

Proof—Power—Pleasure

#0690

Study given by W.D. Frazee—January 17, 1964

The report by the committee appointed by the president to investigate the question of tobacco has come out. Most of you are acquainted with the fact that the worse fears have been realized, and this committee has given a strong indictment on tobacco. It states without question that cigarette smoking is a definite hazard. It deals with the question of lung cancer and other conditions.

It is not that report I want to study with you tonight. It is the reaction to it. That reaction I think is very interesting. In the Monday afternoon newspaper one headline said:

“Tobacco Growers In State Not Worried. Tobacco is Tennessee's second largest cash crop bringing in 90 million dollars a year to farmers in the state. Tobacco growers in Tennessee claim they are not worried by the new report. They say the result had been expected for some time, and more important, most smokers don't want to quit. Matt Jennings, tobacco expert for the state department of agriculture said, ‘Seventy-five percent of those smoking haven't the will power to quit.’”

I would like to have us meditate on the reaction of the public. When the scientists of the world come out with a long awaited report, and they say tobacco kills thousands every year, what is the reaction? Tobacco growers are not worried.

A man in Chattanooga said, “Well, I will have to die of something anyway, so I might as well keep on smoking.”

If it were not so tragic it would be amusing. But it is tragic. The first thing that is apparent is that it takes more than a scientific report to get people to do something. Seventy-five percent of these people lack the will power to quit smoking. They are like galley slaves chained to their oars.

Somebody comes walking down those long rows saying, “Don't you know you are going to die if you stay here?”

They answer, “Yes, but what can we do about it?”

That is only half of it. A lot of them have been sold on the attitude that probably a good man might live longer, but after all, it is better to get some fun out of life even if you don't live quite so long. In fact, some have expressed it, Good people live longer, or maybe it just seems longer. Even if we could live longer without liquor

and tobacco and a lot of other things, what about it? We have got to die sometime anyway.

I believe there are millions of people right here in America that if you would offer to give them a shot of something that would take away all the habits that will shorten their lives, they would say, Wait a minute. What am I going to do to have a good time?

The problem is more complex than just the question of lung cancer. It is more complex than convincing people that tobacco kills. There are two things they have to see. Not only that somehow there is power to break those chains, but there would still be something worth living for.

I would like to have us think of three things—the proof, the power, and the pleasure, and where do we get them? Where lies our proof on the question on tobacco, where lies our power to lift people away from it, and where lies our pleasure in living without it. I say simply, all three lie in the Word of God.

“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word
was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart”
Jeremiah 15:16.

Thank God that testimony has been echoed by millions of the children of God down through the ages. Yes, our pleasure is in the Word of God. We get more real pleasure in this Word than these fellow who are smoking one pack after the other are getting from their cigarettes.

Is there anyone here who has been on both sides of the fence? Some of us are hardly qualified witnesses. Is there anyone here who used to smoke and now you don't, and you have found something in the Word of God which pleases you and brings you more joy than cigarettes did? Yes. Here are some witnesses. Are there men and women who know by experience what the pleasures of sin may be for a season, but there is more actual pleasure in the things of God than in the things of this world? Where lies our power? It is in this Word.

“But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to
become the sons of God, even to them that believe on
His name.” John 1:12.

Did Seventh-day Adventist have to wait until the surgeon general's report came out to be settled and sure and satisfied that tobacco was a health hazard? Not a one. Why not? Because a hundred years ago last summer the angel Gabriel came down from heaven to a little farm house in Otsego, Michigan, and communicated to the Lord's messenger, Ellen White, great principles of health and healing. Tobacco was mentioned. Its effects were delineated. And for a hundred years the remnant church has known something of the nature of tobacco. Enough so no true Seventh-day Adventist has been using tobacco for a hundred years. Isn't that wonderful?

We had some information on tobacco even before that, but that was the great opening vision on health reform. I wonder if this is the time to let our friends know how and why it is we escaped the use of tobacco and its effects these hundred years? I wonder if it wouldn't be a good thing to place in their hands this wonderful book, *Ministry of Healing*, and call their attention to the statement that says tobacco is a slow, insidious, and most malignant poison, written nearly 60 years before the surgeon general's report?

