

The Adventist Home

By Ellen G. White

Section 1

Chap. One - Atmosphere of the Home

Home Is the Heart of All Activity.--Society is composed of families, and is what the heads of families make it. Out of the heart are "the issues of life"; and the heart of the community, of the church, and of the nation is the household. The well-being of society, the success of the church, the prosperity of the nation, depend upon home influences. {AH 15.1}

The elevation or deterioration of the future of society will be determined by the manners and morals of the youth growing up around us. As the youth are educated, and as their characters are molded in their childhood to virtuous habits, self-control, and temperance, so will their influence be upon society. If they are left unenlightened and uncontrolled, and as the result become self-willed, intemperate in appetite and passion, so will be their future influence in molding society. The company which the young now keep, the habits they now form, and the principles they now adopt are the index to the state of society for years to come. {AH 15.2}

The Sweetest Type of Heaven.--Home should be made all that the word implies. It should be a little heaven upon earth, a place where the affections are cultivated instead of being studiously repressed. Our happiness depends upon this cultivation of love, sympathy, and true courtesy to one another. {AH 15.3}

The sweetest type of heaven is a home where the Spirit of the Lord presides. If the will of God is fulfilled, the husband and wife will respect each other and cultivate love and confidence. {AH 15.4}

Importance of the Home Atmosphere.--The atmosphere surrounding the souls of fathers and mothers fills the whole house, and is felt in every department of the home. {AH 16.1}

To a large extent parents create the atmosphere of the home circle, and when there is disagreement between father and mother, the children partake of the same spirit. Make your home atmosphere fragrant with tender thoughtfulness. If you have become estranged and have failed to be Bible Christians, be converted; for the character you bear in probationary time will be the character you will have at the coming of Christ. If you would be a saint in heaven, you must first be a saint on earth. The traits of character you cherish in life will not be changed by death or by the resurrection. You will come up from the grave with the same disposition you manifested in your home and in society. Jesus does not change the character at His coming. The work of transformation must be done now. Our daily lives are determining our destiny. {AH 16.2}

Creating a Pure Atmosphere.--Every Christian home should have rules; and parents should, in their words and deportment toward each other, give to the children a precious, living example of what they desire them to be. Purity in speech and true Christian courtesy should be constantly practiced. Teach the children and youth to respect themselves, to be true to God, true to principle; teach them to respect and obey the law of God. These principles will control their lives and will be carried out in their associations with others. They will create a pure atmosphere--one that will have an influence that will encourage weak souls in the upward path that leads to holiness and heaven. Let every lesson be of an elevating and ennobling character, and the records made in the books of heaven will be such as you will not be ashamed to meet in the judgment. {AH 16.3}

Children who receive this kind of instruction will . . . be prepared to fill places of responsibility and, by precept and example, will be constantly aiding others to do right. Those whose moral sensibilities have not been blunted will appreciate right principles; they will put a just estimate upon their natural endowments and will make the best use of their physical, mental, and moral powers. Such souls are strongly fortified against temptation; they are surrounded by a wall not easily broken down. {AH 17.1}

God would have our families symbols of the family in heaven. Let parents and children bear this in mind every day, relating themselves to one another as members of the family of God. Then their lives will be of such a character as to give to the world an object lesson of what families who love God and keep His commandments may be. Christ will be glorified; His peace and grace and love will pervade the family circle like a precious perfume. {AH 17.2}

Much depends on the father and mother. They are to be firm and kind in their discipline, and they are to work most earnestly to have an orderly, correct household, that the heavenly angels may be attracted to it to impart peace and a fragrant influence. {AH 17.3}

Make Home Bright and Happy.--Never forget that you are to make the home bright and happy for yourselves and your children by cherishing the Saviour's attributes. If you bring Christ into the home, you will know good from evil. You will be able to help your children to be trees of righteousness, bearing the fruit of the Spirit. {AH 17.4}

