THE LADDER OF FAITH AND PROGRESS
CLIMBING TO THE HEAVENLY CHARACTER
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OVERVIEW
From Faith which is your ground or foundation in Christ, there are seven steps toward Heavenly Character. Christ is the Ladder of progress. In climbing this ladder, the key is diligence, the goal is the Divine nature, and the result is the bountiful harvest—you will become fruitful in the Lord.

Text: 2 Peter 1:4-8 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make [you that ye shall] neither [be] barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. JESUS—THE LADDER
John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.
Psalm 86:11 Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.

This man of faith beholds the ladder of Jacob's vision, representing Christ, who has connected earth with heaven, and finite man with the infinite God. His faith is strengthened as he calls to mind how patriarchs and prophets have relied upon the One who is his support and consolation, and for whom he is giving his life. From these holy men who from century to century have borne testimony for their faith, he hears the assurance that God is true. His fellow apostles, who, to preach the gospel of Christ, went forth to meet religious bigotry and heathen superstition, persecution, and contempt, who counted not their lives dear unto themselves that they might bear aloft the light of the cross amidst the dark mazes of infidelity—these he hears witnessing to Jesus as the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. From the rack, the stake, the dungeon, from dens and caves of the earth, there falls upon his ear the martyr's shout of triumph. He hears the witness of steadfast souls, who, though destitute, afflicted, tormented, yet bear fearless, solemn testimony for the faith, declaring, "I know whom I have believed." These, yielding up their lives for the faith, declare to the world that He in whom they have trusted is able to save to the uttermost. \{AA 512.1\}

We ascend to heaven by climbing the ladder--the whole height of Christ's work--step by step. There must be a holding fast to Christ, a climbing up by the merits of Christ. To let go is to cease to climb, is to fall, to perish. We are to mount by the Mediator, and all the while to keep hold on the Mediator,
ascending by successive steps, round above round, stretching the hand from one round to the next above. In the work of redemption we may have a knowledge of Jesus Christ by planting the feet on one round after another in perfect obedience to all the commandments of God. This is a necessity for each individual--striving and making progress at every step. It is simply impossible to enter heaven without constant striving. There is fearful peril in relaxing our efforts in spiritual diligence for a moment, for we are hanging, as it were, between heaven and earth. {19MR 353.4}

2. FAITH—LADDER FOUNDATION
Faith—a belief with submission or surrender to the capacity of the higher power, trust and obedience, confidence and reliance, relies on relationship, hope in the promises of God.

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.
Mark 11:22-24 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive [them], and ye shall have [them].

G4102
πιστις
pistis

Faith, a belief with submission or surrender to the capacity of the higher power, trust and obedience, confidence and reliance, relies on relationship, hope in the promises of God.

"Like precious faith" . . . is a genuine faith. It is not a fruitless faith. True, saving faith is a precious treasure of inestimable value. It is not superficial. The just lives by faith a truly spiritual, Christlike life. It is through faith that the steps are taken one at a time up the ladder of progress. Faith must be cultivated. It unites the human with the divine nature. {OHC 67.3}

3. FIRST STEP—VIRTUE
This “virtue” (Gk. Arête) meant moral excellence, adherence to moral values, respectable or commendable which differ from a “virtue” (Gk. dunamis) which mean power or energy as for miraculous healing.

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things [are] honest, whatsoever things [are] just, whatsoever things [are] pure, whatsoever things [are] lovely, whatsoever things [are] of good report; if [there be] any virtue, and if [there be] any praise, think on these things.

