It is a spurious sabbath, and the members of the Lord’s family cannot participate with the men who exalt this day, and violate the law of God by trampling upon His Sabbath. The people of God are not to vote to place such men in office; for when they do this, they are partakers with them of the sins which they commit while in office....

“Those who are Christians indeed....will not wear political badges, but the badge of Christ.

“What are we to do, then? -- Let political questions alone. ‘Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?’ What can there be in common between these parties? There can be no fellowship, no communion. The word fellowship means participation, partnership. God employs the strongest figures to show that there should be no union between worldly parties and those who are seeking the righteousness of Christ. What communion can there be between light and darkness, truth and unrighteousness? -- None whatever....

“Those teachers in the church or in the school who distinguish themselves by their zeal in politics, should be relieved of their work and responsibilities without delay; for the Lord will not co-operate with them. The tithe should not be used to pay any one for speechifying on political questions....

“I call upon my brethren who are appointed to educate, to change their course of action. It is a mistake for you to link your interests with any political party, to cast your vote with them or for them. Those who stand as educators, as ministers, as laborers together with God in any line, have no battles to fight in the political world. Their citizenship is in heaven. The Lord calls upon them to stand as separate and peculiar people....

“The Lord speaks of those who claim to believe the truth for this time, yet see nothing

inconsistent in their taking part in politics, mingling with the contending elements of these last days,... and He declares that He will destroy both classes together without distinction. They are doing a work that God has not set them to do....

“The question may be asked, Are we to have no union whatever with the world? The word of the Lord is to be our guide. Any connection with infidels and unbelievers which would identify us with them is forbidden by the word. We are to come out from them and be separate. In no case are we to link ourselves with them in their plans or work....

“Those in the ministry who desire to stand as politicians should have their credentials taken from them; for this work God has not given to high or low among His people....

“God calls to His people, saying, ‘Come out from among them, and be ye separate.’... His children are to separate themselves from politics, from any alliance with unbelievers.” FE 475-483

“While we are in no wise to become involved in political questions, yet it is our privilege to take our stand decidedly on all questions relating to temperance reform....

“In our favored land, every voter has some voice in determining what laws shall control the nation. Should not that influence and that vote be cast on the side of temperance and virtue?...

“The advocates of temperance fail to do their whole duty unless they exert their influence by precept and example -- by voice and pen and vote -- in favor of prohibition and total abstinence. We need not expect that God will work a miracle to bring about this reform, and thus remove the necessity for our exertion. We ourselves must grapple with this giant foe....” RH, October 15, 1914

“After it was time to close, the subject of voting was considered and dwelt upon. James first talked, then Brother {J. N.} Andrews talked, and it was thought by them best to give their influence in favor of right and against wrong. They think it right to vote in favor of temperance men being in office in our city instead of by their silence running the risk of having intemperate men put in office. Brother {David} Hewitt tells his experience of a few days {since} and is settled that {it} is right to cast his vote. Brother {Josiah} Hart talks well. Brother {Henry} Lyon opposes. No others object to voting, but Brother {J.P.} Kellogg begins to feel that it is right. Pleasant feelings exist among all the brethren. O that they may all act in the fear of God.

“Men of intemperance have been in the office today in a flattering manner expressing their approbation of the course of the Sabbathkeepers not voting and expressed hopes that they will stick to their course and, like the Quakers, not cast their vote. Satan and his evil angels are busy at this time, and he has workers upon the earth. May Satan be disappointed, is my prayer.--E. G. White diary, Sunday, March 6, 1859.” 2SM 337

Members should not marry those who do not hold the Seventh-day Adventist faith, even if they are Christians.

“The Lord commanded ancient Israel not to intermarry with the idolatrous nations around them: ‘Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.’ The reason is given. Infinite Wisdom, foreseeing the result of such unions, declares: ‘For they will turn away thy son from following Me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.’ ‘For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.’...

“In the New Testament are similar prohibitions concerning the marriage of Christians with the ungodly. The apostle Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians, declares: ‘The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.’ Again, in his second epistle, he writes: ‘Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth

with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.'

