

## Thoughts on Ministry of Healing

### (39) The Knowledge Received Through God's Word (pages 458-466)

#### Summary:

Received, believed and obeyed, the Bible is the great instrumentality in the transformation of character. Sin darkens our minds and dims our perceptions. But as sin is purged from our hearts through the Scriptures, God's presence in our lives opens up both the Bible and the book of nature.

#### Thoughts:

Youth are easily led into temptation and sin because they do not study the Bible and meditate upon it as they should. The truths of the Bible would produce inward rectitude and strength of principle that would enable them to resist temptation (458-459). The mind that is earthly finds no pleasure in God's Word, the mind renewed by the Holy Spirit finds beauty and light in every page. If youth will make the Bible the food of mind and soul they would be fortified against temptation (460).

Unless the above principles are in place, those studying the sciences will tend to put nature above God. A correct understanding of both the Bible and science will prove them to be in harmony. (461-462)

When we read a chapter like this we need to keep two contexts in mind. First, what did Ellen White actually mean when she wrote these statements back in her time and place? And second, what impact will her choice of words have in today's context? After a hundred years the same words can have very different meanings in another time and place.

This chapter states what is in some ways the key theme of *Ministry of Healing*, that the Bible and science illuminate each other. By this Ellen White does not mean that the Bible and science must line up in every detail, but that an understanding of the cross and of the character of God are essential to making sense of the results of science. But while stating this principle in general, Ellen White does not explain how (the "hermeneutics") we are to come to such a conclusion. She is casting a vision more than she is explaining how to get there or the exact details one will find when one gets there. In many ways this is the grounding philosophy behind Loma Linda University and its commitment to the integration of faith and science.

One might get the impression from this statement that the Bible not only comes from God in its spiritual message, but that it is an infallible guide to history, science and even geography. That impression should be balanced with her statements regarding the humanness of Scripture in places such as *1 Selected Messages*, 19-21 and the Introduction to *The Great Controversy*. History tells us that in trying to be true to the Bible, church people have often misread science (Galileo for example). But we must also be open to the possibility that at times we have misread the Bible as well. So an integration between the two requires rigorous attention to the evidence of both.

One other important insight in the chapter (and also the New Testament) is that the line between the present and eternity is not sharply drawn. Eternity in many ways begins now. The spiritual growth that we experience now and the talents that we train and exercise here will have implications for the kind of life we live in the beyond. The Second Coming of Jesus is more like a graduation than an awakening into a totally different kind of life.

### **Quotable Quotes:**

“The whole Bible is a revelation of the glory of God in Christ. Received, believed, obeyed, it is the great instrumentality in the transformation of character. It is the grand stimulus, the constraining force, that quickens the physical, mental, and spiritual powers, and directs the life into right channels.” (458)

“The reason why the youth, and even those of mature years, are so easily led into temptation and sin, is that they do not study the word of God and meditate upon it as they should. The lack of firm, decided will power, which is manifest in life and character, results from neglect of the sacred instruction of God's word. . . . Few treasure His words in the heart and practice them in the life.” (458)

“The mind that is earthly finds no pleasure in contemplating the word of God; but for the mind renewed by the Holy Spirit, divine beauty and celestial light shine from the sacred page.” (460)

“Let the youth make the word of God the food of mind and soul. Let the cross of Christ be made the science of all education, the center of all teaching and all study. Let it be brought into the daily experience in practical life. So will the Saviour become to the youth a daily companion and friend.” (460)

“Man cannot of himself read aright the teaching of nature. Unless guided by divine wisdom, he exalts nature and the laws of nature above nature's God. This is why mere human ideas in regard to science so often contradict the teaching of God's word. But for those who receive the light of the life of Christ, nature is again illuminated. In the light shining from the cross, we can rightly interpret nature's teaching.

“He who has a knowledge of God and His word through personal experience has a settled faith in the divinity of the Holy Scriptures. . . . To such a student, scientific research will open vast fields of thought and information. As he contemplates the things of nature, a new perception of truth comes to him. The book of nature and the written word shed light upon each other. Both make him better acquainted with God by teaching him of His character and of the laws through which He works.” (462)

“Let the student take the Bible as his guide and stand firm for principle, and he may aspire to any height of attainment. All the philosophies of human nature have led to confusion and shame when God has not been recognized as all in all. But the precious faith inspired of God imparts strength and nobility of character. As His goodness, His mercy, and His love are dwelt upon, clearer and still clearer will be the perception of truth; higher, holier, the desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought is transformed by intercourse with God through the study of His word. Truth is so large, so far-reaching, so deep, so broad, that self is lost sight of. The heart is softened and subdued into humility, kindness, and love.” (465-466)

“Our lifework here is a preparation for the life eternal. The education begun here will not be completed in this life; it will be going forward through all eternity--ever progressing, never completed. More and more fully will be revealed the wisdom and love of God in the plan of redemption. . . . In the light that shines from the throne, mysteries will disappear, and the soul will be filled with astonishment at the simplicity of the things that were never before comprehended.”

**Tweets of Healing:**

Received, believed and obeyed, the Bible is the great instrumentality in the transformation of character. (458)

Let the youth make the word of God the food of mind and soul. (460)

Let the cross of Christ be made the science of all education, the center of all teaching and all study. (460)

The one who has a personal experience with God and His word is prepared to engage in the study of natural science. (461)

Man cannot of himself read aright the teaching of nature. (462)

In the light shining from the cross, we can rightly interpret nature's teaching. (462)

He who has a knowledge of God and His word through personal experience has a settled faith in the divinity of the Holy Scriptures. (462)

It is sin that darkens our minds and dims our perceptions. (464)