

Adventist Home Chap. Seventy-Three Our Social Needs

God Made Provision for Our Social Needs.--In the arrangements for the education of the chosen people it is made manifest that a life centered in God is a life of completeness. Every want He has implanted He provides to satisfy; every faculty imparted He seeks to develop. The Author of all beauty, Himself a lover of the beautiful, God provided to gratify in His children the love of beauty. He made provision also for their social needs, for the kindly and helpful associations that do so much to cultivate sympathy and to brighten and sweeten life.

The Influence of Association.--Everyone will find companions or make them. And just in proportion to the strength of the friendship will be the amount of influence which friends will exert over one another for good or for evil. All will have associates and will influence and be influenced in their turn. 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.

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.

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 his 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.

Natural Tendencies Are Downward.--If the youth could be persuaded to associate with the pure, the thoughtful, and the amiable, the effect would be most salutary. If choice is made of companions who fear the Lord, the influence will lead to truth, to duty, and to holiness. A truly Christian life is a power for good. But, on the other hand, those who associate with men and women of questionable morals, of bad principles and practices, will soon be walking in the same path. The tendencies of the natural heart are downward. He who associates with the skeptic will soon become skeptical; he who chooses the companionship of the vile will most assuredly become vile. To walk in the counsel of the ungodly is the first step toward standing in the way of sinners and sitting in the seat of the scornful.

With worldly youth the love of society and pleasure becomes an absorbing passion. To dress, to visit, to indulge the appetite and passions, and to whirl through the round of social dissipation appear to be the great end of existence. They are unhappy if left in solitude. Their chief desire is to be admired and flattered and to make a sensation in society; and when this desire is not gratified, life seems unendurable.

Those who love society frequently indulge this trait until it becomes an overruling passion. . . . They cannot endure to read the Bible and contemplate heavenly things. They are miserable unless there is something to excite. They have not within them the power to be happy, but they depend for happiness upon the company of other youth as thoughtless and reckless as themselves. The powers which might be turned to noble purposes they give to folly and mental dissipation.

The Blessings of Christian Sociability.--Christian sociability is altogether too little cultivated by God's people. . . . 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.

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.

Adventist Home Chap. Seventy-Four Safe And Unsafe Associations

Things Which Influence Us and Our Children.-- Every association we form, however limited, exerts some influence upon us. The extent to which we yield to that influence will be determined by the degree of intimacy, the constancy of the intercourse, and our love and veneration for the one with whom we associate.

If we place ourselves among associates whose influence has a tendency to make us forgetful of the high claims the Lord has upon us, we invite temptation and become too weak in moral power to resist it. We come to partake of the spirit and cherish the ideas of our associates and to place sacred and eternal things lower than the ideas of our friends. We are, in short, leavened just as the enemy of all righteousness designed we should be. The young, if brought under this influence, are more easily affected by it than those who are older. Everything leaves its impress upon their minds--the countenances they look upon, the voices they hear, the places they visit, the company they keep, and the books they read. It is impossible to overestimate the importance for this world and the next of the associations we choose for ourselves and, more especially, for our children.

Dangers of Associating With the Ungodly.--The world is not to be our criterion. We are not to associate with the ungodly and partake of their spirit, for they will lead the heart away from God to the worship of false gods. The steadfast soul, firm in the faith, can do much good; he can impart blessings of the highest order to those with whom he associates, for the law of the Lord is in his heart. But we cannot willingly associate with those who are trampling upon the law of God, and preserve our faith pure and untarnished. We shall catch the spirit, and unless we separate from them, we shall be bound up with them at last, to share their doom.

It was by associating with idolaters and joining in their festivities that the Hebrews were led to transgress God's law and bring His judgments upon the nation. So now it is by leading the followers of Christ to associate with the ungodly and unite in their amusements that Satan is most successful in alluring them into sin. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean." God requires of His people now as great a distinction from the world, in customs, habits, and principles, as He required of Israel anciently.

Samson's Willful Choice.--God's providential care had been over Samson, that he might be prepared to accomplish the work which he was called to do. At the very outset of life he was surrounded with favorable conditions for physical strength, intellectual vigor, and moral purity. But under the influence of wicked associates he let go that hold upon God which is man's only safeguard, and he was swept away by the tide of evil. Those who in the way of duty are brought into trial may be sure that God will preserve them; but if men willfully place themselves under the power of temptation, they will fall sooner or later.