"My sister, dare you disregard these plain and positive directions? As a child of God, a subject of Christ's kingdom, the purchase of His blood, how can you connect yourself with one who does not acknowledge His claims, who is not controlled by His Spirit? The commands I have quoted are not the word of man, but of God. Though the companion of your choice were in all other respects worthy (which he is not), yet he has not accepted the truth for this time; he is an unbeliever, and you are forbidden of heaven to unite yourself with him. You cannot, without peril to your soul, disregard this divine injunction....

"To connect with an unbeliever is to place yourself on Satan's ground. You grieve the Spirit of God and forfeit His protection....

"You may say: 'But I have given my promise, and shall I now retract it?' I answer: If you have made a promise contrary to the Scriptures, by all means retract it without delay, and in humility before God repent of the infatuation that led you to make so rash a pledge. Far better take back such a promise, in the fear of God, than keep it and thereby dishonor your Maker....

"There is in the Christian world an astonishing, alarming indifference to the teaching of God's word in regard to the marriage of Christians with unbelievers. Many who profess to love and fear God choose to follow the bent of their own minds rather than take counsel of Infinite Wisdom.... God's sanction is not given to unions which He has expressly forbidden." 5T 363-365

"It is a dangerous thing to form a worldly alliance. Satan well knows that the hour that witnesses the marriage of many young men and women closes the history of their religious experience and usefulness. They are lost to Christ. They may for a time make an effort to live a Christian life, but all their strivings are made against a steady influence in the opposite direction. Once it was a privilege and joy to them to speak of their faith and hope; but they become unwilling to mention the subject, knowing that the one with whom they have linked their destiny takes no interest in it. As the result, faith in the precious truth dies out of the heart, and Satan insidiously weaves about them a web of skepticism....

"Those who profess the truth trample on the will of God in marrying unbelievers; they lose His favor and make bitter work for repentance. The unbelieving may possess an excellent moral character; but the fact that he or she has not answered to the claims of God, and has neglected so great salvation, is sufficient reason why such a union should not be consummated....

"The plea is sometimes made that the unbeliever is favorable to religion and is all that could be desired in a companion except in one thing--he is not a Christian. Although the better judgment of the believer may suggest the impropriety of a union for life with an unbeliever, yet, in nine cases out of ten, inclination triumphs. Spiritual declension commences the moment the vow is made at the altar; religious fervor is dampened, and one stronghold after another is broken down, until both stand side by side under the black banner of Satan. Even in the festivities of the wedding, the spirit of the world triumphs against conscience, faith, and truth. In the new home the hour of prayer is not respected. The bride and bride groom have chosen each other and dismissed Jesus.

"At first the unbelieving one may make no show of opposition in the new relation; but when the subject of Bible truth is presented for attention and consideration, the feeling at once arises: 'You married me, knowing that I was what I am; I do not wish to be disturbed. From henceforth let it be understood that conversation upon your peculiar views is to be interdicted.'...

"The believing one reasons that in his new relation he must concede somewhat to the

companion of his choice. Social, worldly amusements are patronized. At first there is great reluctance of feeling in doing this, but the interest in the truth becomes less and less, and faith is exchanged for doubt and unbelief. No one would have suspected that the once firm, conscientious believer and devoted follower of Christ could ever become the doubting, vacillating person that he now is. Oh, the change wrought by that unwise marriage!...

“Shall one who is seeking for glory, honor, immortality, eternal life, form a union with another who refuses to rank with the soldiers of the cross of Christ? Will you who profess to choose Christ for your master and to be obedient to Him in all things, unite your interests with one who is ruled by the prince of the powers of darkness? 'Can two walk together, except they be agreed?'... While one of those so closely united is engaged in devotion, the other is indifferent and careless; while one is seeking the way to everlasting life, the other is in the broad road to death.

“Hundreds have sacrificed Christ and heaven in consequence of marrying unconverted persons. Can it be that the love and fellowship of Christ are of so little value to them that they prefer the companionship of poor mortals? Is heaven so little esteemed that they are willing to risk its enjoyments for one who has no love for the precious Saviour?” 4T 504-507

“Men and women professing godliness should tremble at the thought of entering into a marriage covenant with those who do not respect and obey the commandments of God.... Such a connection with the world is a direct departure from God's express requirements,--‘Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.’” ST, December 30, 1880

Members should not take life insurance.

