

Our Present Duty and Man-made Tests

Some Helpful Quotes shared by

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Greetings to all,

I am sending out these quotes to allow the Bible and SOP to clearly define what our present duty is today since the restraining of the 4 winds on 9/11 and to allow inspiration to warn us against placing man-made tests in place of the Word of God. Quotes are at the bottom of this email. I pray that God helps us all to take heed and to obey a plain "thus saith the Lord" rather than abstract patterns and the opinions of men.

Blessings to you all,

PR. I. Richards

Director/Speaker: Restoring the Old Paths Ministry

"While the angels hold the four winds, we are to work with all our capabilities. We must bear our message without any delay. We must give evidence to the heavenly universe, and to men in this degenerate age, that our religion is a faith and a power of which Christ is the Author and His word the divine oracle. Human souls are hanging in the balance. They will either be subjects for the kingdom of God or slaves to the despotism of Satan. All are to have the privilege of laying hold of the hope set before them in the gospel, and how can they hear without a preacher? The human family is in need of a moral renovation, a preparation of character, that they may stand in God's presence. There are souls ready to perish because of the theoretical errors which are prevailing, and which are calculated to counterwork the gospel message. Who will now fully consecrate themselves to become laborers together with God?

Today a large part of those who compose our congregations are dead in trespasses and sins. They come and go like the door upon its hinges. For years they have complacently listened to the most solemn, soul-stirring truths, but they have not put them in practice. Therefore they are less and less sensible of the preciousness of truth. The stirring testimonies of reproof and warning do not arouse them to repentance. The sweetest melodies that come from God through human lips—justification by faith, and the righteousness of Christ—do not call forth from them a response of love and gratitude. Though the heavenly Merchantman displays before them the richest jewels of faith and love, though He invites them to buy of Him "gold tried in the fire," and white raiment" that they may be clothed, and "eyesalve" that they may see, they steel their hearts against Him, and fail to exchange their lukewarmness for love and zeal. While making a profession, they deny the power of godliness. If they continue in this state, God will reject them. They are unfitting themselves to be members of His family.

Let church members bear in mind that the fact that their names are registered on the church books will not save them. They must show themselves approved of God, workmen that need not be ashamed. Day by day they are to build their characters in accordance with Christ's directions. They are to abide in Him, constantly exercising faith in Him. Thus they will grow up to the full stature of men and women in Christ—wholesome, cheerful, grateful Christians, led by God into clearer and still clearer light. If this is not their experience, they will be among those whose voices will one day be raised in the bitter lamentation: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and my soul is not saved! Why did I not flee to the Stronghold for refuge? Why have I trifled with my soul's salvation, and done despite to the Spirit of grace?"

Brethren and sisters who have long claimed to believe the truth, I ask you individually, Have your practices been in harmony with the light, the privileges, and the opportunities granted you of heaven? This is a serious question. The Sun of Righteousness has risen upon the church, and it is the duty of the church to shine. It is the privilege of every soul to make advancement. Those who are connected with Christ will grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Son of God, to the full stature of men and women. If all who claim to believe the truth had made the most of their ability and opportunities to learn and to do, they would have become strong in Christ. Whatever their occupation—whether they were farmers, mechanics, teachers, or pastors—if they had wholly consecrated themselves to God they would have become efficient workers for the heavenly Master." - {CCh 67-68}

This quote is from Volume 9 of the Testimonies and clearly explains our duty to God and man during the day of the Lord's preparation prior to the Sunday Law. The title of this testimony is, "A Time of Preparation".

"We are living in the great antitypical day of atonement. We must individually seek God. This is a personal work. Let us draw near to God, allowing nothing to come into our efforts that would misrepresent the truth for this time. Let everyone confess, not his brother's sin, but his own sin. Let him humble his heart before God and become so filled with the Holy Spirit that his life will show that he has been born again. We read: "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1:12.

The gospel of Christ is to be lived, practiced in the daily life. The servants of God are to be cleansed from all coldness, all selfishness. Simplicity, meekness, lowliness are of great value in the work of God. Try to unite the workers in confidence and love. If you cannot do this, be right yourselves, and leave the rest with God. Labor in faith and prayer. Select Christian youth, and train them to be, not workers with hearts like iron, but workers who are willing to harmonize.

I pray that the Lord will change the hearts of those who, unless they receive more grace, will enter into temptation. I pray that He will soften and subdue every heart. We need to live in close fellowship with God, that we may love one another as Christ has loved us. It is by this that the world is to know that we are His disciples. Let there be no self-exaltation. If the workers will humble their hearts before God, the blessing will come. They will all the while be receiving fresh, new ideas, and there will be a wonderful revival of gospel medical missionary work.