Some of you know that since the tobacco scare has come the *Reader's Digest* came out with an article entitled, *The Case Of The Wise Abstainers*. The wise abstainers were Seventh-day Adventist. What were they abstaining from? Tobacco. Why were they wise? Because a research project had just showed that they didn't have lung cancer like others had. In a whole series they only found one Seventh-day Adventist with lung cancer, and he was a recent convert. But that article didn't tell why we have been without tobacco for a hundred years.

In the light of what I have given from the press, merely helping people to see that tobacco causes lung cancer and heart attacks is not going to get them to stop. Some of them will stop, but there will be two people running to grab the cigarette they throw in the gutter.

In England the government put its power behind an educational program to try to get people to quit using tobacco because of the health hazard. What happened? When the report came out, the consumption of tobacco dropped, but it is climbing back again. Firmly rooted in the minds and bodies of people are these health hazard facts, but the tobacco growers are not worrying too much about it.

I don't suppose the Devil got jittery when that report came out. The proof and the power of our position comes from heaven, not from the surgeon general's office. Don't misunderstand me. I am not sorry for the surgeon general's report. I have ordered a copy. There are facts there that we can use to help people see how science agrees with revelation. But don't forget that the power is in the revelation. That is where the power is. *Ministry of Healing* tells us about tobacco. It tells us about how to overcome not only tobacco but every other poison and problem.

“The foundation of all enduring reform is the law of God”
Ministry of Healing, page 129.

Even if the problem is to get people to eat whole wheat bread I think we are going to need something more than a scientific report. Otherwise a lot of them will say, Give me white bread and pass the vitamin pills.

The foundation of all enduring reform is the law of God. Why do you suppose the word “enduring” is put in there? People will make temporary changes, transient reforms. Listen:

“Apart from divine power, no genuine reform can be effected” *Ibid.*, page 130.

The proof is what God says, and the power is in what He says. I thank God for our glorious opportunity. Praise God for the opportunity of this hour.

There is an interesting thing in this same newspaper, the Monday afternoon newspaper. Right here in big headlines it says, "One Thousand Two-Hundred Smokers Go To Five Day New York Clinic—Plan devised for group therapy and ending habit."

If somebody had told you twenty-five years ago that there would come a time when Seventh-day Adventist would be on the front page of the great city newspapers over helping people to quit tobacco, would you have believed it? I think that is fine. There is one nice thing the brethren are doing. They are helping these people to learn that there are some other things they need to quit besides tobacco.

I would like to have us think of the whole program of life. Are you any surer of the no tobacco way of life than you were before the report came out from the surgeon general? No. You are just as sure as you were before. Why? Because our confidence was not based on the report of some authority.

By the way, do these authorities differ? There are some men that are supposed to be authorities who are willing to stand with the tobacco companies. Isn't that a strange thing?

Is there anything else you are as sure of as the no tobacco program simply because *Ministry of Healing* or some other inspired book says so? Eating butter is a tiny thing, and I want you to know I consider it a tiny thing compared with the tobacco question. Yet when I was a young man people who did not eat butter in this denomination were called fanatics. They were literal in carrying out the *Testimonies* of Ellen G. White. You say that seems strange. Well, it wouldn't if you had lived forty years ago. You would understand it perfectly. In fact, there were those in so-called authorities that questioned whether you had to have butter in order to get this and that and the other thing. So there was a serious question whether extreme health reformers were doing right by themselves and their families by not having butter on the table.

Well, there are some people today who do not know anything about Ellen G. White and *Ministry of Healing* who do not have butter on their table. Oh, yes. There are world renowned authorities who have set out the warning to either cut down on eating butter or cut it out altogether?

It is very interesting to read what Sister White wrote before any of us were ever born, and it is also interesting to read the apology that some of our dear people wrote about it. The apologies are out of date, but the words she wrote are not.