Troubles may invade, but these are the lot of humanity. Let patience, gratitude, and love keep sunshine in the heart though the day may be ever so cloudy. {AH 18.1}

The home may be plain, but it can always be a place where cheerful words are spoken and kindly deeds are done, where courtesy and love are abiding guests. {AH 18.2}

Administer the rules of the home in wisdom and love, not with a rod of iron. Children will respond with willing obedience to the rule of love. Commend your children whenever you can. Make their lives as happy as possible. . . . Keep the soil of the heart mellow by the manifestation of love and affection, thus preparing it for the seed of truth. Remember that the Lord gives the earth not only clouds and rain, but the beautiful, smiling sunshine, causing the seed to germinate and the blossom to appear. Remember that children need not only reproof and correction, but encouragement and commendation, the pleasant sunshine of kind words. {AH 18.3}

You must not have strife in your household. "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." It is gentleness and peace that we want in our homes. {AH 18.4}

Tender Ties That Bind.--The family tie is the closest, the most tender and sacred, of any on earth. It was designed to be a blessing to mankind. And it is a blessing wherever the marriage covenant is entered into intelligently, in the fear of God, and with due consideration for its responsibilities. {AH 18.5}

Every home should be a place of love, a place where the angels of God abide, working with softening, subduing influence upon the hearts of parents and children. {AH 18.6}

Our homes must be made a Bethel, our hearts a shrine. Wherever the love of God is cherished in the soul, there will be peace, there will be light and joy. Spread out the word of God before your families in love, and ask, "What hath God spoken?" {AH 19.1}

Christ's Presence Makes a Home Christian.--The home that is beautified by love, sympathy, and tenderness is a place that angels love to visit, and where God is glorified. The influence of a carefully guarded Christian home in the years of childhood and youth is the surest safeguard against the corruptions of the world. In the atmosphere of such a home the children will learn to love both their earthly parents and their heavenly Father. {AH 19.2}

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. {AH 19.3}

Every Christian family should illustrate to the world the power and excellence of Christian influence. . . . Parents should realize their accountability to keep their homes free from every taint of moral evil. {AH 19.4}

Holiness to God is to pervade the home. . . . Parents and children are to educate themselves to co-operate with God. They are to bring their habits and practices into harmony with God's plans. {AH 19.5}

The family relationship should be sanctifying in its influence. Christian homes, established and conducted in accordance with God's plan, are a wonderful help in forming Christian character. . . . Parents and children should unite in offering loving service to Him who alone can keep human love pure and noble. {AH 19.6}

The first work to be done in a Christian home is to see that the Spirit of Christ abides there, that every member of the household may be able to take his cross and follow where Jesus leads the way. {AH 20.1}

Chap. Two - Fundamentals of True Homemaking

The Most Attractive Place in the World.--While there are weighty responsibilities devolving upon the parents to guard carefully the future happiness and interests of their children, it is also their duty to make home as attractive as possible. This is of far greater consequence than to acquire estates and money. Home must not lack sunshine. The home feeling should be kept alive in the hearts of the children, that they may look back upon the home of their childhood as a place of peace and happiness next to heaven. Then as they come to maturity, they should in their turn try to be a comfort and blessing to their parents. {AH 21.1}

The home should be to the children the most attractive place in the world, and the mother's presence should be its greatest attraction. Children have sensitive, loving natures. They are easily pleased, and easily made unhappy. By gentle discipline, in loving words and acts, mothers may bind their children to their hearts. {AH 21.2}

Clean, Neat, Orderly.--Cleanliness, neatness, and order are indispensable to the proper management of the household. But when the mother makes these the all-important duties of her life, and devotes herself to them, to the neglect of the physical development and the mental and moral training of her children, she makes a sad mistake. {AH 21.3}

