**Victory Everlasting Gospel Church**

**June 17, 2017**

**“Wake Up! Examine Yourself”**

 Wake Up! Examine yourself. I will be quoting from the Spirit of Prophecy, 1 Selected Messages, and G. C., A.A., C.O.L, by Ellen G. White, with some small modification. I also will be quoting from the K.J.Bible and the N.K.J. Bible.

Let us pray

 "**Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves"** (2 Cor. 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?*  {1SM 89.1} **Let not your faith stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God.** (1 Cor. 2:5) *Resistance of temptation must come from man, who must draw his power from God. On the one side there is infinite wisdom, compassion, and power; on the other, weakness, sinfulness, absolute helplessness.*  {AA 482.2}

    *Many in their religious life are making crooked paths for their feet. Their prayers are offered in a loose, haphazard manner. He who is placed in a position of responsibility should remember that of himself he is not able to do that which is required of him. Every day he should remember that he is a spectacle unto the world, to angels, and to men.*  {1SM 89.2}

 *We are living in the last days of this earth's history, in an age of sin and corruption, and like Noah we are to so live that we shall be a pleasure to God, showing forth the praises of Him* **"who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (**1 Peter 2:9). In the prayer which Christ offered to His Father just before His crucifixion, He said, **"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil"** (John 17:15).  {1SM 90.3} Sin will give you all you want. Sin will pay for what you want. Sin will take you as far as you want. Have you, examined yourself lately?

**The Highest Service**

    *When men and women have formed characters which God can endorse, when their self-denial and self-sacrifice have been fully made, when they are ready for the test, ready to be introduced into God's family, what service will stand highest in the estimation of Him who gave Himself a willing offering to save a guilty race? What enterprise will be most dear to the heart of infinite love? What work will bring the greatest satisfaction and joy to the Father and the Son, the salvation of perishing souls? Christ died to bring to men the saving power of the gospel. Those who cooperate with Him in carrying forward His great enterprise of mercy, laboring with all the strength God has given them to save those nigh and afar off, will share in the joy of the Redeemer when the redeemed host stand around the throne of God.*  {1SM 90.4}

    *God has entrusted means and capabilities to His servants for the doing of a work far higher than that which today He looks upon.*  {1SM 91.1} Are we one with Christ, as He is one with the Father?

    *"O," said the heavenly messenger, "the Lord's institutions are terribly behind the greatness of the truths which are being fulfilled at the present time. There is a fearful misconception of the claims of duty. The frosty atmosphere in which believers are content to live retards the self-sacrificing movements which should be made to warn the world and save souls.*  {1SM 91.2} The more complexed we get the more unbearable we are.

    *"Ask any institutions and churches, 'Do you believe the Word of God? What then are you doing in missionary lines? Are you working with self-denial and self-sacrifice? Do you believe that the Word of God means what it says? Our actions show that we do not. How will we meet at the bar of God the countless millions who, unwarned, are passing into eternity?*  {1SM 91.4}

    *"The powers of darkness are working with an intensity of effort, and year by year thousands of people, from all kindred’s, nations, and tongues, pass into eternity, unwarned and unready. Our faith must mean something more definite, more decided, more important*.  {1SM 91.3}

    Will there be a second probation? No, no. This fallacy might just as well be given up at once. The present probation is all that we shall have. Do you realize that the salvation of fallen human beings must be secured in this present life, or they will be forever lost? What is your *highest service*? Wake up, are we, examining ourselves?

 **Our Responsibilities**

    *The Laodicea message is applicable to the church at this time. Do you believe this message? Have you hearts that feel? Or are we constantly saying, we are rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing? Is it in vain that the declaration of eternal truth has been given to this nation to be carried to all the nations of the world? God has chosen a people and made them the repositories of truth weighty with eternal results. To us has been given the light that must illuminate the world. Has God made a mistake? Are we indeed His chosen instrumentalities? Are we the men and women who are to bear to the world the messages of Revelation fourteen, to proclaim the message of salvation to those who are standing on the brink of ruin? Do we act as if we were?*  {1SM 92.1}Examine yourself.

 **"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him"** (1 John 2:4). A great awakening must come to the church. If we only knew, if we only understood, how quickly the spirit of the message would go from church to church.

     *“How willingly would the possessions of believers be given to support the work of God? God calls upon us to pray and watch unto prayer. Cleanse your homes of the picture-idols which have consumed the money that ought to have flowed into the Lord's treasury. The light must go forth as a lamp that burneth. Those who bear the message to the world should seek the Lord earnestly, that His Holy Spirit may be abundantly showered upon them. You have no time to lose. Pray for the power of God, that you may work with success for those nigh and afar off.*  {1SM 92.3}  In the Old Testament people looked forward to the cross for salvation. Today, we look back to Calvary for salvation. This is our responsibility, we must wake up.

