

Having a practical Religion with reason and emotion

Ellen G. White:

“The religion of Christ is not a religion of mere emotion. You cannot depend upon your feelings for an evidence of acceptance with God, for feelings are variable. You must plant your feet on the promises of God’s Word and learn to live by faith. As soon as one begins to contemplate his feelings he is on the dangerous ground.” –

In Heavenly Places, p. 126.

Reason and emotion are two divinely given factors found in every human personality to guide his way of life into the true practical religion. Reason, according to Merriam-Webster pocket dictionary, means: (1) *Statement offered as explanation of some belief or act.* (2) *A ground or cause.* (3) *Intellect.* (4) *A sane or sound mind or consideration.* (5) *Due exercise of the faculty of logical thought.* Emotion is feeling, which means: (1) *Act of one that feels.* (2) *The sense of touch.* (3) *Perception through the senses.* (4) *Mental awareness.* (5) *Emotional response.* (6) *Unreasoned opinion.* So emotion is generally a reaction that emerges from our own five senses.

People with reasonable thinking are generally known as the rational personalities. Such people are usually firm and not easily moved in retaining their personal points of view, because they truly know how to distinguish between the right things and the wrong ones; between the worthy and the unworthy, and between the easy matter and the hard one. They are indeed having the ability to differentiate between the logical things and those illogical ones.

Conversely, those of emotional personalities are usually very much influenced by everything caught in their personal senses. Such people are usually having no definite set of minds; they are easily changing their minds from time to time, following their emotions which vary according to the situation and condition wherein they are.

The Lord God has imprinted in our personalities the reasonable power and the feeling that should be intelligently used to the highest benefit of human need. We cannot live successfully based upon rational thinking only, because this would lead to fanaticism, extremism, and other negative effects.

We also cannot live successfully upon the base of mere emotion or feeling, because this will result in uproar and confusion everywhere unabated. Therefore the people of God must be able to avail themselves intelligently to the two divinely given factors, the reason and the emotion, before making any positive decision : to agree or to disagree, to act or to stay calm. Whatever decision is to be made, however, the reason must always be the priority to dominate our choice.

These problems of reason and emotion have been much deliberated by the servant of the Lord, Sister Ellen G. White, in her Spirit of Prophecy publications. It seems clearly enough that as rational beings of the Lord of the Church of the Laodiceans, especially for those categorized in the five wise virgins, the meaning of these two factors, reason and the emotion, should be clearly identified. In the practical religion these two factors play decisive roles in identifying those who are on the Lord's side and those who are not. The Devil is very cunning to mislead us into his trap, because the difference between the factors in the practical religion is vague and very thin to observe.

Brain and its Function

We all recognize that the function of the brain is to think. As long as we are yet aware, just so long we are yet able to think. The function of the brain is to be sustained by a certain volume of blood. And one more element which is always forgotten by the majority of the people to sustain the brain is the quality of the blood itself. Therefore the quality of the blood would be fully dependent on the quality of food and beverages we usually get every day during our life time. The more qualified food and beverages we use, the more qualified blood could be obtained as the result to this end the servant of the Lord warned us in the following words:

“The intellectual, the moral, and the physical powers are depreciated by the habitual use of flesh meats. Meat eating deranges the system, beclouds the intellect, and blunts the moral sensibilities. We say to you, dear brother and sister, your safest course is to let meat eating alone.” – **2 Testimonies, p. 64.**

The Spirit of Prophecy's statement is addressed especially to the people of God in this time of the end. It is directed to you and me in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. The intellectual and the reasoning powers of ours as a people of God seem to be very much affected by the various kinds of food we eat every day. The use of flesh meats depreciates the quality of blood, that in turn it deranges the system and beclouds the intellect to the truth of God's Word. Let us, therefore, understand that despite all people might still be able to think well, not too many of them could be categorized as rational thinkers.

Not all of us have the intellectual power, because not all have the capacity to think rational. Reason is the capacity to think rational. And those who have the ability to think rational are the only rational beings of God who could understand His message for this time of the end.

