

## In God's Hand Part 1 - 12-9-23

*Our first text is found in Matthew 3:12:*

Matthew 3:12 **"Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."**

*We are being tested the same way like the early disciples. We are going through a period of purging and cleansing for the purification of the church while our heavenly High Priest mediates for us in the most holy place above. The fan in God's hand represents the words of truth that will separate the wheat from the chaff. The wheat represents the true Christians, while the chaff represents the nominal Christians. The purging is a difficult moment, a time of shaking. In fact, it has already started.*

**"The mighty shaking has commenced and will go on, and all will be shaken out who are not willing to take a bold and unyielding stand for the truth and to sacrifice for God and His cause."** {EW 50}

*And in what way will the shaking happen?*

"I asked the **meaning of the shaking** I had seen, and was shown that it would be **caused by the straight testimony** called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the **straight truth**. **Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this will cause a shaking among God's people.**" {1T 181.1}

*The Lord has appointed instruments in giving His words who will feed the flock with the present truth that we needed now. Not side issues nor smooth messages to divert our attention to the true message of the third angel.*

*Should we avoid the strong meat of present truth to prevent offending anyone? No. Galatians 4:16 says.*

Galatians 4:16 "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"

*Manuscript 1, 1854, also says:*

"If those who have been in the church for weeks and months have not learned the straightness of the way, and what it is to be Christians, and cannot hear all the straight truths of the Word of God, **it were better that they were cut off from Israel**. It is too late in the day to feed with milk. If souls a month or two old in the truth, who are about to enter the time of trouble such as never was, cannot hear all the straight truth, or endure the strong meat of the straightness of the way, **how will they stand in the day of battle?** Truths that we have been years learning must be learned in a few months by those who now **embrace the Third Angel's Message**. We had to search and wait the opening of truth, receiving a ray of light here and a ray there, laboring and pleading for God to reveal truth to us. But **now the truth is plain; its rays are brought together. The blazing light of truth when it is presented as it should be can be now seen and brought to bear upon the heart**. There is no need of milk after souls are convinced of the truth. **As soon as the conviction of truth is yielded to and the heart willing, the truth should have its effect, the truth will work like leaven, and purify and purge away the passions of the natural heart**. It is a disgrace for those who have been in the truth for years to talk of feeding souls who have been months in the truth, upon milk. It shows they know little of the leadings of the Spirit of the Lord, and realize not

the time we are living in. Those who embrace the truth now will have to step fast. There will have to be a breaking up of heart before the Lord, a rending of heart, and not the garment.” Manuscript 1, 1854, 2, 3

*The 11<sup>th</sup> hour movement, the remnant of her seed is privilege to have the blazing light of truth in these last days. That alone should make us more humble, inspired and be teachable with a grateful heart to our loving God.*

**“When it is essential for the purification of the church, trials are permitted. Under these trials some regard themselves as abused; and instead of humbling their hearts, they rise up in indignation. Satan watches his opportunity to present some pleasing sophistry that will captivate the minds of the tempted ones and will lead them to accept his fables.** Those who are thus deceived become channels through which other minds are seduced by delusive sentiments.” Manuscript 106, 1905, par. 33

*The reason why the Lord allow these trials and difficulties to happen is in order to reveal what’s in our hearts. Whether we will humble our hearts or will show stubbornness like ancient Israel.*

Isaiah 48:4 **“Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;”**

*The Lord knows best. Those who are offended will feel they were abused and rebel against the truth.*

***But we must put everything in God’s hands.***

*The Pharisees were offended because their errors were exposed by the truth He preached, Jesus answered and said in Matthew 15:13:*

Matthew 15:13 **“But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.”**

*The shaking is needed to keep the church pure. To be free from Achan in the camp.*

**“God is sifting His people.** He will have a clean and holy church. We cannot read the heart of man. But **the Lord has provided means to keep the church pure.** A corrupt people has arisen who could not live with the people of God. **They despised reproof, and would not be corrected.** They had an opportunity to know that theirs was an **unrighteous warfare.** **They had time to repent of their wrongs; but self was too dear to die.** They nourished it, and it grew strong, and **they separated from the trusting people of God, whom He is purifying unto Himself.** We all have reason to thank God that a way has been opened to save the church; for the wrath of God must have come upon us if these **corrupt pretenders** had remained with us.” {1T 99.3}

**What are these means to keep the church pure both in character and doctrines?**

1. Through varied trials

**“Afflictions, crosses, temptations, adversity, and our varied trials** are God's workmen to refine us, sanctify us, and fit us for the heavenly garner.” {3T 115.1}

2. By allowing deviation from the present truth or heresies to come in the church

**“God will arouse His people; if other means fail, heresies will come in among them, which will sift them, separating the chaff from the wheat.** The Lord calls upon all who believe His word to awake out of sleep.

