

The Marriage at Cana

MEMORY VERSE: “Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it” (John 2:5).

Suggested Readings: *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 144–153; *Messages to Young People*, pp. 403–418.

“Jesus began the work of reformation by coming into close sympathy with humanity.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 150.

1. THE BEGINNING OF CHRIST'S MINISTRY

Sunday, Jan 12

a. Where did Jesus begin His ministry on earth? John 2:1, 2.

John 2:1, 2

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: **2** And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

“Jesus did not begin His ministry by some great work before the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem. At a household gathering in a little Galilean village His power was put forth to add to the joy of a wedding feast. Thus He showed His sympathy with men, and His desire to minister to their happiness. In the wilderness of temptation He Himself had drunk the cup of woe. He came forth to give to men the cup of blessing, by His benediction to hallow the relations of human life.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 144.

b. What happened long before the end of the wedding feast? John 2:3.

John 2:3

And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

“[Mary] longed to have [Jesus] prove to the company that He was really the Honored of God. She hoped there might be opportunity for Him to work a miracle before them.

“It was the custom of the times for marriage festivities to continue several days. On this occasion, before the feast ended it was found that the supply of wine had failed. This discovery caused much perplexity and regret. It was unusual to dispense with wine on festive occasions, and its absence would seem to indicate a want of hospitality.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 145, 146.

2. CHRIST AND HIS MOTHER

Monday, Jan 13

a. What did Christ's mother say, and what was His answer? John 2:3, 4.

John 2:3, 4

And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. **4** Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

“[John 2:4 quoted.] This answer, abrupt as it seems to us, expressed no coldness or discourtesy. The Saviour’s form of address to His mother was in accordance with Oriental custom. It was used toward persons to whom it was desired to show respect. Every act of Christ’s earthly life was in harmony with the precept He Himself had given, ‘Honor thy father and thy mother.’ Exodus 20:12. On the cross, in His last act of tenderness toward His mother, Jesus again addressed her in the same way, as He committed her to the care of His best-loved disciple. Both at the marriage feast and upon the cross, the love expressed in tone and look and manner interpreted His words.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 146.

b. What did Christ’s mother say to the servants—and how do these words likewise apply to us today? John 2:5.

John 2:5

His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

“[Christ’s] followers are to become more and more a power in the proclamation of the truth as they draw nearer to the perfection of faith and of love for their brethren. God has provided divine assistance for all emergencies to which our human resources are unequal. He gives the Holy Spirit to help in every strait, to strengthen our hope and assurance, to illuminate our minds and purify our hearts. He means that sufficient facilities shall be provided for the working out of his plans. I bid you seek counsel from God. Seek Him with the whole heart, and ‘whatsoever He saith unto you, do.’ John 2:5.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 414, 415.

c. What did Jesus tell the servant at the wedding to do? John 2:6–8.

John 2:6–8

And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. **7** Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. **8** And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.

“Beside the doorway stood six large stone water jars, and Jesus bade the servants fill these with water. It was done. Then as the wine was wanted for immediate use, He said, ‘Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast.’ Instead of the water with which the vessels had been filled, there flowed forth wine.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 148.

3. THE WINE OF CHRIST

Tuesday, Jan 14

a. When the wine was served, how did the governor of the feast respond? John 2:9, 10.

John 2:9, 10

When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, **10** And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.

“Neither the ruler of the feast nor the guests generally were aware that the supply of wine had failed. Upon tasting that which the servants brought, the ruler found it

superior to any he had ever before drunk, and very different from that served at the beginning of the feast.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 148.

b. What type of wine did Christ provide? Isaiah 65:8.

Isaiah 65:8

Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all.

“The wine which Christ provided for the feast, and that which He gave to the disciples as a symbol of His own blood, was the pure juice of the grape. To this the prophet Isaiah refers when he speaks of the new wine ‘in the cluster,’ and says, ‘Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it.’ Isaiah 65:8. . . .

“The unfermented wine which He provided for the wedding guests was a wholesome and refreshing drink. Its effect was to bring the taste into harmony with a healthful appetite.”—*Ibid.*, p. 149.

c. What does Scripture say about fermented wine? Proverbs 20:1; 23:29–35.

Proverbs 20:1

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

Proverbs 23:29–35

Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? **30** They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. **31** Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. **32** At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. **33** Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. **34** Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. **35** They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

“It was Christ who in the Old Testament gave the warning to Israel, ‘Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.’ Proverbs 20:1. And He Himself provided no such beverage. Satan tempts men to indulgence that will becloud reason and benumb the spiritual perceptions, but Christ teaches us to bring the lower nature into subjection. His whole life was an example of self-denial. In order to break the power of appetite, He suffered in our behalf the severest test that humanity could endure. It was Christ who directed that John the Baptist should drink neither wine nor strong drink. It was He who enjoined similar abstinence upon the wife of Manoah. And He pronounced a curse upon the man who should put the bottle to his neighbor’s lips. Christ did not contradict His own teaching.”—*Ibid.*

4. CHRIST’S EXAMPLE AT SOCIAL GATHERINGS

Wednesday, Jan 15

a. What objectives were achieved both through Christ’s presence and His miracle at the wedding feast, even for us today? John 2:11.

