

SOME QUOTATIONS FROM ELLEN WHITE REGARDING FAITH, EVIDENCE, AND INQUIRY

I. The trust that God desires is based on evidence.

Acts 16:30,31. "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'" (KJV)

"Put your trust in the Lord Jesus. . . ." (NEB)

"Have faith in the Lord Jesus" (Berkeley)

Romans 10:17. "So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ." (RSV)

1. "God never asks us to believe, without giving sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith. His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His Word, are all established by testimony that appeals to our reason; and this testimony is abundant. Yet God has never removed the possibility of doubt. Our faith must rest upon evidence, not demonstration. Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the truth, will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith." Steps to Christ 105 (1892)
2. "God gives sufficient evidence for the candid mind to believe." Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 232 (1876); 5T 675
3. "There are many who fail to distinguish between the rashness of presumption and the intelligent confidence of faith. . . .
"God has given man precious promises upon conditions of faith and obedience; but they are not to sustain him in any rash act. If men needlessly place themselves in peril, and go where God does not require them to go, and self-confidently expose themselves to danger, disregarding the dictates of reason, God will not work a miracle to relieve them. He will not send His angels to preserve any from being burned if they choose to place themselves in the fire." Review and Herald, April 1, 1875 (1RH 161:2:5, 3:3)
4. "God gives sufficient evidence to every soul. He does not promise to remove every doubt, but He gives a reason for faith. And sufficient evidence was given to the Jews." Review and Herald, January 24, 1899 (4RH 13:2:4)
5. "Satan has ability to suggest doubts and devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue and mark of intelligence in them to be unbelieving, and questioning, and quibbling. Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and teachable spirit. All should decide from the weight of evidence." Review and Herald, Sept. 16, 1873 (1RH 132:1:3); 3T 255; 5T 675; cf. 1RH 132:3:2,3
6. "Here is a test which all may apply if they will. None need be left in uncertainty and doubt. There is always sufficient evidence upon which to base an intelligent faith. But God will never remove from any man all occasion for doubts. Those who love to dwell in the atmosphere of doubt and questioning unbelief can have the unenviable privilege. He who turns from the weight of evidence because there are a few things that he cannot make plain to his finite understanding, will be

left to the cold, chilling atmosphere of unbelief and skepticism, and will make shipwreck of faith." Signs of the Times, December 30, 1886 (2ST 83:2:2)

II. Evidence must be carefully and fairly examined.

1 Thessalonians 5:21. "Test everything. Hold on to the good." (NIV)

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3. "We ask you, brothers, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us . . . Don't let anyone deceive you in any way." (NIV)

7. "But as real spiritual life declines, it has ever been the tendency to cease to advance in the knowledge of the truth. Men rest satisfied with the light already received from God's word and discourage any further investigation of the Scriptures. They become conservative and seek to avoid discussion.

"The fact that there is no controversy or agitation among God's people should not be regarded as conclusive evidence that they are holding fast to sound doctrine. There is reason to fear that they may not be clearly discriminating between truth and error. When no new questions are started by investigation of the Scriptures, when no difference of opinion arises which will set men to searching the Bible for themselves to make sure that they have the truth, there will be many now, as in ancient times, who will hold to tradition and worship they know not what." Testimonies, vol. 5, pp. 706-707 (1889); GW 297,298; CWE 39

8. "There is no excuse for any one 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." Review and Herald, Dec. 20, 1892 (2RH 623:1:1); CWE 35

9. "However long men may have entertained certain views, if they are not clearly sustained by the written word, they should be discarded.

"Those who sincerely desire truth will not be reluctant to lay open their positions for investigation and criticism, and will not be annoyed if their opinions and ideas are crossed." Review and Herald, July 26, 1892 (2RH 585:2:1,2); CWE 37

10. "I have been shown that many who profess to have a knowledge of present truth know not what they believe. They do not understand the evidences of their faith. . . . When the time of trial shall come, there are men now preaching to others who will find, upon examining the positions they hold, that there are many things for which they can give no satisfactory reason. Until thus tested they knew not their great ignorance. And there are many in the church who take it for granted that they understand what they believe; but, until controversy arises, they do not know their own weakness. When separated from those of like faith, and compelled to stand singly and alone to explain their belief, they will be surprised to see how confused are their ideas of what they had accepted as truth. . . .