Precious light has come, appropriate for this time. It is Bible truth, showing the perils that are right upon us." {5T 707.3}

*The spiritual enemy is seeking to shake our confidence in God and tempts us to distrust our Saviour. Satan hopes to discourage us and break our hold in God. Satan wanted to sifts the wheat. He don't care about the chaff. He will seek to harass and destroy the church. But we have to thank God because our Saviour is interceding for every one of us. We will only be safe in committing ourselves to God and rest our faith in God's hands. He is saying to us:*

Isaiah 41:10 "Fear thou not; for **I am with thee**: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: **I will strengthen thee**; yea, **I will help thee**; yea, **I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.**"

John 10:29 "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and **no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.**"

*According to 6T 400,*

**"As trials thicken around us, both separation and unity will be seen in our ranks.** Some who are now ready to take up **weapons of warfare** will in times of real peril make it manifest that **they have not built upon the solid rock**; they will yield to temptation. **Those who have had great light and precious privileges, but have not improved them, will, under one pretext or another, go out from us.** Not having received the love of the truth, they will be taken in the delusions of the enemy; they will give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and **will depart from the faith.** But, **on the other hand**, when the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, **the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice.** Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, **and many who have strayed from the fold will come back to follow the great Shepherd. The people of God will draw together and present to the enemy a united front.** In view of the common peril, strife for supremacy will cease; **there will be no disputing as to who shall be accounted greatest.** No one of the true believers will say: "I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas." The testimony of one and all will be: "I cleave unto Christ; I rejoice in Him as my personal Saviour." 6T 400.3

*We must do everything we can to carry out our duty to defend the truth at all costs with no compromise of sin or error. We must defeat our adversary the devil together as one by God's help. But be careful in pointing your weapon to your fellow soldier.*

**"We are to direct the weapons of our warfare against our foes, but never to turn them toward those who are under marching orders from the King of kings, who are fighting manfully the battles of the Lord of lords. Let no one aim at a soldier whom God recognizes, whom God has sent forth to bear a special message to the world and to do a special work."** Letter 48, 1894, par. 21

*The apostle Paul said in 1 Timothy 5:17:*

1 Timothy 5:17 "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of **double honour**, especially **they who labour in the word and doctrine.**"

*Those who are used by God to preach and teach the truth, to care for the flock, those who have gained a great deal of experience in serving the Lord, should be treated with utmost respect.*

*By despising and rejecting the appointed leaders of the church is a great insult to God. You can read that in 4T 393 and 3T 355.*

"The people should **not** regard their ministers as mere public speakers and orators, but as Christ's ambassadors, receiving their wisdom and power from the great Head of the church. **To slight and disregard the word spoken by Christ's representative is not only showing disrespect to the man, but also to the Master who has sent him.** He is in Christ's stead; and the voice of the Saviour should be heard in His representative." 4T 393.2

"It is hardly possible for men to offer a **greater insult to God** than to despise and reject the instrumentalities that He has appointed to lead them." {3T 355.2}

*Nobody is infallible in our midst like what the pope claims. We are all prone to commit mistakes, myself included. But when we do we must be humble enough and ready to correct them by God's grace for this is one means of cleansing us.*

*I feel happy and thanking the Lord when I see young men and women who are doing their part in sharing the truth to others. We have many young people here who have potentials and talents they can dedicate to serve the Lord. In fact, I learned one of our SDR kids wanted to be a minister when he grows up. I praise the Lord on that! Keep in mind, the harvest is ready but the laborers are few. We need more laborers in God's vineyard. Let's pray for more. God is calling you to the field. You can respond like what Isaiah said, "here am I, send me" In Isaiah 6:8.*

Isaiah 6:8 "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, **Here am I; send me.**"

*But there is a warning for those who have just began working for the Lord:*

"I was shown that **those** who have but **recently commenced to labor in this message should not move without counsel from those who have an experience in this message**, and **they should not dictate as to the arrangements and best manner of carrying forward this message**, for they would be in danger of making decisions which, if carried out, would prove an entire failure." {RH, August 19, 1862 par. 7}

*Yes, taking counsel from the men of experience in the church is essential or he will be in danger to make bad decisions.*

*When someone is claiming that he has new light, the rule is this; this should not contradict the established faith of the body.*

"God has not passed His people by and chosen **one solitary man here and another there** as the only ones worthy to be entrusted with His truth. **He does not give one man new light contrary to the established faith of the body. In every reform men have arisen making this claim.** Paul warned the church in his day: "Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." (Acts 20:30) The greatest harm to God's people comes through those who go out from among them speaking perverse things. Through them the way of truth is evil spoken of." {5T 291.2}

*If someone think that he has a new light, he has to submit it to the experienced brethren first.*

