

# 7 – Teach Truth

## “Drama”



“We are to keep as far  
from the theatrical and the extraordinary  
as Christ kept in His work.”

Evangelism 396

“Buy the truth and sell it not;  
also wisdom and instruction,  
and understanding.”

Proverbs 23:23



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## “Drama”

### On The Borders of Canaan

“With joyful hearts and renewed faith in God, the victorious armies of Israel had returned from Bashan. They had already gained possession of a valuable territory, and they were confident of the immediate conquest of Canaan. Only the river Jordan lay between them and the Promised Land. Just across the river was a rich plain, covered with verdure, watered with streams from copious fountains, and shaded by luxuriant palm trees. On the western border of the plain rose the towers and palaces of Jericho, so embosomed in its palm-tree groves that it was called ‘the city of palm trees.’

“On the eastern side of Jordan, between the river and the high tableland which they had been traversing, was also a plain, several miles in width and extending some distance along the river. This sheltered valley had the climate of the tropics; here flourished the shittim, or acacia tree, giving to the plain the name, ‘Vale of Shittim.’ It was

### Assignment:

Read  
Numbers, Chapter 25  
and *Patriarchs and Prophets*,  
pages 453-461

“Baal-peor”  
means  
“Sacrifices of the dead”

“They joined themselves  
also unto Baal-peor,  
and ate the sacrifices  
of the dead.”  
Psalm 106:28



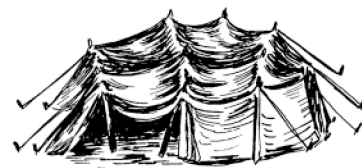
here that the Israelites encamped, and in the acacia groves by the riverside they found an agreeable retreat.

“But amid these attractive surroundings they were to encounter an evil more deadly than mighty hosts of armed men or the wild beasts of the wilderness. That country, so rich in natural advantages, had been defiled by the inhabitants. In the public worship of Baal, the leading deity, the most degrading and iniquitous scenes were constantly enacted. On every side were places noted for idolatry and licentiousness, the very names being suggestive of the vileness and corruption of the people.

“These surroundings exerted a polluting influence upon the Israelites. **Their minds became familiar with the vile thoughts constantly suggested; their life of ease and inaction produced its demoralizing effect; and almost unconsciously to themselves they were departing from God and coming into a condition where they would fall an easy prey to temptation.**” (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 453-454)

We read these sad words in Scripture: “*And Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel*” (Numbers 25:3).

## Notes





Psalm  
101

1 -I will sing  
of mercy and judgment:  
unto thee,  
O Lord, will I sing.

2 -I will behave myself wisely  
in a perfect way.  
O when wilt thou come unto me?  
I will walk within my house  
with a perfect heart.

3 -I will set no wicked thing  
before mine eyes:  
I hate the work of them  
that turn aside;  
it shall not cleave to me.

4 -A froward heart  
shall depart from me:  
I will not know a wicked person.

5 -Whoso privily  
slandereth his neighbour,  
him will I cut off:  
him that hath an high look  
and a proud heart will not I suffer.

6 -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.

7 -He that worketh deceit  
shall not dwell within my house:  
he that telleth lies  
shall not tarry in my sight.

8 -I will early destroy  
all the wicked of the land;  
that I may cut off all wicked doers  
from the city of the Lord.

Satan was trying to hinder the children of Israel from entering the earthly Canaan. **“As we approach the close of time, as the people of God stand upon the borders of the heavenly Canaan, Satan will, as of old, redouble his efforts to prevent them from entering the goodly land...”** (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 457)

“It was when the Israelites were in a condition of **outward** ease and security that they were led into sin. **(1) They failed to keep God ever before them, (2) they neglected prayer and (3) cherished a spirit of self-confidence. (4) Ease and self-indulgence left the citadel of the soul unguarded, and debasing thoughts found entrance.** It was the traitors within the walls that overthrew the strongholds of principle and betrayed Israel into the power of Satan. It is thus that Satan still seeks to compass the ruin of the soul. A long preparatory process, unknown to the world, goes on in the heart before the Christian commits open sin. The mind does not come down at once from purity and holiness to depravity, corruption, and crime. It takes time to degrade those formed in the image of God to the brutal or the satanic. **By beholding we become changed. By the indulgence of impure thoughts man**

**can so educate his mind that sin which he once loathed will become pleasant to him.**

## Notes

“Satan is using every means to make crime and debasing vice popular. We cannot walk the streets of our cities without encountering glaring notices of crime presented in some novel, or to be acted at some theater. The mind is educated to **familiarity** with sin. The course pursued by the base and vile is **kept before the people** in the periodicals of the day, and everything that can excite passion is brought before them in exciting stories. They hear and read so much of debasing crime that the once **tender conscience**, which would have recoiled with horror from such scenes, **becomes hardened**, and they dwell upon these things with greedy interest.”

