

Don't Bring the City to the Country

“For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit” (Romans 8:5).

“If [many Sabbathkeepers] would have a true and saving influence, let them live out their profession, show their faith by their righteous works, and make the distinction great between the Christian and the world.”—The Review and Herald, January 6, 1863.

Suggested Readings: The Review and Herald, January 6, 1863. Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 81, 82.

Sunday March 7

1. WHAT DO YOU LOVE?

a. In some areas, it is very easy to bring the city to the country. How is this done and how can we guard against it? 2 Timothy 3:4; 1 Peter 2:11.

2 Timothy 3:4

[4] Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

1 Peter 2:11

[11] Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

b. What was Israel's real reason for wanting to go back to Egypt?

Numbers 11:4–6.

Numbers 11:4-6

[4] And the mixt multitude that *was* among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?

[5] We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick:

[6] But now our soul *is* dried away: *there is* nothing at all, beside this manna, *before* our eyes.

“[Israel] at one time hankered after the leeks and onions of Egypt, and murmured because they did not have everything to gratify their appetites.”—1888 Materials, p. 922.

c. How does modern Israel show the same desire for “Egypt”? 1 John 2:15, 16.

1 John 2:15-16

[15] 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.

[16] 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.

“Why is it so hard to lead a self-denying, humble life? Because professed Christians are not dead to the world. It is easy living after we are dead. But there is a hankering after the leeks and onions of Egypt. They have a disposition to dress and act as much like the world as possible, and yet go to heaven. Such climb up some other way. They do not enter through the narrow way and straight gate.”—The Review and Herald, January 6, 1863.

Monday March 8

2. WHICH IS EASIER?

a. In studying the early history of mankind, where did the righteous often dwell and why? Hebrews 11:38. What occupations did they pursue?

Hebrews 11:38

[38] (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth.

“Abel had led a pastoral life, dwelling in tents or booths, and the descendants of Seth followed the same course, counting themselves ‘strangers and pilgrims on the earth,’ seeking ‘a better country, that is, an heavenly’ (Hebrews 11:13, 16).”—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 81.

b. Where did the unrighteous choose to make their homes and what were their occupations? Genesis 4:17.

Genesis 4:17

[17] And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch.

“[Cain] had first chosen his occupation as a tiller of the soil, and he now founded a city, calling it after the name of his eldest son. He had gone out from the presence of the Lord, cast away the promise of the restored Eden,

to seek his possessions and enjoyment in the earth under the curse of sin, thus standing at the head of that great class of men who worship the god of this world. In that which pertains to mere earthly and material progress, his descendants became distinguished.”— Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 81.

c. What principle did the children of faithful Seth fail to understand and what were the results? Genesis 6:2; 2 Corinthians 6:14–18.

Genesis 6:2

[2] That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they *were* fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

2 Corinthians 6:14-18

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

[15] And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

[16] And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

[17] Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you,

[18] And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

“For some time the two classes remained separate. The race of Cain, spreading from the place of their first settlement, dispersed over the plains and valleys where the children of Seth had dwelt; and the latter, in order to escape from their contaminating influence, withdrew to the mountains, and there made their home. So long as this separation continued, they maintained the worship of God in its purity. But in the lapse of time they ventured, little by little, to mingle with the inhabitants of the valleys. This association was productive of the worst results. . . . The children of Seth, attracted by the beauty of the daughters of Cain’s descendants, displeased the Lord by intermarrying with them, . . . and they lost their peculiar, holy character.”— Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 81.

Tuesday March 9

3. WE HAVE AN ADVERSARY

a. Does Satan like that we grow closer to Jesus? 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:12.

1 Peter 5:8

[8] Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Revelation 12:12

[12] Therefore rejoice, *ye* heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

“As Satan sees his time is short, he leads [those who are selfish and covetous] on to be more and more selfish, more and more covetous, and then exults as he sees them wrapt up in themselves, close, penurious and selfish. If the eyes of such could be opened, they would see Satan in hellish triumph, exulting over them and laughing at the folly of those who accept his suggestions and enter his snares.” —Spiritual Gifts, vol. 1, p. 181.

b. Why can we be sure that trials and testings will come to us, even in the country? 1 Peter 4:12.