"Believers are not to rest in suppositions and ill-defined ideas of what constitutes truth. Their faith must be firmly founded upon the word of God so that when the testing time shall come and they are brought before councils to answer for their faith they may be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them. . . .

"It is important that in defending the doctrines which we consider fundamental articles of faith we should never allow ourselves to employ arguments that are not wholly sound. These may avail to silence an opposer but they do not honor the truth. We should present sound arguments, that will not only silence our opponents, but will bear the closest and most searching scrutiny." Testimonies, vol. 5, pp. 707,708 (1889); GW 297-300; CWE 39,40

11. "Those who cannot impartially examine the evidences of a position that differs from theirs, are not fit to teach in any department of God's cause." Review and Herald, February 18, 1890 (2RH 368:1:3)
12. "Experience is said to be the best teacher. Genuine experience is indeed superior to mere theoretical knowledge, but many have an erroneous idea as to what constitutes experience. Real experience is gained by a variety of careful experiments, made with the mind free from prejudice, uncontrolled by previously established opinions and habits. The results are marked with careful solicitude. . . .
 "That which many term experience is not experience at all. . . . There has not been a fair trial by actual experiment and thorough investigation, with a knowledge of the principles involved in the action. . . .
 "Here is where we have met the greatest difficulties in religious matters. The plainest facts may be presented, the clearest truths, sustained by the word of God, may be brought before the mind; but the ear and the heart are closed, and the all-convincing argument is, 'my experience.' Some will say, 'The Lord has blessed me in believing and doing as I have; therefore I cannot be in error.' 'My experience' is clung to, and the most elevating, sanctifying truths of the Bible are rejected. . . .
 "Many examples might be given to show how people have been deceived by relying upon what they supposed to be their experience." Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene 109-110 (1890 - Originally written in 1865 in a series "How to Live")
13. "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 is truth. 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 (Selected Messages, vol. 2, p. 56)

III. It is not safe to trust mere assertions or claims.

Proverbs 14:15. "A fool will believe anything;
 smart people watch their step." (GNB)

"A simple man believes every word he hears;
 a clever man understands the need for proof." (NEB)

Matthew 24:4,5. "Jesus answered, 'Watch out, and do not let anyone fool you. Many men, claiming to speak for me, will come and say, "I am the Messiah!" and they will fool many people.'" (GNB)

1 John 4:1,2. "My dear friends, do not believe all who claim to have the Spirit, but test them to find out if the spirit they have comes from God. For many false prophets have gone out everywhere." (GNB)

1 Kings 13:15-18. "Then he [the old prophet] said to him, 'Come home with me and eat bread.' And he [the man of God] said, 'I may not return with you, or go in with you; neither will I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place; for it was said to me by the word of the Lord, "You shall neither eat bread nor drink water

there, nor return by the way that you came." And he said to him, 'I also am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord, saying, "Bring him back with you into your house that he may eat bread and drink water." But he lied to him.' (RSV)