“Many of the amusements popular in the world today, even with those who claim to be Christians, tend to the same end as did those of the heathen. There are indeed few among them that Satan does not turn to account in destroying souls. Through the **drama** he has worked for ages to excite passion and glorify vice. The opera, with its fascinating display and bewildering music, the masquerade, the dance, the card table, Satan employs to break down the barriers of principle and open the door to sensual indulgence. In every gathering for pleasure where pride is fostered or appetite indulged, where one is

led to forget God and lose sight of eternal interests, there Satan is binding his chains about the soul.”  
(*Patriarchs and Prophets* 459-460)



## 4 Steps

There are **four** basic steps Satan uses to educate the mind to sin:

- 1. Life of ease** (If a person does not have enough productive work the mind will search for something to do.)
- 2. Familiarity** (Satan introduces very subtly something sinful to the mind that seems all right at first.)
- 3. Kept before the people** (He keeps the temptation before the mind; even though they may not participate at first.)
- 4. The tender conscience eventually becomes hardened** (The sin loses its sinfulness and does not seem so bad)

**How has Satan worked for ages to excite passion and glorify vice?**

“Among the **most** dangerous resorts for pleasure is the theater...”  
(*Counsels to Teachers* 334)

“Low songs, lewd gestures, expressions, and attitudes, deprave the imagination and debase the morals. Every youth who habitually attends such exhibitions will be corrupted in principle. There is no influence in our land more powerful to poison the imagination, to destroy religious impressions, and to blunt the relish for the tranquil pleasures and sober realities of life than **theatrical amusements**. The love for these scenes increases with every indulgence, as the desire for intoxicating drink strengthens with its use. The only safe course is to shun the theater, the circus, and every other questionable place of amusement.” (*Counsels to Teachers* 334-335)

Today, we do not have to go to the theater; it is brought into the home, church, and school in a variety of ways.

**Let us study the meaning of the words “theater” and “drama” and learn what are God’s principles.**

“Keep thy heart  
with all diligence;  
for out of it are the issues  
of life.”

Proverbs 4:23

“For as he thinketh  
in his heart, so is he:  
Eat and drink, saith he to thee;  
but his heart is not with thee.”

Proverbs 23:7

## Words to Understand

The word “Theater” is from the Greek word “*theatron*” meaning “a place for a spectacle” and from “*theasthai*” meaning “to view.”  
“A building in which plays or motion pictures are presented.”

The word “Drama” is from a Greek word meaning “to make a composition in verse or prose for theatrical presentation.”



## Drama and Truth

Those who will be ready to enter the heavenly Canaan will teach and live the **TRUTH** and reflect Christ's character fully.

Satan perverts all **true** principles; not all at once, but ever so slowly and persistently.

We are to be witnesses in this world like the children of Israel should have been in ancient times. We are not to be actors acting another's part, but witnesses on the stage of life reproducing Christ's character in our lives.

John 14:6 tells us, "*Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the **truth**, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*" Jesus is the **truth**.

Satan is a liar. He mixes **truth** with error. "...It is one of Satan's devices to combine with falsehood just enough **truth** to give it plausibility." (*The Great Controversy* 587)

"It is as certain that we have the truth as that God lives; and Satan, with all his arts and hellish power, cannot change the **truth** of God into a lie. While the great adversary will try his utmost to make of none effect the word of God,

truth must go forth as a lamp that burneth." (*4 Testimonies* 595)

### Questions To Answer

**1. Do you remember the four subtle ways Satan educates the mind to sin? See if you can list them below without looking back.**

1.

2.

3.

4.

