

Lesson 26 – Entertainment Reform

1. What biblical principle ought we keep in mind to hold our interests? **2 Corinthians 3:18**

EGW: But the mind does not come down in a moment from purity and holiness to depravity, corruption, and crime. To degrade to the brutal and satanic those who are formed in the image of God, takes time. By beholding we become changed. Though formed in the image of his Maker, man can so accustom himself to evil that the sin which he once loathed will become pleasant to him. As he ceases to watch and pray, he ceases to guard the citadel —the heart—and is betrayed into sin and crime. Constant war against the carnal mind must be maintained; and we must be aided by the refining influence of the grace of God, which will attract the mind upward, and habituate it to meditate upon pure and holy things. {CTBH 127.3}

2. What avenues are exercised that the devil would love to pervert? **Hebrews 5:14**

EGW: All should guard the senses, lest Satan gain victory over them; for these are the avenues of the soul. {AH 401.2}

3. What sense is most influential upon the body? **Luke 11:34**

EGW: "The light of the body is the eye; if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Those who have an eye single to the glory of God will manifest in their lives the loveliness and purity of Christ's character. The enemy will not be able to pervert their understanding, causing them to view things in a false light, and misjudge the words and motives of their brethren. They will not plan how they may gain approbation; neither will they be so deeply affected by any course that may be pursued toward them that they will give up in discouragement. Shall they forsake their post of duty because they are slighted, or imagine that they are not appreciated? No; they will seek to honor Him whose servants they are. They have the Captain of their salvation to please, his order to obey, and they will leave the result to him. {RH, May 20, 1884 par. 9}

Brethren, if your eye be single, you will have well-balanced minds, and will be firm as a rock to principle. You will remember that the eye of God is upon you, overseeing your labor; and you will move on from strength to strength, from grace to grace, gathering rays of light to reflect them upon

the pathway of others. Be strong in the grace of Christ, and let your hearts be filled with love to God and to one another. Remember that if you are partakers of the sufferings of Christ, you shall be also in the consolation. Though sorrowful, you may be "always rejoicing." Brethren, have courage in the Lord. {RH, May 20, 1884 par. 10}

4. What did David declare to protect his eyes from encouraging temptation? **Psalms 101:3**

EGW: From their infancy the youth need to have a firm barrier built up between them and the world, that its corrupting influence may not affect them. Parents must exercise unceasing watchfulness, that their children be not lost to God. The vows of David, recorded in the 101st psalm, should be the vows of all upon whom rest the responsibilities of guarding the influences of the home. The psalmist declares: "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me. A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person. Whoso privily slandereth his neighbor, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight." Psalm 101:3-7. {CT 119.1}

5. What should we turn our eyes away from? **Psalms 119:37**

EGW: Watchfulness and vigilance are needed now as never before in the history of the race. The eye must be turned off from beholding vanity. Lawlessness, the prevailing spirit of the age, must be met with a decided rebuke. Let none feel that they are in no danger. As long as Satan lives, his efforts will be constant and untiring to make the world as wicked as before the flood, and as licentious as were the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. The prayer may well be offered daily by those who have the fear of God before them, that he will preserve their hearts from evil desires, and strengthen their souls to resist temptation. Those who in their self-confidence feel no need of watchfulness and unceasing prayer, are near some humiliating fall. All who do not feel the importance of resolutely guarding their affections, will be captivated by those who practice their arts to ensnare and lead astray the unwary. Men may have a knowledge of divine things, and an ability to fill an important place in the work of God; yet, unless they cherish a simple faith in their Redeemer, they will be ensnared and overcome by the enemy. {RH, October 11, 1881 par. 4}

It is because the duties of watchfulness and prayer have been so sadly neglected that there is so great a lack of moral power. This is why so many who have a form of godliness bring forth no corresponding works. A careless indifference, a carnal security concerning religious duties and eternal things, prevails to an alarming extent. The word of God exhorts us to be found "praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance;"

and again, "Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." Here is the Christian's safeguard, his protection amid the perils that surround his pathway. {RH, October 11, 1881 par. 5}

6. What do many have their eyes set upon becoming? **Proverbs 28:22**

EGW: If, in their haste to be rich, they overtax their energies, and violate the laws of their being, they place themselves in a condition where they can not render to God perfect service, and are therefore pursuing a course of sin. Property thus obtained is gained at an immense sacrifice. {RH, July 18, 1899 par. 3}

7. What was one way Eve was seduced? **First half of Genesis 3:6 [Choose the phrase that go along with our study thus far.]**

EGW: The serpent plucked the fruit of the forbidden tree and placed it in the hands of the half-reluctant Eve. Then he reminded her of her own words, that God had forbidden them to touch it, lest they die. She would receive no more harm from eating the fruit, he declared, than from touching it. Perceiving no evil results from what she had done, Eve grew bolder. When she "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat." It was grateful to the taste, and as she ate, she seemed to feel a vivifying power, and imagined herself entering upon a higher state of existence. Without a fear she plucked and ate. And now, having herself transgressed, she became the agent of Satan in working the ruin of her husband. In a state of strange, unnatural excitement, with her hands filled with the forbidden fruit, she sought his presence, and related all that had occurred. {PP 55.3}