“I was shown that Sabbathkeeping Adventists should not engage in life insurance. This is a commerce with the world which God does not approve. Those who engage in this enterprise are uniting with the world, while God calls His people to come out from among them and to be separate.... '...When Christ, who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.' Here is the only life insurance which heaven sanctions.

“Life insurance is a worldly policy which leads our brethren who engage in it to depart from the simplicity and purity of the gospel. Every such departure weakens our faith and lessens our spirituality.... As a people we are in a special sense the Lord's. Christ has bought us. Angels that excel in strength surround us. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without the notice of our heavenly Father. Even the hairs of our head are numbered. God has made provision for His people. He has a special care for them, and they should not distrust His providence by engaging in a policy with the world.

“God designs that we should preserve in simplicity and holiness our peculiarity as a people. Those who engage in this worldly policy invest means which belong to God, which He has entrusted to them to use in His cause, to advance His work. But few will realize any returns from life insurance, and without God's blessing even these will prove an injury instead of a benefit. Those whom God has made His stewards have no right to place in the enemy's ranks the means which He has entrusted to them to use in His cause.” 1T 549, 550

Military Service

The sixth commandment prohibits taking human life. The methods used by human militaries are totally out of harmony with benevolent, unselfish Christian principles. In the military, one will most likely be expected to perform acts inappropriate for the Christian. According to prophecy, governments will unite to enforce worship of the beast, and undoubtedly military force will be utilized.

Therefore, Seventh-day Adventists should not voluntarily enlist in the military. Even if one is not required to bear arms, is it right to voluntarily participate in an organization whose

purpose is to destroy life? Only if involuntarily drafted may members enlist. They should then perform medical or other noncombatant service, where possible, but in any case they must never violate God's commandments such as by taking life or Sabbathbreaking. Those already enlisted in the military, desiring membership, may fulfill their term of commitment only if their work does not require them to assist in taking life, to break the Sabbath, or otherwise to break God's commandments. They should not re-enlist.

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also....But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” Matthew 5:38-44

“...they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.” Luke 9:54-56

“Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.” John 18:36

“Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” Matthew 26:52

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work....” Exodus 20:8-10

“Thou shalt not kill.” Exodus 20:13

“Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.” 1 Corinthians 7:23

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?...Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing....” 2 Corinthians 6:14-17

“Satan delights in war, for it excites the worst passions of the soul and then sweeps into eternity its victims steeped in vice and blood. It is his object to incite the nations to war against one another, for he can thus divert the minds of the people from the work of preparation to stand in the day of God.” GC 589

“It suits his Satanic majesty well to see slaughter and carnage upon the earth. He loves to see the poor soldiers mowed down like grass.” 1T 366

“The attention of many was turned to Sabbathkeepers because they manifested no greater interest in the war and did not volunteer.” 1T 356

“Those who would be best prepared to sacrifice even life, if required, rather than place themselves in a position where they could not obey God, ...would make no boast. They would feel deeply and meditate much, and their earnest prayers would go up to heaven for wisdom to act and grace to endure. Those who feel that in the fear of God they cannot conscientiously engage in this war will be very quiet, and when interrogated will simply state what they are obliged to say in order to answer the inquirer....” 1T 357

“I saw that it is our duty in every case to obey the laws of our land, unless they conflict with the higher law which God spoke with an audible voice from Sinai, and afterward engraved on stone with His own finger....He who has God's law written in the heart will obey God rather than men, and will sooner disobey all men than deviate in the least from the commandment of God. God's people, taught by the inspiration of truth, and led by a good conscience to live by every word of God, will take His law, written in their hearts, as the only authority which they can acknowledge or consent to obey. The

wisdom and authority of the divine law are supreme.

“I was shown that God's people, who are His peculiar treasure, cannot engage in this perplexing war, for it is opposed to every principle of their faith. In the army they cannot obey the truth and at the same time obey the requirements of their officers. There would be a continual violation of conscience. Worldly men are governed by worldly principles. They can appreciate no other. Worldly policy and public opinion comprise the principle of action that governs them and leads them to practice the form of rightdoing. But God's people cannot be governed by these motives. The words and commands of God, written in the soul, are spirit and life, and there is power in them to bring into subjection and enforce obedience. The ten precepts of Jehovah are the foundation of all righteous and good laws. Those who love God's commandments will conform to every good law of the land. But if the requirements of the rulers are such as conflict with the laws of God, the only question to be settled is: Shall we obey God, or man?” 1T 361, 362

