

THE THEATER AND SIMILAR WORLDLY AMUSEMENTS

For thousands of years, worldly entertainment has included theatrical presentations. This took the form of live performances viewed by an audience. During her lifetime, Ellen White wrote many statements in condemnation of theaters and theater-attendance. You will find many of these statements in the tract compilation you now have in hand.

Shortly after her death, two new forms of theatrical entertainment began: motion pictures and, then radio dramas. Both grew in prominence, overshadowing the tradition theater, until the 1950s when a new variation of the theater largely replaced both of them: television. This little home theater box has now become the giant in the playwright field, and in recent years has spawned cable TV, satellite TV, and video cassette movies played on video recorders.

But, whether comedy, tragedy, violence, or otherwise, it is still the age-old theater. And it is condemned by the God of heaven.

How should you relate yourself to the theater, whether it be movies, television, live dramatized plays, cablevision, or video cassette reruns of the old movies? For your own well-being, now and throughout eternity to come, you would do well to carefully read this compilation and consider its implications. Do not hurriedly toss it off as of little consequence. You have a soul to be saved or lost. And your influence will greatly affect the futurity of others in your home, particularly your wife, husband, children, or parents, as well as any that visit your home.

Here is what God has said about this matter:

"I am bidden to say to you that you know not how soon the crisis will come. It is stealing gradually upon us, as a thief. The sun shines in the heavens, passing over its usual round, and the heavens still declare the glory of God; men are pursuing their usual course of eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage; merchants are still engaged in buying and selling; publications are still issuing one upon another; men are jostling one against another, seeking to get the highest place; pleasure lovers are still attending theaters, horse races, gambling hells and the highest excitement prevails; but probation's hour is fast closing, and every case is about to be eternally decided. There are few who believe with heart and soul that we have a heaven to win and a hell to shun; but these show their faith by their works.

"The signs of Christ's coming are fast fulfilling. Satan sees that he has but a short time in which to work, and he has set his agencies to work to stir up the elements of the world, that men may be deceived, deluded, and kept occupied and entranced until the day of probation shall be ended, and the door of mercy be forever shut." -Counsels to Teachers, p.413-414.

"In this time of prevailing iniquity we may know that the last great crisis is at hand. When the defiance of God's law is almost universal, when His people are oppressed and afflicted by their fellow men, the Lord will interpose."-Christ's Object Lessons, p. 178.

"Many parents seek to promote the happiness of their children by gratifying their love of amusement. They allow them to engage in sports, and to attend parties of pleasure, and provide them with money to use freely in display and self-gratification. The more the desire for pleasure is indulged, the stronger it becomes. The interest of these youth is more and more absorbed in amusement, until they come to look upon it as the great object of life. They form habits of idleness and self-indulgence that make it almost impossible for them ever to become steadfast Christians.

"Even the church, which should be the pillar and ground of the truth, is found encouraging the selfish love of pleasure. When money is to be raised for religious purposes, to what means do many churches resort? To bazaars, suppers, fancy fairs, even to lotteries, and like devices. Often the place set apart for God's worship is desecrated by feasting and drinking, buying and selling, and merrymaking. Respect for the house of God and reverence for His worship are lessened in the minds of the youth. The barriers of self-restraint are weakened. Selfishness, appetite, the love of display, are appealed to, and they strengthen as they are indulged.

"The pursuit of pleasure and amusement centers in the cities. Many parents who choose a city home for their children thinking to give them greater advantages, meet with disappointment, and too late repent their terrible mistake. The cities of today are fast becoming like Sodom and Gomorrah. The many holidays encourage idleness. The exciting sports, theater-going, horse racing, gambling, liquor-drinking, and reveling, stimulate every passion to intense activity. The youth are swept away by the popular current. Those who learn to love amusement for its own sake open the door to a flood of temptations. They give themselves up to social gaiety and thoughtless mirth, and their intercourse with pleasure lovers has an intoxicating effect upon the mind. They are led on from one form of dissipation to another, until they lose both the desire and the capacity for a life of usefulness. Their religious aspirations are chilled; their spiritual life is darkened. All the nobler faculties of the soul, all that link man with the spiritual world, are debased.