**2. Define the word truth.**

**3. Define the word plausibility.**

“It is a fact widely ignored, though never without danger, that error rarely appears for what it really is. It is by mingling with or attaching itself to **truth** that it gains acceptance. The eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil caused the ruin of our first parents, and the acceptance of a mingling of good and evil is the ruin of men and women today. The mind that depends upon the judgment of others is certain, sooner or later, to be misled.” (*Education* 230-231)

“Satan has wrought with deceiving power, bringing in a multiplicity of errors that obscure the **truth**. Error cannot stand alone, and would soon become extinct if it did not fasten itself like a parasite upon the tree of **truth**. Error draws its life from the **truth** of God. The traditions of men, like floating germs, attach themselves to the **truth** of God, and men regard them as a part of the **truth**. Through false doctrines, Satan gains a foothold, and captivates the minds of men, causing them to hold theories that have no foundation in **truth**. Men boldly teach for doctrines the commandments of men; and as traditions pass on from age to age, they acquire a power over the human mind. But age does not make error **truth**, neither does its burdensome weight cause the plant of **truth** to become a parasite. The tree of

## Questions To Answer

1. Give an example of how error attaches itself to truth.

2. How could error become extinct?

3. Define the word parasite.

4. Define the word germ.

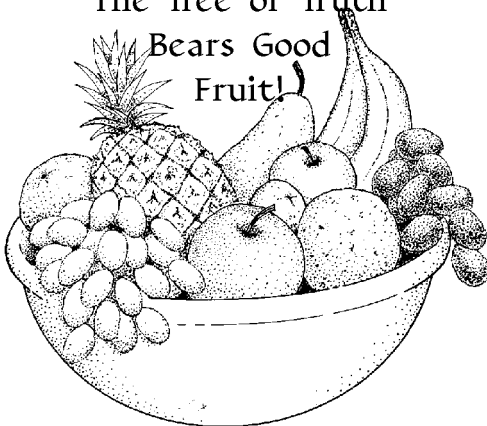
5. How does Satan gain a foothold in the minds of men?

**truth** bears its own genuine fruit, showing its **true** origin and nature. The parasite of error also bears its own fruit, and makes manifest that its character is diverse from the plant of heavenly origin.

“It is through false theories and traditions that Satan gains his power over the human mind...”  
(*Evangelism* 589)

“It was by deception that Satan seduced angels; thus he has in all ages carried forward his work among men, and he will continue this policy to the last. Should he openly profess to be warring against God and His law, men would beware; but he disguises himself, and mixes **truth** with error. The most dangerous falsehoods are those that are mingled with **truth**. It is thus that errors are received that captivate and ruin the soul. By this means Satan carries the world with him. But a day is coming when his triumph will be forever ended.” (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 338)

The Tree of Truth  
Bears Good  
Fruit!



## Questions To Answer

1. How can you tell truth from error?
2. How does Satan gain his power over the human mind?
3. What is the way Satan uses to practice deception?
4. What are the most dangerous falsehoods?

God says: *“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.*

*“For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie”* (Revelation 22:14-15).

All of those who make a lie and love a lie will be lost. They prefer deception to **truth**.

Many have the mistaken idea that the end justifies the means. They believe lies are all right if they teach a good lesson. **Are they?**

God is **truth**. Teach only with **truth!**

Remember we are to be witnesses, not actors nor pretenders.

God tells us: *“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth”* (Acts 1:8).

## Questions To Answer

**1. List all the true programs on television. (Then go through these to determine which of the true programs also fit in with the counsel of Philippians 4:8.)**

**2. Define the word actor.**

**3. Define the word hypocrite.**

“...We are witnesses for God as we reveal in ourselves the working of a power that is divine. Every individual has a life distinct from all others, and an experience differing essentially from theirs. God desires that our praise shall ascend to Him, marked with our own individuality. These precious acknowledgments to the praise of the glory of His grace, when supported by a Christlike life, have an irresistible power that works for the salvation of souls.”  
*(The Ministry of Healing 100)*

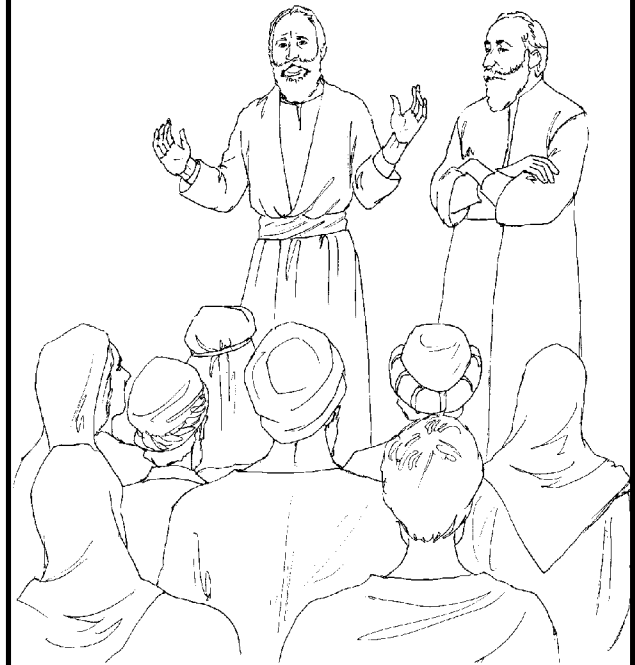
“...*Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God*” (Isaiah 43:12).