Believers should be taught that even though they may be poor, they need not be unclean or untidy in their persons or in their homes. Help must be given in this line to those who seem to have no sense of the meaning and importance of cleanliness. They are to be taught that those who are to represent the high and holy God must keep their souls pure and clean, and that this purity must extend to their dress and to everything in the home, so that the ministering angels will

have evidence that the truth has wrought a change in the life, purifying the soul and refining the tastes. Those who, after receiving the truth, make no change in word or deportment, in dress or surroundings, are living to themselves, not to Christ. They have not been created anew in Christ Jesus, unto purification and holiness. . . . {AH 21.4}

While we are to guard against needless adornment and display, we are in no case to be careless and indifferent in regard to outward appearance. All about our persons and our homes is to be neat and attractive. The youth are to be taught the importance of presenting an appearance above criticism, an appearance that honors God and the truth. {AH 22.1}

A neglect of cleanliness will induce disease. Sickness does not come without a cause. Violent epidemics of fevers have occurred in villages and cities that were considered perfectly healthful, and these have resulted in death or broken constitutions. In many instances the premises of the very ones who fell victims to these epidemics contained the agents of destruction which sent forth deadly poison into the atmosphere, to be inhaled by the family and the neighborhood. It is astonishing to witness the prevailing ignorance relative to the effects which slackness and recklessness produce upon health. {AH 22.2}

Order Necessary for a Happy Home.--God is displeased with disorder, slackness, and a lack of thoroughness in anyone. These deficiencies are serious evils, and tend to wean the affections of the husband from the wife when the husband loves order, well-disciplined children, and a well-regulated house. A wife and mother cannot make home agreeable and happy unless she possesses a love for order, preserves her dignity, and has good government; therefore all who fail on these points should begin at once to educate themselves in this direction, and cultivate the very things wherein is their greatest lack. {AH 22.3}

Vigilance and Diligence to Be Blended.--When we give ourselves unreservedly to the Lord, the simple, commonplace duties of home life will be seen in their true importance, and we shall perform them in accordance with the will of God. We are to be vigilant, watching for the coming of the Son of man; and we must also be diligent; working as well as waiting is required; there must be a union of the two. This will balance the Christian character, making it well developed, symmetrical. We should not feel that we are to neglect everything else, and give ourselves up to meditation, study, or prayer; neither are we to be full of bustle and hurry and work, to the neglect of personal piety. Waiting and watching and working are to be blended. "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." {AH 23.1}

Provide Laborsaving Facilities.--In many a home the wife and mother has no time to read, to keep herself well informed, no time to be a companion to her husband, no time to keep in touch with the developing minds of her children. There is no time or place for the precious Saviour to be a close, dear companion. Little by little she sinks into a mere household drudge, her strength and time and interest absorbed in the things that perish with the using. Too late she awakes to find herself almost a stranger in her own home. The precious opportunities once hers to influence her dear ones for the higher life, unimproved, have passed away forever. {AH 23.2}

Let the homemakers resolve to live on a wiser plan. Let it be your first aim to make a pleasant home. Be sure to provide the facilities that will lighten labor and promote health. {AH 24.1}

Even the Humblest Tasks Are the Work of God.-- All the work we do that is necessary to be done, be it washing dishes, setting tables, waiting upon the sick, cooking, or washing, is of moral importance. . . . The humble tasks before us are to be taken up by someone; and those who do them should feel that they are doing a necessary and honorable work, and that in their mission, humble though it may be, they are doing the work of God just as surely as was Gabriel when sent to the prophets. All are working in their order in their respective spheres. Woman in her home, doing the simple duties of life that must be done, can and should exhibit faithfulness, obedience,

and love, as sincere as angels in their sphere. Conformity to the will of God makes any work honorable that must be done. {AH 24.2}

Chap. Three - The Eden Home a Pattern

God Prepared Man's First Home.--The Eden home of our first parents was prepared for them by God Himself. When He had furnished it with everything that man could desire, He said: "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness." . . . {AH 25.1}

The Lord was pleased with this last and noblest of all His creatures, and designed that he should be the perfect inhabitant of a perfect world. But it was not His purpose that man should live in solitude. He said: "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." {AH 25.2}