"It is true that some may see their folly and repent. God may pardon them. But they have wounded their own souls, and brought upon themselves a lifelong peril. The power of discernment, which ought ever to be kept keen and sensitive to distinguish between right and wrong, is in a great measure destroyed. They are not quick to recognize the guiding voice of the Holy Spirit, or to discern the devices of Satan. Too often in time of danger they fall under temptation, and are led away from God. The end of their pleasure-loving life is ruin for their world and for the world to come.

"Cares, riches, pleasures, all are used by Satan in playing the game of life for the human soul. The warning is given, 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.' 1 John 2:15, 16. He who reads the hearts of men as an open book says, 'Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life.' Luke 21 :34. And the apostle Paul by the Holy Spirit writes, 'They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.' 1 Timothy 6:9, 10." - Christ's Object Lessons, p. 54.56.

"While they profess to be Christians, they recommend to their patients, card playing, dancing, and attending theaters, all of which have a tendency to evil, or, to say the very least, have the appearance of evil, and are directly contrary to the teachings of Christ and His apostles." -1 Testimonies, p. 490.

"They urge. . dancing and card playing, and recommend attendance at theaters and such places of worldly amusement, which is in direct opposition to the teachings of Christ and the apostles." -1 Testimonies, p. 554.

"I was shown the state of the world, that it is fast filling up its cup of iniquity. Violence and crime of every description are filling our world, and Satan is using every means to make crime and debasing vice popular. The youth who walk the streets are surrounded with handbills and notices of crime and sin, presented in some novel or to be

acted at some theater. Their minds are educated into familiarity with sin. The course pursued by the base and vile is kept before them in the periodicals of the day, and everything which can excite curiosity and arouse the animal passions is brought before them in thrilling and exciting stories.

"The literature that proceeds from corrupted intellects poisons the minds of thousands of our world. Sin does not appear exceeding sinful. They hear and read so much of debasing crime and vileness that the once tender conscience which would have recoiled with horror becomes so blunted that it can dwell upon the low and vile sayings and actions of men with greedy interest" -3 Testimonies, p. 471-472.

"A spirit of frivolity may be in keeping with the profession of clowns and theatrical actors; but it is altogether beneath the dignity of a man who is chosen to be . . . a mouthpiece for God."-4 Testimonies, p. 320.

"In Christian homes a bulwark should be built against temptation. Satan is using every means to make crime and degrading vice popular. We cannot walk the streets of our cities without encountering flaring notices of crime presented in some novel or to be acted at some theater. The mind is educated to familiarity with sin. The course pursued by the base and vile is kept before the people in the periodicals of the day, and everything that can arouse passion is brought before them in exciting stories." -Bible Echo, October 15, 1894.

" 'We are in the world,' they say, 'and we cannot get out: of it.' But, parents, we can get a good way out of the world, if we choose to do so. We can avoid seeing many of the evils that are multiplying so fast in these last days. We can avoid hearing about much of the wickedness and crime that exist." -Notebook Leaflets, Education, Number 1.

"Many of the amusements popular in the world today, even with those who claim to be Christians, tend to the same end as did those of the heathen. There are indeed few among them that Satan does not turn to account in destroying souls. Through the drama he has worked for ages to excite passion and glorify vice. The opera, with its fascinating display and bewildering music, the masquerade, the dance, the card table, Satan employs to break down the barriers of principle and open the door to sensual indulgence. In every gathering for pleasure where pride is fostered or appetite indulged, where one is led to forget God and lose sight of eternal interests, there Satan is binding his chains about the soul." -Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 707.

"The true Christian will not desire to enter any place of amusement or engage in any diversion upon which he cannot ask the blessing of God. He will not be found at the theater, the billiard hall, or the bowling saloon. He will not unite with the gay waltzers or indulge in any other bewitching pleasure that will banish Christ from the mind.

"To those who plead for these diversions we answer, we cannot indulge in them in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. The blessing of God would not be invoked upon the hour spent at the theater or in the dance. No Christian would wish to meet death in such a place. No one would wish to be found there when Christ shall come." -Review, February 28, 1882.

"In many religious families dancing and card playing are made a parlor pastime. It is urged that these are quiet home amusements, which may be safely enjoyed under the parental eyes. But a love for these exciting pleasures is thus cultivated, and that which was considered harmless at home will not long be regarded dangerous abroad. It is yet to be ascertained that there is any good to be obtained from these amusements. They do not give vigor to the body nor rest to the mind. They do not implant in the soul one virtuous or holy sentiment. On the contrary, they destroy all relish for serious thought and for religious services. It is true that there is a wide contrast between the better class of select parties and the promiscuous and degraded assemblies of the low

dance house. Yet all are steps in the path of dissipation." -Review, February 28, 1882.

