

# **TRUE INDEPENDENCE**

“The Lord would not have us yield up our individuality.” Testimonies, vol 3, p 360.

“God has made us free moral agents. He requires us to preserve our moral independence, and not be bound by any man. Our consciences are to be controlled by no power on earth.”

Manuscript Releases, vol 17, p 193-194.

**Each human being is an independent agent who is responsible to God for their own actions and spiritual life – no one else can be blamed if we lose heaven.**

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” Ecclesiastes 12:13-14.

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.” Revelation 20:11-13.

“No man can grow up to the full stature of a man for another. Each must reach his own individual measurement for himself. Each is to grow up under God's supervision.” Mind, Character and Personality, vol 2, p 429.

“There is an individuality in Christian experience that must be preserved in every human agent, and the responsibility cannot be removed from any soul. Each one has his own battles to fight, his own Christian experience to gain, independent in some respects from any other soul; and God has lessons for each to gain for himself that no other can gain for him.” Mind, Character and Personality, vol 2, p 430.

“When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die...and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity...When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity...he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered.” Ezekiel 3:18-20.

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” 1 Corinthians 10:12.

**We are responsible to God to do our own personal study--no one else is to study for us.**

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15.

“...they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” Acts 17:11.

“True independence of mind is not stubbornness. It leads the youth to form their opinions on the word of God, irrespective of what others [non-believers] may say or do. If in the company of the unbelieving, the atheist, or the infidel, it leads them to acknowledge and defend their belief in the sacred truths of the gospel against the cavilings and witticisms of their ungodly associates. If they are with those who think it is a virtue to parade the faults of professed Christians, and then scoff at religion, morality, and virtue, real independence of mind will lead them courteously yet boldly to show that ridicule is a poor substitute for sound argument. It will enable them to look beyond the caviler to the one who influences him, the adversary of God and man, and to resist him in the person of his agent.

“Stand up for Jesus, young friends, and in your time of need Jesus will stand up for you.” Fundamentals of Christian Education, p 88-89.

**We are responsible to think for ourselves – we are not to be the shadow or rubber stamp of any person.**

“Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.” Romans 14:5.

“It is well for Brother and Sister \_\_\_\_\_ and Brother and Sister \_\_\_\_\_ to have strong minds. Each is to maintain his individuality. Each is to preserve an individuality that will not be submerged in the individuality of another. No human being is to be the shadow of another human being.” Mind, Character and Personality, vol 2, p 429.

“I have been shown that no man's judgment should be surrendered to the judgment of any one man.” Testimonies, vol 3, p 492.

“One of the very highest applications of these principles [recognition of personal responsibilities] is found in the recognition of man's right to himself, to the control of his own mind, to the stewardship of his talents, the right to receive and to impart the fruit of his own labor.” Testimonies, vol 7, p 180.

“Though reason and conscience are convinced, these deluded souls dare not think differently from the minister; and their individual judgment, their eternal interests, are sacrificed to the unbelief, the pride and prejudice, of another.” Great Controversy, p 597.

“You belong to God, soul, body, and spirit. Your mind belongs to God, and your talents belong to Him also. No one has a right to control another's mind and judge for another, prescribing what is his duty. There are certain rights that belong to every individual in doing God's service. No man has any more liberty to take these rights from us than to take life itself. God has given us freedom to think, and it is our privilege to follow our impressions of duty. We are only human beings, and one human being has no jurisdiction over the conscience of another human being.... Each one of us has an individuality and identity that cannot be surrendered to any other human being. We are individually the workmanship of God.” Mind, Character and Personality, vol 2, p 708-709.

“God permits every human being to exercise his individuality. He desires no one to submerge his mind in the mind of a fellow mortal. Those who desire to be transformed in mind and character are not to look to men, but to the divine Example. God gives the invitation, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."...Every one is to stand before God with an individual faith, an individual experience, knowing for himself that Christ is formed within, the hope of glory. For us to imitate the example of any man--even one whom we might regard as nearly perfect in character--would be to put our trust in a defective human being, one who is unable to impart a jot or tittle of perfection.” Signs of the Times, September 3, 1902.

