

This is a portion of a larger book. In this version, the Bible texts have been modified into modern English, the punctuation improved, headings and emphasis may have been added, and some sentences realigned.

Christ's Object Lessons (The parables)

[I have added the emphases]

Chapter 25b

Health

Health is a blessing of which few appreciate the value; yet upon it the efficiency of our mental and physical powers largely depends. Our impulses and passions have their seat in the body, and it must be kept in the best condition physically and under the most spiritual influences in order that our talents may be put to the highest use. {COL 346.2}

Anything that lessens physical strength enfeebles the mind and makes it less capable of discriminating between right and wrong. We become less capable of choosing the good and have less strength of will to do that which we know to be right. {COL 346.3}

The misuse of our physical powers shortens the period of time in which our lives can be used for the glory of God [\[causes us to die before our time.\]](#)

And it unfits us to accomplish the work God has given us to do. By allowing ourselves to form wrong habits, by keeping late hours, by gratifying appetite at the expense of health, we lay the foundation for feebleness. By neglecting physical exercise, by overworking mind or body, we unbalance the nervous system. Those who thus shorten their lives and unfit themselves for service by disregarding nature's laws, are guilty of robbery toward God. And they are robbing their fellow men also. The opportunity of blessing others, the very work for which God sent them into the world, has by their own course of action been cut short. And they have unfitted themselves to do even that which in a briefer period of time they might have accomplished. The LORD holds us guilty when by our injurious habits we thus deprive the world of good. {COL 346.4}

Transgression of physical law is transgression of the moral law; for God is as truly the author of physical laws as He is the author of the moral law. His law is written with His own finger upon every nerve, every muscle, every faculty, which has been entrusted to man. And every misuse of any part of our organism is a violation of that law. {COL 347.1}

All should have an intelligent knowledge of the human frame that they may keep their bodies in the condition necessary to do the work of the LORD.

The physical life is to be carefully preserved and developed that through humanity the divine nature may be revealed in its fullness. ***The relation of the physical organism to the spiritual life is one of the most important branches of education.*** It should receive careful attention in the home and in the school. All need to become acquainted with their physical structure and the laws that control natural life. He who remains in willing ignorance of the laws of his physical being and who violates them through ignorance is sinning against God. All should place themselves in the best possible relation to life and health. ***Our habits should be brought under the control of a mind that is itself under the control of God.*** {COL 348.1}

“Know you not,” says the apostle Paul, “that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which you have of God, and you are not your own? For you are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20. {COL 348.2}

Strength

We are to love God, not only with all the heart, mind, and soul, but with all the strength. This covers the full, intelligent use of the physical powers. {COL 348.3}

Christ was a true worker in temporal as well as in spiritual things, and into all His work He brought a determination to do His Father’s will. The things of heaven and earth are more closely connected and are more directly under the supervision of Christ than many realize.

It was Christ who planned the arrangement for the first earthly tabernacle. He gave every specification in regard to the building of Solomon’s temple. The One who in His earthly life worked as a carpenter in the village of Nazareth was the heavenly architect who marked out the plan for the sacred building where His name was to be honored. {COL 348.4}

It was Christ who gave to the builders of the tabernacle wisdom to execute the most skillful and beautiful workmanship. He said, “See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship.... And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded you.” Exodus 31:2-6. {COL 349.1}

God desires that His workers in every line shall look to Him as the Giver of all they possess. All right inventions and improvements have their source in Him who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working. The skillful touch of the physician's hand, his power over nerve and muscle, his knowledge of the delicate organism of the body, is the wisdom of divine power, to be used in behalf of the suffering. The skill with which the carpenter uses the hammer, the strength with which the blacksmith makes the anvil ring, comes from God. He has entrusted men with talents, and He expects them to look to Him for counsel. Whatever we do, in whatever department of the work we are placed, He desires to control our minds that we may do perfect work. {COL 349.2}

Religion and business are not two separate things; they are one. Bible religion is to be interwoven with all we do or say. Divine and human agencies are to combine in temporal as well as in spiritual achievements. They are to be united in all human pursuits, in mechanical and agricultural labors, in mercantile and scientific enterprises. There must be co-operation in everything embraced in Christian activity. {COL 349.3}