"Satan has invented many ways in which to squander the means which God has given. Card playing, betting, gambling, horse racing, and theatrical performances are all of his own inventing, and he has led men to carry forward these amusements as zealously as though they were winning for themselves the precious boon of eternal life. Men layout immense sums in following these forbidden pleasures; and the result is, their God-given power, which has been purchased by the blood of the Son of God, is degraded and corrupted. The physical, moral, and mental powers which are given to men of God, and which belong to Christ, are zealously used in serving Satan, and in turning men from righteousness and holiness.

"Everything is devised that can possibly turn the mind from that which is noble and pure, and the boundary line is almost reached when the inhabitants of the earth will be as corrupt as were the inhabitants of the world before the flood. -Counsels on Stewardship, p. 134-135.

"If we look at the picture of the days that were before the flood, and then turn our attention to the habits and practices of society today, we shall see that our earth is fast ripening for the plagues of the last days. Men have corrupted the earth by their sinful course of action. Satan is playing the game of life for the souls of men. Those who are doers of the words of Christ will find that they will have to watch and pray continually in order that they may not be led into temptation."-Counsels on Stewardship, p. 135.

"Let us stand clear of all these church corruptions, dissipations, and festivals, which have a demoralizing influence upon young and old. We have no right to throw over them the cloak of sanctity because the means is to be used for church purposes. Such offerings are lame and diseased, and bear the curse of God. They are the price of souls. The pulpit may defend festivals, dancing, lotteries, fairs and luxurious feasts, to obtain means for church purposes; but let us participate in none of these things; for if we do, God's displeasure will be upon us. We do not propose to appeal to the lust of the appetite or resort to carnal amusements as an inducement to Christ's professed followers to give of the means, which God has entrusted to them. If they do not give willingly, for the love of Christ, the offering will in no case be acceptable to God." - Counsels on Stewardship, p. 201-202.

"In professedly Christian gatherings, Satan throws a religious garment over delusive pleasures and unholy revelings to give them the appearance of sanctity, and the consciences of many are quieted because means are raised to defray church expenses. Men refuse to give for the love of God; but for the love of pleasure, and the indulgence of appetite for selfish considerations, they will part with their money."-Counsels on Stewardship, p. 202-203.

"With every truly converted soul the relation to God and to eternal things will be the great topic of life. But where, in the popular churches of today, is the spirit of consecration to God? The converts do not renounce their pride and love of the world. They are no more willing to deny self, to take up the cross, and follow the meek and lowly Jesus, than before their conversion. Religion has become the sport of infidels and skeptics because so many who bear its name are ignorant of its principles. The power of godliness has well-nigh departed from many of the churches. Picnics, church theatricals, church fairs, fine houses, personal display, have banished thoughts of God. Lands and goods and worldly occupations engross the mind, and things of eternal interest receive hardly a passing notice.

"Notwithstanding the widespread declension of faith and piety, there are true followers of Christ in these churches. Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth; there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be

poured out upon His children. At that time many will separate themselves from those churches in which the love of this world has supplanted love for God and His word. Many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time to prepare a people for the Lord's second coming. The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work; and before the time for such a movement shall come, he will endeavor to prevent it by introducing a counterfeit." Great Controversy, p. 463-464.

"The young should be controlled by firm principle, that they may rightly improve the powers which God has given them. But youth follow impulse so much and so blindly, without reference to principle, that they are constantly in danger. Since they cannot always have the guidance and protection of parents and guardians they need to be trained to self-reliance and self-control. They must be taught to think and act from conscientious principle.

"Those who are engaged in study should have relaxation. The mind must not be constantly confined to close thought, for the delicate mental machinery becomes worn. The body as well as the mind must have exercise. But there is great need of temperance in amusements, as in every other pursuit. And the character of these amusements should be carefully and thoroughly considered. Every youth should ask himself: What influence will these amusements have on physical, mental, and moral health? Will my mind become so infatuated as to forget God? Shall I cease to have His glory before me?