**Warnings to Be Given**

    *We must have genuine faith. As yet we scarcely grasp the reality of the truth. We only half believe the Word of God. A man will act out all the faith he has. Notwithstanding that the signs of the times are fulfilling all over the world, faith in the Lord's coming has been growing feeble. Clear, distinct, certain, the warnings are to be given. At the peril of our souls we are to learn the prescribed conditions under which we are to work out our own salvation, remembering that it is God which worketh in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure.*  {1SM 93.1}

    *Those who have knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus must now become one in heart and purpose. All differences must be swept away. The members of the church must work united under the great Head of the church.*  {1SM 93.2} Let those who have knowledge of the truth arise and shine. "**Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet"** (Isa. 58:1). No longer mutilate the truth. Let the soul cry out for the living God. You have cost much. **"Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's"** (1 Cor. 6:20).

    *Christ gave His life for sinful men and women. He desired to rescue the race from a life of transgression to a life of obedience and righteousness; and to those who accept Him as their Redeemer. He offers the richest reward that Heaven can bestow--even the inheritance of life eternal*....  {1SM 100.1**}  Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.** John 14:1

    Of those who do their part faithfully, it is said, **"We are laborers together with God"** (1 Cor. 3:9). *Apart from divine aid, man can do very little; but the heavenly Father and His Son are ready to work through everyone who consecrates himself wholly on the altar of service. Every soul before us must cooperate with God, and labor for Him acceptably. The Lord desires us all to come into line. To every man He has given an appointed work, according to their several ability....*  {1SM 100.5}  That is a warning being given.  Mingle with others, show compassion, minister to their needs, win their confidence and invite them to follow Jesus.

 **Personal Experience**

     *I tell you that which I know, for your encouragement and comfort. Let us all place ourselves in right relation to God. What satisfaction is to be found in keeping pace with the* ***fashions*** *of this world? You have a better work to do.* ***Fashion your character****. Use every ability, every nerve, every muscle, every thought, and every action, to the* ***glory*** *of God. Then you will see, as you have never seen before, the salvation of God going before you.*  {1SM 101.4} This should be our personal experience with God.

**When the Church awakes, If it awakes**

    **The church needs to be begotten again unto a lively hope "by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away"** (1 Peter 1:3, 4). *When the church awakes to a sense of what must be done in our world, the members will have travail of soul for those who know not God and who in their spiritual ignorance cannot understand the truth for this time. Self-denial, self-sacrifice, is to be woven into all our experience.*

 *We must not fail to show others that we understand that watching unto prayer means living our prayers before God, that He may answer them. We are to pray and watch unto prayer, that there may be no inconsistency in our lives.*

    *The church will not retrograde while the members seek help from the throne of grace that they may not fail to cooperate in the great work of saving the souls that are on the brink of ruin. The members of a church that is an active, working Church, will have a realization that they are wearing Christ's yoke, and drawing with Him.*  {1SM 117.1} That is when the church wakes up, if it wakes up.

 *The heavenly universe is waiting for consecrated channels, through which God can communicate with His people and through them with the world. God will work through a consecrated, self-denying church, and He will reveal His Spirit in a visible and glorious manner, especially in this time, when Satan is working in a masterly manner to* ***deceive*** *the souls of both ministers and people. If God's ministers will cooperate with Him, He will be with them in a remarkable manner, even as He was with His disciples of old.*  {1SM 117.2}

   Will not the church awake to her responsibility? God is waiting to impart the Spirit of the greatest missionary the world has ever known to those who will work with self-denying, self-sacrificing consecration. When God's people receive this Spirit, power will go forth from them. --Manuscript 59, 1898.  {1SM 117.3}

**The Passive Graces**

    *The Lord permits circumstances to come that call for the exercise of the passive graces, which increase in purity and efficiency as we endeavor to give back to the Lord His own in tithes and offerings. You know something of what it means to pass through trials. These have given you the opportunity of trusting in God, of seeking Him in earnest prayer that you may believe in Him, and rely upon Him with simple faith. It is by suffering that our virtues are tested, and our faith tried.*

   *With us, everything depends on how we accept the Lord's terms. As is our spirit, so will be the moral result upon our future life and character. Each individual soul has victories to gain, but we must realize that we cannot have things just as we want them. We are to observe carefully every lesson Christ has given throughout His life and teaching.* ***He does not destroy; He improves whatever He touches****.--*Letter 135, 1897.  {1SM 118.1} So let us not be so receptive to the outside world. Influences or impressions of the world, gives us very little energy for the work of God.

  *A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work There must be earnest effort to obtain the blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow His blessing upon us, but because* ***we are unprepared to receive it****. {1SM 121}*

 *The old standard bearers knew what it was to wrestle with God in prayer, and to enjoy the outpouring of His Spirit. But these are passing off from the stage of action; and who are coming up to* ***fill*** *their places? How is it with the* ***rising*** *generation? Are they* ***converted*** *to God? Are we awake to the work that is going on in the heavenly sanctuary, or are we waiting for some compelling power to come upon the church before we shall arouse? Are we hoping to see the whole church revived?* ***That time will never come.*** {1SM 122.1 We better wake up.

 *There are persons in the church who are* ***not converted****, and who will not* ***unite*** *in earnest, prevailing prayer. We must enter upon the work individually. We must pray more, and* ***talk less****.*  1SM 122.2 Do we realize we are opening the door to our adversary?

