Camp Meeting for Singles

The June, 1977, issue of THE MINISTRY contained an interview article entitled "Ministering to the Neglected 'Singles.'" If you read that article you will remember that in America single people, including the unmarried, the divorced, and the widowed (some of whom are rearing children), now account for one out of every three households. According to Floyd Miller, president of the International PHILOSDA Club, there are 160,000 single adult Adventists in the North American Division. This represents a large segment of our church population and is gaining more and more attention from the leadership of the church.

The General Conference president, Pastor Pierson, and I had the privilege in July of attending the first "singles" camp meeting in the history of the church, perhaps of any church. Though it was not a large group as camp meetings go, it was very evident to us that these people were committed to finding a deeper spiritual relationship with the Lord.

Anyone who attended this camp meeting in order to gain spiritual strength did not leave disappointed. Under Miller's leadership the program was well-organized. PHILOSDA is doing everything possible to erase the stigma of being merely a "lonely-hearts club" or a "date-match club." Their purpose is to help all adult Adventists not presently married, many of whom have gone through traumatic experiences such as divorce or the death of their spouse, to find a real purpose in life.

Frankly, my heart was deeply touched as I associated with this group. Though they differ greatly from one another in age and experience, they demonstrated a spirit of unity, harmony, love, and respect that I have rarely witnessed elsewhere. I am certain that one of the explanations for this spirit is the fact that many of these people have gone through so much anguish that they can empathize with one another; they are thus bound together in a common bond of fellowship. I am sure there are other reasons as well why people who live by choice or circumstance without spouses find common ground in a group like this.

The evangelistic fervor of this gathering was exhibited on a recent Sabbath afternoon during the program entitled "Catch the Spider Spirit." The point of the program was that each person should try to make every movement count, to dedicate body, soul, and spirit to the one great cause of advancing the work of the Lord on the earth. They proposed to give an offering for evangelistic projects, and set a goal of $20,000. When the contributions were all counted, the total exceeded $26,500, all to be sent to The Voice of Prophecy, Amazing Facts, and a project in Africa to build five native churches at $1,500 each. May the initiative and spirit of the PHILOSDA Club be a challenge to the entire church, around the world. J. R. S.
Al though I was being selective, was de

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FEEDBACK

Appreciated June Cover

Praise the Lord! Your cover on the
June 1977 issue is exactly what the
Lord has led me to see.

When our office moved to Westlake,
the home I bought was in an area that
has no TV reception without the
cable. I chose not to pay the hookup
fee nor the monthly fee because I had
come to the conclusion that TV, even
though I was being selective, was de-
stroying my peace of mind, my
health, and my happiness.

Owing to Mr. Jefferson's prolonged
illness (a disease of the central nervous
system) our circumstances are not
ideal. But without TV I find I am
having no further difficulty sleeping,
my thoughts are easily trained on the
Lord, His promises, and His bless-
ings.

Stan is only with me weekends and
would be able to enjoy a bit of TV,
perhaps, but Philippians 4:8 seems
more important, and my heart aches
for the world that is glued to the tube.

There is some good on TV, and at
times I think I am missing some-
ting, but when viewing it I found the
good was so mingled with bad (advert-
sing, smut, bad language, immor-
ality, et cetera) it killed my desire to
watch it.

HELEN JEFFERSON
Westlake Village, California

An Urgent Need

All too frequently workers are
transferred with excellent recom-
mendations only to have the receiv-
ing organization soon discover that
there is either a personality problem
or some deficiency in ability, knowl-
edge of which has been withheld.
What kind of game are we playing
with people? This kind of procedure is
not peculiar to the Seventh-day Ad-
ventist Church, but happily some or-
ganizations have faced up to the fact
that this is a nonproductive game to
play.

This procedure is common with the
transferring of some ministers,
teachers, and institutional workers.
I know of a number of such transfers in
recent months. This should be a

major concern to us, because people
are the church's major resource and
these categories make up the very
fabric of our total organization.

It is nothing but cruel to continue
to pass on an insecure person or a
person who is in the wrong niche
without first dealing with his need. If
you really love people, begin to speak
out against this unfeeling approach
to the needs of individuals. Let us
commend those administrators who
take the time to deal with such needs
in a sympathetic way before recom-
mending transfer.

It is time that we cease dealing
with individuals in a calloused way.
It is time that we stop wasting large
amounts of money in transferring
people without dealing with their
personal needs first.

ELDEN B. SMITH
Shawnee Mission, Kansas

Likes P.R.E.A.C.H. Project

I have just read the March issue of
Ministry magazine. Reading through
the Feedback section gave me great
joy and thanksgiving. I believe with
all my heart that this idea of sending
Ministry magazine to ministers of
other denominations is heaven-born.
We certainly have much to share with
our brother ministers of other
churches. I just hope that this offer
can be made in other places so that
more ministers can benefit. It is my
sincere prayer that this will be ex-
tended to a larger group of ministers,
even outside the United States. I am
writing you this note to tell you that I
am proud of all of you for starting
this venture, and am praying for all
of you as you endeavor to uplift Jesus
through the ministry of this magazine.
My life and ministry have been
greatly enriched by Ministry magazine.
I am sure many of my fellow workers
will testify to this effect. As one com-
ing from a Buddhist home, I am very
thankful to the Lord for giving me a

part in this work of bringing the
eternal truth to people.

JONATHAN T. K. NG
Manila, Philippines

Joy and Inspiration

The Ministry magazine is a real joy
and inspiration. I look forward to re-
cieving it with real anticipation. Your
contributors, the choice of subject
material, and the format are excep-
tional. God bless you richly in your
good work.

SHERMAN S. DEVINE
Sacramento, California

The Ministry/October, 1977/3
When All Else Fails... Get Back to the Blueprint!

FOR SOME time now it has been the deep concern of not a few of us as to how we can reach the large cities with our message and be able to study with the many people who should be hearing this message of truth. How can we adequately follow up the interest when we have such a few workers to handle the mushrooming interest in these giant megalopolises?

Two problems face us in accomplishing this task. First, we do not have enough of our people who live in the city, and this is as it should be. Most of our people have moved out to the suburbs. The only work that is being carried on in the inner city is by our black brethren who find themselves and their people still very much in this area of the crime-infested cities. Many of these brethren will move out into more peaceful surroundings. Most of our members who belong to the white churches in both Chicago and Detroit live in the suburbs, and after working all day in the city they are not eager to venture back into the city at night to work for the unsaved.

The second reason why we have a problem reaching those who live in the

Don Gray is Ministerial secretary and coordinator of soul winning for the Lake Union Conference.
heart of our large cities is that our ministers have become so involved with administration of the local churches that they have little time for, or interest in, other areas of the conference. Some of our ministers would like to help, but they do not see how they can take the time to make a special effort to reach the lost. Yet we have been told by Ellen White that the minister is to move on and raise up new churches in dark areas after the establishment of the church he is in (see Testimonies, vol. 7, pp. 18-21). We see little or no effort to follow this instruction. We need to get these men involved and let laymen begin to grow as they run the churches and use their talent to reach others with the message of salvation.

**A Way to Reach Those in Large Cities**

In the last few weeks we have been experimenting with a follow-up in Chicago for the STEPS PROJECT that has been initiated and funded mostly by laymen. They have already mailed more than one million packets in the Chicago area and more than 8,500 people have asked for literature and/or Bible stud-

ies. Of the 35 who attended the first class, only two were Adventists. Only one had attended an Adventist meeting before. We conduct classes three times a day at the same location and teach the same lesson at all three sessions at 10:00 A.M., 1:30 P.M., and 7:00 P.M. This gives the people the option of choosing the time that best suits their schedule. A Bible and lesson is given to each person, with instructions to study the lesson and fill in the answers and bring it to the next class. At the next class we study the lesson, question by question, answering and discussing their questions, adding material that we think will help them understand the subject better. When they become more familiar with the Bible we study two lessons each week. This is a very easy way to study with 35-40 people each week in one location. What pastor could give that many studies by working hard all week long? To have the people come to him is a wonderful way to conserve the pastor’s time, as well as his driving. More than 300 non-Adventists have currently enrolled in the 13 classes now operating in the heart of Chicago.

The only real problem with this project is finding suitable places to hold the classes. Halls or rooms have to be found that are large and nice enough for the people to be willing to attend.

**Putting Laymen to Work**

Adlai Esteb once asked the following question in a poem:

> What would it mean in this crisis hour
> If all were filled with the Spirit’s power?
> The church like an army would shine
> as the sun
> And Christ would return, for the work
> would be done!

That’s what it would mean!

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain is one of the most cherished promises of the Scriptures. The Spirit is the source of power for Christian living and witness. Christians who are filled with the Spirit should be able to accomplish the objectives God has for the church, and to respond to the commission to take the gospel to every person on the globe. How can church members find that experience?
Ellen White writes, "When we have entire, wholehearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God."—*Christian Service*, p. 253.

How many church members are presently "laborers together with God"? There is no way to know for sure, but it seems evident that the largest portion are not so involved. In far too many churches the attitude of both the pastors and the lay people has been that the work of evangelism and church administration is the sole responsibility of the pastor; the members are there to give him an audience and to finance the church structure. The pastor's time is crowded with responsibilities and the church's program is complex; hence, even a hard-working minister can do only a fraction of the church's potential work. Though he exerts himself to the utmost, the church's effect on the community around it may be slight. The untouched portion of the community may in some cases increase faster in size than the church.

What if church members could find the motivation, time, and talent to help the pastor? In every church, of course, there are some members who staff the Sabbath school and carry out other church campaigns. Almost everyone who becomes involved in the church's program finds that the church means more to him as a result. Not only does a person who is active in the church have the satisfaction of seeing a part of himself in its work, but he may also learn more about his capacities and potentials, become aware of a need for more strength and wisdom, and thus study the Bible more diligently and pray more earnestly. In doing so he grows spiritually.

It seems to me that most church members are concerned about being active, but they see no way to make a significant contribution of their time. The pastor too often has not provided opportunity for church members to get involved. Everything important or crucial depends on him; he runs the show. Ellen White says, "Those who have the spiritual oversight of the church should devise ways and means by which an opportunity may be given to every member of the church to act some part in God's work. Too often in the past this has not been done. Plans have not been clearly laid and fully carried out whereby the talents of all might be employed in active service. There are but few who realize how much has been lost because of this."—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 116. (Italics supplied.)

A recent survey in the Lake Union Conference revealed that there were more than 200 separate projects and programs that the pastors were supposed to promote. As a result of their unsuccessful attempt to deal with so many things, many pastors become frustrated and discouraged. Yet they may not realize that some of this load could be carried by church members.

Note this observation from the pen of Ellen White: "Ministers should not do the work which belongs to the church, thus wearying themselves, and preventing others from performing their duty. They should teach the members how to labor in the church and in the community."—*Historical Sketches*, p. 291.

**Need for Careful Organization and Planning**

If the responsibility for the church's maintenance is to be entrusted to so many different hands, there is a great need for sound organization and careful planning. Of course, this takes time and effort. Some pastors may feel themselves too busy to do so; but the urgent counsel comes to them:

"There should be a well-organized plan for the employment of workers to go into all our churches, large and small, to instruct the members how to labor for the upbuilding of the church and also for unbelievers."—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 117.

The burden of laying these plans and drawing up the organization chart can often be shared with some of the church members. Sometimes the local pastor can get help from leaders in his local or union conference. In the Lake Union Conference, the departmental secretaries are being organized to give this
kind of help. The stewardship secretaries are training local church leaders to handle the financial matters and fund raising. The youth department secretaries assist in the forming and staffing of local youth organizations such as the Pathfinders. The educational directors help train chairmen for local church school boards. The lay activities leaders help church members organize and implement annual church promotional campaigns, such as the Ingathering effort, and Community Services centers. Communication secretaries conduct workshops at which church members may learn the methods of effective public relations and publicity for their church. Other services are available to aid the local church members find the training and inspiration to do some of the many tasks needed to keep a local church operating harmoniously. A local church so organized will meet the various objectives of the gospel commission without overemphasizing some and neglecting others.