14. "Let none cherish the idea that special providences or miraculous manifestations are to be the proof of the genuineness of their work or of the ideas they advocate. If we keep these things before the people, they will produce an evil effect, an unhealthful emotion. The genuine working of the Holy Spirit on human hearts is promised, to give efficiency through the Word. . . . the Bible will never be superseded by miraculous manifestations. . . . We shall encounter false claims; false prophets will arise; there will be false dreams and false visions; but preach the Word, be not drawn away from the voice of God in His Word. Let nothing divert the mind. The wonderful, the marvelous, will be represented and presented. Through satanic delusions, wonderful miracles, the claims of human agents will be urged. Beware of all this. . . . We must not trust the claims of men. . . . Nor can we trust impressions. . . . The man who makes the working of miracles the test of his faith will find that Satan can, through a species of deceptions, perform wonders that will appear to be genuine miracles. . . . If we accept not the truth in the love of it, we may be among the number who will see the miracles wrought by Satan in these last days, and believe them." Selected Messages, vol. 2, pp. 48-53
15. "Every individual soul has a responsibility before God, and is not to be arbitrarily instructed by men as to what he shall do, what he shall say, and where he shall go. We are not to put confidence in the counsel of men and assent to all they shall say unless we have evidence that they are under the influence of the Spirit of God." Review and Herald, July 1, 1909 (5RH 525:1:3)
16. "If we mistake the wisdom of man for the wisdom of God we are led astray by the foolishness of man's wisdom. Here is the great danger of many in the habit. They have not an experience for themselves. They have not been in the habit of prayerfully considering for themselves, with unprejudiced, unbiased judgment, questions and subjects that are new and that are ever liable to arise. They wait to see what others will think. If these dissent, that is all that is needed to convince them that the subject under consideration is of no account whatever. Although this class is large, it does not change the fact that they are inexperienced and weak-minded through long yielding to the enemy, and will always be as sickly as babes, walking by others' light, living on others' experience, feeling as others feel, and acting as others act. They act as though they had not an individuality. Their identity is submerged in others; they are merely shadows of those whom they think about right. Unless these become sensible of their wavering character and correct it, they will all fail of everlasting life; they will be unable to cope with the perils of the last days. . . .
- "Men, women, and youth, God requires you to possess moral courage, steadiness of purpose, fortitude and perseverance, minds that cannot take the assertions of another, but which will investigate for themselves before receiving or rejecting, that will study and weigh evidence, and take it to the Lord in prayer. . . ." Testimonies, vol. 2, pp. 129,130 (1868)
17. "He [Christ] maintained his disguise till he had interpreted the Scriptures, and had led them to an intelligent faith in his life, his character, his mission to earth, and his death and resurrection. He wished the truth to take firm root in their minds, not because it was supported by his personal testimony, but because the typical law, and the prophets of the Old Testament, agreeing with the facts of his life and death, presented unquestionable evidence of that truth." Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 3, p. 214 (1878); 4ST 492:3:2 (5BC 1125; 7aBC 245) (emphasis supplied)

18. "As Jesus came into the temple, He took in the whole scene. He saw the unfair transactions. He saw the distress of the poor, who thought that without shedding of blood there would be no forgiveness for their sins. He saw the outer court of His temple converted into a place of unholy traffic. The sacred enclosure had become one vast exchange.

"Christ saw that something must be done. Numerous ceremonies were enjoined upon the people without the proper instruction as to their import. The worshipers offered their sacrifices without understanding that they were typical of the only perfect Sacrifice. And among them, unrecognized and unhonored, stood the One symbolized by all their service. He had given directions in regard to the offerings. He understood their symbolical value, and He saw that they were now perverted and misunderstood. Spiritual worship was fast disappearing. No link bound the priests and rulers to their God. Christ's work was to establish an altogether different worship." Desire of Ages 157 (1898) (emphasis supplied)

IV. It is not safe to trust mere miracles, signs or wonders.

Deuteronomy 13:1-3. "If a prophet arises among you, or a dreamer of dreams, and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder which he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, 'Let us go after other gods,' which you have not known, 'and let us serve them,' you shall not listen to the word of that prophet or to that dreamer of dreams." (RSV)

Matthew 24:24. "If anyone says to you then, 'Look, here is Christ!' or 'There he is!' don't believe it. False christs and false prophets are going to appear and will produce great signs and wonders to mislead, if it were possible, even God's own people!" (Phillips)

19. "The way in which Christ worked was to preach the Word, and to relieve suffering by miraculous works of healing. But I am instructed that we cannot now work in this way; for Satan will exercise his power by working miracles. God's servants today could not work by means of miracles; because spurious works of healing, claiming to be divine, will be wrought.