G703
αρετη
aretē

This “virtue” (Gk. Arête) meant moral excellence, adherence to moral values, respectable or commendable which differ from a “virtue” (Gk. dunamis) which mean power or energy as for miraculous healing.
The Scriptures plainly show that the work of sanctification is progressive. When in conversion the sinner finds peace with God through the blood of the atonement, the Christian life has but just begun. Now he is to "go on unto perfection;" to grow up "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Says the apostle Paul: "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." [PHIL. 3:13, 14.] And Peter sets before us the steps by which Bible sanctification is to be attained: "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. . . . If ye do these things, ye shall never fall." [2 PET. 1:5-10.] {GC88 470.1}

Let everyone who professes Christ seek to overcome all unmanliness, all weakness and folly. Some men never grow up to the full stature of men in Christ Jesus. They are childish and self-indulgent. Humble piety would correct all this. Pure religion possesses no characteristics of childish self-indulgence. It is honorable in the highest degree. Then let not one of those who have enlisted as soldiers of Christ be ready to faint in the day of trial. All should feel that they have earnest work to do to elevate their fellow men. Not one has a right to rest from the warfare to make virtue desirable and vice hated. There is no rest for the living Christian this side of the eternal world. To obey God's commandments is to do right and only right. This is Christian manliness. But many need to take frequent lessons from the life of Christ, who is the Author and Finisher of our faith. "Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." You are to show a growth in the Christian graces. By manifesting meekness under provocation and growing away from low earthliness you give evidence that you have an indwelling Saviour, and every thought, word, and deed attracts men to Jesus rather than to self. There is a great amount of work to be done and but little time in which to do it. Let it be your lifework to inspire all with the thought that they have a work to do for Christ. Wherever there are duties to be done which others do not understand because they do not wish to see their lifework, accept them and do them. {5T 597.1}

4. SECOND STEP—KNOWLEDGE
Knowledge—acceptance of what has been revealed, the revealed way or will of God—the instruction of truth—the word of God, surrendering or relating of oneself to the God of knowledge.

Numbers 24:16  He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the most High, [which] saw the vision of the Almighty, falling [into a trance], but having his eyes open: 1Samuel 2:3  Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let [not] arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD [is] a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.  Psalm 119:66  Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.  Proverbs 1:7  The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of knowledge: [but] fools despise wisdom and instruction.

G1108
γνωσις
gnōsis
 Knowing (the act), that is, (by implication) knowledge: - knowledge, science.
As the knowledge of truth is imparted, it will increase. All who receive the gospel message into the heart will long to proclaim it. The heaven-born love of Christ must find expression. Those who have put on Christ will relate their experience, tracing step by step the leadings of the Holy Spirit—their hungering and thirsting for the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, the results of their searching of the Scriptures, their prayers, their soul agony, and the words of Christ to them, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." {AG 63.3}

All who receive the gospel message into the heart will long to proclaim it. The heaven-born love of Christ must find expression. Those who have put on Christ will relate their experience, tracing step by step the leadings of the Holy Spirit—their hungering and thirsting for the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, the results of their searching of the Scriptures, their prayers, their soul agony, and the words of Christ to them, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." It is unnatural for any to keep these things secret, and those who are filled with the love of Christ will not do so. In proportion as the Lord has made them the depositaries of sacred truth will be their desire that others shall receive the same blessing. And as they make known the rich treasures of God's grace, more and still more of the grace of Christ will be imparted to them. They will have the heart of a little child in its simplicity and unreserved obedience. Their souls will pant after holiness, and more and more of the treasures of truth and grace will be revealed to them to be given to the world. {COL 125.1}

5. THIRD STEP—TEMPERANCE
Temperance—self-control based on God's principles as in submission to the guidance of the Word of God and of the Holy Spirit. Not giving up to the desire of the flesh; moderation in good things and abstinence in harmful things.
Galatians 5:22,23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

G1466
eγκρατεία
egkrateia

eng-krat'-i-ah
From G1468: self control (especially continence): - temperance.