Those who enter the pastoral ministry are called to do a spiritual kind of work for the Lord—preaching, teaching, counseling, helping people understand the claims of God on their lives, and pointing them to the joy of salvation in Christ. With their special training in college and Seminary and their subsequent growth through practice and experience, they should be equipped to exert a strong spiritual influence on their community. When they are burdened with local church administrative details, this influence may be diminished. If the local church members can come to view themselves as integral parts of the church and participate in its material and devotional functions, the pastor’s time can be freed for more of this essential work. In this way church members may participate doubly in the outreach of the church—they can extend the pastor’s time for his work, and they can bear their own witness to people they associate with.

When the majority in a congregation catch the vision of this total involvement of the church in its effort to reach the community and the world with the knowledge of Christ’s saving power, that congregation will indeed be alive in the Spirit. Ellen White writes: "Those only who are constantly receiving fresh supplies of grace, will have power proportionate to their daily need and their ability to use that power. Instead of looking forward to some future time when, through a special endowment of spiritual power, they will receive a miraculous fitting up for soul winning, they are yielding themselves daily to God, that He may make them vessels meet for His use. . . . Daily they are witnessing for the Master wherever they may be, whether in some humble sphere of labor in the home, or in a public field of usefulness."—The Acts of the Apostles, p. 55.

If God’s people are not filled with the Spirit’s power now, it is not because He is reluctant to give it to them. He will send it as soon as they ask for it, in order to make them more effective soul winners (ibid., p. 37). Someday the work will be finished to the Lord’s satisfaction and He will return. Attractive as the Promised Land may look to us now, we must not spend our time daydreaming about that future and weeping that we haven’t entered it sooner. "Our part is not to sit still and weep and wring our hands, but to arise and work for time and for eternity.”—Christian Service, p. 83.
The Omega of Apostasy

DURING THE first decade of this century, the Seventh-day Adventist Church experienced the Kellogg apostasy. It was described by Ellen White as "the alpha of deadly heresies."—Selected Messages, book 1, p. 200. Assessing not only the damage wrought by this subtle insurrection, but also an even more devastating one yet to come, the servant of the Lord wrote: "Be not deceived; many will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. We have now before us the alpha of this danger. The omega will be of a most startling nature."—Ibid., p. 197.

In the August issue of THE MINISTRY we restated some of the identifying marks of the alpha with its "deadly heresies."—Selected Messages, book 1, p. 200. Assessing not only the damage wrought by this subtle insurrection, but also an even more devastating one yet to come, the servant of the Lord wrote: "Be not deceived; many will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. We have now before us the alpha of this danger. The omega will be of a most startling nature."—Ibid., p. 197.

Now go back over those thirteen points. Study them carefully and prayerfully. You may have to meet them sooner than you expect. The seeds of such apostasy are in the churches of Christendom all around us. Before Jesus returns, the Seventh-day Adventist Church may well be confronted with a crisis that will exceed in magnitude the Kellogg alpha apostasy. It "will be of a most startling nature."

Knowing what is ahead for the people of God should keep us as leaders on our knees and alert for every subtle move of the evil one. This is God's church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, but God's leaders must be eternally vigilant.
WAS CHRIST human? Was He truly and fully human? Could He have sinned? Was He really tempted? These questions have stimulated theological discussion (and argument) for centuries, if not millennia.

And why? If one takes the Gospels simply as they read, it seems quite evident that each of the above is true. Christ simply referred to Himself as "the Son of man."

Christ was not burdened to explain fully His human existence. The Bible gives us no chemical analysis of how Christ assumed a human form and was born of an earthly, carnal mother. There is no scientific data computing the number and type of His chromosomes. That was not the burden of His message.

The burden of His work was the salvation of lost humanity. "For God sent . . . his Son into the world . . . that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:17).

Whatever was profitable for our salvation was revealed. The rest was left concealed. Christ "might have unlocked mysteries that have required centuries of toil and study to penetrate. He might have made suggestions in scientific lines that, till the close of time, would have afforded food for thought and stimulus for invention. But He did not do this. He said nothing to gratify curiosity or to stimulate selfish ambition. He did not deal in abstract theories, but in that which is essential to the development of character; that which will enlarge man's capacity for knowing God, and increase his power to do good. He spoke of those truths that relate to the conduct of life and that unite man with eternity."—Education, p. 81.

It was good enough for Matthew and his Jewish cohorts to accept the humanity of Christ without being able to fully understand it. They had enough truth essential for salvation to absorb their minds without getting sidetracked by speculating upon unrevealed mysteries.

But then, that is the way the Jews were. They were charged by the Greeks as being pragmatists. They were uninterested in Hellenistic philosophies and creeds. They were more interested in "What am I supposed to do?" This led some people to the extreme of legalism, but its basic concept was established in the Scriptures—"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl. 12:13).

As some theologians say, "The Jewish creed was their deed." In other words, the basis of the Jewish religion was what they did, not what they professed.

Because of the Jews' lack of interest in abstract philosophy, and because of their acceptance of revealed truth whether understandable or not, the early Christian Jews did not have many arguments on such things as the nature of Christ.

"Was Christ a human person, born of a woman?"
"Yes."
"Was He the eternal Son of God, the sustainer of the universe?"
"Yes."
"That doesn't make sense! Christ couldn't have been both. How do you explain it?"
"I don't. It's the mystery of God. But would you like to hear about what He did?"

And with that switch, the Jewish Christians went about their work of preaching, medical missionary activity, and worship. They were unified. And they spread the gospel to the then-known world in just a few years (see Colossians 1:23).
If you differ with your brethren as to your understanding of the grace of Christ and the operations of His Spirit, you should not make these differences prominent. You view the matter from one point; another, just as devoted to God, views the same question from another point, and speaks of the things that make the deepest impression.

But a change came in. In the process of time many Greek scholars accepted Christianity, and they brought with them their love of philosophy. They wanted everything explained in a neat little package so they could understand it.

To the lowly and persecuted Christians, it was a great honor to have these men of worldly achievement join their group. They probably invited them to tell their conversion stories in their general meetings and published their names far and wide. The ability of these men to synthesize and explain the great secrets of eternity gave them an aura of superiority and genius. These philosophers—Justin, Clement of Alexandria, Athenagoras, and others—quickly became prominent leaders in the movement. But the result was that the church began to slide into apostasy.

One of the great burdens of apostate Christianity seems to be that they felt called on to explain the mysteries of God. How could Christ be sinless, for example, and still be human? According to the master philosopher Plato, human flesh was sinful; all matter was evil in and of itself. The goal of life was to escape from the materialistic into the spiritualistic. So how could Christ have sinful flesh like you and me (made up of sinful, horrible matter) and still be the sinless Son of God?

"Well," said some philosophers, "Christ did not really have flesh. It just appeared that He did. It was merely an illusion so that He might communicate with us."

The famous Clement of Alexandria could not quite buy the fact that Christ was only an illusion, but that most certainly He could not have had human qualities such as feelings. So he took the position that "in the case of the Saviour it would be absurd to suppose that His body demanded these essential services (such as food and drink) for His stay. For He ate, not because of bodily needs, since His body was supported by holy power, but so that His companions might not entertain a false notion about Him, as in fact certain men did later, namely that He had been manifested only in appearance. He Himself was, and remained, 'untroubled by passion': no movement of the passions, either pleasure or pain, found its way into Him."—The Early Christian Fathers, ed. & translated by Henry Bettenson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 175.

Other thinkers were concerned about understanding how the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit could all three be one God. This became a bone of contention that eventually split the church right down the middle. While the New Testament writers gave but little systematic study to this problem, the early Christian literature was saturated with it. In fact, the word "Trinity" was first coined in the third century by a converted son of a pagan centurion by the name of Tertullian.

These technicalities about Christ's nature and the Trinity became the all-important issues of Christian teachers. Different schools were started to support different opinions. Papers were written and debates held. Excommunications were issued. Battles were fought. Fields of blood were created—all to support one side or another of an abstract theological concept.

The Christian church was caught up in the Greek love of philosophizing. These different philosophies on the nature of Christ superseded such seemingly inconsequential things as the Sabbath. They had more important things to do than to obey God—they had to explain Him!

How is it in the Adventist Church today? Have all the Hellenistic philoso-
on his mind; another, viewing it from a still different point, presents another phase; and how foolish it is to get into contention over these things, when there is really nothing to contend about. Let God work on the mind and impress the heart.—Selected Messages, book 1, p. 183.
IN THE ROUND of planning and executing large projects for the church, a busy pastor may often overlook one of the most important kinds of soul-winning work he can do—visiting the sick. Ellen White declares, "By visiting the people, talking, praying, sympathizing with them, you will win hearts. This is the highest missionary work that you can do."—Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 41.

Until you have been through it yourself, you may not realize how lonely, frightened, and discouraged a person may be who has become ill and is confined in a hospital. Everything looks strange and different when viewed from the perspective of one who is flat on his back, eyeing the ceiling. Pain, weakness, and the feeling of utter dependency may lead a person to spend his unoccupied time reflecting on the cause of his misfortune. Some of these reflections may lead to guilt feelings.

Besides being a minister's wife, I am a registered nurse. This gives me additional insight into the needs of people who are in pain and perhaps frightened or discouraged. At such a time of crisis a person needs support and strength from friends, and an intelligent, sensitive pastor or local church officer can make a unique contribution to a patient's spiritual welfare. I have found that there truly is a "balm in Gilead," and I would like to share some observations on how visitors can bring it to the hospital patient.

To be most effective in visiting a patient—perhaps a member of the local congregation—the pastor should make some preparations. Whenever possible, try to get information in advance about the nature of the patient's illness. Is it a minor sickness, or a serious disease, perhaps with a terminal outlook? Or does it involve the loss of a limb or other anatomical feature that will result in disability or some stigma after recovery? How much has the patient been told about his condition and prospects? The pastor can usually get this kind of information from the attending physician, the family, or even a nurse working on the unit.

The timing of the visit is important. Usually you should not call on hospital patients in the morning, because they may be involved in various tests, X-rays, and treatments, or even be under the influence of pre-operative medications. Nor should you call late in the evening, because patients are often given medications about nine o'clock and are prepared to go to sleep. On Sabbath afternoon an Adventist patient may be flooded with visits by well-wishing friends from the church. The best time, therefore, to plan for hospital visits would be some weekday afternoon or early evening. Such a call, for instance, the evening before a patient is to undergo surgery may be of great significance to him or her.

The pastor's attire and behavior during a hospital visit are important. The patient, as well as the hospital personnel, sees the pastor as a representative of the church, so you should be neatly dressed. If you come outside regular visiting hours, stop at the nurses' station and identify yourself, then ask permission to visit the individual. If the patient's door is closed, knock on it lightly before entering. Respect the patient's privacy.

How can you best communicate when you enter and sit at a patient's bedside? Give a friendly greeting. When you speak, do so clearly and no more loudly than needed for him to hear. Be a good listener, paying attention to what the patient says and commenting on his concerns. If he seems to be worried about his family during his absence from home, or about his prospects for returning home, encourage him to talk about it. If he is concerned about dying, don't turn him off; listen to him. If he asks about you and the church, respond to his interests, but don't get carried away with talk about your family, your hobbies, or the problems of the church. Especially avoid discussing other illnesses or bad hospital experiences.
Generally speaking, the visit should be brief. Whenever possible, read a portion of Scripture, comment on it, and pray with the patient. Ask for peace and strength for him, the presence of the Holy Spirit, and for healing according to the Lord’s will. Remember his concerns, his family, and the nurses and doctors who care for him. Don’t forget to mention the names of other patients who may be in the same room and within hearing distance. If he has the strength to read, leave him a booklet on the promises of God or some other helpful, inspiring topic.

Sometimes you may arrive at the room when the patient appears to be sleeping or in a comatose condition. If you talk with the nurse or a family member, remember that the patient may actually be listening. Hearing is one of the last senses to linger when the perceptual field is narrowed. If family members begin to talk of the patient’s illness or even discuss funeral arrangements, politely usher them out into the hall and remind them gently that their words may carry farther than they think.

