

“Hover” in EGW’s Writings

~Compiled by Pastor Daniel R. Mesa III~

Brethren and sisters, why hover about the churches? Study the parable of the lost sheep, and go forth as true shepherds, seeking the lost one who is in the wilderness of sin. Rescue the perishing.--Review and Herald, Dec. 12, 1893. {ChS 178.4} The lay members of our churches can accomplish a work which, as yet, they have scarcely begun. None should move into new places merely for the sake of worldly advantage; but where there is an opening to obtain a livelihood, let families that are well grounded in the truth enter, one or two families in a place, to work as missionaries. They should feel a love for souls, a burden of labor for them, and should make it a study how to bring them into the truth. They can distribute our publications, hold meetings in their homes, become acquainted with their neighbors, and invite them to come to these meetings. Thus they can let their light shine in good works.--Testimonies, vol. 8, p. 245. {ChS 178.5} Christian Service – 178-179

Our ministers should plan wisely, as faithful stewards. They should feel that it is not their duty to hover over the churches already raised up, but that they should be doing aggressive evangelistic work, preaching the Word and doing house-to-house work in places that have not yet heard the truth. . . . They will find that nothing is so encouraging as doing evangelistic work in new fields. --Letter 169, 1904. {Ev 382.3} If the ministers would get out of the way, if they would go forth into new fields, the members would be obliged to bear responsibilities, and their capabilities would increase by use.--Letter 56, 1901. {Ev 382.4}

There are thousands whose lives are just as precious as yours. Then why do you wrap your coat about you, and hug the shore? Awake to duty and to usefulness! If you will launch out into the deep and let down your nets, the Master will gather in the fishes, and you will see of the mighty working of God. {HS 138.7} Do not, my ministering brethren, allow yourselves to be kept at home to serve tables; and do not hover around the churches, preaching to those who are already fully established in the faith. Teach the people to have light in themselves, and not to depend upon the ministers. They should have Christ as their helper, and should educate themselves to help one another, so that the minister can be free to enter new fields. An important work is to be done in the world. New fields are to be opened; and the zeal and the missionary spirit that Christ manifested are greatly needed. Oh that the power of God would set the truth home to every heart! Oh that all might see the necessity of having a living connection with God, and of knowing and doing his will from day to day! {HS 139.1}

The churches that have not life in themselves, that have lost their spiritual discernment, call for ministers to come to their help, to bring them the breath of life. But the ministers have other work to do. They must carry the message of truth to those who know it not. Those ministers who hover about the churches, who have not a clear cut message, which, like a sharp, two-edged sword, cuts both ways, will do the churches harm. They will not work for the salvation of souls that are in great peril because they know not the truth, and they will die spiritually themselves, and trouble and discourage those who try to help them. 6MR 65. {PaM 121.3}

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There are many who have never heard from the Word the reasons for our faith; and yet some of our ministers feel a burden to hover over little companies of believers in an effort to hold them together. The best way to hold them together is to induce them to maintain a living connection with God, and to exert their influence in seeking to draw others to Him.--RH July 16, 1908. {PaM 263.4}

The minister should not feel that it is his duty to do all the talking and all the laboring and all the praying; but he should make it a part of his work to educate workers in every church. Let different ones take turns in leading the meetings, and in giving Bible readings, and in so doing you will be calling into use the talents which God has given you, and at the same time educating workers. --RH Nov. 6, 1888. {PaM 264.2}

Let the praise of God be upon your lips when you meet together in little companies to worship God. Let not one man do much of the talking. Let several take part.--15MR 153. {PaM 265.2}

Our people should not be made to think that they need to listen to a sermon every Sabbath. Many who listen frequently to sermons, even though the truth be presented in clear lines, learn but little. Often it would be more profitable if the Sabbath meetings were of the nature of a Bible class study. Bible truth should be presented in such a simple, interesting manner that all can easily understand and grasp the principles of salvation.--Ev 348. {PaM 265.3}

