

## The Divine Principle of Cooperation

The Provision for Salvation.--Penance, mortifications of the flesh, constant confession of sin, without sincere repentance; fasts, festivals, and outward observances, unaccompanied by true devotion--all these are of no value whatever. The sacrifice of Christ is sufficient; He made a whole, efficacious offering to God; and human effort without the merit of Christ, is worthless. We not only dishonor God by taking this course but we destroy our present and future usefulness. A failure to appreciate the value of the offering of Christ, has a debasing influence; it blights our expectations, and makes us fall short of our privileges; it leads us to receive unsound and perilous theories concerning the salvation that has been purchased for us at infinite cost. **The plan of salvation is not understood to be that through which divine power is brought to man in order that his human effort may be wholly successful.** {3SM 190.1}

To be pardoned in the way that Christ pardons, is not only to be forgiven, but to be renewed in the spirit of our mind. The Lord says, "A new heart will I give unto thee." The image of Christ is to be stamped upon the very mind, heart, and soul. The apostle says, "But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16). Without the transforming process which can come alone through divine power, the original propensities to sin are left in the heart in all their strength, to forge new chains, to impose a slavery that can never be broken by human power. But men can never enter heaven with their old tastes, inclinations, idols, ideas, and theories. Heaven would be no place of joy to them; for everything would be in collision with their tastes, appetites, and inclinations, and painfully opposed to their natural and cultivated traits of character. {3SM 190.2}

Happiness is the result of holiness and conformity to the will of God. Those who would be saints in heaven must first be saints upon the earth; for when we leave this earth, we shall take our character with us, and this will be simply taking with us some of the elements of heaven imparted to us through the righteousness of Christ.--Review and Herald, Aug. 19, 1890. {3SM 191.1}

Now Jesus stands in our world, His divinity clothed with humanity, and man must be clothed with Christ's righteousness. Then he can, through the righteousness of Christ, stand acquitted before God. {1SAT 113.2}

O, I am glad I have a Saviour! **We must have the Holy Spirit to combine with man's human effort.** We can do nothing without Christ. "Without Me, ye can do nothing." "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" [Rev. 3:20]. I am so glad that we can be partakers of the divine nature, and that through Jesus Christ we can be conquerors. This is the victory--even your faith, feelings, and good works? Is that it? No; "This is the victory . . . , even your faith" [1 John 5:4]. {1SAT 113.3}

What is faith? It "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Then what? "Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" [James 2:17]. Therefore we lay hold upon the merits of the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour. Our lives are hid with Christ in God. There we have the whole of it. We can do nothing of ourselves, but the fire of God's love is burning on the altar of our hearts. We are not following cunningly devised fables, no indeed; but we have been revealing Christ our righteousness. If you boast in your own good works, you cannot boast in Christ. {1SAT 113.4}

{David}

With deepest interest the king had gathered the rich material for building and beautifying the temple. He had composed the glorious anthems that in after years should echo through its courts. Now his heart was made glad in God, as the chief of the fathers and the princes of Israel so nobly responded to his appeal, and offered themselves to the important work before them. And as they gave their service, they were disposed to do more. They swelled the gifts, giving of their own possessions into the treasury. David had felt deeply his own unworthiness in gathering the material for the house of God, and the expression of loyalty in the ready response of the nobles of his kingdom, as they came forward, with willing hearts dedicating their treasures to Jehovah, and devoting themselves to his service, filled him with joy. But it was God alone who had imparted this disposition to his people. He

must be glorified, not man. God must receive the honor and praise due to his name. It was he who had provided the people with the riches of earth, and his Spirit had made them willing to bring their precious things for the temple. It was all of the Lord; **if his divine power had not wrought with human effort, moving upon the hearts of the people, the king's efforts would have been in vain, and the temple would never have been erected.** {RH, December 11, 1888 par. 4}

{Daniel}

True success in any line of work is not the result of chance or accident or destiny. It is the outworking of God's providences, the reward of faith and discretion, of virtue and perseverance. Fine mental qualities and a high moral tone are not the result of accident. God gives opportunities; success depends upon the use made of them.

