

Form and Reform 3 of 4

From the Spirit of Prophecy

#0328

Study Given by W. D. Frazee

This evening we are continuing our study of the last two Friday nights: form and reform. Why do we need reform? Because we lost the original shape. And what was that original shape? The image of God. Man was made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26–27). Sin marred that image, and so God set in operation the plan of salvation to restore in man the image of his Maker, to reshape him, so that he will reflect again the image of the Creator. Isn't that a wonderful plan, friends?

How is that to be brought about? There're two parts to it: God's part and our part. God's part is immeasurably great. My part is immeasurably small. There's no question about God doing His part. The only question is whether I cooperate or not. So it all hangs on my decision, even though I can't do anything about it of myself. Nothing in this world can I do to save myself. And yet God, Himself, cannot save me in opposition to my will, my choice. For if He were going to do that, He could have done it in the first place and saved all the suffering of the cross.

God's part is to change me, transform me. My part is to behold His life, to listen to His Word, and choose to follow His way. As I behold and choose, He works the miracle and changes me. And He's promised that He'll finish what He has started.

Probably everybody here tonight has felt some of that transforming influence. Doubtless, each one longs for more of it. Am I correct? And friends, thank God, we're dealing with the Creator who gave us the Sabbath to show that He finishes what He starts. The Sabbath is the memorial of a finished creation. And so the work of redemption will be finished through the operation of the Spirit of God.

Two weeks ago tonight, we studied this matter of reform as presented in the Old Testament. Last Friday night, we studied it as presented in the New Testament. This evening, I want to study it with you as presented in the testimony of Jesus, which is the Spirit of Prophecy, as revealed to the remnant church.

Most of you are acquainted with the fact that this great Advent Movement, since its rise in 1844, has been led by revelation from the skies. We are a privileged people to have the gift of prophecy in our midst. This is in harmony with the promises of the Bible itself, both in the Old and New Testament. Joel 2 and Acts 2 clearly predict that in the last days, God will pour out His Spirit, and the gift of prophecy will be manifested. So it has been in this movement.

In Revelation 12:17, John saw the remnant of the seed of the woman, the last church, keeping the commandments of God—all 10 of them, thank the Lord, including

the Sabbath—and having the testimony of Jesus, which the same book explains in Revelation 19:10 is the spirit of prophecy. So, beginning in 1844, the year when the 2300 day period came to its end and Jesus entered His closing work of judgment in the Most Holy Place, God poured out the gift of prophecy in this movement. And today as the result, we have these thousands of precious pages filled with divine instruction—not to take the place of the Bible, but to magnify the Word of God that we may understand it better and follow it more carefully.

And so this subject of reform; I thought we might study tonight—since we studied it first from the Old and then New Testament—we might study it tonight as presented in these latter-day revelations that have come to us through the gift of prophecy, the testimony of Jesus.

You remember that as Christ met with His disciples in the upper room and washed the feet of His disciples and gave them the emblems of His sacrifice, He talked to them about the work He wished them to do and the promise of the Spirit, that He intended to send to them from the sanctuary above. He told them that the evidence that would convince the world that they were His representatives was this: that they would have love one to the other (John 13:35).

Again, a few hours later, as He knelt on the borders of Gethsemane and poured out His heart to His Father in that intercessory prayer, He interceded that His church might be one as He and the Father are one, that the world might know, He said, that God had sent Him. In other words, the evidence, friends, of God's work in human hearts is the evidence of love and unity.

Well, you know sometimes when we use this word “reform,” people think of health reform, that is reform, isn't it? Or they think of dress reform, and that is reform, isn't it? Or Sabbath reform and that's reform or educational reform. All of these are reforms. But tonight as I study with you further in this matter of reform, reshape, remold, I want to come to the basic reform presented in these texts that I have just alluded to from John 13 and 17—the reshaping of the human character in the image of God. And God is love (1 John 4:8).

In Volume 9 of the *Testimonies to the Church*, I read this striking statement:

“The world needs to see worked out before it the miracle that binds the hearts of God's people together in Christian love”
Testimonies for the Church, Volume 9, page 188.

Now, this is just saying, in other words, what Christ said in that prayer of John 17:

“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.

“The world needs to see worked out before it the miracle that binds the hearts of God's people together in Christian love”

Testimonies for the Church, Volume 9, page 188.