The Insidious Leaven of Wickedness.--Dear students, day and night the prayers of your parents will follow you. Listen to their entreaties and warnings, and do not choose reckless associates. You cannot discern how the leaven of wickedness will insidiously corrupt your mind and impair your habits and, by leading you to repeat evil habits, cause you to develop an unsound character. You may see no real danger and think that you will be able to do right as easily as before you yielded to temptation to do wrong, but this is a mistake. Parents and teachers who love and fear God may warn and entreat and counsel, but it may all be in vain if you do not yield yourself to God and improve the talents which He has given you to His glory.

Beware of Those Indifferent to Religion.--If children are with those whose conversation is upon unimportant, earthly things, their minds will come to the same level. If they hear the principles of religion slurred and our faith belittled, if sly objections to the truth are dropped in their hearing, these things will fasten in their

minds and mold their characters. Nothing can more effectually prevent or banish serious impressions and good desires than association with vain, careless, and corrupt-minded persons. Whatever attractions such persons may possess by their wit, sarcasm, and fun, the fact that they treat religion with levity and indifference is sufficient reason why they should not be associated with. The more engaging they are in other respects, the more should their influence be dreaded as companions because they throw around an irreligious life so many dangerous attractions. Worldly associations attract and dazzle the senses so that piety, the fear of God, faithfulness, and loyalty have not power to keep men steadfast. The humble, unassuming life of Christ seems altogether unattractive. To many who claim to be sons and daughters of God, Jesus, the Majesty of heaven, is "as a root out of a dry ground: He hath no form nor comeliness."

Do Not Center Affections on Worldly Relatives.-- We cannot serve God and the world at the same time. We must not center our affections on worldly relatives, who have no desire to learn the truth. We may seek in every way, while associated with them, to let our light shine; but our words, our deportment, our customs and practices, should not in any sense be molded by their ideas and customs. We are to show forth the truth in all our intercourse with them. If we cannot do this, the less association we have with them the better it will be for our spirituality.

Shun Those With Low Standards, Loose Morals.-- It is wrong for Christians to associate with those whose morals are loose. An intimate, daily intercourse which occupies time without contributing in any degree to the strength of the intellect or morals is dangerous. If the moral atmosphere surrounding persons is not pure and sanctified, but is tainted with corruption, those who breathe this atmosphere will find that it operates almost insensibly upon the intellect and heart to poison and to ruin. It is dangerous to be conversant with those whose minds naturally take a low level. Gradually and imperceptibly those who are naturally conscientious and love purity will come to the same level and partake of and sympathize with the imbecility and moral barrenness with which they are so constantly brought in contact. A good name is more precious than gold. There is an inclination with the youth to associate with those who are inferior in mind and morals. What real happiness can a young person expect from a voluntary connection with persons who have a low standard of thoughts, feelings, and deportment? Some are debased in taste and depraved in habits, and all who choose such companions will follow their example. We are living in times of peril that should cause the hearts of all to fear.

Many Yield to Temptation Through Fear of Ridicule.-- Children . . . should have companions who will not ridicule what is pure and worthy, but will rather advocate what is right. The fear of ridicule leads many a youth to yield to temptation and to walk in the way of the ungodly. Mothers may do much by example as well as by precept to show their children how to be upright amid scorn and ridicule.

Why do our youth not consider that those who are ready to lead others into forbidden paths are easily overcome by temptation and are Satan's agents to encourage disorderly habits, to laugh at those who are conscientious and who would preserve their integrity of character?

Live Before Strangers As You Would Before God.-- Young friends, do not spend an hour in the company of those who would unfit you for the pure and sacred work of God. Do nothing before strangers that you would not do before your father and mother, or that you would be ashamed of before Christ and the holy angels. Some may think these cautions are not needed by Sabbathkeepers, but those to whom they apply know what I mean. I tell you, young men, to beware; for you can do nothing that is not open to the eyes of angels and of God. You cannot do an evil work and others not be affected by it. While your course of action reveals what kind of material is used in your own character building, it also has a powerful influence over others. Never lose sight of the fact that you belong to God, that He has bought you with a price, and you must render an account to Him for all His entrusted talents.