Some men have a special message from heaven. They are to be sent forth to waken the people, not to hover over the churches to their own detriment and the hindrance of the work of God. It does a church no good to have two or three ministers waiting upon it. Were these ministers to go forth to labor for those in darkness, their work would show some results. Let the experienced men take the young men who are preparing for the ministry and go forth into new territory to proclaim the message of warning. {2SM 156.1}

I entreat you whom God has favored with a knowledge of the truth, Go to work; there is work to do everywhere. The fields are all white unto the harvest. Sowers and reapers are needed just now. The time you devote to imparting constantly to those who understand the message of warning will not give one tithe of the strength which they would receive in taking hold of the work to communicate life to save perishing souls. Angels are waiting to bless the consecrated workers. The parable of the lost sheep should be a lesson to every soul who has been rescued from the snare of Satan. We are not to hover over the ninety and nine, but to go forth to save the lost, hunting them up in the wilderness of the large cities and towns. In this work the laborers will be led to feel their weakness and they will flee to the stronghold. The divine presence will be with them to give strength and courage and faith and hope. The truehearted workers will be laborers together with God. {TM 232.1}

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Our ministers are not to be encouraged to hover about the churches to repeat to the believers week after week the same truths. We have a truth that is saving and precious. The Word of God must be planted in many hearts; the bread of life must be dealt out to many hungering souls. . . . It is a blessed work to lift up Christ before the world. {UL 264.3}

The righteous judgments of God, with their weight of final decision, are coming upon the land. Do not hover over the churches to repeat over and over again the same truths to the people, while the cities are left in ignorance and sin, unwarned and unlabored for. Soon the way will be hedged up and these cities will be closed to the gospel message. Wake up the church members, that they may unite in doing a definite and self-denying work. . . . {UL 274.6}

God has given all something to do. Those who are willing to work in self-denial and self-sacrifice will find their place. But those who seek only a safe and easy place need to be converted. Until their hearts are renewed, their purposes changed, God has no use for them in His work. By an unreserved consecration we are to prepare ourselves for His service. Our ministers are not to hover over the churches, regarding the churches in some particular place as their special care. And our churches should not feel jealous and neglected if they do not receive ministerial labor. They should themselves take up the burden, and labor most earnestly for souls. Believers are to have root in themselves, striking firm root in Christ, that they may bear fruit to His glory. As one man, they are to strive to attain one object,--the saving of souls. {AUCR, August 1, 1902 par. 7}

Just as soon as the workers in California stop doing aggressive work, and hover over a few churches, treading on one another's heels, their light will go out. If you wish to retain the tithe in California, not using it in foreign fields, you must do aggressive work at home. You are not to be merely consumers, but producers. You should not merely absorb. You should sustain the work in every part of the world. {GCB, April 5, 1901 par. 39}

I have been for a long time pressed under the burden of the fact that we are not elevating the standard as we should. New fields are continually opening, and the third angel's message must be proclaimed to all kindreds, nations, tongues, and peoples. We must not feel that we are compelled to hover over churches that have received the truth. We must not encourage the people to depend upon ministerial labor in order to preserve spiritual life. Everyone who has received the truth must go to God for his individual self, and decide to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Those who have embraced the third angel's message must not make man their trust, and depend upon the ministers to make their experience for them. {HM, December 1, 1894 par. 14}

The Lord has aggressive work to be done. To every human being he has committed a work, and he would have his servants stand at their post of duty. But many are unwilling to do anything for the Master that will incur self-denial and self-sacrifice. They will

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hover over the ninety and nine who are safely sheltered from danger, but refuse to go out into the highways and hedges with the gospel message, "Come, for all things are now ready." There must be an awakening among the people of God. The entire church is to be tested. There will be those who will go out into the highways and hedges who will labor with patient earnestness, simplicity, and zeal, united with earnest effort to restore health to the body. On the part of such there will be most decided efforts made to awaken to life the souls that are dead in trespasses and sins. {HM, June 1, 1897 par. 1}