“Sabbathkeepers now cannot expect this [that God would work a miraculous victory for them], and should not, upon any consideration, engage in this terrible war [the Civil War]. They have nothing to hope for. The desolating power of God is upon the earth to rend and destroy; the inhabitants of the earth are appointed to the sword, famine, and pestilence.” 7MR 112

“The Conscription Act of 1863 was amended in February of 1864. In the amendment provision was made by the Federal government that 'members of religious denominations, who shall by oath or affirmation declare that they are conscientiously opposed to the bearing of arms,' shall when drafted 'be considered noncombatants.' They might then be assigned to duty in hospitals, or to the care of freedmen; or they might avail themselves of the privilege of exemption granted to those who should pay \$300.00....

“But a bill signed July 4, 1864, revoked 'the clause commonly known as the \$300.00 exemption clause,' *except for those 'conscientiously opposed to bearing arms.'* This action precipitated a crisis, for if Seventh-day Adventists were to secure the continued benefits of exemption, or were to secure noncombatant status should they respond to the draft, they must now publicly declare their position and attitude.

“Prompt steps were taken to meet the issue. On August 3, there was laid before Austin Blair, Governor of Michigan, a declaration of principles, signed by the General Conference Committee, giving the reasons why Seventh-day Adventists 'have not felt free to enlist into the service,' and requesting the governor's endorsement of the claim that '*as a people we come under the intent of the late action of Congress concerning those who are conscientiously opposed to bearing arms, and are entitled to the benefits of said laws.*' (Emphasis supplied).

“The Governor of Michigan readily granted this request.

“Similar steps were taken in other states, as Wisconsin, Illinois, and Pennsylvania, with equally satisfactory replies from the governors. These endorsements, together with letters of recommendation from certain military officers, were carried to Washington, D. C., by Elder J. N. Andrews, who laid them before Provost Marshal James B. Fry.

“Mr. Fry....gave detailed instructions as to how our brethren should proceed, if drafted, in order to be given the privilege of exemption through the payment of \$300 or to be assigned to some noncombatant service. Many who were drafted took advantage of the \$300 exemption clause provided for noncombatants. But some who were drafted applied for assignment to noncombatant service.

“It is only in accordance with the facts to state that in a number of cases brethren who, being drafted, entered the army in late 1864, were treated unfairly by local officers who refused to recognize the provision of the law. Under most trying circumstances our young men remained loyal to the God of heaven, while doing their duty to their fellowman. They endeavored to let their light shine in the army. Responding to their call for literature, a tract fund was raised to furnish them with reading matter that

they might distribute among their associates. Many letters were received from drafted men whose claims to exemption from bearing arms were angrily refused. Two of these letters were published in one issue of the *Review*, together with a note from James White as follows:

“The experience they give seems not to be the exception, but the rule. We have not yet heard of any who though their claims as non-combatants were endorsed by the provost marshalls of their districts and certificates granted them accordingly, have succeeded in obtaining a position in hospitals, or in the care of freedmen. And even the district provost marshalls sometimes refuse to endorse the claims of our brethren, notwithstanding all the evidences as noncombatants.’ *Review and Herald*, Jan. 24, 1865.

“At this juncture, the inquiry is rightfully raised, 'Did the Lord give Ellen White light, either guiding the leaders of the church in the steps they took in 1863 and 1864 in relation to military service, or approving the course which was followed?’

“This question is vitally important to us today, for the position of the denomination toward military service is based on the 'historic stand' we took in Civil War days.

“In the counsels of *Testimonies for the Church*, Volume One, which parallels this period in our history, there is no direct information on this point. After January, 1863, there are no utterances concerning the Civil War or the draft. Had the war not come to a close within such a short time after the draft became effective with all its attendant problems, there would undoubtedly have been some published counsel....