A hospital visit by a dedicated Christian worker can be a real asset to the healing of a patient. Surgery, medication, and rest are important to a patient’s recovery, but a will to live, peace of mind, a willingness to bring one’s life into harmony with the God of nature may often be equally important. Of course, an ill-managed visit may do the reverse. One day a patient’s wife came to us frantically, asking us to give her husband something to calm him down. The pastor had just left, after praying loud and long for God to heal him—“O God, heal this man; heal him, heal him.” The patient was greatly aroused emotionally, and despite the maximum allowable medication it took him hours to relax and get to sleep.

On the other hand, I have seen many instances where the patient was greatly improved by the visits of thoughtful, serious church workers who would help him sort out his confused, anxious thoughts into a framework of trust and confidence. Instead of becoming embittered by his misfortune the patient was able to claim the promises of God and face his future with cheer. I have heard comments by personnel indicating impressions for good. Not only did the patient benefit but a real witness was given on behalf of Christ and the church.

“A hospital visit by a dedicated Christian worker can be a real asset to the healing of a patient.”

Working as a supervisor in a small community hospital where, due to several unfortunate experiences in the past, pastors are limited to visiting only those who are actually members of their church, I have a real concern that Adventist ministers always be aware of both their responsibility to the patient and the impact they make on hospital personnel.

May the experience of those we visit reflect the full meaning of the words in the Master’s parable where the King says of His accepted people, “I was sick, and ye visited me” (Matt. 25:36).

Editor’s Note: We would appreciate additional discussion of this topic by one of our hospital chaplains.

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"Until Death Do Us Part"

AT A RATHER large wedding I attended, a very fine young couple were being married. The bride, I was told, asked the minister to leave out the words "until death do us part." Naturally, the pastor omitted them. Was this good? Was it bad? What do you think?

You know that five words won't hold a marriage together. But why did she ask to have these left out?

Christ and the Spirit of Prophecy teach that marriage is for life. That's the ideal. Many don't reach it, but it is still there. I am of the conviction that if we really believed the teaching of the Word of God and had an experience with the Lord Jesus Christ, many divorces could be prevented.

Many in our present culture accept marriage as a very tenuous experience. The Bible, however, does not justify such a position. After Adam awoke from his God-imposed sleep he found one rib missing, but he had something far more precious—a wife. "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." Then God added: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:23, 24).

Where did Adam get the idea that he and his wife were one flesh? Did he dream this? Jesus, speaking about 4,000 years later, said: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:6).

God "created . . . [them] male and female" (Gen. 1:27). One male and one female unite as one flesh. In God's mathematics, one plus one equals one. This union of two people into one flesh was for life and, in spite of all cultural changes, still is.

"One flesh" can refer to sexual union, but there is much more beyond mere sexuality. Unfortunately, we are living in an oversexed generation. Sex seems to ooze out of every TV tube and is prominent in all advertising media. Not even toothpaste can be sold without wrapping it up in sex language, it seems.

Marriage is more than two people living together and sharing the same bed. Many exist under one roof but don't know what marriage is all about. Marriage is a total commitment of two wills to each other, the blending of two minds into the mutual expression of God-given emotions. God brings man and woman together and unites them in a unique and profound biological-spiritual bond that reaches to the very depths of their souls. When two people kneel at the altar they pledge to unite their lives, not for a few weeks, a few months, or a few years, but as long as life shall last—until death parts them.

"Every marriage engagement should be carefully considered, for marriage is a step taken for life. Both the man and woman should carefully consider whether they can cleave to each other through the vicissitudes of life as long as they both shall live."—The Adventist Home, p. 340. (Italics supplied.)

The Home Is the Heart of the Nation

Since God pronounced the marriage that He performed good, certainly we can consider the union between man and wife as the law of highest blessing and development for man. "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."—Ibid., p. 15.

This statement is still true. People can get along without a gallbladder, a kidney, tonsils, and even a stomach, but they can't get along without a heart. A nation could get along without an army and a navy, and without factories, but not without homes. The home is the heart of the nation. A church could get along without institutions and evangelistic campaigns, but a church could not get along without a home. The home is the heart of the church.

Marriage, to be successful, must also be a growing, maturing experience. We hear young people say, "We fell in love."
The facts of the case are we don’t “fall in love.” Marriage is not made a success by falling into it. Two people—husband and wife—have to climb into it. It is a steady climb up the ladder of mutual understanding and forbearance. We climb inch by inch, day by day, week after week, year after year—always climbing into the fullness of God’s love shared with each other.

Dr. John L. Thomas’ opinion is that the most prevalent myth about marriage can be expressed this way: “Somehow or other marriage is an end in itself. Some people think that when you get married you’ve got it made, that it will take care of itself, rather than seeing marriage as a process of constant mutual interchange, interaction and growth. Marriage is not a static thing, rather it is dynamic. When you get married all you have is a learner’s permit. Marriage is a way of life.”—Marriage and the Family, June, 1976, p. 3.

In order to grow there must be the right atmosphere. You can’t raise roses when it’s 30° below zero. Poinsettias don’t do well even in 30° above zero. The husband and wife cannot grow in an icy atmosphere. The tender plant of love will never grow unless there is warmth, understanding, and much of the love of Christ.

We should not expect to grow and mature just because we live in the same house, go to the same church, have the same children, eat at the same table, or because we made a vow at the same altar. Some have done all of this and still are engaged in a civil war fought in the home. Why? Because the plant of love does not grow nestled between two icebergs—husband and wife.

There are some who grit their teeth and feel that since they are united for life they must stick it out, live together in torture day after day, month after month, and year after year, even if it kills them. Many times it does just that. What does this attitude do to their own personalities and their children’s? The answer is obvious.

A little girl, about to be confirmed, was asked by the minister, “What is matrimony?” She evidently got matrimony mixed up with purgatory, for she said: “Matrimony is something that you enter into, but it’s a terrible torment and you’ve got to go through it in order to get to heaven.” Too often, marriage “is a most galling yoke. There are thousands that are mated but not matched.”—The Adventist Home, p. 44.

If married life is lived in an atmosphere of love, then husband and wife will be helpful to each other and to their children. “A husband said, ‘I love you not only for what you have made of yourself, but for what you are making of me. That is, I love you for putting your hand into my heaped-up heart, passing over all the foolish weak things you can’t help see there, and for drawing out into the light all the beautiful longings no one else had looked quite long enough to find. I love you because you are helping me to make the lump of my life not a tavern, but a temple.’”—Great Preaching Today, p. 49.

After a few decades love should be more profound because two people have suffered together, laughed together, wept together, prayed together, and endured together.

Most of life is lived in the home. Most of the lessons of life are learned at home. Here we learn to live or fail in living. Here we realize happiness or fail to experience it. Here our children will learn from what they see and hear—good or bad. There will be no union “until death do us part” unless Christ abides within the heart. There will be no growth unless we grow in Christ. There will be no maturing except as we mature in Christ. There will be no communication except as we do it in the spirit of Jesus Christ, for “in Him we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28).

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SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS are currently working in 189 of the 220 countries, islands, and island groups listed by the United Nations. We have publications in 199 languages and oral work in 367 additional languages. Thus the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, be it preaching, healing, evangelism, or administration, is very often managed through an interpreter, with English as the source language. Every day of the week, missionaries and visiting leaders are relying completely on an interpreter for the communication of their message, be it of spiritual or practical nature. No matter how well-prepared or eloquent the speaker may be, he will be able to communicate only as well as his interpreter can understand and put his thoughts into another tongue. Thus the importance of the interpreter's ability to interpret properly cannot be overestimated. Wittingly or unwittingly, he is a medium that can hasten or delay the work of God.

With this in mind, I would like to suggest a few practical hints that should help those having to work with an interpreter.

The Sermon. The great fundamental truths of our message must be presented in simple, plain words. Make sure your message is not dependent upon any particular twist or expression of any language. When a sermon is being translated, references to Greek and Hebrew words are more out of place than when the minister speaks to those of his own language. The message should not depend on specific words, as these words can have a different meaning in the language the sermon is translated into.

Bible Texts. Before the minister who works through an interpreter goes to the pulpit, he should make sure that the Bible texts he is using in his sermon have the same meaning in the language his sermon will be translated into. This is especially needed when the Bible text in English or any other source language has an idiomatic expression based on Hebrew cultural background. The expression in Proverbs 25:22, "heap[ing] coals of fire upon his head,” was a real problem for me when I was a boy. Some people take the text to mean that the Bible advocates a diabolical method of torturing people to death.

The use of a simple Bible translation is especially needed when preaching to a people who have not had the Bible or parts of it translated into their tongue. In such cases the right oral rendering of the Word of God is dependent on the interpreter and not the professional Bible translators.

Poetry, Humor, Ambiguous Words, Slogans, et cetera. These items can be a real problem to the interpreter. A poem is difficult to translate even when the interpreter has time to go through it in advance. In a consecutive translation it is almost impossible. The other alternative is to put the poem into prose (which is accepted in modern literature). But when this is done, the end result will in most cases be poor and uninteresting. If poetry is not too essential to what is being said, and it seldom is, it is better left out. The same goes for slogans and mottoes, unless the interpreter has had some time to work on them. In a promotion program, a motto or slogan can be of importance. Always make sure that it is translated in the best way. For translated sermons, humor should be avoided, particularly since it differs from culture to culture. Often points in humor are dependent on play on words and are therefore not translatable.

Quotations. The question of quotations is a different matter, especially if they are from the Spirit of Prophecy and are used outside of North America, where all the books are not available. A quotation from the writings of Ellen G. White can be an important addition.
when used to stress a point. The quotations should be translated carefully, and, therefore, the preacher would do well to let his interpreter go through them beforehand.

_Pronunciation and Sentences._ Use clear and distinct pronunciation. This is probably more important than speaking slowly. Also, use short, complete sentences. Since many foreign languages have a completely different sentence structure, the speaker should never stop in the middle of a sentence. If he is not able to complete a sentence, at least the thought should be completed.

_Culturally Conditioned Illustrations._ Translating is more than matching words from a dictionary. It is a piece of human behavior; it is a phase of culture and cannot be studied in isolation. Therefore the speaker cannot be too careful when he draws lessons from his home country. Western customs, technology, family life, the use of Western political systems, courtroom procedures, and social welfare benefits do not ring a bell with many people in the Third World; neither do illustrations taken from space traveling. Likewise, what is accepted as good manners in one culture may be downright rude in another.

_Relationship With the Interpreter._ The speaker should always keep in mind that interpretation is an exhaustive and tiring task. More concentration and alertness is required of the interpreter than of the source. The speaker should give the interpreter enough time to familiarize himself with the message he is to convey. It is essential, if at all possible, for the speaker and interpreter to go through the high points of the material, paying special attention to the items mentioned above.

**Pointers for Interpreters**

_Training and Insight._ Translation can be taught only to a certain extent in the classroom. The ability to translate is something that a man either has or doesn't have. Of course, this gift can be developed by training. The interpreter must possess a thorough knowledge of the language from which he translates and a complete mastery of the language into which he translates. Skill in handling the receptor language is most important. Most errors made by interpreters arise primarily from their lack of thorough knowledge of the receptor language.

In addition to this complete mastery of the receptor language, the interpreter must also possess what the Germans call a "Sprachgefühl" (feeling for language). It is not sufficient for the interpreter to get just the general drift of the meaning. He must understand not only the obvious content of the message but also the delicate meaning and the important emotive value of words that give the message "flavor and feeling."

_Personal Relationship Between Speaker and Interpreter._ The right relationship here is extremely important. In addition to the technical knowledge mentioned earlier, the attitude of the interpreter toward his principal will give dynamism, vigor, and spirit to the translation.

One of the primary rules of interpretation is that the interpreter must not permit his own ideas, feelings, prejudices, or convictions to influence his work. He is expected to present the speaker's idea while he is performing his task. The interpreter's voice is the voice of his principal, who, in many cases, has come from afar, incurring much expense. He should be given a fair chance to present his point and promote his cause, uncolored by an interpreter's thoughts.