“True independence of mind is an element entirely different from rashness. Independence, that is of that quality which leads to a cautious, prayerful, deliberate opinion, should be not easily yielded, until the evidence is sufficiently strong to make it certain that we are wrong. This independence will keep the mind calm, and unchangeable amidst the multitudinous errors which are prevailing, and will lead those in responsible positions to look carefully at the evidence on every side, and not be swerved by the influence of others, or by the surroundings, to form conclusions without intelligent and thorough knowledge of all the circumstances.” Pamphlet #159, p 129.

**While we are to ask for advice from others of experience, yet we are responsible to follow our own convictions – no one else is to be conscience for us.**

“Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.” Proverbs 11:14.

“We should never feel too independent to learn of one another.” Historical Sketches, p 125.

“As children in the family of God we need the wisdom and experience of matured Christians to direct, to encourage, and to defend us in times of danger, and to lead on to constant growth in grace, and to seek daily attainments in the knowledge of the truth and true holiness.” Signs of the Times, October 23, 1879.

“Some are deceived as to what constitutes true independence. Obstinacy is often confounded with independence. The yielding of self, surrendering all to the will of God, being clothed with humility, possessing that love which is pure, peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, can not be obtained unless Christ rules the life....

“True independence never disdains to ask advice of the experienced, and it treats the counsel of others with respect. God desires His people to be disciplined and brought into harmony, that they may see eye to eye. This does not mean that they are to yield up their individuality. Individuality should not be sacrificed, but it should be refined and elevated. That personal independence which leaves one to trust to his own judgment, to be self-willed, and to despise the counsel of his brethren, is not what is needed at this time.” Pacific Union Recorder, December 5, 1901.

“You may be dignified without vain self-confidence; you may be condescending and yielding without sacrificing self-respect or individual independence, and your life may be of great influence with those in the higher as well as the lower walks of life.” Testimonies, vol 3, p 506.

“Many are the ways by which Satan works through human influence to bind his captives. He secures multitudes to himself by attaching them by the silken cords of affection to those who are enemies of the cross of Christ. Whatever this attachment may be--parental, filial, conjugal, or social--the effect is the same; the opposers of truth exert their power to control the conscience, and the souls held under their sway have not sufficient courage or independence to obey their own convictions of duty.” Great Controversy, p 597.

“Your religion cannot be in any other man's keeping. Honor the cross of Christ, and the cross will honor you. Let every man stand in God, not to be bought, not to be sold, but to reveal a Christian fortitude. Serve no man through fear of what that man can do to you that is disagreeable. Christians you cannot be if you depend on any other man's conscience. Christ died to give men moral independence, freedom to exercise their God-given ability. His servants are to be circumscribed by no man or council of men unless they have decided evidence that the men or council of men are worked by the Holy Spirit.

“God has given us all that we possess. It all belongs to Him, and we are not to sit at the footstool of any man to obey his orders, for God has made us free moral agents. He requires us to preserve our moral independence, and not be bound by any man. Our consciences are to be controlled by no power on earth.” Manuscript Releases, vol 17, p 193-194.

**We are responsible to help ourselves – no one else is required to help when we are able.**

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.” Ecclesiastes 9:10.

“Parents should now encourage their children to become more independent. Serious troubles are soon to be seen upon the earth, and children should be trained in such a way as to be able to meet them. Many parents give a great deal of time and attention to amusing their children, encouraging them to bring all their troubles to them; but children should be trained to amuse themselves, to exercise their minds in devising plans for their own satisfaction, doing the simple things that are natural for them to do.” Signs of the Times, August 13, 1896.

“There is an individuality in Christian experience that must be preserved in every human agent, and the responsibility cannot be removed from any soul. Each one has his own battles to fight, his own Christian experience to gain, independent in some respects from any other soul; and God has lessons for each to gain for himself that no other can gain for him.” Mind, Character and Personality, vol 2, p 430.

**We are responsible for the performance of the work given us to do – no one else can be blamed if it does not get done.**

“...do your own business, and...work with your own hands.” 1 Thessalonians 4:11.

“You belong to God, soul, body, and spirit. Your mind belongs to God, and your talents belong to Him also. No one has a right to control another's mind and judge for another, prescribing what is his duty. There are certain rights that belong to every individual in doing God's service. No man has any more liberty to take these rights from us than to take life itself. God has given us freedom to think, and it is our privilege to follow our impressions of duty.” Mind, Character and Personality, vol 2, p 708-709.

