

Rooted and Grounded in Love

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Study given by W. D. Frazee—September 12, 1965

If you will listen carefully and ask the Holy Spirit to impress your mind, there will be something in this study for you. And that which you find especially for you may be a little different. If we were having a picnic lunch here and there were salads and sandwiches and various sorts of things, you probably would not try to eat everything on the table. At least I hope you wouldn't. But somewhere you would find that which meets your need and your taste.

I caution you that the thing you need most might be the thing you would be the least inclined to take hold of. The thing you are most inclined to say Amen to you probably don't need. You probably have enough of it already. But that which you might not be quite ready to say Amen to might be the thing you need more than anything else in the study.

Let's listen carefully with our hearts under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and God will be our teacher.

Yesterday morning, between ten and eleven I was walking in Mt. Tabor park. The weather was blowing a gale. I love to hear the wind sweep through those great evergreen trees. As I looked down upon a grove of those giants I saw one that was completely overturned. It was gone. The wind had blown it over.

As I looked at the root system I saw it was very shallow. I presume that in the place that tree was growing rock must have been near the surface, and instead of finding a place to strike its roots deep, the tree simply spread its roots out into the shallow soil. It got along all right. I suppose the tree was between fifty and seventy years old, which is quite a lifetime. But yesterday it went over.

"A storm is coming, relentless in its fury. Are we prepared to meet it?" *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 8, page 315.

As I looked at that great fir tree stretched out on the ground, who would have thought which one would fall and which one would stand. No one could tell. But when the tree had been overturned and the root system exposed, the reason for its being overturned was very clear. What we want, then, is a good root system. And that is what our text is talking about:

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of

Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God" Ephesians 3:17-19.

Each one of us is supposed to be a tree in the garden of God. But the tree must be rooted. I want to study some of those roots.

I think you understand the way a root system works. It isn't enough to have roots on one side of a tree. If the wind was only going to blow from one side, then you might have some of your strongest roots on that side. When the wind is coming from one side and then the other we need well anchored roots on every side. Don't forget that the apostle tells us about every wind of doctrine blowing. And the only way the tree that represents you and me can survive the storm as the winds blow from one side and the other is to be anchored on every side.

All these roots the apostle is dealing with here find the ground they are to be anchored in is love. They are rooted and grounded in love.

The first root I would like to study is love for the Bible and love for the Spirit of Prophecy. Love for God's law which is basic to everything in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. If we love Jesus, we will love what He says. The Psalmist says:

"Oh how love I Thy law. It is my meditation all the day"
Psalm 119:97.

Do you love God's Word? Do you love everything Jesus said? When we come to the place where we love everything Jesus said we will be ready for heaven.

Probably all of us here this afternoon love some of it. Probably most of us, if we were honest with ourselves, would say there are some things in the Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy we accept just because He says so, but we would not put it that way if we were doing it. It is our privilege to encourage in our hearts not merely the spirit of obedience, but a spirit of appreciation of what God has told us through the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.

Speaking of those who are going to be taken in the final deception, the marvelous working of Satan, the apostle says they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved (2 Thessalonians 2:10). They knew some points of truth, but they didn't love all of it. It is dangerous to allow our hearts to continue in painful performance of Christian duty.

Let me illustrate it. A number of years ago I was assisting a minister in a series of tent meetings, and there was an elderly woman who was attending. She accepted the Sabbath. She came forward with others to keep the Sabbath. She gave her name. Soon after we noticed she was not at the meeting. I was asked to go to see her.

I went to her home and knocked at the door. She didn't want to ask me in. As I talked to her about her not coming to the meetings, and tried to find out what she was thinking about, she finally told me, "Mr. Frazee, I went down to the tent meetings and heard you talk, and I thought I had to keep the Sabbath. I have been praying

about it. All my family think different about this. They do not want me to change from my church. They don't want me to change from keeping Sunday. If the Lord really wants me to do this He will help me to know it. And the Lord has helped me to see that I don't have to do it."

Had she prayed? Yes. Had she gotten an answer to her prayer? Yes. But when I raised the question that there might be more than one place to get an answer from, she didn't like that a bit. What was it she lacked? A love for the whole truth. It doesn't make any difference whether a person is a Catholic or a Protestant, a Methodist, a Baptist, or a Seventh-day Adventist. Unless there is in our hearts a genuine love for truth, all the truth, somewhere along the line we will find a place to get what we want instead of the thing we do not want. Do you see what I mean?