8. What leads to the sin of adultery? **Matthew 5:28**

EGW: While Jesus is teaching, there are pleasure-boats upon the water, and it is evident to all that the idlers who occupy them are disreputable characters. The listening people expect Jesus to severely denounce this class, but are surprised when he declares: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Those who have looked upon the guilty characters who lead lives of sensual dissipation as sinners above all others, are astonished to hear Jesus assert that those who cherish lascivious thoughts are as guilty at heart as the shameless violators of the seventh commandment. Jesus condemned the custom then

existing of a man putting away his wife for trivial offenses. This practice led to great wretchedness and crime. Jesus strikes at the primary cause of the laxness with which the marriage relation was held, when he condemns the unholy passions which find the marriage institution a barrier to the gratification of their lust. Christ would have the marriage relation hedged about with judicial restrictions, so that there could be no legal separation between husband and wife, save for the cause of adultery. {2SP 221.1}

9. What should the ear lead us to? **Proverbs 18:15**

EGW: God does not seem to be in their thoughts. Their minds are filled with nonsense. Their conversation is only empty, vain talk. They have a keen ear for music, and Satan knows what organs to excite to animate, engross, and charm the mind so that Christ is not desired. The spiritual longings of the soul for divine knowledge, for a growth in grace, are wanting. {1T 496.1}

10. What are we to stop our ears from hearing? **Isaiah 33:15**

EGW: The words of Christ are plain: "Strive [agonize] to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Not all professed Christians are Christians at heart. There are sinners in Zion now, as there were anciently. Isaiah speaks of them in referring to the day of God: "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly, he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." {2T 446.1}

11. What sense did God give us that makes eating food pleasant? **Proverbs 24:13**

EGW: Christians should be the most cheerful and happy people that live. They may have the consciousness that God is their father, and their everlasting friend. But many professed Christians do not correctly represent the Christian religion. They appear gloomy, as if under a cloud. They often speak of the great sacrifices they have made to become Christians. They appeal to those who have not accepted Christ, representing by their own example and conversation that they must give up everything which would make life pleasant and joyful. They throw a pall of darkness over the blessed Christian hope. The impression is given that God's requirements are a burden even to the

willing soul, and that everything that would give pleasure, or that would delight the taste, must be sacrificed. {HR, July 1, 1871 par. 1}

12. What are we to do regarding our mouths? **Job 6:30**

EGW: I have often heard people say: "Oh! this is only sweet cider; it is perfectly harmless, and even healthful." Several quarts, perhaps gallons, are carried home. For a few days it is sweet; then fermentation begins. The sharp flavor makes it all the more acceptable to many palates, and the lover of sweet wine or cider is loath to admit that his favorite beverage ever becomes hard or sour. Persons may become just as really intoxicated on wine and cider as on stronger drinks, and the worst kind of inebriation is produced by these so-called milder drinks. The passions are more perverse; the transformation of character is greater, more determined and obstinate. A few quarts of cider or wine may awaken a taste for stronger drinks, and in many cases those who have become confirmed drunkards have thus laid the foundation of the drinking habit. For some persons it is by no means safe to have wine or cider in the house. They have inherited an appetite for stimulants, which Satan is continually soliciting them to indulge. If they yield to his temptations they do not stop; appetite clamors for indulgence and is gratified to their ruin. The brain is benumbed and clouded; reason no longer holds the reins, but they are laid on the neck of lust. Licentiousness, adultery, and vices of almost every type are committed as the result of indulging the appetite for wine and cider. A professor of religion who loves these stimulants, and accustoms himself to their use, never grows in grace. He becomes gross and sensual; the animal passions control the higher powers of the mind, and virtue is not cherished. {5T 356.2}

13. Are pleasures allowed to be experienced regarding tastes? **Proverbs 24:13**

EGW: Again and again I have been shown that God is trying to lead us back, step by step, to His original design,—that man should subsist upon the natural products of the earth. Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord, meat-eating will eventually be done away; flesh will cease to form a part of their diet. We should ever keep this end in view, and endeavor to work steadily toward it. I can not think that in the practice of flesh-eating we are in harmony with the light which God has been pleased to give us. All who are connected with our health institutions especially should be educating themselves to subsist on fruits, grains and vegetables. If we move from principle in these things, if we as Christian reformers educate our own taste, and bring our diet to God's plan, then we may exert an influence upon others in this matter, which will be pleasing to God. {TSD 64.5}