John 2:11

This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

“Christ knew all things; He looked down the ages to our own time, and saw what would be the condition of society in the close of the world’s history. He saw thousands upon thousands perishing in the use of wine and strong drink. The world would gradually come into the same state as it was in the days before the flood. But heaven has lifted a danger signal, that men may take warning, and cooperate with God for their own self-preservation. He has given us examples of absolute abstinence, and provided instruction that, if followed, will result in the creation and preservation of the vigor, skill, and excellency of our children.”—*The Signs of the Times*, April 16, 1896.

b. Describe the refreshing type of attitude that Christ exemplified throughout His ministry. Matthew 11:29.

Matthew 11:29

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

“Jesus began the work of reformation by coming into close sympathy with humanity. While He showed the greatest reverence for the law of God, He rebuked the pretentious piety of the Pharisees, and tried to free the people from the senseless rules that bound them. He was seeking to break down the barriers which separated the different classes of society, that He might bring men together as children of one family. His attendance at the marriage feast was designed to be a step toward effecting this.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 150.

“Jesus reproved self-indulgence in all its forms, yet He was social in His nature. He accepted the hospitality of all classes, visiting the homes of the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, and seeking to elevate their thoughts from questions of commonplace life to those things that are spiritual and eternal. He gave no license to dissipation, and no shadow of worldly levity marred His conduct; yet He found pleasure in scenes of innocent happiness, and by His presence sanctioned the social gathering. A Jewish marriage was an impressive occasion, and its joy was not displeasing to the Son of man. By attending this feast, Jesus honored marriage as a divine institution.”— *Ibid.*, pp. 150, 151.

5. HEALTHY SOCIAL INTERACTION

Thursday, Jan 16

a. What should we learn from the example of Christ that distinguished Him in contrast to the religious rulers of His day? Proverbs 18:24.

Proverbs 18:24

A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

“The ministry of Christ was in marked contrast to that of the Jewish elders. Their regard for tradition and formalism had destroyed all real freedom of thought or action. They lived in continual dread of defilement. To avoid contact with the ‘unclean,’ they kept aloof, not only from the Gentiles, but from the majority of their own people, seeking neither to benefit them nor to win their friendship. By dwelling constantly on these matters, they had dwarfed their minds and narrowed the orbit of their lives. Their example encouraged egotism and intolerance among all classes of the people.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 150.

b. What should be our aim in all social interactions? Proverbs 11:30.

Proverbs 11:30

The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.

“We can manifest a thousand little attentions in friendly words and pleasant looks, which will be reflected upon us again. Thoughtless Christians manifest by their neglect of others that they are not in union with Christ. It is impossible to be in union with Christ and yet be unkind to others and forgetful of their rights.

“We should all become witnesses for Jesus. Social power, sanctified by the grace of Christ, must be improved in winning souls to the Saviour. Let the world see that we are not selfishly absorbed in our own interests, but that we desire others to share our blessings and privileges. Let them see that our religion does not make us unsympathetic or exacting. Let all who profess to have found Christ minister as He did for the benefit of men. We should never give to the world the false impression that Christians are a gloomy, unhappy people.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 428.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

Friday, Jan 17

1. Describe the spiritual fruits borne by the miracle of Christ in Cana.
2. Describe the relationship between Christ and His mother.
3. Why did the governor of the feast show surprise?
4. What kind of wine appropriately symbolizes the blood of Christ?
5. At social gatherings, what should we recall from the example of Jesus?

Suggested Readings: *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 144–153; *Messages to Young People*, pp. 403–418.

Jesus did not begin His ministry by some great work before the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem. At a household gathering in a little Galilean village His power was put forth to add to the joy of a wedding feast. Thus He showed His sympathy with men, and His desire to minister to their happiness. In the wilderness of temptation He Himself had drunk the cup of woe. He came forth to give to men the cup of blessing, by His benediction to hallow the relations of human life. (DA 144.1)

From the Jordan, Jesus had returned to Galilee. There was to be a marriage at Cana, a little town not far from Nazareth; the parties were relatives of Joseph and Mary; and Jesus, knowing of this family gathering, went to Cana, and with His disciples was invited to the feast. (DA 144.2)

Again He met His mother, from whom He had for some time been separated. Mary had heard of the manifestation at the Jordan, at His baptism. The tidings had been carried to Nazareth, and had brought to her mind afresh the scenes that for so many years had been hidden in her heart. In common with all Israel, Mary was deeply stirred by the mission of John the Baptist. Well she remembered the prophecy given at his birth. Now his connection with Jesus kindled her hopes anew. But tidings had reached her also of the mysterious departure of Jesus to the wilderness, and she was oppressed with troubled forebodings. (DA 144.3)

From the day when she heard the angel's announcement in the home at Nazareth Mary had treasured every evidence that Jesus was the Messiah. His sweet, unselfish life assured her that He could be no other than the Sent of God. Yet there came to her also doubts and

disappointments, and she had longed for the time when His glory should be revealed. Death had separated her from Joseph, who had shared her knowledge of the mystery of the birth of Jesus. Now there was no one to whom she could confide her hopes and fears. The past two months had been very sorrowful. She had been parted from Jesus, in whose sympathy she found comfort; she pondered upon the words of Simeon, “A sword shall pierce through thy own soul also” (Luke 2:35); she recalled the three days of agony when she thought Jesus lost to her forever; and with an anxious heart she awaited His return. **(DA 145.1)**

At the marriage feast she meets Him, the same tender, dutiful son. Yet He is not the same. His countenance is changed. It bears the traces of His conflict in the wilderness, and a new expression of dignity and power gives evidence of His heavenly mission. With Him is a group of young men, whose eyes follow Him with reverence, and who call Him Master. These companions recount to Mary what they have seen and heard at the baptism and elsewhere. They conclude by declaring, “We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write.” John 1:45. **(DA 145.2)**