The great work before us all, as Christians, is to extend Christ's kingdom as rapidly as possible, in accordance with the divine commission. The gospel is to advance from conquest to conquest, from victory to victory. The greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, and they shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever and ever." – {9T 218-219}

"We are the Lord's family, His children, and by Him we are to be instructed in regard to what is and what will be in the future. Vigilant waiting and earnest looking are required in preparation for the solemn events soon to take place. **Perfect men and women in Christ do not spend all their time in waiting, in meditation and contemplation. While we should have quiet, prayerful hours of meditation, when we leave the busy bustle and excitement to commune with God, to learn from Him His will concerning us, we are not to forget that we have a positive message of warning to bear to the world.**

Enoch walked with God, and he bore a message of warning to the inhabitants of the old world. His words and actions, his example of piety, were a continual witness in favor of the

truth. In an age no more favorable to the development of a pure, holy character than is the present age, he lived a life of obedience. So filled had the earth become with impurity that the Lord washed it by a flood. He turned the world upside down, as it were, to empty it of its corruption.

Enoch was holy because he walked with God in God's way. In him the world had an example of what those will be who, when Christ comes, are caught up in the clouds to meet Him in the air. As Enoch was, so are we to be. Personal piety is to be blended with the most earnest and energetic warnings and appeals. We are to point to what is, with what is to be following fast after. We are instructed to be "not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." We are to be earnest in our efforts to clear the King's highway, to prepare a people for the coming of the Lord. Fervency of spirit must be brought into our service for the Lord. The lamps of the soul must be kept filled and burning.

Service for God demands the whole being—heart, mind, soul, and strength. Without reservation we are to give ourselves to God, that we may bear the image of the heavenly instead of the image of the earthly. There must be a quickening of the sensibilities, that the mind may be fully awake to the work to be done for all classes, high and low, rich and poor, learned and ignorant. We are to reveal the tenderness shown by the great Shepherd as He gathers the lambs in His arms and carefully guards His flock from harm, leading it in safe paths. Christ's followers are to show His tenderness and sympathy, and they must also show His intensity of desire to impart the truths that mean eternal life to the receiver.—Letter 97, 1902 (Manuscript Releases, vol. 12, pp. 213, 214). {CTr 46}

"The Lord is waiting for His people to become wise in understanding. **As we see the wretchedness, deformity, and disease that have come into the world as the result of ignorance in regard to the proper care of the body, how can we refrain from giving the warning?** Christ has declared that as it was in the days of Noah, when the earth was filled with violence and corrupted by crime, so shall it be when the Son of man is revealed. God has given us great light, and if we walk in this light, we shall see His salvation.

There is need of decided changes. It is time for us to humble our proud, self-willed hearts, and seek the Lord while He may be found. As a people we need to humble our hearts before God; for the scars of inconsistency are on our practice.

The Lord is calling upon us to come into line. The day is far spent. The night is at hand. The judgments of God are already seen, both on land and on sea. No second probation will be granted us. This is no time for making false moves. Let every one thank God that we still have an opportunity to form characters for the future eternal life." {CD 40}

"Living power must attend the message of Christ's second appearing. **We must not rest until we see many souls converted to the blessed hope of the Lord's return.** In the days of the apostles the message that they bore wrought a real work, turning souls from idols to serve the living God. **The work to be done today is just as real, and the truth is just as much truth; only we are to give the message with as much more earnestness as the coming of the Lord is nearer. The message for this time is positive, simple, and of the deepest importance. We must act like men and women who believe it. Waiting, watching, working, praying, warning the world--this is our work. . . .**

All heaven is astir, engaged in preparing for the day of God's vengeance, the day of Zion's deliverance. The time of tarrying is almost ended. The pilgrims and strangers who have so long been seeking a better country are almost home. I feel as if I must cry aloud, Homeward bound! Rapidly we are nearing the time when Christ will come to gather His redeemed to Himself."--Review and Herald, Nov. 13, 1913. {Ev 219}

"Last Friday morning, just before I awoke, a very impressive scene was presented before me. I seemed to awake from sleep but was not in my home. From the windows I could behold a terrible conflagration. Great balls of fire were falling upon houses, and from these balls fiery arrows were flying in every direction. It was impossible to check the fires that were kindled, and many places were being destroyed. The terror of the people was indescribable. After a time I awoke and found myself at home...