Rational thinking would be as valuable as a starting capital in the personal life affair. When this capital of rational thinking could be rightly developed, either through an institute of formal education or by a personal investigation into the word of God, then more valuables could be produced to the benefit of more people than to the thinker himself

The Sustainable Factors

From the experience that the thinking capacity of man should be sustained by several factors, we submit to you herewith some of them as follow:

[1] The hereditary talent or faculty

This is a hereditary factor transmitted from our ancestors or parents. To this end the Bible said: *“For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate Me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My Commandments.”* – **Exodus 20 : 5, 6.**

Beside the hereditary factors of bad things transmitted from the ancestors to their offspring's, there are also several good and valuable factors from the grace of God being transmitted unto many more thousands generations of them who love God and keep His Commandments. One of the hereditary factors, from the grace of God to His people in this time of the end, is the capacity of rational thinking. Such intellectual and moral power would sometimes create men of genius in their related field of investigation. So if the object of their investigation is the Bible, then sometimes someone of them would emerge as a genius in his field. From the Spirit of Prophecy, however, it has been also revealed that the hereditary faculty or talent is yet to be complemented with some other factors, such as good food etc.

[2] Education and Training

Actually ever since the beginning man has been created as a rational being. Due to sin, and due to various sustainable facilities available that differ one with the other, that the level of intellectual power of men have been different one with the other. Therefore through the Spirit of Prophecy the Lord said:

“Will God compel your obedience; will He compel your will? Never. The Lord has furnished you with capacities, with intelligence, with reason.” -- Testimonies to Ministers, p. 452.

“It is the first and highest duty of every rational being to learn from the Scriptures what is truth, and then to walk in the light and encourage others to follow his example. We should day by day study the Bible diligently, weighing every thought and comparing scripture with scripture. With divine help we are to form our opinions for ourselves as we are to answer for ourselves before God.” – The Great Controversy, p. 598.

Having the rational thinking, though, it is yet to be sustained by good education and training. As an example, the little children should first be educated at the level of kindergarten. Then advance to the higher level of primary school. After that to the level of elementary school, and then advance to the secondary school, and high school. And after that to the more advanced level of education in colleges or the Universities. And at last to the highest level of post graduate studies in the University. The scales of education have been arranged as such higher and higher one after the other following the sciences that have been advancing from time to time.

We could have witnessed for ourselves how the world scientists have been educated and trained to such extent to make their thinking capacity developing from time to time. And how many goods and services they have wonderfully produced for the prosperity of mankind in various facilities provided by them in this time of the end. What are the result, however, if all the scales of education have been so arranged higher and higher, whereas the sciences and trainings presented in all the institutions of education stay the same without any sign of development? How could it be anticipated from such image of education and training to produce men of geniuses in any related science?

Now let us for a moment observe the practical religion of the people of God in this time of the end. It is the highest duty of every Seventh-Day Adventist as man of rational being to learn from the Bible what is truth, that the institute of Sabbath School has been established ever since the beginning. The little children get their primary education of the Bible at the Sabbath School for children. Then advance to the Sabbath School for the young people. After this they could join in the Sabbath School for the adult. The Sabbath School seems to be an institute of an ever living education, without any program of graduation. For those who want to be a Bible worker or minister of the gospel, they could apply for higher education with the Seventh-Day Adventist Colleges or SDA Universities somewhere in the world. Even for them who want to advance to the highest level of education,

they could have applied to the post graduate studies at the SDA Universities in the United States of America. Here they could be promoted as SDA ministers of the gospel with the highest achievements, and then be granted the title of the highest degree: Doctor in theology.