"Card playing should be prohibited. The associations and tendencies are dangerous. The prince of the powers of darkness presides in the gaming room and wherever there is card playing. Evil angels are familiar guests in these places. There is nothing to strengthen the intellect, nothing to store it with valuable ideas for future use. The conversation is upon trivial and degrading subjects. There is heard the unseemly jest, the low, vile talk, which lowers and destroys the true dignity of manhood. These games are the most senseless, useless, unprofitable, and dangerous employments the youth can have. Those who engage in card playing become intensely excited and soon lose all relish for useful and elevating occupations. Expertness in handling cards will soon lead to a desire to put this knowledge and tact to some use for personal benefit. A small sum is staked, and then a larger, until a thirst for gaming is acquired, which leads to certain ruin. How many has this pernicious amusement led to every sinful practice, to poverty, to prison, to murder, and to the gallows! And yet many parents do not see the terrible gulf of ruin that is yawning for our youth.

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

"There are modes of recreation which are highly beneficial to both mind and body. An enlightened, discriminating mind will find abundant means for entertainment and diversion, from sources not only innocent, but instructive. Recreation in the open air, the contemplation of the works of God in nature, will be of the highest benefit.

"The great God, whose glory shines from the heavens, and whose divine hand upholds millions of worlds, is our Father. We have only to love Him, trust in Him, as little

children in faith and confidence, and He will accept us as His sons and daughters, and we shall be heirs to all the inexpressible glory of the eternal world. All the meek will He guide in judgment, the meek will He teach His way. If we will walk in obedience to His will, learn cheerfully and diligently the lessons of His providence, by and by He will say: Child, come home to the heavenly mansions I have prepared for you."-4 Testimonies, p. 651-653.

"God's people are to be of a ready mind, quick to see and to avail themselves of every opportunity to advance the Lord's cause. They have a message to bear. By pen and voice they are to sound the note of warning. Only a few will listen; only a few will have ears to hear. Satan has artfully devised many ways of keeping men and women under his influence. He leads them to weaken their organs by the gratification of perverted appetite and by indulgence in worldly pleasure. Intoxicating liquor; tobacco, the theater and the race-course,— these and many other evils are benumbing man's sensibilities, and causing multitudes to turn a deaf ear to God's merciful entries." - Temperance, p. 252-253.

"The enemy of righteousness has every kind of pleasure prepared for youth in all conditions of life; and they are not presented alone in crowded cities, but in every spot inhabited by human beings. Satan loves to secure the youth in his ranks as soldiers. The archfiend well knows with what material he has to deal; and he has displayed his infernal wisdom in devising customs and pleasures for the youth, which will separate their affections from Jesus Christ. The various amusements of society have been the ruin of thousands and tens of thousands who, had it not been for these attractions, would have been obedient children, respectful to their parents, upright, pure, and noble in their pursuits and in their character."-Youth Instructor, January 5, 1887.

"Should Christ come among the assembly who were absorbed in their plays and frivolous amusements, would the solemn melody of His voice be heard in benediction, saying, 'Peace be to this house'? How would the Saviour of the world enjoy these scenes of gaiety and folly?" -Review, October 13, 1874.

"Pride and ambition are never satisfied, but those who are truly wise will find substantial and elevating pleasure in the sources of enjoyment that God has placed within the reach of all."-Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 50.

"It is the privilege and duty of Christians to seek to refresh their spirits and invigorate their bodies by innocent recreation, with the purpose of using their physical and mental powers to the glory of God. Our recreations should not be scenes of senseless mirth, taking the form of the nonsensical. We can conduct them in such a manner as will benefit and elevate those with whom we associate, and better qualify us --and them to more successfully attend to the duties devolving upon us as Christians. . The religion of Christ is cheering and elevating in its influence." -Messages to Young People, p. 364.

"The shows, the theaters, and all such demoralizing amusements, are taking the money from the country, and poverty is continually increasing. Poor men will invest their last shilling in a lottery, hoping to secure a prize, and then they have to beg for food to sustain life, or go hungry. Many die of hunger, and many put an end to their existence."- Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 318.