Thus we see the importance of this root of love for the truth, love for the Bible, and love for the *Testimonies*. Love for everything the Bible and the *Testimonies* teach. I will illustrate it in another way.

Most of you I don't know. I have never met you before. If I mention some specific things, it is not because my study is on them. I am just using them as an illustration. I will take the point of meat eating. I don't know if you are vegetarians or not. If you have been studying the Bible and the *Testimonies*, somewhere along the line you have arrived at a conviction that for this generation the ideal standard is a meatless diet.

But suppose I love to eat meat. Suppose I like beef steak. Suppose I like chicken. Suppose I like fish. Will God somewhere let me have a chance to see somebody who is higher in the church than I am, who has known the Lord longer than I have, eating meat with a clear conscience? Will the Lord let me have that opportunity to see whether I am rooted in the Word, and love for the Word, or whether I am willing to be swayed by the influence of human beings?

I say He will. I am using meat eating as an illustration. There are a thousand other things. There is many a person who would do what he finds in the *Testimonies* if the people in the church he associates with were doing those things.

Let's take a step in another direction. Are there not thousands of Baptists and Methodists who would be glad to begin keeping the Sabbath next week if the other members of their church would do it too? Is it not a fact that the greatest cross many of them carry is not the matter of a jot or a matter of changing their theological ideas, but a matter of bearing the cross of doing something different from the people around them?

Do you mean that is the cross that the Methodists and Baptists ought to carry in accepting this message, but once we get into the church you and I as individuals do not have to carry any more? Ah, where is our love for truth, God's truth, God's Word just as it reads? God will test every one of us on that point. Be sure of it.

"At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason." *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, page 136.

What are we to gather from the coldness of others? Warmth. How do you get warmth from the coldness of others? It is only by reaction.

When I studied hydrotherapy at Loma Linda forty years ago I learned about the laws of reaction. When you give a person an application of cold, especially if you rub him with it, instead of getting cold he gets warm, providing he has a good reaction. And we were warned about how to treat weak patients who did not have much of a reaction. If you are a good healthy Christian, and you find yourself in an atmosphere of coldness on anything God has said, instead of becoming cold along with those around you, you are to do what? Gather warmth. And the only way you can do it is by reaction.

Two weeks ago this afternoon I had the privilege of listening to Elder Hegstead from the religious liberty department of the conference speaking to a large group of church officers in Colorado. He was telling us about how things worked out in China when the communists came in. Many of our church members, and some leaders, went with the enemy and apostatized. Some of those along with the communist mob would cry out for the blood of the loyal Seventh-day Adventist who stood by the truth, saying kill them. And he was pointing out the great need for each one of us today of having an experience with God and His Word so that no matter what those around us do we are anchored in God's truth so we know for ourselves.

Are we going to be tested like that? Elder Hegstead quoted from this same page in *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5. "To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test."

Let us settle in our hearts this afternoon that one of the great roots we must have if we are to stand through the storm and shock that is ahead, is the root of being anchored in the Word of God, knowing what the Bible and Testimonies teach, and loving what the Bible and Testimonies teach.

That means following them. Jesus said, If ye love Me keep My commandments. If we know God's truth and love it, we will stand for it no matter what those around us do. That stands for diet, dress, music, reading, education, recreation, life work, and for everything we do. God has given us literally thousands of details in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, and if we love God's Word and His truth, and sink the roots of affection deep into those things, the more those truths are despised by those about us the more we will cling to them and love them.

That is what it is going to take to withstand the pressure on the mark of the beast. And we are developing or failing to develop that attitude right now in the attitude we are taking in the little things of daily life.

So think of it. Why do you eat what you eat? Are you eating by faith in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy? When you read *Ministry of Healing* and *Counsels on Diet and Foods* do you find there what guides your life in what you put on your table? Or are you affected by what those about you do or don't do? Is that a fair question?

So with dress. My sisters, and my brethren too, why do you dress as you dress? Is it simply because of the prevailing styles, the prevailing customs, or are you being guided by the testimony of Jesus which is the Spirit of Prophecy?