While God was working in Daniel and his companions "to will and to do of His good pleasure," they were working out their own salvation. Philippians 2:13. **Herein is revealed the outworking of the divine principle of co-operation, without which no true success can be attained. Human effort avails nothing without divine power; and without human endeavor, divine effort is with many of no avail. To make God's grace our own, we must act our part. His grace is given to work in us to will and to do, but never as a substitute for our effort.**

As the Lord co-operated with Daniel and his fellows, so **He will co-operate with all who strive to do His will.** And by the impartation of His Spirit **He will strengthen every true purpose, every noble resolution.** Those who walk in the path of obedience will encounter many hindrances. Strong, subtle influences may bind them to the world; but the Lord is able to render futile every agency that works for the defeat of His chosen ones; in His strength they may overcome every temptation, conquer every difficulty. {PK 486-487}

Satan had gained the victory over man in almost every temptation on the point of appetite. The Son of God saw that man could not of himself overcome this powerful temptation and he had such infinite love for the race that he left the royal courts of Heaven, and clothed his divinity with humanity, that with his long human arm he might reach to the very depths of human woe, while with his divine arm he grasps the Infinite. **He came to earth to unite his divine power with our human efforts, that through the strength and moral power which he imparts, we may overcome in our own behalf.** Oh! what matchless condescension for the King of glory to come down to this world to endure the pangs of hunger and the fierce temptations of a wily foe, that he might gain an infinite victory for man. Here is love without a parallel. Yet this great condescension is but dimly comprehended by those for whom it was made. {ST, August 7, 1879 par. 14 (also found in "God's Amazing Grace", 164 and "In Heavenly Places", 194)}

**Now is the time to receive grace and strength and power to combine with our human efforts that we can form characters for everlasting life. When we do this we will find that the angels of God will minister unto us,** and we shall be heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. And when the last trump shall sound, and the dead shall be called from their prison house and changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the crowns of immortal glory shall be placed upon the heads of the overcomers. The pearly gates will swing back for the nations that have kept the truth and they will enter in. The conflict is ended. {Mar 334.3}

... But of ourselves we can do nothing. If we try to work in our own strength, we shall fail completely. **Jesus came to our world to bring divine power to combine with human effort. When God unites his power with man's effort, the work is brought to perfection.** God wants to do great things for his people; and if we only have faith in him, he will work for us mightily. {RH, May 7, 1889 par. 8}

But Christ has given us no assurance that to attain perfection of character is an easy matter. A noble, all-round character is not inherited. It does not come to us by accident. **A noble character is earned by individual effort through the merits and grace of Christ. God gives the talents, the powers of the mind; we form the character.** It is formed by hard, stern battles with self. Conflict after conflict must be waged against hereditary tendencies. We shall have to criticize ourselves closely, and allow not one unfavorable trait to remain uncorrected. {COL 331.1}

**The heavenly intelligences will work with the human agent who seeks with determined faith that perfection of character which will reach out to perfection in action. To everyone engaged in this work Christ says, I am at your right hand to help you.** {COL 332.4}

**As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings.** {COL 333.1}

Today Satan presents the same temptations that he presented to Christ, offering us the kingdoms of the world in return for our allegiance. But upon him who looks to Jesus as the author and finisher of his faith, Satan's temptations have no power. **He cannot cause to sin the one who will accept by faith the virtues of Him who was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin.**

**The expulsion of sin is the act of the soul itself. True, we have no power to free ourselves from Satan's control; but when we desire to be set free from sin, and in our great need cry out for a power out of and above ourselves, the powers of the soul are imbued with the divine energy of the Holy Spirit, and they obey the dictates of the will in fulfilling the will of God.** (Maranatha - Page 91)

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. Titus 2:11, 12. {RC 296.1}

While Christ is cleansing the sanctuary, the worshipers on earth should carefully review their life, and compare their character with the standard of righteousness. As they see their defects, they should seek the aid of the Spirit of God to enable them to have moral strength to resist the temptations of Satan, and to reach the perfection of the standard. **They may be victors over the very temptations which seemed too strong for humanity to bear; for the divine power will be combined with their human effort, and Satan cannot overcome them.** {RC 296.2}