God Himself gave Adam a companion. He provided "an help meet for him"--a helper corresponding to him--one who was fitted to be his companion, and who could be one with him in love and sympathy. Eve was created from a rib taken from the side of Adam, signifying that she was not to control him as the head, nor to be trampled under his feet as an inferior, but to stand by his side as an equal, to be loved and protected by him. A part of man, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, she was his second self; showing the close union and the affectionate attachment that should exist in this relation. "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it." "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one." {AH 25.3}

First Marriage Performed by God.--God celebrated the first marriage. Thus the institution has for its originator the Creator of the universe. "Marriage is honourable"; it was one of the first gifts of God to man, and it is one of the two institutions that, after the fall, Adam brought with him beyond the gates of Paradise. When the divine principles are recognized and obeyed in this relation, marriage is a blessing; it guards the purity and happiness of the race, it provides for man's social needs, it elevates the physical, the intellectual, and the moral nature. {AH 25.4}

He who gave Eve to Adam as a helpmeet performed His first miracle at a marriage festival. In the festal hall where friends and kindred rejoiced together, Christ began His public ministry. Thus He sanctioned marriage, recognizing it as an institution that He Himself had established. . . . {AH 26.1}

Christ honored the marriage relation by making it also a symbol of the union between Him and His redeemed ones. He Himself is the Bridegroom; the bride is the church, of which, as His chosen one, He says, "Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee." {AH 26.2}

Every Want Was Supplied.--Adam was surrounded with everything his heart could wish. Every want was supplied. There were no sin and no signs of decay in glorious Eden. Angels of God conversed freely and lovingly with the holy pair. The happy songsters caroled forth their free, joyous songs of praise to their Creator. The peaceful beasts in happy innocence played about Adam and Eve, obedient to their word. Adam was in the perfection of manhood, the noblest of the Creator's work. {AH 26.3}

Not a shadow interposed between them and their Creator. They knew God as their beneficent Father, and in all things their will was conformed to the will of God. And God's character was reflected in the character of Adam. His glory was revealed in every object of nature. {AH 26.4}

Labor Was Appointed for Man's Happiness.--God is a lover of the beautiful. He has given us unmistakable evidence of this in the work of His hands. He planted for our first parents a beautiful garden in Eden. Stately trees were caused to grow out of the ground, of every description, for usefulness and ornament. The beautiful flowers were formed, of rare loveliness, of every tint and hue, perfuming the air. . . It was the design of God that man should find happiness in the employment of tending the things He had created, and that his wants should be met with the fruits of the trees of the garden. {AH 27.1}

To Adam was given the work of caring for the garden. The Creator knew that Adam could not be happy without employment. The beauty of the garden delighted him, but this was not enough. He must have labor to call into exercise the wonderful organs of the body. Had happiness consisted in doing nothing, man, in his state of holy innocence, would have been left unemployed. But He who created man knew what would be for his happiness; and no sooner had He created him than He gave him his appointed work. The promise of future glory, and the decree that man must toil for his daily bread, came from the same throne. {AH 27.2}

God Is Honored by a Christian Home.--Fathers and mothers who make God first in their households, who teach their children that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, glorify God before angels and before men by presenting to the world a well-ordered, well-disciplined family--a family that love and obey God instead of rebelling against Him. Christ is not a stranger in their homes; His name is a household name, revered and glorified. Angels delight in a home where God reigns supreme and the children are taught to reverence religion, the Bible, and their Creator. Such families can claim the promise, "Them that honour Me I will honour." As from such a home the father goes forth to his daily duties, it is with a spirit softened and subdued by converse with God. {AH 27.3}

The presence of Christ alone can make men and women happy. All the common waters of life Christ can turn into the wine of heaven. The home then becomes as an Eden of bliss; the family, a beautiful symbol of the family in heaven. {AH 28.1}