Are there things in your heart you wish you were doing but dare not do because of the mass pressure of those about you? Is that a fair question? My friends, it is a vital question.

Is our practice being molded by the attitude of those about us, or are we being influenced by what the Spirit of Prophecy teaches? How much do we love what God has said? That is the question. And remember, the One who knows has told us we will act out all the faith we have.

I come to another root. This is one on the other side of the tree. And just as a root on the north side balances the root on the south side, and the two keep the tree standing, so this second root I want to study is vital.

"Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it"
Ephesians 5:25.

The first root is love for the Word, the law of Christ, the Bible, the testimony of Christ, which is the Spirit of Prophecy. Love for what God has said, what He has revealed. This second root is love for the church. Christ loved the church. How much did He love it? He gave Himself for it.

"The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" Galatians 2:20.

Did Christ give Himself for you? Why? Because He loved you. And this text says He loved the church and gave Himself for it. All Jesus did for you He did for the church. The love Jesus has for you He has for the church.

"Christ and His church are inseparable" *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 3, page 418.

What does inseparable mean? Cannot be separated. Are this brother and I inseparable? No. He will go to one place tonight and I will go to another. It doesn't mean we are not friends. We are, thank the Lord, but we are not inseparable. He can live apart from me and I can live apart from him.

But Jesus and His church are inseparable. In fact, Paul says Jesus is the head of His church (Ephesians 5:23). Is the head and the body inseparable? The church cannot exist without Christ.

You might say Christ could certainly exist without the church, but you don't know Him if you say He can. Calvary stands as the eternal revelation of the fact that Christ cannot exist without His church. He would rather perish than lose it. And that is what our text in Ephesians 5:25 says. Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it.

You and I know that when He hung on the cross He was tempted to feel that if He went into that black pit He would never come up again, but if He paid the price His church could be in the kingdom. What did He do? He plunged. Christ and His church are inseparable.

I want to ask you a question. Do you love the church the way Jesus loves it? Is there a root that goes from your tree down into the church, and are you anchored there so that no wind can push you or draw you out, or in any way unsettle you? Is that a good question? And I want to tell you, if there is even one thing that could happen to you to pull you out of the church or push you out of the church, that thing will happen. Remember the fir tree I told you about. It had been standing there for years. Yesterday it went over. A wind came along from the right direction with the right velocity and force to overturn it. Did it have any roots on that side? Yes, but they were shallow. You and I must be rooted and grounded in love for Christ, Love for His Word, love for His church. We must be grounded in a love such as Jesus had, that we would rather be blotted out of existence than see the church fail.

That is the spirit Moses had. God told Moses the people had made a golden calf and were worshiping it. He told Moses He was ready to blot them out and start with him.

Did Moses say, Well Lord, that is too bad, but the people who are with us will be true, so we won't have any more golden calves? No. He said blot my name out.

The rebels had to be executed. The impenitent had to be put to the sword. But Israel as a nation, Israel as a church, was saved through the prayers of Moses. What caused those prayers? The love of Jesus. Moses was rooted and grounded in love, not only for the Word of God, but for the church of God. And there are going to be some people down here today who sing the song of Moses.

"Christ and His church are inseparable. To neglect or despise those whom God has appointed to lead out and to bear the responsibilities connected with His work and with the advancement and spread of the truth is to reject the means which God has ordained for the help, encouragement, and strength of His people. To pass these by and think your light must come through no other channel than directly from God places you in a position where you are liable to deception and to be overthrown"
Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 3, pages 418,419.

Can I take my Bible under one arm and the *Testimonies* under the other arm and go by myself, or with a few others who will agree with me, and think I can get all the help and light God sees I need No.

Someone says, Isn't there enough light in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy?

What about that portion in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy which tells us to hear the church, and unite with the church, and love the church, and support the church, and be loyal to the church? Is that part of the Bible? Is that part of the

Testimonies? If I say the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy are enough for me, must I not then take that part of the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy which points me to the church, draws me to the church? Indeed I must.

"The Word of God does not give license for one man to set up his judgment in opposition to the judgment of the church, neither is he allowed to urge his opinions against the opinions of the church. If there were no church discipline and government, the church would go to fragments; it could not hold together as a body."
Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 3, page 428.

Somebody says, I would respect church discipline if it were done right.

