

## Ellen G. White Selected Quotations on Health and Ministry

### **The Purpose of the Health Message**

#### 1. Relieve suffering; purify the church

The work of health reform is the Lord's means for lessening suffering in our world and for purifying His church...I am instructed to say to health reform educators: Go forward. The world needs every jot of the influence you can exert to press back the tide of moral woe (*Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 112, 113).

#### 2. Secure the highest development of body, mind and soul

In teaching health principles, keep before the mind the great object of reform—that its purpose is to secure the highest development of body and mind and soul. Show that the laws of nature, being the laws of God, are designed for our good: that obedience to them promotes happiness in this life, and aids in the preparation for the life to come (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 146).

#### 3. Elevate the moral standards

If we would elevate the moral standard in any country where we may be called to go, we must begin by correcting their physical habits (*Counsels on Health*, p. 505).

#### 4. Serve as an entering wedge

I can see the Lord's providence that the medical missionary work is to be a great entering wedge, whereby the diseased soul may be reached (*Counsels on Health*, p. 535).

#### 5. To open doors

The right hand is used to open doors through which the body may find entrance. This is the part the medical missionary work is to act. It is to largely prepare the way for their reception of the truth for this time (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 238).

#### 6. To clarify thought processes

He (God) designs that the subject shall be agitated, and the public mind deeply stirred to investigate it; for it is impossible for men and women, while under the power of sinful, health-destroying, brain enervating habits, to appropriate sacred truth (*Counsels on Health*, p. 21).

#### 7. To sow the seed and reap a harvest

When connected with other lines of gospel effort, medical missionary work is a most effective instrument by which the ground is prepared for the sowing of the seeds of truth, and the instrument also by which the harvest is reaped (*Medical Ministry*, p. 240).

#### 8. To restore the image of God

This is the work that will restore the moral image of God in man (*Medical Ministry*, p.160).

#### 9. To prepare a people for Christ's return

As he thus instructs the people in the principles of true temperance, and as a guardian of souls gives advice to those who are mentally and physically diseased, the physician is acting his part in the great work of making ready a people prepared for the Lord. This is what medical missionary work is to accomplish in its relation to the third angel's message (*Counsels on Health*, p. 336).

In the preparation of a people for the Lord's second coming, a great work is to be accomplished through the promulgation of health principles (*Medical Ministry*, p. 206).

### **Origin of Health Evangelism**

The medical missionary work is of divine origin, and has a most glorious mission to fulfill (*Medical Ministry*, p. 24).

Medical missionary work is a sacred thing of God's devising (*Medical Ministry*, p. 131).

### **Health Evangelism; Christ's Method**

Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me!" (The Ministry of Healing, p. 143).

Christ came to this world as the great medical missionary. When His example is followed, medical missionary work will be carried forward on a much higher plane than it is at the present time. God calls for a reconversion among gospel teachers, and especially among physicians and other medical missionary workers, that Christ may not be misrepresented and put to shame. The cleansing must begin in the heart and mind, and flow forth in the actions. The characters of our medical missionary workers need to be refined and ennobled. This result can be brought about only as these workers are made partakers of the divine image, escaping the corruption that is in the world through lust (Review & Herald, Aug. 20, 1903).

Christ, the great Medical Missionary, is our example. He healed the sick and preached the gospel. In His service, healing and teaching were linked together. Today they are not to be separated (Testimonies, vol. 9, pp. 170, 171).

During His ministry, Jesus devoted more time to healing the sick than to preaching. His miracles testified to the truth of His words, that He came not to destroy, but to save.... Where he had passed, the objects of His compassion were rejoicing in health (The Ministry of Healing, p. 19).

In order to impress upon man his obligation to obey the law of God, Christ began His work of redemption by reforming the physical habits of man (Testimonies, vol. 3, p. 486).

His work did not stop with an exhibition of His power over disease. He made each work of healing an occasion of implanting in the heart the divine principles of His love and benevolence (Counsels on Health, p. 249).

### **Health Should be a Part of Church Ministry**

Christ is no longer in this world in person, to go through our cities and towns and villages

healing the sick. He has commissioned us to carry forward the medical missionary work that He began, and in this work, we are to do our best (Counsels on Health, p. 212).

Read the Scriptures carefully, and you will find that Christ spent the largest part of His ministry in restoring the suffering and afflicted to health....

We shall have success if we work on practical lines. Ministers, do not confine your work to giving Bible instruction. Do practical work. Seek to restore the sick to health. This is true ministry. Remember that the restoration of the body prepares the way for the restoration of the soul (Medical Ministry, p. 240).

There are precious blessings and a rich experience to be gained if ministers will combine the presentation of the health question with all their labors in the churches (Gospel Workers, p. 231).

You will never be ministers after the gospel order till you show a decided interest in medical missionary work, the gospel of healing and blessing and strengthening (Counsels on Health, p. 533).