 *The adversary of souls is not permitted to read the thoughts of men; but he is a keen observer, and he marks the words; he takes account of actions, and skillfully adapts his temptations to meet the cases of those who place themselves in his power****.***  1SM122.4. **Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.** 1Peter 5: 8-9

  *But how often do* ***professed******Christians****, by their* ***lack of self-control****, open the door to the adversary of souls! Divisions, and even bitter dissensions which would disgrace any worldly community, are common in the churches, because there is so* ***little effort to control wrong feelings, and to repress every word that Satan can take advantage of****. As soon as an alienation of feeling arises, the matter is spread before Satan for his inspection, and the opportunity given for him to use his serpent like wisdom and skill in* ***dividing*** *and* ***destroying*** *the church.* {1SM 123} *When are we going to wake up?*

 *The world looks on, and jeeringly exclaim, "Behold how these Christians hate one another! If this is religion, we do not want it." And they look upon themselves and their irreligious characters with great satisfaction. Thus they are confirmed in their impenitence, and Satan exults at his success. The great* ***deceiver*** *has prepared his wiles for every soul that is not* ***braced*** *for trial and* ***guarded*** *by constant prayer and living faith. As ministers, as Christians, we must work to take the* ***stumbling blocks out of the way. We must remove every obstacle****.* {1Sm 123.4-5}

 *We cannot prepare the way by gaining the friendship of the world, which is enmity with God; but by His help we can break its seductive influence upon ourselves and upon others. We cannot individually or as a body secure ourselves from the constant temptations of a relentless and determined foe; but in the strength of Jesus we can resist them.*  {1SM 123.4}

 *From every member of the church a steady light may shine forth before the world, so that they shall not be led to inquire, what do these people more than others? There can be and must be a withdrawal from conformity to the world, a* shunning *of all appearance of evil, so that no occasion shall be given for gainsayers. We cannot escape reproach; it will come; but we should be very careful that we are not reproached for our own sins or follies, but for Christ's sake.*  {1SM 124.1} We must wake up.

 A profession of religion has become popular with the world. Rulers, politicians, lawyers, doctors, merchants, join the church as a means of securing the respect and confidence of society, and advancing their own worldly interests. Thus they seek to cover all their unrighteous transactions under a profession of Christianity.

 *Let the church arise, and repent of her backslidings before God. Let the watchmen awake, and give the trumpet a certain sound. It is a definite warning that we have to proclaim. {1SM 126.1} God commands His servants,* **"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins"** Isa. 58: 1

 The various religious bodies, re-enforced by the wealth and influence of these baptized world lings, make a still higher bid for popularity and patronage. Splendid churches, embellished in the most extravagant manner, are erected on popular avenues. The worshipers array themselves in costly and fashionable attire. A high salary is paid for a talented minister to entertain and attract the people. His sermons must not touch popular sins, but be made smooth and pleasing for fashionable ears. Thus fashionable sinners are enrolled on the church records, and fashionable sins are concealed under a pretense of godliness. {GC 386.1}

 *The work is before us; will we engage in it? We must work fast, we must go steadily forward. We must be preparing for the great day of the Lord. We have no time to lose, no time to be engaged in selfish purposes.*

*Only those who have been diligent students of the Scriptures and who have received the love of the truth will be shielded from the* ***powerfu****l* ***delusion*** *that takes the world* ***captive****. By the Bible testimony these will* ***detect*** *the* ***deceive****r in his* ***disguise****.* ***To all*** *the testing time will come. By the sifting of temptation the* ***genuine Christian*** *will be revealed. Are the people of God now so firmly established upon His word that they would not yield to the evidence of their senses?*

 *Would they, in such a crisis, cling to the Bible and the Bible only? Satan will, if possible, prevent them from obtaining a preparation to stand in that day.* ***He will so arrange affairs as to hedge up our way, entangle us with earthly treasures, cause us to carry a heavy, wearisome burden, that our hearts may be overcharged with the cares of this life and the day of trial may come upon us as a thief.*** *{GC 625.3}*

 *The world is to be warned****.*** 1SM 126.3 **We are to be "not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord"** (Rom. 12:11).

 What are we doing as individuals to bring the light before others? God has left to every man his work; everyone has a part to act, and we cannot neglect this work except at the peril of our souls.  {1SM 126.3}

 *Let the church arise, and repent of her backsliding* *before God. Unless this takes place, those who are lukewarm will continue to grow more abhorrent to the Lord, until He will refuse to acknowledge us as His children.*  {1SM 128.1} ***WAKE UP! Examine yourself.***

 *God will accept only those who are* ***determined*** *to aim high. He places every human agent under* ***obligation*** *to do his best.* ***Moral*** *perfection is required of all. Never should we* ***lower*** *the standard of righteousness in order to accommodate inherited or cultivated tendencies to wrong-doing. We need to understand that* ***imperfection of character is sin****. All righteous attributes of character dwell in God as a perfect, harmonious whole, and everyone who receives Christ as a personal Savior is privileged to possess these attributes. {COL 330.2}*

 **Examine yourselves, as to whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you, unless indeed you are disqualified? But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified.** 2Cor. 13: 5-6 **Wake Up! Examine yourself**.

Let Us Pray