God has proclaimed the principles on which alone this co-operation is possible. His glory must be the motive of all who are laborers together with Him. All our work is to be done from love of God and in accordance with His will. {COL 350.1}

It is just as essential to do the will of God when erecting a building as when taking part in a religious service. And if the workers have brought the right principles into their own character making, then in the erection of every building they will grow in grace and knowledge. {COL 350.2}

But God will not accept the greatest talents or the most splendid service unless self is laid upon the altar, a living, consuming sacrifice. The root must be holy, else there can be no fruit acceptable to God. {COL 350.3}

The LORD made Daniel and Joseph shrewd managers. He could work through them because they did not live to please their own inclination but to please God. {COL 350.4}

The case of Daniel has a lesson for us. It reveals the fact that a businessman is not necessarily a sharp, policy man. He can be instructed by God at every step. Daniel, while prime minister of the kingdom of Babylon, was a prophet of God, receiving the light of heavenly inspiration. Worldly, ambitious statesmen are represented in the word of God as the grass that grows up and as the flower of the grass that fades. Yet the LORD desires to have in His service intelligent men, men

qualified for various lines of work. There is need of businessmen who will weave the grand principles of truth into all their transactions. And their talents should be perfected by most thorough study and training. If men in any line of work need to improve their opportunities to become wise and efficient, it is those who are using their ability in building up the kingdom of God in our world. Of Daniel we learn that in all his business transactions, when subjected to the closest scrutiny, not one fault or error could be found. He was a sample of what every businessman may be. His history shows what may be accomplished by one who consecrates the strength of brain and bone and muscle, of heart and life, to the service of God. {COL 350.5}

Money

God also entrusts men with means. He gives them power to get wealth. He waters the earth with the dews of heaven and with the showers of refreshing rain. He gives the sunlight, which warms the earth, awakening to life the things of nature and causing them to flourish and bear fruit. And He asks for a return of His own. {COL 351.1}

Our money has not been given us that we might honor and glorify ourselves. As faithful stewards we are to use it for the honor and glory of God. Some think that only a portion of their means is the LORD's. When they have set apart a portion for religious and charitable purposes, they regard the remainder as their own, to be used as they see fit.

But in this they mistake. All we possess is the LORD's, and we are accountable to Him for the use we make of it. In the use of every penny, it will be seen whether we love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves. {COL 351.2}

Money has great value, because it can do great good. In the hands of God's children it is food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, and clothing for the naked. It is a defense for the oppressed, and a means of help to the sick. But money is of no more value than sand, only as it is put to use in providing for the necessities of life, in blessing others, and advancing the cause of Christ. {COL 351.3}

Hoarded wealth is not merely useless, it is a curse. In this life it is a snare to the soul, drawing the affections away from the heavenly treasure. In the great day of God its witness to unused talents and neglected opportunities will condemn its possessor. The Scripture says, "Go to now, you rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall bear witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. You have heaped treasure together for

the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the LORD of sabaoth [the host.](#)” James 5:1-4. {COL 352.1}

But Christ sanctions no lavish or careless use of means. His lesson in economy, “Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost,” is for all His followers. (John 6:12.) He who realizes that his money is a talent from God will use it economically, and will feel it a duty to save that he may give. {COL 352.2}

The more means we expend in display and self-indulgence, the less we can have to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. Every penny used unnecessarily deprives the spender of a precious opportunity of doing good. It is robbing God of the honor and glory which should flow back to Him through the improvement of His entrusted talents. {COL 352.3}

Kindly Impulses and Affections

Kindly affections, generous impulses, and a quick apprehension of spiritual things are precious talents, and lay their possessor under a weighty responsibility. All are to be used in God’s service. But here many err. Satisfied with the possession of these qualities, they fail to bring them into active service for others. They flatter themselves that if they had opportunity, if circumstances were favorable, they would do a great and good work. But they are awaiting the opportunity.

They despise the narrowness of the poor niggard who grudges even a pittance to the needy. They see that he is living for self, and that he is responsible for his misused talents. With much complacency they draw the contrast between themselves and such narrow-minded ones, feeling that their own condition is much more favorable than that of their mean-souled neighbors.