As the guests assemble, many seem to be preoccupied with some topic of absorbing interest. A suppressed excitement pervades the company. Little groups converse together in eager but quiet tones, and wondering glances are turned upon the Son of Mary. As Mary had heard the disciples’ testimony in regard to Jesus, she had been gladdened with the assurance that her long-cherished hopes were not in vain. Yet she would have been more than human if there had not mingled with this holy joy a trace of the fond mother’s natural pride. As she saw the many glances bent upon Jesus, she longed to have Him prove to the company that He was really the Honored of God. She hoped there might be opportunity for Him to work a miracle before them. **(DA 145.3)**

It was the custom of the times for marriage festivities to continue several days. On this occasion, before the feast ended it was found that the supply of wine had failed. This discovery caused much perplexity and regret. It was unusual to dispense with wine on festive occasions, and its absence would seem to indicate a want of hospitality. As a relative of the parties, Mary had assisted in the arrangements for the feast, and she now spoke to Jesus, saying, “They have no wine” John 2:3. These words were a suggestion that He might supply their need. But Jesus answered, “Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come” John 2:3. **(DA 145.4)**

This answer, abrupt as it seems to us, expressed no coldness or discourtesy. The Saviour’s form of address to His mother was in accordance with Oriental custom. It was used toward persons to whom it was desired to show respect. Every act of Christ’s earthly life was in harmony with the precept He Himself had given, “Honor thy father and thy mother.” Exodus 20:12. On the cross, in His last act of tenderness toward His mother, Jesus again addressed her in the same way, as He committed her to the care of His best-loved disciple. Both at the marriage feast and upon the cross, the love expressed in tone and look and manner interpreted His words. **(DA 146.1)**

At His visit to the temple in His boyhood, as the mystery of His lifework opened before Him, Christ had said to Mary, “Wist ye not that I must be about My Father’s business?” Luke 2:49. These words struck the keynote of His whole life and ministry. Everything was held in abeyance to His work, the great work of redemption which He

had come into the world to accomplish. Now He repeated the lesson. There was danger that Mary would regard her relationship to Jesus as giving her a special claim upon Him, and the right, in some degree, to direct Him in His mission. For thirty years He had been to her a loving and obedient son, and His love was unchanged; but He must now go about His Father's work. As Son of the Most High, and Saviour of the world, no earthly ties must hold Him from His mission, or influence His conduct. He must stand free to do the will of God. This lesson is also for us. The claims of God are paramount even to the ties of human relationship. No earthly attraction should turn our feet from the path in which He bids us walk. **(DA 146.2) 2 I**

The only hope of redemption for our fallen race is in Christ; Mary could find salvation only through the Lamb of God. In herself she possessed no merit. Her connection with Jesus placed her in no different spiritual relation to Him from that of any other human soul. This is indicated in the Saviour's words. He makes clear the distinction between His relation to her as the Son of man and as the Son of God. The tie of kinship between them in no way placed her on an equality with Him. **(DA 147.1) 2 I**

The words, "Mine hour is not yet come," John 2:3. point to the fact that every act of Christ's life on earth was in fulfillment of the plan that had existed from the days of eternity. Before He came to earth, the plan lay out before Him, perfect in all its details. But as He walked among men, He was guided, step by step, by the Father's will. He did not hesitate to act at the appointed time. With the same submission He waited until the time had come. **(DA 147.2)**

In saying to Mary that His hour had not yet come, Jesus was replying to her unspoken thought,—to the expectation she cherished in common with her people. She hoped that He would reveal Himself as the Messiah, and take the throne of Israel. But the time had not come. Not as a King, but as "a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief," (Isaiah 53:3) had Jesus accepted the lot of humanity. **(DA 147.3)**

But though Mary had not a right conception of Christ's mission, she trusted Him implicitly. To this faith Jesus responded. It was to honor Mary's trust, and to strengthen the faith of His disciples, that the first miracle was performed. The disciples were to encounter many and great temptations to unbelief. To them the prophecies had made it clear beyond all controversy that Jesus was the Messiah. They looked for the religious leaders to receive Him with confidence even greater than their own. They declared among the people the wonderful works of Christ and their own confidence in His mission, but they were amazed and bitterly disappointed by the unbelief, the deep-seated prejudice, and the enmity to Jesus, displayed by the priests and rabbis. The Saviour's early miracles strengthened the disciples to stand against this opposition. **(DA 147.4)**

In nowise disconcerted by the words of Jesus, Mary said to those serving at table, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." John 2:5. Thus she did what she could to prepare the way for the work of Christ. **(DA 148.1)**

Beside the doorway stood six large stone water jars, and Jesus bade the servants fill these with water. It was done. Then as the wine was wanted for immediate use, He said, "Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast." John 2:8. Instead of the water with which the vessels had been filled, there flowed forth wine. Neither the ruler of the feast

nor the guests generally were aware that the supply of wine had failed. Upon tasting that which the servants brought, the ruler found it superior to any he had ever before drunk, and very different from that served at the beginning of the feast. Turning to the bridegroom, he said, "Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now." John 2:10. **(DA 148.2)**