All heaven has been looking on with interest, and ready to do whatever God might appoint, to help fallen men and women to become what God would have them. **God will work for His children, but not without their cooperation. They must have indomitable energy, and a constant desire to become all that it is possible for them to be.** {RC 296.3}

They should seek to cultivate their powers and develop characters that will be meet for a holy heaven. Then and then only will the servants of God be bright and shining lights in the world. Then they will bring energy into their Christian life, for they will put all their powers to the task, and respond to the efforts that have been made to uplift, refine, and purify them, that they may shine in the courts above. They will bring all their powers under the control of the Spirit of God; they will study His Word, and listen for His voice, to direct, encourage, strengthen, and advance them in their religious experience. {RC 296.4}

**Those who are waiting to behold a magical change in their characters, without a determined effort on their part, will be disappointed.** With our limited powers we are to be as holy in our sphere as God is holy in his sphere. To the extent of our ability we are to make manifest the truth and love and

excellence of the divine character, and for this reason we must draw from the living fountain. As the wax takes the impression of the seal, so the soul is to take the impression of the Spirit of God, and retain the moral image of Christ. We are to become partakers of the divine nature, realizing in our experience the vigor and perfection of spiritual life. {RH, November 1, 1892 par. 9}

"Wherefore, my beloved," he continued, "as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling**. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do His good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain." {AA 481.3}

These words were recorded for the help of every striving soul. Paul holds up the standard of perfection and shows how it may be reached. "Work out your own salvation," he says, "for it is God which worketh in you." {AA 482.1}

The work of gaining salvation is one of copartnership, a joint operation. There is to be co-operation between God and the repentant sinner. This is necessary for the formation of right principles in the character. **Man is to make earnest efforts to overcome that which hinders him from attaining to perfection. But he is wholly dependent upon God for success.** Human effort of itself is not sufficient. Without the aid of divine power it avails nothing. God works and man works. Resistance of temptation must come from man, who must draw his power from God. On the one side there is infinite wisdom, compassion, and power; on the other, weakness, sinfulness, absolute helplessness. {AA 482.2}

**God wishes us to have the mastery over ourselves. But He cannot help us without our consent and co-operation. The divine Spirit works through the powers and faculties given to man.** Of ourselves, we are not able to bring the purposes and desires and inclinations into harmony with the will of God; but if we are "willing to be made willing," the Saviour will accomplish this for us, "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:5. {AA 482.3}

Says the prophet: "Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Malachi 3:2, 3. Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. **Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort they must be conquerors in the battle with evil.** While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God's people upon earth. This work is more clearly presented in the messages of Revelation 14. {GC 425.1}

When this work shall have been accomplished, the followers of Christ will be ready for His appearing. "Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years." Malachi 3:4. Then the church which our Lord at His coming is to receive to Himself will be a "glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." Ephesians 5:27. Then she will look "forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Song of Solomon 6:10. {GC 425.2}

Yes, Christ has become the medium of prayer between man and God. He also has become the medium of blessing between God and man. He has combined divinity and humanity. **Men are to be co-**

laborers with God in the salvation of their own souls, and then make earnest, persevering, untiring efforts to save those who are ready to perish (Letter 22, 1898). {6BC 1078.8}

I was shown that the follies of Israel in the days of Samuel will be repeated among the people of God today, unless there is greater humility, less confidence in self, and more trust in the Lord God of Israel, the Ruler of the people. **It is only as divine power is combined with human effort that the work will abide the test.** When men lean no longer on men or on their own judgment, but make God their trust, it will be made manifest in every instance by meekness of spirit, by less talking and much more praying, by the exercise of caution in their plans and movements. Such men will reveal the fact that their dependence is in God, that they have the mind of Christ. {LS 323.1}

God calls upon those to whom He has entrusted His goods to acquit themselves as **faithful stewards**. The Lord would have all things of temporal interest occupy a secondary place in the heart and thoughts; but Satan would have the matters of the earth take the first place in our lives. The Lord would have us approve the things that are excellent. He shows us the conflict in which we must engage, reveals the character and plan of redemption. He lays open before you the perils you will meet, the self-denial that will be required, and He bids you count the cost, assuring you that if you zealously engage in the conflict, **divine power will combine with human effort.** {FW 92.2}