"For this reason the Lord has marked out a way in which His people are to carry forward a work of physical healing, combined with the teaching of the Word. . . . The truth must be proclaimed in the highways and the byways, and thus work is to be done by sensible, rational methods. . . . We are to keep as far from the theatrical and the extraordinary as Christ kept in His work." LT 53, 1904; Notebook Leaflets, vol. 1, no. 32; (first portion in 2SM 54)

20. "I am afraid of anything that would have a tendency to turn the mind away from the solid evidences of the truth as revealed in God's word. I am afraid of it, I am afraid of it. We must bring our minds within the bounds of reason, lest the enemy so come as to set everything in a disorderly way." MS 115, 1908; Selected Messages, vol. 2, p. 43; "The Ralph Mackin Story," Review and Herald, Aug. 17, 1972 (see also # 27 below)

21. "The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested." Great Controversy 593 (1888)

22. "As spiritualism more closely imitates the nominal Christianity of the day, it has greater power to deceive and ensnare. Satan himself is converted, after the modern order of things. He will appear in the character of an angel of light. Through the agency of spiritualism, miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed,

and many undeniable wonders will be performed. And as the spirits will profess faith in the Bible, and manifest respect for the institutions of the church, their work will be accepted as a manifestation of divine power." Great Controversy 588 (1888)

V. Faith must not be confused with feelings or impressions.

Proverbs 14:12. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (KJV)

"What you think is the right road may lead to death." (GNB)

23. (A comment on Psalm 81:12, "So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust. . .")
 "Those who desire to follow a course which pleases their fancy are in danger of being left to follow their own inclinations, supposing them to be the leadings of God's Spirit. The duty of some is indicated sufficiently clear by circumstances and facts; but, through the solicitations of friends, in harmony with their own inclinations, they swerve from the path of duty and pass over the clear evidences in the case; then, with apparent conscientiousness, they pray long and earnestly for light. They have earnest feeling in the matter, and they interpret this to be the Spirit of God. But they are deceived. This course grieves the Spirit of God. They had light and in the very reason of things should have understood their duty; but a few pleasing inducements balance their minds in the wrong direction, and they urge these before the Lord and press their case, and the Lord allows them to have their own way. They have so strong an inclination to follow their own course that He permits them to do so and to suffer the results. These imagine that they have a wonderful experience." Testimonies, vol. 3, pp. 73,74 (1872)
24. "They [some unconverted ministers] have occasionally a flight of feeling, which gives them the impression that they are indeed children of God. This dependence upon impressions is one of the special deceptions of Satan." Testimonies, vol. 2, p. 505.5 (Oct. 25, 1868)
25. "Impressions alone are not a safe guide to duty. The enemy often persuades men to believe that it is God who is guiding them, when in reality they are following only human impulses." Acts of the Apostles 279 (1911)
26. "Counterfeit holiness, spurious sanctification, is still doing its work of deception. Under various forms it exhibits the same spirit as in the days of Luther, diverting minds from the Scriptures and leading men to follow their own feelings and impressions rather than to yield obedience to the law of God. This is one of Satan's most successful devices to cast reproach upon purity and truth." Great Controversy 193 (1888)
27. "In the future we shall have special tokens of the influence of the Spirit of God--especially at times when our enemies are the strongest against us. The time will come when we shall see some strange things; but just in what way--whether similar to some of the experiences of the disciples after they received the Holy Spirit following the ascension of Christ--I cannot say. . . .
 "We must go to the people with the solid Word of God; and when they receive that Word, the Holy Spirit may come, but it always comes, as I have stated before, in a way that commends itself to the judgment of the people. In our speaking, our singing, and in all our spiritual exercises, we are to reveal that calmness and dignity and godly fear that actuates every true child of God. . . .
 "I am afraid of anything that would have a tendency to turn the mind away from the solid evidences of the truth as revealed in God's Word. I am afraid of it; I am afraid of it. We must bring our minds within the bounds of reason, lest the

enemy so come in as to set everything in a disorderly way. There are persons of an excitable temperament who are easily led into fanaticism; and should we allow anything to come into our churches that would lead such persons into error, we would soon see these errors carried to extreme lengths, and then because of the course of these disorderly elements, a stigma would rest upon the whole body of Seventh-day Adventists. . .

"During the years of Christ's ministry on earth, . . . The truth was proclaimed intelligently, and so plainly that all could understand. How afraid I am to have anything of a fanatical nature brought in among our people. There are many, many who must be sanctified, but they are to be sanctified through obedience to the message of truth. I am writing on this subject today. In this message there is a beautiful consistency that appeals to the judgment. We cannot allow excitable elements among us to display themselves in a way that would destroy our influence with those whom we wish to reach with the truth. . .