However, what are the facts now as the result of so many progressive scales of education and training, with so many ministers holding the titles of Doctor and Master in theology, whereas so many prophecies from the books of Isaiah up to Malachi, and from the book of Revelation and the parables of Jesus, have never been systematically interpreted to be fully revealed in the churches? Are they not aware that: *“By a thorough investigation of the prophecies we understand where we are in this world’s history, and we know for a certainty that the second coming of Christ is near.”* — **4 Testimonies, p. 592.** The servant of the Lord has ever warned:

“So in the prophecies the future is opened before us as plainly as it was opened to the disciples by he words of Christ. The events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble is clearly brought to view.” – **4 Spirit of Prophecy, p. 412.**

Since the Bible doctrines taught in various Seventh-day Adventist institutes of education are only the same old doctrines from time to time, no wonder if up to this day they would have no more new things to present to their congregations. How could we anticipate from such system of education to produce men and woman who are later to be divinely appointed evangelists, pastors, and teachers, in this time of the end? No wonder if Sister White had to say the following warning:

“There are many ministers who have never been converted. They come to the prayer-meeting and pray the same old, lifeless prayers over and over, from week to week, and from month to month. They have nothing new and inspiring to present to their congregation, and it is evident that they are not eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man, for they have no life in them. They are not partakers of the divine nature; Christ is not abiding in their hearts by faith.” -- **Review and Herald, vol. 2, p. 337.**

[3] Food and Beverages

From the above study we have shown that the function of brain would be fully dependent upon the well-balanced volume of blood, and the quality of the blood itself. And the good quality of the blood would also be fully dependent upon the food and beverages we use every day. The more natural the food and beverages according to the law of health, the more healthily we are.

[4] Health

We know from the experience that health is not only dependent upon food and beverages we use. There are yet other factors that could bring direct or indirect effect upon health, such as : the situation and the condition wherein we live, the surrounding areas, the personal habit of living, the long hours of working, the body immunity, the discipline and order on time of eating and drinking, discipline and order in dressing, etc. From the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY we read: *“It is a sin to be sick, for all sickness is the result of transgression.”* -- **Counsels on Health, p. 37.**

It is impossible for those who are sick to be mentally healthy. That is why the sick cannot have the ability to fully think rational.

[5] The Holy Spirit

THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY says: *“Without the enlightenment of the Spirit, men will not be able to distinguish truth from error, and they will fall under the masterful temptations of Satan.* – **Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 411.** It is clear now that the Holy Spirit is indeed the main sustainable factor to the thinking capacity of man.

To Think Rationally

Although man is naturally a rational being, however due to sin and the various sustainable facilities available with everyone that are not the same, then the reasoning power and the level of intellectuality of one would also differ with the other.

Sin is the transgression of the law of God. Due to its hereditary character, that the sin has been inherited from Adam and Eve to their offspring’s up to this day. And even the consequences are to be followed after, to be borne by the father down to their children, and even up to the fourth generation. (Exodus 20 : 5). Hence, beside the various sustainable factors mentioned above, just sin would be the main blocking factor. Therefore Sister White said:

“Sin not only shuts us away from God, but destroys in the human soul both the desire and the capacity for knowing Him.” – **Education, p. 29.**

However through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, man would again be able to distinguish between right and wrong. And that is why the servant of the Lord said: *“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”* – **Psalms 119 : 105.** *“The oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. Thus the Spirit is represented in the prophecy of Zechariah. (Zechariah chapter 4).* – **Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 406.**

Thus under the guidance of the Holy Spirit symbolized by the golden oil of the prophecy of Zechariah chapter 4, God's people in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church should have been more able to think rational. And all the rational thinking would give us the following results:

R I G H T or W R O N G
L O G I C A L or I L L O G I C A L
W O R T H Y or U N W O R T H Y
D I F F I C U L T or E A S Y

The five Senses and their Functions

The five senses exist within every one of us, consist of the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, and the skin.

A. The E y e

The function of the eye is to see. There are many things that could be seen upon the earth. Even the things that are invisible to the eye, they are yet to be looked upon by the eye. According to the things caught in the eyes, they would have been able to give us the following answers: (1) Much or little or many or a few; (2) Red or white or blue, etc; (3) Light or dark or vague; (4) Glorious, beautiful, gentle, bad, and so on.

B. The E a r

The function of the ear is to listen. Everything that gives sound on the earth will be caught in the ear. Those heard will give us one of the following answers: (1) Clear or not clear; (2) Harsh or delicate, uproar or calm, and so on.