As the early church went forth spreading the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire, even the heathen were constrained to acknowledge the power of a new influence. And one of them exclaimed, "Behold how these Christians love one another!" And they did, and that was the power of the church in the first century. This is the glory of the Loud Cry which closes the work of the third angel's message. And oh, I'm so glad friends for every token that we're even now entering into that time. Aren't you glad!

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us..." 1 John 3:1.

And how great is our privilege to reflect that love to others!

Just across the page:

"If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 9, page 189.*

Quite a statement, isn't it? The presence of love in our hearts, the manifestation of love in our lives, makes the difference, friends, between success or relative failure in our evangelistic endeavors. And why shouldn't it be that way? People need the warmth of love, and God has plenty of it. All He desires, all He needs is channels through which that love can be poured out.

I came across this interesting statement in *Volume 4*:

"The most eloquent sermon that can be preached upon the law of Ten Commandments is to do them" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 4, page 58.*

What's the best sermon we can preach on the Ten Commandments? Just do them. And love, as Paul says in Romans 13:10, is the fulfilling of the law. Strange that anybody ever got the idea that if you have enough love you don't need to keep the law. Isn't that strange? Love is the fulfilling of the law. Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments (John 14:15).

But remember, the Ten Commandments are not just some legal precepts, some statutes. Jesus said that the first great commandment is to love God with all the heart, and the second is what? Love your neighbor as yourself. And on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. And so Paul rightly states that all the law is fulfilled in this one word, namely thou shall love.

The person who does not love is not keeping the law; however punctilious he may be about certain outward ceremonies or forms. It is only the one who knows love who can fulfill the law, for the whole purpose of the law is love: love to God, love to our

fellow men. And these are simply ten ways to show that love, ten methods to use in revealing that love. But without love, it can never be done.

Ministry of Healing: You know, I just love this book, *Ministry of Healing*. I've been studying it for over half a century. I have worn out two or three books and several bindings of each book. But you know folks it gets sweeter and better to me all the time. I was looking just this week at some of these paragraphs that I've read again and again, and I thought, "Isn't this wonderful?" I just had to share some of it with you tonight.

Look at this on page 159 before I read you what I was going to:

"Constantly reveal the sweetness of His character" *Ministry of Healing*, pages 159.

Isn't that sweet?

"Constantly reveal the sweetness of His character" *Ibid.*

That isn't hard to take, is it?

Someone says, "It is hard to do."

Do you think it is easier to be sour? It's certainly not sweeter, is it? No, no.

"Constantly reveal the sweetness of His character" *Ministry of Healing*, pages 159.

You know all God's biddings are enablings. I studied with you a few weeks ago about this matter of reflecting the image of Jesus fully. The moon doesn't have to be as big as the sun to reflect the sun, does it? Oh, no. And these stars, these planets like Jupiter and Venus and Mercury, they do not have to be as big as the sun to reflect the sun. To reflect fully is to reflect fully as far as our capacity is concerned.

So you and I can never be as big as God or as great as God, or as wonderful as God. And we can never have that infinite, and love everybody in the universe in the way God does. But you know, friends you and I can have our whole hearts filled with love. If your heart capacity is only a teacup, if it is full of love, then it will overflow, won't it? That's right. And if your heart gets bigger, your spiritual heart—this is an experience where it is all right to have enlargement of the heart—and as it does friends, we can have more and more, and we can be full all the time and overflowing. I am thankful for this. Aren't you?

Now, on this matter of reform:

"Of all people in the world, reformers should be the most unselfish, the most kind, the most courteous" *Ibid.*, page 157.

Who should be the kindest people in the world? Reformers. Is that your image of a reformer? It will be if you reflect the image of Jesus. This is what God is looking for. The Devil's game is to separate what God has joined together. But as the scripture says, what God has joined together, let not man put asunder (Matthew 19:6). The Devil tries to get the law and love separated. He tries to get those who break the law to give the impression that, that's the kind way, the easy way, the nice way to do: It's just to let people do as they please, and to do as they please themselves. And too often, Christian reformers help out the Devil by being stern and unkind and hard to live with. And the Devil says to the world, "Look, that's what religion does."

I remember hearing Dr. Mervin Hardinge of the School of Health at Loma Linda in one of his excellent health lectures, which is truly a sermon. In this health lecture sermon, he was telling about the advantages of different health habits. And then he pointed out that the real purpose of it all was to get people ready for Heaven and to be like Jesus.