"It is through the Word--not feeling, not excitement--that we want to influence the people to obey the truth. On the platform of God's Word we can stand with safety. The living Word is replete with evidence, and a wonderful power accompanies its proclamation in our world." MS 115, 1908; portions in Selected Messages, vol. 2, pp. 43,44; "The Ralph Mackin Story," Review and Herald, Aug. 17, 1972

28. "As we near the time when principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places will be brought into warfare against the truth, when the deceiving power of Satan will be so great that if it were possible he will deceive the very elect, we must have our discernment sharpened by divine enlightenment, that we may know the spirit that is of God, that we may not be ignorant of Satan's devices. . . .New and strange things will continually arise to lead God's people into false excitement, religious revivals, and curious developments. . . . Thus fanaticism will take the place of well-regulated, well-disciplined, heaven-ordained efforts to carry forward the work to its completion. . . . Not once should feeling be allowed to get the mastery over judgment. . . . Many suppose an emotion or a rapture of feeling to be an evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit. . . . Some open revival meetings, and by this means call large numbers into the church. But when the excitement is over, where are the converted ones? . . . With some, religious exercises mean little more than a good time. When their feelings are aroused, they think they are greatly blessed. Some do not think they are blessed unless they are stirred and excited. . . . Let God's people act so that the world will see that Seventh-day Adventists are an intelligent, thinking people, whose faith is based on a surer foundation than the bedlam of confusion. The people are hungry for the bread of life. Do not offer them a stone." Selected Messages, vol. 2, pp. 15-24

29. "Popular revivals are too often carried by appeals to the imagination, by exciting the emotions, by gratifying the love for what is new and startling. Converts thus gained have little desire to listen to Bible truth, little interest in the testimony of prophets and apostles. Unless a religious service has something of a sensational character, it has no attractions for them. A message which appeals to unimpassioned reason awakens no response. The plain warnings of God's word, relating directly to their eternal interests, are unheeded." Great Controversy 463 (1888)

VI. We must understand truth and evidence for ourselves.

1 Peter 3:15. "Be ready at any time to give a quiet and reverent answer to any man who wants a reason for the hope that you have within you." (Phillips)

30. "Every soul who believes present truth will be brought where he will be required to give a reason of the hope that is in him. The people of God will be

called upon to stand before kings, princes, rulers, and great men of the earth, and they must know that they do know what is truth." Review and Herald, Feb. 10, 1890 (2RH 368:3:4); TM 119; cf. 1SM 416

31. "Young men should search the Scriptures for themselves. They are not to feel that it is sufficient for those older in experience to find out the truth; that the younger ones can accept it from them as authority. . . .
 "Young men in our ranks are watching to see in what spirit the ministers come to the investigation of the Scriptures; whether they have a teachable spirit, and are humble enough to accept evidence, and receive light from the messengers whom God chooses to send.
 "We must study the truth for ourselves. No man should be relied upon to think for us. No matter who he is, or in what position he may be placed, we are not to look upon any man as a criterion for us. We are to counsel together, and to be subject one to another; but at the same time we are to exercise the ability God has given us, in order to learn what is truth. Each one of us must look to God for divine enlightenment. We must individually develop a character that will stand the test in the day of God." Testimonies to Ministers 109,110; first published in Gospel Workers, 1893 ed., pp. 128,129; cf. 2RH 311:3:1 (June 18, 1889)
32. "Satan is constantly endeavoring to attract attention to man in the place of God. He leads the people to look to bishops, to pastors, to professors of theology, as their guides, instead of searching the Scriptures to learn their duty for themselves.

