

SPIRITUAL LIFE

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SPIRITUAL LIFE

“Spiritual life yields to its possessor that which all the world is seeking but which can never be obtained without an entire surrender to God.--Lt 121, 1904.” *Mind, Character, and Personality 2*, 404 {2MCP 404.1}

“Spiritual life--what is it? It is the contemplation of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us, that our lives might be sweet and fragrant, that we might have power to perfect an unselfish Christian experience, and that from us others might learn to do good.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 8, 332 {8MR 332.4}

How do we know if we are spiritually healthy?

“‘Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves’ (2 Corinthians 13:5). Closely criticize the temper, the disposition, the thoughts, words, inclinations, purposes, and deeds. How can we ask intelligently for the things we need unless we prove by the Scriptures the condition of our spiritual health?” *Selected Messages*, book 1, 89 {1SM 89.1}

THE RECIPE FOR LIFE

The way to have spiritual life is similar to the way to have physical life.

“For the health and vitality of the soul the divine Physician has prescribed **communion with Christ**. Spiritual health is dependent on the **food** which is given to the heart and mind, and on the atmosphere which is breathed. The soul needs food, and in order to get this food, the Word of God must be studied. Christ declares:--

“‘I am the bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst. . . . I am the **living bread** which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. . . . Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me. . . . It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.’

“The breathing of **pure air** is essential for physical health. And it is no less true that the air we breathe in the spiritual life must be pure if we would make healthy growth in grace. Breathe the atmosphere which produces pure thoughts and noble words. Choose Christian society. The Christian will not be spiritually healthy unless he carefully guards his associations.

“**Exercise** is essential to growth in grace. When the spiritually diseased are given exercise in spiritual things, there is seen a transformation of character. But spirituality can not grow while the heart is full of the corrupting sores of selfishness. The soul must be cleansed and purified by the refining grace of God. The channel of communication between earth and heaven must be kept free from all obstruction, that the soul may receive from Christ a supply of **living water**. Every spiritual muscle and sinew must be put to the test. God has given us many opportunities to work for Him. Unless we improve these opportunities, we can not be growing Christians. When Christ is formed within, the hope of glory, a decided change will be seen in the religious experience of professing Christians.” *The Signs of the Times* {ST, September 18, 1901 par. 4-7}

To be spiritually healthy, the following ingredients need to be incorporated daily:

PROPER DIET, LIGHT, AIR, EXERCISE, WATER, REST, TRUST IN GOD, ABSTEMIOUSNESS

PROPER DIET

In order to have spiritual health, we need to provide our mind and heart with spiritual food. We need to eat the spiritual bread that is available to us through the Word of God.

“**As our physical life is sustained by food, so our spiritual life is sustained by the word of God.** And every soul is to receive life from God's word for himself. As we must eat for ourselves in order to receive nourishment, so we must receive the word for ourselves. We are not to obtain it merely through the medium of another's mind. We should carefully study the Bible, asking God for the aid of the Holy Spirit, that we may understand His word. We should take one verse, and concentrate the mind on the task of ascertaining the thought which God has put in that verse for us. We should dwell upon the thought until it becomes our own, and we know ‘what saith the Lord.’” *The Desire of Ages*, 390 {DA 390.4}

Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts. Jeremiah 15:16

And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness. Ezekiel 3:3

And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. Revelation 10:10

My son, eat thou honey, because it is good; and the honeycomb, which is sweet to thy taste: So shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found it, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off. Proverbs 24:13-14

*And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that **man doth not live by bread only, but by every [word] that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.** Deuteronomy 8:3*

*Hear my words, O ye wise men; and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge. For **the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.** Let us choose to us judgment: let us know among ourselves what is good. Job 34:2-4*

See also Psalm 104:27, 28, 145; Malachi 3:10-12; Psalm 34:8-9

“He who would have spiritual life and vigor must eat the flesh and drink of the blood of the Son of God. Christ declares, ‘I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.’ ‘Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me’ (John 6:35, 54-57).” *The Upward Look*, 258 {UL 258.4}