"There are a thousand temptations in disguise prepared for those who have the light of truth; and **the only safety for any of us is in receiving no new doctrine, no new interpretation of the Scriptures,**

**without first submitting it to brethren of experience.** Lay it before them in a humble, teachable spirit, with earnest prayer; and **if they see no light in it, yield to their judgment;** for "in the multitude of counselors there is safety." {5T 293.1}

*So, if the ordained leaders and elders of the church do not see light in it, you have to submit to their judgment and do not push the issue of it because it is unsafe. Because if you do, Satan will take advantage to enter in the church by sugar-coating these side issues with beauty and importance which are dangerous to allow.*

**"That which Brother D calls light is apparently harmless; it does not look as though anyone could be injured by it. But, brethren, it is Satan's device, his entering wedge. This has been tried again and again. One accepts some new and original idea which does not seem to conflict with the truth. He talks of it and dwells upon it until it seems to him to be clothed with beauty and importance, for Satan has power to give this false appearance. At last it becomes the all-absorbing theme, the one great point around which everything centers; and the truth is uprooted from the heart."** {5T 292.1}

**"No sooner are erratic ideas started in his mind than Brother D begins to lose faith and to question the work of the Spirit** which has been manifested among us for so many years. He is not a man who will entertain what he believes to be special light without imparting it to others; **therefore it is not safe to give him influence that will enable him to unsettle other minds. It is opening a door through which Satan will rush in many errors to divert the mind from the importance of the truth for this time.** Brethren, as an ambassador of Christ I warn you to **beware of these side issues, whose tendency is to divert the mind from the truth. Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is always dangerous.** The enemy has great power over minds that are not thoroughly fortified by prayer and established in Bible truth." {5T 292.2}

*In other words, when someone among the rank claim he has the new light that the image of the beast is still future and not the 501c3. That is contrary to the establish faith of the body because we all have the evidence of truth to back it up which is found in <https://www.remnantofgod.org/image.htm>. **Beware of this side issue, for that is a peace and safety message! It is dangerous!***

*Not only that, when someone in our rank become one sided about his understanding on the principles of health reform and urge his mistaken view to someone. It is dangerous!*

*I will give you 3 basic principles what Sister White laid down. But there are more.*

1. "The diet reform should be progressive." MH 320 (1905)
2. "We do not mark out any precise line to be followed in diet." 9T 159 (1909)
3. "I make myself a criterion for no one else." Letter 45, 1903

*Majority in our church here are vegetarians or vegans, because animal products are no longer safe because of the drugs being injected to them. Some maybe still eating some clean fish or meats. Nothing wrong with that because diet reform is progressive. The transition process to plant-based diet takes time. Our statement of faith about the health message is very clear on that subject.*

*We also discard caffeinated tea and coffee because they are sinful indulgences and we have to discard them completely according to Manuscript 44, 1896. Because they are poisonous narcotics. But, in*

*Manuscript 5, 1881 it says, we cannot place on the same ground meat, eggs, butter, cheese and such articles upon the table. **These are not to be borne in front, as the burden of our work.***

**“Tea and coffee drinking is a sin,** an injurious indulgence, which, like other evils, injures the soul.”  
11LtMs, Ms 44, 1896, par. 10, December 4, 1896

“Tea, coffee, tobacco, and alcohol we must present as sinful indulgences. **We cannot place on the same ground meat, eggs, butter, cheese, and such articles placed upon the table. These are not to be borne in front, as the burden of our work.** The former, **tea, coffee, tobacco, beer, wine, and all spirituous liquors, are not to be taken moderately, but discarded.** The **poisonous narcotics** are not to be treated in the same way as the subject of eggs, butter, and cheese.” 3LtMs, Ms 5, 1881, par. 16

*It is true that the use of spices is not healthful because it irritates the stomach and make the blood feverish and impure just like meat and cheese, so it is better to avoid them... Don't get me wrong about that. However, if someone among the rank push his mistaken idea to others, and will make a precise rule for everybody by saying NOT to use spices in cooking your food or not to be eaten because Sister White said so. You have to beware -- **for this is a sign of fanaticism!** Why? Because many dried herbs and greens that our body needs for nourishment to season our food are now labeled as spices nowadays like cummin, basil, parsley or mint, onion, garlic, etc.*

*I'm saddened that some among the ranks who have unbalanced mind with regards to the principles of health reform accused me of lowering the standard and in error because some time ago I declared that cayenne is okay. But some were offended. Why? They became one sided. When in reality, James and Ellen White themselves have used it.*

*Sister White wrote that James White became very ill, in Letter 9, 1877, she prepared a cup of “weak red pepper tea.” He had further complications after this, but eventually recovered.*