Did you ever hear of civil government making mistakes? Did you ever hear the police arresting anyone that was innocent? Did you ever hear of an innocent man going to prison? Has it ever happened? Well, that is the trouble, and that is why I don't have any use for the police or judges or courts. I have no use for them. There are too many crooks and rascals. They make mistakes all the time, and I am not going to pay any attention to them.

Or am I? Well, with civil government, I probably will whether I want to or not. There is a sword they bear, and Paul tells us why they do it (Romans 13). But if I submit to civil government in spite of all the mistakes it makes through graft and ignorance, shouldn't I be willing to submit to the church of Christ, even if sometimes some of its officers make mistakes?

Another illustration. Do you believe in parental authority? Parents, do you think your children should obey? Children, do you think you should obey your parents? Who says so? God does.

"Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee"
Exodus 20:12

Well, I would obey my father and mother if they would always say the right things. But they don't always know. I know better than they do sometimes. Especially if I am sixteen. And not only that, they are not always nice about the way they tell me things. And I am sure that is not the spirit of Christ. So if I could have a good father and mother who always did things like Jesus did, I would be willing.

Do you see, friends? Does the fact that a father raises his voice release the child from obedience? Do we still believe in parental authority in spite of the mistakes of parents? Do we still believe in the authority of the church and church officers and church leadership in spite of the mistakes of church officers and leaders? Right here is the test of our faith. Right here is the test of our love.

Just as the meat eating brother will find an opportunity where he can get off the vegetarian train and back to the flesh pots of Egypt, so the brother who is

inclined to be independent, who loves to chose his own way and finds it hard to submit to the discipline of the church, will find somewhere along the line some good excuse for rebelling, or at least ignoring. Rebelling against the church, or ignoring his claim.

Brother Frazee, this sounds like a different tune than what you were singing ten minutes ago.

Yes, it is the root on the other side of the tree. Precisely. We need a root that is anchored deep in love for Christ expressed in love for His Word. We will cling to the Word no matter what men do. But we need a root on the other side that is anchored deep in love for Christ expressed in love for His church. We will cling to the church no matter what anyone does.

Somebody says, You don't know where I live.

No, I don't know where you live. But let me sum it up. I need both roots, and more and more I love both of them. I love the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, and I love the church. I find I need both. I need God's Word, I need His church. Each of these roots needs the other, to supplement and complement. It is very important.

Those who sing the song of love for the church, and be loyal to it, and that is all they know, are simply good Roman Catholics, whatever their denominational name. That is the great teaching of the Roman Catholic church. They say Luther, Knox, Calvin, and all those men were off because they left the church. Of course, you and I know that according to *Great Controversy* the church left Jesus a thousand years before Luther ever came along. God's church was not where the Pope was. It was where he wasn't.

But my point is that the idea men are to submit to the church without regard to what the Bible teaches is a Roman Catholic doctrine. And those who exalt the church at the expense of the Bible are good Roman Catholics.

There are those who think that the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy is enough, and the church is more or less a religious social club in which we get together and share with one another what we have found from the Bible. We are in no sense bound by our brethren. We are in no sense disciplined by the church.

What will we do then with these statements I have read, and many others which might be read? Thank God He has put in this world an organized church with officers and leaders. And just as He has given the state authority in the civil realm, just as He has given parents authority in the family, so God has given to His church authority. He expects every loyal Christian to respect the authority of the church and its leadership, and to love it.

If we find in our heart the least bit of independence, antagonism, a feeling of, Oh well, I don't want to get so bound up I can't move, we would do well to examine our hearts and see if we are rooted and grounded in love for the church.

Remember, Jesus loved the church so much that He gave Himself for it. And the truly converted heart that loves the church as Jesus loves it would rather anything happen to him personally than the fair name of the church be tarnished.

You see where that will lead us. If we see mistakes in the church, instead of publishing those mistakes to the world, or publish them to our brothers and sisters, we will want to cast over them that mantle of love which hides a multitude of sins.

Does that mean we are to become tolerant of sin in the church? Not at all. That is not love. That is sentimentalism.

"At the time when the danger and depression of the church are greatest, the little company who are standing in the light will be sighing and crying for the abominations that are done in the land. But more especially will their prayers arise in behalf of the church because its members are doing after the manner of the world.