“To eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ is to receive Him as a personal Saviour, believing that He forgives our sins, and that we are complete in Him. It is by beholding His love, by dwelling upon it, by drinking it in, that we are to become partakers of His nature. What food is to the body, Christ must be to the soul. **Food cannot benefit us unless we eat it, unless it becomes a part of our being. So Christ is of no value to us if we do not know Him as a personal Saviour.** A theoretical knowledge will do us no good. We must feed upon Him, receive Him into the heart, so that His life becomes our life. His love, His grace, must be assimilated.” *The Desire of Ages*, 389 {DA 389.3}

“We should eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God; that is, **carefully study the Word, eat it, digest it, make it a part of our being. We are to live the Word**, not keep it apart from our lives. The character of Christ is to be our character. We are to be transformed by the renewing of our hearts. Here is our only safety. Nothing can separate a living Christian from God.” *The Review and Herald* {RH, November 27, 1900 par. 16}

“The Word of God must be **read and studied with an earnest desire** to gain from it spiritual power.” *Selected Messages*, book 3, 203 {3SM 203.2}

“We must eat and drink the word of life, which is represented as eating and drinking of the flesh and blood of Christ. Those who know the truth must be educated to **receive it** from their own shepherds, and **pray over it**, and **practice it**. Then souls will grow in faith and in intelligent knowledge. They would receive the bread of life and digest it. The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.’ **The truth needs to enter into heart and mind.** More, much more praying, and less long sermonizing will be for the health of the body and soul.” *Testimonies to Ministers*, 345 {TM 345.2}

“**Our physical being is composed of what we eat, and our spiritual nature is also composed of what it feeds upon.** If you allow the mind to dwell upon common things, it will be of a common order.” *The Signs of the Times* {ST, September 16, 1889 par. 8}

“Our religious experience is of exactly the same quality as the food we give our minds.” *Pamphlets 140*, 40 {PH140 40.1}

“The Word of God is not half comprehended. If each one would proclaim a fast for his own soul, studying the Word of God with earnest prayer, and reading only those books which would help him to gain a clearer knowledge of the Word, God's people would have much more spiritual health and strength, much more spiritual knowledge and understanding, than they now reveal. We need to seek God, that we may find Him precious to our souls. We need to keep Him as our abiding guest and companion, never parting from Him.” *This Day with God*, 150 {TDG 150.6}

MEMORIZING SCRIPTURE

“Let the more important passages of Scripture connected with the lesson be committed to memory, not as a task, but as a privilege. Though at first the memory be defective, it will gain strength by exercise, so that after a time you will delight thus to treasure up the words of truth. And the habit will prove a most valuable aid to spiritual growth.” *Child Guidance*, 511 {CG 511.4}

LIGHT

But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. Malachi 4:2

“The Lord has made every provision so that we may have a rich, abundant, joyful experience. John writes concerning Christ, saying, ‘In him was life; and the life was the light of men.’ Life is associated with light, and if we have no light from the Sun of Righteousness, we can have no life in

Him. But this light has been provided for every soul, and it is only as we withdraw from the light that darkness comes upon us. Jesus said, 'He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.' In the world about us there can be no life without light. Were the sun to withdraw his shining, all vegetation, all animal life, would have an end. This illustrates the fact that **we cannot have spiritual life unless we place ourselves under the beams of the Sun of Righteousness.** If we put a flowering plant in a dark room, it will soon wither and die; and so we may have some spiritual life, and yet lose it by dwelling in an atmosphere of doubt and gloom. . . .”
Sons and Daughters of God, 281 {SD 281.2}

AIR

“We need continually to breathe the vitalizing atmosphere of heaven that we may have spiritual health and strength.” *The Review and Herald* {RH, May 4, 1886 par. 5}

COMMUNION WITH GOD

“If we would have spiritual life and energy, we must commune with God. We can speak to him of our real wants; and our earnest petitions will show that we realize our needs, and will do what we can to answer our own prayers. We must obey the injunction of Paul, ‘Arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light,’ [Ephesians 5:14.]” *Gospel Workers* 92, 428 {GW92 428.1}

“Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power. No other means of grace can be substituted and the health of the soul be preserved. Prayer brings the heart into immediate contact with the Wellspring of life, and strengthens the sinew and muscle of the religious experience. Neglect the exercise of prayer, or engage in prayer spasmodically, now and then, as seems convenient, and you lose your hold on God. The spiritual faculties lose their vitality, the religious experience lacks health and vigor. . . .” *Messages to Young People*, 249 {MYP 249.3}

“...Several times each day precious, golden moments should be consecrated to prayer and the study of the Scriptures, if it is only to commit a text to memory, that spiritual life may exist in the soul. The varied interests of the cause furnish us with food for reflection and inspiration for our prayers. Communion with God is highly essential for spiritual health, and here only may be obtained that wisdom and correct judgment so necessary in the performance of every duty.”
Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, 459 {4T 459.1}

“If we would develop a character which God can accept, we must form correct habits in our religious life. Daily prayer is as essential to growth in grace, and even to spiritual life itself, as is temporal food to physical well-being. We should accustom ourselves to often lift the thoughts to

God in prayer. If the mind wanders, we must bring it back; by persevering effort, habit will finally make it easy. We cannot for one moment separate ourselves from Christ with safety. We may have His presence to attend us at every step, but only by observing the conditions which He has Himself laid down.--RH, May 3, 1881." *Daughters of God*, 81 {DG 81.3}

"Communion with God is highly essential for spiritual health, and here only may be obtained that wisdom and correct judgment so necessary in the performance of every duty.--4T 459 (1880)." *Daughters of God*, 82 {DG 82.2}

"As we try to become acquainted with our heavenly Father through His word, angels will draw near, our minds will be strengthened, our characters will be elevated and refined. We shall become more like our Saviour. And as we behold the beautiful and grand in nature, our affections go out after God. While the spirit is awed, the soul is invigorated by coming in contact with the Infinite through His works. **Communion with God through prayer develops the mental and moral faculties, and the spiritual powers strengthen as we cultivate thoughts upon spiritual things.**" *The Desire of Ages*, 70 {DA 70.4}

ASSOCIATIONS

"We raise our voice and cry to every believer in the present truth: If you would have spiritual health, look to your lungs. Look to your spiritual food. Cultivate a love for the society of those who are pure and good, if you would have Christ formed in you as the life of the soul. The health of the soul depends upon the breathing of a good moral atmosphere." *Our High Calling*, 255 {OHC 255.5}

"The breathing of pure air is essential for the cure of disease. And it is no less essential that the atmosphere we breathe in the spiritual life shall be pure. This is essential for a healthy growth in grace. Breathe the pure atmosphere which produces pure thoughts and noble words. Choose Christian society. The Christian will not have spiritual health unless he is guarded in regard to his associations. . . ." *The Upward Look*, 174 {UL 174.3}

EXERCISE

Spiritual exercise is putting into practice that which we know. When we know what God has told us through His Word, we then need to incorporate it into our habits and actions. Having an intellectual knowledge, good intentions, and the belief that we should do right is only the first step, but we need to go beyond that by practicing and obeying God's instructions. This will keep us connected to Him and give us life.

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. James 1:22

*For **we are labourers together with God**: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. 1 Corinthians 3:9*

"...let us be doers of his word, and we shall have spiritual life and power." The Review and Herald {RH, June 28, 1892 par. 5}

OBEDIENCE

*"He who does not heed the instruction God has given in His word and in His works, **he who does not obey the divine commands, has a defective experience. He is a sickly Christian. His spiritual life is feeble.** He lives, but his life is devoid of fragrance. He fritters away precious moments of grace." Counsels on Diet and Foods, 39 {CD 39.4}*

GIVING AND SUPPORTING GOD'S CAUSE

*"**Those churches who are the most systematic and liberal in sustaining the cause of God are the most prosperous spiritually.** True liberality in the follower of Christ identifies his interest with that of his Master...."*

*"...**The spiritual health and prosperity of the church is dependent in a great degree upon her systematic benevolence.** It is like the lifeblood which must flow through the whole being, vitalizing every member of the body. It increases love for the souls of our fellow men; for by self-denial and self-sacrifice we are brought into a closer relation to Christ, who for our sakes became poor. The more we invest in the cause of God to aid in the salvation of souls, the closer to our hearts will they be brought...." Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, 405 {3T 405.1-2}*

