

Hyde Park Seventh-day Adventist Church

The Meaning of Christlikeness

Compiled by J. Yansen, Jr

Selected Scripture References

1. “And he said to his men, “The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the LORD’s anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he *is* the anointed of the LORD.”” (1 Sam 24:6)
2. “Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom.” (James 3:13)
3. “But as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct,” (1 Peter 1:15)
4. “He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.” (1 John 2:6)
5. “Imitate me, just as I also *imitate* Christ.” (1 Cor. 11:1)
6. “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:” (1 Peter 2:21)
7. “Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.” (Eph. 5:1-2)
8. “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,” (Phil. 2:5)
9. “Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.” (Titus 3:1-2)
10. “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)
11. “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.” (Galatians 5:22-23)
12. “I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Eph. 4:1-3)
13. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Galatians 5:19-21)

Selected References from the Works of Ellen G. White

1. “Watch well your words, for they have a powerful influence for good or for ill. Allow no sharpness to come into your voices. Bring into your united life the fragrance of Christlikeness.” (*Adventist Home*, 107.1)
2. “The religion of Christ never degrades the receiver; it never makes him coarse or rough, discourteous or self-important, passionate or hardhearted. On the contrary, it refines the taste, sanctifies the judgment, and purifies and ennobles the thoughts, bringing them into captivity to Christ....

The ideal of Christian character is Christlikeness. There is opened before us a path of constant advancement. We have an object to gain, a standard to reach, that includes everything good and pure and noble and elevated. There should be continual striving and constant progress onward and upward toward perfection of character.” (CCh, 78.5-6)

3. “Man longs to rule over his fellow men. Separating himself in his egotism from God and his fellow beings, he follows his unrestrained inclinations. He acts as if the good of others depended on their subjection to his supremacy.

Selfishness has brought discord into the church, filling it with unholy ambition....

Selfishness destroys Christlikeness, filling man with self-love. It leads to continual departure from righteousness.” (CS 24.2-3)

4. “Let Christ’s methods be followed in dealing with those who make mistakes. Unwise actions, the manifestation of undue severity on the part of the teacher, may thrust a student upon Satan’s battleground. Prodigals have been kept out of the kingdom of God by the un-Christlikeness of those who claimed to be Christians.

A Christlike nature is not selfish, unsympathetic, cold. It enters into the feelings of those who are tempted and helps the ones who has fallen to make the trial a stepping-stone to higher things. The Christian teacher will pray for and with an erring student, but he will not get angry with him. He will not speak sharply to the wrongdoer, thus discouraging a soul who is struggling with the powers of darkness. He will let his heart ascend to God for help, and angels will come to his side to help him in lifting up the standard against the enemy; thus instead of cutting off the erring one from help, he will be enabled to gain a soul for Christ.” (CT 266.1-2)

5. “The tempter’s agency is not to be accounted an excuse for one wrong act. Satan is jubilant when he hears the professed followers of Christ making excuses for their deformity of character. It is these excuses that lead to sin. There is no excuse for sinning. A holy temper, a Christlike life, is accessible to every repenting, believing Child of God.” (DA 311.3)

6. Men may speak fluently upon doctrines, and may express strong faith in theories, but do they possess Christianlike meekness and love? If they reveal a harsh, critical spirit, they are denying Christ. If they are not kind, tenderhearted, long-suffering, they are not like Jesus; they are deceiving their own souls. A spirit contrary to the love, humility, meekness, and gentleness of Christ, denies Him, whatever may be the profession.” (Ev 632.4)
7. “Let no one be sharp and dictatorial in his dealings with God’s workers. Let those who are inclined to censure remember that they have made mistakes as grievous as those they condemn in others. Let them bow in contrition before God, asking His pardon for the sharp speeches they have made and the unguarded spirit they have revealed. Remember that God hears every word you speak, and that as you judge, you will be judged.... Shall we not remedy the difficulties that exist by striving to restore the wounded, not by cutting off their limbs, leaving them crippled for life, their usefulness impaired, when they might have been restored?” (Ev 633.5-634.1)
8. “Remember that he who takes the position of a criticizer greatly weakens his own hands. God has not made it the duty of men or of women to find fault with their fellow workers.... If men desire to place themselves where they can be used by God, they must not criticize others, to make their defects apparent. This is Satan’s special temptation, whereby he strives to hinder the work.... We want men who will strengthen and build up the work, not tear down and seek to destroy that which others are trying to do. We need men and women whom God can work, the fallow ground of whose heart has been broken up.” (Ev 634.2-4)
9. The attributes of the enemy of God and man too often find expression in their spirit and attitude toward one another. They hurt one another, because they are not partakers of the divine nature; and thus they work against the perfection of their own character. They bring trouble to themselves, and make the work hard and toilsome, because they regard their spirit and defects of character as precious virtues, to be clung to and fostered.” (Ev 635.1)
10. Those who are defective in character, in conduct, in habits and practices, are to take heed to counsel and reproof. This world is God’s workshop, and every stone that can be used in the heavenly temple, must be hewed and polished, until it is a tried and precious stone, fitted for its place in the Lord’s building. But if we refuse to be trained and disciplined, we shall be as stones that will not be hewed and polished, and that are cast aside at last as useless.” (Ev 635.3)
11. “Dear Brother,
...I have this message for you from the Lord: Be kind in speech, gentle in action. Guard yourself carefully, for you are inclined to be severe and dictatorial, and to say rash things. The Lord speaks to you, saying, Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. Harsh expressions grieve the Lord; unwise words do harm. I am charged to say to you, Be gentle in your speech; watch well your words; let no harshness come into your utterances or into your gestures. Bring into all you do and say the fragrance of Christlikeness. Let