_Paraphrasing and Translating Difficult Passages._ A translator has to be an artist. He sometimes has to create new words and expressions, especially if he translates into a receptor language in a primal situation. He can also use the word from the source language where the receptor language has no equivalent, but then he must explain what it means. Paraphrasing or explanation is the last resource for the translator; it is only to be used when there is no other alternative.

Being an interpreter is a difficult and demanding job. It does take hard work, planning, and preparation behind the scenes, which is seldom seen or appreciated by the public. Often he is called a "parrot" or "interrupter." He is blamed for speaking too fast, too slow, too loudly, too softly, too extendedly, or too briefly. When the speaker is introduced, the interpreter is sometimes forgotten and receives no thanks after his performance.

He is rewarded, however, by the knowledge that he is an important link in helping to spread the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth and keeping a worldwide church unified. His calling is a divine one. Without him, the work of God could not be so widespread.
LONG BEFORE the birth of Christ a group of people in England called the Druids gathered with their priests in oak groves to celebrate the harvest festival. The date was October 31, the last day of the autumn season.

As night drew on, a group of men and women watched as the high priest put a torch to a large pile of wood. Fire crept upward along with spirals of smoke ascending toward the heavens. Some of the celebrants drew closer to the fire, glancing fearfully at the dark groves behind them. Their priest intoned a prayer to Saman, sometimes called Samhain, the so-called mighty lord of the dead. They expected that, as a result, Saman would release the souls of those who had died during the past year, and for the next forty-eight hours these spirits would be free to roam about the earth. This was a mystic and much-dreaded time of the year.

One can imagine the stark terror of a people who believed that the dead came out of their graves on what was called All Hallows’ Eve. Many even believed that the souls of wicked men were condemned to inhabit the bodies of animals. A black cat was thought to be the abode of the devil, and symbolized death and magic. Other cats were looked upon as former human beings, who were changed into animals in punishment for some crime. This superstition took many forms, and cats later became standard equipment for anyone who practiced witchcraft.

It is common knowledge that ancient pagans offered gifts to the spirit world to appease their gods’ wrath. They also followed this same custom in order to lighten the supposed sufferings of the restless spirits as the time came for those spirits to come out of the graves for a brief period of time.

In his book The Golden Bough, Sir James Frazer states that throughout Europe, Halloween, the night that marks the transition from autumn to winter, seems to have been the time of year when the souls of the departed were supposed to revisit their old homes in order to warm themselves by the fire.

All Hallows’ Eve, or Halloween, was originally a festival of fire, roaming spirits, and the powers of darkness. Bonfires on high hills were a conspicuous feature of the old Halloween rites. At times people danced in a circle around the fires, which symbolized the sun and its life-giving powers. Originally, these bonfires were probably meant to provide light and heat, which would help the sun through the winter, when it seemed to grow weak under the attack of darkness and cold. Winter brought to mind the chill blackness of the grave, and on All Hallows’ Eve the ghosts of the dead were supposed to pass by to the west, the direction of the dying sun at sunset. The frightened people placed food and drink offerings out for the ghosts as they supposedly passed by.

Much more could be said about demons and hobgoblins, witches and masks, carved pumpkins and owls, but one thing is plain, Halloween gained its impetus from a misunderstanding of the Bible’s teaching concerning the immortality of the soul. Thus we might turn to Genesis 3:1-5 to find the origin of Halloween: “Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”

Modern spiritualism, as well as ancient witchcraft and idol worship, is founded upon Satan’s first lie to Eve, “Ye shall not surely die.” This lie has reechoed down through the centuries in contradiction to what the Bible reveals to be the state of the dead. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Eze. 18:20) and “For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten” (Eccl. 9:5, 6).

This Halloween, as usual, children will again wear masks and dress up as visible representations of ghosts and goblins. These “reincarnated denizens of the grave” will visit their neighbors asking for treats, a custom which reflects the ancient practice of offering food to the souls of the dead.

We naturally can’t expect our children to ignore Halloween completely, but we certainly should do what we can to provide some viable alternative that will prevent them from becoming fascinated with that which is contrary to Bible teachings.
ABRAHAM GOTTLOB WERNER, a most influential and persuasive geologist at the end of the eighteenth century, postulated that volcanic activity was the result of the burning of coal beds and melting of the nearby rocks. This conclusion was reached after a visit to a burned-out coal seam in Bohemia, and was afterwards taught as doctrine at the mining school of Freiberg, Germany, where Werner was head. 1

Beginning in 1864, and over a period of some forty years, Ellen White has written several intriguing passages that trace volcanic activity to subterranean fires that have been fueled by burning coal beds. The unanswered question has been whether these passages have scientific confirmation. Since the time of their writing, oil wells have punctured the skin of the earth, both on land and at sea, like hypodermic needles. Many have penetrated coal seams. Why do we not have evidence for burning coal beds producing volcanoes? Why is there evidence of volcanic activity at Mount Fuji and Mount Pelee and not at Pittsburgh? Why have there been volcanic explosions at Krakatoa and Crater Lake and not in the mining district of Ruhr?

The amount of volcanic activity in the historical past is staggering. The basalt flows of the Columbia River plateau of the northwest United States have buried 130,000 square kilometers, and the total volume is an amazing 100,000 cubic kilometers (25,000 cubic miles). The basalt flows of the Deccan of India cover 500,000 square miles and of the Paraná of Brazil and Paraguay an incredible 750,000 square kilometers. One shield volcano alone, Mauna Loa, rises higher than Mount Everest when computed from its base on the ocean floor (10 kilometers in height) and has a basal diameter of 100 kilometers (60 miles). 2 To suggest that all such volcanic activity is the result of burning coal beds is obviously unreasonable.

With nearly all coal reserves around the world mapped for future energy needs, and with a large share of them located by underground drilling, it would seem that there should be some correlation between coal beds and volcanism. To suggest that the only burning coal beds are those that have been plunged deep within the earth’s crust beyond the reach of the driller’s bit simply postpones indefinitely the answering of this major challenge. Is there any scientific corroboration for these interesting Ellen White quotations (see the footnotes for a summary), 3 or are they a product of her age?

As these questions were tugging at my mind, I was browsing through the science library of a large university campus and encountered two shelves of books dealing with coal. I pulled a 461-page book off the shelf and turned to a three-page section that amazingly provided the long-awaited answer. It was The Geology of Coal, by Otto Stutzer, of the School of Mines at Freiburg, Germany, the same place where Werner once taught. It was revised and translated into English in 1940 by Adolph Noé, the well-known paleobotanist of the University of Chicago.

It is a well-documented fact that subterranean fires in coal beds are ignited through spontaneous combustion, re-
resulting in the melting of nearby rocks that are classed as pseudovolcanic deposits. Among many examples that could be cited is the following: "The burning mountain near Dudweiler, in the Sarre basin, has often been described. The fire was in the Blucher coal bed along an outcrop 400 meters long. It lasted over 150 years, and the adjacent shale has been baked to a blue and red porcelain jasper and to a solid red slate." Other examples are found in Zwickau and Upper Silesia, in the brown coals of Zittau and several fires in the Serbia district, where the surrounding clay has been baked to the hardness of brick. In the Zwickau district, fires have lasted for several years, and the heat from one burning coal bed was used for heating greenhouses in that area from 1837 to 1868.

Note how the specifics of Ellen White's handling of subterranean fires are validated by this discovery. The spontaneous combustion of coal can be inferred from one of her statements: "The coal and oil frequently ignite and burn beneath the surface of the earth." The mechanism for such combustion is now understood. Pyrite absorbs oxygen, liberates heat, and thus spontaneously ignites. "This heat may lead to the ignition of coal. There are cases known where ship cargoes of pyrite have taken fire." One of the main constituents of pyrite is sulphur, and it is sulphur that is often seen around the eruptions of hot springs, geysers, and volcanic fumaroles.

That the coal fires are sufficiently hot to melt surrounding rocks is well-established. Studies from the same part of Germany (Bohemia) where Werner reached his conclusions indicate this: "Evidences of old ground fires are numerous in the brown-coal district of Bohemia, especially along the east and south margins of the basis. Rocks which overlie the coal have suffered considerable alteration because of the fires, being sintered and partly melted." This correlates amazingly with the Ellen G. White statement: "Rocks are heated, limestone is burned, and iron ore melted." A more difficult statement to explain is the one on the same page, "The air is heated and suffocating," because of its superficial resemblances to medieval speculation about underground air pas sageways, which was derived from Greek philosophers and passed on to seventeenth-century cosmologists. Coal is known to be permeable to air, as evidenced by the movement of shrubs at the natural exits of such currents and by the measurement of downdrafts and updrafts in mine openings when barometric pressure is stable. Besides air, noxious gases commonly collect in coal beds—methane, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, and even helium. No wonder she describes the air as "suffocating."

Such gases can easily result in explosions, which Ellen White describes as sounding like "muffled thunder." According to experiments, fresh coal fragments of the size of walnuts when pulverized may release methane up to four times their own volume. Since in gas explosions great quantities of fine coal are suddenly thrown into the mine workings, large quantities of gas may be liberated from this single source. . . . Violent outbursts of gas are common in coal beds which are rich in fusain [mineral charcoal]." Thus, such explosions can result in earth tremors.

It is well to take note of what Ellen White is not saying. For example, she does not state that all volcanoes are the product of burning coal beds. Ellen White does link earthquake and volcanic action together, which is now well-substantiated from the "ring of fire" around the edges of the Pacific Ocean, which is a high-level earthquake, as well as volcanic, zone. Nor does she state that all earthquakes are the result of subterranean fires in coal. Otherwise, Germany would have more earthquakes because of its higher concentration of burning coal fields. Thus we can conclude that what she is describing is a much more limited and localized phenomena than what first meets the eye, yet its accuracy is amazing.

Evidence in United States

Several months after my "rediscovery" of the long-forgotten burning coal beds from Bohemia, I was confronted with even greater and more recent evidence for burning coal beds, this time in the western United States. While doing research on the Powder River and Williston basins, I was surprised to find numerous references in several U.S. Geological Survey papers to a phenomenon called "clinker" in the rocks above the lignite (soft coal) beds. Clinker, or "baked slag," is the result of the partial melting or baking of the sandstone and shale beds above the coal.
What is the source for such intense heat so as to melt rocks? Geologists are unanimous in agreeing that the heat comes from the burning of the coal bed below, for invariably clinker occurs above a burned-out coal seam. The coal is useless because all the volatiles and other combustibles have been burned out of it.

The earliest geological evaluation of the burned-out coal beds of the western United States was by Bastin in 1905, although it was briefly reported earlier in a very cursory way in the 1869 geological survey of Hayden, who opened up the Yellowstone area to exploration. The most thorough discussion was in 1918 by Rogers (and perhaps today still stands as the most comprehensive).

Rogers opens his U.S. Geological Survey report with these words: "The baking and reddening of large masses of strata by the burning of coal beds is a striking feature of the landscape in most of the great western coal-bearing areas." Several theories are advanced as to what exactly ignited the fires: lightning, prairie fires, campfires left by Indians, or spontaneous combustion. The latter is favored by Rogers, as well as by recent authors. A problem of freshly mined coal is that if it is left exposed to air for a week or two, it can absorb oxygen and spontaneously ignite. This is why coal must be covered with plastic if it is to be left stockpiled in the open or kept covered with water.

Recognition of burned-out beds of coal in the States of Montana, North Dakota, and Wyoming is not too difficult. Clinker resembles the slag from smelting processes and is usually baked to a distinctive reddish-brown color that contrasts with the paler colors of the surrounding sandstone.

The question can be raised about the propriety of applying volcanic terminology to the simple burning of coal beds. One encounters expressions such as, "volcanoes, and fiery issues," "streams of lava," "melted ore," and "volcanic eruption," in the Ellen White accounts of subterranean fires prompting us to look toward the divine source.

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peared so infrequently since first reported by Werner. It is much more unlikely that she resorted to the published ideas of contemporary Creationists on the subject, since their views were relics of wild cosmological speculations going back to Burnet (1691) and even earlier.