 "There are today thousands of professors of religion who can give no other reason for points of faith which they hold than that they were so instructed by their religious leaders. They pass by the Saviour's teachings almost unnoticed, and place implicit confidence in the words of the ministers. But are ministers infallible? How can we trust our souls to their guidance unless we know from God's word that they are light bearers?" Great Controversy 595-597 (1888)
33. "Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator--individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom this power is developed are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thought. . . . Instead of educated weaklings, institutions of learning may send forth men strong to think and to act, men who are masters and not slaves of circumstances, men who possess breadth of mind, clearness of thought, and the courage of their convictions." Education 17 (1903)
34. "It does not seem possible to us now that any should have to stand alone; but if God has ever spoken by me, the time will come when we shall be brought before councils and before thousands for His name's sake, and each one will have to give the reason of his faith. Then will come the severest criticism upon every position that has been taken for the truth. We need, then, to study the word of God, that we may know why we believe the doctrines we advocate. We must critically search the living oracles of Jehovah." Review and Herald, Dec. 19, 1888 (2RH 270:1:2)
35. "All whom God has blessed with reasoning powers are to become intellectual Christians. They are not requested to believe without evidence; therefore Jesus has enjoined upon all to search the Scriptures. Let the ingenious inquirer, and the one who would know for himself what is truth, exert his mental powers to search out the truth as it is in Jesus. Any neglect here is at the peril of the soul. We must know individually the prescribed conditions of entering into eternal life. . . . We cannot allow these questions to be settled for us by another's mind, or another's judgment.

. . . We cannot trust the salvation of our souls to ministers, to idle traditions, to human authorities, or to pretensions. . . . The Lord positively demands of every Christian an intelligent knowledge of the Scriptures." Review and Herald, March 8, 1887 (2RH 117:1:1 - 2:0)

36. "But beware of rejecting that which is truth. The great danger with our people has been that of depending upon men and making flesh their arm. Those who have not been in the habit of searching the Bible for themselves, or weighing evidence, have confidence in the leading men and accept the decisions they make; and thus many will reject the very messages God sends to His people, if these leading brethren do not accept them." Testimonies to Ministers 106,107; first published in Gospel Workers, 1893 ed., p. 126
37. "When the human agents shall exercise their faculties to acquire knowledge, to become deep-thinking men; when they, as the greatest witnesses for God and the truth, shall have won in the field of investigation of vital doctrines concerning the salvation of the soul, that glory may be given to the God of heaven as supreme, then even judges and kings will be brought to acknowledge, in the courts of justice, in parliaments and councils, that the God who made the heavens and the earth is the only true and living God, the author of Christianity, the author of all truth, who instituted the seventh-day Sabbath when the foundations of the world were laid, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted together for joy. All nature will bear testimony, as designed, for the illustration of the word of God." Special Testimonies on Education, April 22, 1895; Fundamentals of Christian Education 374, 375
38. "Teachers should lead students to think, and clearly to understand the truth for themselves. It is not enough for the teacher to explain or for the student to believe; inquiry must be awakened, and the student must be drawn out to state the truth in his own language, thus making it evident that he sees its force and makes the application. By painstaking effort the vital truths should thus be impressed upon the mind. This may be a slow process; but it is of more value than rushing over important subjects without due consideration." Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 154 (1900); cf. CT 434
39. "It is not safe for us as reformers to repeat the history of the Reformers in every particular; for after those to whom God gave light advanced to a certain knowledge, many of them ceased to be reformers. We must not for a moment think that there is no more light and truth to be given us, and become careless, and let the sanctifying power of the truth leak out of our hearts by our attitude of satisfaction in what we have already attained. . . .
"The people of God have educated themselves in such a way that they have come to look to those in positions of trust as guardians of truth, and have placed men where God should be. When perplexities have come upon them, instead of seeking God, they have gone to human sources for help, and have received only such help as man can give. . . . The president of the Conference is not to do the thinking for all the people. He has not an immortal brain, but has capabilities and powers like any other man. . . . When men place the president of the Conference in the place of God, . . . they are doing that which is exactly opposite to what Christ has told them to do." Review and Herald, Aug. 7, 1894 (3RH 173:1:1 - 3:2 and 174:1:1)
40. "Are you daily working to outgeneral the enemy and save your children from his devices? Are you opening to them the precious truths of the word of God, explaining to them the reasons of our faith, that their young feet may be planted on the platform of truth?"