As men set forth the best wine first, then afterward that which is worse, so does the world with its gifts. That which it offers may please the eye and fascinate the senses, but it proves to be unsatisfying. The wine turns to bitterness, the gaiety to gloom. That which was begun with songs and mirth ends in weariness and disgust. But the gifts of Jesus are ever fresh and new. The feast that He provides for the soul never fails to give satisfaction and joy. Each new gift increases the capacity of the receiver to appreciate and enjoy the blessings of the Lord. He gives grace for grace. There can be no failure of supply. If you abide in Him, the fact that you receive a rich gift today insures the reception of a richer gift tomorrow. The words of Jesus to Nathanael express the law of God's dealing with the children of faith. With every fresh revelation of His love, He declares to the receptive heart, "Believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these." John 1:50. **(DA 148.3)**

The gift of Christ to the marriage feast was a symbol. The water represented baptism into His death; the wine, the shedding of His blood for the sins of the world. The water to fill the jars was brought by human hands, but the word of Christ alone could impart to it life-giving virtue. So with the rites which point to the Saviour's death. It is only by the power of Christ, working through faith, that they have efficacy to nourish the soul. **(DA 148.4)**

The word of Christ supplied ample provision for the feast. So abundant is the provision of His grace to blot out the iniquities of men, and to renew and sustain the soul. **(DA 149.1)**

At the first feast He attended with His disciples, Jesus gave them the cup that symbolized His work for their salvation. At the last supper He gave it again, in the institution of that sacred rite by which His death was to be shown forth "till He come." 1 Corinthians 11:26. And the sorrow of the disciples at parting from their Lord was comforted with the promise of reunion, as He said, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." Matthew 26:29. **(DA 149.2)**

The wine which Christ provided for the feast, and that which He gave to the disciples as a symbol of His own blood, was the pure juice of the grape. To this the prophet Isaiah refers when he speaks of the new wine "in the cluster," and says, "Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it." Isaiah 65:8. **(DA 149.3)**

It was Christ who in the Old Testament gave the warning to Israel, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Proverbs 20:1. And He Himself provided no such beverage. Satan tempts men to indulgence that will becloud reason and benumb the spiritual perceptions, but Christ teaches us to bring the lower nature into subjection. His whole life was an example of self-denial. In order to break the power of appetite, He suffered in our behalf the severest test that humanity could endure. It was Christ who directed that John the Baptist should drink neither wine nor strong drink. It was He who enjoined similar abstinence upon the wife of Manoah.

And He pronounced a curse upon the man who should put the bottle to his neighbor's lips. Christ did not contradict His own teaching. The unfermented wine which He provided for the wedding guests was a wholesome and refreshing drink. Its effect was to bring the taste into harmony with a healthful appetite. **(DA 149.4)**

As the guests at the feast remarked upon the quality of the wine, inquiries were made that drew from the servants an account of the miracle. The company were for a time too much amazed to think of Him who had performed the wonderful work. When at length they looked for Him, it was found that He had withdrawn so quietly as to be unnoticed even by His disciples. **(DA 149.5)**

The attention of the company was now turned to the disciples. For the first time they had the opportunity of acknowledging their faith in Jesus. They told what they had seen and heard at the Jordan, and there was kindled in many hearts the hope that God had raised up a deliverer for His people. The news of the miracle spread through all that region, and was carried to Jerusalem. With new interest the priests and elders searched the prophecies pointing to Christ's coming. There was eager desire to learn the mission of this new teacher, who appeared among the people in so unassuming a manner. **(DA 150.1)**

The ministry of Christ was in marked contrast to that of the Jewish elders. Their regard for tradition and formalism had destroyed all real freedom of thought or action. They lived in continual dread of defilement. To avoid contact with the "unclean," they kept aloof, not only from the Gentiles, but from the majority of their own people, seeking neither to benefit them nor to win their friendship. By dwelling constantly on these matters, they had dwarfed their minds and narrowed the orbit of their lives. Their example encouraged egotism and intolerance among all classes of the people. **(DA 150.2)**

Jesus began the work of reformation by coming into close sympathy with humanity. While He showed the greatest reverence for the law of God, He rebuked the pretentious piety of the Pharisees, and tried to free the people from the senseless rules that bound them. He was seeking to break down the barriers which separated the different classes of society, that He might bring men together as children of one family. His attendance at the marriage feast was designed to be a step toward effecting this. **(DA 150.3)**

God had directed John the Baptist to dwell in the wilderness, that he might be shielded from the influence of the priests and rabbis, and be prepared for a special mission. But the austerity and isolation of his life were not an example for the people. John himself had not directed his hearers to forsake their former duties. He bade them give evidence of their repentance by faithfulness to God in the place where He had called them. **(DA 150.4)**

Jesus reproved self-indulgence in all its forms, yet He was social in His nature. He accepted the hospitality of all classes, visiting the homes of the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, and seeking to elevate their thoughts from questions of commonplace life to those things that are spiritual and eternal. He gave no license to dissipation, and no shadow of worldly levity marred His conduct; yet He found pleasure in scenes of innocent happiness, and by His presence sanctioned the social gathering. A Jewish marriage was an impressive occasion, and its joy was not displeasing to the Son of man. By attending this feast, Jesus honored marriage as a divine institution. **(DA 150.5)**

In both the Old and the New Testament, the marriage relation is employed to represent the tender and sacred union that exists between Christ and His people. To the mind of Jesus the gladness of the wedding festivities pointed forward to the rejoicing of that day when He shall bring home His bride to the Father's house, and the redeemed with the Redeemer shall sit down to the marriage supper of the Lamb. He says, "As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; ... but thou shalt be called My Delight; ... for the Lord delighteth in thee." "He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing." Isaiah 62:5, 4, margin; Zephaniah 3:17. When the vision of heavenly things was granted to John the apostle, he wrote: "I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready." "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." Revelation 19:6, 7, 9. **(DA 151.1)**