Special Help Is Promised When Needed.--We are not to place our children where they must associate with the depraved and degraded. Sometimes God in His providence may bring our youth into association with those who are impure and intemperate. He will give them strength of purpose and power to resist temptation, even as He did Daniel and his associates in Babylon, if they will co-operate with Him. They must constantly commune with God.

They must keep themselves pure, refusing to do anything that would dishonor God, living always with an eye single to His glory. They must watch for souls, laboring earnestly for those in whom the image of God has been defaced, seeking to reform, to elevate, and to ennoble them.

Choose Thoughtful, Serious Companions.--The youth who are in harmony with Christ will choose companions who will help them in right doing, and will shun society that gives no aid in the development of right principles and noble purposes. In every place are to be found youth whose minds are cast in an inferior mold. When brought into association with this class, those who have placed themselves without reserve on the side of Christ will stand firmly by that which reason and conscience tell them is right. Let all who would form a right character choose associates who are of a serious, thoughtful turn of mind and who are religiously inclined. Those who have counted the cost and wish to build for eternity must put good material into their building. If they accept of rotten timbers, if they are content with deficiencies of character, the building is doomed to ruin. Let all take heed how they build. The storm of temptation will sweep over the building, and unless it is firmly and faithfully constructed, it will not stand the test. By association with those who walk according to principle, even the careless will learn to love righteousness. And by the practice of right doing there will be created in the heart a distaste for that which is cheap and common and at variance with the principles of God's word.

Adventist Home Chap. Seventy-Five Parental Guidance In Social Affairs

Evil Influences Almost Overpowering.--The evil influence around our children is almost overpowering; it is corrupting their minds and leading them down to perdition. The minds of youth are naturally given to folly; and at an early age, before their characters are formed and their judgment matured, they frequently manifest a preference for associates who will have an injurious influence over them.

Could my voice reach the parents all through the land, I would warn them not to yield to the desires of their children in choosing their companions or associates. Little do parents consider that injurious impressions are far more readily received by the young than are divine impressions; therefore their associations should be the most favorable for the growth of grace and for the truth revealed in the word of God to be established in the heart.

Let the youth be placed in the most favorable circumstances possible; for the company they keep, the principles they adopt, the habits they form, will settle the question of their usefulness here and of their future, eternal interests with a certainty that is infallible.

The Peril of Unlimited Freedom.--Parents, your sons and daughters are not properly guarded. They should never be permitted to go and come when they please, without your knowledge and consent. The unbounded freedom granted to children at this age has proved the ruin of thousands. How many are allowed to be in the streets at night, and parents are content to be ignorant of the associates of their children. Too often companions are chosen whose influence tends only to demoralize. Under the cover of darkness boys collect in groups to learn their first lessons in card playing, gambling, smoking, and wine or beer sipping. The sons of religious parents venture into the saloons for an oyster supper or some similar indulgence, and thus place themselves in the way of temptation. The very atmosphere of these resorts is redolent with blasphemy and pollution. No one can long remain in it without becoming corrupted. It is by such associations that promising youth are becoming inebriates and criminals. The very beginnings of the evil should be guarded against. Parents, unless you know that their surroundings are unexceptionable, do not permit your children to go into the streets after nightfall to engage in outdoor sports or to meet other boys for amusement. If this rule be rigidly enforced, obedience to it will become habitual, and the desire to transgress will soon cease.

Parents Must Choose the Child's Associates.--Parents should remember that association with those of lax morals and coarseness of character will have a detrimental influence upon the youth. If they fail to choose proper society for their children, if they allow them to associate with youth of questionable morals, they place them, or permit them to place themselves, in a school where lessons of depravity are taught and practiced. They may feel that their children are strong enough to withstand temptation, but how can they be sure of this? It is far easier to yield to evil influences than to resist them. Ere they are aware of it, their children may become imbued with the spirit of their associates and may be degraded or ruined.

