

Tithes and Offerings, Sabbath Collections and Call for Means

I send this matter to you so that you shall not make a mistake. Circumstances alter cases. I would not advise that any one should make a practice of gathering up tithe money. But for years there have now and then been persons who have lost confidence in the appropriation of the tithe who have placed their tithe in my hands and said that if I did not take it they would themselves appropriate it to the families of the most needy ministers they could find. I have taken the money, given a receipt for it, and told them how it was appropriated. {Lt267-1905}

Ms 176, 1907, NP 1907 Shall We Take Up Collections on the Sabbath? Previously unpublished.

Shall We Take Up Collections on the Sabbath? {Ms176-1907}

The question has been brought before me, Shall we take up collections on the Sabbath? The occurrence which brought up this question was that of taking up a collection to purchase an organ for the church. I replied that I would not advise this being done. {Ms176-1907}

When collections are taken on the Sabbath for foreign missionary work, it is that the gospel may be given to those who are in darkness. This is genuine missionary work, and often these collections could not be taken up so fully at any other time. To gather these offerings could not be called transgression of the Sabbath. {Ms176-1907}

But if this is to open that way for the taking up of contributions for such purposes as the buying of instruments of music, then I would advise that it be discontinued. Instruction was given me that collections taken on the Sabbath for such purposes sometimes left on minds impressions that counteracted the good they might otherwise receive. For this reason I say it is better that the music be defective than that one soul be tempted on this point. Let our people avoid the passing of the contribution boxes, even if it become a much more difficult matter than it now is to raise money for foreign missionary work. {Ms176-1907}

It would be well if our brethren and sisters would consider the advisability of laying by during the week their offerings for foreign missionary work. As they call to mind the blessings and mercies that God is affording them, let them put a thank offering in an envelope. These envelopes could be presented on the Sabbath, when it could be stated for what purpose they are intended. If perplexed to know how the offering should be applied, they can leave it to the judgment of the church officers, and these officers in turn should state just how every dollar has been applied. {Ms176-1907}

The sacredness of the Sabbath could be in no way violated by such gifts, and the results would be for good. There would be no occasion for distrust. The Lord would be honored, and the blessings to giver and receiver would be increased. The

possession of a willing heart would make the giving a joy to the receiver, and the gift would bring to the receiver the assurance that the Lord was mindful of his necessities. My brethren and sisters, try this method. Let there be no collections taken on the Sabbath, but let praise and thank offerings be made. {Ms176-1907}

The time of our Sabbath service should be a season of praise and thanksgiving to God, and it can be made a time of blessing to all who assemble. If short sermons were preached, and time given for all to bear testimony, the people would be refreshed and blessed. No harm would be done if, in order to give time for all to speak, the meeting [were to] be continued for two or three hours; [then] the time spent in physical fasting would be a season of spiritual feasting to all who appropriated the blessings of the hour. Many would find relief as they acknowledged the goodness and mercy of God. Their witness to the mercy and love of God would help and bless other souls. These are thank offerings the Lord delights to receive. {Ms176-1907}

We are much nearer the end of earth's history than many suppose. Said my Instructor, "The time has come when we need to devote much time to prayer and testimony meetings. After the discourse, time should be given for all who desire to speak. The Lord would have His people make the Sabbath a day of special seeking after Him." Shall we not try this? Let this work be entered into in our large churches in such cities as Los Angeles. Let us hold meetings in which church members can have opportunity to give expression to the feelings of the soul. {Ms176-1907}

Christ is watching with intense interest His church in the earth. He would be pleased to have His Sabbaths made more devotional, and angels of God will listen as we witness to His goodness and His love. {Ms176-1907}

Calls for Means

I was shown that there have been unhappy results from making urgent calls for means at our camp meetings. This matter has been pressed too hard. Many men of means would not have done anything had not their hearts been softened and melted under the influence of the testimonies borne to them. But the poor have been deeply affected and, in the sincerity of their souls, have pledged means which they had a heart to give, but which they were unable to pay. In most instances urgent calls for means have left a wrong impression upon some minds. Some have thought that money was the burden of our message. Many have gone to their homes blessed because they had donated to the cause of God. But there are better methods of raising means, by freewill offerings, than by urgent calls at our large gatherings. If all come up to the plan of systematic benevolence, and if our tract and missionary workers are faithful in their department of the work, the treasury will be well supplied without these urgent calls at our large gatherings. {3T 510.1}

Ministers have stood directly in the way of the work of God in Ohio. They should stand out of the way, that God may reach His people. They step in between God and His people, and turn aside His purposes. Brother J has exerted an influence in

Ohio which he must labor to counteract. I saw that there were those in Ohio who would take the right position with right instructions. They have been willing to sustain the cause of present truth, but have seen so little accomplished that they have become discouraged. Their hands are feeble, and need staying up. I saw that the cause of God is not to be carried forward by pressed offerings. God does not accept such offerings. This matter is to be left wholly to the people. They are not to bring a yearly gift merely, but should also freely present a weekly and monthly offering before the Lord. This work is left to the people, for it is to be to them a weekly, monthly, living test. This tithing system, I saw, would develop character, and manifest the true state of the heart. If the brethren in Ohio have this matter presented before them in its true bearing, and are left to decide for themselves, they will see wisdom and order in the tithing system. {1T 237.1}