14. What sense can be triggered through something that is sweet? **John 12:3, Philippians 4:18**

EGW: We rejoice that the Lord in his providence has guided us to this place. No buildings can be put up near the sanitarium. There is here nothing to offend the sense of sight or the sense of smell, and care must be taken that there shall be nothing of the kind. {RH, September 29, 1904 par. 12}

What is more repulsive to the sense or smell than a shop where flesh meats are kept for sale? The smell of the raw flesh is offensive to all whose senses have not been depraved by culture of the unnatural appetites. {PH031 2.1}

15. What is the fifth sensation? **1 Corinthians 7:1, 2 Corinthians 6:17**

EGW: The world is given up to self-indulgence. "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life," control the masses of the people. But Christ's followers have a holier calling. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean." In the light of God's Word we are justified in declaring that sanctification cannot be genuine which does not work this utter renunciation of the sinful pursuits and gratifications of the world. {GC88 475.2}

16. What are all these senses feeding into? **Proverbs 23:7**

EGW: The influence of every man's thoughts and actions surrounds him like an invisible atmosphere, which is unconsciously breathed in by all who come in contact with him. This atmosphere is frequently charged with poisonous influences, and when these are inhaled, moral-degeneracy is the sure result.--Test., Vol. V, p. 111. {PH048 9.2}

Proverbs 23:7: As he thinketh in his heart, so is he. {PH048 9.3}

17. What are we to think upon? **Philippians 4:8**

EGW: The apostle says, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." By beholding we become changed into the image of that upon which we dwell; then let us turn away our eyes from beholding the imperfections of those who are in the church, but who

have not the likeness of Christ. We shall not be held responsible because those who make a high profession do not possess corresponding virtues. Let us thank God that it is our privilege to turn away our eyes from these defective Christians, and look upon those who are truly devoted, who are doers of the word, and who in life and character bear the image of the Divine. And above all things, thank God that it is your privilege to look upon Christ, the perfect pattern. We shall be without excuse if we do not study the word of God that we may understand how inseparable are Christian doctrine and Christian practice. {RH, August 8, 1893 par. 2}

18. What did Joseph keep before himself in thought? **Genesis 39:9**

EGW: There is no safety for any man, young or old, unless he feels the necessity of seeking God for counsel at every step. Those only who maintain close communion with God will learn to place His estimate upon men, to reverence the pure, the good, the humble, and the meek. The heart must be garrisoned as was that of Joseph. Then temptations to depart from integrity will be met with decision: "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" The strongest temptation is no excuse for sin. No matter how severe the pressure brought to bear upon you, sin is your own act. The seat of the difficulty is the unrenewed heart. {AH 331.1}

19. What was Daniel's attitude that made him so successful in resisting the urges of the senses? **Daniel 1:8**

EGW: But in the work of temperance there are duties devolving upon the young which no other can do for them. While parents are responsible for the stamp of character as well as for the education and training which they give their sons and daughters, it is still true that our position and usefulness in the world depend, to a great degree, upon our own course of action. {HS 209.5}

Nowhere shall we find a more comprehensive and forcible illustration of true temperance and its attendant blessings than in the history of the youthful Daniel and his associates in the court of Babylon. When they were selected to be taught the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans, that they might "stand in the king's palace," "the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank." "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank." Not only did these young men decline to drink the king's wine, but they refrained from the luxuries of his table. They obeyed the divine law, both natural and moral. With their habits of self-denial were coupled earnestness of purpose, diligence, and steadfastness. And the result shows the wisdom of their course. {HS 209.6}

20. When the senses are pressing in urging us to participate in selfish gratification, what did Jesus tell us to do? **Matthew 16:24**

EGW: The offerings made to God by his professed people would be much larger if it were not for the selfish love of ease, the manufactured wants, the lack of economy, the love of luxuries, the gratification of appetite, the desire for self-pleasing. But the life and character of Christ and the lessons he has given to his followers present no encouragement to selfishness. How much of self-indulgence did Christ have in his life? He for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. And he said, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Self-indulgence, self-pleasing, pride, and extravagance must be renounced. We cannot be Christians and gratify these propensities. We cannot love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves, and devote to our own use the means intrusted to us to honor and glorify God. We need to make a practical application of the lessons of our Saviour's life and teachings. {RH, May 16, 1893 par. 3}

21. What did Paul declare regarding the body urges? **1 Corinthians 9:27, Galatians 5:24**

EGW: A large proportion of all the infirmities that afflict the human family, are the results of their own wrong habits, because of their willing ignorance, or of their disregard of the light which God has given in relation to the laws of their being. It is not possible for us to glorify God while living in violation of the laws of life. The heart cannot possibly maintain consecration to God while lustful appetite is indulged. A diseased body and disordered intellect, because of continual indulgence in hurtful lust, make sanctification of the body and spirit impossible. The apostle understood the importance of the healthful conditions of the body for the successful perfection of Christian character. He says, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." He mentions the fruit of the Spirit, among which is temperance. "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts." {HR, March 1, 1878 par. 10}