But they are deceiving themselves. ***The mere possession of unused qualities only increases their responsibility.*** Those who possess large affections are under obligation to God to bestow them, not merely on their friends, but on all who need their help. Social advantages are talents, and are to be used for the benefit of all within reach of our influence. The love that gives kindness to only a few is not love, but selfishness. It will not in any way work for the good of souls or the glory of God. Those who thus leave their Master’s talents unimproved are even more guilty than are the ones for whom they feel such contempt. To them it will be said, You knew your Master’s will, but did it not. {COL 352.4}

Talents Multiplied by Use

Talents used are talents multiplied. Success is not the result of chance or of destiny; it is the outworking of God's own providence, the reward of faith and discretion, of virtue and persevering effort. The LORD desires us to use every gift we have; and if we do this, we shall have greater gifts to use. He does not supernaturally endow us with the qualifications we lack; but while we use that which we have, He will work with us to increase and strengthen every faculty. By every wholehearted, earnest sacrifice for the Master's service our powers will increase. While we yield ourselves as instruments for the Holy Spirit's working, the grace of God works in us to deny old inclinations, to overcome powerful propensities, and to form new habits. As we cherish and obey the promptings of the Spirit, our hearts are enlarged to receive more and more of His power, and to do more and better work. Dormant energies are aroused, and palsied faculties receive new life. {COL 353.1}

The humble worker who obediently responds to the call of God may be sure of receiving divine assistance. To accept so great and holy a responsibility is itself elevating to the character. It calls into action the highest mental and spiritual powers, and strengthens and purifies the mind and heart. Through faith in the power of God, it is wonderful how strong a weak man may become, how decided his efforts, how prolific of great results. He who begins with a little knowledge, in a humble way, and tells what he knows, while seeking diligently for further knowledge, will find the whole heavenly treasure awaiting his demand. ***The more he seeks to impart light, the more light he will receive. The more one tries to explain the word of God to others, with a love for souls, the plainer it becomes to himself. The more we use our knowledge and exercise our powers, the more knowledge and power we shall have.*** {COL 354.1}

Every effort made for Christ will react in blessing upon ourselves. If we use our means for His glory, He will give us more. As we seek to win others to Christ, bearing the burden of souls in our prayers, our own hearts will throb with the quickening influence of God's grace; our own affections will glow with more divine fervor; our whole Christian life will be more of a reality, more earnest, more prayerful. {COL 354.2}

The value of man is estimated in heaven according to the capacity of the heart to know God. This knowledge is the spring from which flows all power. God created man that every faculty might be the faculty of the divine mind; and He is ever seeking to bring the human mind into association with the divine. He offers us the privilege of co-operation with Christ in revealing His

grace to the world, that we may receive increased knowledge of heavenly things. {COL 354.3}

Looking to Jesus we obtain brighter and more distinct views of God, and by beholding we become changed. Goodness, love for our fellow men, becomes our natural instinct. We develop a character which is the counterpart of the divine character. Growing into His likeness, we enlarge our capacity for knowing God. More and more we enter into fellowship with the heavenly world, and we have continually increasing power to receive the riches of the knowledge and wisdom of eternity. {COL 355.1}

The One Talent

The man who received the one talent “went and dug in the earth, and hid his lord’s money.” {COL 355.2}

It was the one with the smallest gift who left his talent unimproved. In this is given a warning to all who feel that the smallness of their endowments excuses them from service for Christ. If they could do some great thing, how gladly would they undertake it; but because they can serve only in little things, they think themselves justified in doing nothing. In this they err. The LORD in His distribution of gifts is testing character. The man who neglected to improve his talent proved himself an unfaithful servant. Had he received five talents, he would have buried them as he buried the one. His misuse of the one talent showed that he despised the gifts of heaven. {COL 355.3}

“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.” Luke 16:10. The importance of the little things is often underrated because they are small; but they supply much of the actual discipline of life. There are really no nonessentials in the Christian’s life. Our character building will be full of peril while we underrate the importance of the little things. {COL 356.1}

