

The hill of progress is not to be climbed without effort. No one need expect to be carried along to the prize, either in **religious** or secular matters, independently of his own exertions. 5T180.

In order that we may become instruments fit for a valuable service, we must be prepared for our labor. We are as rough stones from the quarry, and we must be chiseled and hewn, until God sees that the unsightly edges are all taken off, and we are fitted and polished for a place in the heavenly temple. Do not entertain the idea that because you have accepted the truth, you have attained perfection. The work of character-building is a life-long work. ***The Bible must be studied in order that you may properly estimate your progress, and understand your obligations.*** It is necessary for you to look constantly into the great moral mirror, to measure your attainments by the great standard of holiness. The principles of God's law must become the principles of your life and the motive power of all your actions. The impulses of your heart must be regulated by the gospel of the Son of God, and your character must be fashioned after the divine Pattern. The truth you profess must be established in reverent and holy purposes to honor God and benefit mankind. ***This is the only successful method of controlling the life.*** There should be ***steady, persevering, persistent advancement*** in the Christian pathway. A fitful experience is of little value. The impulsive effort to overcome is often as impulsively discontinued as begun. There should be a ***determined resistance*** of evil in the strength of Christ. Forgetting what is behind, we should press toward the mark with ***all diligence***. The truth must be stamped upon the soul, woven into the character, until the life is sanctified through the power of God. ***While God works in you, to will and to do of his own good pleasure, you are to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*** You have something more to do than simply to believe. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Use your talents for God in humble faith and love, and he who has been faithful over the "few things" of earth, will be made ruler over "many things" in the eternal world of glory. {RH, May 1, 1888 par. 11}

The great reason why so many professed disciples of Christ fall into grievous temptation and make work for repentance is that they are deficient in a knowledge of themselves. Here is where Peter was so thoroughly sifted by the enemy. Here is where thousands will make shipwreck of faith. ***You do not take your wrongs and errors to heart, and afflict your souls over them. I entreat you to purify your souls by obeying the truth. Connect yourselves with heaven. And may the Lord save you from self-deception.*** {4T 246.2}

Many are inquiring, "How am I to make the surrender of myself to God?" You desire to give yourself to Him, but you are weak in moral power, in slavery to doubt, and controlled by the habits of your life of sin. Your promises and resolutions are like ropes of sand. You cannot control your thoughts, your impulses, your affections. The knowledge of your broken promises and forfeited pledges weakens your confidence in your own sincerity, and causes you to feel that God cannot accept you; but you need not despair. What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. ***Everything depends on the right action of the will.*** The power of

choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centered upon Him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him. {SC 47.1}

Desires for goodness and holiness are right as far as they go; but if you stop here, they will avail nothing. Many will be lost while hoping and desiring to be Christians. They do not come to the point of yielding the will to God. They do not now choose to be Christians. {SC 47.2}

Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be made in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, you ally yourself with the power that is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from above to hold you steadfast, and thus through constant surrender to God you will be enabled to live the new life, even the life of faith. {SC 48.1}

God holds us responsible *for all that we might be* if we would *improve* our talents. We shall be judged according to *what we ought to have been*, but were not; *what we might have done, but did not accomplish because we did not use our powers to glorify God*. For all *knowledge that we might have gained but did not*, there will be an eternal loss, even if we do not lose our souls. All our influence belongs to God. All that we acquire is to be used to His glory. All the property that the Lord has entrusted to us is to be held on the altar of God, to be returned to Him again. We are working out our own destiny. May God help us all to be wise for eternity. {TM 146.2}

The Lord has shown me that great interest should be taken by Sabbathkeepers to keep up their meetings and make them interesting. There is great necessity of more interest and energy being manifested in this direction. All should have something to say for the Lord, for by so doing they will be blest. A book of remembrance is written of those who do not forsake the assembling of themselves together, but speak often one to another. The remnant are to overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. *Some expect to overcome alone by the blood of the Lamb, without making any special effort of their own*. I saw that God has been merciful in giving us the power of speech. He has given us a tongue, and we are accountable to Him for its use. We should glorify God with our mouth, speaking in honor of the truth and of His unbounded mercy, and overcome by the word of our testimony through the blood of the Lamb. {EW 114.2}

**When souls are converted, their salvation is not yet accomplished.** They then have the race to run. An arduous struggle is before them, to do what?--To "fight the good fight of faith," to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." There is no release in this warfare; the battle is life-long, and must be carried forward with *determination and energy proportionate to the value of the object to be attained*, which is eternal life. Immense interests are here involved. We are made partakers of Christ's sacrifice here in this life, and if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end, we are assured that we shall be partakers of all the benefits of the future, immortal life. {RH, August 25, 1891 par.