C. The N o s e

The function of the nose is to smell. Whatever things on the earth that could give smell or fragrance will be caught in the nose. So as a sense the nose will give us one of the following answers: (1) Fragrant; (2) Stench; and so on.

D. The T o n g u e

The function of the tongue is to taste everything that is taken into the mouth. The result is, the tongue as a sense is to give us one of the following answers: (1) Sweet; (2) Bitter; (3) Hot; (4) Salty; (5) Delicious, and so on.

E. S k i n

The function of the skin is to feel everything that gets in touch with our body. As a result the skin as a sense is to give us one of the following answers: (1) Warm; (2) Cold; (3) Rough or soft, and so on.

As well as the brain and its function are to produce the rational thinking, even so are the five senses and their functions to produce emotion or feeling. Emotion or feeling is to give the answers according to those caught in each of the related sense.

M a k i n g D e c i s i o n

As a people of God to make a decision in a religious matter in this time of the end, is indeed not as easy as one might think. Especially when we are brought to face with the new things presented us from the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY. When the decision made is wrong, and then the maker would possibly be fallen into the so-called unpardonable sin against the Holy Spirit. Whereas when the decision made is right the maker will not as yet be free from the consequences of the prevailing challenges to his faith in God through the truth he has received from the message.

Every decision that has been made will always be marked in the practical doing of the word: To live up the truth or not to live up the truth. Since every act of doing is basically coming from the mind of understanding and belief, then the belief that is followed by the act of doing, is called f a i t h. Thus is the faith that comes from the rational thinking. To this end the servant of the Lord has warned:

“Said the angel: ‘Feeling is not faith. Faith is simply to take God at His word.’ “Many of us walk by sight, and not by faith. We believe the things that are seen, but do not appreciate the precious promises given us in God’s Word; and yet we cannot dishonor God more decidedly than by showing that we distrust what He says, and question whether the Lord is in earnest with us or is deceiving us.”– 1 Testimonies, p. 620; 1 Selected Message, p. 350.

Undeniably true, that in taking into consideration any decision that should be made, we were frequently influenced by emotion or feeling that comes from the five senses. We have been many times influenced by the things that were caught in our sight, and also by the insinuations or provocations that have entered our ears. Due to all these, however, Sister White said:

“The religion of Christ is not a religion of mere emotion. You cannot depend upon your feelings for an evidence of acceptance with God, for feelings are variable. You must plant your feet on the promises of God’s Word and

learn to live by faith. As soon as one begins to contemplate his feelings he is on the dangerous ground.” – In Heavenly Places, p. 126.

“Many make a serious mistake in their religious life by keeping the attention fixed upon their feelings and thus judging of their advancement or decline. Feelings are not a safe criterion. We are not to look within for evidence of our acceptance with God. We shall find there nothing but that which will discourage us.” -- 5 Testimonies, p. 199.

“We need the bread of life that comes down from heaven to give life to the soul. Study the Word of God. Do not be controlled by feeling. To study it is to eat the leaves of the tree of life.” – Evangelism, p. 138.

The bread of life that comes down from heaven to give life to the soul in this time of the end is the Law of God and its rules of implementations in the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY. These are the only requirement that should be met by all of us to reach the sanctified life. Since holiness is the only absolute condition for us to be sealed into the company of the 144,000 elected ones, prior to the pouring out of the Spirit of latter rain in the future, then for studying the Law and its rules of implementation in the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, we should have been able to think rationally. This means reason (not emotion or feeling) should be taken as a dominant factor to control our thinking capacity.

Despite both factors : reason or rational thinking and emotion or feeling, should be functional when making a thorough investigation into the message in the Bible and the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, at every decision making we should depend wholly on the result of the rational thinking only. It means that whatever risk would be the outcome of the decision that has been made, we should fully trust to none other than the truth itself. Because it is the result of rational thinking, that is controlled by “reason” as the only dominant factor.