WORKING TO HAVE UNITY

A Song of degrees of David. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! Psalms 133:1

"Then let every one look to Christ and copy the divine Model. Let every worker tax his powers to the utmost to work in harmony with the plan of God. ...TSS 76, 77." Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 106 {CSW 106.1}

*"**Strive earnestly for unity. Pray for it, work for it. It will bring spiritual health, elevation of thought, nobility of character, heavenly-mindedness, enabling you to overcome selfishness and evil surmisings,** and to be more than conquerors through Him that loved you and gave Himself for*

you. Crucify self; esteem others better than yourselves. Thus you will be brought into oneness with Christ. Before the heavenly universe, and before the church and the world, you will bear unmistakable evidence that you are God's sons and daughters. God will be glorified in the example that you set." *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, 188 {9T 188.1}

WATER

Spiritual water is the Holy Spirit, imparting spiritual grace that refreshes the soul.

"When the Holy Spirit controls the minds of our church members, there will be seen in our churches a much higher standard in speech, in ministry, in spirituality, than is now seen. The church members will be refreshed by the water of life, and the laborers, working under one Head, even Christ, will reveal their Master in spirit, in word, in deed, and will encourage one another to press forward in the grand, closing work in which we are engaged. There will be a healthy increase of unity and love, which will bear testimony to the world that God sent His Son to die for the redemption of sinners. Divine truth will be exalted; and as it shines forth as a lamp that burneth, we shall understand it more and still more clearly." *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, 211 {8T 211.2}

He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. Psalms 72:6

My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Deuteronomy 32:2

"The Saviour made use of this symbolic service to direct the minds of the people to the blessings that He had come to bring them. 'In the last day, that great day of the feast,' His voice was heard in tones that rang through the temple courts, **'If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.'** 'This,' said John, 'spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive.' John 7:37-39. The refreshing water, welling up in a parched and barren land, causing the desert place to blossom, and flowing out to give life to the perishing, is an emblem of the divine grace which Christ alone can bestow, and which is as the living water, purifying, refreshing, and invigorating the soul. He in whom Christ is abiding has within him a never-failing fountain of grace and strength. Jesus cheers the life and brightens the path of all who truly seek Him. His love, received into the heart, will spring up in good works unto eternal life. And not only does it bless the soul in which it springs, but the living stream will flow out in words and deeds of righteousness, to refresh the thirsting around him." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 412 {PP 412.2}

“There are today many as ignorant of the Holy Spirit's work upon the heart as were those believers in Ephesus; yet no truth is more clearly taught in the word of God. Prophets and apostles have dwelt upon this theme. Christ Himself calls our attention to the growth of the vegetable world as an illustration of **the agency of His Spirit in sustaining spiritual life**. The sap of the vine, ascending from the root, is diffused to the branches, sustaining growth and producing blossoms and fruit. So **the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Saviour, pervades the soul, renews the motives and affections, and brings even the thoughts into obedience to the will of God, enabling the receiver to bear the precious fruit of holy deeds.**” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 284 {AA 284.1}

REST

Spiritual rest can be obtained by learning of the meekness and lowliness of Jesus, and it can also be found in obedience to the Sabbath.

“God made the world in six days and rested on the seventh day, sanctifying it as **a day of rest for the performance of spiritual duties**. He set it apart from all other days, establishing it as a memorial of the work of creation. It was to be devoted to Him in spiritual service. This day is a day of God's special appointment. Exodus 31:12-18 gives the charge concerning this day more definitely, and specifies the Sabbath as a sign between God and His people, that they may know by their obedience to the commandments that He is the Lord who sanctifies them.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 19, 263 {19MR 263.1}