“But we are not left to inference or logical conclusions alone in this matter which is of such interest and vital importance to our young men throughout the world. It is indeed gratifying to observe that as the leaders of the church moved forward prayerfully and carefully in meeting the crises as they arose, and in finding the 'historic positions' we as a denomination take in regard to the draft, they did so in harmony with the light given by God through the Spirit of prophecy. Ellen White makes direct reference to this some two decades after the close of the Civil War in a letter to church leaders, Elder G. I. Butler...and S. N. Haskell.... Ellen White, then in Europe, had before her certain questions these brethren had placed before her, and as she answers, she looks back and comments concerning the propriety of our church leaders seeking relief from oppressive measures:

“You inquire in regard to the course which should be pursued to secure the rights of our people to worship according to the dictates of our own conscience. This has been a burden on my soul for some time, whether it would be a denial of our faith, and an evidence that our trust was not fully in God. But *I call to mind many things God has shown me in the past in regard to things of a similar character, as the draft and other things*. I can speak in the fear of God, it is right we should use every power we can to avert the pressure that is being brought to bear upon our people.’ *Ellen G. White Letter* 55, 1886. (Emphasis supplied)

“Thus we have the certain answer. The Lord did give Ellen White direct and definite light which helped the leaders of the church in arriving at the position they took at that time and since hold concerning the relation of Seventh-day Adventists to military service.” *The Spirit of Prophecy and Military Service*, statement prepared by W. C. White, D. E. Robinson and A. L. White, pages 14-18.

“We have just said farewell to three of our responsible men in the office who were summoned by the government to serve for three weeks of drill. It was a very important stage of our work in the publishing house, but the government calls do not accommodate themselves to our convenience. They demand that young men whom they have accepted as soldiers shall not neglect the exercise and drill essential for soldier service. We were glad to see that these men with their regimentals had tokens of honor for faithfulness in their work. They were trustworthy young men.

“These did not go from choice, but because the laws of their nation required this. We gave them a word of encouragement to be found true soldiers of the cross of Christ. Our prayers will follow these

young men, that the angels of God may go with them and guard them from every temptation.” Ellen G. White Uncopied Letter 23, 1886. (Written from Basel, Switzerland, Sept. 2, 1886)

“RESOLVED, That we recognize civil government as ordained of God, that order, justice, and quiet may be maintained in the land; and that the people of God may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty. In accordance with this fact we acknowledge the justice of rendering tribute, custom, honor, and reverence to the civil power, as enjoined in the New Testament. While we thus cheerfully render to Caesar the things which the Scriptures show to be his, we are compelled to decline all participation in acts of war and bloodshed as being inconsistent with the duties enjoined upon us by our divine Master toward our enemies and toward all mankind.” General Conference Resolution, May 17, 1865

“RESOLVED, That it is the judgment of this Conference, that the bearing of arms, or engaging in war, is a direct violation of the teachings of our Saviour and the spirit and letter of the law of God. Yet we deem it our duty to yield respect to civil rulers, and obedience to all such laws as do not conflict with the word of God. In the carrying out of this principle we render tribute, customs, reverence, etc.” General Conference Resolution, May 14, 1867

Some Specific Sins Requiring Church Discipline

“Christ has plainly taught that those who persist in open sin must be separated from the church, but He has not committed to us the work of judging character and motive.” COL 71

“Christ's example forbids exclusiveness at the Lord's Supper. It is true that open sin excludes the guilty. This the Holy Spirit plainly teaches. 1 Cor. 5:11. But beyond this none are to pass judgment. God has not left it with men to say who shall present themselves on these occasions. For who can read the heart? Who can distinguish the tares from the wheat?” DA 656

“I saw that decided efforts should be made to show those who are unchristian in life their wrongs, and if they do not reform, they should be separated from the precious and holy, that God may have a clean and pure people that He can delight in. Dishonor Him not by linking or uniting the clean with the unclean.” 1T 117, 118

“Brother ----- has been a great hindrance to the church. He should not be a member of the church unless his daily life is in harmony with his profession. God does not acknowledge him as His child. He stands today under the black banner of the powers of darkness. Satan has him completely under his control.” 5T 118

“Cleanse the camp of this moral corruption, if it takes the highest men in the highest positions. God will not be trifled with. Fornication is in our ranks; I know it, for it has been shown me to be strengthening and extending its pollutions. There is much we will never know; but that which is revealed makes the church responsible and guilty unless they show a determined effort to eradicate the evil. Cleanse the camp, for there is an accursed thing in it.” *The Sin of Licentiousness* (Quoted in TM 427, 428)

“Said the angel, ‘The ax has not been laid at the root of the tree.’ Those who have indulged in the wicked passions of the heart have been fellowshiped....God has not altered nor changed. He is a jealous God, and will not look upon sin now with any more allowance than He did among ancient Israel. Sin is sin. Sins have not been held forth in their sinfulness, but it has been made to appear as though sins have been lightly regarded by God.