**The Christian's warfare is not a warfare waged against flesh** and blood but against principalities, against powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places. The Christian must contend with supernatural forces, but he is not to be left alone to engage in the conflict. The Saviour is the captain of his salvation, and with Him man may be more than conqueror. {FW 92.3}

The world's Redeemer would not have man in ignorance of Satan's devices. The vast confederacy of evil is arrayed against those who would overcome; but Christ would have us look to the things that are not seen, to the armies of heaven that encamp round about those who love God, to deliver them. The angels of heaven are interested in behalf of man. **The power of Omnipotence is at the service of those who trust in God.** The Father accepts the righteousness of Christ in behalf of His followers, and they are surrounded with light and holiness which Satan cannot penetrate. The voice of the Captain of our salvation speaks to His followers, saying, "'Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.' I am your defense; advance to victory." {FW 93.1}

All the plan of redemption is expressed in these precious words: "For God so loved the world, that He gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Christ actually bore the punishment of the sins of the world, that His righteousness might be imputed to sinners, and through repentance and faith they might become like Him in holiness of character. He says, "I bear the guilt of that man's sins. Let Me take the punishment and the repenting sinner stand before Thee innocent." The moment the sinner believes in Christ, he stands in the sight of God uncondemned; for the righteousness of Christ is his: Christ's perfect obedience is imputed to him. But **he must co-operate with divine power, and put forth his human effort to subdue sin, and stand complete in Christ.** {FE 429.3}

When you die to self, when you surrender to God, to do His work, to let the light that He has given you shine forth in good works, you will not labor alone. **God's grace stands forth to cooperate with every effort** to enlighten the ignorant and those who do not know that the end of all things is at hand. But **God will not do your work.** Light may shine in abundance, but the **grace given will convert your soul only as it arouses you to cooperate with divine agencies.** You are called upon to put on the Christian armor and enter the Lord's service as active soldiers. **Divine power is to cooperate with human effort to break the spell of worldly enchantment** that the enemy has cast upon souls. {AG 37.4}

The Lord has honored us by choosing us as His soldiers. Let us fight bravely for Him, maintaining the right in every transaction. Rectitude in all things is essential to the warfare of the soul. As you strive for the victory over your own inclinations, He will help you by His Holy Spirit to be circumspect in every action, that you may give no occasion for the enemy to speak evil of the truth. {AG 37.5}

God was to be manifest in Christ, "reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). Man had become so degraded by sin that it was impossible for him, in himself, to come into harmony with Him whose nature is purity and goodness. But **Christ, after having redeemed man from the condemnation of the law, could impart divine power to unite with human effort.** Thus by repentance toward God and faith in Christ the fallen children of Adam might once more become "sons of God." {AG 53.5}

**When a soul receives Christ, he receives power to live the life of Christ.** {AG 53.6}

### {Moses}

Moses would never have been prepared for his position of trust had he waited for God to do the work for him. Light from heaven will come to those who feel the need of it, and who seek for it as for hidden treasures. But if we sink down into a state of inactivity, willing to be controlled by Satan's power, God will not send His inspiration to us. **Unless we exert to the utmost the powers which He has given us, we shall ever remain weak and inefficient.** Much prayer and the most vigorous exercise of the mind are necessary if we would be prepared to do the work which God would entrust to us. Many never attain to the position which they might occupy, because they wait for God to do for them that which He has given them power to do for themselves. All who are fitted for usefulness in this life must be trained by the severest mental and moral discipline, and then **God will assist them by combining divine power with human effort.** {4T 611.2}

### {Joshua}

The Spirit of God inspired Joshua's prayer, that evidence might again be given of the power of Israel's God. Hence the request did not show presumption on the part of the great leader. Joshua had received the promise that God would surely overthrow these enemies of Israel, yet he put forth as earnest effort as though success depended upon the armies of Israel alone. He did all that human energy could do, and then he cried in faith for divine aid. **The secret of success is the union of divine power with human effort.** Those who achieve the greatest results are those who rely most implicitly upon the Almighty Arm. The man who commanded, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon," is the man who for hours lay prostrate upon the earth in prayer in the camp of Gilgal. The men of prayer are the men of power. {PP 509.1}