"The Bible with its precious gems of truth was not written for the scholar alone. On the contrary, it was designed for the common people; and the interpretation given by the common people, when aided by the Holy Spirit, accords best with the truth as it is in Jesus. The great truths necessary for salvation are made clear as the noonday, and none will mistake and lose their way except those who follow their own judgment instead of the plainly revealed will of God." Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 331 (1885)

41. "The education of children, at home or at school, should not be like the training of dumb animals; for children have an intelligent will, which should be directed to control all their powers. Dumb animals need to be trained, for they have not reason and intellect. But the human mind must be taught self-control. It must be educated to rule the human being, while animals are controlled by a master and are trained to be submissive to him. . ." Testimonies, vol. 3, p. 132 (1872); FE 15-16
42. "The severe training of youth, without properly directing them to think and act for themselves as their own capacity and turn of mind will allow, that by this means they may have growth of thought, feelings of self-respect, and confidence in their own ability to perform, will ever produce a class who are weak in mental and moral power. And when they stand in the world to act for themselves, they will reveal the fact that they were trained like the animals, and not educated. Their wills, instead of being guided, were forced into subjection by the harsh discipline of parents and teachers." Testimonies, vol. 3, p. 133 (1872); FE 17
43. "In some schools and families, children appear to be well trained, . . .but when the system which has held them to set rules is broken up, they seem to be incapable of thinking, acting, or deciding for themselves. Had they been taught to exercise their own judgment as fast and as far as practicable, the evil would have been obviated. But they have so long been controlled by parents or teachers as to wholly rely upon them." Review and Herald, Jan 10, 1882 (1RH 306:2:1); FE 57-58; cf. Ed 18,19; CT 24
44. (Comment on Eze. 36:25,26, "A new heart also will I give you . . .")
 "Many who speak to others of the need of a new heart do not themselves know what is meant by these words. The youth especially stumble over this phrase, 'a new heart.' They do not know what it means. They look for a special change to take place in their feelings. This they term conversion. Over this error thousands have stumbled to ruin, not understanding the expression, 'Ye must be born again.' [John 3:3-7]
 "Satan leads people to think that because they have felt a rapture of feeling, they are converted. But their experience does not change. Their actions are the same as before. Their lives show no good fruit. They pray often and long, and are constantly referring to the feelings they had at such and such a time. But they do not live the new life. They are deceived. Their experience goes no deeper than feeling. They build upon the sand, and when adverse winds come, their house is swept away. . . .
 "When Jesus speaks of the new heart, he means the mind, the life, the whole being. To have a change of heart is to withdraw the affections from the world, and fasten them upon Christ. To have a new heart is to have a new mind, new purposes, new motives. What is the sign of a new heart? -- A changed life. There is a daily, hourly dying to selfishness and pride." The Youth's Instructor, Sept. 26, 1901 (523:1:2 - 2:1); 4BC 1164,1165; MYP 71,72; SD 100; OHC 159; cf. CT 452
45. "Why is it that our youth, and even those of more mature years, are so easily led into temptation and sin? It is because the Bible is not studied and meditated upon as it should be. If it were made the daily study, there would be an

inward rectitude, a strength of spirit, that would resist the temptations of the enemy." Review and Herald, Aug. 20, 1888 (2RH 239:3:4); CT 442; FE 132; cf. Bible Echoes, Apr. 23, 1884

46. "In the Bible the will of God is revealed. The truths of the Word of God are the utterances of the Most High. He who makes these truths a part of his life becomes in every sense a new creature. He is not given new mental powers, but the darkness that through ignorance and sin has clouded the understanding is removed. The words, 'A new heart also will I give you,' mean, 'A new mind will I give you.' A change of heart is always attended by a clear conviction of Christian duty, an understanding of truth. He who gives the Scriptures close, prayerful attention will gain clear comprehension and sound judgment, as if in turning to God he had reached a higher plane of intelligence." Review and Herald, Dec. 18, 1913 (6RH 388:3:3); MLT 24; compare Bible Echoes Sept. 1, 1889; [see also # 44 above]
47. "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." Great Controversy 598 (1888)