Jesus saw in every soul one to whom must be given the call to His kingdom. He reached the hearts of the people by going among them as one who desired their good. He sought them in the public streets, in private houses, on the boats, in the synagogue, by the shores of the lake, and at the marriage feast. He met them at their daily vocations, and manifested an interest in their secular affairs. He carried His instruction into the household, bringing families in their own homes under the influence of His divine presence. His strong personal sympathy helped to win hearts. He often repaired to the mountains for solitary prayer, but this was a preparation for His labor among men in active life. From these seasons He came forth to relieve the sick, to instruct the ignorant, and to break the chains from the captives of Satan. **(DA 151.2)**

It was by personal contact and association that Jesus trained His disciples. Sometimes He taught them, sitting among them on the mountainside; sometimes beside the sea, or walking with them by the way, He revealed the mysteries of the kingdom of God. He did not sermonize as men do today. Wherever hearts were open to receive the divine message, He unfolded the truths of the way of salvation. He did not command His disciples to do this or that, but said, "Follow Me." On His journeys through country and cities He took them with Him, that they might see how He taught the people. He linked their interest with His, and they united with Him in the work. **(DA 152.1)**

The example of Christ in linking Himself with the interests of humanity should be followed by all who preach His word, and by all who have received the gospel of His grace. We are not to renounce social communion. We should not seclude ourselves from others. In order to reach all classes, we must meet them where they are. They will seldom seek us of their own accord. Not alone from the pulpit are the hearts of men touched by divine truth. There is another field of labor, humbler, it may be, but fully as promising. It is found in the home of the lowly, and in the mansion of the great; at the hospitable board, and in gatherings for innocent social enjoyment. **(DA 152.2)**

As disciples of Christ we shall not mingle with the world from a mere love of pleasure, to unite with them in folly. Such associations can result only in harm. We should never give sanction to sin by our words or our deeds, our silence or our presence. Wherever we go,

we are to carry Jesus with us, and to reveal to others the preciousness of our Saviour. But those who try to preserve their religion by hiding it within stone walls lose precious opportunities of doing good. Through the social relations, Christianity comes in contact with the world. Everyone who has received the divine illumination is to brighten the pathway of those who know not the Light of life. **(DA 152.3)**

We should all become witnesses for Jesus. Social power, sanctified by the grace of Christ, must be improved in winning souls to the Saviour. Let the world see that we are not selfishly absorbed in our own interests, but that we desire others to share our blessings and privileges. Let them see that our religion does not make us unsympathetic or exacting. Let all who profess to have found Christ, minister as He did for the benefit of men. **(DA 152.4)**

We should never give to the world the false impression that Christians are a gloomy, unhappy people. If our eyes are fixed on Jesus, we shall see a compassionate Redeemer, and shall catch light from His countenance. Wherever His Spirit reigns, there peace abides. And there will be joy also, for there is a calm, holy trust in God. **(DA 152.5)**

Christ is pleased with His followers when they show that, though human, they are partakers of the divine nature. They are not statues, but living men and women. Their hearts, refreshed by the dews of divine grace, open and expand to the Sun of Righteousness. The light that shines upon them they reflect upon others in works that are luminous with the love of Christ. **(DA 153.1)**

Chapter 136—Social to Save

The example of Christ in linking Himself with the interests of humanity should be followed by all who preach His word, and by all who have received the gospel of His grace. We are not to renounce social communion. We should not seclude ourselves from others. In order to reach all classes, we must meet them where they are. They will seldom seek us of their own accord. Not alone from the pulpit are the hearts of men touched by divine truth. There is another field of labor, humbler, it may be, but fully as promising. It is found in the home of the lowly, and in the mansion of the great; at the hospitable board, and in gatherings for innocent social enjoyment. **(MYP 403.1)**

As disciples of Christ we shall not mingle with the world from a mere love of pleasure, to unite with them in folly. Such associations can result only in harm. We should never give sanction to sin by our words or our deeds, our silence or our presence. Wherever we go, we are to carry Jesus with us, and to reveal to others the preciousness of our Saviour. But those who try to preserve their religion by hiding it within stone walls lose precious opportunities of doing good. Through the social relations, Christianity comes in contact with the world. Every one who has received the divine illumination is to brighten the pathway of those who know not the Light of life. **(MYP 403.2)**

We should all become witnesses for Jesus. Social power, sanctified by the grace of Christ, must be improved in winning souls to the Saviour. Let the world see that we are not selfishly absorbed in our own interests, but that we desire others to share our blessings and privileges. Let them see that our religion does not make us unsympathetic or

exacting. Let all who profess to have found Christ minister as He did for the benefit of men. **(MYP 403.3)**

We should never give to the world the false impression that Christians are a gloomy, unhappy people. If our eyes are fixed on Jesus, we shall see a compassionate Redeemer, and shall catch light from His countenance. Wherever His spirit reigns, there peace abides. And there will be joy also, for there is a calm, holy trust in God. **(MYP 404.1)**

Christ is pleased with His followers when they show that, though human, they are partakers of the divine nature. They are not statues, but living men and women. Their hearts, refreshed by the dews of divine grace, open and expand to the Sun of Righteousness. The light that shines upon them they reflect upon others in works that are luminous with the love of Christ.—The Desire of Ages, 152, 153. **(MYP 404.2)**