“Your father had a very ill turn yesterday which greatly alarmed us all. He had been working very hard and very successfully in disposing of difficult matters and taking in hand cases that needed to be managed. He then sat up till midnight writing for Review. He seemed very cheerful, nothing seemed to weigh upon his mind. In the morning he said he felt rather bad. **I prepared a cup of weak red pepper tea.** He then came to the table, but seemed to be bewildered. He called for articles he had taken upon his plate and placed the things beside his plate instead of in the plate. We saw that he could not see. This was done with several things. I persuaded him to leave the table, and I placed his feet at once in hot water and bathed his head.” 3LtMs, Lt 9, 1877, par. 1, August 21, 1877

*In 1905, when Sister White became ill with cold and in severe pain, she requested Cayenne Pepper and obtained relief after its use. You can read that in Letter 353, 1905.*

“I had an ill turn that night. The wind came up while we were searching for a place to rest. I think I took cold. I was in such severe pain **I called for cayenne pepper and obtained some relief,** but the same kind of a cold I had when at San Diego was upon me.” 20LtMs, Lt353, 1905, par. 3, August 27, 1905

*To add more, back in 1873, she used ginger.*

“In regard to our using spice, I plead not guilty. We have not had spice in our house for ten years **except a little ginger**, which **we have always used to some extent.**” 2LtMs, Lt 1, 1873, par. 47

*Having a little ginger or weak cayenne, a little kick for prevention of diseases is not a denial of faith. But temperance still applies. In using certain herbs or spices to season our food or health remedies we have to use it wisely and you can avoid those things that cause you inconvenience:*

“It is **no denial of faith to use rational remedies judiciously**. Water, air, and sunshine, these are God’s healing agents. The **use of certain herbs** that the Lord has made to grow for the good of man is in harmony with the exercise of faith.” Manuscript 31, 1911 (written June 3, 1888)

*We have to be tolerant of other people’s manner of eating because It is impossible to make one rule for all to follow. Why?*

“There is a wide difference in constitutions and temperaments, and the demands of the system differ greatly in different persons. **What would be food for one, might be poison for another**; so precise rules cannot be laid down to fit every case.” 7LtMs, Lt 19a, 1891, par. 8, April 2, 1891 (CDF 494)

“**The same rule of eating can not be made for all**. I make it a rule never to eat custards; for when I eat them, they always make a disturbance in my stomach. But there are those in my family who suffer no inconvenience from **eating custards**, and because I can not eat them, I do not say that they ought not to eat them. **We must each experiment and know for ourselves what is best for us to eat. We may have to abstain from many things that others can eat without inconvenience.**” SpM 260, 18LtMs, Lt 44, 1903, par. 14, March 9, 1903

*Who are these one-sided people who are urging these side issues to the people or their families?*

“**Those who have but a partial understanding of the principles of reform are often the most rigid, not only in carrying out their views themselves, but in urging them on their families and their neighbors.** The effect of their mistaken reforms, as seen in their own ill-health, and their efforts to force their views upon others, give many a false idea of dietetic reform, and lead them to reject it altogether.” MH 318.4

*So I have a question, am I lowering the standard? Am I preaching error? No. My solemn duty to God is to educate the people. It is our solemn duty to expose fanaticism because it never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is always dangerous.*

*In teaching health reform, it is better to make mistakes on the side of the people than going to opposite extremes of indulgence or restriction otherwise people will lose confidence in your sound judgment. Why?*

“If you err, let it not be in getting as far from the people as possible, for then you cut the thread of your influence and can do them no good. Better err on the side of the people than altogether away from them, for there is hope in that case that you can carry the people with you, but there is no need of error on either side. **You need not go into the water, or into the fire, but take the middle path, avoiding all extremes.**” Letter 57, 1886 {CD 211.3}

*So let’s avoid this fanaticism, extremes. The extreme of indulgence and the extreme of restriction. Let’s take the middle path. Let us be balanced. Let’s experiment what is best on us. We have the guide in the*

*Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. Study your system and listen to your body. If a certain food give discomfort in you, in your stomach, stop using it!*

*What is the standard or TEST for God's people? What is the burden of our message?*

**“God's holy law is the only standard** by which we can estimate divine affection. **If we do not accept the law of God as our standard, we set up a standard of our own.”** RH June 17, 1890 (1SM 311)

“The question whether we shall eat **butter, meat, or cheese** is **not** to be presented to anyone as a test, but **we are to educate and to show the evils of the things that are objectionable**. Those who gather up these things and drive them upon others do not know what work they are doing. The Word of God has given tests to His people. **The keeping of God's holy law, the Sabbath, is a test, a sign between God and His people throughout their generations forever. Forever this is the burden of the third angel's message—the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.”** 3LtMs, Ms 5, 1881, par. 15 (3SM 287)

