**Victory Everlasting Gospel Church**

**Sabbath August 19, 2017**

**Are We Losing Sight and Slipping Into Darkness?**

Are We Losing Sight is a question I have been asking myself for quite some time now. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. (Psa. 119:105) I will be quoting from Ellen G. White and the Spirit of Prophecy, First Selected Messages with a few modifications. Also I will be quoting from the King James Bible. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Slipping into darkness.

Let Us Pray

Satan and his legions of satanic agencies are on the ground, pressing their powers upon every soul to make of none effect the showers of grace that have come from heaven to revive and quicken the dormant energies into decided action to impart that which God has imparted.

The church has not made honorable progress in doing her work, and God's blessing will not rest upon the church in advancing still more light until they use the light as God has directed in His Word. The light that would shine in clear and distinct rays will grow dim amid the moral darkness. The aggressive power of the truth of God is dependent upon the cooperation of the human agent with God in piety, in zeal, in unselfish efforts to get the light of truth before others.--Manuscript 45, 1893.

There had been a large blessing of work of the Holy Spirit of God. Much of the blessings have been lost because the church has lost its sight. The Holy Spirit is not for the human agent to work; it is to work and use the human agent. We need to get back that passion that Christ still has for us. In the past, we were asked to wake up and examine ourselves.

God did abundantly bless us, the church, we have not one doubt; but a period of great light and the outpouring of the Spirit is quite generally followed by a time of great darkness. Why? Because the enemy works with all his deceiving energies to make of none affect the deep moving of the Spirit of God on the human subject.

When you raise your children and yourself to enjoy the amusement of Satins world, you get so absorbed that you lose the Holy Spirit of God. Satan saw it a good time to step in and make of none affect the Holy Spirit of God in molding and using the human subject. That is slipping into darkness.

Had the teachers to a man done their duty, had they realized their accountability, had they stood in moral independence before God, had they used the ability which God had given them according to the sanctification of the spirit through the love of the truth, they would have had spiritual strength and divine enlightenment to press on and on and upward on the ladder of progress reaching heavenward. The fact is evident that they did not appreciate or walk in the light or follow the Light of the world. That tells me, they were losing sight of the light and slipping into darkness.

It is an easy matter to idle away, talk and play away, the Holy Spirit's influence. To walk in the light is to keep moving onward in the direction of light. If the one blessed becomes negligent and inattentive and does not watch unto prayer, if he does not lift the cross and bear the yoke of Christ, if his love of amusements and strivings for the mastery absorb his power or ability, then God is not made the first and best and last in everything, and Satan comes in to act his part in playing the game of life for your soul. He can play much more earnestly than you can play, and make deep-laid plots for the ruin of your soul. . . .

The results after the working of the Spirit of God in our homes and churches are not because of fanaticism, but because those who were blessed did not show forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvelous light; and when the earth is lightened with the glory of God, some will not know what it is, and from where it came, because they misapplied and misinterpreted the Spirit shed upon them. God is a jealous God of His own glory. He will not honor those who dishonor Him. Our leaders living in the light ought to have instructed we the church to walk in the light after they had received the light. There must be earnest effort to obtain and keep the blessing of the Lord.

There are too many ways we can lose our blessings. Has the Lord graciously opened to you the windows of heaven and poured you out a blessing? If so, that was the very time to educate the church, family and friends on how to retain the precious favor of God by working in accordance with increased light, and send its precious rays to others.

The work of every true Christian is to represent Christ, to reflect light, to elevate the standard of morals, and by words and influence consecrated to God, to compel the careless and reckless to think of God and eternity. The world would gladly drop eternity out of their reckoning, but they cannot succeed so long as there are those who represent Christ in their practical life. Let us not lose sight.

How often do professed Christians, by their lack of self-control, open the door to the adversary of souls! I will remind you again, Divisions, and even bitter dissensions which would disgrace any worldly community, are common in the churches, because there is so little effort to control wrong feelings, and to repress every word that Satan can take advantage of .Also, as soon as alienation of feeling arises, the matter is spread before Satan for his inspection, and the opportunity given for him to use his serpent like wisdom and skill in dividing which Satan is doing and destroying which he is still doing, to the church.