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When it is in the heart to obey God, **when efforts are put forth to this end**, Jesus accepts this disposition and effort as man's best service, and He makes up for the deficiency with His own divine merit. But He will not accept those who claim to have faith in Him and yet are disloyal to His Father's commandment. We hear a great deal about faith, but **we need to hear a great deal more about works**. Many are deceiving their own souls by living an easy-going, accommodating, crossless religion. {FW 50.1}

To make God's grace our own, we must act our part. The Lord does not propose to perform for us either the willing or the doing. His grace is given to work in us to will and to do, but *never as a substitute for our effort*. Our souls are to be aroused to cooperate. The Holy Spirit works in us, that we may work out our own salvation. . . . Fine mental qualities and a high tone of moral character are not the result of accident. God gives opportunities; success depends upon the use made of them. The openings of Providence must be quickly discerned and eagerly entered. There are many who might become mighty men, if, like Daniel, they would depend upon God for grace to be overcomers, and for strength and efficiency to do their work. {AG 111.3}

Do you have to separate in your affections from friends? Does the truth require you to stand alone in your position to serve God, because others around you are not willing to yield to the claims that Christ has upon them? Does it require a separation in feeling from them? Yes; and this is the cross which you must bear, which leads many to say, I cannot yield to the claims of the truth. But says Christ, If any man love father, or mother, or brother, or sister, more than me, he is not worthy of me. Whosoever will come after me, and will be my disciple, **let him take up his cross and follow me**. Here is the **cross of self-denial and sacrifice**; to separate in your affections here from those who will not yield to the claims of truth. Is this too great a sacrifice to make for him who sacrificed all for you? Here are the conditions specified by God {RH, April 19, 1870 par. 7}

**Everything depends on the right action of the will.** The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; **but you can choose to serve Him**. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centered upon Him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him.

Desires for goodness and holiness are right as far as they go; but if you stop here, they will avail nothing. Many will be lost while hoping and desiring to be Christians. They do not come to the point of yielding the will to God. They do not now choose to be Christians. {SC 47.1-2}

Many desire the final reward and victory which are to be given to overcomers, but are **not willing to endure toil, privation, and denial of self**, as did their Redeemer. It is only through

obedience and continual effort that we shall overcome as Christ overcame. {CD 59.2}

**It will cost us an effort to secure eternal life. It is only by long and persevering effort, sore discipline, and stern conflict, that we shall be overcomers.** But if we patiently and determinedly, in the name of the Conqueror who overcame in our behalf in the wilderness of temptation, overcome as he overcame, we shall have the eternal reward. Our efforts, our self-denial, our perseverance, must be proportionate to the infinitive value of the object of which we are in pursuit. . . . Wrongs cannot be righted, nor reformations in character made, by a few feeble, intermittent efforts. Sanctification is not a work of a day or a year, but of a lifetime. **Without continual efforts and constant activity, there can be no advancement in the divine life,** no attainment of the victor's crown. . GW p206

**"Gird up the loins of your mind,"** says the apostle; then control your thoughts, not allowing them to have full scope. The thoughts may be guarded and controlled by your own determined efforts. Think right thoughts and you will perform right actions. You have, then, to guard the affections, not letting them go out and fasten upon improper objects. Jesus has purchased you with His own life; you belong to Him, therefore He is to be consulted in all things as to how the powers of your mind and the affections of your heart shall be employed. . . . {TMK 135.2}