It would be a good thing for all of us to dig into the books and see if there is anything the surgeon general's office hasn't caught up with, and see if we believe it just because the testimony of Jesus says so, and love it just as much as though a scientific report were substantiating it. God intended that as different scientific reports came out our people would stand out head and shoulders above the world on

all these points, just like He intended Israel to stand out among all the nations back in their day.

Someone was telling me about a very interesting study that a researcher made of some Seventh-day Adventist children in a church school in a Midwestern state. She was struck with how little tooth decay there was among them compared with the public school children around them. Should it be that way? Of course it should. But somebody was very sad to find out that by the time our children got to academy and college age the tooth decay was just as much as the world. That is something to think about and study.

Has science discovered one or more of the causes of tooth decay? Yes. Was it anything *Ministry of Healing* told us wasn't good for us a long time ago? Yes. Far too much sugar was used in food. But on that point, will all the warning of the dental association on the free use of sugar cut down the use of ice cream, candy, soda water, pastries and all the rest? You know it will not. Are they going to quit eating between meals? No. They would rather have their teeth drilled. They would rather have their teeth fall out. But before we laugh, is there anyone here related to them?

As on the tobacco question, it takes more than scientific proof? Where the power lies is in the Word of God and our acceptance of divine revelation. Beyond that there is a thing that I trust will grip our hearts. There must be a demonstration that life without all these things is still worth living. Oh, a million miles beyond that. Show that wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. Show that God shows His children the path of light.

"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" Psalm 16:11.

Do you believe it? Does your table show it? Does your way of life show it? Ah friends, that is where the power lies. Notice this statement:

"It is our practice of the principles we inculcate that gives them weight" *Ministry of Healing*, page 132.

That is the thing. One of the officials of the American Cancer Society was smoking a cigarette while he discussed with Elder Nickol the report showing cancer was caused by cigarettes. Nobody thinks too much about that. But if because of religious principle you and I believe and teach these things, then people expect, and have the right to expect that we practice them.

The question is, can we practice them and still have joy? Can we in spite of strictness be happy? And could we get to the place where we are happy because of strictness? That is the thing we are challenged to in this eventful hour.

People who enter into the experience of finding joy in reform, whether it be diet, dress, Sabbath, amusement, educational, and demonstrate to the world around them that they have found in this way of life the secret of happiness, will be God's

witnesses in the closing hour. That is why we were born. That is why we are here. Let's thank God for this opportunity. Listen:

"If we do represent Christ, we shall make His service appear attractive, as it really is. Christians who gather up gloom and sadness to their souls, and murmur and complain, are giving to others a false representation of God and the Christian life. They give the impression that God is not pleased to have His children happy, and in this they bear false witness against our heavenly Father."
Steps to Christ, page 116.

A mournful, gloomy Christian is breaking which commandment? The ninth. And the stricter it is the worse it is. The people who ought to be gloomy are the ones whose stomachs are giving them agony because of what they ate and drank. But health reformers and all other people who embrace health reform ought to be the happiest people in the world. They are if they get hold of Jesus. I would hate to try to carry out these reforms without Him. Wouldn't you? Yes. He is the heart of all of them.

"It is the work of Satan to represent the Lord as lacking in compassion and pity. He misstates the truth in regard to Him...Satan ever seeks to make the religious life one of gloom. He desires it to appear toilsome and difficult. And when the Christian presents in his own life this view of religion, he is, through his unbelief, seconding the falsehood of Satan" *Ibid*.

Years ago I used to go with a band who went to sing at the jail. Sometimes you get pretty close to the prisoners. Of course, between you and the prisoners there are bars. What would you think if one of those prisoners would say, You can't come in here, can you? Just think of all you are missing. You have to stay out there.

If it was snowing, he would say, "You have to stay out in the cold. It is nice and warm in here. We don't have to worry about our food. It comes." But they won't let you in here, will they?

How long would you have to listen to that before you began to feel sorry for yourself? Has the Devil sold millions of people on the idea that the way to prove you can do anything you want is to slip inside those bars? Do you believe that lie? Well if you don't, be happy outside. Suppose after going to the jail to sing I would wander along looking wistfully through the bars. Oh, I wish I could get in there, at least part of the time. What would the prisoners think? They would think maybe it was not so bad in there after all.