“There is so much cowardice and helplessness, and so much dependence upon others, that we are inefficient to do the great work which has been committed to us. God's work cannot be done without a spirit of independence. Every man is to know by personal experience that he can lean upon God alone, and find in him a support and helper. Every man must learn to say humbly and firmly, ‘Looking unto Jesus, I dare to stand alone; for the Father is with me.’ This was the attitude of Jesus. He said to his followers before his hour of trial: ‘Ye shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.’” Signs of the Times, December 23, 1889.

“...your husband must remember that he is God's property, the purchase of the blood of Christ. The Lord has a work for him to do, and if the enemy works through you to thwart His purpose, there is but one course for him to take--to go forth to his work independent of your influence, and give himself wholly to God. If he does this, he will, through the grace of Christ, save his own soul, and through this course may be the means of saving your soul. But he is not now doing the work which God requires him to do. He is not to indulge your unconsecrated desires by his means or consent, but should restrain them.” Manuscript Releases, vol 16, p 314.

“Each must stand in his lot and place to do the work appointed him...” Manuscript Releases, vol 18, p 8.

**We are responsible for our own daily maintenance and living – no one owes us anything.**

“The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.” Proverbs 13:4.

“...be morally independent, and be able to furnish themselves with conveniences, because they have educated ability. Whether men or women they should learn to mend, wash, and keep their own clothes in order. They should be able to cook their own meals.” Pamphlet #140, p 31-32.

“Children are what their training has made them. Boys who lavishly spend money from their father's pocket...who do not apply themselves to any useful occupation, have no foundation to build upon, and cannot become self-reliant and independent. Money which comes to the young with but little effort on their part will not be valued. Some have to obtain money by hand work and privation, but how much safer are those youth who know just where their spending-money comes from, who know what their clothing and food cost, and what it takes to purchase a home. There are many ways in which children can earn money themselves, and can act their part in bringing thank-offerings to Jesus, who gave his own life for them. Children should be educated to make the very best use of their time, to be helpful to father and mother, to be self-reliant.” Pamphlet #96, p 50-51.

**We are responsible to maintain our integrity, moral righteousness, and obligations in the various affairs of life.**

“...stand in moral independence, free from sin, in the strength of a character molded after the divine similitude.” Selected Messages, book 1, p 249.

“Our only safety is to stand as God's peculiar people. We must not yield one inch to the customs and fashions of this degenerate age but stand in moral independence, making no compromise with its corrupt and idolatrous practices.” Testimonies, vol 5, p 78.

“Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” 1 Peter 1:14-16.

**We are responsible to stand for God, His honor, and His truth regardless of the consequences.**

“It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes....The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?” Psalms 118:8-9, 6.

“We ought to obey God rather than men.” Acts 5:29.

“It will require courage and independence to rise above the religious standard of the Christian world.” Testimonies, vol 5, p 78.

“The truly converted laborer...will not be molded after the customs and practices of the world, but will stand in moral independence. He will set an example that will be consistent with his profession, coming out from the world, and maintaining a separation from its spirit and fashions. He will not be turned in the least from his steadfast purpose to be one with Christ, nor yield an iota from his stand of fidelity to God, in opposition to pride, to indulgence in selfish amusement, to expenditure of means for the gratification of inclination or love of display, but will be an example in spirit, deportment, and dress.” Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p 95.

“Moral independence will be wholly in place when opposing the world. By conforming entirely to the will of God, we shall be placed upon vantage ground and shall see the necessity of decided separation from the customs and practices of the world. We are not to elevate our standard just a little above the world's standard; but we are to make the line of demarcation decidedly apparent.” Review and Herald, January 9, 1894.

“There is so much cowardice and helplessness, and so much dependence upon others, that we are inefficient to do the great work which has been committed to us. God's work cannot be done without a spirit of independence. Every man is to know by personal experience that he can lean upon God alone, and find in him a support and helper. Every man must learn to say humbly and firmly, ‘Looking unto Jesus, I dare to stand alone; for the Father is with me.’ This was the attitude of Jesus. He said to his followers before his hour of trial: ‘Ye shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.’” Signs of the Times, December 23, 1889.

“The mind needs to be trained by daily tests that it may acquire power to stand in any difficult position. In the days of trial and of peril you will need to be fortified to stand firmly for the right, independent of every opposing influence.” Testimonies, vol 4, p 561.

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God.” 2 Timothy 1:7-8.

“But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.” 1 Peter 3:14-17.

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