“I saw that the seventh commandment has been violated by some who are now held in fellowship by the church. This has brought God's frown upon them. This sin is awful in these last days, but the church [members] have brought God's frown and curse upon them by regarding the sin so lightly. I saw it was an enormous sin and there have not been as vigilant efforts made as there should

have been to satisfy the displeasure of God and remove His frown by taking a strict, thorough course with the offender.

“It has had an awful, corrupting influence upon the young. They see how lightly the sin of breaking the seventh commandment is regarded, and the one who commits this horrid sin thinks that all he has to do is to confess that he was wrong and is sorry, and he is then to have all the privileges of the house of God and be held in [the] embrace or fellowship of the church.

“They have thought it was not so great a sin, but have lightly esteemed the breaking of the seventh commandment. This has been sufficient to remove the ark of God from the camp, if there were no other sins to cause the ark to be taken away and weaken Israel.

“Those who break the seventh commandment should be suspended from the church, and not have its fellowship nor the privileges of the house of God. Said the angel, ‘This is not a sin of ignorance. It is a knowing sin and will receive the awful visitation of God, whether he who commits it be old or young.’

“Never was this sin regarded by God as being so exceedingly sinful as at the present time. Why? Because God is purifying unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. It is at the very time when God is purifying this peculiar people unto Himself that [unsanctified] individuals step in among us. Notwithstanding the straight truths they have heard--the terrors of the Word of God set before them, and all the blazing truth for these last days calculated to arouse Israel--they sin with a high hand, give way to all the loose passions of the carnal heart, gratify their animal propensities, disgrace the cause of God, and then confess they have sinned and are sorry!

“And the church receives them and says ‘Amen’ to their prayers and exhortations, which are a stink in the nostrils of God, and cause His wrath to come upon the camp. He will not dwell in their assemblies. Those who move on thus heedlessly, plastering over these sins, will be left to their own ways, to be filled with their own doings.

“Those who anciently committed these sins were taken without the camp and stoned to death. Temporal and eternal death was their doom; and because the penalty of stoning to death is abolished, this sin is indulged in beyond measure and is thought to be a small offense.” Ms 3, 1854 (Quoted in TSB 247-249)

“Parents are responsible for the work coming from their hands. They should have wisdom and firmness to do their work faithfully and in the right spirit. They are to train their children for usefulness by developing their God-given talents. A failure to do this should not be winked at, but should be made a matter of church discipline, for it will bring the curse of God on the parents and a reproach and grievous trials and difficulties on the church. A moral leprosy that is contagious, polluting the bodies and souls of the youth, often results from a failure to discipline and restrain the young; and it is time that something was done to check its ravages.” 5T 327, 328

“We see steadily gaining ground in the church an evil which the word of God condemns. What is the duty of those in authority, in regard to this matter? Will the influence of the church be what it should be, while many of its members obey the dictates of fashion, rather than the clearly expressed will of God? How can we expect the presence and aid of the Holy Spirit, while we suffer these things to exist among us? Can we remain silent while the teachings of Christ are set aside by his professed followers? These things bring grief and perplexity to those who have the oversight of the church of God.” RH December 6, 1881

“It should be understood whether those who profess to be converted are simply taking the name of Seventh-day Adventists, or whether they are taking their stand on the Lord's side, to come out from the world, and be separate and touch not the unclean thing. When they give evidence that they fully understand their position, they are to be accepted. But when they show that they are following the customs and fashions and sentiments of the world, they are to be faithfully dealt with. If they feel no

burden to change their course of action, they should not be retained as members of the church.” PH086
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“I have been shown that our church rules are very deficient. All exhibitions of pride in dress, which is forbidden in the word of God, should be sufficient reason for church discipline. If there is a continuance, in face of warnings and appeals and entreaties, to still follow the perverse will, it may be regarded as proof that the heart is in no way assimilated to Christ. Self, and only self, is the object of adoration, and one such professed Christian will lead many away from God.

