

And while they remain together, the spirit of evil, through the fall, has great power with the body; and the body, through its intimate connection, has great power with the spirit; and for this reason both are prone to evil. Still it would be difficult to find a person upon the earth so vile—so wicked—so overcome by the grossness of earth, that the holy principles and acts in the lives of the righteous are not more beautiful to them than are the wickedness and corruption in the lives of the froward and disobedient. The human family naturally admire a life of virtue and truth, and abhor falsehood and every kind of wickedness. The spirits that the Almighty has put into their tabernacles will more or less admire goodness, inwardly if not outwardly, though they are often overcome by the evil propensities that pertain to the flesh.

Since we are permitted by our Father and our God to do good, let us never suffer ourselves to be tempted, to be drawn aside, to be overcome, or thwarted in the pure and holy purpose that the pure spirit of intelligence (the spirit that is in us) reveals to the understanding. Not but that it is necessary in the very nature of things, in the economy of heaven, that we should be tried and tempted in all things, in order to prove ourselves and prepare ourselves to enjoy that eternal life that is prepared for the just. The time will be when people will not be tempted as they now are—when there will be no Tempter upon the earth. The knowledge and intelligence that will be diffused among the people will enable them to live a time and a season without the Tempter. But we live in a day when the power and rule of that evil principle is more excessive upon the earth than it ever has been. As the Prophet said, “For every one, from the least even unto the greatest, is given to covetousness; from the prophet

even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.” Mankind, in the present day, are further from the intelligence, the light, the glory, and the power of the Invisible than ever they were before, from the days of Adam until now. There never was a day of such heathen darkness and unbelief as now prevails. We have had the privilege of receiving those holy principles calculated to give us power to secure to ourselves eternal life and happiness, if we follow out those principles. It is a constant warfare. As the apostle expresses it, “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” The spirit that is put into man is pure and holy; but through the power of evil with the flesh, it is more or less contaminated, influenced, seduced, and brought into bondage by the evil that exists upon the earth. Let the spirit overcome and come off conqueror.

While we have the privilege of speaking to each other, let us speak words of comfort and consolation. When you are influenced by the Spirit of holiness and purity, let your light shine; but if you are tried and tempted and buffeted by Satan, keep your thoughts to yourselves—keep your mouths closed; for speaking produces fruit, either of a good or evil character.

If persons think they have greater sorrow and affliction than any others, when they reveal that sorrow and affliction, it produces fruit. You frequently hear brethren and sisters say that they feel so tried and tempted, and have so many cares, and are so buffeted, that they must give vent to their feelings; and they yield to the temptation, and deal out their unpleasant sensations to their families and neighbors. Make up your minds thoroughly, once for all, that