F a i t h o r B e l i e f

It is from the Bible we know that faith is the belief that is followed by doing. Faith alone is empty. Since faith must be followed by doing, then it is inevitably clear that we must first understand what or how the doing should be carried out. And for us to understand we must first study to investigate the things we are going to take into practical doing. Thus we must first have the Bible and the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, to study to investigate into them, to get them understood, and then have faith in them. And after that to get the faith be taken into practical doing. This is faith or belief that is taught in the

Word of God. To get faith in such a way is normal, because it is the right procedure that has been taken: study ----- understand ----- believe ----- do.

Meanwhile, we also have to understand that the result of the practical doing of faith must be perfect (complete) and satisfying. It means, that we have to study from (A) ----- to ----- (Z) to get the things fully understood and believed, and then to get them practiced. The result would be truly satisfactory. Sister Ellen G. White said:

“When Nicodemus, a great teacher in Israel, came to Jesus, the Master laid before him the conditions of divine life, teaching him the very alphabet of conversion [from (A) --- to --- (Z)].” – 6 Testimonies, p. 154.

The Bible, which was available in the time of Jesus, was still limited to only the Old Testament Scriptures. However, the conditions of divine life available up to that time were enough provided in them. Nicodemus had been instructed by Jesus to get the procedure of conversion systematically followed from A up to Z, as far as those provided him in the Bible of the Old Testament.

At this time, however, not only the Old and the New Testament Scriptures are available in our midst, even the various Testimonies of Christ as well have been developed into the so-called THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, as prophesied in Zechariah chapter 4. Thus it is, as how Jesus had taught Nicodemus the very alphabet of conversion from A --- to --- Z in the past, even to us now through His servant Ellen G. White He said:

“The work for these last days is a missionary work. Present truth, from the first letter of its alphabet to the last, means missionary effort.” – Counsels on Health, p. 300.

“Ministers should present the sure word of prophecy as the foundation of the faith of Seventh-Day Adventists. The prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation should be carefully studied, and in connection with them the words, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” – Gospel Workers, p. 148.

Had the ministers already provided us in writings of all the truths and the sure words of prophecies up to this day, then those words would have been made the foundation of our faith as Seventh-Day Adventists, and then the following instruction by John the Revelator would have been obeyed: *‘Blessed is he that readeth and they that heareth the words of this prophecy*” – **Revelation 1 : 3**. But now we have to strife with all the power God

has given us to find all the truths and the sure words of prophecies by ourselves. The servant of the Lord further said:

“It is the first and highest duty of every rational being to learn from the Scriptures what is truth, and then to walk in the light and encourage others to follow his example.” – **The Great Controversy, p. 598.**

The more we learn from the Scriptures what truth is, the more we could walk in the light. And the more perfect our faith. But the less we learn from the Scriptures what is truth, the more darkened we are in the falsehood. And the result is, the more limited our knowledge, the more imperfect is our faith.

“We must not think, ‘Well, we have all the truth, we understand the main pillars of our faith, and we may rest on this knowledge.’ The truth is an advancing truth, and we must walk in the increasing light.” – **Counsels to Writers and Editors, p. 33.** It is the first and highest duty of man to learn and again from the Scriptures what is truth, because the truth that has been revealed is an advancing truth from A --- to --- Z. to reach its perfect ness in this time of the end. But how could it be with our spiritual condition, when we keep on learning and learning from the Scriptures what is truth, whereas only the same old truths presented us from time to time up to this time without any more advance to completeness? This is the reason why the servant of the Lord said:

“No one should claim that he has all the light there is for God’s people. The Lord will not tolerate this. He has said, ‘I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.’ Even if all our leading men should refuse light and truth, that door will still remain open. The Lord will raise up men who will give the people the message for this time.” – **Testimonies to Ministers, pp. 106, 107.**

“There is no excuse for anyone in taking the position that there is no more truth to be revealed, and that all our expositions of Scripture are without an error. The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people is not a proof that our ideas are infallible. Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation.” – **Counsels to Writers and Editors, p. 35.**

“New light will ever be revealed on the word of God to him who is in living connection with the Sun of Righteousness. Let no one come to the conclusion that there is no more truth to be revealed. The diligent, prayerful seeker for truth will find the precious rays of light yet to shine forth from the word of God. Many gems are yet scattered that are to be gathered together to become

the property of the remnant people of God.” – Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 34. (1892).