### {Disciples of Jesus}

... Though they were to be deprived of His personal companionship, and of the means of support by their former employment, the risen Saviour would still have a care for them. While they were doing His work, He would provide for their needs. And Jesus had a purpose in bidding them cast their net on the right side of the ship. On that side He stood upon the shore. That was the side of faith. **If they labored in connection with Him,--His divine power combining with their human effort,--they could not fail of success.** {DA 810.5}

**When divine power is combined with human effort, the work will spread like fire in the stubble.** God will employ agencies whose origin man will be unable to discern. Angels will do a work which men might have had the blessing of accomplishing had they not neglected to answer the claims of God.--1SM 118 (1885). {LDE 207.3}

... Some have strong traits of character that will need to be constantly repressed. If kept under the control of the Spirit of God, these traits will be a blessing; but if not, they will prove a curse. If those who are now riding upon the wave of popularity do not become giddy, it will be a miracle of mercy. If they lean to their own wisdom, as so many thus situated have done, their wisdom will prove to be foolishness. But while they shall give themselves unselfishly to the work of God, never swerving in the least from principle, the Lord will throw about them the everlasting arm and will prove to them a mighty helper. "Them that honor Me, I will honor." {4T 538.1}

This is a dangerous age for any man who has talents which can be of value in the work of God; for Satan is constantly plying his temptations upon such a person, ever trying to fill him with pride and ambition; and when God would use him, it is too often the case that he becomes independent and self-sufficient, and feels capable of standing alone. This will be your danger, brethren, unless you live a life of constant faith and prayer. You may have a deep and abiding sense of eternal things and that love for humanity which Christ has shown in His life. A close connection with heaven will give the right tone to your fidelity and will be the ground of your success. Your feeling of dependence will drive you to prayer, and your sense of duty summon you to effort. **Prayer and effort, effort and prayer, will be the business of your life. You must pray as though the efficiency and praise were all due to God, and labor as though duty were all your own. If you want power you may have it; it is waiting your draft upon it. Only believe in God, take Him at His word, act by faith, and blessings will come.** {4T 538.2}

In this matter, genius, logic, and eloquence will not avail. Those who have a humble, trusting, contrite heart, God accepts, and hears their prayer; and when God helps, all obstacles will be overcome. How many men of great natural abilities and high scholarships have failed when placed in positions of responsibility, while those of feebler intellect, with less favorable surroundings, have been wonderfully successful. The secret was: The former trusted to themselves, while the latter united with Him who is wonderful in counsel and mighty in working to accomplish what He will. {4T 539.1}

Their work being always urgent, it is difficult for some to secure time for meditation and prayer; but this they should not fail to do. The blessing of heaven, obtained by daily supplication, will be as the bread of life to the soul and will cause them to increase in moral and spiritual strength, like a tree planted by the river of waters, whose leaf will be always green and whose fruit will appear in due time. {4T 539.2}

After we have offered our petitions, we are to answer them ourselves as far as possible, and not wait for God to do for us what we can do for ourselves. **The help of God is held in reserve for all who demand it. Divine help is to be combined with human effort, aspiration, and energy.** But we cannot reach the battlements of Heaven without climbing for ourselves. We cannot be borne up by the prayers of others when we ourselves neglect to pray, for God has made no such provision for us. Not even divine power can lift one soul to Heaven that is unwilling to put forth efforts in his own behalf. **The unlovely traits in our characters are not removed, and replaced by traits that are pure and lovely, without some effort on our part.** {ST, August 14, 1884 par. 13. Also in "My Life Today" - Page 19}

As thus step by step we ascend the shining ladder that leads to the city of God, oh how many times we shall be discouraged, and come to weep at the feet of Jesus over our failures and our defeats. In our efforts to follow the copy set us by our Lord, we shall make crooked lines, and leave many a page blotted and blistered by our tears of repentance. Yet let us not cease our efforts. **Heaven can be attained by every one of us if we will strive lawfully, doing the will of Jesus and growing into his image. Temporary failure should make us lean more heavily on Christ, and we should press on with brave-heart, determined will, and unfaltering purpose.** {ST, August 14, 1884 par. 14}