In referring to these races as a figure of the Christian warfare, Paul emphasized the preparation necessary to the success of the contestants in the race—the preliminary discipline, the abstemious diet, the necessity for temperance. "Every man that striveth for the mastery," he declared, "is temperate in all things." The runners put aside every indulgence that would tend to weaken the physical powers, and by severe and continuous discipline trained their muscles to strength and endurance, that when the day of the contest should arrive, they might put the heaviest tax upon their powers. How much more important that the Christian, whose eternal interests are at stake, bring appetite and passion under subjection to reason and the will of God! Never must he allow his attention to be diverted by amusements, luxuries, or ease. All his habits and passions must be brought under the strictest discipline. Reason, enlightened by the teachings of God's word and guided by His Spirit, must hold the reins of control. {AA 311.1}

There is great need of temperance in amusements, as in every other pursuit. And the character of these amusements should be carefully and thoroughly considered. Every youth should ask himself, What influence will these amusements have on physical, mental, and moral health? Will my mind become so infatuated as to forget God? Shall I cease to have His glory before me? {AH 512.4}

In the advocacy of the cause of temperance, our efforts are to be multiplied. The subject of Christian temperance should find a place in our sermons in every city where we labor. Health reform in all its
bearings is to be presented before the people, and special efforts made to instruct the youth, the middle-aged, and the aged in the principles of Christian living. Let this phase of the message be revived, and let the truth go forth as a lamp that burneth.--Manuscript 61, 1909. {CME 37.5}

6. FOURTH STEP—PATIENCE

Patience—longsuffering, endurance in persecution or in waiting, not giving up under pressure or stress, cheerful in spite of the troubles around, not giving up the calmness and peace in the soul, having the forgiving attitude or spirit, holding in check the burst of anger.

Luke 8:15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep [it], and bring forth fruit with patience.

Luke 21:19 In your patience possess ye your souls.

Romans 5:3-5 And not only [so], but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience: And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Romans 8:24, 25 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, [then] do we with patience wait for [it].

Romans 15:4, 5 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

G5281

υπομονή

hupomonē

hoop-om-on-ay'

From G5278; cheerful (or hopeful) endurance, constancy: - enduring, patience, patient continuance (waiting).

Self-cultured, self-controlled, under discipline in the school of Christ, having a living connection with the great Teacher, they will have an intelligent knowledge of practical religion; and keeping their own souls in the love of God, they will know how to exercise the grace of patience and Christlike forbearance. The patience, love, long-forbearance, and tender sympathies are called into activity. They will discern that they have a most important field in the Lord's vineyard to cultivate. They must lift up their hearts unto God in sincere prayer, Be thou my pattern, and then by beholding Jesus they will do the work of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do." [JOHN 5:19.] So with the sons and daughters of God; they steadfastly and teachably look to Jesus, doing nothing in their own way and after their own will and pleasure; but that which they have, in the lessons of Christ, seen him, their pattern, do, they do also. Thus they represent to the students under their instruction at all times and upon all occasions the character of Jesus Christ. They catch the bright rays of the Sun of Righteousness and reflect these precious beams upon the children and youth whom they are educating. The formation of correct habits is to leave its impress upon the mind and characters of the children, that they may practice the right way. It means much to bring these children under the direct influence of the Spirit of God, training and disciplining them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The formation of correct habits, the exhibition of a right spirit, will call for earnest efforts in the name and strength of Jesus. The instructor must persevere, giving line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, in all long-suffering and patience, sympathy and love, binding these children to his heart by the love of Christ revealed in himself. {CE 152.1}

7. FIFTH STEP—GODLINESS
Godliness—Godlikeness, having a close relationship with God, devoted to the cause of God, holiness in wholeness, walking faithfully in the way or the will of God, piety, and reverent to God.

1 Timothy 2:2  For kings, and [for] all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

1 Timothy 4:7, 8  But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself [rather] unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

1 Timothy 6:6, 11, 12  But godliness with contentment is great gain… But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

2 Timothy 3:1-5  This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

2 Peter 1:2-4  Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that [pertain] unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

2 Peter 3:10-14  But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. [Seeing] then [that] all these things shall be dissolved, what manner [of persons] ought ye to be in [all] holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

**G2150**

εὐσεβεία
eusebeia

*yoo-seb'-i-ah*

From **G2152**: piety; specifically the gospel scheme: - godliness, holiness.