Ministers should not be severe, and draw upon any one man, and press means from him. If he does not give just as much as another thinks he should, they are not to denounce him, and throw him overboard. They should be as patient and forbearing as the angels are. They should work in union with Jesus. Christ and angels are watching the development of character, and weighing moral worth. The Lord bears long with His erring people. The truth will be brought to bear closer and closer, and will cut off one idol after another, until God reigns supreme in the hearts of His consecrated people. I saw that God's people must bring to Him a freewill offering; and the responsibility should be left wholly upon the individual, whether he will give much or little. It will be faithfully recorded. Give the people of God time to develop character. {1T 237.2}

The salient point is this as i have studied and read this matter, there should be no passing of tithes and offering boxes or plates, but these offerings can be put to envelope and brought on church on Sabbath then put in the offertory boxes for the treasury department to collect them without passing between the people. There are even several quotes where there were Special Sabbath Collections for missionary work. The manner of conducting this was the issue not the bringing of them on Sabbath.

Sabbath, July 4, has been set apart as the day when an offering for Australasia shall be taken. My brethren and sisters in America, I plead with all earnestness that at the appointed time you shall do your best to help meet the necessities in our sister field. Let parents and children unitedly give of their means. Let old and young remember that in God's sight they are all little children, and that at this time they are to reveal their obedience to their heavenly Father by giving freely in answer to this call. Upon, those who do this, will rest heaven's richest blessings. {Needs, July 4, 1903 par. 26}

We thank God that our Sabbath schools have contributed enough to advance many a precious enterprise. Children and youth have given their pennies, that, like little rivulets, have supplied a stream of beneficence. Children should be educated in such a way that they may perform unselfish acts which heaven will rejoice to see. When the dew of youth is upon them, children should be trained how to do service for Christ. They should be taught self-denial.--TSS 113. {CSW 129.1}

There was a large attendance at our meetings on Sabbath, June 4. Besides the families of the Avondale church, there were about forty present from Dora Creek, making a congregation, old and young, of over two hundred. The weather was excellent, and about thirty took their dinner under the large gum-trees near the church. This was the last Sabbath of the week of prayer, and the time appointed for the bringing in of the annual offerings for missions. {RH, November 1, 1898 par. 1}

With the passing of another year, we have come to the time when a general call is being made for an offering to be taken up in all our churches, Sabbath, October 5, for the support of our colored work in the Southern States. {AU Gleaner, September 25, 1907 par. 1}

One of the most important branches of this work is the establishment and maintenance of mission schools. The great need for this educational work has often been plainly pointed out. There are few more in need of the elevating influence of the truths of God's word, than are the majority of the colored people in the South. They must be taught to read the Scriptures for themselves, and to understand what they read. {AU Gleaner, September 25, 1907 par. 2}

Bottom line, this urging of tithes and offerings is a violation of the Sabbath and the passing of plates is another breaking of the Sabbath. Let everything be enveloped and dropped in the Tithes and Offerings box as people enter the church and then the treasurers will see to it later in the time when the sun is going down without interrupting the worship services. If people have been taught what to do and they don't want to do it, then don't participate in their sins. It would be better that we live without their tithes and offerings than to break the Sabbath.

It means eternal salvation to keep the Sabbath holy unto the Lord. God says: "Them that honor Me I will honor." 1 Samuel 2:30. {6T 356.4}

A Tithe Collector

"F. McVagh, president of the Southern Union Conference, wrote W. C. White on October 24, 1912: "Brethren Nicola, Hart, and others of the older brethren tell me that they distinctly remember that years ago Sister White said that the tithe collector and clerk of the Battle Creek church should be paid out of the tithe, and up to the time of the Haughey administration, I guess it is a fact that the Battle Creek church paid its clerk and treasurer out of the tithe, and then turned the balance over to the conference."

"My memory of the matter is in full harmony with the statements of Brother Nicola, Hart, and others. In the olden days, when the Battle Creek church was growing, it was found that unless the work of collecting the tithe was followed up regularly that the amount received was very much less than if the matter were followed up in a businesslike way by a collector who made the work his regular duty. We also found that this work demanded more time than it was right for us to ask any one,

two, or three of the deacons to give to the matter, and it was thought by the church council that it would be good policy, and for the best interests of the tithe payers, and for the best interests of the conference, to have a good collector chosen and employed and paid a reasonable amount for his time.

This plan, with the reasons therefore, was placed before Father and Mother, and received their hearty approval. I cannot name the time or the place, nor can I repeat the words, but I am very positive that Mother gave her hearty approval to this plan, and it seems to me that the wisdom of the plan can be clearly discerned from the business standpoint, and that it should be maintained even though we may not find a written testimony bearing upon the subject. In years past there was no effort made to conceal from other churches the fact that Battle Creek managed its affairs in this way. Our brethren largely recognized that different methods must be followed in churches of different circumstances. I am glad to tell you that the St. Helena Sanitarium church employs a faithful tithe collector and pays for actual service done from the tithe. Should this plan be discontinued, I think the conference would lose from five to ten times as much as it paid to the collector. But we do not find that our smaller churches need to follow this plan or that they are brought into perplexity because this plan is followed in our very large churches."-- W. C. White to C. F. McVagh, October 31, 1912.

In the above history Willie White says they gained much more in tithe collection by doing this than if they had not.