"The earnest prayers of this faithful few will not be in vain.

. .

"The class who do not feel grieved over their own spiritual declension, nor mourn over the sins of other, will be left without the seal of God. . . .

"The abominations for which the faithful ones were sighing and crying were all that could be discerned by finite eyes, but by far the worse sins, those which provoked the jealousy of the pure and holy God, were unrevealed" *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, pages 209, 210, 211.

What will those who receive the seal of God be doing? Sighing and crying. What for? For sins. Sins that are done where? In the world, but more especially in the church.

Are we at the point on the prophetic map where there is sin aplenty both in the world and the church? Oh, yes. But if we are rooted and grounded in love, we will not let a single sin in the church weaken our loyalty to the church. Mark this point and don't miss it: we will not let any mistake of some church officer, some brother or sister, cause us to grow cold in our love for the church, grow cold in our loyalty, grow weak in our support. Oh, no. We are to gather what from the coldness of others? Warmth.

The weaker the church is the more it needs our help. But remember, that does not mean compromise. Not at all. In the popular Protestant churches they talk love and tolerance. You can do most anything and be a member in the leading churches today. But it is going to lead to black-listing the people who keep the commandments of God. It is going to lead to a death decree to put to death those who keep the Sabbath. That is what this false love in the popular churches is going

to lead to. And that same spirit of compromise will lead the individual Seventh-day Adventist, or anyone else, to turn against the truth.

"As the Protestant churches have been seeking the favor of the world, false charity has blinded their eyes. They do not see but that it is right to believe good of all evil, and as the inevitable result they will finally believe evil of all good." *Great Controversy*, page 571.

The Protestant churches today think it is all right to take anyone in. Someone who smokes, drinks, gambles, take him in. God is our Father and we are all brothers. But remember what that is going to do. That apparent broad-mindedness is going to lead to the narrow-mindedness of killing or trying to kill the only people in this world who are being true to God. So let us never think that loyalty to the church and love for the church means we are to join in compromise.

Never. We are to stand earnestly and firmly for truth, and for righteousness even if the majority forsake us.

Somebody says, Brother Frazee, how can somebody do both of these?

My brother, your assignment is to love God's Word so much that you will not sacrifice one principle; to love the church so much that you will be loyal and cooperative. You will support the church with your tithes and offerings, your presence, your participation regardless of what mistakes some brother or sister makes.

Somebody says, That's just too much.

It is too much for human nature to do, but it isn't too much for Jesus to do. To your knees, my brother, to your closet, my sister, and there agonize with God until the roots of love for the Word are so deep that nothing can pull you away from what is written. Agonize until your roots of love for the church are so deep that nothing can drive you from God's church or weaken your love and loyalty.

That's our assignment, dear friends. And the people who learn it are going to sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. Oh, I want to sing that song. Don't you? Some people are going to do it. They are in training right now. Oh, what a wonderful God we have to give us these precious opportunities. What do you say?

Take a look for a moment at John 17. I want you to see something there. There is no chapter in the Bible like John 17. We call Matthew 6 the Lord's prayer, and it is the prayer He taught us to pray. But John chapter 17 is preeminently the Lord's prayer, the prayer He prayed to His Father in Gethsemane. And the Spirit of Prophecy tells us that this prayer was a sample, an illustration that Jesus would offer in the sanctuary within the veil. So if you want to know the kind of prayers Jesus has been praying ever since He went there to the sanctuary in heaven nineteen hundred years ago, read John chapter 17. You will find out what is on His heart.

The Spirit of Prophecy tells us that this chapter comprehends and includes more than any other chapter in the New Testament. We have not time to look at all this chapter this afternoon, but I want to point out the great burden of His prayer. I want to point out the great burden of this chapter. And don't miss it, dear friend.

Christ prays for His disciples, and He pleads that they all may be one. Then He says:

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word" John 17:20.

Who is that? That is you and me.

"That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me" John 17:21.

Here is Jesus' recipe for selling the world on His church. It is a church that is united. One. How close? As close as Jesus and the Father are one. Can that be accomplished by error? Can it be accomplished by transgression? Can it be accomplished by rebellion? Can it be accomplished by criticism? Can it be accomplished by pulling off?