The Lord calls upon the churches who know the truth to be converted,--soul, body, and spirit,--to be sanctified and dedicated to his service. They are not to stand saying, "Who is my neighbor?" They are to bear in mind that their neighbor is the one who most needs their help and sympathy. Those who will stand where the Lord can work through them to communicate light to the world, will be chosen as vessels unto honor. {HM, June 1, 1897 par. 2}

Oh, what a work there is before us! Our ministers are not to hover over those who have received the message. With Christ's love burning in their hearts, they are to go forth to win sinners to the Saviour. Beside all waters God's messengers are to sow the seeds of truth. Place after place is to be visited; church after church is to be raised up. Those who take their stand for the truth are to be organized into churches, and then the minister is to pass on to other equally important fields. {PUR, April 24, 1902 par. 6} Just as soon as a church is organized, let the minister set the members to work. The newly-formed churches will need to be educated. The minister should devote more of his time to educating than to preaching. He should teach the people how to extend the knowledge of the truth. While the new converts should be taught to ask counsel of those more experienced in the work, they should also be taught not to put ministers in the place of God. Ministers are not gods, but human beings, men compassed with infirmities. Christ is the One to whom all are to look for guidance. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth. . . . And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." {PUR, April 24, 1902 par. 7}

Soldiers of Christ are now wanted to push the battle to the front. Marshall under the bloodstained banner of Prince Emmanuel, wear his armor, and press the battle to the gate. The gospel of the kingdom of Christ must go into new countries, and enter new provinces. We are laborers together with God. Brethren and sisters, why hover about the churches? Study the parable of the lost sheep, and go forth as true shepherds, seeking the lost one who is in the wilderness of sin. Rescue the perishing. {RH, December 12, 1893 par. 3}

The great object of our work is to carry the light to those who are in darkness. Our work is world-wide. God's delegated messengers are not to hover about the people who have been long in the truth. Altogether too much labor is devoted to the churches. God's people are not to depend on others to do their work for them. Let the Lord's messengers carry the triumphs of the cross into the regions beyond, calling upon the members of the church to

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send their prayers as sharp sickles into the harvest-field. Let the church appoint pastors or elders who are devoted to the Lord Jesus, and let these men see that officers are chosen who will attend faithfully to the work of gathering in the tithe. If the pastors show that they are not fitted for their charge, if they fail to set before the church the importance of returning to God his own, if they do not see to it that the officers under them are faithful, and that the tithe is brought in, they are in peril. They are neglecting a matter which involves a blessing or a curse to the church. They should be relieved of their responsibility, and other men should be tested and tried. {RH, December 1, 1896 par. 26}

The Lord's messengers should see that his requirements are faithfully discharged by the members of the churches. God says that there should be meat in his house, and if the money in the treasury is tampered with, if it is regarded as right for individuals to make what use they please of the tithe, the Lord cannot bless He cannot sustain those who think that they can do as they please with that which is his. {RH, December 1, 1896 par. 27}

Who will now carry this burden? In view of the great needs all about us, who can be content to hover over our own churches, neither gaining nor imparting strength? Let those who have a living connection with God, go out and labor for unbelievers. We do not call for those who are half asleep to go in their present condition, but we beseech them to awake, to lay hold of the arm of infinite strength, and then go forth speaking the words of life. {RH, July 16, 1908 par. 16}

"Night after night, I have lain awake, weeping and pleading with God, because of the seeming inability of some to discern opportunities for extending our efforts into the many unworked places,--near-by places that might have been warned years ago, had we chosen to do a broad work, rather than to hover around a few centers. We need to cultivate a spirit of self-sacrifice, and of constant devotion to the needs of a lost world. {RH, November 25, 1909 par. 5}

The words were spoken to me with impelling power: Wake up the watchmen to carry the word of warning to every city in America. Build up the waste places. The righteous judgments of God, with their weight of final decision, are coming upon the land. Do not hover over the churches to repeat over and over again the same truths to the people, while the cities are left in ignorance and sin, unwarned and unlabored for. Soon the way will be hedged up and these cities will be closed to the gospel message. Wake up the church members that they may unite in doing a definite and self-denying work. {10MR 216.2}