“There is a terrible sin upon us as a people, that we have permitted our church members to dress in a manner inconsistent with their faith. We must arise at once and close the door against the allurements of fashion. Unless we do this, our churches will become demoralized.” 4T 647, 648

“Boldness and immodesty must be met with a decided rebuke.” ST, December 30, 1880

“I then saw a lack of cleanliness among Sabbathkeepers. ... I saw that God was purifying unto Himself a peculiar people. He will have a clean and a holy people in whom He can delight. I saw that the camp must be cleansed, or God would pass by and see the uncleanness of Israel and would not go forth with their armies to battle....

“I saw that God would not acknowledge an untidy, unclean person as a Christian. His frown was upon such....

“I saw that the houses of the saints should be kept tidy and neat, free from dirt and filth and all uncleanness. I saw that the house of God had been desecrated by the carelessness of parents with their children and by the untidiness and uncleanness there. I saw that these things should meet with an open rebuke, and if there was not an immediate change in some that profess the truth in these things they should be put out of the camp.” 3SM 273, 274

“When trouble arises between brethren, the Saviour's rule should be strictly followed. All possible effort should be made to effect a reconciliation; but if the parties stubbornly persist in remaining at variance, they should be suspended till they can harmonize.” 5T 241

“He also enjoined upon the church to separate from their fellowship anyone who should persist in disregarding the instruction given by God's ministers. ‘Yet,’ he added, ‘count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.’” AA 267, 268

“...I was again shown the case of this deceived woman, and the danger of the church in listening to such teaching as came from her lips. Her course was calculated to disgrace the cause of God.... by her fanatical course she had forfeited all claims to christian fellowship.” 2SG 158, 159

“You have given occasion for the enemies of our faith to blaspheme, and to reproach Sabbathkeepers.... You have never looked upon slavery in the right light, and your views of this matter have thrown you on the side of the Rebellion, which was stirred up by Satan and his host. Your views of slavery cannot harmonize with the sacred, important truths for this time. You must yield your views or the truth. Both cannot be cherished in the same heart, for they are at war with each other....

“I saw you casting your influence with a degraded company, a Godforsaken company; and angels of God fled from you in disgust. I saw that you were utterly deceived. Had you followed the light which God has given you, had you heeded the instructions of your brethren, had you listened to their advice, you would have saved yourself and saved the precious cause of truth from reproach. But notwithstanding all the light given, you have given publicity to your sentiments. Unless you undo what you have done, it will be the duty of God's people to publicly withdraw their sympathy and fellowship from you, in order to save the impression which must go out in regard to us as a people. We must let it be known that we have no such ones in our fellowship, that we will not walk with them in church capacity.” 1T 359, 360

“Men and women have many habits that are antagonistic to the principles of the Bible. The victims of strong drink and tobacco are corrupted, body, soul and spirit. Such ones should not be

received into the church until they give evidence that they are truly converted, that they feel the need of the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. The truth of God will purify the true believer. He who is thoroughly converted will abandon every defiling habit and appetite. By total abstinence he will overcome his desire for health-destroying indulgences.” *Bible Training School* July 1, 1902

“Let all who profess to believe the truth for this time, and to be reformers, act in accordance with their faith. If one whose name is on the church book manufactures wine or cider for the market, he should be faithfully labored with, and, if he continues the practice, he should be placed under censure of the church. Those who will not be dissuaded from doing this work are unworthy of a place and a name among the people of God.” 5T 359

Preserving the Church

Each individual church is to keep its own borders free from fellowship with worldliness. Only speakers who believe and practice Bible truth and standards should be allowed the use of the pulpit. Only books and materials promoting uncorrupted truth and righteousness should be promoted and circulated. Materials containing adulterated truth or worldliness, be they quarterlies, books, videos, or Sabbath school papers, should not be used nor distributed. All participants in church programs, including musicians, song leaders, speakers, or teachers, must appear with modest, plain dress and appearance.