Acting is pretending and is a counterfeit of witnessing.

The word hypocrite comes from a Greek word “*hupokrisis*” meaning one who acts or performs on the stage—acting under a feigned part (pretending to be someone else); that is, deceit or hypocrisy.

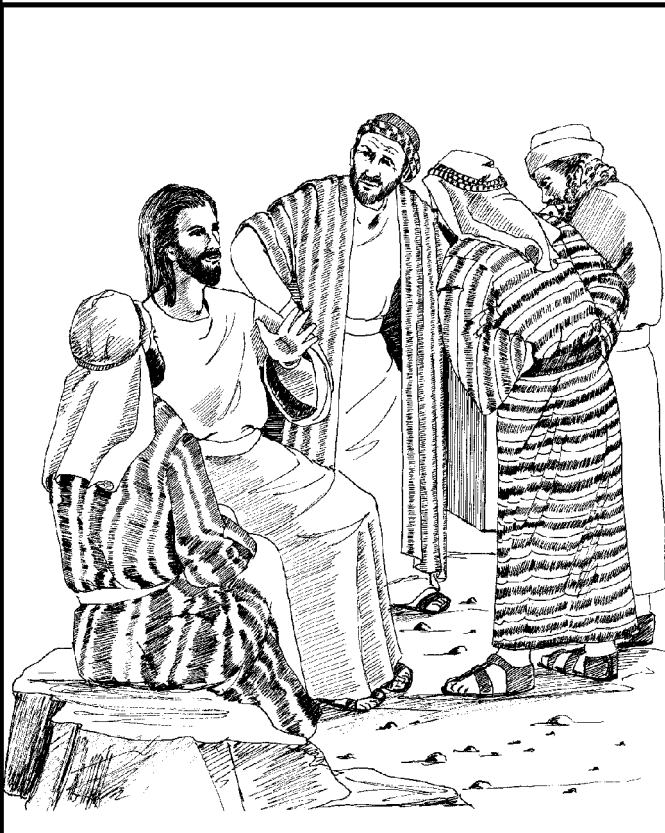
Drama is an effective method of teaching and that is why the devil uses it! Does God use this method to teach?

## Notes



Whether in your home, church or school it is wrong to use theatrical performances (to teach **truth** in an untruthful way is confusing to young minds).

In Jerusalem, in Jesus' day, there were theaters. **Did Jesus attend these theaters? Did He use ideas from it to teach the disciples and the people? Did He send His disciples there to learn how to pretend?**



It is very simple—pretending to be what God has not called us to be is acting—it is being a hypocrite.

## God's Word

The power of the gospel is neutralized by presenting it improperly.

Whenever the mind is drawn to the speaker instead of to Christ—he is using improper methods to advance the message and it will not have the power or the desired effect.

The power of the message a speaker presents comes from hours of prayer and study, and all the jumping, shouting, and intellectual thoughts cannot make up for the lack of communion with God.

The most powerful message a speaker ever presented was when he simply stood before a congregation and read, in a quiet voice, from God's Word!

**Find verses in the Bible that use the word hypocrite and read them.**



## Some Questions To Consider

1. Where has God authorized the use of drama in His work?
2. Did Christ use it?
3. Is it real?
4. Is this method of acting presenting the truth as it is in Jesus, or falsehood as it is in Satan?
5. Does acting glorify God or the actor?
6. Does it develop individuality?
7. How did Israel begin to imitate (or act like) the heathen at Baal-peor?

## Some Answers To Consider

Silence does not give consent!