*The enemy is trying to destroy the church with confusion through minor issues, side issues and fanaticism. But let us not allow this to happen my dear brothers and sisters. Remember, we are safe only in God's hand. We will continue next week God willing this study.*

*I hope and pray that you are blessed with what we shared today.*

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## In God's Hand Part 2 – 12-16-23

*Our first text is found in Isaiah:*

Isaiah 1:25 “And **I will turn my hand upon thee**, and purely **purge away thy dross**, and **take away all thy tin:**”

*The hand of God indicates his power, his divine aid or favor to his children or church to cleanse and purify us so that we are prepared to be gathered into heaven.*

*It also represents his punishment or discipline for those who rebel or disobey him.*

1 Samuel 12:15 “But if ye will **not obey** the voice of the LORD, but **rebel** against the commandment of the LORD, then shall **the hand of the LORD be against you**, as it was against your fathers.”

*When David sinned in numbering Israel, God provided him with three options for punishment: 1.) three years of famine, 2.) three months of war, fleeing before his enemies, or 3.) three days of plague. David chooses the third.*

*And here is Why?*

1 Chronicles 21:13 “And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: **let me fall now into the hand of the LORD; for very great are his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man.**”

*By choosing the third option of punishment, David knew that it's better to rely on the mercy of God than to the mercy of man. David magnified the Lord when he said:*

Psalms 89:14 “**Justice and judgment** are the habitation of thy throne: **mercy and truth shall go before thy face.**”

*Yes, we have to understand that justice and mercy are twin sisters. They have to blend together. True, God is a God of Justice and a God of mercy and love at the same time.*

*The apostle Peter fell because of his former pride and self-confidence. But he repented and submitted himself in God's hand. Because he acknowledged and confessed his sin, the Lord raised him up again..*

*And because of his first-hand experience, he was inspired by God to utter these words to us:*

1 Peter 5:6-7 “**Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God**, that he may **exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.**”

*Humbleness, yes, Christian humility is a wonderful grace, this is the antidote for pride. It will help us discern our weakness and imperfection.*

*While facing tests and difficulties is never pleasant, it is very comforting and peaceful to know, by faith, that we are in God's hands. When we fall into sin due to our weakness, we must come to him and beg him to help us and to lift us up. Our God understands, he is wise and loving, and he is not indifferent about our problems, worries, struggles, and troubles we carry. We just have to trust everything to him. He cares a lot. He will hold you and me in his hands and take care of us.*

*And because Jesus, our high priest, is mediating now for us to the Father in the most holy place of heavenly sanctuary, we can also claim his prayer for Peter in Luke 22.*

Luke 22:31-32 “And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, **Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:** 32 **But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not:** and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”

*Satan doesn't need the chaff for the wicked is already on his side. He wanted the wheat. He desired to have the elect. He is trying to get you and me out of God's hands.*

*The fall of David and Peter was recorded to remind us how foolish it is to depend on our own human wisdom and strength because we will always fail.*

*However, we are told in the Bible that the just and wicked react differently when they fall.*

Proverbs 24:16 “For a **just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again:** but **the wicked shall fall into mischief.**”

*The wicked will not recover when they fall into sin because they have no strong arm to uphold them. But the righteous will come out brighter and more refined every time he passes through trials and sins because he recognizes his own weakness and believe in Christ's righteousness and continue to live righteously in this evil world. Listen to this encouraging words:*

**“When we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, we shall have no relish for sin;** for Christ will be working with us. **We may make mistakes, but we will hate the sin** that caused the sufferings of the Son of God.” RH, March 18, 1890

**“God does not give us up because of our sins. We may make mistakes, and grieve His Spirit; but when we repent, and come to Him with contrite hearts, He will not turn us away.”** RH, April 15, 1884

*Brothers and sisters, When we wear the righteousness of Christ, we may make mistakes but we will not be attracted to commit sin willfully anymore. Yes, we will hate the sin as a leprosy. The enemy will continue to prevent us to gain heaven. But we must stand up and keep going. We are in the process of sanctification. True sanctification means perfect love, perfect obedience and entire conformity to the will of God; on a daily basis. Perfection of character is not an overnight work. It is a work of a lifetime but we are privilege to be perfect in this life and reach the standard of perfection he wanted us to attain while we are waiting for Christ return. This is also the reason why 1 John 1:9 is in the Bible so that we can go to God for forgiveness as soon as you discern your sins. He will not turn us away.*

1 John 1:9 **“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins,** and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

*When Jesus gave the outline of prayer to His disciples in Matthew 6:10, he said*

Matthew 6:10 **“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”**

*This shows that God's government should be preserved on earth as it is in heaven.*

*Our God is a God of order.*

1 Corinthians 14:33 “For **God is not the author of confusion, but of peace**, as in all churches of the saints.”

*Confusion is Babylon. All the major churches now are in confusion because of their rejection of truth. Confusion has no place in the church of God.*