Our ministers are not to be encouraged to hover about the churches to repeat to the believers week after week the same truths. We have a truth that is saving and precious. The Word of God must be planted in many hearts, the bread of life must be dealt out to many hungering souls. If we will study carefully the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, with these words I have read to you from the 54th and 55th chapters, you will see that there is a precious and an extended work to be done by the people of God. It is a blessed work to lift up Christ before the world. {10MR 320.2}

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I would say, Let Brother Simpson labor where his message is evidently accomplishing great good. Those who have come to his meetings have given freely of their means to sustain the work that he has carried forward. At this time, when there is such urgent need of workers in Los Angeles, when the brethren are seeking to establish a sanitarium there, I dare not say to Elder Simpson, You must go back to Canada. And, besides, such a move might not be best for his health. For the present let him remain in Los Angeles, for the Lord is giving him marked success in bearing the message to the people. Let him give the trumpet a certain sound, arousing those who have never heard the truth. May the Lord encourage him to remain in Los Angeles until the church members are aroused to gird on the armor and show that they have a burden to give the message. Our ministers are not to hover over the churches. They are to proclaim the truth, as Elder Simpson is doing. Let those who know not the truth be given an opportunity to hear the reasons of our faith. {15MR 314.1}

I believe that Brother Simpson is presenting the truth as God would have many others present it. Some of the brethren in Los Angeles felt that he should do more in the church there. When this was suggested to me, I thought of the answer that Christ gave when the priests and rulers reproached Him for eating with publicans and sinners. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," He declared. {15MR 314.2}... The message that I have to bear to the church in Los Angeles is, Awake, and put on the whole armor of God. There is selfishness in the church that must be rooted out. Seek the Lord earnestly. Reveal in your lives the sanctifying power of the truth. Cooperate with the evangelist that the Lord has placed amongst you. God would have you work as fishers of men. {15MR 315.3}

I do not know when our ministers will learn to let business and financial matters alone. Over and over again I have been shown that this is not the work of the ministry. They are not to be heavily burdened with the details of city work. They are to be in readiness to go to places where an interest has been awakened in the message, and especially to attend our camp meetings. They are not to hover over cities at the time when these meetings are in progress. {17MR 52.1}

Camp meetings must be multiplied. Place after place is to be entered. The interests can be divided, meetings being held in more than one place at the same time, if our men of ability are not kept hovering over the cities at the very time when they could reach many people in large tent meetings. This instruction has been repeated over and over again. {17MR 52.2}

May the Lord help His people to do the work that is so urgent in this part of His great vineyard. There are important fields to be worked. We shall not hover over the churches but press into new territory and raise the standard in places where the message has not been proclaimed. May the Lord bless and guide you, is my prayer.--Letter 139, 1899.

The idea that our ministers must hover over the churches might just as well be given up now as later. The members of the churches must be taught to keep themselves at work, showing the intelligence and spirituality God requires in those who claim to be members of His church. {2SAT 156.5}

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Will our ministers remember that it is not the particular duty of a minister of the gospel to hover over the churches? Those who do not labor for the salvation of others will soon lose their own confidence in God. All who profess to understand the plan of

salvation have a special work to do for those around them, ever to be ready to speak a word in season to them that are ready to perish. If it is your desire to honor and glorify, not yourself, but God, He will give you a work to do that will result in the salvation of souls. But you yourselves must be in right relation with God before you can lead others to Him. You must have a humility that God can accept. Then He will be able to impress your mind, and give you a fitness for His service. {2SAT 302.1}

We must not feel that we are compelled to hover over churches who have received the truth. We are not to spend our time doing detail work, but are to educate others, teaching them how to labor in right lines. We must not encourage the people to depend on ministerial help and labor to preserve spiritual life. Everyone who has received the truth must go to God for his individual self, and decide to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, and do true service for God. Those who have embraced the third angel's message must not make man their trust, depending upon the ministers to make their experience for them. They are to secure an individual experience by looking to God for themselves. {1NL 127.3}