VII. Even the work of the Holy Spirit on the heart must be tested by the evidence.

48. "Even the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart is to be tested by the Word of God. The Spirit which inspired the Scriptures, always leads to the Scriptures." GC Daily Bulletin, Apr. 13, 1891 (1SM 43)
49. "The Holy Spirit will not compel men to take a certain course of action. We are free moral agents; and when sufficient evidence has been given us as to our duty, it is left with us to decide our course." Review and Herald, July 17, 1888 (2RH 229:2:2); FE 124

VIII. The evidence for trust in God can be understood by all.

John 12:32. "When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to me." (GNB)

Revelation 14:6. "Then I saw another angel flying high in the air, with an eternal message of Good News to announce to the peoples of the earth, to every race, tribe, language, and nation." (GNB)

50. "God permitted Satan to carry forward his work until the spirit of disaffection ripened into active revolt. . . All his [Satan's] acts were so clothed with mystery that it was difficult to disclose to the angels the true nature of his work. . . . It was his policy to perplex with subtle arguments concerning the purposes of God. Everything that was simple he shrouded in mystery, and by artful perversion cast doubt upon the plainest statements of Jehovah." Patriarchs and Prophets 41 (1890)
51. "Christ came to preach the gospel to the poor. He reached the people where they were. He brought plain, simple truth to their comprehension. How simple His language! Even the poorest, the unlearned and ignorant, could understand Him. Not one needed go to a dictionary to obtain the meaning of the high-sounding titles or words that fell from the lips of the greatest Teacher the world ever knew." Review and Herald, July 19, 1887 (2RH 156:1:4)

52. "He dined and lodged with the rich and the poor, and made Himself familiar with the interests and occupations of men, that He might gain access to their hearts. The learned and the most intellectual were gratified and charmed with his discourses, and yet they were so plain and simple as to be comprehended by the humblest minds." Testimonies, vol. 3, p. 214 (Dec. 10, 1871)
53. "Christ reached the people where they were. He presented the plain truth to their minds in the most forcible, simple language. The humble poor, the most unlearned, could comprehend, through faith in Him, the most exalted truths. No one needed to consult the learned doctors as to His meaning. He did not perplex the ignorant with mysterious inferences, or use unaccustomed and learned words, of which they had no knowledge. The greatest Teacher the world has ever known, was the most definite, simple, and practical in His instruction." Gospel Workers 49,50 (1892)
54. "A little girl once asked me, . . . 'Will you please ask the minister to speak easy words that we can understand? Will you please tell him that we do not understand large words, like "justification" and "sanctification"? We do not know what these words mean.
"The little girl's complaint contains a lesson worthy of consideration by teachers and ministers. Are there not many who would do well to heed the request, 'Speak easy words, that we may know what you mean'?
"Make your explanations clear, for I know that there are many who do not understand many of the things said to them. Let the Holy Spirit mold and fashion your speech, cleansing it from all dross. Speak as little children, remembering that there are many well advanced in years who are but little children in understanding."
Counsels to Teachers 254 (July 6, 1902)
55. "The teachings of Christ were marked with a simplicity, dignity, and power heretofore unknown to them, and their involuntary exclamation was: 'Never man spake like this Man.'" Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 747 (1889); cf. CT 433
56. "His lessons of truth. . . were 'eloquent with simplicity,' . . . His lessons were impressive, beautiful and weighty with importance, and yet so simple that a child could understand them." Sons and Daughters of God 266 (Undated MS 33)
57. "The Bible contains a simple and complete system of theology and philosophy." Counsels to Teachers 422; taken from Special Testimonies on Education, p.53 (May 16, 1896)
58. "Present the gospel in its simplicity." Counsels to Teachers 255 (July 6, 1902); Ev. 175
59. "Eve really believed the words of Satan, but her belief did not save her from the penalty of sin. She disbelieved the words of God, and this was what led to her fall. In the judgment men will not be condemned because they conscientiously believed a lie, but because they did not believe the truth, because they neglected the opportunity of learning what is truth." Patriarchs and Prophets 55 (1890)
60. "A few that are conscientious are ready to decide from the weight of evidence; but it is impossible to move many with a mere theory of the truth. There must be a power to attend the truth, a living testimony to move them." Testimonies, vol. 1, p. 113 (Nov. 20, 1855)