

Conquering the Most Feared Enemy

“... is our greatest enemy”



So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is...fear itself.

1 Corinthians 15:26 (KJV) — 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

Self is the enemy we most need to fear. No form of vice has a more baleful effect upon the character than has human passion not under the control of the Holy Spirit. No other victory we can gain will be so precious as the victory gained over self. (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 485.1)

Self is our greatest enemy, and day by day each must strive for the victory. (*The Signs of the Times*, August 26, 1897, par. 9)

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It is gained by placing the will wholly on the
side of God, taking the divine will for your will.
(*The Youth's Instructor*, August 17, 1899, par. 2)

2 Corinthians 10:3–5 (KJV) — 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

Through Christ you may and should be happy and should acquire habits of self-control. Even your thoughts must be brought into subjection to the will of God and your feelings under the control of reason and religion. Your imagination was not given you to be allowed to run riot and have its own way without any effort at restraint or discipline. If the thoughts are wrong the feelings will be wrong, and the thoughts and feelings combined make up the moral character. When you decide that as Christians you are not required to restrain your thoughts and feelings you are brought under the influence of evil angels and invite their presence and their control. If you yield to your impressions and allow your thoughts to run in a channel of suspicion, doubt, and repining you will be among the most unhappy of mortals, and your lives will prove a failure. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 310.1)

Romans 6:16 (KJV) — 16 Know ye not,
that to whom ye yield yourselves
servants to obey, his servants ye are to
whom ye obey; whether of sin unto
death, or of obedience unto
righteousness?

In his own strength man can not rule his spirit. But through Christ he may gain self-control. In his strength he may bring his thoughts and words into subjection to the will of God. The religion of Christ brings the emotions under the control of reason, and disciplines the tongue. Under its influence the hasty temper is subdued, and the heart is filled with patience and gentleness. (*The Review and Herald*, October 31, 1907, par. 10)

1 Thessalonians 5:23 (KJV) — 23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 12:1–2 (KJV) — 1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Our Saviour is a Saviour for the perfection of the whole man.

He is not the God of part of the being only. The grace of Christ works to the disciplining of the whole human fabric. He made all. He has redeemed all. He has made the mind, the strength, the body as well as the soul, partaker of the divine nature, and all is his purchased possession. He must be served with the whole mind, heart, soul, and strength.

Then the Lord will be glorified in his saints, in even the common, temporal things, with which they are connected. "Holiness unto the Lord," will be the inscription placed upon them. (*The Youth's Instructor*, April 14, 1898, par. 3)

As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings.

(Christ's Object Lessons, p. 333.1)

Mark 9:23 (KJV) — 23 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centered upon Him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him. (*Steps to Christ*, p. 47.1)

Desires for goodness and holiness are right as far as they go; but if you stop here, they will avail nothing. Many will be lost while hoping and desiring to be Christians. They do not come to the point of yielding the will to God. They do not now choose to be Christians. (*Steps to Christ*, p. 47.2)

The mind which has been placed in the control of Christ, and on which he has wrought by his grace, becomes refined, purified, elevated.

(The Review and Herald, May 10, 1906, par. 2)

Philippians 2:3–5 (KJV) — 3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. 4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. 5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

Philippians 2:6–8 (KJV) — 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: **7** But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: **8** And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

All your habits are to be brought under the control
of a mind that is itself under the control of God.

(The Youth's Instructor, April 7, 1898, par. 7)

Proverbs 16:32 (KJV) — 32 He
that is slow to anger is better than
the mighty; and he that ruleth his
spirit than he that taketh a city.

You will doubtless meet with things that will ruffle your spirit and severely test you; but self-control may be yours in the strength of Jesus. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 501.2)

**Philippians 4:13 (KJV) — 13 I can
do all things through Christ which
strengtheneth me.**

2 Corinthians 12:9 (KJV) — 9 And
he said unto me, My grace is
sufficient for thee: for my strength is
made perfect in weakness. . . .

**2 Corinthians 5:14 (KJV) — 14 For
the love of Christ constraineth us; . . .**

There is a transforming power in love. [1 John 4:19]
When the love of God rules in the heart, it brings all
our powers into obedience to his will, and enlists
them in willing, active service. (*The Signs of the
Times*, June 12, 1884, par. 12)

Genuine faith is followed by love, and love by obedience. All the powers and passions of the converted man are brought under the control of Christ. His Spirit is a renewing power, transforming to the divine image all who will receive it. It makes me sad to say that this experience is understood by but few who profess the truth. Very many follow on in their own ways and indulge their sinful desires and yet profess to be disciples of Christ. They have never submitted their hearts to God. Like the foolish virgins they have neglected to obtain the oil of grace in their vessels with their lamps. I tell you, my brethren, that a large number who profess to believe and even to teach the truth are under the bondage of sin. Base passions defile the mind and corrupt the soul. Some who are in the vilest iniquity have borrowed the livery of heaven, that they may serve Satan more effectively. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 219.4)

God's abounding love and presence in the heart will give the power of self-control, and will mold and fashion the mind and character. The grace of Christ in the life will direct the aims and purposes and capabilities into channels that will give moral and spiritual power—power which the youth will not have to leave in this world, but which they can carry with them into the future life and retain through the eternal ages. (*The Youth's Instructor*,

November 12, 1907, par. 8)

Hebrews 12:2–3 (KJV) — 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. **3** For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Hold firmly to the One who has all power in heaven and in earth. Though you so often fail to reveal patience and calmness, do not give up the struggle. Resolve again, this time more firmly, to be patient under every provocation. And never take your eyes off your divine Example. (*The Review and Herald*, October 31, 1907, par. 11)

John 17:3 (KJV) — 3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

This is true education. It imparts power. The experimental knowledge of God and of Christ transforms man into the image of God. It gives man the mastery of himself, bringing every impulse and passion of the lower nature under the control of the higher powers of the mind. It makes its possessor a son of God and an heir of heaven. It brings him into communion with the mind of the Infinite, and opens to him the rich treasures of the universe. (*The Signs of the Times*, September 12, 1906, par. 7)