“...He [Christ] was the great Educator for the present and the future life. I have not been able to find one instance where He educated His disciples to engage in ...theatrical performances; and yet Christ was our pattern in all things...” (*Fundamentals of Christian Education* 229)

*“Rejoiceth not in iniquity,  
but rejoiceth in the truth.”*

I Corinthians 13:6

*“...Fear God, and give glory  
to him....”*

Revelation 14:7

*“...Be no other person’s shadow...”  
(The Ministry of Healing 499)*

Imitate no one  
or act like them.  
Only imitate Jesus.  
In His character is an infinite  
number of reflections  
and one is for you.  
Be your plain, simple self.  
Drama destroys individuality  
and makes us like others.

## Some Questions To Consider

**1. Are we entertaining our children and young people or are we training them for the time of trouble such as never was?**

**2. Television, DVD, Blue Ray, plays, skits, dramas—is there a place for these in the home, church, or school?**

**3. How do plays, skits, television shows, and DVD and Blue Ray dramas compare with theater attendance?**

## Some Answers To Consider

**Read Evangelism, 203-206.**

“Satan’s ruling passion is to pervert the intellect and cause men to long for shows and theatrical performances.” (*Evangelism* 266)

“Worldly or theatrical entertainments are not essential for the prosperity of the sanitarium or for the health of the patients. The more they have of this kind of amusements, the less will they be pleased unless something of the kind shall be continually carried on. **The mind is in a fever of unrest for something new and exciting, the very thing it ought not to have.** And if these amusements are once allowed, they are expected again, and the patients lose their relish for any simple arrangement to occupy the time. But repose, rather than excitement, is what many of the patients need.

“As soon as these entertainments are introduced, the objections to theater going are removed from many minds, and the plea that moral and high-toned scenes are to be acted at the theater breaks down the last barrier.” (*4 Testimonies* 578)



## Some Questions To Consider

**1. Is it all right for people to play or act the part of Bible characters and of Christ? Why or why not?**

**2. Why are we warned against drama?**

## Some Answers To Consider

“God is not pleased by your large outlay of means to advertise your meetings... He is dishonored by your expensive preparations. At times you do that which is represented to me as the shredding of wild gourds into the pot. This display makes the **truth** taste too strongly of the dish. Man is exalted... Sensible men and women can see that the theatrical performances are not in harmony with the solemn message that you bear.” (*Evangelism* 127)

“...The work that Christ did in our world is to be our example, as far as display is concerned. We are to keep as far from the **theatrical and the extraordinary** as Christ kept in His work. Sensation is not religion, although religion will exert its own pure, sacred, uplifting, sanctifying influence, bringing spiritual life and salvation.” (*Evangelism* 396)

Drama is an exciting, intoxicating influence. Like the wine of Babylon it destroys those who perform it and those who watch it (Revelation 14:8; 22:14-15).

## Some Questions To Consider

**Do we not have good materials we can read and watch?**

**What happened at Baal-peor when the people sinned?**

## Some Answers To Consider

We have an abundance of that which is true and righteous. Let us drink deeply of the Water of Life and not of the wine of Babylon or the pollution of Baal-peor.

“But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”  
John 4:14

*“And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand”* (Numbers 25:9).

“All felt that the punishment was just, and the people hastened to the tabernacle, and with tears and deep humiliation confessed their sin...”

“The judgments visited upon Israel for their sin at Shittim, destroyed the survivors of that vast company, who, nearly forty years before, had incurred the sentence, *‘They shall surely die in the wilderness...’*” (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 455-456)

**Read Psalm 9:15; 94:14-15, 21, 23.**

## A Question to Consider

### 1. What can lead us into sin?



## Do Not Forget

### 1. Life of ease

- Keep your young people productive in learning, working, and worshipping God.

### 2. Familiarity

- Do not even introduce into the mind of the youth that drama may be all right in some forms. Do not let them be made familiar with it in any form.

### 3. Kept before them

- Do not keep drama before your youth by games, books, skits, school plays, DVDs, or television.

### 4. Consciences became hardened

- Encourage your youth to have soft moldable minds for the Holy Spirit, not minds hardened by sin.

The carnal mind craves conformity, and similarity to the world.  
(See *Life Sketches* 351.)

**What parents do in moderation  
most often their children  
will do in excess!**

This is why each generation  
decreases in spiritual life.

The reverse can be true.

## A Question To Consider

1. Do you believe Jesus is coming soon? Why?

## Some Answers To Consider

We are on the borders of the Heavenly Canaan. We stand where the children of Israel once stood at Baal-peor.

We are to play the part God has given us—our life of witness to this world and to the universe.