“I felt rather sad and ashamed when you stood upon the platform before the large crowd under the tent, with that light, large-figured dress... We who claim to be in the light, and who take prominent positions to instruct others in children's meetings, need to be severely plain, yet tidy and tasteful, in dress; we should not give a semblance of excuse to any for patterning after the worldly, changing fashions of this corrupt age. Those who dress after the order given in the Bible can, with appropriate words, help others to reach a proper standard. Do not come to me to ask how you shall dress. If our sisters have the Spirit of God abiding as a living principle in the heart, they will not in a single instance give occasion for any to turn aside the counsels of God by quoting the ministers' wives or those engaged in giving Bible-readings. Ever have your dress of good, durable material, and modest colors; let it be made plainly, without adornment.” MR926 23

“He has declared that the spiritual character of His church is to be carefully maintained. The church is in the world, and is to do a work for the world, but the doors of the church are not to be opened to worldliness. ‘Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up’ (Matt. 15:13). The church must be strictly guarded. Its sacred character must be demonstrated to the world.” Manuscript 114, Sept. 17, 1904 (Quoted in TDG 269)

“Truth and error cannot stand in copartnership. Let us now place ourselves where God has said that we should stand.... We are to strive for unity but not on the low level of conformity to worldly policy and union with the popular churches.” Letter 113, 1903 (Quoted in 2MCP 559)

“My message to you is: No longer consent to listen without protest to the perversion of truth. Unmask the pretentious sophistries which, if received, will lead ministers and physicians and medical missionary workers to ignore the truth. Every one is now to stand on his guard.... I have been instructed to warn our people; for many are in danger of receiving theories and sophistries that undermine the foundation pillars of the faith.” SpTB02 15

“Never should books containing a perversion of truth be placed before children or youth. And if those with mature minds had nothing to do with such books, they would be far safer.

“We have an abundance of that which is real, that which is divine. Those who thirst for knowledge need not go to polluted fountains.” 8T 309

“Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is

always dangerous.” 5T 292

“Many, many are very dull of comprehension in regard to their obligation to preserve the truth in its purity, uncontaminated by one vestige of error. Their danger is in holding the truth in light esteem, thus leaving upon minds the impression that it is of little consequence what we believe, if, by carrying out plans of human devising, we can exalt ourselves before the world as holding a superior position....

“God calls for men whose hearts are as true as steel, and who will stand steadfast in integrity, undaunted by circumstances. He calls for men who will remain separate from the enemies of the truth.” RH, February 1, 1906

“If ever there was a time when the writings of every one connected with our work should be closely criticized, it is now.” Manuscript 127, 1905 (Quoted in CW 158)

“Let the son of deceit and false witness be entertained by a church that has had great light, great evidence, and that church will discard the message the Lord has sent, and receive the most unreasonable assertions and false suppositions and false theories. Satan laughs at their folly, for he knows what truth is.

“Many will stand in our pulpits with the torch of false prophecy in their hands, kindled from the hellish torch of Satan.” TM 409, 410

“I was shown a platform, braced by solid timbers--the truths of the Word of God. Some one high in responsibility in the medical work was directing this man and that man to loosen the timbers supporting this platform. Then I heard a voice saying, 'Where are the watchmen that ought to be standing on the walls of Zion? Are they asleep? This foundation was built by the Master Worker, and will stand storm and tempest. Will they permit this man to present doctrines that deny the past experience of the people of God? The time has come to take decided action.'

“The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist in giving up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engaging in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place, what would result? The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error. A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure.

“Who has authority to begin such a movement? We have our Bibles. We have our experience, attested to by the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit. We have a truth that admits of no compromise. Shall we not repudiate everything that is not in harmony with this truth?” 1SM 204, 205

“What influence is it would lead men at this stage of our history to work in an underhand, powerful way to tear down the foundation of our faith--the foundation that was laid at the beginning of our work by prayerful study of the Word and by revelation? Upon this foundation we have been building for the past fifty years. Do you wonder that when I see the beginning of a work that would remove some of the pillars of our faith, I have something to say?...

“We are God's commandment-keeping people. For the past fifty years every phase of heresy has been brought to bear upon us, to becloud our minds regarding the teaching of the Word--especially concerning the ministration of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, and the message of Heaven for these last days, as given by the angels of the fourteenth chapter of Revelation. Messages of every order and

kind have been urged upon Seventh-day Adventists, to take the place of the truth which, point by point, has been sought out by prayerful study, and testified to by the miracle-working power of the Lord. But the waymarks which have made us what we are, are to be preserved, and they will be preserved, as God has signified through His Word and the testimony of His Spirit. He calls upon us to hold firmly, with the grip of faith, to the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority.” 1SM 207, 208