**G2151**

εὐσεβέω
eusebeō

*yoo-seb-eh'-o*

From **G2152**: to be pious, that is, (towards God) to worship, or (towards parents) to respect (support): - show piety, worship.

**G2152**

εὐσεβίας
eusebios

eusebē s
You are not laying up treasure in heaven and becoming rich toward God. Self and selfish interests are eating out true godliness from your soul. You are bowing to the god of this world. Your heart is alienated from God. An inspired writer says: "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The steps of a Christian may at times appear feeble and faltering, yet in his conscious weakness he leans upon the Mighty One for support. He is sustained, and makes sure progress onward and upward toward perfection. He gains new victories daily, and comes nearer and nearer to the standard of perfect holiness. His eye is not downward to the earth, but upward, ever keeping in view the heavenly Pattern. {2T 228.2}

There are still additional steps to take. Add "to godliness brotherly kindness." Thus there will not be merely a profession of Bible religion, but a sincere, earnest practice of godliness. We must be partakers of the divine nature before we can represent the Christlike character and practice the works of Christ. The climbing Christian will not sit passively, claiming the promises, enjoying the grace given him of God, but will work from principle. He is a worker together with God. The grace given him of God teaches him how to be kind and tender and helpful to his brethren. There is no waiting for an overpowering, magical change to be wrought into the conversion of others without any action of our own. Life becomes a humble but earnest working out of salvation with fear and with trembling, knowing that God worketh in us both to will and to do of His own good pleasure. The very exercise of brotherly kindness assimilates the soul to Christ and brings him into sympathy with Christ. {19MR 347.2}

8. SIXTH STEP—BROTHERLY KINDNESS OR BROTHERLY LOVE (Philadelphia)

Brotherly love—the love toward fellow believers based on the love of Jesus, preferring one another, sharing one anothers' burden, serving one another, a relationship as in one body or one family.

John 13:34, 35 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all [men] know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Romans 12:10 [Be] kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

1 Thessalonians 4:9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

Hebrews 13:1-3 Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; [and] them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

G5360
φιλαδέλφια
philadelphia
fil-ad-el-fee'-ah
From **G5361**: *fraternal affection*: - brotherly love (kindness), love of the brethren.

When Christians accuse and condemn their brethren, they show themselves to be in the service of the accuser of the brethren. When they talk of their faults and failings, they plant roots of bitterness, whereby many shall be defiled. It is through this kind of work that brother becomes suspicious of brother, and variance arises in the church. Love cannot exist where the conversation of the professed people of God is largely made up of talk concerning the errors and mistakes of others. When this is done, the words of Christ are treated with indifference and contempt, as though frail, erring man had found some other way to heaven save the one appointed by the Lord.--obedience to the commandments of God. We should remember that we are all brethren, seeking the same home in heaven; but if Christ is not formed within, if you have not the mind of Christ, and do not practice the words of Christ; if you are fully satisfied with your own peculiar ways, so that you feel justified in complaining of your brethren, you will never reach heaven. If you cannot live in harmony on the earth, how could you live throughout eternity in love and peace? There must be kindness, love, courtesy, and delicate regard shown for one another here and now. To practice the principles of love will not prevent us from dealing plainly with our brethren, in brotherly kindness pointing out wrongs and short-comings when it is necessary to do so. But we should do this in harmony with the directions of Christ. When you are yourself connected with God, you may speak plainly to those who by their crooked course are turning the lame out of the way. The apostle gives this instruction concerning this class: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." {RH, July 22, 1890 par. 12}

Satan designs to keep the church in a state of wrangling, envy, jealousy, and evil surmising, so that brethren cannot pray or work in harmony; while thus at variance, they fail to bring the saving power of the truth to bear upon the heart of unbelievers. People become disgusted with our religion when they witness the way in which a brother treats an offending brother. {RH, July 22, 1890 par. 13}

9. **SEVENTH STEP—CHARITY OR LOVE (COMPLETENESS IN GOD’S LOVE—OBEDIENT)**

Charity (agape) is the foundational love—where love in the family or between brethren, and love between opposite gender branches out. This love as expressed by the entire Ten Commandments.