"These poor souls are engaged in a wild chase after worldly pleasure and earthly riches. They have no knowledge of anything more desirable. But games, theaters, horse races, will not satisfy the soul. Human beings were not created to be satisfied in this way, to spend their money for that which is not bread. Show them how infinitely superior to the fleeting joys and pleasures of the world is the imperishable glory of heaven, Seek to convince them of the freedom and hope and rest and peace there is in the gospel. 'Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst,' Christ declared.'

"-Evangelism, p. 267-268.

"The world is teeming with errors and fables. Novelties in the form of sensational dramas are continually arising to engross the mind, and absurd theories abound which are destructive to moral and spiritual advancement. The cause of God needs men of intellect, men of thought, men well versed in the Scriptures, to meet the inflowing tide of opposition." -4 Testimonies, p. 415.

[In the following quotation try reading "home" for "sanitarium" and "members of the house" for "patients".] "All heaven is interested in the salvation of man and is ready to pour upon him her beneficent gifts if he will comply with the conditions Christ has made: 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean.' "Those who bear the responsibility at the sanitarium should be exceedingly guarded that the amusements shall not be of a character to lower the standard of Christianity, bringing this institution down upon a level with others and weakening the power of true godliness in the minds of those who are connected with it. Worldly or theatrical entertainments are not essential for the prosperity of the sanitarium or for the health of the patients. The more they have of this kind of amusements, the less will they be pleased unless something of the kind shall be continually carried on. The mind is in a fever of unrest for something new and exciting, the very thing it ought not to have. And if these amusements are once allowed, they are expected again, and the patients lose their relish for any simple arrangement to occupy the time. But repose, rather than excitement, is what many of the patients need.

"As soon as these entertainments are introduced, the objections to theatergoing are removed from many minds, and the plea that moral and high-toned scenes are to be acted at the theater breaks down the last barrier. Those who would permit this class of amusements at the sanitarium would better be seeking wisdom from God to lead these poor, hungry, thirsting souls to the Fountain of joy, and peace, and happiness.

"When there has been a departure from the right path, it is difficult to return. Barriers have been removed, safeguards broken down. One step in the wrong direction prepares the way for another. A single glass of wine may open the door of temptation which will lead to habits of drunkenness. A single vindictive feeling indulged may open the way to a train of feelings, which will end in murder. The least deviation from right and principle will lead to separation from God and may end in apostasy. What we do once, we more readily and naturally do again; and to go forward in a certain path, be it right or wrong, is more easy than to start. It takes less time and labor to corrupt our ways before God, than to engraft upon the character habits of righteousness and truth. Whatever a man becomes accustomed to, be its influence good or evil, he finds it difficult to abandon."-4 Testimonies, p. 577, 578.

"The public feeling is that manual labor is degrading, yet men may exert themselves as much as they choose at cricket, baseball, or in pugilistic contests, without being regarded as degraded. Satan is delighted when he sees human beings using their physical and mental powers in that which does not educate, which is not useful, which does not help them to be a blessing to those who need their help. While the youth are becoming expert in games that are of no real value to themselves or to others, Satan is playing the game of life for their souls, taking from them the talents that God has given them, and placing in their stead his own evil attributes. It is his effort to lead men to ignore God. He seeks to engross and absorb the mind so completely that God will find no place in the thoughts. He does not wish people to have a knowledge of their Maker, and he is well pleased if he can set in operation games and theatrical performances that will so confuse the senses of the youth that God and heaven will be forgotten.

"One of the surest safeguards against evil is useful occupation, while idleness is one of the greatest curses; for vice, crime, and poverty follow in its wake. Those who are

always busy, who go cheerfully about their daily tasks, are the useful members of society. In the faithful discharge of the various duties that lie in their pathway, they make their lives a blessing to themselves and to others. Diligent labor keeps them from many of the snares of him who 'finds some mischief still for idle hands to do.' "-Counsels to Teachers, p. 274-275.

"I am bidden to say to you that you know not how soon the crisis may come. It is stealing gradually upon us, as a thief . . . pleasure-lovers are still attending theaters, horse races, gambling hells, and the highest excitement prevails; yet probation's hour is fast closing, and every case is about to be eternally decided. There are few who believe with heart and soul that we have a heaven to win and a hell to shun; but these few show their faith by their works. The signs of Christ's coming are fast fulfilling. Satan sees that he has but a short time in which to work, and he has set his satanic agencies at work to stir the elements of the world, in order that many may be deceived, deluded, and kept occupied and entranced until the day of probation shall be ended, and the door be forever shut.

