

Study Questions

1. What is the source of spiritual life in the hearts of people? (Paragraph 2).
2. What must happen in order for you to partake of this spiritual life? (2).
3. What are we not able to secure by anxiety or effort of ourselves? (3).
4. What wrong idea do some people have, and what do they do regarding it? (7).
5. How are we to grow in grace? (7).
6. How are we to abide in Christ? (8).
7. What are we to give and take in order to abide in Him? (8).
8. What should we do on a daily basis to abide in Him? (9).
9. What should our mind dwell upon? (10).
10. How are we to be transformed into His likeness? (10).
11. What happens when the mind dwells upon self? (12).

12. What is Satan's constant effort? (12).
13. To what does Satan seek to divert the mind? (12).
14. What often happens to the conscientious? (12).
15. Why does Satan constantly present us with allurements? (13).
16. What things did John see that filled his soul with admiration and love for Christ? (15).
17. What did John lose in love for Christ? (15).
18. What power transforms our character? (15).
19. What happens when Christ abides in the heart? (15).
20. How does Christ abide continually in the hearts of His children, and what are the results? (17, 19).

Thought Questions

1. How can I keep my eyes on Jesus, and yet examine my life and recognize my sins?
2. Every day I am confronted with sin—News, TV, internet. It's everywhere. How can I get away from the temptations?
3. How long does it take to learn to abide in Christ?
4. How can I handle the uncomfortable feelings that Christ's presence seems to bring?
5. Why is it the harder I try, the worse it gets?
6. Why is it that some people are so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good?
7. Does this mean that I can't make any plans by myself?
8. Will the new me be able to handle all the new things that result from the changes?
9. What if people don't like the new person I'm becoming?"
10. How can I know if my change is really correct, not too little or much? I don't want to become a fanatic.
11. How do I find out what the real problem is, and not just try to change the symptoms?
12. What does it mean when I see the same patterns in my life over and over?
13. Why does change always take so long?
14. Why is change always so difficult?
15. Someone said, "just do it." But I can't. Am I lost?
16. Are 30-day plans what I need?
17. [Add your questions].

Problem Solving

The following person has a high degree of physical activity, and loves to take the roll of leader. She has been very successful at most everything, because of her drive and persistence. She usually accomplishes her goals, by having everyone else conform to her plans. She is struggling unsuccessfully with a particular sin, and has a tendency to get angry and take it out on others. If others try to help, their help is quickly rejected. She has a hard time admitting that she needs outside help. She feels that if circumstances would only change, she could accomplish the task, and this causes her to be critical and fault-finding. Her approach to character growth has been "just do it." How would you help this self-achiever find the proper way to have victory?

Notes: You might work with the following information: causes, options, solutions, decisions, scriptures that apply.

Ellen G. White Quotations

"It is a law both of the intellectual and the spiritual nature that by beholding we become changed. The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is allowed to dwell. It becomes assimilated to that which it is accustomed to love and reverence. Man will never rise higher than his standard of purity or goodness or truth. If self is his loftiest ideal, he will never attain to anything more exalted. Rather, he will constantly sink lower and lower. The grace of God alone has power to exalt man. Left to himself, his course must inevitably be downward." (*The Great Controversy*, p. 555).

"The tempter can never compel us to do evil. He cannot control minds unless they are yielded to his control. The will must consent, faith must let go its hold upon Christ, before Satan can exercise his power upon us. But every sinful desire we cherish affords him a foothold. Every point in which we fail of meeting the divine standard is an open door by which he can enter to tempt and destroy us." (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 125).

"A long preparatory process, unknown to the world, goes on in the heart before the Christian commits open sin. The mind does not come down at once from purity and holiness to depravity, corruption, and crime. It takes time to degrade those formed in the image of God to the brutal or the satanic. By beholding we become changed. By the indulgence of impure thoughts man can so educate his mind that sin which he once loathed will become pleasant to him." (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 459).

"Man must work with his human power, aided by the divine power of Christ, to resist and to conquer at any cost to himself. In short, man must overcome as Christ overcame. And then, through the victory that it is his privilege to gain by the all-powerful name of Jesus, he may become an heir of God and joint heir with Jesus Christ. This could not be the case if Christ alone did all the overcoming. Man must do his part; he must be victor on his own account, through the strength and grace that Christ gives him. Man must be a co-worker with Christ in the labor of overcoming, and then he will be partaker with Christ in His glory." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 32, 33).

