

Please have all the brethren read this before they are baptized:

Repentance, faith, and baptism are the requisite steps in conversion. Christ Himself was baptized by John. When John would forbid Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?" Jesus replied, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." [Matthew 3:14, 15.]

Baptism is a most solemn ceremony. When men and women, truly converted, are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, these three representatives of heavenly authority behold the scene and accept the vows made by human agents to walk henceforth in newness of life. In taking the baptismal vows, you have united with the highest powers in the heavenly courts, to live a life patterned after the life of Christ. I praise the Lord with my whole soul that you have taken this step. {24LtMs, Lt 174, 1909, par. 2-3}

Matthew 3:8, "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."

The souls under conviction of the truth need to be visited and labored for. Sinners need a special work done for them, that they may be converted and baptized.-- {23LtMs, Ms 17, 1908, par. 12} Christ has made baptism the sign of entrance to His spiritual kingdom. He has made this a positive condition with which all must comply who wish to be acknowledged as under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Before man can find a home in the church, before passing the threshold of God's spiritual kingdom, he is to receive the impress of the divine name, "The Lord our righteousness." **Jeremiah 23:6**.

Baptism is a most solemn renunciation of the world. Those who are baptized in the threefold name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, at the very entrance of their Christian life declare publicly that they have forsaken the service of Satan, and have become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. They have obeyed the command, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, . . . and touch not the unclean thing." And to them is fulfilled the promise, "I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18. --**Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 91.2-3 (1900)**

As Christians submit to the solemn rite of baptism, He registers the vow that they make to be true to Him. This vow is their oath of allegiance. They are baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Thus they are united with the three great powers of heaven. They pledge themselves to renounce the world and to observe the laws of the kingdom of God. Henceforth they are to walk in newness of life. No longer are they to follow the traditions of men. No longer are they to follow dishonest methods. They are to obey the statutes of the kingdom of heaven. They are to seek God's honor. If they will be true to their vow, they will be furnished with grace and power that will enable them to fulfill all righteousness. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. {18LtMs, Lt 129, 1903, par. 10}

Isaiah 8:16, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples."

Isaiah 8:20, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, [it is] because [there is] no light in them."

Psalms 19:7, "The law of the LORD [is] perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD [is] sure, making wise the simple."

Revelation 12:17, "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Revelation 22:14, "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."

The preparation for baptism is a matter that needs to be carefully considered. The new converts to the truth should be faithfully instructed in the plain, "Thus saith the Lord." The Word of the Lord is to be read and explained to them point by point.

All who enter upon the new life should understand, prior to their baptism, that the Lord requires the undivided affections. In the Sermon on the Mount are given most precious lessons from the lips of the great Teacher. He says, "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." [Matthew 6:24.] Again he says, "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. ... Not every one 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." [Matthew 7:13, 14, 21.]

The practicing of the truth is essential. The bearing of fruit testifies to the character of the tree. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit. The line of demarkation will be plain and distinct between those who love God and keep His commandments and those who love Him not and disregard His precepts. There is need of a thorough conversion to the truth. We are not only to say, I believe, but to practice the truth. The light of the Word carefully studied, the voice of conscience, the strivings of the Spirit, produce in the heart genuine love for Christ, who gave Himself a whole sacrifice to redeem the whole person, soul, body, and spirit. - {15LtMs, Ms 56, 1900, par. 1-3}

The test of discipleship is not brought to bear as closely as it should be upon those who present themselves for baptism. It should be understood whether those who profess to be converted are simply taking the name of Seventh-day Adventist, or whether they are taking their stand on the Lord's side to come out of the world and be separate and touch not the unclean thing. When they give evidence that they fully understand their position, they are to be accepted. But when they show that they are following the customs and fashions and sentiments of the world, they are to be faithfully dealt with. If they feel no burden to change their course of action, they should not be retained as members of the church. The Lord wants those who compose His church to be true, faithful stewards of the grace of Christ. {13LtMs, Ms 7, 1898, par. 28}

Note: The name "Seventh-Day Adventist" today is associated with apostasy, and as such,

we do not call ourselves Seventh-Day Adventist. The true Israelites who left the Jewish synagogues were renamed Christians; next came the Protestants, and later the Seventh Day-Adventists. While it is true that all these names to some degree do spiritually apply to us, the name which we display to the world is the name "Seventh Day Remnant".

