

A FEW PAGES FROM GOD'S CHURCH MANUAL

God's church manual is found in the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy. If His instructions were followed, there would be much less disunity and far more souls won for Christ. It may come as a shock to many among God's people but the church is not meant to be a hospital. Neither the Bible nor the Spirit of prophecy ever refer to it as such. In fact, as startling as it may seem, it is not the Lord's will for unconverted people to become members of the church. Our heavenly Father only brings converted people into the church. Someone else brings in the unconverted.

God will have only those in the church who are earnestly striving to be right. Opportunity is given to develop character, and if members of the family develop a character unworthy [of] the Christian name, **they have no right to the privileges of the house of God.** False sympathy must die. It commenced in heaven at the fall of Satan, and has existed ever since. This sympathy has blunted the straight testimony. It pleases Satan well. --Ms 4, 1860.

While the Lord brings into the church those who are truly converted, Satan at the same time **brings persons who are not converted** into its fellowship. {RH, September 5, 1893 par. 1}

Many are received into the church **who are not converted.** Men, women, and children are allowed to take part in the solemn rite of baptism without being fully instructed in regard to the meaning of this ordinance. {RH, October 6, 1904 par. 18}

Baptism may be repeated over and over again, but of itself it has no power to change the human heart. {RH, September 18, 1900 par. 4}

All who are baptized are to give evidence **that they have been converted.** MS 36, 1890

Much of the weak leadership in the church is due to general neglect of God's church manual rules in selecting people to fill positions. Notice the wise counsel of our heavenly Father.

It is always best to wait a little until character is developed before putting [persons into office] in the church, unless all are thoroughly acquainted with the persons elected and know them to be fit to act in the capacity in which they are chosen to act. --Ms 8, 1863.

There should not be so great haste in electing leaders as to ordain men who are in no way fitted for the responsible work--men who need to be converted, elevated, ennobled, and refined before they can serve the cause of God in any capacity. {5T 617,618}

Our heavenly Father, has indicated a way in which we may determine to some degree the fitness of men and women for the various offices of the church. It is the same means by which He will determine each individual's fitness or unfitness for heaven. It through the revelation of his or her character in the home life. Character is what will be measured in the judgment.

Men and women, children and youth, are measured in the scales of heaven in accordance with that which they reveal in their home life. (MS 34, 1899).

HOW GOD CHOOSES CHURCH MEMBERS TO FILL POSITIONS

It takes time for character to be developed; there must be time to learn what men really are. *The family of the one suggested for office should be considered. Are they in subjection? Can the man rule his own house with honor? What character have his children? Will they do honor to the father's influence? If he has no tact, wisdom, or power of godliness at home in managing his own family, it is safe to conclude that the same defects will be carried into the church, and the same unsanctified management will be seen there.* It will be far better to criticize the man before he is put into office than afterward, better to pray and counsel before taking the decisive step than to labor to correct the consequences of a wrong move. {5T 618.1}

Our words and actions in the home bear testimony to *our true character*, and they are recorded in the books of heaven. {ST, November 14, 1892 par. 8}

No man can bring into the church an influence that he does not exert in his home life and in his business relations. Manuscript 57, 1903

In the church and in every business transaction *a man will be just what he is in his home*. If he submits to the Holy Spirit's guidance in the home, if he understands his responsibility to deal with minds there, then when in responsible positions he will pursue the same course. Remembering the tenderness of Christ toward him, he will manifest the same love and tenderness toward others. {GCB, April 3, 1901 par. 23}

God judges a man *by what he is in his family*. --MS. 136, 1898.

He who faithfully performs small duties will be prepared to answer the demands of larger responsibilities. The man who is kind and courteous in the daily life, who is generous and forbearing *in his family*, whose constant aim it is to make home happy, will be the first to deny self and make sacrifices when the Master calls. {YI, January 17, 1901 par. 3}

He who fails to be a faithful, discerning shepherd in the home *will surely fail of being a faithful shepherd to the flock of God in the church*.--Manuscript 42, 1903. {RC}

Those who profess to be followers of Christ *will reveal in the home circle* just what is their attitude toward Christ. {ST, February 15, 1892 par. 8}

As you reveal wisdom by faithfulness *in the home life*, as patterns of piety, you will reveal faithfulness in the church as patient, kind, forbearing teachers. The Lord will see that you can be entrusted with souls. -- Letter 6b, 1890.

He who cannot control the members of his own family, cannot properly minister to the church of God, or preserve it from strife and controversy. {GW 205.1}

Lord please help us to live in accordance with your church manual rules. In Jesus name, Amen