Who told Ellen White, then? What is her source? She could have read the accounts of John Wesley, the most likely candidate, but if her ideas are a wholesale borrowing from him, why are there not relics of eighteenth-century thinking, such as the supposed existence of hollow underground passageways with subterranean windstorms, in her writings? Our fruitless search to find a human source for Ellen White’s descriptions of subterranean fires prompts us to look toward the divine source.

Just as the mystery of spontaneous combustion in the dark bosom of the earth is now coming to light, so the mysterious presence of the Eternal One is being made visible behind the pen of these Ellen White statements. They must have been inspired. If these declarations dealing with the origin of coal and subsequent phenomena are indeed the product of inspiration and are trustworthy, then her companion statements on a vast array of scientific topics are inspired and thus trustworthy. Their accuracy is not just theological but also scientific. The coal mines of Germany have become a veritable gold mine in a study of Ellen White’s scientific declarations, indicating the intermingling of the divine and human in a unique way.

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3 Eight salient points summarizing Ellen White’s views on subterranean fires were listed in part one of this article. They are as follows: (1) the formation of coal beds is linked to the Noachian Flood; (2) a byproduct of coal formation is oil; (3) subterranean fires are fueled by the burning; (4) ground water is added to the subterranean fires, producing explosions, and thus earthquakes; (5) earthquake and volcanic activity are linked together as products of these fires; (6) both limestone and iron ore are connected with the burning coal beds and oil deposits; (7) the circulation of air is also involved; (8) deposits of coal and oil are usually found where there are no subterranean fires.
5 Ibid.
7 Stutzer, op. cit., p. 310.
8 Ibid., p. 310.
9 Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 108.
10 Stutzer, op. cit., pp. 219, 220.
11 Ibid., pp. 260, 261.
14 Rogers, op. cit. (Italics supplied.)
15 Ibid., pp. 9, 10.

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The Pastor’s

LET ME begin this article with a confession. I have problems, and at times serious problems, managing my personal financial affairs—and don’t we all? So if you are in trouble financially, please do not feel that this writing is to impose upon you a burden of guilt for your past operations, or to circumscribe you with harsh bookkeeping rituals for the future. Be it far from that purpose! In truth, it is presented to point out briefly a few guidelines that, if followed, could free you from some of your financial anxieties so that you might pursue your divine commission with ease.

Ministers for the most part are good financiers, but it is so easy to become involved in the business of your calling, that you neglect giving the proper attention to your personal finances. Because of the Adventist minister’s complete dedication, the program of the church comes first, and rightfully so, but it should not be at the expense of home and family. This ye ought to do and not leave the other undone.

I have known ministers who could be termed financial giants in church management, who did a superb job in conducting the affairs of the church, but allowed home and personal finance to hang at loose ends and eventually had to confess lamentably, "They made me keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept."

I know we have great faith in the promise, “But my God shall supply all your need.” In view of our established confidence in the Lord, we could easily decide not to take an anxious thought about tomorrow. Please stop and ponder this thought for a moment. The Lord may be blessing you today so that you might prudently prepare for the needs of tomorrow.

In giving thought to our personal finances, there is one thing that we should be sure of, and that is that we are getting everything from our income dollar that it will afford. Review your financial program and see whether there are any spending leaks that you have not detected. In these days of inflationary spending, money can inad-
vertently leak through your hands like water from a constantly dripping faucet. A faucet that drips only one drop per second will run off two hundred gallons of water in one month. And the spending process that dribbles away a penny here and a penny there will run off substantial sums of money over the period of a year.

How do you plug up the leaks? I would like to make the following suggestions:

**Control Your Spending.** Diligently strive to keep expenses well within the income. We are told, "Many, very many, have not so educated themselves that they can keep their expenditures within the limit of their income. They do not learn to adapt themselves to circumstances, and they borrow and borrow again and again and become overwhelmed in debt, and consequently become discouraged and disheartened. . . . We are pilgrims and strangers on earth. Let us not spend our means in gratifying desires that God would have us repress. Let us fitly represent our faith by restricting our wants."—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 374, 375.

Study carefully all of your expenditures and make a clear demarcation between necessities and desires. Necessities must be provided for first. Some of our desires or wants may be valid, but before you buy, ask yourself the question, "Can I afford it?" If you can, buy it. If not, learn to wait.

**Be Your Own Number-One Creditor.** Be in debt to yourself for a certain amount each month. Pay yourself until you have saved an amount equal to at least your income for one month, preferably three months.

Note this: "Every week you should lay by in some secure place five or ten dollars not to be used up unless in case of sickness. . . . With wise management you can save something after paying your debts."—*Ibid.*, p. 396.

Try this: Take an empty peanut-butter jar or small bank and put it in a convenient place. Each time you come home, deposit all of the pennies you have into it. See what happens over a period of three months. Later you may wish to try nickels, dimes, or maybe quarters.

**Be Careful in Purchasing Food.** Remember, the supermarket sales slip is one of the trickiest items to keep under control. (1) Never shop for groceries without a list. (2) Never shop in a supermarket while you are hungry. (3) Purchase food that will enable you to furnish a wholesome menu for your family and never be swayed by high-powered television commercials.

**Use Your Credit Wisely.** There are some advantages to a wise use of credit. Properly managed credit can stretch your dollar and help your family get far more out of life. It can help you realize more of your objectives and goals. Occasionally it is possible to buy something that you really need on sale when the sale price plus interest charges is still significantly below the original cost. For a bigger saving, borrow the money from your bank and pay cash for the purchase. Bank interest is much lower than company financing. Never let an auto dealer finance your car. Borrowing the money from the bank and paying cash, you can save from two to three hundred dollars on the purchase. Shop for good credit terms with the same diligence that you use in shopping for merchandise. If you buy an item on credit, be sure to check on the cost of financing. You can lose many a dollar in excess carrying charges.

**Credit Cards.** Credit cards are useful and convenient, but very dangerous because they encourage compulsive buying. A shopper laden with parcels said to her friend, "I like credit cards; they go so much further than money." She is right, but there is a day of reckoning. There is an old saying that credit is like fire—it is easy to start and very useful, but it can be extremely dangerous if you are careless with it. Using a credit card can become an insidious disease. Always think before you buy! Steer clear of revolving credit. In this kind of credit buying, the charges are high and very difficult to figure out.

**Examine Your Financial Condition Regularly.** Let's try something that
might be interesting to you. Let’s see what your net worth is. Your net worth may be defined as the difference between what you own and what you owe. It can be figured in three simple steps.

**Step Number One.** Determine your assets. Your assets will include the following: Make a list of all checking accounts, savings accounts, real estate, investments, personal property, and any other assets. Now summarize. Add the list, and you have your total assets. Surprised? You probably have more assets than you thought you had.

**Step Number Two.** Determine your liabilities. List all of your liabilities, which include mortgages, loans, or borrowed money, charge accounts, amount due on credit cards, et cetera. Now summarize your liabilities.

**Step Number Three.** Determine your net worth. Take your total assets and subtract from this your total liabilities.

The result is your net worth. Keep your net worth constantly increasing. Month by month, strive to bring those liabilities down, and the net worth will increase. The norm is a two-to-one ratio—that is, the assets should be twice the amount of the liabilities for the average family. If your liabilities are more than your assets, then you are in trouble. Eliminate some of your debt as soon as possible.

It would be impossible to mention in one article all of the points that may be helpful, but I hope that these will cause you always to be on guard when you are disbursing your hard-earned funds.

The above suggestions have been made with the understanding that you are already committed to the program of tithe and offerings. The Lord comes first in all of our transactions, because He is owner of both the possessor and the possessions.

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**The Adventist Approach to Theology**

Some weeks ago it was my privilege as a member of the Biblical Research Institute Committee to listen to a presentation by E. Edward Zinke on “Approaches to Theology.” This material was so carefully researched and clearly presented that we requested the committee to make it available as a supplement to all of our Ministry readers. This we are glad to do with this issue of The Ministry magazine. In this supplement the author surveys various systems of theology as a basis for comparing or contrasting the Seventh-day Adventist approach to theology with them. The uniqueness and importance of the Seventh-day Adventist approach to theology is also illustrated and clarified.

The study begins with a summary statement regarding the general method by which religion has developed within the history of mankind. From there it moves into the history of Christian theology, noting that to some extent the theology of historic Christianity has developed in ways not altogether dissimilar to those of other religions. A characterization is made of method in theology during the period of the early church. Beginning with Origen, one of the first to give clear consideration to method in theology, the presentation then moves to Anselm and Aquinas, two major figures of medieval theological thinking, in order to examine the relationship they saw between revelation and reason.

The Reformation provides the next sampling of approaches, beginning with William of Ockham and his reaction to the medieval synthesis between faith and reason. A summary statement of the Reformation principle of sola Scriptura follows as a contrast to approaches to theology taken within the early and medieval periods. The survey then skips to the contemporary theological scene, pointing out the major change that took place in theology as a result of Kant’s influence and illustrating that change particularly by Schleiermacher’s words. A basic continuity is seen in spite of the differences between the theological method of the medieval period and that of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Protestant thought, as well as contemporary Catholic theology.

Then follows a brief section designed to illustrate the relationship of contemporary Biblical studies to the general procedures that have been carried out in theology.

The concluding section deals with an evaluation from a Seventh-day Adventist perspective of critical Biblical studies and of method in theology in general. A proposal follows for method in theology within the Seventh-day Adventist declaration that Scripture is the starting point for all thinking about God, man, and the universe.

We are greatly indebted to Pastor Zinke for this excellent work. The paper was presented to those who attended the Bible conferences in Europe this summer, and the reception there was equally good and much appreciated. We are happy to make it available to our ministers and other workers throughout the world field.

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N. R. Dower
A Conservative Approach to Theology

E. EDWARD ZINKE

The purpose of this paper is to trace by means of characterization portions of the history of theology from the early church to the beginning of the contemporary period as a means of clarifying the presuppositions of theology and the ways in which theology has generally been carried out. This characterization will then be contrasted with a conservative Protestant approach to theology. It is felt that the basic method for characterizing theology within the context of Scripture will be clarified when this method is seen in relation to other possible methods within theology.

The presuppositions with which one begins the task of theology determine the method by which one will treat theological materials. The basic presupposition of this paper is that God’s Word through Jesus Christ is reliably and objectively conveyed to mankind in both the Old and the New Testament. Scripture is then considered the basis upon which one builds not only his doctrine and practice but also his method in Biblical studies and theology, as well as his method for the study of the universe and mankind, including Christian experience. The paper also assumes as Biblically based the concept of God as one who is not only immanent but also transcendent, and as unknowable apart from self-revelation.

In general, man attempts to find some basis within the world around him by which he may come to a knowledge of God. On the basis of the natural outworkings of the forces of nature, of interpersonal relationships, of psychological factors, and of rational processes of the mind, man postulates a concept of God that is congruent with these various processes and with the structure of reality as he sees it.

Many solutions to the problem of the existence and attributes of God have arisen out of man’s attempt to use that which is available to his experience and rational processes as a basis for postulating a God. Man has developed concepts of polytheism, of dualism, pantheism, absolutism or religious monism, agnosticism, atheism, secularism, humanism, deism, and theism.

Each of these concepts regarding the existence and attributes of God represents an attempt to come to a knowledge about God on the basis of what is available to man within the world, and each is a possibility and follows logically from the experienced world or from rational processes. Unfortunately in his search for God, man has in effect attempted to build his own God.

The history of the theology of Christianity is replete with man’s attempts to come to a knowledge of God by use of methods not totally dependent upon Scripture. During a large segment of the history of Christianity, the topic of God and theology in general was influenced in one way or another by a metaphysic—a philosophical concept of reality.

Christian theologians in the early and medieval church generally looked upon ancient Greek philosophy and literature as a forerunner, a preparer, a foreshadowing of, and an avenue leading to Christian theology. The views of Plato (427-347 b.c.) and Aristotle (384-322 b.c.) were held in high esteem, and were at times even regarded as authoritative and unchangeable.