Association Influences Destiny

God's word places great stress upon the influence of association, even on men and women. How much greater is its power on the developing mind and character of children and youth! The company they keep, the principles they adopt, the habits they form, will decide the question of their usefulness here, and of their future destiny.—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 220. **(MYP 404.3)**

Christian sociability is altogether too little cultivated by God's people. This branch of education should not be neglected or lost sight of in our schools. **(MYP 405.1)**

Students should be taught that they are not independent atoms, but that each one is a thread which is to unite with other threads in composing a fabric. In no department can this instruction be more effectually given than in the school home. Here students are daily surrounded by opportunities which, if improved, will greatly aid in developing the social traits of their characters. It lies in their own power so to improve their time and opportunities as to develop a character that will make them happy and useful. Those who shut themselves up within themselves, who are unwilling to be drawn upon to bless others by friendly associations, lose many blessings; for by mutual contact minds receive polish and refinement; by social intercourse acquaintances are formed and friendships contracted which result in a unity of heart and an atmosphere of love which is pleasing in the sight of heaven. **(MYP 405.2)**

Especially should those who have tasted the love of Christ develop their social powers, for in this way they may win souls to the Saviour. Christ should not be hid away in their hearts, shut in as a coveted treasure, sacred and sweet, to be enjoyed solely by themselves; nor should the love of Christ be manifested toward those only who please their fancy. Students are to be taught the Christlikeness of exhibiting a kindly interest, a social disposition, toward those who are in the greatest need, even though these may not be their own chosen companions. At all times and in all places Jesus manifested a loving interest in the human family, and shed about Him the light of a cheerful piety. Students should be taught to follow in His steps. They should be taught to manifest Christian interest, sympathy, and love for their youthful companions, and endeavor to draw them to Jesus; Christ should be in their hearts as a well of water springing up into everlasting life, refreshing all with whom they come in contact. **(MYP 405.3)**

It is this willing, loving ministry for others in times of necessity that is accounted precious with God. Thus even while attending school, students may, if true to their profession, be living missionaries for God. All this will take time; but the time thus employed is profitably spent, for in this way the student is learning how to present Christianity to the world. **(MYP 406.1)**

Christ did not refuse to mingle with others in friendly intercourse. When invited to a feast by Pharisee or publican, He accepted the invitation. On such occasions every word that He uttered was a savor of life unto life to His hearers; for He made the dinner hour an occasion of imparting many precious lessons adapted to their needs. Christ thus taught His disciples how to conduct themselves when in the company of those who were not religious as well as of those who were.—Testimonies for the Church 6:172, 173. **(MYP 406.2)**

Chapter 138—Guiding Principles

The heart belongs to Jesus. He has paid an infinite price for the soul; and He intercedes before the Father as our Mediator, pleading not as a petitioner, but as conqueror who would claim that which is His own. He is able to save to the uttermost, for He ever lives to make intercession for us. A young heart is a precious offering, the most valuable gift that can be presented to God. All that you are, all the ability you possess, comes from God a sacred trust, to be rendered back to Him again in a willing, holy offering. You cannot give to God anything that He has not first given you. Therefore when the heart is given to God, it is giving to Him a gift which he has purchased and is His own. **(MYP 407.1)**

There are many claimants to the time, the affections, and the strength of youth. Satan claims the youth as his property, and a vast number render to him all the ability, all the talent, they possess. The world claims the heart; but that heart belongs to the One who redeemed it. If given to the world, it will be filled with care, sorrow, and disappointed hopes; it will become impure and corrupted. It would be the worst kind of robbery to give to the world your heart's affections and service, for they belong to God. You cannot with profit give your heart to pleasure-seeking. **(MYP 407.2)**

The enemy of righteousness has every kind of pleasure prepared for youth in all conditions of life; and they are not presented alone in crowded cities, but in every spot inhabited by human beings. Satan loves to secure the youth in his ranks as soldiers. The arch fiend well knows with what material he has to deal; and he has displayed his infernal wisdom in devising customs and pleasures for the youth which will separate their affections from Jesus Christ.... **(MYP 407.3)**

The Prodigal

The lesson of the prodigal is given for the instruction of youth. In his life of pleasure and sinful indulgence, he expends his portion of the inheritance in riotous living. He is friendless, and in a strange country; clad in rags, hungry, longing even for the refuse fed to the swine. His last hope is to return, penitent and humbled, to his father's house, where he is welcomed, forgiven, and taken back to a father's heart. Many youth are doing as he

did, living a careless, pleasure-loving, spendthrift life, forsaking the fountain of living waters, the fountain of true pleasure, and hewing out to themselves broken cisterns, which can hold no water. **(MYP 408.1)**

God's Gracious Invitation

God's invitation comes to each youth, "My son, give Me thine heart; I will keep it pure; I will satisfy its longings with true happiness." Proverbs 23:26. God loves to make the youth happy, and that is why He would have them give their hearts into His keeping, that all the God-given faculties of the being may be kept in a vigorous, healthful condition. They are holding God's gift of life. He makes the heart beat; he gives strength to every faculty. Pure enjoyment will not debase one of God's gifts. We sin against our own bodies, and sin against God, when seeking pleasures which separate our affections from God. The youth are to consider that they are placed in the world on trial, to see whether they have characters that will fit them to live with angels. **(MYP 408.2)**