There is need of a more thorough preparation on the part of candidates for baptism. They are in need of more faithful instruction than has usually been given them. The principles of the Christian life should be made plain to those who have newly come to the truth. None can depend upon their profession of faith as proof that they have a saving connection with Christ. We are not only to say, "I believe," but to practice the truth. It is by conformity to the will of God in our words, our deportment, our character, that we prove our connection with Him. Whenever one renounces sin, which is the transgression of the law, his life will be brought into conformity to the law, into perfect obedience. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. The light of the word carefully studied, the voice of conscience, the strivings of the Spirit, produce in the heart genuine love for Christ, who gave Himself a whole sacrifice to redeem the whole person, body, soul, and spirit. And love is manifested in obedience. The line of demarcation will be plain and distinct between those who love God and keep His commandments, and those who love Him not and disregard His precepts. **{6T 91.4}**

The Parents' Work. Parents whose children desire to be baptized have a work to do, both in self-examination and in giving faithful instruction to their children. Baptism is a most sacred and important ordinance, and there should be a thorough understanding as to its meaning. It means repentance for sin, and the entrance upon a new life in Christ Jesus. There should be no undue haste to receive the ordinance. Let both parents and children count the cost. In consenting to the baptism of their children, parents sacredly pledge themselves to be faithful stewards over these children, to guide them in their character building. They pledge themselves to guard with special interest these lambs of the flock, that they may not dishonor the faith they profess.

Religious instruction should be given to children from their earliest years. It should be given, not in a condemnatory spirit, but in a cheerful, happy spirit. Mothers need to be on the watch constantly, lest temptation shall come to the children in such a form as not to be recognized by them. The parents are to guard their children with wise, pleasant instruction. As the very best friends of these inexperienced ones, they should help them in the work of overcoming, for it means everything to them to be victorious. They should consider that their own dear children who are seeking to do right are younger members of the Lord's family, and they should feel an intense interest in helping them to make straight paths in the King's highway of obedience. With loving interest they should teach them day by day what it means to be children of God and to yield the will in obedience to Him. Teach them that obedience to God involves obedience to their parents. This must be a daily, hourly work. Parents, watch, watch and pray, and make your children your companions.

When the happiest period of their life has come, and they in their hearts love Jesus and wish to be baptized, then deal faithfully with them. Before they receive the ordinance, ask them if it is to be their first purpose in life to work for God. Then tell them how to begin. It is the first lessons that mean so much. In simplicity teach them how to do their first service for God. Make the work as easy to be understood as possible. Explain what it means to give up self to the Lord, to do just

as His word directs, under the counsel of Christian parents.

After faithful labor, if you are satisfied that your children understand the meaning of conversion and baptism, and are truly converted, let them be baptized. But, I repeat, first of all prepare yourselves to act as faithful shepherds in guiding their inexperienced feet in the narrow way of obedience. God must work in the parents that they may give to their children a right example, in love, courtesy, and Christian humility, and in an entire giving up of self to Christ. If you consent to the baptism of your children and then leave them to do as they choose, feeling no special duty to keep their feet in the straight path, you yourselves are responsible if they lose faith and courage and interest in the truth. {6T 93.3-94.2}

The test of discipleship is not brought to bear as closely as it should be upon those who present themselves for baptism. It should be understood whether they are simply taking the name of Seventh-day Adventists, or whether they are taking their stand on the Lord's side, to come out from the world and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing. Before baptism there should be a thorough inquiry as to the experience of the candidates. Let this inquiry be made, not in a cold and distant way, but kindly, tenderly, pointing the new converts to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Bring the requirements of the gospel to bear upon the candidates for baptism.

One of the points upon which those newly come to the faith will need instruction is the subject of dress. Let the new converts be faithfully dealt with. Are they vain in dress? Do they cherish pride of heart? The idolatry of dress is a moral disease. It must not be taken over into the new life. In most cases, submission to the gospel requirements will demand a decided change in the dress.

There should be no carelessness in dress. For Christ's sake, whose witnesses we are, we should seek to make the best of our appearance. In the tabernacle service, God specified every detail concerning the garments of those who ministered before Him. Thus we are taught that He has a preference in regard to the dress of those who serve Him. Very specific were the directions given in regard to Aaron's robes, for his dress was symbolic. So the dress of Christ's followers should be symbolic. In all things we are to be representatives of Him. Our appearance in every respect should be characterized by neatness, modesty, and purity. But the word of God gives no sanction to the making of changes in apparel merely for the sake of fashion, that we may appear like the world. Christians are not to decorate the person with costly array or expensive ornaments.