"The kingdoms of this world have not yet become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. Do not deceive yourselves; be wide awake, and move rapidly, for the night cometh, in which no man can work. Do not encourage students, who come to you, burdened for the work of saving their fellow men, to enter upon course after course of study. Do not lengthen out the time for obtaining an education to many years. By this course they suppose that there is time enough, and this very plan proves a snare to their souls. Many are better prepared, have more spiritual discrimination and knowledge of God, and know more of His requirements, when they enter upon a course of study than when they graduate. They become inspired with an ambition to become learned men, and are encouraged to add to their studies until they become infatuated. They make their books their idol, and are willing to sacrifice health and spirituality in order to obtain an education. They limit the time which they should devote to prayer, and fail to improve the opportunities which they have had to do good, and do not communicate light and knowledge. They fail to put to use the knowledge which they have already obtained, and do not advance in the science of winning souls. Missionary work becomes less and less desirable, and while the passion to excel in book-knowledge increases abnormally. In pursuing their studies, they separate from the God of wisdom. Some congratulate them on their advance, and encourage them to take degree after degree, even though they are less qualified to do the work of God after Christ's manner of instruction than they were before they entered the school." -Fundamentals of Christian Education, pp. 354-356.

"Many who suppose they are going to heaven, are blindfolded by the world. Their ideas of what constitutes a religious education and religious discipline are vague, resting only on probabilities. There are many who have no intelligent hope, and are running great risk in practicing the very things which Jesus has taught that they should not do, in eating, drinking, and dressing, binding themselves up with the world in a variety of ways. They have yet to learn the serious lessons so essential to growth in spirituality, to come out from the world and be separate. The heart is divided; the carnal mind craves conformity, similarity to the world in so many ways that the mark of distinction from the world is scarcely distinguishable. Money, God's money, is expended in order to make an appearance after the world's customs; the religious experience is contaminated with worldliness; and the evidence of discipleship— Christ's likeness in self-denial and cross-bearing—is not discernible by the world or by the universe of heaven.

"Never can the proper education be given to the youth in this country, or any other country, unless they are separated a wide distance from the cities. The customs and practices in the cities unfit the minds of the youth for the entrance of truth. The liquor-drinking, the smoking and gambling, the horse-racing, the theater-going, the great

importance placed upon holidays, —all are a species of idolatry, a sacrifice upon idol altars."-Life Sketches, p. 350-351.

"Terrible as was the representation that passed before me, that which impressed itself most vividly upon my mind was the instruction given in connection with it. The angel that stood by my side declared that God's supreme ruler-ship and the sacredness of His law must be revealed to those who persistently refused to render obedience to the King of kings. Those who choose to remain disloyal must be visited in mercy with judgments, in order that, if possible, they may be aroused to a realization of the sinfulness of their course." -9 Testimonies, p. 91-93.

"The cities of today are fast becoming like Sodom and Gomorrah. Holidays are numerous; the whirl of excitement and pleasure attracts thousands from the sober duties of life. The exciting sports-theatergoing, horse racing, gambling, liquor drinking and reveling-stimulate every passion to activity.

"The youth are swept away by the popular current. Those who learn to love amusement for its own sake open the door to a flood of temptations. They give themselves up to social gaiety and thoughtless mirth. They are led on from one form of dissipation to another, until they lose both the desire and the capacity for a life of usefulness. Their religious aspirations are chilled; their spiritual life is darkened. All the nobler faculties of the soul, all that link man with the spiritual world, are debased."-9 Testimonies, p. 89-90.

"The Scriptures describe the condition of the world just before Christ's second coming. . From age to age the Lord has made known the manner of His working. When a crisis has come, He has revealed Himself and has interposed to hinder the working out of Satan's plans. With nations, with families, and with individuals He has often permitted matters to come to a crisis, that His interference might become marked. Then He has made it manifest that there is a God in Israel who will maintain His law and vindicate His people.

"In the antediluvian world human agencies brought in all manner of devisings and ingenious practices to make of no effect the law of Jehovah. They cast aside His authority because it interfered with their schemes. As in the days before the Flood, so now the time is right upon us when the Lord must reveal His omnipotent power. In this time of prevailing iniquity we may know that the last great crisis is at hand. When defiance against God's law is almost universal, when His people are oppressed and afflicted by their fellow men, the Lord will interpose.