The dangers of the young are greatly increased as they are thrown into the society of a large number of their

own age, of varied character and habits of life. Under these circumstances many parents are inclined to relax rather than redouble their own efforts to guard and control their children. Prayerfully, unitedly, the father and the mother should bear the grave responsibility of guiding their children aright. Whatever else they neglect, they should never leave their children free to wander in paths of sin. Many parents allow children to go and do as they please, amusing themselves and choosing evil associates. In the judgment such parents will learn that their children have lost heaven because they have not been kept under home restraint.

Where Are the Evenings Spent?--Every son and daughter should be called to account if absent from home at night. Parents should know what company their children are in and at whose house they spend their evenings. Some children deceive their parents with falsehoods to avoid exposure of their wrong course.

Weeds Predominate in an Uncultivated Field.--Fathers and mothers too often leave their children to choose for themselves their amusements, their companions, and their occupation. The result is such as might reasonably be expected. Leave a field uncultivated, and it will grow up to thorns and briars. You will never see a lovely flower or a choice shrub peering above the unsightly, poisonous weeds. The worthless bramble will grow luxuriantly without thought or care, while plants that are valued for use or beauty require thorough culture. Thus it is with our youth. If right habits are formed and right principles established, there is earnest work to be done. If wrong habits are corrected, diligence and perseverance are required to accomplish the task.

Accustom Child to Trust Parents' Judgment.--Parents, guard the principles and habits of your children as the apple of the eye. Allow them to associate with no one with whose character you are not well acquainted. Permit them to form no intimacy until you are assured that it will do them no harm. Accustom your children to trust your judgment and experience. Teach them that you have clearer perception of character than they in their inexperience can have, and that your decisions must not be disregarded.

The Restraint to Be Firm, but Kind.--The parents should not concede to the inclinations of their children, but should follow the plain path of duty which God has marked out, restraining them in kindness, denying with firmness and determination, yet with love, their wrong desires, and with earnest, prayerful, persevering effort leading their steps away from the world upward to heaven. Children should not be left to drift into whatever way they are inclined, and to go into avenues which are open on every side, leading away from the right path. None are in so great danger as those who apprehend no danger and are impatient of caution and counsel.

Guard your children from every objectionable influence possible; for in childhood they are more ready to receive impressions, either of moral dignity, purity, and loveliness of character, or of selfishness, impurity, and disobedience. Once let them become influenced by the spirit of murmuring, pride, vanity, and impurity, and the taint may be as indelible as life itself. It is because the home training is defective that the youth are so unwilling to submit to proper authority. I am a mother; I know whereof I speak when I say that youth and children are not only safer but happier under wholesome restraint than when following their own inclination.

Unaccompanied Visits Inadvisable.--Some parents mistake in giving their children too much liberty. They sometimes have so much confidence in them that they do not see their faults. It is wrong to allow children, at some expense, to visit at a distance, unaccompanied by their parents or guardians. It has a wrong influence upon the children. They come to feel that they are of considerable consequence and that certain privileges belong to them, and if these are not granted, they think themselves abused. They refer to children who go and come and have many privileges, while they have so few.

And the mother, fearing that her children will think her unjust, gratifies their wishes, which in the end proves a great injury to them. Young visitors, who have not a parent's watchful eye over them to see and correct their faults, often receive impressions which it will take months to remove.

Unwise Advice and How to Meet It.--Keep your children at their home; and if people say to you, "Your children will not know how to conduct themselves in the world," tell your friends that you are not so concerned about that matter, but that you do want to take them to the Master for His blessing, even as the mothers of old took their children to Jesus. Say to your advisers: Children are the heritage of the Lord, and I want to prove faithful to my trust. . . . My children must be brought up in such a way that they shall not be swayed by the influences of the world, but where, when tempted to sin, they may be able to say a square, hearty no." . . . Tell your friends and neighbors that you want to see your family inside the gates of the beautiful city.

Powerful Tests Are Before Our Youth.--Children should be trained and educated so that they may calculate to meet with difficulties and expect temptations and dangers. They should be taught to have control over

themselves and to nobly overcome difficulties; and if they do not willfully rush into danger and needlessly place themselves in the way of temptation, if they avoid evil influences and vicious society, and then are unavoidably compelled to be in dangerous company, they will have strength of character to stand for the right and preserve principle and will come forth in the strength of God with their morals untainted. The moral powers of youth who have been properly educated, if they make God their trust, will be equal to stand the most powerful test.