Too little attention is generally given to the preservation of health. It is far better to prevent disease than to know how to treat it when contracted (The Ministry of Healing, p. 128).

Our ministers should become intelligent on health reform. They need to become acquainted with physiology and hygiene; they should understand the laws that govern physical life and their bearing upon the health of mind and soul.

In their own lives and homes they should obey the laws of life, practicing right principles and living healthfully. Then they will be able to speak correctly on this subject, leading the people higher and still higher in the work of reform.

Living in the light themselves, they can bear a message of great value to those who are in need of just such a testimony (Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 376).

Those who go forth to engage in the work of the ministry must be intelligent upon the subject of health reform. Those men who after many years' experience have yet no appreciation of the medical missionary work, should not be appointed to preside over our churches (Medical Ministry, p. 238).

In new fields no work is so successful as medical missionary work. If our ministers would

work earnestly to obtain an education in medical missionary lines, they would be far better fitted to do the work Christ did as a medical missionary....

Then will the work of the ministry be after the Lord's order; the sick will be healed, and poor, suffering humanity will be blessed.

Begin to do medical missionary work with the conveniences which you have at hand. You will find that thus the way will open for you to hold Bible readings. The heavenly Father will place you in connection with those who need to know how to treat their sick ones (Medical Ministry, p. 239).

The subject of health reform has been presented in the churches; but the light has not been heartily received. The selfish, health-destroying indulgences of men and women have counteracted the influence of the message that is to prepare a people for the great day of God. If the churches expect strength, they must live the truth which God has given them. If the members of our churches disregard the light on this subject, they will reap the sure result in both spiritual and physical degeneracy. And the influence of these older church members will leaven those newly come to the faith. The Lord does not now work to bring many souls into the truth, because of the church members who have never been converted, and those who were once converted but who have backslidden. What influence would these unconsecrated members have on new converts? Would they not make of no effect the God-given message which his people are to hear? (Testimonies, vol. 6, pp. 370, 371).

Ministers and people must make greater advancement in the work of reform. They should commence without delay to correct their wrong habits of eating, drinking, dressing, and working. I saw that quite a number of the ministers are not awake upon this important subject. They are not all where God would have them. The result is, some can show but little fruit of their labors (Testimonies, vol. 1, p. 466).

The Lord has presented before me that many, many will be rescued from physical, mental, and moral degeneracy through the practical influence of health reform. Health talks will be given, pub-

lications will be multiplied. The principles of health reform will be received with favor, and many will be enlightened. The influences that are associated with health reform will commend it to the judgment of all who want light, and they will advance step by step to receive the special truths for this time (Testimonies, vol. 6, pp. 378, 379).

Much of the prejudice that prevents the truth of the third angel's message from reaching the hearts of the people, might be removed if more attention were given to health reform. When people become interested in this subject, the way is often prepared for the entrance of other truths (Counsels on Diet and Foods, p. 76).

Those who labor in our conferences as ministers should become acquainted with the work of ministering to the sick. No minister should be proud that he is ignorant where he should be wise (Medical Ministry, p. 250).

The gospel ministry is needed to give permanence and stability to the medical missionary work; and the ministry needs the medical work to demonstrate the practical working of the gospel. Neither part of the work is complete without the other (Counsels on Health, p. 514).

### **Health Evangelism**

We have come to a time when every member of the church should take hold of the medical missionary work (Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 289).

The medical missionary work should be a part of the work of every church in our land (Counsels on Health, p. 514).

Every city is to be entered by workers trained to do medical missionary work. As the right hand of the third angels's message, God's method of treating disease will open doors for the entrance of present truth (Testimonies, vol. 7, p. 59).

I wish to tell you that soon there will be no work done in ministerial lines but medical missionary work (Counsels on Health, p. 533).

Nothing will open doors for the truth like evangelistic medical missionary work (Evangelism, p. 513).

Medical missionary work gives opportunity for carrying forward successful evangelistic work. It is as these lines of effort are united, that we

may expect to gather the most precious fruit for the Lord (Evangelism, p. 516).

The health reform is one branch of the great work which is to fit a people for the coming of the Lord (Counsels on Health, p. 20).

### **The Importance of Healthful Living for Church Workers**

So far as health is concerned, physical exercise would be of the greatest value to all our ministers (Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 408).

The reason why many of our ministers complain of sickness is, they fail to take sufficient exercise, and indulge in overeating. They do not realize that such a course endangers the strongest constitution. Those who, like yourself, are sluggish in temperament, should eat very sparingly, and not shun physical taxation. Many of our ministers are digging their graves with their teeth. The system, in taking care of the burden placed upon the digestive organs, suffers, and a severe draught is made upon the brain. For every offense committed against the laws of health, the transgressor must pay the penalty in his own body (Testimonies, vol. 4, pp. 408, 409).