“The truth is an advancing truth, and we must walk in the in creasing light.” – Counsels to Writers and Editors, p. 33.

Dear Brethren! Rational thinking would produce fruits of the true and right practical doing of the word. Belief that is followed by the true and right practical doing of the word is called “faith” in the sense of the Bible. Therefore, faith is the result of rational thinking.

The Just shall live by Faith

“The Just shall live by Faith” is the subject of DR. Martin Luther doctrinal point of view, which was the foundation of his reform movement. And it is the doctrine that has toppled the powerful papacy of the Roman Catholic Church in 1798. After the spiritual declension began to overcome the Seventh-Day Adventists after 1880, then the doctrine of faith again was offered us through the General Conference of SDA leadership session in 1888 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA. The doctrine is more known today as the message of the “Justification by Faith” by Elders Waggoner and Jones. To this end Sister White said:

“Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third’s angel message, and I have answered, ‘It is the third angel’s message in verity.’” — 1 Selected Messages, p. 372.

“The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin – pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth.” – Review and Herald, November 22, 1892.

We have found from the above two quotations, that the doctrine of “Justification by Faith”, besides being a part of the third angel’s message, which is the Spirit of Prophecy of Sister White, it also is the beginning of the light of the angel of Revelation 18 : 1, which is the message of the Shepherd’s Rod that came in 1929 through Bro. Victor T. Houteff. What are indeed the objective and the need of the message of Justification by Faith that it should have come ahead of the message of the Shepherd’s Rod? Sister White gave us the answer in the following quotation:

“The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Savior, the sacrifice for the sins of

*the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family.” – **Testimonies to Ministers, pp. 91 – 92.***

It means, that the message of Justification by Faith emphasizes the following,

1. Building faith upon the foundation of the Ten Commandments of the Law of God. This is to be manifested in obedience to all the commandments as stipulated in the rules of implementations of the Law provided in The SPIRIT OF PROPHECIES.
2. Uplifting Christ the Savior, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.
3. Receiving of Christ’s righteousness, which is the full and complete forgiveness of sin as the result of faith, which is followed by the obedience to all the commandments of God from (A) --- to--- (Z).

Attention !

Solomon the prophet ever said: “*For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.*” – **Proverbs 24 : 16.** It means, that due to having faith that is based upon all the commandments of God from (A) --- to --- (Z), then whatever sin one may be implicated in, and how ever frequently he may fall , he would always be sure to rise up again. Thus is the status of the just as the people of God, who persist to maintain their existence here on earth up to their coming deliverance unto the kingdom in Palestine.

Dear Brethren, had the General Conference leadership and all their ministers all over the world still have the ability to think rational, then they should have been convinced by themselves, that with so many prophecies of the Old Testament and the book of Revelation and even the parables of Jesus in the New Testament, are not as yet revealed in our midst up to this time, then there must be inevitably something wrong with their way of teaching the Bible doctrine in our midst. It will be proven by itself that the message of “Justification by Faith” presented to them by the ministers, Waggoner and Jones, in the General Conference Session of 1888 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA, has not as yet been fully understood, to be taken into their practical doing. Thus despite their repeated claims of their fault in the past for having rejected the message, they still failed to manifest themselves obedient to all the commandments of God and its rules of implementation in the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY. To such a folly the servant of the Lord warned:

“Faith in a lie will not have a sanctifying influence upon the life or character. No error is truth, or can be made truth by repetition, or by faith in it. Sincerity will never save a soul from the consequences of believing an error. Without sincerity there is no true religion, but sincerity in a false religion will never save a man. I may be perfectly sincere in following a wrong road, but that will not make it the right road, or bring me to the place I wished to reach. The Lord does not want us to have a blind credulity, and call that the faith that sanctifies. The truth is the principle that sanctifies, and therefore it becomes us to know what truth is. We must compare spiritual things with spiritual. We must prove all things, but hold fast only that which is good, that which bears the divine credentials, which lays before us the true motives and principles which should prompt us to action. – Letter 12, 1890.”
-- 2 Selected Messages, p. 56.

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