"Satan is not asleep; he is wide awake to make of no effect the sure word of prophecy. With skill and deceptive power he is working to counterwork the expressed will of God, made plain in His word. For years Satan has been gaining control of human minds through subtle sophistries that he has devised to take the place of the truth. In this time of peril, right-doers, in the fear of God, will glorify His name by repeating the words of David: 'It is time for Thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law: Psalm 119: 126.

"While at Loma Linda, California, April 16, 1906, there passed before me a most wonderful representation. During a vision of the night, I stood on an eminence, from which I could see houses shaken like a reed in the wind. Buildings, great and small, were falling to the ground. Pleasure resorts, theaters, hotels, and the homes of the wealthy were shaken and shattered. Many lives were blotted out of existence, and the air was filled with the shrieks of the injured and the terrified.

"The destroying angels of God were at work. One touch, and buildings, so thoroughly constructed that men regarded them as secure against every danger, quickly became heaps of rubbish. There was no assurance of safety in any place. I did not feel

in any special peril, but the awfulness of the scenes that passed before me I cannot find words to describe. It seemed that the forbearance of God was exhausted and that the judgment day had come.

"The angel that stood at my side then instructed me that but few have any conception of the wickedness existing in our world today, and especially the wickedness in the large cities. He declared that the Lord has appointed a time when He will visit transgressors in wrath for persistent disregard of His law.

"The day of the Lord is approaching with stealthy tread; but the supposed great and wise men know not the signs of Christ's coming or of the end of the world. Iniquity abounds, and the love of many has waxed cold.

"There are thousands upon thousands, millions upon millions, who are now making their decision for eternal life or eternal death. The man who is wholly absorbed in his counting room, the man who finds pleasure at the gaming table, the man who loves to indulge perverted appetite, the amusement lover, the frequenters of the theater and the ballroom, put eternity out of their reckoning. The whole burden of their life is: What shall we eat? What shall we drink? And wherewithal shall we be clothed? They are not in the procession that is moving heavenward. They are led by the great apostate, and with him will be destroyed.

"Unless we understand the importance of the moments that are swiftly passing into eternity, and make ready to stand in the great day of God, we shall be unfaithful stewards. The watchman is to know the time of night. Everything is now clothed with a solemnity that all who believe the truth for this time should realize. They should act in reference to the day of God. The judgments of God are about to fall upon the world, and we need to be preparing for that great day.

"Our time is precious. We have but few, very few days of probation in which to make ready for the future, immortal life. We have no time to spend in haphazard movements. We should fear to skim the surface of the word of God.

"It is true now as when Christ was upon the earth, that every inroad made by the gospel upon the enemy's dominion is met by fierce opposition from his vast armies. The conflict that is right upon us will be the most terrible ever witnessed. But though Satan is represented as being as strong as the strong man armed, his overthrow will be complete, and everyone who unites with him in choosing apostasy rather than loyalty will perish with him.

"The restraining Spirit of God is even now being withdrawn from the world. Hurricanes, storms, tempests, fire and flood, disasters by sea and land, follow each other in quick succession. Science seeks to explain all these. The signs thickening around us, telling of the near approach of the Son of God, are attributed to any other than the true cause. Men cannot discern the sentinel angels restraining the four winds that they shall not blow until the servants of God are sealed; but when God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture.

"To those who are indifferent at this time Christ's warning is: 'Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of My mouth.' Revelation 3: 16. The figure of spewing out of His mouth means that He cannot offer up your prayers or your expressions of love to God. He cannot endorse your teaching of His word or your spiritual work in anywise. He cannot present your religious exercises with the request that grace be given you.

"Could the curtain be rolled back, could you discern the purposes of God and the judgments that are about to fall upon a doomed world, could you see your own attitude, you would fear and tremble for your own souls and for the souls of your fellow men. Earnest prayers of heart-rending anguish would go up to heaven. You would weep

between the porch and the altar, confessing your spiritual blindness and backsliding." 6 Testimonies, p. 406-408.

There is no safety in this world other than a continual clinging to Jesus and humble, trustful obedience to His Written Word. This compilation may, in the providence of God, have been compiled especially to help you. Just now, plead with God for help in making the necessary changes.-vf

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