*Love in complete form—love toward God and love toward fellowmen.*

Romans 5:5-8 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Deuteronomy 6:4-6 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God [is] one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

Matthew 24:12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

Luke 11:42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

John 5:41-44 I receive not honour from men. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that [cometh] from God only?

John 13:34, 35 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all [men] know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.
John 15:10-14 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and [that] your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

**G26**

*ἀγάπη*

*agapē*

*ag-ah'-pay*

From G25; *love*, that is, *affection or benevolence*; specifically (plural) a *love feast*: - (feast of) charity ([-ably]), dear, love.

We should talk faith, and educate the soul to praise God. Says the apostle, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." While you appreciate the love of God, you will have living faith. You must climb up by Christ; he is the ladder. We could not scale the battlements of heaven were it not for the fact that Christ is the ladder. The base of the ladder rests upon the earth, and the top reaches into the highest heavens. The base of this divine ladder touches the earth. If it had stopped one inch short of that, humanity could never have reached the first round; but it is the goodness of God that leadeth you to repentance, and the grace and mercy of God shines down on every round, for God is above the ladder. Its topmost round reaches into the heaven of heavens. The light of God's love brightens the whole length of the ladder, and every step upward is a step toward him. When we are mounting this ladder, we are on our way to the mansions which Christ has gone to prepare for those that love him. Says the apostle, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." {ST, September 16, 1889 par. 5}

**REFLECTION**

The path of obedience to God is as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. We are to climb the rounds of the ladder. God is above it. His light is shining on every round of this ladder. It is by the difficult steps of faith and self-denial that the top of the ladder is reached. To all who choose to be guided by their own judgment and impulses, life will be a failure; for they discard God's ways, and follow the human, perverse, passionate will. They are bent upon having their own way. God has a special work for every one to do, and those who do this work trustingly, in the meekness and lowliness of Christ, will do it well. {MR926 28.3}

The gaining of eternal life is no easy thing. By living faith we are to keep on reaching forward, ascending the ladder round by round, seeing and taking the necessary steps; and yet we must understand that not one holy thought, not one unselfish act, can be originated in self. It is only through Christ that there can be any virtue in humanity. Without Christ we can do no good thing, but with him we may do all things. It is at this point that many stumble, to their ruin. They think that they must struggle in their own strength to grow into goodness, before they can receive a new heart. But such effort is in vain. All warfare is useless unless Christ's power is combined with human effort. But while we can do nothing without him, we have something to do in connection with him. At no time must we relax our spiritual vigilance; for we are hanging, as it were, between heaven and earth. We must cling to Christ, climb up by Christ, become laborers together with him in the saving of our souls. {RH, November 11, 1890 par. 11}

**MORE INFORMATION**
Let us consider this ladder which was presented to Jacob. . . . The sin of Adam cut off all intercourse between heaven and earth. Up to the moment of man's transgression of God's law there had been free communion between earth and heaven. They were connected by a path which Deity could traverse. But the transgression of God's law broke up this path and man was separated from God. . . . {OHC 66.2}

Every link which bound earth to heaven and man to the infinite God seemed broken. Man might look to heaven, but how could he attain it? But joy to the world! The Son of God, the Sinless One, the One perfect in obedience, becomes the channel through which the lost communion may be renewed, the way through which the lost paradise may be regained. Through Christ, man's substitute and surety, man may keep the commandments of God. He may return to his allegiance and God will accept him. Christ is the ladder. "By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture." John 10:9. . . . {OHC 66.3}