"There are conscientious souls that trust partly to God, and partly to themselves. They do not look to God, to be kept by His power, but depend upon watchfulness against temptation, and the performance of certain duties for acceptance with Him. There are no victories in this kind of faith. Such persons toil to no purpose; their souls are in continual bondage, and they find no rest until their burdens are laid at the feet of Jesus. There is need of constant watchfulness, and of earnest, loving devotion; but these will come naturally when the soul is kept by the power of God through faith." (*Selected Messages*, book. 1, p. 353).

"As a shield from temptation and an inspiration to purity and truth, no other influence can equal the sense of God's presence." (*Education*, p. 255).

"Doing, not saying merely, is expected of the followers of Christ. It is through action that the character is built." (*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 149).

"It is difficult for us to understand ourselves, to have a correct knowledge of our own characters. The Word of God is plain, but often there is an error in applying it to one's self. There is liability to self-deception and to think its warnings and reproofs do not mean me. 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?' Self-flattery maybe construed into Christian emotion and zeal. Self-love and confidence may give us assurance that we are right when we are far from meeting the requirements of God's Word." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 332).

"The only safeguard against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness. It is because selfishness exists in our hearts that temptation has power over us. But when we behold the great love of God, selfishness appears to us in its hideous and repulsive character, and we desire to have it expelled from the soul." (*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 118).

"The effort to earn salvation by one's own works inevitably leads men to pile up human exactions as a barrier against sin. For, seeing that they fail to keep the law, they will devise rules and regulations of their own to force themselves to obey. All this turns the mind away from God to self. His love dies out of the heart, and with it perishes love for his fellow men." (*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 122, 123).

"Circumstances cannot work reforms. Christianity proposes a reformation in the heart. What Christ works within, will be worked out under the dictation of a converted intellect. The plan of beginning outside and trying to work inward has always failed, and always will fail. God's plan with you is to begin at the very seat of all difficulties, the heart, and then from out of the heart will issue the principles of righteousness; the reformation will be outward as well as inward." (*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 35).

"The highest evidence of nobility in a Christian is self-control." (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 301).

"Put your will on the side of Christ. Will to serve Him, and in acting upon His word you will receive strength. Whatever may be the evil practice, the master passion which through long indulgence binds both soul and body, Christ is able and longs to deliver." (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 85).

"The victory is not won without much earnest prayer, without the humbling of self at every step. Our will is not to be forced into cooperation with divine agencies, but it must be voluntarily submitted. Were it possible to force upon you with a hundredfold greater intensity the influence of the Spirit of God, it would not make you a Christian, a fit subject for heaven. The stronghold of Satan would not be broken." (*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 142).

QUIZ - 8

Circle T for True or F for False according to the reference:

1. T F We are transformed by the renewing of our minds. (Romans 12:2).
2. T F It is by loving Jesus, by copying Him, depending wholly upon Him that we are transformed into His likeness. (SC 8.10).
3. T F Abiding in Christ is a daily matter. (SC 8.9).
4. T F A person must be born again to partake of Christ's life. (SC 8.2).
5. T F We are changed into God's image by beholding. (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Use one or more words to answer the following:

6. List one thing Satan tries to divert our mind to. (SC 8.12).

7. What are you unable to secure by anxiety or effort of yourself? (SC 8.3).

8. List one thing that John saw in the life of Jesus that filled his soul with admiration and love. (SC 8.15).

9. What wrought a transformation of character in the Apostle John? (SC 8.15).

10. What does God promise to give to us when we are born again? (Ezekiel 36:26, 27).

Circle the letter of the best answer according to the reference:

11. When did the Apostle Paul feel he was the strongest? (2 Corinthians 12:9, 10).
 - A. When walking to Athens
 - B. After performing a miracle
 - C. After preaching a sermon on God's love
 - D. When he was weak
12. How are we to abide in Christ? (SC 8.8).
 - A. By staying away from temptation
 - B. By beholding the good example of others
 - C. By good works
 - D. By faith
13. What did the Apostle John lose sight of when his heart of was drawn out toward Christ? (SC 8.15).
 - A. Nature
 - B. Self
 - C. Others
 - D. Sin
14. By what means is Christ to abide continually in the hearts of His children? (SC 8.17).
 - A. Through knowledge from the Scriptures
 - B. By the Holy Spirit
 - C. Through the habit of prayer
 - D. By help from the angels
15. Complete the following quotation:
 "It is by _____ with Him, _____, _____, —
 by _____ in Him,—that we are to grow in grace."
 (SC 8.7).