“[Hebrews 4:9, 11 quoted.] The rest here spoken of is the rest of grace, obtained by following the prescription, Labor diligently. **Those who learn of Jesus His meekness and lowliness find rest in the experience of practicing His lessons**. It is not in indolence, in selfish ease and pleasure-seeking, that rest is obtained. Those who are unwilling to give the Lord faithful, earnest, loving service will not find spiritual rest in this life or in the life to come. Only from earnest labor comes peace and joy in the Holy Spirit--happiness on earth and glory hereafter.” *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 928 {7BC 928.7}

TRUST IN GOD

“Throughout the history of God's people great mountains of difficulty, apparently insurmountable, have loomed up before those who were trying to carry out the purposes of Heaven. Such obstacles are permitted by the Lord as a test of faith. When we are hedged about on every side, this is the time above all others to trust in God and in the power of His Spirit. **The**

exercise of a living faith means an increase of spiritual strength and the development of an unfaltering trust. It is thus that the soul becomes a conquering power. Before the demand of faith, the obstacles placed by Satan across the pathway of the Christian will disappear; for the powers of heaven will come to his aid. ‘Nothing shall be impossible unto you.’” *Conflict and Courage*, 258 {CC 258.3}

ABSTEMIOUSNESS

Abstemiousness primarily means to avoid something that is harmful, yet it also includes the idea of being temperate; to be moderate and avoid excess in things that are not harmful. Many things can be said about abstinence and temperance in the spiritual life, but what it generally means is to have a proper balance in spiritual matters.

MODERATION IN SPIRITUAL EATING:

“Even as the bodily necessities must be supplied daily, so the word of God must be daily studied--eaten, and digested, and practiced. This sustains the nourishment, to keep the soul in health. **The neglect of the word means starvation to the soul.** The word describes the blessed man as one meditating day and night upon the truths of God's word. We all are to feast upon the word of God. The relation of the word to the believer is a vital matter. Appropriating the word to our spiritual necessities is the eating of the leaves of the tree of life that are for the healing of the nations. Study the word, and practice the word, for it is your life.-- Ellen G. White Letter 4, 1902.” *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, 43 {CSW 43.2}

Although too little spiritual food will starve the soul, too much will also hinder the spiritual health. We need the proper balance.

“It is not reasonable to suppose that the mind can assimilate an oversupply of mental food, and it is as great a sin to overload the mind as it is to overload the digestive organs.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 296 {CT 296.2}

Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it. It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory. He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.
Proverbs 25:16, 27, 28

“It is not essential to our salvation, nor for the glory of God, to keep the mind laboring constantly and excessively, even upon religious themes.” *The Adventist Home*, 494 {AH 494.1}

“But there is but little benefit derived from a hasty reading of the Scriptures. One may read the whole Bible through and yet fail to see its beauty or comprehend its deep and hidden meaning. One passage studied until its significance is clear to the mind and its relation to the plan of salvation is evident, is of more value than the perusal of many chapters with no definite purpose in view and no positive instruction gained. Keep your Bible with you. As you have opportunity, read it; fix the texts in your memory. Even while you are walking the streets you may read a passage and meditate upon it, thus fixing it in the mind.” *Steps to Christ*, 90 {SC 90.2}

AVOID EXCESS (EXTREME POSITIONS) AND MAINTAIN BALANCE

*Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And **every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things**. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: **But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection**: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. 1 Corinthians 9:24-27*

Sister White had much to say about avoiding extremes in different areas of life; anything from self-perception, and health reform, to balanced activity as we wait for Christ’s return. Having a proper combination of abstinence and balance will help maintain a good spiritual life.

“There are **two extremes**, both of which we should avoid.” *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 286 {CD 286.2}

“...You should **avoid either extreme**. Feeling should not control you; circumstances should not affect you. You may form a correct estimate of yourself, one which will prove a safeguard from both extremes. You may be dignified without vain self-confidence; you may be condescending and yielding without sacrificing self-respect or individual independence, and your life may be of great influence with those in the higher as well as the lower walks of life.” *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, 506 {3T 506.1}

“Those who do not feel that it is a religious duty to discipline the mind to dwell upon cheerful subjects, will usually be found at **one of two extremes**: they will be elated by a continual round of exciting amusements, indulging in frivolous conversation, laughing and joking, or they will be depressed, having great trials and mental conflicts, which they think but few have ever experienced or can understand. These persons may profess Christianity, but they deceive their own souls. . . .” *Counsels on Health*, 628 {CH 628.3}