The ladder is the medium of communication between God and man. Through the mystic ladder the gospel was preached to Jacob. As the ladder stretched from earth, reaching to the highest heavens, and the glory of God was seen above the ladder, so Christ in His divine nature reached immensity and was one with the Father. As the ladder, though its top penetrated into heaven, had its base upon the earth, so Christ, though God, clothed His divinity with humanity and was in the world "found in fashion as a man" (Phil. 2:8). The ladder would be useless if it rested not on the earth or if it reached not to the heavens. {OHC 66.4}

God appeared in glory above the ladder, looking down with compassion on erring, sinful Jacob. . . . It is through Christ that the Father beholds sinful man. . . . The broken links have been repaired. A highway has been thrown up along which the weary and heavy laden may pass. They may enter heaven and find rest. {OHC 66.5}

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure." 2 Peter 1:10. We need not have a supposed hope, but an assurance. To make our calling and election sure is to follow the Bible plan to closely examine ourselves, to make strict inquiry whether we are indeed converted, whether our minds are drawn out after God and heavenly things, our wills renewed, our whole souls changed. To make our calling and election sure requires far greater diligence than many are giving to this important matter. "For if ye do these things"-- live on the plan of addition, growing in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ--ye shall mount up, step by step, the ladder Jacob saw, and "ye shall never fall." {OHC 74.4}

Holding Fast to Christ, the Ladder

For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 1:11. {OHC 75.1}

We ascend to heaven by climbing the ladder--the whole height of Christ's work--step by step. There must be a holding fast to Christ, a climbing up by the merits of Christ. To let go is to cease to climb, is to fall, to perish. We are to mount by the Mediator and all the while to keep hold on the Mediator, ascending by successive steps, round above round, stretching the hand from one round to the next above. . . . There is fearful peril in relaxing our efforts in spiritual diligence for a moment, for we are hanging, as it were, between heaven and earth. {OHC 75.2}

We must keep the eye directed upward to God above the ladder. The question with men and women gazing heavenward is, How can I obtain the mansions for the blessed? It is by being a partaker of the divine nature. It is by escaping the "corruption that is in the world through lust." It is by entering into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, laying hold of the hope set before you in the gospel. It is by fastening yourself to Christ and straining every nerve to leave the world behind. . . . It is by being in Christ and yet led by Christ; by believing and working, . . . holding onto Christ and constantly mounting upward toward God. . . . {OHC 75.3}

We point you to the mansions Christ is preparing for all those who love Him. We point you to that city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. We show you its massive walls, with the
twelve foundations, and tell you that these walls must be scaled. You look discouraged at the magnitude of the work before you. We point you to the ladder set up on earth, reaching to the city of God. Plant your feet on the ladder. Forsake your sins. Climb step by step and you will reach God above the ladder, and the Holy City of God. . . . {OHC 75.4}

When the successive steps have all been mounted, when the graces have been added one after another, the crowning grace is the perfect love of God--supreme love to God and love to our fellow men. And then the abundant entrance into the kingdom of God. {OHC 75.5}

Christ is the ladder that Jacob saw, the base resting on the earth, and the topmost round reaching to the gate of heaven, to the very threshold of glory. If that ladder had failed by a single step of reaching the earth, we should have been lost. But Christ reaches us where we are. He took our nature and overcame, that we through taking His nature might overcome. Made "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3), He lived a sinless life. Now by His divinity He lays hold upon the throne of heaven, while by His humanity He reaches us. He bids us by faith in Him attain to the glory of the character of God. Therefore are we to be perfect, even as our "Father which is in heaven is perfect." {RC 24.3}