No. There is only one thing that can accomplish it, and that is love. Love for God's Word, love for our brethren, love for the truth, love for the church. It takes all of that, and that is all it takes. But thank God, that prayer is going to be answered.

"The prayer of Christ that His church may be one as He was one with His Father will finally be answered"
Testimonies to Ministers, page 50.

I want to ask you, which church do you think it is going to be? Well I know. That is why I am a Seventh-day Adventist. If I didn't know I would be hunting for that church. But I found it. 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.

I am so glad I am one of the children of that woman. And even if she is a little lame at times, I propose to stick right with her. She is my mother, and God is my Father. The world outside is Babylon, and Babylon it is. But thank God He has a church in this world.

Someone says, I see a lot of things in it that shouldn't be.

Let me ask you, do any of you ladies wash clothes? Do any of you have a washing machine? It is churning away. I think of a pair of blue jeans in there sloshing around. It looks around at the other clothes in that washing machine and says, Look at that dirty shirt. Look at those over there. They are just a bunch of dirty clothes. I am going to jump out of here.

Can it do it? In what I am talking about, it can. But if that pair of dirty blue jeans would jump out, all it would get for its trouble would be to lose its only chance of getting clean.

Dear brother, sister, if in the church you find some people that are not just what you wish they were, remember that the church is God's washing machine. I don't mean the church can wash you, but the church is the place to get washed. And He is going to present it to Himself not having any spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

Yes, thank the Lord, it has a dryer and ironer. The whole thing. Remember, it takes heat to wash, and it takes more heat to iron. So do not be afraid when the heat gets turned on. God is trying to get His church ready. He is trying to get you ready. If you and I will not get restless and take into our hands the work God has left for Himself, He will bring this thing through.

If anywhere along the line we say, Oh well, I guess all I can do is go along with what the others are doing, dress like other people, eat like other people, have amusements like other people, my dear ones, we have lost the battle. What is happening? We are failing to send this root deep down, and sooner or later a storm is coming that will blow us over, and the very people we have patterned after will go out. They did in China. We will go out with them. God pity us.

"The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us"
Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5, page 81.

When is that? The National Sunday Law. Have we come to it yet? Do you think it is close? But with that Sunday law is coming the test:

"Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death" *Ibid*.

Then is when the chaff is going to be blown away. The people who go out when the Sunday law pressure comes will be those who have been going down step by step.

Let me ask you, are you more like the world than you were ten years ago, five years ago, a year ago, or less? How about the radio and TV. Are you using it more or less than you used to? How about the worldly magazines and periodicals. Are you more wedded to them, or is the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy increasing in interest? How about worldly dress. God has told us that in these last days fashions are shameful and immodest. And if that is true a hundred years ago, what are they today?

Where is your love? Is it love for human approbation, or is it love for what Jesus has revealed? Do you see what I mean?

Today is the training ground, tomorrow is the battle. Those who have accustomed themselves to going along with the crowd today, either out in the world or in the church, will go with the majority when the storm comes and all the trees are turned over, except those that are anchored on both sides.

Remember, some people can be independent provided they can be independent. Some people can stand true on health reform and dress reform and amusements and a world of other things provided they can paddle their own canoe, take their own personal attitude, and leave the church to go its way.

That is not our assignment. Christ loved the church and did what? Gave Himself for it. Christ and His church are inseparable. And listen brother, sister, no matter how firm I am for the truth, for the *Testimonies*, for reforms, for getting ready for heaven, if I allow any of that to make me independent of the church, critical of the church and its leadership, all I have done is change the method of my final failure. That's all.

Drive these freeways and tell me, can you turn off at times to the right? Can you turn off at times to the left. Oh, yes. And some people do not seem to know there is more than one way to fail.

To state it another way, some people think that if they stand strong for reforms they are sure to be true. But the Devil slips up on their blind side and says, I will show them how to be so loyal to the *Testimonies* that they become critical of everything and everybody that they think do not follow the *Testimonies*.

On the other side, some people think the way to be sure is to be loyal to the church, and they talk loyalty to the church, and the Devil listens and slips up on their blind side, and gets them to thinking that the way to prove their loyalty is to eat what others eat, dress the way others dress, do the way others do, and finally drop out when the mark of the beast comes.

May God bless us.

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