I saw an immense ball of fire fall among some beautiful mansions, causing their instant destruction. **I heard someone say: "We knew that the judgments of God were coming upon the earth, but we did not know that they would come so soon." Others, with agonized voices, said: "You knew! Why then did you not tell us? We did not know."**-9T 28 (1909). {LDE 24-25}

"I think of the many cities and towns, even in our own country, that have never heard a discourse upon present truth, and have no knowledge of our faith, or of us as a people. The solemn warnings for this time have never fallen upon their ears or convicted their consciences. My burdened heart goes up to God in the wakeful hours of the night that he would work by whom he will, to warn the world of their coming doom. Who are living out their faith? Who, with singleness of purpose, are lifting up to the view of the impenitent, Jesus Christ and his matchless love? Where is the living zeal that will make the impression upon minds paralyzed with sin, that we believe what we profess, that the end of all things is at hand, and that what is done in the work of preparation must be done quickly?" {RH, June 3, 1880 par. 8}

"So far as his opportunities extend, everyone who has received the light of truth is under the same responsibility as was the prophet of Israel to whom came the word: "Son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at My mouth, and warn them from Me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." Ezekiel 33:7-9.

Are we to wait until the fulfillment of the prophecies of the end before we say anything concerning them? Of what value will our words be then? Shall we wait until God's judgments fall upon the transgressor before we tell him how to avoid them? Where is our faith in the word of God? Must we see things foretold come to pass before we will believe what He has said? In clear, distinct rays light has come to us, showing us that the great day of the Lord is near at hand, "even at the doors." Let us read and understand before it is too late.

We are to be consecrated channels, through which the heavenly life is to flow to others. The Holy Spirit is to animate and pervade the whole church, purifying and cementing hearts. Those who have been buried with Christ in baptism are to rise to newness of life, giving a living representation of the life of Christ. Upon us is laid a sacred charge. The commission has been given us: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world." Matthew 28:19, 20, margin. You are dedicated to the work of making known the gospel of salvation. Heaven's perfection is to be your power. {9T 19, 20}

An extremely interesting quote from the SOP entitled, "The Charm of New Theories". The last paragraph I find the most fascinating of all. Take heed folks!

"Every phase of fanaticism and erroneous theories, claiming to be the truth, will be brought in among the remnant people of God. These will fill minds with erroneous sentiments which have no part in the truth for this time. Any man who supposes that in the strength of his own devised resolutions, in his intellectual might united with science or supposed knowledge, he can start a work which will conquer the world, will find himself lying among the ruins of his own speculations, and will plainly understand why he is there....

From the light given me of the Lord, men will arise speaking perverse things. Yea, already they have been working and speaking things which God has never revealed, bringing sacred truth upon a level with common things. Issues have been and will continue to be made of men's conceited fallacies, not of truth. The devisings of men's minds will invent tests that are no tests at all, that when the true test shall be made prominent, it shall be considered on a par with the man-made tests that have been of no value. We may expect that everything will be brought in and mingled with sound doctrine, but by clear, spiritual discernment, by the heavenly anointing, we must distinguish the sacred from the common which is being brought in to confuse faith and sound judgment, and demerit the great, grand, testing truth for this time....

Never, never was there a time when the truth suffered more from being misrepresented, belittled, demerited through the perverse disputings of men than in these last days. Men have brought themselves in with their heterogeneous mass of heresies which they represent as oracles for the people. The people are charmed with some strange new thing, and are not wise in experience to discern the character of ideas that men may frame up as something. But to call it something of great consequence and tie it to the oracles of God, does not make it truth. Oh, how this rebukes the low standard of piety in the churches.

Men who want to present something original will conjure up things new and strange, and without consideration will step forward on these unstable theories, that have been woven together as a precious theory, and present it as a life and death question. —Letter 136a, 1898. — {2SM 14-15}

From a chapter entitled, "False Tests and Man-Made Standards":

"Those who would labor in word and doctrine, should be firmly established in the truth before they are authorized to go out into the field to teach others. The truth, pure and unadulterated, must be presented to the people. It is the third angel's message that bears the true test to the people. Satan will lead men to manufacture false tests, and thus seek to obscure the value of, and make of none effect, the message of truth.

The commandment of God that has been almost universally made void, is the testing truth for this time.... The time is coming when all those who worship God will be distinguished by this sign. They will be known as the servants of God, by this mark of their allegiance to Heaven. But all man-made tests will divert the mind from the great and important doctrines that constitute the present truth.