I would not want to have to stay behind those bars even if they would show me a movie every night. Would you? Which side of the bars are you on? And are you happy whichever side of the bars you are on? Do you wish you could go in

there and spend awhile just to see what it is like? Let's not bear false witness against our heavenly Father. What do you say?

There is another way in which the Devil tempts people. It is not with the idea that they are restricted too much, but that they have made a great sacrifice. Have you ever heard people tell of the great sacrifices they have made?

The Devil has well-meaning people help him talk to people sometimes. They come around and say, Brother, you are making a great sacrifice. You are having a hard time, aren't you? You don't even have enough to eat sometimes. You don't get very much money. You have a hard time. Well, if you are faithful, by and by you will get a crown in heaven, but it is pretty hard down here in this world.

And if that is all there is to it, a lot of people are going to say, I won't wait until the pie in the sky. I will take my pie now. And when they interpret that, it means they are going to go on with their dances and skating rinks. They are going to go on with their movies and bowling alleys. They are going to go on with their liquor and tobacco. They are going to go on with all the rest while they can get it. And if there is some soul who wants to go along as a pilgrim and carry that heavy load on his back, they hope he gets to the celestial city. But in the meantime they have got some fun they are sure of.

Who is back of that idea? The Devil. Who is helping him? Christians who moan and groan. Christians who have their hand out and say, Can't you see I am poverty stricken in following the Lord? Will you help me out a little?

They bear false witness against our heavenly Father. God is not dependent upon the wicked world to make His children happy, or to make their life sufferable. Oh, no. Thank God there is joy and satisfaction in the service of God. The way of life God has committed to us in His program is not a sacrifice.

Is it a sacrifice to leave the cities and live where the air is pure? No. Is it a sacrifice to eat bread that has some life in it instead of you know what? No. Is it a sacrifice to drink pure water and the sweet juices of the fruit instead of liquor and all the artificially colored and flavored things that are going by the millions, yes billions of bottles? Tell me. Come down the line. Where is the sacrifice?

"We are never called upon to make a real sacrifice for God" *Ministry of Healing*, page 473.

Moses did not tell the children of Israel what a tremendous sacrifice he had made in order to be with them. It is not written that he ever said it once. Do you know who I feel sorry for? I feel sorry for the man who feels sorry for himself. He does not know what he is missing. He could be happy. But believe me, watch the man who enters into God's way of life and is forever feeling sorry for himself. He is not going to stay with it forever. No sir. He is going to be back there where the things he wishes he still had abound.

Oh, that God may help you and me to demonstrate that there is joy in the strict and sacrificial program He has given us. I wish everybody here could get the implications of that.

I fear sometimes there is a Babylonish garment pulled into the camp, or a golden wedge. I fear there is something tucked into the tent. I pray that the time may come quickly when the camp shall be clean from compromise from one end to the other. Instead of studying how to get some of the dainties of the world, we shall rejoice in getting manna from heaven.

I am not just talking about diet. I am talking about the whole program. If we know it, we have the privilege of living by the books. Everything we need to know about our lives God has put into the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. Hasn't He? And we can live by these books from the time the sun goes down Saturday night until it goes down again Saturday night. That is what this program is for. It is a humble, but I trust, earnest endeavor to live by these books. Let's do it. And remember that everything God has said is going to be demonstrated as surely as this tobacco report is demonstrated.

Some people will have to wait until the judgment day to see it up in the sky. Then they are going to rub their eyes and say they see it now. Everybody will see it. No question about it. They will see that the happy way, the healthy way, the holy way was God's way.

Let's demonstrate it right now. We can. This is our glorious opportunity. Oh, that God may put it into our hearts to go all the way and not wait for science to demonstrate everything. Just say that anything and everything God says on any subject we will do, and find our pleasure in it.