Then he asked this, "Did you used to use the white flour products, and now you have learned the advantages of whole grains and the benefits of wholewheat bread? If so, I want to ask you a question. Are you easier to live with since you've started eating wholewheat bread?"

And then he smiled and said, "If you aren't, maybe you'd better go back to eating white bread."

Do you see? The purpose of reform, my dear friends, is not to carry out some legalistic details. The whole purpose of reform, health reform, dress reform, educational reform, Sabbath reform, amusement reform, and every other reform, is that you and I shall be more like Jesus. But what *is* Jesus? He's love, isn't He? He's kind. He's courteous. And if our observance of forms makes us unkind or uncaring or pharisaical, then we are not reformed, friends. We still need a lot of changing, reshaping if that's our direction. Am I right? Oh, that Jesus may help us to meet this standard:

"Of all people in the world, reformers should be the most unselfish, the most kind, the most courteous" *Ibid.*

I like that. What do you say?

Now the next paragraph:

"As the dew and the still showers fall upon the withering plants, so let words fall gently when seeking to win men from error. God's plan is first to reach the heart" *Ibid.*

I want to read that sentence again, and then I want you to repeat it with me:

"God's plan is first to reach the heart" *Ibid.*

Together:

“God’s plan is first to reach the heart” *Ibid.*

Again:

“God’s plan is first to reach the heart” *Ibid.*

Unless we do it that way, friends, it’ll be like scattering seed on hard ground, very little of it sprouts. The birds get most of them. And the Devil always has his birds around to pick up the seed that we try to scatter on hard hearts.

“God’s plan is first to reach the heart” *Ibid.*

With the water, the rain, the dew of His love manifested through His people, His messengers, His servants:

“God’s plan is first to reach the heart. We are to speak the truth in love...” *Ibid.*

You know, this is one of the great reasons God gave this people the medical missionary work. When a man is in pain or distress of any kind, relieving him is a good way to reach the heart, right? That’s one of the reasons. It isn’t the only reason. That’s one of the great reasons God gave us the medical missionary work. But if I’m a nurse and the very act of giving a treatment to relieve pain, my manner is such that there’s a barrier made between the person I’m trying to help and me, then I’m defeating my purpose, right? Yes. Oh, how precious is our privilege, men and women, yes, boys and girls, too, to be the channels for the revelation of Jesus’ love.

In *Volume 4* of the *Testimonies*, beginning on page 55, there is a message to dear Brother and Sister F. Now, that happens to be the initial of my name, you know. And I’ve been reading it. And I’ve been trying to get something out of it for myself. Is that the way to read the *Testimonies*? Why, sure. And there may be some other Brother or Sister F here, tonight. At any rate, if you’d like something that gets right down to business in helping folks to be kind and loving in the home and in the church and in the community, and pointing out how they may miss that, you’ll find it in this chapter. Let me just pick up a few sentences here and there from this wonderful letter:

“Both of you love the truth and want to obey it” *Testimonies to the Church, Volume 4, page 55.*

That sounds good, doesn’t it? The next word is “but.” That’s right. Then the Lord’s messenger points out that in God’s providence:

“We are placed in different positions to call into exercise qualities of mind calculated to develop character under a variety of circumstances” *Ibid.*

She points out that these people had been brought into circumstances in which

certain traits of character were revealed that they weren't so much aware of, and they needed some pruning.

"You will be in danger of regarding your prosperity and your convenience irrespective of the prosperity of others"
Ibid., page 56.

The world has a proverb: Look out for number one. And number one, who is that? Now, that's me. And I'm to look out for number one. Is that in the Bible? No, it's not in the *Testimonies*, either. No, no.

"When human sympathy is blended with love and benevolence, and sanctified by the Spirit of Jesus, it is an element which can be productive of great good" *Ibid.*

Now comes a sentence which is wonderful on what revealing this love will do for the person who reveals it:

"The pleasure of doing good to others imparts a glow to the feelings which flashes through the nerves, quickens the circulation of the blood, and induces mental and physical health" *Ibid.*

This is an electrical shock treatment that leaves no bad results, folks. What is it? The pleasure of doing good to others.

You remember in the Bible, the 58th chapter of Isaiah is God's prescription for people who are feeling down, depressed, sick in body or mind. And the key in that chapter is take hold and do something for somebody that's worse off than you are. Find some hungry person and feed him, find somebody that needs clothes and minister. Find somebody that is depressed and down worse than you are and help them—minister to them. And it says if you and I will do that, our health will spring forth speedily.