not natural traits of character mar and spoil your work. You are to help and strengthen the tempted. Let not self appear in rash words. Christ has given His life for the flock, and for all for whom you labor. Let no word of yours balance souls in the wrong direction. In the minister of Christ there must be revealed Christlikeness of character. – {GW 163.1}

Rash, overbearing expressions do not harmonize with the sacred work that Christ has given His ministers to do. When the daily experience is one of looking unto Jesus and learning of Him, you will reveal a wholesome, harmonious character. Soften your representations, and let not condemnatory words be spoken. Learn of the great Teacher. Words of kindness and sympathy will do good as a medicine, and will heal souls that are in despair. The knowledge of the word of God brought into the practical life will have a healing, soothing power. Harshness of speech will never bring blessing to yourself or to any other soul. – {GW 163.2}

My brother, you are to be a representative of the mildness and patience and goodness of Christ. In your talks before the public, let your representations be after Christ's order. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits." [James 3:17.] Watch and pray, and subdue the harshness which at times breaks out in you. By the grace of Christ dwelling in you, your words may become sanctified. If your brethren do not act just as you think they should, do not meet them with harshness. The Lord has been grieved at times by your severe expressions. – {GW 164.1}

Your will is to be yielded to the Lord's will. You need the help of the Lord Jesus. Let only words that are clean and pure and sanctified come from your lips; for as a minister of the gospel, your spirit and example will be followed by others. Be kind and tender to children at all times.... – {GW 164.2}

You may reach God's ideal if you will resolve that self shall not be woven into your work. To know that you are striving in spirit and in works to be Christlike, will give you strength and comfort and courage. It is your privilege to become meek and lowly in heart; then angels of God will co-operate with you in your revival efforts. Christ died that His life might be lived in you, and in all who make Him their example. In the strength of your Redeemer you can reveal the character of Christ, and you can work in wisdom and in power to make the crooked places straight." – {GW 164.3}

12. "No other influence that can surround the human soul has such power as the influence of an unselfish life. The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian.

To live such a life, to exert such an influence, costs at every step effort, self-sacrifice, discipline. It is because they do not understand this that many are so easily discouraged in the Christian life. Many who sincerely consecrate their lives to God's service are surprised and disappointed to find themselves, as never before, confronted by obstacles and beset by trials and perplexities. They pray for Christlikeness of character, for a fitness for the Lord's work, and they are placed in circumstances that seem to call forth all the

evil of their nature. Faults are revealed of which they did not even suspect the existence. Like Israel of old they question, “If God is leading us, why do all these things come upon us?” – {HDL 8.2}

It is because God is leading them that these things come upon them. Trials and obstacles are the Lord’s chosen methods of discipline and His appointed conditions of success. He who reads the hearts of men knows their characters better than they themselves know them. He sees that some have powers and susceptibilities which, rightly directed, might be used in the advancement of His work. In His providence He brings these persons into different positions and varied circumstances that they may discover in their character the defects which have been concealed from their own knowledge. He gives them opportunity to correct these defects and to fit themselves for His service. Often He permits the fires of affliction to assail them that they may be purified.” – {HDL 9.1}