Every wrong tendency may be, through the grace of Christ, repressed, not in a languid, irresolute manner, **but with firmness of purpose, with high resolves to make Christ the pattern.** Let your love go out for those things that Jesus loved, and be withheld from those things that will give no strength to right impulses. With determined energy seek to learn, and to improve the character every day. You must have firmness of purpose to take yourself in hand and be what you know God would be pleased to have you. {TMK 135.3}

### **Ernest Effort**

Gal. 6:9 ***let us not be weary in well doing:*** for in due season ***we shall reap,*** if we faint not.  
6:10 10 As we have therefore opportunity, ***let us do good unto all men,*** especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

1 Cor. 9:24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? ***So run, that ye may obtain.***

9:25 And every man that ***striveth*** for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

9:26 ***I therefore so run,*** not as uncertainly; ***so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:***

9:27 ***But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection:*** lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

Phil. 3:12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

3:13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting

those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

3:14 ***I press toward the mark*** for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

3:15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

3:16 Nevertheless, whereto ***we have already attained***, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and ***having done all, to stand***.

**Heb. 12:4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.**

Heb 10:36 For ye have need of patience, that, **after ye have done the will of God**, ye might receive the promise.

Matt 7:21 "Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but **he that doeth the will of My Father** which is in heaven.

: **"Work out your own salvation** with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:12, 13).

"present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Whereunto I also labor, **striving according to His working**, which worketh in me mightily" (Colossians 1:28, 29).

, **"For we wrestle** not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12)

Without **human effort** divine effort is in vain. (AH 206)

It is a fatal mistake to think that there is nothing for you to do in obtaining salvation. You are to cooperate with the agencies of heaven. We are exhorted to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." .....There is **a cross to be lifted** in the pathway, a **wall to be scaled** before you enter the eternal city, a **ladder to be climbed** before the gate of pearl is reached; ..... {RH, March 6, 1888 par. 6}

There is no such thing as following Christ unless you refuse to gratify inclination and **determine to obey** God. It is not your feelings, your emotions, that make you a child of God, but the doing of God's will. .... {5T 515.2}

Sanctification is not a work of a day or a year, but of a lifetime. Without **continual efforts and constant activity**, there can be no advancement in the divine life, no attainment of the victor's crown. 3T 325.2}

The formation of a noble character is the work of a lifetime and must be the result of **diligent and persevering effort**. God gives opportunities; success depends upon the use made of them. {PP 223.1}

.... In order to receive God's help, man must realize his weakness and deficiency; **he must apply his own mind to the great change to be wrought in himself**; he must be aroused to earnest **and persevering prayer and effort**. Wrong habits and customs must be shaken off; and it is **only by determined endeavor to correct these errors and to conform to right principles that the victory can be gained**. Many never attain to the position that they might occupy, because they wait for **God to do for them that which He has given them power to do for themselves**. ..... {PP 248.2}

Through the grace of God and their **own diligent effort** they must be conquerors in the battle with evil. .... {GC 425.1}

.....A noble character is **earned by individual effort** through the merits and grace of Christ. **God gives the talents, the powers of the mind; we form the character**. It is **formed by hard, stern battles with self**. Conflict after conflict must be waged against hereditary tendencies. We shall have to criticize ourselves closely, and allow not one unfavorable trait to remain uncorrected. {COL 331.1}

. Are we willing to welcome the Holy Spirit's aid, and co-operate with it, **putting forth efforts and making sacrifices proportionate to the value of the object to be obtained?**--Rh 2/10. 1903. {MYP 56.1}

No one of us will gain the victory **without persevering, untiring effort**, proportionate to the value of the object which we seek, even eternal life. {TM 511.2}

.....Probation would be granted him in which, through a life of repentance and faith in the atonement of the Son of God, he might be redeemed from his transgression of the Father's law, and thus be elevated to a position where **his efforts to keep His law could be accepted**. {SR 46.3}

.The Spirit of God does not propose to do our part either in the **willing or the doing**. This is the work of the human agent in cooperating with the Divine agencies. . . . {2MR 35.1}

As soon as we incline our will to harmonize with God's will, the grace of Christ stands to cooperate with the human agent; but it will not be the substitute to do our work independent of our **resolving and decidedly acting**..... {2MR 35.2}