“Care should be exercised by all Christians, to **shun the two extremes**, of laxness in dealing with sin on the one hand, and harsh judgment and groundless suspicion on the other.” *The Signs of the Times* {ST, May 12, 1881 par. 17}

“The present duty of every true child of God is to wait patiently, to watch vigilantly, to work faithfully, until the coming of the Lord, that we may be prepared for the solemn event. The characteristics of the true follower of Christ, the perfect man in Christ Jesus, will be manifested in working, watching, and waiting for the Lord. He will not be wholly given up to contemplation and meditation, or be so engrossed in some busy works, that he will neglect the exercise of personal piety; but **in the symmetrical Christian, personal devotion will be blended with earnest work**, and the follower of Christ will be ‘not slothful in business;’ but ‘fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.’” Romans 12:11. *The General Conference Bulletin* {GCB, October 1, 1896 par. 1}

“When we give ourselves unreservedly to the Lord, the simple, commonplace duties of home life will be seen in their true importance, and we shall perform them in accordance with the will of God. We are to be vigilant, watching for the coming of the Son of man; and we must also be diligent; working as well as waiting is required; there must be a **union of the two. This will balance the Christian character, making it well developed, symmetrical.** We should not feel that we are to neglect everything else, and give ourselves up to meditation, study, or prayer; neither are we to be full of bustle and hurry and work, to the neglect of personal piety. **Waiting and watching and working are to be blended.** ‘Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.’” *The Adventist Home*, 23 {AH 23.1}

“If it is possible, Satan will cause that the professors of religion shall be borne off on some tangent of fanaticism, that they may take extreme positions, and bring reproach on the cause of the Master; and then how he exults; for he can present to the world the inconsistency of those who claim to be led by Christ, and charge their wild and inconsistent positions and measures upon the truth which they believe. ‘Here,’ says the enemy, ‘is what results from believing the doctrines of Seventh-day Adventists. See their inconsistency!’ The soul needs to be guarded by the strongest fortifications. **The knowledge of the Scriptures must preserve the soul in its balance, by supplying the mind with solid principles of faith and truth.**” *The General Conference Bulletin* {GCB, October 1, 1896 par. 5}

GROWTH

Growth should be expected in the spiritual life just as physical growth can be expected when the conditions are met; proper diet, light, air, exercise, water, rest, trust in God, and abstemiousness.

“Be sure that your spiritual life does not become poor, sickly, inefficient. There are many who have need of the words and example of a Christian. Weakness and indecision provoke the assaults of the enemy, and **any one who fails to increase in spiritual growth, in a knowledge of truth and righteousness, will frequently be overcome by the enemy.”** *God’s Amazing Grace*, 292 {AG 292.3}

“Will you have a stunted Christian growth, or will you make healthy progress in the divine life? Where there is spiritual health there is growth. The child of God grows up to the full stature of a man or woman in Christ. There is no limit to his improvement. . . .” *God’s Amazing Grace*, 312 {AG 312.4}

“The young convert to truth must not always remain a child in spiritual knowledge. A child, however beautiful as a child, is a dwarf if it makes no development as years pass by. And **every Christian who is indeed a Christian, must grow.** He must constantly increase in wisdom and knowledge. Day by day he must approach more nearly to the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus. He must advance into a deeper appreciation of the love of God, and a clearer knowledge of His will. If his light does not shine more and more brightly, his faith becomes weak, his love grows feeble; and unless he seeks and acknowledges his danger, he is doing the cause of God more harm than an avowed unbeliever. Piety leaves the soul-temple. The man turns carelessly from duties and responsibilities. By him the Son of God is crucified afresh and put to open shame.” *The Signs of the Times* {ST, September 18, 1901 par. 8}

“But unless the members of God's church today have a living connection with the Source of all spiritual growth, they will not be ready for the time of reaping. Unless they keep their lamps trimmed and burning, they will fail of receiving added grace in times of special need.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 55 {AA 55.2}