We ascend to heaven by climbing the ladder--the whole height of Christ's work--step by step. There must be a holding fast to Christ, a climbing up by the merits of Christ. To let go is to cease to climb, is to fall, to perish. We are to mount by the Mediator, and all the while to keep hold on the Mediator, ascending by successive steps, round above round, stretching the hand from one round to the next above. In the work of redemption we may have a knowledge of Jesus Christ by planting the feet on one round after another in perfect obedience to all the commandments of God. This is a necessity for each individual--striving and making progress at every step. It is simply impossible to enter heaven without constant striving. There is fearful peril in relaxing our efforts in spiritual diligence for a moment, for we are hanging, as it were, between heaven and earth. {19MR 353.4}

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We want to see the sick among us healed by the power of God. He cooperates with man in every reformation made. Let us take hold with Him. Climb, climb, for your souls' sake climb the ladder of progress. First ascend the lower rounds, and then climb, climb, climb; for the topmost round rests upon the threshold of heaven. Angels of God are ascending and descending that ladder of shining brightness. You can ascend round by round, round by round, and finally step off into the kingdom of glory.

Keep progressing upward, ever ascending higher and still higher. God will put it into your mind to do His will. He will give you strength and courage and hope and faith. You can reach the golden city.

And how was this kingdom prepared? Our Lord of glory stepped down from His royal throne, and, laying aside His royal robe and kingly crown, He took upon Himself the garments of humanity, that, by standing at the head of humanity, He might give value to humanity, and enable us through His strength to become conquerors, sons of God, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus. {2SAT 258.7}
Shall we not put to the test every muscle and sinew, in an effort to cooperate with God? Then we
shall be victorious. Then we shall be ushered into the kingdom of everlasting glory. Then we will unite
with the saints in casting our glittering crowns at the feet of our Redeemer. Then we will touch our
golden harps and sing the song of redemption. 2SAT 259.1

I want to be there. I want to unite in this song, and I want you to unite in it. I want you to be there,
that you may see the King in His beauty, His marvelous loveliness. God help us, is my prayer. 2SAT
259.2

The humility that bears fruit, filling the soul with a sense of the love of God, will speak for the one
who has cherished it, in the great day when men will be rewarded according as their works have been.
Happy will be the one of whom it can be said, "The Spirit of God never stirred this man's soul in vain.
He went forward and upward from strength to strength. Self was not woven into his life. Each message
of correction, warning, and counsel he received as a blessing from God. Thus the way was prepared for
him to receive still greater blessings, because God did not speak to him in vain. Each step upward on
the ladder of progress prepared him to climb still higher. From the top of the ladder the bright beams of
God's glory shone upon him. He did not think of resting, but sought constantly to attain the wisdom and
righteousness of Christ. Ever he pressed toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in
Christ Jesus." HP 122.4

This experience every one who is saved must have. HP 122.5

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the wisdom and righteousness of Christ. Ever he pressed toward the mark for the prize of the high
calling of God in Christ Jesus." 3SM 360.3

There are those whose characters are so frivolous that it seems impossible for them to keep their
tongues from speaking evil; but notwithstanding this, maintain your self-control, and then, wherever
you are, those who have charge over you will not have to control you, for you will control yourselves.
Climb steadily upward on the ladder of progress, round by round, and at last you will step off the
topmost round into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. RH, July 6, 1905
par. 12

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do
these things, ye shall never fail." Our eternal life insurance policy is found right in these words, and we
want you to study them carefully. "Ye shall never fail." Ought we not, then, to work right to the point?
RH, July 6, 1905 par. 13

Will we be diligent to make our calling and election sure? Will we patiently climb the ladder of
Christian progress, until from the topmost round we step into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ?
We may become pure and holy. We may become more precious than fine gold, even the golden wedge
of Ophir. And what joy it will be to hear from the lips of Jesus the sweet benediction, "Well done, good
and faithful servant." What a victory to be of that company of whom John speaks: "And one of the
elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came
they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of
great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in blood of the Lamb. Therefore
are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the
throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the
sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and
shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."
ST, October 22, 1885 par. 18