Philosophy covers the same general topic material as that developed by religion. Philosophy is an attempt to understand ultimate reality and the general causes and principles of things, particularly with reference to mankind and to the principles and end results of man’s activities. During the formative period of Christian theology, philosophy was equated with metaphysics—that science that attempted to understand the nature of things.

It was generally felt that reality in one way or another imposed meaning upon the mind of man. There was considered to be a direct relationship between what is known and reality—or what is. God was assumed to be congruent with the reality that presented itself to mankind. Thus by a process of argumentation man could move from the known to the unknown, from the known to reality, from reality to God.

The general approach for method in theology (first indirectly, then more directly) was to build upon a concept of reality, usually that accepted by the contemporary culture, in order to show either the congruity of that concept of reality with the concept of God or to find a way of moving from within that concept of reality to the concept of God.

An example of the impact of this approach on theology is evidenced in the concept of God that developed in the early and medieval church. The concept of reality was molded primarily by influences from Platonism, Neoplatonism and then Arisotelianism. In harmony with the concepts of reality that were postulated by these philosophical systems, theologians attempted to develop a concept of God. Although this process took place unconsciously at first, the results were the same. The God who was postulated was not conceived as being in a relationship of interaction with the world. God was rather the first cause, pure causality, and thus no force could act upon Him. God could not be acted upon by anything or anyone else. By deduction, then, God could not be sensitive to the woes and joys of mankind. Unknowingly this philosophical concept of God was in contradiction to the Biblical concept of the suffering God on the cross.

In general, the early church fathers intended to develop their theology out of Scripture itself. The specific purpose
was to interpret the present generation the word that God had
given to earlier generations in Scripture. We shall choose
Origen as an illustration of the kind of approaches to Scripture
that were common in the early and medieval church. Origen (c.
A.D. 185-255), of course, cannot be taken as representative of
the work that was done during this entire period. There was, for
example, a strong reaction from the school of thought that de-
veloped at Antioch against the exegetical patterns of Origen.
Nevertheless, the general approach of Origen to Scripture had a
major influence upon Western exegesis. Smalley even suggests
that the history of Origen’s influence is tantamount to the
history of Western exegesis.²

**Origen’s Approach to Scripture**

Origen was reared and educated in Alexandria and absorbed
the influence of the intellectual life of that city—primarily that
of Neoplatonism and the exegetical methods of the Jew Philo
(c. 20 B.C.-c. A.D. 50). Origen himself seems to have attended
the lectures of Ammonius Saccas (c. A.D. 175-242), a Neopla-
tonist under whom some years later Plotinus (c. 205-270) may
have studied. It is debated as to the degree (if at all) to which
Origen may have been acquainted with Plotinus; however, they
at least shared in the same intellectual climate. Thus, Origen
developed principles for the interpretation of Scripture within
the climate of the allegorical methods of Philo and the philo-
sophical thinking of Neoplatonists.

Origen’s concept of the nature of Scripture had a direct
bearing upon his method for interpreting Scripture. He con-
ceived of Christ as both the source of knowledge and as the
illuminating power that made knowledge understandable.
Knowledge from Christ came through the Scriptures. Both the
Old and New Testaments were of divine origin, yet the message
of Scripture was concealed in vessels of poor and humble
words. The Holy Spirit directed the message of Scripture on
two levels—one for those who are capable of understanding
deep truths and the other for the multitudes who cannot receive
the deep truths.

Origen’s principles for the interpretation of Scripture arose
out of his understanding of the nature of Scripture. Important
elements for the development of his hermeneutics include such
things as the divine origin of Scripture, the resultant unity of
Scripture, the purpose of the Spirit to interweave spiritual
truths with literal events, and the resultant fact that not all of
Scripture contains the literal meaning and therefore there are
stumbling blocks in Scripture.

Because of its unity, Scripture was to be interpreted as a
connected whole. It was not appropriate to finalize upon the
interpretation of a particular passage until one understood the
general tenor of Scripture upon that topic. The unity of Script-
ture also indicated that the same method was to be used for
interpreting both the Old and the New Testament.³

Origen’s concept that the nature of Scripture included both
literal and spiritual meanings also had implications for the
interpretation of Scripture. The Holy Spirit had used literal
events within which to interweave mystical meanings. At times
it was not possible for the Spirit to find literal events for the
mystical meaning. Some events recorded in Scripture did not
actually happen, and in some cases they could not have taken
place at all. Thus there are riddles, dark sayings, and stumbling
blocks within Scripture.

This concept of Scripture suggested a threefold method of
interpretation that sought the literal, moral, and spiritual
meaning of the text. Although Origen distinguishes these three
senses of Scripture, his description of the method for inter-
preting Scripture boils down to a consideration of the literal
and the spiritual, and in actual practice he primarily refers to the
literal or spiritual meaning of the passage.

Although Origen promotes the spiritual interpretation of
Scripture over and above the literal, it seems that the majority
of his references to Scripture in On First Principles fall within
the category of an attempt to find the literal intent of Scripture.
In general, whenever Origen moved over to allegorical inter-
pretation, it was in an area where he was at cross-purposes with
Scripture and thus needed to find some other way of justifying
his viewpoint.

Origen’s primary objective was to remain within the bounds
of Scripture in the development of his theology. Unfortunately,
however, he almost uncritically accepted and operated out of
the milieu of his time. The promotion of the allegorical system
of interpretation of Scripture made it possible for Origen to
impose contemporary philosophical thinking upon the words of
Scripture.

Although his intent was to place authority within Scripture
as God’s Word, he has in fact built a theology based upon the
authority of his philosophical background, upon his concept of
God, and upon what seemed rational to his age. The controlling
factor in Origen’s exegesis was his concept of reality rather
than the meaning rising out of the text. Authority lay within
what was rational, for that which Origen considered to be
irrational was allegorized and thus in effect removed from
Scripture.

He aimed at being an interpreter of the Bible, and he never
consciously departed from Scripture. Yet, since his milieu
played an almost controlling factor in development of his
theology, the net result was that Origen attempted a wedding
between philosophy and Biblical studies.

Although the allegorical method is generally rejected as too
subjective by contemporary critical Biblical studies, there is
nonetheless a basic similarity between the framework within
which Origen developed his principles of interpretation and the
framework out of which contemporary Biblical studies operate.
Origen’s allegorical method imposed a method upon Scripture
that did not arise out of Scripture itself and consequently
imposed foreign elements upon Scripture. Present-day critical
Biblical studies operate out of a different milieu from that of
Origen, and their principles for the understanding of Scripture
are generally quite different from those of Origen. Nonetheless,
as will be seen later, there is a basic similarity in that these
methods, rather than developing from Scripture itself, impose
upon Scripture a method that is harmonious with the contem-
porary milieu. The final authority thus becomes the contempo-
rary mind-set rather than Scripture itself.

**Adaptation of Aristotelian Logic and Philosophy to Theology**

Up to the time of the eleventh century, Scripture (and
gradually the church and the early church fathers) was given an
authoritative role in the development of theology. Although the
allegorical method of interpretation allowed for the distortion
of aspects of the Biblical message and for the possibility of
synthesis between philosophical thinking and the Biblical mes-
sage, it was nonetheless the basic intent of theologians
throughout this period to be Biblical in their theology. How-
ever, the eleventh century brought about a basic change in
concepts of authority and in the relation between the Biblical
message and philosophy.

From the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries there
arose a gradual knowledge and use of the method of logic and
the concept of philosophy that had been worked out by Ari-
sto tle. Aristotelian systems of logic had always been available,
but were not in demand until the eleventh century, when there
emerged an appreciation of the power of words and arguments
and of the force of logic. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries
the total philosophy of Aristotle began to come through to the
West primarily through the channels of Arabic and Jewish
thought, and Aristotle replaced Plato as the philosopher to all
the schools.

At first the use of dialectic or logic was seen as subservient
to the authority of the Scriptures and the tradition of the
that when the divine arrangement of things could not be understood, argumentation was to be abandoned in favor of authority. By contrast, Berengar de Tours (c. 998-1088), a pupil of Fulbert, placed a major emphasis upon reason as the judge of theology. It was his purpose to submit faith to treatment by dialectic, for dialectic is the use of reason, and when it comes to determining truth, he proposed that reason is superior to authority.

Among others who gave a primary role to dialectic were such men as Peter Abelard (1072-1142) and Gilbert de La Porée (1076-1154). Abelard stated that reason could go far in establishing the doctrines of Christian faith, and he tended to see Christian revelation and morality as merely the production of natural reason and ethics. He even tended to see an outline of Christian theology, including the Trinity, in heathen philosophy. Gilbert also used dialectic as a means of building theological truth. The categories that were developed logically were held to have their exact counterparts in reality. If, for example, the mind could not logically consider God without separating His nature from the three persons in the Godhead, then, in fact, that separation existed in some way. For both Abelard and Gilbert, grammar and logic were the primary means of expressing the objects of Christian revelation. Their concept of the universe grew out of their understanding of a coherence between the world and the gospel, and thus grammar and logic, as representing the world, formed a basic framework on which they built Christian theology. Saint Bernard of Clairvaux (c. 1091-1153) reacted strongly against this approach and by contrast started within the framework of divine revelation and faith.

Anselm (c. 1033-1109) also made extensive use of dialectic. Although on the one hand he stated that one must believe in order to understand, he also insisted that the truth of faith may be developed by reason. Reason puts man in contact with the whole order of being, and it has its own principles of operation. Thus the truth of what was received by faith could be demonstrated by an intellectual process. Not only could reason support the existence of God but also it could deal with the nature of God, the Trinity, immortality, and the incarnation, the death, and the resurrection of Christ. These basic tenets of Christian teaching were held to be in harmony with and accompanied by a rational view of the universe.

Anselm developed what is called the ontological argument for the existence of God. The argument arises out of a definition of God. God is a being than which nothing greater can be conceived. By greater, Anselm means more perfect. Everyone, even the fool who denies the existence of God, has as an object of thought the idea of something than which nothing greater can be conceived. The question is whether the object that exists as a concept in our minds also exists in reality. To deny existence to this object would be a contradiction of terms, for if it does not exist, then we can think of another being as having real existence that is greater by reason of existence than the one than which nothing greater can exist, and this would be absurd. Therefore, something than which nothing greater can be conceived must exist in reality. Anselm goes on to argue for other characteristics of this divine being such as His eternity. If an eternal being can be conceived, it must exist, for it is self-contradictory to conceive of an eternal being that either has not yet come into existence or that has ceased to exist.

Anselm's argument for the existence of God was formed within the thought world that assumed the necessary relationship between thought processes and reality. It asserted that there can be no contradiction between man's reasoning processes and reality, for the universe was not structured in any way that is out of harmony with the reasoning processes of mankind. Thus there was conceived a necessary relationship between thought processes and reality. If thought processes affirm the existence of God, God must exist. The question must be raised as to whether a valid inference can be made from the thought of a given kind of being to the conclusion that in fact a being of that kind does exist.

Albert the Great (c. 1200-1280), one of the professors of Thomas Aquinas, created a climate in which philosophy could be accepted as parallel to and independent of God's revelation in Scripture. Up to the time of Albert, philosophy was generally seen as subservient to the Scriptures and as a tool that could aid in the process of explaining, interpreting, and communicating the Christian message. Albert, however, accepted philosophy, particularly that of Aristotle, as a means of obtaining truth parallel to that of the Old and New Testaments. He thus admitted into Christian theology the realm of nature that within its own limits was to be pursued for its own sake by the faculties given man at his creation. Natural philosophy provided an essential basis for the Christian concept of the universe.

Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274) is generally considered the outstanding theologian of the Middle Ages, and his theological positions have been taken by many to be almost normative for Roman Catholic theology. Aquinas gives revelation a primary role in development of theology. As a result of the grace of God, revelation is a gift that reveals to man knowledge of spiritual truths not otherwise available merely by the exercise of human reason. Revelation has been communicated to the prophets and thus through Scripture. The basis of the doctrines of the church is not the creeds, the traditions, the teaching office within the church, nor even Peter nor the apostles, but the teaching of the prophets and the apostles particularly in their witness to Christ. Thus Scripture plays a primary role even above that of reason, tradition, and the church.