Let one lose his connection with Christ, and Satan seizes the opportunity to lead him to dishonor Christ by words, by spirit, by action, and thus Christ's character is misinterpreted.

Let your righteousness so shine before men, "that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). "Ye are," said Christ to His disciples, "the salt of the earth: but if the salt has lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Matt. 5:13). The church illuminates the world, not by their profession of godliness, but by their manifestation of the transforming, sanctifying power of the truth on life and character. . . . Are we losing sight?

How does Christ subdue His chosen people to Himself?--It is by the power of His Holy Spirit; for the Holy Spirit, through the Scriptures, speaks to the mind, and impresses truth upon the hearts of men. Before His crucifixion, Christ promised that the Comforter should be sent to His disciples. He said: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.

The period of great spiritual light, if that light is not sacredly cherished and acted upon, will be turned into a time of corresponding spiritual darkness. The impression made by the Spirit of God, if men do not cherish the sacred impression, and occupies holy ground, will fade from the mind. Slipping into darkness.

Those who would advance in spiritual knowledge must stand by the very fountain of God, and drink again and again from the wells of salvation so graciously opened unto them. They must never leave the source of refreshment; but with hearts swelling with gratitude and love at the display of the goodness and compassion of God, they must be continually partakers of the living water. The danger of the light can very easily become darkness; we must be united under the great Head of the church.

"I am the light of the world"; "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger {for anything more satisfying}; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 8:12, 6:35). To come to this condition means that you have found the Source of light and love, and have learned when and how you may be replenished, and may make use of the promises of God by continually applying them to your souls.

The spiritual victory we thought we had was lost in the passion of the world. We began to come to Christ, but we did not abide in Christ. We forsook Him, and the realization we had had of the great favors and blessings He had given us, was lost from our heart. The question of amusement occupied so large a place in our minds, that after the solemn visitation of the Spirit of God, we entered into its discussion with such great zeal that all barriers were broken down; and through our passion for the world, We the world neglected to heed the word of Christ: We wanted to keep up with the fashions of the world, instead of fashioning our character. "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation" (Mark 14:38). Slipping into darkness.

The place that should have been occupied by Jesus was replaced by our passion for the world. We chose our amusements instead of the comfort of the Holy Spirit. We did not follow the example of Jesus, who said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6:38). Are we losing sight and slipping into darkness?

The minds of many are so bewildered with their own human desires and inclinations, and they have been so in the habit of indulging them, that they cannot comprehend the true sense of the Scriptures. The living Christian will be filled with cheerfulness and peace, because he lives as seeing Him who is invisible; and those who seek Christ in His true character have within them the elements of everlasting life, because they are partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruptions that are in the world through lust. Only those who have been diligent students of the Scriptures and who have received the love of the truth will be shielded from the powerful delusion that takes the world captive.

Jesus said, "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seethe the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:39, 40).

We must see the light, we must hear his word, and we cannot afford to lose sight at the blessings given to us and continue slipping into darkness.

All spiritual life is derived from Jesus Christ. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God" (John 1:12). But what is the sure result of becoming a child of God? The result is that we become laborers together with God. My question to the church is, we are a child of God but do we really have the image of God?

There is a great work to be done for your own soul's salvation, and to qualify you to win others from unbelief to a life sustained by faith in Christ Jesus: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me {with a casual faith?--No, with an abiding faith that works by love and purifies the soul} hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. . . . I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eats of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. . . . Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. . . . It is the Spirit that quickened; the flesh profited nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. 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. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father" (John 6:47, 48, 51, 53, 54, 63-65). We are a child of God we are laborers with God, are we losing the image of God?

When Jesus spoke these words, He spoke them with authority, assurance, and power. At times He manifested Himself in such a way that the deep moving of His Spirit was sensibly realized. But many who saw and heard and participated in the blessings of the hour, went their way, and soon forgot the light He had given them. In other words, some of us have lost our sight and are following that wide road, into darkness.

Christ does not exalt and honor the great ones of the world, who are flattered and applauded; Remember, back in June I said to you, a profession of religion has become popular with the world. Rulers, politicians, lawyers, doctors, merchants. I also said, they join the church as a means of securing the respect and confidence of society, and advancing their own worldly interests. Thus they seek to cover all their unrighteous transactions under a profession of Christianity.