If they worked intelligently, giving both mind and body a due share of exercise, ministers would not so readily succumb to disease. If all our workers were so situated that they could spend a few hours each day in outdoor labor, and felt free to do this, it would be a blessing to them; they would be able to discharge more successfully the duties of their calling. If they have not time for complete relaxation, they could be planning and praying while at work with their hands, and could return to their labor refreshed in body and spirit.

Some of our ministers feel that they must every day perform some labor that they can report to the Conference. And as the result of trying to do this, their efforts are too often weak and inefficient. They should have periods of rest, of entire freedom from taxing labor. But these cannot take the place of daily physical exercise.

Brethren, when you take time to cultivate your garden, thus gaining the exercise needed to keep the system in good working order, you are

just as much doing the work of God as in holding meetings. God is our Father, he loves us, and he does not require any of his servants to abuse their bodies (Gospel Workers, p. 92).

The Bible says of Jesus, "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him." As He worked in childhood and youth, mind and body were developed. He did not use His physical powers recklessly, but gave them such exercise as would keep them in health, that He might do the best work in every line. He was not willing to be defective, even in the handling of tools. He was perfect as a workman, as He was perfect in character.

The time spent in physical exercise is not lost (Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 418).

Continued inactivity is one of the greatest causes of debility of body and feebleness of mind (Testimonies, vol. 2, p. 524).

The chief if not the only reason why many become invalids is that the blood does not circulate freely, and the changes in the vital fluid, which are necessary to life and health, do not take place. They have not given their bodies exercise nor their lungs food, which is pure, fresh air; therefore it is impossible for the blood to be vitalized, and it pursues its course sluggishly through the system. The more we exercise, the better will be the circulation of the blood. More people die for want of exercise than through overfatigue; very many more rust out than wear out. Those who accustom themselves to proper exercise in the open air will generally have a good and vigorous circulation. We are more dependent upon the air we breathe than upon the food we eat. Men and women, young and old, who desire health, and who would enjoy active life, should remember that they cannot have these without a good circulation. Whatever their business and inclinations, they should make up their minds to exercise in the open air as much as they can. They should feel it a religious duty to overcome the conditions of health which have kept them confined indoors, deprived of exercise in the open air (Testimonies, vol. 2, pp. 525, 526).

**Healthful Living: Prerequisite to Effectual Ministry and Child Rearing**

Those who give proper attention to physical development will make greater advancement in literary lines than they would if their entire time were devoted to study.... Physical inaction lessens not only mental, but moral power. (Education, pp. 208, 209).

Healthful exercise in the open air will strengthen the muscles, encourage a proper circulation of blood, help to preserve the body from disease, and will be a great help in spirituality (Medical Ministry, p. 81).

Because of imprudence in eating, the senses of some seem to be paralyzed, and they are sluggish and sleepy. These pale-faced ministers who are suffering in consequence of selfish indulgence of the appetite, are no recommendation of health reform. When suffering from overwork, it would be much better to drop out a meal occasionally, and thus give nature a chance to rally. Our laborers could do more by their example to advance health reform than by preaching it. When elaborate preparations are made for them by well-meaning friends, they are strongly tempted to disregard principle; but by refusing the dainty dishes, the rich condiments, the tea and coffee, they may prove themselves to be true, practical health reformers. Some are now suffering in consequence of transgressing the laws of life, thus causing a stigma to rest on the cause of health reform. Excessive indulgence in eating, drinking, sleeping, or seeing, is sin (Gospel Workers, p. 92).

Overeating prevents the free flow of thought and words, and that intensity of feeling which is so necessary in order to impress the truth upon

the heart of the hearer. The indulgence of appetite beclouds and fetters the mind, and blunts the holy emotions of the soul. The mental and moral powers of some of our preachers are enfeebled by improper eating and lack of physical exercise. Those who crave great quantities of food should not indulge their appetite, but should practice self-denial, and retain the blessings of active muscles and unoppressed brains. Overeating stupefies the entire being by diverting the energies from the other organs to do the work of the stomach (Gospel Workers, p. 92).

A gospel minister will be twice as successful in his work if he understands how to treat disease (Medical Ministry, p. 245).

A minister of the gospel who is also a medical missionary, who can cure physical ailments, is a much more efficient worker than one who cannot do this. His work as a minister of the gospel is much more complete (Medical Ministry, p. 245).

You should be teaching your children. You should be instructing them how to shun the vices and corruptions of this age. Instead of this, many are studying how to get something good to eat. You place upon your tables butter, eggs and meat and your children partake of them. They are fed with the very things that will excite their animal passions, and then you come to meeting and ask God to bless and save your children. How high do your prayers go? You have a work to do first. When you have done all for your children which God has left for you to do, then you can with confidence claim the special help that God has promised to give you (Counsels on Diet and Foods, p. 366).