The words of Scripture in regard to dress should be carefully considered. We need to understand that which the Lord of heaven appreciates in even the dressing of the body. All who are in earnest in seeking for the grace of Christ will heed the precious words of instruction inspired by God. Even the style of the apparel will express the truth of the gospel.

All who study the life of Christ and practice His teachings will become like Christ. Their influence will be like His. They will reveal soundness of character. As they walk in the humble path of obedience, doing the will of God, they exert an influence that tells for the advancement of the cause of God and the healthful purity of His work. In these thoroughly converted souls the world is to have a witness to the sanctifying power of truth upon the human character.

The knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, expressed in character, is an exaltation above everything that is esteemed in earth or in heaven. It is the very highest education. It is the key that opens the portals of the heavenly city. This knowledge it is God's purpose that all who put on Christ by baptism shall possess. And it is the duty of God's servants to set before these souls the privilege of their high calling in Christ Jesus. **{6T 95.2-97.1}**

Christians are required by the Scriptures to enter upon a plan of active benevolence which will keep in constant exercise an interest in the salvation of their fellow men. The moral law enjoined the observance of the Sabbath, which was not a burden except when that law was transgressed and they were bound by the penalties involved in breaking it. The tithing system was no burden to those who did not depart from the plan. The system enjoined upon the Hebrews has not been repealed or relaxed by the One who originated it. Instead of being of no force now, it was to be more fully carried out and more extended, as salvation through Christ alone should be more fully brought to light in the Christian age. **{3T 391.4}**

God gives man nine tenths, while He claims one tenth for sacred purposes, as He has given man six days for his own work and has reserved and set apart the seventh day to Himself. For, like the Sabbath, a tenth of the increase is sacred; God has reserved it for Himself. He will carry forward His work upon the earth with the increase of the means that He has entrusted to man. **{3T 395.2}**

God calls for talents of influence and of means. Shall we refuse to obey? Our heavenly Father bestows gifts and solicits a portion back, that He may test us whether we are worthy to have the gift of everlasting life. **{3T 408.4}**

We have great need to search the Scriptures that we may be representatives of Christ, and act our part as laborers together with God to build up the church in the most holy faith. There is not enough careful, prayerful, painstaking investigation in accepting members into the church. We cannot follow the example of the world, or allow their criticisms to sway us from the path of duty. They will blame us if we refuse to admit certain persons into church fellowship, and on the other hand, they condemn the church for its unworthy members. They will say, The church is no better than the world; for its members deceive and cheat and bear false witness; so the world's say so in this matter of who shall be admitted into church fellowship, should have no weight with us. There is one thing that we have no right to do, and that is to judge another man's heart or impugn his motives. But when a person presents himself as a candidate for church membership, we are to examine the fruit of his life, and leave the responsibility of his motive with himself. But great care should be exercised in accepting members into the church; for Satan has his specious devices through which he purposes to crowd false brethren into the church, through whom he can work more successfully to weaken the cause of God. **{RH, Jan 10, 1893, par. 2}**

After the believing soul has received the ordinance of baptism, he is to bear in mind that he is dedicated to God, to Christ, and to the Holy Spirit. These three all co-operate in the great work of the covenant made by baptism in the sight of the heavenly universe. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit receive the believing soul into covenant relation with God.

All who study the life of Christ and practice His teaching will become like Christ. Their influence will be like His. They will reveal soundness of character. They are established in the

faith, and will not be overcome by the devil because of vanity and pride. They seek to walk the humble path of obedience, doing the will of God. Their character exerts an influence that tells for the advancement of the cause of God and the healthful purity of His work.

By the reception of the doctrines revealed and the performance of the duties required in the Word of God, the professed followers of Christ are to witness to the world of their unity with Christ. They are to show that they have been given to Christ by His Father, and are overcomers through the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. They love Him who hath redeemed them. They increase in knowledge of Christ through exemplifying His character. And they cherish expectations that will not be disappointed: they expect to see His face and to rejoice in the sunshine of His countenance.

