
Ellen G. White on University Students

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) was a cofounder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and an inspired writer. She wrote extensively on education, health, the family, the Bible, and practical Christianity. She encouraged young men and women to develop fully their God-given abilities through advanced studies, as the following excerpts show.

Aim High

Dear youth, what is the aim and purpose of your life? Are you ambitious for education that you may have a name and position in the world? Have you thoughts that you dare not express, that you may one day stand upon the summit of intellectual greatness; that you may sit in deliberative and legislative councils, and help to enact laws for the nation? There is nothing wrong in these aspirations. You may every one of you make your mark. You should be content with no mean attainments. Aim high, and spare no pains to reach the standard.

The fear of the Lord lies at the foundation of all true greatness. Integrity, unswerving integrity, is the principle that you need to carry with you into all the relations of life. Take your religion into your school life, into your boarding house, into all your pursuits. The important question with you now is, how to so choose and perfect your studies that you will maintain the solidity and purity of an untarnished Christian character, holding all temporal claims and interests in subjection to the higher claims of the gospel of Christ...

Whatever the business you may qualify yourself to engage in,

never entertain the idea that you cannot make a success of it without sacrificing principle.

Balanced by religious principle, you may climb to any height you please. We would be glad to see you rising to the noble elevation God designs that you shall reach.¹

Continual Progress

Higher than the highest human thought can reach is God's ideal for His children. Godliness—Godlikeness—is the goal to be reached. Before the student there is opened a path of continual progress. He has an object to achieve, a standard to attain, that includes everything good, and pure, and noble. He will advance as fast and as far as possible in every branch of true knowledge.²

Opportunities and Dangers

The Waldensians entered the schools of the world as students. They made no pretensions; apparently they paid no attention to anyone but they lived out what they believed. They never sacrificed principle, and their principles soon became known. This was different from anything the other students had seen, and they began to ask themselves, What does all this mean? Why cannot these men be induced to swerve from their principles?...

Those who have the spirit of God, who have the truth wrought into their very being, should be encouraged to enter colleges, and live the truth, as Daniel and Paul did. Each one should study to see what is the best way to get the truth into the school, that the light

may shine forth. Let them show that they respect all the rules and regulations of the school. The heaven will begin to work; for we can depend much more upon the power of God manifested in the lives of his children than upon any words that can be spoken. But they should also tell inquirers, in as simple language as they can, of the simple Bible doctrines.

There are those who, after becoming established, rooted and grounded in the truth, should enter these institutions of learning as students. They can keep the living principles of truth, and observe the Sabbath, and yet they will have opportunity to work for the Master by dropping seeds of truth in minds and hearts. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, these seeds will spring up to bear fruit for the glory of God and will result in the saving of souls. . . No open controversies should be started, yet opportunity will be given to ask questions upon Bible doctrines, and light will be flashed into many minds. A spirit of investigation will be aroused.

But I scarcely dare present this method of labor; for there is danger that those who have no connection with God will place themselves in these schools, and instead of correcting error and diffusing light, will themselves be led astray. But this work must be done, and it will be done by those who are led and taught of God.³

NOTES

1. *Messages to Young People*, pp. 36-37.
2. *Education*, p. 18.
3. *Selected Messages*, vol. 3, pp. 233-234.