Suppose there is something God has told me to do and I do not find any pleasure in it. Is there anything I can do about it? Yes. I can pray about it. I am not to wait until I find pleasure in something.

When Sister White had the vision a hundred years ago, and the Lord showed what a wonderful thing whole wheat bread was, she said she could not stand a piece of whole wheat bread as big as a dollar. She was wise. Probably she got some wisdom from heaven. She didn't force the whole wheat bread on her stomach. She just let it wait. That's right. By and by it got to the place where it could take a little.

There is something that is keeping people from being happy, but I have a longing to get rid of everything that makes people unhappy. We are to make a demonstration. If I am unhappy somebody is going to think it is because I am on too strict a program. I may not think so. God may know that isn't it at all. But if I am unhappy somebody is going to say that poor Brother Frazee has made such a sacrifice it is getting him down. Or else they are going to say, Brother Frazee is just denying himself of too many things, and it is too hard on him.

There is something that is more of a thing to burden hearts than all the strictness and sacrifice. Do you know what it is? I will tell you, and I know what I am talking about. It is uncertainty.

I want to share with you something I would not take a million dollars for. When I read this to you and the comment on it, you are going to say, "This is wonderful."

"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths" Proverbs 3:6.

"Has not God said He would give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him? And is not this Spirit a real, true, actual guide? Some men seem afraid to take God at His word, as though it would be presumption in them. They pray for the Lord to teach us, and yet are afraid to credit the pledged word of God and believe we have been taught of Him. So long as we come to our heavenly Father humbly and with a spirit to be taught, willing and anxious to learn, why should we doubt God's fulfillment of His own promise? You must not for a moment doubt Him and dishonor Him thereby. When you have sought His will, your part in the operation is to believe that you will be led and guided and blessed in the doing of His will. We may mistrust ourselves lest we misinterpret His teachings, but make even this a subject of prayer, and still trust Him to the uttermost that His Holy Spirit may lead you to interpret aright His plans and the working of His providence" *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 3, page 1155.

When I read that it came to me just at a time when I needed it so much, and I said, Lord, that is just what I need, and I am going to believe it. I thank God He keeps His word. That doesn't mean that any of us are going to get infallible all of a sudden. But it does mean, praise His holy name, that morning by morning you and I can ask God to lead and guide us, and then we can do the thing we think will please Him moment by moment, and believe that it is pleasing Him.

What kind of an expression will that put on our face? A happy smile. That is our glorious privilege. Thank God for this glorious hour to live in, and the opportunity of being witnesses.

"Our confession of His faithfulness is heaven's chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world" *Ministry of Healing*, page 100.

We are to confess Him moment by moment. In this thing of uncertainty, many true honest Christians are worried because they do not know what to do about this or that. It isn't always the question whether this or that is bad. It is the question of where we ought to be.

There are so many good things to do, so many places to go, so much missionary work to do, so many books to read, so many people to see, so many letters to write. You know what I mean. Yes, it can get confusing and perplexing,

and if we are not careful it leads us to the place where there is a worried look on our faces because there is a worry down inside. Let's take God at His word in this promise: "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy path."

Suppose we were actually walking along a road with Jesus and come to a fork in the road. What would we do? We would turn to Jesus and ask, "Which way do we go, right or left?" Would He tell us? Yes, He would. You say, "That is the trouble. I don't know how." Well, if you and I will acknowledge Him at every turn in the road He will direct us at every turn of the road. And I say to you, when we come to the turn in the road, it is our privilege to acknowledge Him, and then do the thing we think He wants us to do. That's all.

But first we are to acknowledge Him. We are not to run like a dog up the trail. We are not to guess at what the answer is. Stop and acknowledge Him. Do the thing we believe will please Him and not worry at all. He has reasons for sending us to the place to which our feet have been directed. Do you believe that? God has a reason for your being here. I am so glad I am sure.

Copyright 2019. All rights reserved.
W.D. Frazee Sermons
PO Box 102, Wildwood, GA 30757
1-800-WDF-1840 / 706-820-9755
www.WDFsermons.org
support@WDFsermons.org