Well, the prophet of God here quotes much of that 58th chapter of Isaiah on page 60, and says this in comment on it:

"If the mind is free and happy, under a consciousness of right doing and a sense of satisfaction in causing happiness to others, it will create a cheerfulness that will react upon the whole system, causing a freer circulation of the blood and a toning up of the entire body" *Ibid.*, page 60.

How about that? Think of it. Do you need better circulation? Well, the more you work for others and help others and make others happy, the more your blood will circulate freely and tone up the entire system.

So it isn't just the brain that is affected by love and kind service. The whole

system is affected by it. My, you'd think even a selfish person would do it just to get the benefits, wouldn't you? But it's oh, so hard, for a selfish person to be loving. It's impossible, isn't it? That's right. It takes love to be loving, and where do we get love? From Jesus. Thank God. As we behold Him and yield our lives to Him, we become like Him.

Notice some other things written to Brother and Sister F. This is on page 61:

"You hold yourselves too rigid and un-sympathizing. You have become stern, exacting, and overbearing. You are in danger of making yourselves conscience for others. You have your own ideas of Christian duties and propriety, and you would gauge others by those ideas; this is overreaching the bounds of right.

"Other people have opinions and marked traits of character which cannot be assimilated to your peculiar views"
Ibid., page 61.

Do you know what the Lord might do with these people if they were alive today? He might send them to this campus. Do you know what for? To learn how to be reformers without being exacting, overbearing, and trying to be conscience for others. It just could be somebody here tonight was sent for that purpose. Oh, if you are, my dear friend, I pray that God will give you His melting Spirit.

"Ah, but," somebody says, "Brother Frazee, it says so on a certain page of a certain volume. It says this."

Yes. It does. And so I'm reading you some other things it says tonight. Because, He that said, said also:

"God's plan is first to reach the heart" *Ministry of Healing*, page 157.

Next page:

"God does not wish you to make your conscience a criterion for others" *Testimonies to the Church, Volume 4*, page 62.

What is a "criterion"? That's how you measure. You have a conscience and you ought to have one, but don't make that the measuring line for somebody else.

"You have imagined that cheerfulness was not in accordance with the religion of Christ. This is a mistake"
Ibid.

And then this; I thought this was quite interesting:

“Forbear reprimanding and censuring. You are not adapted to reprove” *Ibid.*

And I don't know, when they got this, maybe they said, "Well, somebody's got to do it."

Yes. There aren't very many of you I'd trust to operate on me, folks. Now, Dr. Hansen and Dr. Gilkes, I'd let them work on me. I'm satisfied with their surgery. But most of you, I'd say, "Hands off."

And when it comes to spiritual surgery, and it has to be done sometimes, be sure of two things. Be sure that under God, you know how and be sure the patient is willing. Don't run after him and catch him and strap him down while you operate.

On page 63 is one of the most precious things in the whole testimony. It tells how to get this experience of love and kindness and courtesy:

“Reach up and [take the hand of the dear Saviour], that the touch may electrify you and charge you with the sweet properties of His own matchless character” *Ibid.*, page 63.

Is that possible? Can God change a wolf into a lamb? Well, if He can't friends, I have no hope of Heaven. My natural disposition is to be snarly, selfish, like an old bear, you understand. But I have the hope of standing on Mount Zion with the Lamb, being one of the 144,000 lambs that stand with Him. I think it's a marvel that God ever picked me out to be a lamb.

And how He's going to do it? That is His secret, folks. But I'm confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in me will finish it until the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6).

Has He started anything in you? Tell, me, has He? Will He finish it? Praise His name.

Well, that's all I'm going to give you tonight. Two weeks from tonight, the Lord willing, we'll look at this some more. But now, just now, I'd like to ask you, who of you would like to witness for Jesus tonight? Somebody who would, come right up, and we'll spend a few moments thanking our Lord for His love and responding as His Spirit moves upon our hearts.

[Testimony service follows]

All to Jesus I surrender,
All to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live;

I surrender all,

I surrender all;
All to Thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.

Our precious Lord, we're so glad that we know Thee as a loving God, not some stern judge who is waiting to cast us into hell, watching for our failures, but a loving Father, always with outstretched arms, waiting to welcome us home. Tonight, we're putting our little hands in Thy great hand. Take us and lead us all the way. Tonight we're looking into Thy dear face and catching those beams of love and mercy. May we reflect them to those about us; for Christ's sake, amen.

Good night and happy Sabbath.

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