In these thoroughly converted souls the world has a witness to the sanctifying power of truth upon the human character. Through them Christ makes known to the world His character and will. In the lives of God's children is revealed the blessedness of serving the Lord, and the opposite is seen in those who do not keep His commandments. The line of demarkation is distinct. All who obey God's commandments are kept by His mighty power amid the corrupting influence of the transgressors of His law. From the lowliest subject to the highest in positions of trust, they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. **{15LtMs, Ms 56, 1900, par. 26-29}**

The vows which we take upon ourselves in baptism embrace much. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit we are buried in the likeness of Christ's death and raised in the likeness of His resurrection, and we are to live a new life. Our life is to be bound up with the life of Christ. Henceforth the believer is to bear in mind that he is dedicated to God, to Christ, and to the Holy Spirit. He is to make all worldly considerations secondary to this new relation. Publicly he has declared that he will no longer live in pride and self-indulgence. He is no longer to live a careless, indifferent life. He has made a covenant with God. He has died to the world. He is to live to the Lord, to use for Him all his entrusted capabilities, never losing the realization that he bears God's signature, that he is a subject of Christ's kingdom, a partaker of the divine nature. He is to surrender to God all that he is and all that he has, employing all his gifts to His name's glory.

The obligations in the spiritual agreement entered into at baptism are mutual. As human beings act their part with wholehearted obedience, they have a right to pray: "Let it be known, Lord, that Thou art God in Israel." The fact that you have been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is an assurance that, if you will claim Their help, these powers will help you in every emergency. The Lord will hear and answer the prayers of His sincere followers who wear Christ's yoke and learn in His school His meekness and lowliness. **{6T 98.3-99.1}**

"Satan well knows that success can only attend order and harmonious action. He well knows that everything connected with heaven is in perfect order, that subjection and thorough discipline mark the movements of the angelic host. It is his studied effort to lead professed Christians just as far from heaven's arrangement as he can; therefore he deceives even the professed people of God and makes them believe that order and discipline are enemies to spirituality, that the only safety for them is to let each pursue his own course, and to remain especially distinct from bodies

of Christians who are united, and are laboring to establish discipline and harmony of action. All the efforts made to establish this are considered dangerous, a restriction of rightful liberty, and hence are feared as popery. These deceived souls consider it a virtue to boast of their freedom to think and act independently. They will not take any man's say-so. They are amenable to no man. It was and now is Satan's special work to lead men to feel that it is God's order to strike out for themselves and choose their own order, independent of their brethren. {7LtMs, Lt 32, 1892, par. 21}

If Christ is my Saviour, my sacrifice, my atonement, then I shall never perish. Believing on Him, I have life for evermore. Oh, that all who believe the truth would believe in Jesus as their own Saviour. I do not mean that cheap faith unsupported by works, but that earnest, living, constant, abiding faith, that eats the flesh and drinks the blood of the Son of God. I want not only to be pardoned for the transgression of God's holy law, but I want to be lifted into the sunshine of God's countenance. Not simply to be admitted to heaven, but to have an abundant entrance.

Are we so insensible as a peculiar people, a holy nation, to the inexpressible love that God has manifested for us? Salvation is not to be baptized, not to have our names upon the church books, not to preach the truth. But it is a living union with Jesus Christ, to be renewed in heart, doing the works of Christ in faith and labor of love, in patience, meekness, and hope. Every soul united to Christ will be a living missionary to all around him. He will labor for those near and those afar off. He will have no sectional feeling, no interest merely to build up one branch of the work over which he presides, and there let his zeal end. All will work with interest to make every branch strong. There will be no self-love, no selfish interest. The cause is one, the truth a great whole.

Well may the question be asked with earnest, anxious heart, Is envy cherished, is jealousy permitted to find a place in my heart? If so, Christ is not there. Do I love the law of God, is the love of Jesus Christ in my heart? If we love one another as Christ has loved us, then we are getting ready for the blessed heaven of peace and rest. There is no struggling there to be first, to have the supremacy; all will love their neighbor as themselves. Oh, that God would open the understanding and speak to the hearts of our churches by arousing the individual members. {4LtMs, Lt 55, 1886, par. 21-23}

Baptism is a most solemn renunciation of the world. Those who are baptized in the threefold name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, at the very entrance of their Christian life declare publicly that they have forsaken the service of Satan and have become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. They have obeyed the command: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, ... and touch not the unclean thing." And to them is fulfilled the promise: "I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." [2 Corinthians 6:17, 18](#). {6T 91.3}

Amos 3:3 Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

Proverbs 12:26, "The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked seduceth them."

1 Corinthians 15:33 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

2 Corinthians 6:14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

Galatians 4:17 They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.

2 Thessalonians 3:6,14 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

James 4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

2 John 1:10-11 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: (11) For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.