“The God of heaven is a God of order, and He requires all His followers to **have rules and regulations, and to preserve order.**” 5T 274

*To maintain the purity of the church, the Lord has given us rules and regulations, as well as gospel order in dealing with its erring members. Those who refuse to submit or obey the judgment of the church will have to face a corresponding punishment because there are Bible rules to be followed:*

“**The world's Redeemer has invested great power with His church. He states the rules to be applied in cases of trial with its members.** After He has given explicit directions as to the course to be pursued, He says: “Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever **[in church discipline]** ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” [Matthew 18:18-19] Thus even the heavenly authority ratifies the discipline of the church in regard to its members when the **Bible rule** has been followed.” {3T 428.1}

*This bible rule should make us very careful in our Christian walk.*

“Brethren, **never allow anyone's ideas to unsettle your faith in regard to the order and harmony which should exist in the church.** Many of you do not see all things clearly. The directions in regard to order in the tabernacle service were recorded that lessons might be drawn from it by all who should live upon the earth. Men were selected to do various parts of the work of setting up and taking down the tabernacle, and if one strayed in carelessly and put his hands to the work assigned to another, he was to be put to death. We serve the same God today. **But the death penalty has been abolished;** had it not been, there would not now be so much careless, disorderly work in His cause.” 5T 274.

*In the Old Testament times, the word cut-off means physical death or death penalty. But the death penalty has been abolished in our time. The word cut-off in the New Testament is now used to mean separate, exclude, suspend, or remove sinners from the congregation or fellowship to keep the church pure. This church discipline must be maintained in the church or it would fall apart.*

“The word of God does **not** give license for **one man to set up his judgment in opposition to the judgment of the church**, neither is he allowed to urge his opinions against the opinions of the church. **If there were no church discipline and government, the church would go to fragments; it could not hold together as a body.** There have ever been **individuals of independent minds who have claimed that they were right, that God had especially taught, impressed, and led them.** Each has a theory of his own, views peculiar to himself, and each claims that his views are in accordance with the word of God. Each one has a different theory and faith, yet each claims special light from God. **These draw away from the body, and each one is a separate church of himself.** All these **cannot be right**, yet they all claim to be led of the Lord. **The word of Inspiration is not Yea and Nay, but Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus.**” {3T 428.2}

*These words, dear brothers and sisters, are being said in front of our eyes. The enemy is wide-awake and preparing with his minions how to attack and harm us with his different tactics, as we move forward with sanctified effort and united work, planting the standard of the righteousness of Christ in the church,*

*the spiritual battle will be more intense. Satan's goal was to deceive the very elect. The remnant of her seed. And we must be vigilant.*

“Our work must be an earnest one. We are not to fight as those that beat the air. **The ministry, the pulpit, and the press demand men like Caleb, who will do and dare, men whose eyes are single to detect the truth from error, whose ears are consecrated to catch the words from the faithful Watcher.** And the Spirit from the throne of God will make itself felt upon a degenerate Christianity, a corrupt world, ready to be consumed by the long-deferred judgments of an offended God.” SpTA11 5.1 (Special Testimonies for Ministers and Workers, 1898)

*How does God regards sin in his people?*

“I have been shown that **God here illustrates how He regards sin among those who profess to be His commandment-keeping people.** Those whom He has specially honored with witnessing the remarkable exhibitions of His power, as did ancient Israel, and who will even then venture to disregard His express directions, will be subjects of His wrath. He would teach His people that disobedience and sin are exceedingly offensive to Him and are 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 that sin from them, that His frown may not rest upon them all. But **if the sins of the people are passed over by those in responsible positions, His frown will be upon them, and the people of God, as a body, will be held responsible for those sins.** In His dealings with His people in the past the Lord shows the **necessity of purifying the church from wrongs. One sinner may diffuse darkness that 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, they should seek God earnestly, in great humility and self-abasement, until the wrongs which grieve His Spirit are searched out and put away.” 3T 265**

*So how dangerous is one sinner in the camp?*

Ecclesiastes 9:18 “Wisdom is better than weapons of war: but **one sinner destroyeth much good.**”

*One sinner, one Judas, One Achan in a camp, or one fanatic in the church can bring disaster in the whole church. If these sins or open sinners are not checked, if the responsible leaders of the church overlook and ignore them, God's anger will fall on us all, for we are all corporately responsible for those sins. We must seek out and put away sins in our midst..*

“**We have far more to fear from within than from without.** The hindrances to strength and success are far greater from the church itself than from the world. Unbelievers have a right to expect that those who profess to be keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus will do more than any other class to promote and honor, by their consistent lives, by their godly example and their active influence, the cause which they represent. But **how often have the professed advocates of the truth proved the greatest obstacle to its advancement. The unbelief indulged, the doubts expressed, the darkness cherished, encourage the presence of evil angels, and open the way for the accomplishment of Satan's devices.**” ST May 17, 1883, par. 4

