

## A Synthesis of Spirit of Prophecy Statements

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I. RECREATION: Identifying Characteristics of True Recreation

1. It does, as the name suggests, re-create, thus strengthening and building up body, soul, and spirit, a blessing to mind as well as to body. [Ed. 207-13; 4T 653; 5T 218; CH 190, 198]
2. It enables a more successful discharge of duties. [2T 586; CT 336]
3. It gives new life, new courage, new hope. [1T 515; 2T 586-87; CT 336, 347; CH 196]
4. It gives new strength to be better men and women. [2T 587]
5. It improves the mind and refreshes the body. [Ed. 207; 2T 586; CT 335-36]
6. It makes one better prepared to resist disease. [1T 515; CT 347; CH 196]
7. It makes one's influence upon one's associates more beneficial. [2T 586; CT 336]

II. HARMFUL AMUSEMENT: Identifying CharacteristicsA. Effect on the MIND:

1. It creates disrelish for serious thought [MYP 399] and diverts the mind from serious things. [Ev. 210-11]
2. It creates a love for excitement and exciting pleasures [MYP 399]--and it is true in the body, as in nature, that "to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction." For the body, the reaction, very dangerous, is mental depression [CH 627; ML 150], or, at the very least, a relaxation of mental tone. [SD 131]
3. The intellect may actually be "dwarfed." [AH 521]
4. Perhaps most serious of all, the senses are "beclouded" [Te 50], and "the power of discernment, which ought ever to be kept keen and sensitive, to distinguish between the sacred and the common, is in a great measure destroyed. [MYP 382; cf. CT 368] (In the latter reference, Mrs. White specifically states that even though a sinner repents and is forgiven of God, that he will "carry the scars through [his] lifetime," because the damage is permanent.)

B. Effect on the BODY:

1. It absorbs energies needed for useful work [Ed. 207] as well as creating a dislike for useful exercise and work. [CT 354] Thus ordinary duties may appear to be "tame and uninteresting." [AH 513]

2. Health as well as morals may be injured [WM 291], as rest and sleep are often sacrificed on the altar of amusement [ML 143]. The net effect is dissipation [AH 516-17; NYP 399; IT 514] in which man is made "bruitish," [FE 314], the lower passions are strengthened. [CT 281]. If one is not in good health at the time, the recovery of health may be hindered--or prevented; [IT 555] and, in it all, duty may be neglected [2T 411] since when we do not feel in good health we are seldom inclined to any exertion, even for God.

#### C. Effect on the SPIRITUAL NATURE:

1. Many amusements are harmful, not only in themselves, but also in what they lead to--the end may be sin. [Ed 227] They open the door to a "flood" of temptations [COL 54-55; 9T 90] and to evil itself. [IT 514; PP 458] The conscience is benumbed [PP 558], faith is confused [CT 345], God is forgotten [SD 141], the attention is diverted from Christian warfare [AA 311] and from truth itself. [ML 91; SD 280]
2. It engenders a disrelish for religious services [AH 516-17; 2T 236]. the heart is hardened [PP 558], the soul is weakened [2T 412], the Holy Spirit is grieved [CT 348-49], His work is spurned [ISM 136], and His work counteracted [SD 131], and a neglect of God's work. [CSW 67]
3. Many amusements lead especially to self-glorification. [AH 499; 2SM 322]
4. In the eyes of the world Christianity is compromised, counteracted, and reproached [MYP 388], and "Christ's religion is misunderstood." [ISM 133] (It may be misunderstood from the standpoint of the world's getting a distorted idea of what true Christianity is like, and also "misunderstood" in the sense that a Christian who is not fully connected to Christ cannot think clearly and correctly.)

#### D. OTHER DANGERS:

1. There is the problem of evil associations, and the influence and effect they may have upon us. [MYP 389] An unchristian atmosphere is dangerous. [5T 78]
2. The question of money almost always arises. It is often frittered away [FE 422], and needlessly spent [CS 134-35, 249; 3T 401], and poverty may be increased thereby. [FE 312-13, 318, 422]
3. The question of time arises always--and the manner in which we shall spend it--profitably or otherwise? Much is wasted in amusement because of the nature of the amusement, and its effect upon us. [CT 283] The time might have been better spent in Bible study [CSW 20] or a study of the Sabbath School lesson [3T 189], in helping the needy, [6T 276] or in missionary work of some other nature [FE 290]. (Let it be remembered, however, that time spent in true recreation is never wasted, and we are not expected to spend all our time in either Bible study or missionary work--if we do, we shall be leading an unbalanced life just as much as the man who spends no time on either!)

### III. TESTS FOR AMUSEMENT AND RECREATION: Whether safe or not--

1. Can you ask the blessing of God, in faith, upon the activity? [CT 337] Was Jesus invited to preside over the affair? [CT 338] Were prayer or songs of praise out of place there? [PP 207]
2. Did you have a clear conscience, void of offense, when you went to your home afterward? [CT 337]
3. Did it disqualify you for secret prayer, devotion at the altar of prayer, or for taking part in a religious meeting? [CT 337] Was anything said or done that would have grieved the Holy Spirit? [CT 339] Did your mind become so infatuated that you forgot God? [CT 334]
4. Did it encourage pride of dress, pride of appearance, self-glorification, hilarity, trifling? [CT 339]
5. Did it better fit you for successfully discharging the duties devolving upon you as a Christian? [CT 336] Did it elevate and ennoble you, refine your tastes, sanctify your judgment, and fit you for the society of heavenly angels? [FE 84]
6. What influence did it have upon your physical, mental, and moral health? [CT 334] Did it dissipate your mind, debase your soul, and destroy your self-respect? [FE 84]

### BIBLE PRINCIPLES INVOLVED IN THESE COUNSELS:

1. I Cor. 3:16,17; 6:19,20 -- Body is temple of Holy Ghost. Man obliged to care well for it. Destruction threatened to man who defiles because temple is holy. Body is bought with a price; hence, obligation to glorify God in it. Man is not his own; thus has external obligations.
2. I Cor. 10:31 -- Whatsoever we do, must glorify God.
3. I Cor. 9:25 -- Those striving for mastery are temperate in all things. Phil. 4:5 -- Moderation [in good things, of course, not in sin] should be apparent to all men. (N.B. Sin, by definition, is not "lawful;" and some lawful things are not expedient. I Cor. 6:12; 10:23.)
4. 3 John 2 -- God's highest wish for us is physical health as well as spiritual health.
5. Phil. 4:8 -- We should concentrate on the things that we know to be true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of a good report.
6. John 5:11 -- Jesus has given us counsels by His Spirit so that "My joy might remain in you, and your joy might be full." The Christian will thoroughly enjoy life, and have a genuinely good time and be filled with happiness and peace unknown by the world. John 14:27; Phil. 4:7.