When your associates urge you into paths of vice and folly, and all around you are tempting you to forget God, to destroy the capabilities God has intrusted to you, and to debase all that is noble in your nature, *resist them*. Remember that you are the Lord's property, bought with a price, the suffering and agony of the Son of God.... **(MYP 409.1)**

The Lord Jesus claims your service. He loves you. If you doubt His love, look to Calvary. The light reflected from the cross shows you the magnitude of that love which no tongue can tell. "He that keepeth My commandments, he it is that loveth Me." John 14:21. We are to become acquainted by diligent study with the commandments of God; and then show that we are His obedient sons and daughters. **(MYP 409.2)**

Surrounded by God's Mercies

The mercies of God surround you every moment; and it would be profitable for you to consider how and whence your blessings come every day. Let the precious blessings of God awaken gratitude in you. You cannot number the blessings of God, the constant loving-kindness expressed to you, for they are as numerous as the refreshing drops of rain. Clouds of mercy are hanging over you, and ready to drop upon you. If you will appreciate the valuable gift of salvation, you will be sensible of daily refreshment, of the protection and love of Jesus; you will be guided in the way of peace. **(MYP 409.3)**

Look upon the glorious things of God in nature, and let your heart go out in gratitude to the Giver. There is in nature's book profitable study for the mind. Be not thankless and reckless. Open the eyes of your understanding; see the beautiful harmony in the laws of God in nature, and be awed, and reverence your Creator, the supreme Ruler of heaven and earth. See him, by the eye of faith, bending over you in love, saying with compassion, "My son, my daughter, give Me thy heart." Make the surrender to Jesus, and then with grateful hearts you can say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Job 19:25. Your faith in Jesus will give strength to every purpose, consistency to the character. **(MYP 410.1)**

All your happiness, peace, joy, and success in this life are dependent upon genuine, trusting faith in God. This faith will prompt true obedience to the commandments of God.

Your knowledge and faith in God is the strongest restraint from every evil practice, and the motive to all good. **(MYP 410.2)**

Believe in Jesus as one who pardons your sins, one who wants you to be happy in the mansions He has gone to prepare for you. He wants you to live in His presence; to have eternal life and a crown of glory.—The Youth's Instructor, January 5, 1887. **(MYP 410.3)**

It is inevitable that the youth will have associates, and they will necessarily feel their influence. There are mysterious links that bind souls together, so that the heart of one answers to the heart of another. One catches the ideas, the sentiments, the spirit, of another. This association may be a blessing or a curse. The youth may help and strengthen one another, improving in deportment, in disposition, in knowledge; or, by permitting themselves to become careless and unfaithful, they may exert an influence that is demoralizing. **(MYP 411.1)**

The matter of choosing associates is one which students should learn to consider seriously. Among the youth who attend our schools there will always be found two classes, those who seek to please God and to obey their teachers, and those who are filled with a spirit of lawlessness. If the youth go with the multitude to do evil, their influence will be cast on the side of the adversary of souls; they will mislead those who have not cherished principles of unswerving fidelity. **(MYP 411.2)**

It has been truly said, "Show me your company, and I will show you your character." The youth fail to realize how sensibly both their character and their reputation are affected by their choice of associates. One seeks the company of those whose tastes and habits and practices are congenial. He who prefers the society of the ignorant and vicious to that of the wise and good, shows that this own character is defective. His tastes and habits may at first be altogether dissimilar to the tastes and habits of those whose company he seeks; but as he mingles with this class, his thoughts and feelings change; he sacrifices right principles, and insensibly yet unavoidably sinks to the level of his companions. As a stream always partakes of the property of the soil through which it runs, so the principles and habits of youth invariably become tinged with the character of the company in which they mingle.... **(MYP 411.3)**

The Measure of Strength

Strength of character consists of two things,—power of will, and power of self-control. Many youth mistake strong, uncontrolled passion for strength of character; but the truth is that he who is mastered by his passions is a weak man. The real greatness and nobility of the man is measured by his power to subdue his feelings, not by the power of his feelings to subdue him. The strongest man is he, who, while sensitive to abuse, will yet restrain passion and forgive his enemies. **(MYP 412.1)**

God has given us intellectual and moral power; but to a great extent every one is the architect of his own character. Every day the structure more nearly approaches completion. The word of God warns us to take heed how we build, to see that our building is founded upon the eternal rock. The time is coming when our work will stand revealed just as it is. Now is the time for all to cultivate the powers that God has given

them, that they may form characters for usefulness here and for a higher life hereafter. **(MYP 412.2)**

Faith in Christ as a personal Saviour will give strength and solidity to the character. Those who have genuine faith in Christ will be sober-minded, remembering that God's eye is upon them, that the Judge of all men is weighing moral worth, that heavenly intelligences are watching to see what manner of character is being developed. **(MYP 413.1)**

The reason that so grave mistakes are made by the youth is that they do not learn from the experience of those who have lived longer than they have. Students cannot afford to pass off with jest or ridicule the cautions and instruction of parents and teachers. They should cherish every lesson, realizing at the same time their need of deeper teaching than any human being can give. When Christ abides in the heart by faith, His Spirit becomes a power to purify and vivify the soul. The truth in the heart cannot fail of having a correcting influence upon the life.... **(MYP 413.2)**

Let those students who are away from their homes, no longer under the direct influence of their parents, remember that the eye of their Heavenly Father is upon them. He loves the youth. He knows their necessities, He understands their temptations. He sees in them great possibilities, and is ready to help them to reach the highest standard, if they will realize their need and seek Him for help. **(MYP 413.3)**