Aquinas also dealt with the method by which Scripture is to be interpreted. In contradistinction to the allegorical method of interpretation, he placed primary emphasis upon the literal meaning of the Bible as expressing the true sense of Scripture.

Aquinas also intended to give Scripture a primary role in the development of theology. Scripture supplied to theology principles or fundamental propositions that were similar to the self-evident principles of philosophy. These principles were not subject to debate nor were they capable of demonstration, but were rather the starting point or presupposition of theological thinking. It was the task of theology through the function of reason to systematize and to draw conclusions from these presuppositions.

Scripture provided not only the source of knowledge but also the norm for theological instruction. Aquinas, for example, rejected the doctrine of the immaculate conception on the basis of scriptural testimony. Although he found rational arguments for accepting it, he considered the doctrine to be in conflict with unmistakable Biblical testimony concerning Christ as the universal Saviour of all. Mary must be reckoned among those sinners who need salvation through Christ. Thus for Aquinas, it was the purpose of theology to determine and express through the use of reason, illuminated by faith, the meaning and significance of the supernatural knowledge of God given in Scripture in order to reconstruct in a rational and human way the truth that God had been pleased to give in Scripture.

The teachings of Aristotle had come into full view and were flourishing around the time when Aquinas arrived on the scene. Aristotle gave a purely naturalistic this-world point of view that cannot be characterized as Christian or even medieval, but ancient Greek and nonreligious, as well as rationalistic. Yet the Aristotelian system afforded a basis upon which could be constructed a full and mature system of theology.

Aquinas accepted the epistemology of Aristotle that knowledge is based upon what the senses perceive. The senses
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If You Want to Know God, Look at Reality

provide data that when interpreted by reason provide the road to knowledge. Aquinas also went beyond Aristotle by indicating that faith is also a road to truth. Both reason and faith provided a means of obtaining knowledge of God and the universe. Since man was a part of nature, human reason was both an adequate and self-sufficient instrument for obtaining truth within the world of man’s natural experience, as well as within aspects of the spiritual realm. The unchanging mind and law of God in the universe was reflected in reason and in the order of the universe. Neither the senses nor reason play false when they function normally under the divine illumination of the Spirit.

Since philosophical and metaphysical thinking take place within the natural world, they are essentially independent of revelation and follow the laws of reason. There is a sphere that is directly accessible to reason not only within the natural but also within the spiritual realm. Since God is the ultimate cause of Creation, it is possible to obtain a natural knowledge of Him by means of an analogy between the created world and God. Natural knowledge of God is limited and is only analogous knowledge. Yet the existence of God and to some extent His attributes can be demonstrated (at least to those who are already believers) on the basis of knowledge obtained through the senses and reason. Revelation is distinct from reason and brings knowledge to mankind that would not otherwise be available within the natural sphere.

Both revelation and reason bring knowledge to mankind. Revelation is given, whereas reason brings knowledge by means of an interpretation of the data of the senses. Revelation does not come from reason, but is given in accordance with reason. It actually brings reason to fuller perfection that would not otherwise be possible apart from revelation. The fact that revelation brings something new into the sphere of reason does not mean that there is a contradiction between reason and revelation, nor does it imply any correction of the structure that characterizes the work of reason. The new knowledge that is given in revelation is an extension of the knowledge gained through reason.

Since all being and therefore all truth comes from one source, there is an order and harmony that exists within all knowledge. Thus, although revelation and reason deal with different (although not unrelated) realms of truth and although there are limits to the human mind, there is nonetheless only one truth. God is the origin of both nature and revelation. Reason and faith therefore have their source in God and cannot be in conflict with each other, nor can knowledge that is reached through the senses contradict that which is given through revelation.

God has given both the first principles of thought in the natural world and the articles of faith in the revealed world. If there were any conflicts between faith and reason it would mean that God was acting falsely by intending to deceive man. Thus, it is presupposed that God as the Creator will operate in accordance with the natural world as interpreted by reason, and, thus, how God will act is ultimately determined by the conception of the natural world.

Aquinas is saying that truth is truth wherever it may be found. God is the author of truth whether it is in revelation or in the natural world. Therefore there can be no contradiction between them. But as we will see, what finally happens within the concept that the natural world and the world of revelation supply parallel tracks to truth is that rather than allowing the truths of revelation to become the ordering principle for the exercise of the function of reason, the natural world becomes the ordering principle for truth within revelation.

The relation between faith and reason in Aquinas cannot be stated simply, for it is not merely a case of reason over faith or of faith over reason. Rather there is a continual interrelationship between the two.

Theology is not itself equated with revelation. Rather it is a human attempt to employ all the resources of natural reason in order to synthesize and to reflect through a cognitive process on the knowledge that has been given in revelation. Revelation, as communicated in Scripture, expresses the content of faith and is thus the starting point for and presupposition of the work of a theologian. But the content of Scripture is only a starting point or a sort of first principle upon which the theologian builds an orderly system through the use of reason as informed by the various available philosophical systems.

Thus within the system of Aquinas we have the influence of both Scripture and philosophy. Scripture at times correcting metaphysics and defining the limits in which reason may operate. Metaphysics at times restructuring not only the form but even the content of the Biblical message. The content of Scripture is normative in some sense in that it provides the basic materials to be interpreted and upon which the theologian operates. It sets the limits and attempts to purge the philosophy of foreign elements. On the other hand, rational knowledge that is independent of revelation is used to define not only the meaning but also the structure in which the Biblical message will be conveyed. Although Scripture is the starting point, it is reason that (is the primary determinant and) gives unity to the system of ideas, and this structuring does not take place without altering the content.

In effect, then, the role of reason in theology is both dominant and determinative in that it provides the structure and to some extent the content. Revelation is coordinated with knowledge obtained by reason, and it is interpreted in terms of that same knowledge. Revelation does not abrogate the existing thought categories; rather, it brings to conclusions existing lines
of thought. It is in this sense, then, that it may be said that reason is primary.

The net effect of it all is that the theology of Aquinas became something other than Biblical theology. At the base of Aquinas' ordering principle was the concept of cause, which, though modified in part by Biblical principles, came essentially from Aristotle.

For Aquinas, the mode of study that was appropriate to human reason was to move from effects to initial cause by a process of deduction. Even though the study of theology would suggest movement from cause to the study of its effects, the end result of Aquinas' method placed emphasis upon movement from effect to cause as the primary structuring principle of his theology. The end result was that revelation became subordinated to what was understood to be the laws that structured the human mind.

In dealing with God's relation to the world, Aquinas defined the relationship as that between a transcendent cause and its effects.

God is transcendent cause, that is, everything else is dependent upon Him, whereas God Himself is self-existing. Thus all change moves from God as the final cause, but never toward God. God is the unchanging cause of change.

As the result of Aquinas' notion of causality between God and man, it is difficult for him to deal with Biblical concepts such as "descent from heaven," to "become poor," to "empty himself," and to "give himself for others." When Aquinas dealt with the suffering of Christ, it was placed totally within His human nature, not the divine nature, for divine nature cannot suffer. When Aquinas dealt with 1 Corinthians 2:2, where Paul stated that he knew nothing except the cross of Christ among the Corinthians, Aquinas stated that Paul was dealing with an inferior doctrine. The cross was considered an inferior doctrine because it implied suffering, which could not easily be correlated with the idea of the perfection of God. Thus we see that the rational lines upon which Aquinas built his theology made it difficult for him to do justice to certain Biblical passages regarding the incarnation and the work of Christ.

In constructing his theology, Aquinas is dependent upon the Greek frame of reference, which sees that which lies beneath the surface of the experienced world. His absolute causality, His power and wisdom, and in that way His absolute causality, His power and wisdom, and in that way His face of absurdity and nothingness. The difference is not in the chain of logical argument, but in the selection and interpretation of the experienced world.

It can be seen, then, that the arguments for the existence and attributes of God did not allow for God's being other than what could be established by logic. Thus they placed God in a logical straitjacket. To a large extent the brand of Christianity that developed after the time of the apostles was a direct extension and prolongation of the ancient philosophy of Greece whereby a rational process was used to establish a frame of reference in which the world was seen to be intelligible. This

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If You Want to Know God, You Must Look at Man

If You Want to Know God or the World, You Must Rely on God's Self-revelation

Man's Understanding of God Dependent on Self-knowledge

that is not congruent with Scripture. This also means the elimination of some motifs of Scripture that, if expressed, would destroy the structure of the thought that gives synthesis, unity, and cohesion to the theology of Aquinas.

Within the medieval period of theology, it was felt that theoretical arguments for the existence and to some extent the nature of God were possible. The argument from cause to effect stated that for every effect there must be a cause sufficient to explain the effect. By moving back from each cause to the cause that produced the cause, one could finally get back to the first cause. The label "God" was written across the term "first cause." The argument from design stated that the existence of design demands a designer. The label "God" was written through the term "Designer."

These and other arguments for the existence of God proved effective to those who were already believers, but the arguments had their limitations. The argument from effect to cause is not conclusive within itself, for it leaves unanswered one of the basic premises of the argument, namely the question of the cause for the first cause.

The argument from design is also unsatisfactory in that it does not answer the question as to the nature of the designer. Is the designer of the entire universe taken as a whole—a divine mind—a master computer, the God of Christianity, or merely chance? If one argues on the basis of probability that the universe and its present order and development is totally improbable on the basis of evolution or chance, one is left with an even greater improbability that there should exist within the universe a designer capable of ordering the present state of affairs. The concept of universal mechanism, which was at the basis of the argument for design also, became the basis for Darwinism.

The argument that God exists and can be somewhat known because He is reflected in the world can also go two ways. One can argue from that which is to the invisible properties of God, His absolute causality, His power and wisdom, and in that way arrive at an intelligible conception of infinite being, which may then be labeled God; however, atheism by looking in the same mirror does not see the countenance of a god, but only the grim face of absurdity and nothingness. The difference is not in the chain of logical argument, but in the selection and interpretation of the experienced world.
concept of reality was then used by theologians to frame the background out of which their theology was developed. They conceived a single reasoned and intelligible explanation of the universe on the natural level, and a single analysis of man and his powers, that could be discovered, elaborated, and taught, and that was valid for all men and final within its own sphere.

Although the basic intent of theologians during the period of the early and medieval church was to develop a theology that was Biblical, the net result of operating within the climate of the various philosophies was a synthesis between theology and philosophy. The scholastic method of the later period no less than the allegorical method of the earlier allowed for the imposition of rational interpretations and structures upon Scripture. Thus Origen came to Scripture as a Neoplatonist, Aquinas as a theologian, and Albert as a philosopher.

The basic assumption necessary for building a theology out of the background of a metaphysic was that there is a natural continuity between the natural and the supernatural, and that man is capable of perceiving correctly the real world. Basic to the history of Christian thought is the emphasis that there is continuity between thought and divine revelation so that one may start theology within the thought processes. Even though revelation surpassed the rational processes, it was nonetheless congruent with them. The idea of God and revelation could be accounted for and creatively accepted into a system of human thought such as the metaphysics of Plato or Aristotle. Although the approaches for bringing about the union between thought process and revelation were taken from different vantage points, at the basis of each of these approaches was the position that there is continuity between human thought and divine revelation.

If either of the basic assumptions of medieval theology—that there is a natural continuity between the world and God, and that man is capable of perceiving correctly the real world—should prove inadequate, then any method of theology arising out of metaphysics would be inadequate for dealing with the question of God. The question must be asked whether there is any necessary relationship between human thought and revelation or whether, as a matter of fact, revelation brings something within the grasp of man that is not otherwise available to mankind—something that is not only an addition to human thought but that actually reorients and restructures the entire basis for man’s thinking and acting in all spheres of his life.

The Reformation Period

The dissolution of medieval scholasticism, as illustrated by such thinkers as William of Ockham (c. 1300-1349), prepared a background out of which the Protestant Reformation could arise. This background can best be understood within the context of the battle that took place during the medieval period between realism and nominalism. Reality according to the realists was characterized by structure and order. Rational thought patterns were inherent within reality itself. Thus language expressed reality, and the reality that was reflected in concepts actually expressed universal realities. The concept “animal,” for example, had reality even apart from specific animals.