“Many are in reality fighting his battles while they profess to serve under the banner of Christ. **These traitors in the camp may not be suspected, but they are doing their work to create unbelief, discord, and strife. Such are the most dangerous of foes.** While they insinuate themselves into our favor, and gain our confidence and sympathy, they are busy suggesting doubts and creating suspicion. They work

in the same manner as did Satan in Heaven when he deceived the angels by his artful representations, placing darkness for light, and making the forbearance and mercy of God to appear as harshness and severity. As he worked at the beginning, so he works in the end, only **concealing** himself more perfectly from view." RH August 28, 1883, par. 24

*Treason, is one of the traits that is considered dangerous in the last days as in the past.*

2 Timothy 3:4 "**Traitors**, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;"

"The gospel of Christ has little to fear from its open enemies. **Its most dangerous foes are its pretended friends,—unconsecrated Christians**, who profess to be serving Christ, while in their lives they deny him. Such drive many away from the Saviour." YI January 22, 1903, par. 1

*Satan always disguises himself as a chameleon to deceive us. He is using traitors in the camp, the pretended friends and unconsecrated members to sow discord or confusion and drive away God's presence of God from the church. Treason is a grave sin whether committed in the heart of an individual or in the church.*

*Let us listen to this solemn warning:*

**"We are nearing the end of time. Trials will be abundant from without, but let them not come from within the church.** Let God's professed people deny self for the truth's sake, for Christ's sake." {5T 483.2}

*There are rules in governing church discipline.*

### **Rules in governing church discipline.**

#### **1. On matters regarding Personal Injuries follow Matthew 18:15-17**

"If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother" (Matthew 18:15). **This is the way in which misunderstandings are to be settled.** Speaking alone, and in the spirit of Christ to the one who is in fault, will often remove the difficulty. Show Christlike love for your brother by seeking to adjust the difficulty "between thee and him alone." Talk quietly together. Let no angry words escape your lips. Present the subject in a way that will appeal to his best judgment. And if he will hear you, you have gained him as a friend. **Whatever the character of the offense may be, this does not change the plan God has made for the settlement of misunderstandings and personal injuries.** Act out the spirit of Christ. Take the recipe God has provided, and carry it to the spiritually diseased [one]. Give him the remedy that will cure the disease of disaffection. Do your part to help him. Feel that it is a duty and privilege to do this, for the sake of the unity and peace of the church, which is very dear to the heart of Christ. He does not want any wound to remain unhealed on any member of His church. All heaven is interested in the interview between the injured member and the one who has been guilty of error. After settling the difficulty, pray together, and angels of God will come to you and bless you. There is music in heaven over this union." Manuscript 47, April 2, 1902

#### **2. On matters pertaining to Public Wrongs which threatened the prosperity of the church follow 1 Timothy 5:20**

1 Timothy 5:20 "Them that sin **rebuke before all**, that others also may fear."

“Her husband seemed to feel unreconciled to my bringing out her faults before the church and stated that if Sister White had followed the directions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 he should not have felt hurt: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

“My husband [James White] then stated that he should understand that these words of our **Lord had reference to cases of personal trespass, and could not be applied in the case of this sister. She had not trespassed against Sister White. But that which had been reproved publicly was public wrongs which threatened the prosperity of the church and the cause.** Here, said my husband, is a text applicable to the case: 1 Timothy 5:20: "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." 2T 14-16

*There should not be any hasty action to be taken by church members in cutting off those they may think defective in character.*

*However, when it comes to public sin and when the prosperity of the church is threatened and endangered, the church has solemn duty to act quickly, speedily to stop and implement disciplinary action as a warning to all to preserve order. As in the cases of Ananias and Sapphira in the days of the apostles and the case of Achan in the days of Joshua.*

*Those who are subjected to church discipline, unfortunately, will always sympathizers, called false sympathizers.*

**“Some will lay blame upon the one whom God has sent with a message of warning, saying, He is too severe; and in so doing they become responsible for the soul of the sinner whom God desired to save, and to whom, because He loved him, He sent correction, that he might humble his soul before God and put his sins from him. These false sympathizers will have an account to settle with the Master by-and-by for their work of death.”** 3T 329.1

“There are murmurers among us now, even as there were murmurers among ancient Israel. **Those who by unwise sympathy encourage men in rebellion when their self-love is smarting beneath merited reproof are not the friends of God, the great Reprover.** God will send reproof and warning to His people as long as they continue upon earth.” {4T 180.3}