Adventist Home Chap. Seventy-Eight The Family a Missionary Center

Parents Should Give Children Right Direction.-- With us as parents and as Christians it rests to give our children right direction. They are to be carefully, wisely, tenderly guided into paths of Christlike ministry. We are under sacred covenant with God to rear our children for His service. To surround them with such influences as shall lead them to choose a life of service, and to give them the training needed, is our first duty.

Children May Be Daniels and Esthers Today.-- God's purpose for the children growing up beside our hearths is wider, deeper, higher, than our restricted vision has comprehended. From the humblest lot those whom He has been faithful have in time past been called to witness for Him in the world's highest places. And many a lad of today, growing up as did Daniel in his Judean home, studying God's word and His works, and learning the lessons of faithful service, will yet stand in legislative assemblies, in halls of justice, or in royal courts as a witness for the King of kings. Multitudes will be called to a wider ministry. The whole world is opening to the gospel. . . . From every quarter of this world of ours comes the cry of sin-stricken hearts for a knowledge of the God of love. . . . It rests with us who have received the knowledge, with our children to whom we may impart it, to answer their cry. To every household and every school, to every parent, teacher, and child upon whom has shone the light of the gospel, comes at this crisis the question put to Esther the queen at that momentous crisis in Israel's history, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Successful Ways of Witnessing for Christ.--Not all can go as missionaries to foreign lands, but all can be home missionaries in their families and neighborhoods. There are many ways in which church members may give the message to those around them. One of the most successful is by living helpful, unselfish Christian lives. Those who are fighting the battle of life at great odds may be refreshed and strengthened by little attentions which cost nothing. Kindly words simply spoken, little attentions simply bestowed, will sweep away the clouds of temptation and doubt that gather over the soul. The true heart expression of Christlike sympathy, given in simplicity, has power to open the door of hearts that need the simple, delicate touch of the spirit of Christ. There is a wide field of service for women as well as for men. The efficient cook, the seamstress, the nurse-- the help of all is needed. Let the members of poor households be taught how to cook, how to make and mend their own clothing, how to nurse the sick, how to care properly for the home. Even the children should be taught to do some little errand of love and mercy for those less fortunate than themselves.

Children and Youth to Join in Service for Others.-- In an effort to excuse themselves some say: "My home duties, my children, claim my time and my means." Parents, your children should be your helping hand, increasing your power and ability to work for the Master. Children are the younger members of the Lord's family. They should be led to consecrate themselves to God, whose they are by creation and by redemption. They should be taught that all their powers of body, mind, and soul are His. They should be trained to help in various lines of unselfish service. Do not allow your children to be hindrances. With you the children should share spiritual as well as physical burdens. By helping others they increase their own happiness and usefulness. If in every church the young men and the young women would solemnly consecrate themselves to God, if they would practice self-denial in the home life, relieving their tired, careworn mothers, what a change would take place in our churches! The mother could find time to make neighborly visits. When opportunity offered, the children could give assistance by doing, when quite young, little errands of mercy and love to bless others. Thus thousands of the homes of the poor and needy not of our faith could be entered. Books relating to health and temperance could be placed in many homes. The circulation of these books is an important work; for they contain precious knowledge in regard to the treatment of disease--knowledge that would be a great blessing to those who cannot afford to pay for the physician's visits.

God Wants Children as Little Missionaries.--God wants every child of tender age to be His child, to be adopted into His family. Young though they may be, the youth may be members of the household of faith and have a most precious experience.

In their early years children may be useful in God's work. . . . He will give them His grace and His Holy Spirit, that they may overcome impatience, fretfulness, and all sin. Jesus loves the children. He has blessings for them, and He loves to see them obedient to their parents. He desires them to be His little missionaries, denying their own inclinations and desires for selfish pleasure to do service for Him; and this service is just as acceptable to God as is the service of grown-up children.

By precept and example parents are to teach their children to labor for the unconverted. The children should be so educated that they will sympathize with the aged and afflicted and will seek to alleviate the sufferings of the poor and distressed. They should be taught to be diligent in missionary work; and from their earliest years self-denial and sacrifice for the good of others and the advancement of Christ's cause should be inculcated, that they may be laborers together with God.