“He that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.”
By unfaithfulness in even the smallest duties, man robs his Maker of the service which is His due. This unfaithfulness reacts upon himself. He fails of gaining the grace, the power, the force of character, which may be received through an unreserved surrender to God. Living apart from Christ he is subject to Satan’s temptations, and he makes mistakes in his work for the Master. Because he is not guided by right principles in little things, he fails to obey God in the great matters which he regards as his special work. The defects cherished in dealing with life’s minor details pass into more important affairs. He acts on the principles to which he has accustomed himself. Thus actions repeated form habits, habits form character, and by the character our destiny for time and for eternity is decided. {COL 356.2}

Only by faithfulness in the little things can the soul be trained to act with fidelity under larger responsibilities. God brought Daniel and his fellows into connection with the great men of Babylon, that these heathen men might become acquainted with the principles of true religion. In the midst of a nation of idolaters, Daniel was to represent the character of God. How did he become fitted for a position of so great trust and honor? It was his faithfulness in the little things that gave complexion to his whole life. He honored God in the smallest duties, and the LORD co-operated with him. To Daniel and his companions God gave “knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.” Daniel 1:17. {COL 356.3}

As God called Daniel to witness for Him in Babylon, so He calls us to be His witnesses in the world today. In the smallest as well as the largest affairs of life He desires us to reveal to men the principles of His kingdom. {COL 357.1}

Christ in His life on earth taught the lesson of careful attention to the little things. The great work of redemption weighed continually upon His soul. As He was teaching and healing, all the energies of mind and body were taxed to the utmost; yet He noticed the most simple things in life and in nature. His most instructive lessons were those in which by the simple things of nature He illustrated the great truths of the kingdom of God. He did not overlook the necessities of the humblest of His servants. His ear heard every cry of need. He was awake to the touch of the afflicted woman in the crowd; the very slightest touch of faith brought a response. When He raised from the dead the daughter of Jairus, He reminded her parents that she must have something to eat. When by His own mighty power He rose from the tomb, He did not disdain to fold and put carefully in the proper place the graveclothes in which He had been laid away. {COL 357.2}

The work to which as Christians we are called is to co-operate with Christ for the salvation of souls. This work we have entered into covenant with Him to do. To neglect the work is to prove disloyal to Christ. But in order to accomplish this work we must follow His example of faithful, conscientious attention to the little things. This is the secret of success in every line of Christian effort and influence. {COL 358.1}

The LORD desires His people to reach the highest round of the ladder that they may glorify Him by possessing the ability He is willing to bestow. Through the grace of God every provision has been made for us to reveal that we act upon better plans than those upon which the world acts. We are to show a superiority in intellect, in understanding, in skill and knowledge,

because we believe in God and in His power to work upon human hearts. {COL 358.2}

But those who have not a large endowment of gifts need not become discouraged. Let them use what they have, faithfully guarding every weak point in their characters, seeking by divine grace to make it strong. Into every action of life we are to weave faithfulness and loyalty, cultivating the attributes that will enable us to accomplish the work. {COL 358.3}

Habits of negligence should be resolutely overcome.

Many think it a sufficient excuse for the grossest errors to plead forgetfulness. But do they not, as well as others, possess intellectual faculties? Then they should discipline their minds to be retentive. ***It is a sin to forget, a sin to be negligent.*** If you form a habit of negligence, you may neglect your own soul's salvation and at last find that you are unready for the kingdom of God. {COL 358.4}

Great truths must be brought into little things. Practical religion is to be carried into the lowly duties of daily life. The greatest qualification for any man is to obey implicitly the word of the LORD. {COL 359.1}

Because they are not connected with some directly religious work, many feel that their lives are useless; that they are doing nothing for the advancement of God's kingdom. But this is a mistake. If their work is that which someone must do, they should not accuse themselves of uselessness in the great household of God. The humblest duties are not to be ignored. Any honest work is a blessing, and faithfulness in it may prove a training for higher trusts. {COL 359.2}

However lowly, any work done for God with a full surrender of self is as acceptable to Him as the highest service. No offering is small that is given with true-heartedness and gladness of soul. {COL 359.3}

Wherever we may be, Christ bids us take up the duty that presents itself. If this is in the home, take hold willingly and earnestly to make home a pleasant place. If you are a mother, train your children for Christ. This is as verily a work for God as is that of the minister in the pulpit. If your duty is in the kitchen, seek to be a perfect cook. Prepare food that will be healthful, nourishing, and appetizing. And as you employ the best ingredients in preparing food remember that you are to give your mind the best thoughts. If it is your work to till the soil or to engage in any other trade or occupation, make a success of the present duty. Put your mind on what you are doing. In all your work represent Christ. Do as He would do in your place. {COL 359.4}