Christ calls upon His chosen, peculiar people who love and serve Him, to come unto Him and ask, and He will give them the bread of life, and endow them with the water of life, which shall be in them as a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.

In order to increase our spiritual endowment, it is necessary to walk in the light. In view of the event of Christ's soon coming, we must be vigilantly working to prepare our own souls, to keep our own lamps trimmed and burning, and to urge upon others the necessity of getting ready for the coming of the Bridegroom. Watching and working must go together; faith and works must be united, or our characters will not be symmetrical and well-balanced, perfect in Christ Jesus.

Should we give our lives up to prayerful meditation, our lights would grow dim, for light is given to us that we may impart it to others, and the more we impart light, the brighter our own light will become. The exhortation is given for us to be "not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" (Rom. 12:11). God expects us all to do our best, not to please, amuse, and glorify ourselves, but to honor Him in all our ways, returning unto Him according to the light and privileges that He had given us through the endowment of His grace.

God has been testing the fidelity of His people, proving them to see what use they would make of His entrusted precious blessing. This blessing came from our Intercessor and Advocate in the heavenly courts; but Satan was ready to enter any avenue that was open for him, in order that he might turn the light and blessing into darkness and cursing.

How may the blessing be turned into a curse? By persuading the human agent not to cherish the light or not to reveal to the world that it has been effective in transforming the character. You are to be living witnesses; but if no special endeavor of a high and holy character bears testimony before the world, if no higher effort has been made than that which is seen in the popular churches of the day, then the name of God has not been honored, and His truth has not been magnified before the world, by presenting divine credentials in the people who have received great light. I asked you before are we losing sight on what God has directed the church to do through and by the Holy Spirit.

If we have had no greater appreciation of the manifest power of God than to eat and drink, and rise up to play, as did ancient Israel, then how can the Lord trust His people with rich and gracious manifestations? If we act directly contrary in almost every respect to the known will of God, and are found in carelessness, in levity, in selfishness, in ambition and pride, corrupting our way before the Lord, how can He give us another outpouring of the Holy Spirit? Are we going to continue slipping into darkness and allow our blessings to be turned into a curse?

God has the richest blessing for His people; but He cannot bestow it until we know how to treat the precious gift in showing forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:1, 2). No other sits by the throne of the God, the Father, except his son our lord and savior Jesus Christ. Scripture says, One Lord, one faith, and one baptism, One God and the Father of all, and through all, and in you all. Eph. 4: 5-6

Divine intelligences cooperate with human agencies as they seek to magnify the law and make it honorable. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. It is in the converted soul that the world sees a living testimony. Then shall the Lord of heaven have room to work? Shall He find a place in the hearts of those who claim to believe the truth? Shall His pure, disinterested benevolence meet with a response from the human agent? Shall the world see a display of the glory of Christ in the characters of those who profess to be His disciples? Shall Christ be favored and glorified in seeing His own sympathy and love pouring forth in streams of goodness and truth from His human agents? In implanting His gospel in the heart, He is pouring out the resources of heaven for the blessing of the world. "We are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building" (1 Cor. 3:9).

Therefore we need to be exceedingly careful, and walk humbly before God, that we may have spiritual eye salve that we may distinguish the working of the Holy Spirit of God from the working of that spirit that would bring in wild license and fanaticism. This means, we are slipping into darkness. "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20) Are we losing sight?

Be Careful, because some have misappropriated the rich blessing of heaven, shall others deny that Jesus, the Savior of the world, has passed through our churches, and that to bless? Let not doubt and unbelief question this; for in so doing, you are treading on dangerous ground. God has given the Holy Spirit to those who have opened the door of their hearts to receive the heavenly gift. But let them not yield to the temptation afterward to believe that they have been deceived. You will be slipping into darkness. Remember, Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

I warn you to be careful. Sow not one expression of doubt. God has wrought for you, bringing sound doctrines of truth into actual contact with the heart. Blessing was given you, that it might produce fruit in sound practices and upright character. Again, remember, And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

I ask you again church, are we losing sight and slipping into darkness, God forbid.