Let parents teach their little ones the truth as it is in Jesus. The children in their simplicity will repeat to their associates that which they have learned.

The Church Has Work for the Youth.--Let the overseers of the church devise plans whereby young men and women may be trained to put to use their entrusted talents. Let the older members of the church seek to do earnest, compassionate work for the children and youth. Let ministers put to use all their ingenuity in devising plans whereby the younger members of the church may be led to co-operate with them in missionary work. But do not imagine that you can arouse their interest merely by preaching a long sermon at the missionary meeting. Plan ways whereby a live interest may be kindled. Let all have a part to act. Train the young to do what is appointed them, and from week to week let them bring their reports to the missionary meeting, telling what they have experienced and through the grace of Christ what success has been theirs. If such reports were brought in by consecrated workers, the missionary meetings would not be dull and tedious. They would be full of interest, and there would be no lack in attendance.

Seek Opportunities in the Neighborhood.-- Opportunities are within the reach of everyone. Take up the work that should be done in your neighborhood, for which you are held responsible. [NOTE: FOR DETAILED COUNSEL ON THE METHODS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF NEIGHBORHOOD MINISTRY OF KINDNESS, SEE WELFARE MINISTRY.--COMPILERS.] Wait not for others to urge you to take advance steps. Move without delay, bearing in mind your individual responsibility to Him who gave His life for you. Move as if you heard Christ calling upon you personally to awake out of sleep and to exert every God-given faculty in doing the utmost in His service. Look not to see who else is ready to catch inspiration from the word of the living God. If you are thoroughly consecrated, through your instrumentality He will bring into the truth others whom He can use as channels to convey light to many souls in darkness.

Let Christian Families Enter Dark Counties.--God calls for Christian families to go into communities that are in darkness and error, and work wisely and perseveringly for the Master. To answer this call requires self-sacrifice. While many are waiting to have every obstacle removed, souls are dying without hope and without God in the world. Many, very many, for the sake of worldly advantage, for the sake of acquiring scientific knowledge, will venture into pestilential regions and endure hardship and privation. Where are those who are willing to do this for the sake of telling others of the Saviour? Where are the men and women who will move into regions that are in need of the gospel, that they may point those in darkness to the Redeemer?

If families would locate in the dark places of the earth, places where the people are enshrouded in spiritual gloom, and let the light of Christ's life shine out through them, a great work might be accomplished. Let them begin their work in a quiet, unobtrusive way, not drawing on the funds of the conference until the interest becomes so extensive that they cannot manage it without ministerial help.

Children Will Work When Others Cannot.--When heavenly intelligences see that men are no longer permitted to present the truth, the Spirit of God will come upon the children, and they will do a work in the proclamation of the truth which the older workers cannot do because their way will be hedged up.

In the closing scenes of this earth's history many of these children and youth will astonish people by their witness to the truth, which will be borne in simplicity, yet with spirit and power. They have been taught the fear of the Lord, and their hearts have been softened by a careful and prayerful study of the Bible. In the near

future many children will be endued with the Spirit of God and will do a work in proclaiming the truth to the world that at that time cannot well be done by the older members of the church.

Our church schools are ordained by God to prepare the children for this great work. Here children are to be instructed in the special truths for this time and in practical missionary work. They are to enlist in the army of workers to help the sick and the suffering. Children can take part in the medical missionary work and by their jots and tittles can help to carry it forward. . . . By them God's message will be made known and His saving health to all nations. Then let the church carry a burden for the lambs of the flock. Let the children be educated and trained to do service for God.

Learn to Do by Doing.--Love and loyalty to Christ are the spring of all true service. In the heart touched by His love there is begotten a desire to work for Him. Let this desire be encouraged and rightly guided. Whether in the home, the neighborhood, or the school, the presence of the poor, the afflicted, the ignorant, or the unfortunate should be regarded, not as a misfortune, but as affording precious opportunity for service.

In this work, as in every other, skill is gained in the work itself. It is by training in the common duties of life and in ministry to the needy and suffering that efficiency is assured. Without this the best-meant efforts are often useless and even harmful. It is in the water, not on the land, that men learn to swim.

~Compiled from the writings of Ellen G. White