*The true friends of God, are those who fearlessly stand on the right side, who is trying to correct the errors of His people in love, so that God may wash them and cleanse them from their sins.*

*Brothers and sisters, if we do not follow the Bible rules in implementing church order and discipline we will bring God’s judgment on the church. Let us do our heaven-sent duty and responsibility by establishing order and discipline to the camp and cleansing it of Achans before it is too late.*

*Keep in mind:*

Hebrews 10:31 “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

**“Were there no justice, no penalty, there would be no stability to the government of God.** It is the mingling of judgment and mercy that makes salvation complete. It is the blending of the two that leads

us, as we view the world's Redeemer, and the law of Jehovah, to exclaim, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." RH, December 13, 1892

*This is just a thought: Have you ever noticed how angry Satan was when the church began holding prayer meetings and begun studying the Righteousness of Christ? What did you notice? The enemy has caused trouble and distractions in the church by bringing in side issues and fanaticism in order to divert our focus away from our holy work of unity and perfection. He wanted to keep us from receiving the large measure of the latter rain, the ten times power that He promised! But once again, the Lord allowed these things to happen in order to purify His church. But the enemy will not win, he will not triumph! He is no match for God's power. He is a defeated foe. He can only win if we give him the chance.*

**"There is nothing that Satan fears so much as that the people of God shall clear the way by removing every hindrance, so that the Lord can pour out His Spirit upon a languishing church and an impenitent congregation.** If Satan had his way, there would never be another awakening, great or small, to the end of time. **But we are not ignorant of his devices. It is possible to resist his power. When the way is prepared for the Spirit of God, the blessing will come.** Satan can no more hinder a shower of blessing from descending upon God's people than he can close the windows of heaven that rain cannot come upon the earth. Wicked men and devils cannot hinder the work of God, or shut out His presence from the assemblies of His people, **if they will, with subdued, contrite hearts, confess and put away their sins, and in faith claim His promises. Every temptation, every opposing influence, whether open or secret, may be successfully resisted, "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts"** (Zechariah 4:6). RH, March 22, 1887 {1SM 124.2}

*We must all ask the Lord to help us diligently search and know our hearts in these borrowed time. Our prayers should be offered in the same way that David did:*

Psalms 139:23-24 "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: 24 And see if there be any wicked way in me, and **lead me in the way everlasting.**"

"The coming of the Lord is nearer than when we first believed. What a wonderful thought it is that the great controversy is nearing its end! **In the closing work we shall meet with perils that we know not how to deal with; but let us not forget that the three great powers of heaven are working, that a divine hand is on the wheel, and that God will bring His purposes to pass. He will gather from the world a people who will serve Him in righteousness.**

"Fearful perils are before those who bear responsibilities in the Lord's work--perils the thought of which makes me tremble. But the word comes, "**My hand is on the wheel, and in My providence I will carry out the divine plan.**" RH, May 5, 1903.

**"The great crisis is just before us.** To meet its trials and temptations, and to perform its duties, will require persevering faith. But we may triumph gloriously; not one watching, praying, believing soul will be ensnared by the enemy." {6T 404.1}

*During the crisis in Galilee after Jesus fed the five thousand, many followers of Jesus turned their backs on him because they were offended by the sacred truth. Many people rejected Jesus because they only wanted the temporal kingdom and meat that sinful world provided. Because of their selfish ambition, their love turned to hatred and their praise to curses. They rejected Jesus. Very sad, Jesus saw them*

*leaving but without attempting them to stop. Then, Jesus turned to His twelve disciples, and asked them a question? In John 6:66-68 I read:*

John 6:60-61,64-68 “Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? 61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, **Doth this offend you?** 64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. 65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. 66 **From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.** 67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, **Will ye also go away?** 68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, **to whom shall we go?** thou hast the words of eternal life.”

*This question applies to us as well. This is a great test for everyone! When we face a crisis in life or a difficulty in the church, let's not be disappointed or offended because the blazing light of truth has been revealed to us; instead, remember our Saviour's question, Will you also go away? Remember God's promise that He is holding the wheel and will safely bring us to the harbor.*

*And lastly, let me leave these words of the Lord to all of you before we end. In Ecclesiastes 9:1 and Steps to Christ pages 80-81.*

Ecclesiastes 9:1 “For all this I considered in my heart even to declare all this, that **the righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God:** no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them.”

“If you will leave yourself in His hands, He will bring you off more than conqueror through Him that has loved you ... But let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, and He will preserve us. Looking unto Jesus, we are safe. **Nothing can pluck us out of His hand.**” SC 80-81

*I hope and pray that you are blessed with what we shared this Sabbath day.*

**END**

- Part 1 Notes: <https://sdrmovement.org/note/120923.html>
- Part 2 Notes: <https://sdrmovement.org/note/121623.html>