Students, night and day the prayers of your parents are rising to God in your behalf; day by day their loving interest follows you. Listen to their entreaties and warnings, and determine that by every means in your power you will lift yourselves above the evil that surrounds you. You cannot discern how insidiously the enemy will work to corrupt your minds and habits, and develop in you unsound principles. **(MYP 413.4)**

You may see no real danger in taking the first step in frivolity and pleasure-seeking, and think that when you desire to change your course you will be able to do right as easily as before you yielded yourselves to do wrong. But this is a mistake. By the choice of evil companions many have been led step by step from the path of virtue into depths of disobedience and dissipation to which at one time they would have thought it impossible for them to sink. **(MYP 414.1)**

The student who yields to temptation weakens his influence for good, and he who by a wrong course of action becomes the agent of the adversary of souls, must render to God an account for the part he has acted in laying stumbling-blocks in the way of others. Why should students link themselves with the great apostate? Why should they become his agents to tempt others? Rather, why should they not study to help and encourage their fellow students and their teachers? It is their privilege to help their teachers bear the burdens and meet the perplexities that Satan would make discouragingly heavy and trying. They may create an atmosphere that will be helpful, exhilarating. Every student may enjoy the consciousness that he has stood on Christ's side, showing respect for order, diligence, and obedience, and refusing to lend one jot of his ability or influence to the great enemy of all that is good and uplifting. **(MYP 414.2)**

The student who has a conscientious regard for truth and a true conception of duty can do much to influence his fellow students for Christ. The youth who are yoked up with the Saviour will not be unruly; they will not study their own selfish pleasure and gratification. Because they are one with Christ in spirit, they will be one with Christ in action. The older students in our schools should remember that it is in their power to mold the habits and practices of the younger students; and they should seek to make the best of every opportunity. Let these students determine that they will not through their influence betray their companions into the hands of the enemy. **(MYP 415.1)**

Jesus will be the helper of all who put their trust in Him. Those who are connected with Christ have happiness at their command. They follow the path where their Saviour leads, for His sake crucifying the flesh, with its affections and lusts. They have built their hopes on Christ, and the storms of earth are powerless to sweep them from the sure foundation. **(MYP 415.2)**

Trustworthy and Faithful

It rests with you, young men and women, to decide whether you will become trustworthy and faithful, ready and resolute to take your stand for the right under all circumstances. Do you desire to form correct habits? Then seek the company of those who are sound in morals, and whose aim tends to that which is good. The precious hours of probation are granted that you may remove every defect from your character, and this you should seek to do, not only that you may obtain the future life, but that you may be useful in this life. A good character is a capital of more value than gold or silver. It is unaffected by panics or failures, and in that day when earthly possessions shall be swept away it will bring rich returns. Integrity, firmness, and perseverance are qualities that all should seek earnestly to cultivate; for they clothe the possessor with a power which is irresistible,—a power which makes him strong to do good, strong to resist evil, strong to bear adversity. **(MYP 415.3)**

The love of truth, and a sense of the responsibility to glorify God, are the most powerful of all incentives to the improvement of the intellect. With this impulse to action the student cannot be a trifler. He will be always in earnest. He will study as under the eye of God, knowing that all heaven is enlisted in the work of his education. He will become noble-minded, generous, kind, courteous, Christlike, efficient. Heart and mind will work in harmony with the will of God.—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 220-226. **(MYP 416.1)**

The life of Christ was an ever-widening, shoreless influence, an influence that bound Him to God and to whole human family. Through Christ, God has invested man with an influence that makes it impossible for him to live to himself. Individually we are connected with our fellow men, a part of God's great whole, and we stand under mutual obligations. No man can be independent of his fellow men; for the well-being of each affects others. It is God's purpose that each shall feel himself necessary to others' welfare, and seek to promote their happiness. **(MYP 417.1)**

Every soul is surrounded by an atmosphere of its own,—an atmosphere, it may be, charged with the lifegiving power of faith, courage, and hope, and sweet with the fragrance of love. Or it may be heavy and chill with the gloom of discontent and

selfishness, or poisonous with the deadly taint of cherished sin. By the atmosphere surrounding us, every person with whom we come in contact is consciously or unconsciously affected. **(MYP 417.2)**

Our Responsibility

This is a responsibility from which we cannot free ourselves. Our words, our acts, our dress, our deportment, even the expression of the countenance, has an influence. Upon the impression thus made there hang results for good or evil which no man can measure. Every impulse thus imparted is seed sown which will produce its harvest. It is a link in the long chain of human events, extending we know not whither. If by our example we aid others in the development of good principles, we give them power to do good. In their turn they exert the same influence upon others, and they upon still others. Thus by our unconscious influence thousands may be blessed. **(MYP 417.3)**

Throw a pebble into the lake, and a wave is formed; and another and another; and as they increase, the circle widens, until it reaches the very shore. So with our influence. Beyond our knowledge or control it tells upon others in blessing or in cursing. **(MYP 418.1)**

Character is power. The silent witness of a true, unselfish, godly life carries an almost irresistible influence. By revealing in our own life the character of Christ, we co-operate with Him in the work of saving souls. It is only by revealing in our life His character that we can co-operate with Him. **(MYP 418.2)**

And the wider the sphere of our influence, the more good we may do. When those who profess to serve God follow Christ's example, practicing the principles of the law in their daily life; when every act bears witness that they love God supremely and their neighbor as themselves, then will the church have power to move the world.—Christ's Object Lessons, 339, 340. **(MYP 418.3)**