## Read These Important Thoughts

1. “Never did this message apply with greater force than it applies today. More and more the world is setting at nought the claims of God. Men have become bold in transgression. The wickedness of the inhabitants of the world has almost filled up the measure of their iniquity. This earth has almost reached the place where God will permit the destroyer to work his will upon it. The substitution of the laws of men for the law of God, the exaltation, by merely human authority, of Sunday in place of the Bible Sabbath, is the last act in the drama. When this substitution becomes universal, God will reveal Himself. He will arise in His majesty to shake terribly the earth. He will come out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity, and the earth shall disclose her blood and shall no more cover her slain.” (*7 Testimonies* 141)

2. “We are standing on the threshold of the **crisis** of the ages. In quick succession the judgments of God will follow one another—fire, and flood, and earthquake, with war and bloodshed. We are not to be surprised at this time by events both great and decisive; for the angel of mercy cannot remain much longer to shelter the impenitent.” (*Prophets and Kings* 278)

3. “The **crisis** is stealing gradually upon us. The sun shines in the heavens, passing over its usual round, and the heavens still declare the glory of God. Men are still eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage. Merchants are still buying, and selling. Men are jostling one against another, contending for the highest place. Pleasure lovers are still crowding to theaters, horse races, gambling hells. The highest excitement prevails, yet probation’s hour is fast closing, and every case is about to be eternally decided. Satan sees that his time is short, he has set all his agencies at work that men may be deceived, deluded, occupied, and entranced until the day of probation shall be ended, and the door of mercy forever shut.” (*Christian Service* 51)

4. “Transgression has almost reached its limit. Confusion fills the world, and a great terror is soon to come upon human beings. The end is very near. We who know the truth should be preparing for what is soon to break upon the world as an overwhelming surprise.” (*8 Testimonies* 28)

5. “In this time of prevailing iniquity we may know that the last great **crisis** is at hand. When the defiance of God’s law is almost universal, when His people are oppressed and afflicted by their fellow men, the Lord will interpose.” (*Christ’s Object Lessons* 178)

6. “We are standing upon the threshold of great and solemn events. Prophecies are fulfilling. Strange, eventful history is being recorded in the books of heaven. Everything in our world is in agitation. There are wars and rumors of wars. The nations are angry, and the time of the dead has come, that they should be judged. Events are changing to bring about the day of God, which hasteth greatly. Only a moment of time, as it were, yet remains. But while already nation is rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, there is not now a general engagement. As yet the four winds are held until the servants of God shall be sealed in their foreheads. Then the powers of earth will marshal their forces for the last great battle.” (*6 Testimonies* 14)

# Healing

**1. Some may say, “But we have been involved in much drama, how can our minds be healed?”**

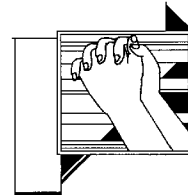
**2. Do you trust God?**

“Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, ‘Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee.’ This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ.” (*Steps to Christ* 70)



God says, “...*I am the Lord that healeth thee.*” “*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases*” (Exodus 15:26; Psalm 103:2-3).

## There are four ways God can heal:



**1. Prayer**

“*Pray without ceasing*”  
(I Thessalonians 5:17).

**2. Study of the Word**

(Read II Timothy 2:15.)

**3. Through Nature**—such as camping, hiking, studying, observing out in the fresh air.

(Read Job 12:7-8; 35:11.)

**4. Hard, productive work**—projects that give satisfaction such as gardening. (Read I Thessalonians 4:11 and Ecclesiastes 9:10.)

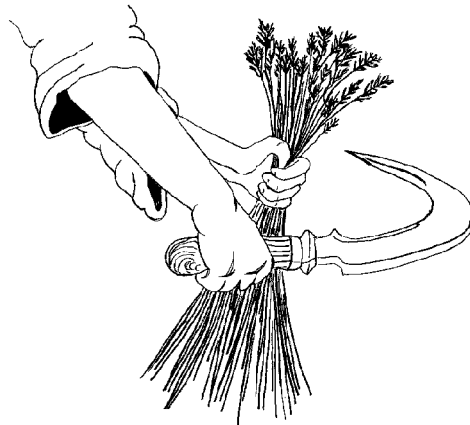
“I have chosen the way of truth:  
thy judgments have I laid before me.”

Psalm 119:30



“Many of the amusements popular  
in the world today,  
even with those who claim  
to be Christians,  
tend to the same end as did those  
of the heathen.”

Patriarchs and Prophets 460



Mark 4:29