However small your talent, God has a place for it. That one talent, wisely used, will accomplish its appointed work. By faithfulness in little duties, we are to work on the plan of addition, and God will work for us on the plan of multiplication. These littles will become the most precious influences in His work. {COL 360.1}

Let a living faith run like threads of gold through the performance of even the smallest duties. Then all the daily work will promote Christian growth. There will be a continual looking to Jesus. Love for Him will give vital force to everything that is undertaken. Thus through the right use of our talents, we may link ourselves by a golden chain to the higher world. ***This is true sanctification; for sanctification consists in the cheerful performance of daily duties in perfect obedience to the will of God.*** {COL 360.2}

But many Christians are waiting for some great work to be brought to them. Because they cannot find a place large enough to satisfy their ambition, they fail to perform faithfully the common duties of life. These seem to them uninteresting. Day by day they let slip opportunities for showing their faithfulness to God. While they are waiting for some great work, life passes away, its purposes unfulfilled, its work unaccomplished. {COL 360.3}

The Talents Returned

“After a long time the LORD of those servants comes, and reckoneth with them.” When the LORD takes account of His servants, the return from every talent will be scrutinized. The work done reveals the character of the worker. {COL 360.4}

Those who have received the five and the two talents return to the LORD the entrusted gifts with their increase. In doing this they claim no merit for themselves. Their talents are those that have been delivered to them; they have gained other talents, but there could have been no gain without the deposit. ***They see that they have done only their duty.*** The capital was the LORD’s; the improvement is His. Had not the Saviour bestowed upon them His love and grace, they would have been bankrupt for eternity. {COL 360.5}

But when the Master receives the talents, He approves and rewards the workers as though the merit were all their own. His countenance is full of joy and satisfaction. He is filled with delight that He can bestow blessings upon them. For every service and every sacrifice He requites them, not because it is a debt He owes, but because His heart is overflowing with love and tenderness. {COL 361.1}

“Well done, you good and faithful servant,” He says; “you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things; enter you into the joy of your LORD.” {COL 361.2}

It is the faithfulness, the loyalty to God, the loving service, that wins the divine approval. Every impulse of the Holy Spirit leading men to goodness and to God, is noted in the books of heaven, and in the day of God the workers through whom He has wrought will be commended. {COL 361.3}

They will enter into the joy of the LORD as they see in His kingdom those who have been redeemed through their instrumentality. And they are privileged to participate in His work there, because they have gained a fitness for it by participation in His work here. What we shall be in heaven is the reflection of what we are now in character and holy service. Christ said of Himself, “The Son of man came not to be ministered to, but to minister.” Matthew 20:28. This, His work on earth, is His work in heaven. And our reward for working with Christ in this world is the greater power and wider privilege of working with Him in the world to come. {COL 361.4}

“Then he which had received the one talent came and said, LORD, I knew you that you are an hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not sowed; and I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the earth; lo, there you have that is your.” {COL 362.1}

Thus men excuse their neglect of God’s gifts. They look upon God as severe and tyrannical, as watching to spy out their mistakes and visit them with judgments. They charge Him with demanding what He has never given, with reaping where He has not sown. {COL 362.2}

There are many who in their hearts charge God with being a hard master because He claims their possessions and their service. But we can bring to God nothing that is not already His. “All things come of You,” said King David; “and of Your own have we given You.” 1 Chronicles 29:14. All things are God’s, not only by creation, but by redemption. All the blessings of this life and of the life to come are delivered to us stamped with the cross of Calvary. Therefore the charge that God is a hard master, reaping where He has not sown, is false. {COL 362.3}

The master does not deny the charge of the wicked servant, unjust as it is; but taking him on his own ground he shows that his conduct is without excuse. Ways and means had been provided whereby the talent might have been improved to the owner’s profit. “You ought,” he said, “to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.” {COL 362.4}

Our heavenly Father requires no more nor less than He has given us ability to do. He lays upon His servants no burdens that they are not able to bear. “He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.” Psalm 103:14. All that He claims from us we through divine grace can render. {COL 362.5}