It is the desire and plan of Satan to bring in among us those who will go to great extremes—people of narrow minds, who are critical and sharp, and very tenacious in holding their own conceptions of what the truth means. They will be exacting, and will seek to enforce rigorous duties, and go to great lengths in matters of minor importance, while they neglect the weightier matters of the law—judgment and mercy and the love of God. Through the work of a few of this class of persons, the whole body of Sabbathkeepers will be designated as bigoted, Pharisaical, and fanatical. The work of the truth, because of these workers, will be thought to be unworthy of notice." — {Ev 211-212}

"Truth is straight, plain, clear, and stands out boldly in its own defense; but it is not so with error. It is so winding and twisting that it needs a multitude of words to explain it in its crooked form." --Early Writings, p. 96. (1853.) {CW 15.3}

Some further interesting quotes to consider:

"Suppose that Brother D leads the people to question and reject the testimonies that God has been giving to His people during the past thirty-eight years; suppose he makes them believe that the leaders in this work are designing, dishonest men, engaged in deceiving the people; what great and good work has he done? It is a work exactly similar to that of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and with all whom he has influenced the result will be disastrous. He has thought that he could not be in error; but does this work bear the signet of heaven? No; Brother D has indulged a self-righteous spirit, which has almost ruined him. Let him come upon an equality with his brethren; if he has difficulties with them in regard to their course of action, let him show wherein their sin lies.

"When Satan became disaffected in heaven, he did not lay his complaint before God and Christ; but he went among the angels who thought him perfect and represented that God had done him injustice in preferring Christ to himself. The result of this misrepresentation was that through their sympathy with him one third of the angels lost their innocence, their high estate, and their happy home. Satan is instigating men to continue on earth the same work of jealousy and evil surmising that he commenced in heaven." {5T 290}

"When Jesus was upon earth, the Jews were ever acting as spies on His track. They gathered up every false report and charged Him with one crime after another. They were constantly endeavoring to turn the people away from Him. Was their course right? If it was, then Brother D has not sinned, for he is doing a similar work. He may now break the snare of the enemy; he may conquer this spirit which leads him to exalt himself above his brethren. Let him seek meekness, and learn to esteem others better than himself. If he will work in fidelity and in harmony with God's plan he will hear the sweet words, "Well done," from the lips of the Master. But if he rejects the labors of God's servants, if he chooses his own way and leans to his own understanding, he will surely make shipwreck of faith. 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." 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.

"Let none be self-confident, as though God had given them special light above their brethren. Christ is represented as dwelling in His people. Believers are represented as "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord," says Paul, "beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

"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 291-292}

"Brother B's self-confidence is most wonderful, and is a fearful snare to him. If he does not overcome this dangerous trait in his character, it will prove his ruin. He is in his natural element when he is battling and controverting points of doctrine; he will question and quibble and be at variance with his brethren until Satan so controls his mind that he really thinks that he has the truth and his brethren are in error. He does not stand in the light and has not the blessing of God, for it constitutes a part of his religion to oppose the settled points of God's commandment-keeping people. Are all these deceived? and is Brother B the only man to whom God has given correct truth? Is not God just as willing to give His devoted, self-sacrificing servants a correct understanding of the Scriptures as to give it to Brother B for them? {3T 444.2}

"Does Brother B try his course by this simple test: "Does this light and knowledge that I have found, and which places me at variance with my brethren, draw me more closely to Christ? does it make my Saviour more precious to me and make my character more closely resemble His?" It is a natural, but not a pleasing, trait in our characters to be keen in our perceptions, and tenacious in our remembrance, of the faults and failings of others. {3T 444.3}

"Brother B does not try to be in union with his brethren; his self-confidence has led him to feel no special necessity for union. He feels that their minds have been cast in a mold inferior to his own and that to receive their opinions and counsel as worthy of attention would be a great condescension. This self-confidence has shut him away from the love and sympathy of his brethren and from union with them. He feels that he is too wise and experienced to need the precautions which are indispensable to many. He has so high an opinion of his own abilities and such a reliance upon his own attainments that he believes himself prepared for any emergency. Said the heavenly angels, pointing to Brother B: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Self-confidence leads to neglect of watchfulness and of humble, penitential prayer. There are outward temptations to be shunned and inward foes and perplexities to be overcome, for Satan adapts his temptations to the different characters and temperaments of individuals. {3T 445.1}

"The church of Christ is in constant peril. Satan is seeking to destroy the people of God, and one man's mind, one man's judgment, is not sufficient to be trusted. Christ would have His followers brought together in church capacity, observing order, having rules and discipline, and all subject one to another, esteeming others better than themselves. 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, without stopping to question and canvass the whole subject from end to end, thus letting the enemy gain every advantage by delay, when united action might save many souls from perdition." {3T 445.2}

Let us take heed!