1 Peter 4:12

[12] Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

“I saw some, with strong faith and agonizing cries, pleading with God. Their countenances were pale and marked with deep anxiety, expressive of their internal struggle. . . . Evil angels crowded around, pressing darkness upon them to shut out Jesus from their view, that their eyes might be drawn to the darkness that surrounded them, and thus they be led to distrust God and murmur against Him. Their only safety was in keeping their eyes directed upward. Angels of God had charge over His people, and as the poisonous atmosphere of evil angels was pressed around these anxious ones, the heavenly angels were continually wafting their wings over them to scatter the thick darkness.”—Early Writings, pp. 269, 270.

c. How should we respond when circumstances occur which tempt us to go back to all the conveniences of city life? Philippians 3:13, 14.

Philippians 3:13-14

[13] Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

[14] I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

“It is easier to go in an evil way than to do right; for Satan and his angels are constantly tempting to do wrong.

“But there is One who has promised to hear the needy when they cry. Go to God when tempted to speak or act wrong. Ask Him in faith for strength, and He will give it.” —An Appeal to the Youth, p. 58.

Wednesday March 10

4. THE BLESSING OF INDUSTRY

a. Country living calls for something more. What is it? Genesis 3:19; 2 Thessalonians 3:12.

[Genesis 3:19](#)

[19] In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.

[2 Thessalonians 3:12](#)

[12] Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

b. How does the Lord consider physical labor? 2 Thessalonians 3:6–13.

[2 Thessalonians 3:6-13](#)

[6] 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.

[7] For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

[8] Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

[9] Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

[10] For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

[11] For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

[12] Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

[13] But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.

“To the dwellers in Eden was committed the care of the garden, ‘to dress it and to keep it.’ Their occupation was not wearisome, but pleasant and invigorating. God appointed labor as a blessing to man, to occupy his mind, to strengthen his body, and to develop his faculties. In mental and physical activity Adam found one of the highest pleasures of his holy existence. And when, as a result of his disobedience, he was driven from his beautiful home, and forced to struggle with a stubborn soil to gain his daily bread, that very labor, although widely different from his pleasant occupation in the garden, was a safeguard against temptation and a source of happiness. Those who regard work as a curse, attended though it be with weariness and pain, are cherishing an error. The rich often look down with contempt upon the working classes, but this is wholly at variance with God’s purpose in creating man. What are the possessions of even the most wealthy in comparison with the heritage given to the lordly Adam? Yet Adam was not to be idle. Our Creator, who understands what is for man’s happiness, appointed Adam his work. The true joy of life is found only by the working men and women. The angels are diligent workers; they are the ministers of God to the children of men. The Creator has prepared no place for the stagnating practice of indolence.”—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 50.

c. How do we consider work? Are we viewing it as described in 1 Corinthians 3:9 and 10:31?

1 Corinthians 3:9

[9] For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, *ye are* God's building.

1 Corinthians 10:31

[31] Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

“The Christian religion is practical. It does not incapacitate one for the faithful discharge of any of life’s essential duties. . . . It is not a religion of inaction that is here sketched, but one that requires the energetic use of all

the mental and physical powers.”—Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 419.

Thursday March 11

5. ANOTHER MISTAKE

a. Lot made a mistake often repeated by our generation. What was it?

Genesis 19:20.

Genesis 19:20

[20] Behold now, this city *is* near to flee unto, and it *is* a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (*is* it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.

“Lot, not desiring to flee to the mountains, had pleaded with the Lord to spare a smaller city a few miles from Sodom to which he could flee. What unbelief he manifested! His faith was very weak. . . . The result of their going to Zoar is plainly recorded in the Scriptures. All the cities surrounding Sodom were corrupted with the sins of the Sodomites. . . . Lot could have preserved his family from many evils had he not made his home in that wicked, polluted city. All that Lot and his family did in Sodom could have been done by them, even if they had lived in a place some distance from the city. Enoch walked with God, and yet he did not live in the midst of any city, polluted with every kind of violence and wickedness, as did Lot in Sodom.”— Southern Union Worker, October 16, 1913.

b. Instead of still wanting convenience, pleasures and ease, what should our hearts desire? Isaiah 30:15; Ecclesiastes 8:5.

Isaiah 30:15

[15] For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.

Ecclesiastes 8:5

[5] Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.

“God calls upon His creatures to turn their attention from the confusion and perplexity around them, and admire His handiwork. As we study His works, angels from heaven will be by our side to enlighten our minds and guard them from Satan’s deceptions. As you look at the wonderful things that God’s hand has made, let your proud, foolish heart feel its dependence and inferiority. How terrible it is when the acknowledgment of God is not made

when it should be made! How sad to humble oneself when it is too late!”—
Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, p. 457.