“To whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.” Luke 12:48. We shall individually be held responsible for doing one jot less than we have ability to do. The LORD measures with exactness every possibility for service. The unused capabilities are as much brought into account as are those that are improved. For all that we might become through the right use of our talents God holds us responsible. We shall be judged according to what we ought to have done, but did not accomplish because we did not use our powers to glorify God. Even if we do not lose our souls, we shall realize in eternity the result of our unused talents. For all the knowledge and ability that we might have gained and did not, there will be an eternal loss. {COL 362.6}

But when we give ourselves wholly to God and in our work follow His directions, He makes Himself responsible for its accomplishment. He would not have us conjecture as to the success of our honest endeavors. Not once should we even think of failure. We are to co-operate with One who knows no failure. {COL 363.1}

We should not talk of our own weakness and inability. This is a manifest distrust of God, a denial of His word. When we murmur because of our burdens, or refuse the responsibilities He calls upon us to bear, we are virtually saying that He is a hard master, that He requires what He has not given us power to do. {COL 363.2}

The spirit of the slothful servant we are often fain to call humility. But true humility is widely different. ***To be clothed with humility does not mean that we are to be dwarfs in intellect, deficient in aspiration, and cowardly in our lives, shunning burdens lest we fail to carry them successfully. Real***
 ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! . {COL
363.3}

God works by whom He will. He sometimes selects the humblest instrument to do the greatest work, for His power is revealed through the weakness of men. We have our standard, and by it we pronounce one thing great and another small; but God does not estimate according to our rule. We are not to suppose that what is great to us must be great to God, or that what is small to us must be small to Him. It does not rest with us to pass judgment on our talents or to choose our work. We are to take up the burdens that God appoints, bearing them for His sake, and ever going to Him for rest.

Whatever our work, God is honored by wholehearted, cheerful service. He is pleased when we take up our duties with gratitude, rejoicing that we are accounted worthy to be co-laborers with Him. {COL 363.4}

The Talent Removed

Upon the slothful servant the sentence was, “Take therefore the talent from him, and give it to him which has ten talents.” Here, as in the reward of the faithful worker, is indicated not merely the reward at the final judgment ***but the gradual process of retribution in this life***. As in the natural, so in the spiritual world: every power unused will weaken and decay. Activity is the law of life; idleness is death. “The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.” 1 Corinthians 12:7. Employed to bless others, his gifts increase. Shut up to self-serving they diminish, and are finally withdrawn. He who refuses to impart that which he has received will at last find that he has nothing to give. He is consenting to a process that surely dwarfs and finally destroys the faculties of the soul. {COL 364.1}

Let none suppose that they can live a life of selfishness, and then, having served their own interests, enter into the joy of their LORD. In the joy of unselfish love they could not participate. They would not be fitted for the heavenly courts. They could not appreciate the pure atmosphere of love that pervades heaven. The voices of the angels and the music of their harps would not satisfy them. To their minds the science of heaven would be as an enigma. {COL 364.2}

In the great judgment day those who have not worked for Christ, those who have drifted along, carrying no responsibility, thinking of themselves, pleasing themselves, will be placed by the Judge of all the earth with those who did evil. They receive the same condemnation. {COL 365.1}

Many who profess to be Christians neglect the claims of God, and yet they do not feel that in this there is any wrong. They know that the blasphemer, the murderer, the adulterer, deserves punishment; but as for them, they enjoy the services of religion. They love to hear the gospel preached, and therefore they think themselves Christians. Though they have spent their lives in caring for themselves, they will be as much surprised as was the unfaithful servant in the parable to hear the sentence, Take the talent from him. Like the Jews, they mistake the enjoyment of their blessings for the use they should make of them. {COL 365.2}

Many who excuse themselves from Christian effort plead their inability for the work. But did God make them so incapable? No, never. This inability has been produced by their own inactivity and perpetuated by their deliberate choice. Already, in their own characters, they are realizing the result of the

sentence, “Take the talent from him.” The continual misuse of their talents will effectually quench for them the Holy Spirit, which is the only light. The sentence, “Cast you the unprofitable servant into outer darkness,” sets Heaven’s seal to the choice which they themselves have made for eternity. {COL 365.3}

oooOooo