By contrast, the nominalists declared that names, concepts, and generalities were merely tags that were used to speak about individual things. Only actual individuals were real. Realism placed emphasis upon universal concepts, as well as organizations such as the church, whereas nominalism placed emphasis upon the individual. The latter was, of course, important to the Reformation concept of the priesthood of all believers and their responsibility as interpreters of the word of God in Scripture.

Ockham’s concern was not so directly with the status of universals as with the principles of valid demonstration and the status of knowledge itself. Since all knowledge, to be valid, had to be verifiable within empirical experience, the base of evidence upon which knowledge rests is direct experience of individual things and particular events. He rejected the medieval notion that the human intellect discovers in individual things by sense experience an order of abstract essences and necessary relations that are prior to individual things and contingent events from which the intellect can demonstrate necessary truths about first causes and the nature and attributes of God.

Ockham thus closed the door against any possibility of rational or metaphysical knowledge of God or of the universe. When metaphysics fell, the whole fabric of natural theology that rested upon the validity and reality of universal concepts also collapsed. Both God and metaphysics are outside the scope of verifiable natural experience and thus of knowledge naturally available to man. The only knowledge that is available to man is that which comes by direct experience. Man does not acquire knowledge by purely rational processes. Since God cannot be known by direct experience, it follows that God cannot be known by any means in which man naturally acquires knowledge. This also applies to any consideration of causality.

Ockham states that knowledge of causal relations can stem only from experience, for it is not possible to obtain knowledge of a cause by merely observing its effect, for the cause must also be intuited directly by us if we are to have knowledge of it. Ockham rejects the idea that the effect is virtually in its causes and is deducible from the central nature of the cause. Man does not have knowledge of God either by direct evidence of His existence or from an analysis of causality. Thus Ockham concluded that neither the characteristics nor the existence of God could be conclusively demonstrated.

He was not atheistic in his denial of the possibility of natural knowledge of God. Rather he insisted that the acceptance of God’s existence and acquaintance with His attributes must rest upon Scripture. By denying the possibility of a rational demonstration of the truths of natural religion and by regarding revelation as a given that does not rest upon reason, Ockham opened the door to the concept that revealed doctrine could be confined to Scripture alone by appealing solely to the literal word of Scripture as the norm by which doctrine could be acknowledged as universal and necessary for salvation. This step was soon taken by John Wycliffe (c. 1324-1384), followed later by Martin Luther (1483-1546).

Aristotelian and, to some extent, medieval concepts of the universe placed God in a position subject to His own ordering principles. There was considered to be a divine order and law and predictability to the working of the universe in accordance with which God acted by the exercise of His reason. God, by His very nature, it was argued, is not inconsistent with reason and order. Since human reason is derived from God, both God’s nature and His acts are not out of accord with man’s reason. By contrast, Ockham, following Duns Scotus (c. 1265-1308), placed emphasis upon the freedom and absolute power of God. Human reason does not place a limit upon the freedom of God. We know nothing by pure reason, either of God’s attributes or of His way of acting. Thus Ockham would not allow reason to make judgments upon the actions of God. God is not under some universal norm. Rather God is Himself the norm. This also had implications for ethics on the human level. Although Ockham recognized that naturally good and virtuous choices may arise out of reason, he was primarily interested in a theological norm of moral goodness. This norm does not arise out of rational reflections, but rather out of the will of God expressed in the commandments of the Old and New Testaments. The right is defined by what God wills man to do out of man’s free choice.

The battle cry of the Reformation was sola Scriptura. The principle of the Bible alone meant not only the priority of Scripture over church and tradition but also its priority over all methods of obtaining knowledge. Thus the Reformation rejected any approach that started within a concept of reality or
within a system of reason or philosophy. By implication, sola Scriptura would also reject any approach that starts within such disciplines as psychology, sociology, history, and science. The principle that the Bible alone must be held as authoritative within the areas of theology, Christian doctrine, and Christian living also had implications for method. Not only did it reject the imposition of an external concept upon Scripture but it also rejected the imposition of any external method. Method for the study of Scripture arose out of Scripture itself, and Scripture was considered to be its own interpreter. The concept of the historical-grammatical method for interpreting Scripture received prominence as the most adequate method for doing so from within Scripture itself. The historical-grammatical method affirmed the necessity of understanding the grammar of the text and the historical setting within which God reveals Himself. This method is to be distinguished from the later historical-critical method, which not only attempts to understand what was said and meant but also what can historically be affirmed to have taken place regardless of the specific declaration of the text. The concept of sola Scriptura did not deny that God could speak through other channels such as nature, philosophy, the church, and tradition. Rather, it emphasized that such possible channels for God's word must first be brought under the judgment of, and understood within, the context of Scripture. Shortly after the initial Reformation period of Luther and Calvin (1509-1564), movements began to take place within the Protestant churches toward positions similar to those of Catholic scholasticism of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries. For example, Richard Hooker (c. 1554-1600), a theologian of the Church of England, drew largely on the medieval tradition. He saw continuity rather than discontinuity in the relation between the world and God, and saw authority as lying within Scripture, the church (including tradition), and reason. Within the Lutheran and Reformed groups there also developed movements that are generally characterized by the terms "Protestant orthodoxy" and "Protestant scholasticism." Within these movements there was an emphasis upon a natural knowledge of God, supplemented by revelation. Reason was seen to be parallel to revelation as a means of obtaining knowledge of God. These movements put forward rational propositions about God as defense against the new "scientific" views of the world, which were in sharp contrast to the Biblical world view. Although Protestant scholasticism saw itself as in opposition to its philosophical milieu, which was almost exclusively rationalistic, it nonetheless did not escape the spirit of this same rationalism either in temper or in method. The Contemporary Theological Scene At the end of the eighteenth century, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) argued against the possibility of the development of a metaphysic—a concept of reality—by way of rational argument. Kant's critique of the philosophical and theological scene has had an influence either negatively or positively on almost all of the subsequent history of theology. Consequently, it is necessary to understand something of the revolutionary nature of Kant's thinking in order to understand what has taken place within theology subsequently. Kant disagreed with the idea that the mind is a tabula rasa, an empty vessel that simply receives impressions from or conforms to the exterior world or to exterior objects. Rather, he stated that it is not only the objects that define the characteristics of knowledge but also the subject (man). Thus he asked the question, What must be presupposed in general for our knowledge of objects to be possible? He dealt with the a priori conditions for thinking itself and attempted to define the characteristics of the knowing subject if it is to think at all. Thus Kant attempted to understand the structure or nature of the human mind itself, which must be presupposed for the very possibility of actual experience. This turn to the subject on the part of Kant is essential for understanding the contemporary theological concern with anthropology. (Virtually all theology since Kant may be characterized as anthropology. Theology has attempted to move from man to God. When the divine dimension in Scripture is called in question, the theologian has no other option than to turn to man.) Kant then questioned the possibility of theoretical arguments for the existence of God. He stated that it is logically inappropriate to push the categories or necessary laws of thought beyond their limit, that is, beyond actual or possible experience. Objects or things in themselves cannot be known except in their relation to the experience of the knowing subject. Whenever the a priori categories of knowing are pushed beyond actual or possible experience, reason plunges out of control. Whatever is outside the realm of actual or possible experience can be conceived but not known. Since God is beyond the phenomenal order, He cannot be known by means of theoretical reason. Kant critiqued the classical arguments for the existence of God by collapsing them into the ontological argument of Anselm and Descartes. Although the arguments from cause and design claim to be based on experience, they, in fact, project beyond experience to that which is without cause and, in the argument from design, from finite intelligence to a supreme and necessary God. The ontological argument itself, as we have seen, starts with pure reason and by applying logic to a definition of God attempts to establish the necessary existence of God. But Kant already rejected the possibility that knowledge could be obtained by reason when it operates outside man's experience. Kant made a new appeal for the existence of God. This appeal, however, did not rest on speculative thought, but on practical reason in relation to responsible human action. Kant turned to what he considered to be the moral imperatives of mankind as a means of arguing for the existence of God. Thus, rather than moving from theology to ethics, he moved from ethics to theology. Kant finds morality to be a part of the a priori structure of mankind. Man finds himself under moral law that arises from his own nature. Kant then asks what kind of world is required if one is to make sense of the a priori fact of moral law, and goes on to argue that the supreme good is to be found in good will, that is, the will that is motivated out of duty and duty alone. This duty must be fulfilled consistently, and this requires the use of reason to apply general principles consistently in each situation. What is presupposed and necessary for any morality, then, is good will, which is done for the sake of duty and is fulfilled in a willing and a consistent manner. Practical reason is thus structured a priori in such a way as to demand morality. But the concept that man is under moral obligation does not exhaust the demands of human nature. The perfect good is not reached by morality alone, but also requires happiness. Man in his practical reason finds himself driven toward the goal of the ideal union of moral perfection and complete happiness. This is the perfect good. The perfect good is also demanded by morality itself. But this demand does not arise from experience, for we do not discover the perfect good. Rather, it is an a priori requirement of practical reasoning. In summary to this point, the supreme good is demanded by morality and is a part of the a priori structure of practical reason. The supreme good thus ought to be obtained, and the ought implies the can. Practical reason thus postulates a state of affairs to account for the possibility of the fulfillment of the ought. This state of affairs cannot be obtained within the allocated span of life, but rather in progress ad infinitum. Thus the fulfillment of the act can only take place on the supposition of the endless existence of the same rational being. This leads Kant to postulate the immortality of the soul. He
then goes on to argue that the existence of God is necessary to bring about this state of affairs. He notes that endless virtuous existence by itself does not guarantee eventual happiness. Yet practical reason is driven toward the goal of the perfect good. Thus an agency must be postulated, capable of bringing about the results indicated by practical reason and by morality itself. The only cause that is adequate for this effect is a supreme being.

Kant felt that by turning from theoretical reason to practical reason he was able to justify directly the concept of a perfect and infinite God. But it is important to note that this is only justification for, and not objectively valid proof of, the being of God. The argument cannot be stated any more rigidly than in the following: "Insofar as the moral law is necessary, to that extent whatever is presupposed for making its fulfillment possible (including God) must also be necessarily assumed." Thus the moral argument for the existence and nature of God is required only for those who wish to think consistently with the implications of their practical moral existence.

Kant turned from Scripture to the moral law written in the heart as the basis for his theology. He rejected belief in divine revelation, hoping that moral religion would finally supersede the so-called revealed religion. Since the Protestantism of Kant's day was so ingrained in faith in a book, Kant recognized that moral instruction must make use of the Bible. Thus he stated that the Biblical writings must be grounded by moral reason. Thus the Bible was interpreted according to morals rather than morals being interpreted according to the Bible. Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) is generally considered to be the most influential Protestant theologian between the Reformation period and Karl Barth. He is often given the title Father of Contemporary Theology. Early in his life Schleiermacher was influenced by Moravian pietism. This proved to have a major impact upon his theology, for a key presupposition of his theology was that piety is based primarily upon feeling, that is, upon unobjectified self-consciousness.

In the intellectual vein, Schleiermacher did theologically what Kant did philosophically. This basic turn to the subject presented a way of approach to theology that has become dominant in Protestantism, as well as in Roman Catholicism.

In his work entitled On Religion: Speeches Addressed to Its Cultured Despisers, Schleiermacher attempted to answer the question of the nature of religion. He agreed with Kant that religion is not found in metaphysics, but he rejected Kant's contention that it is found within the moral life, as well as the concept that it is found in some sacred book. Piety, says Schleiermacher, "cannot be an instinct craving for a mass of metaphysical and ethical crumbs." Mental life is composed of three essential elements, he stated: perception, feeling, and activity. Perception and activity deal with knowledge and moral life, whereas feeling issues in religious life. It is essential for all three fields to be occupied in order for human nature to be complete.

For Schleiermacher, religion was grounded in the structure of human existence. It was the creation of a priori self-consciousness that was neither scientific nor natural knowledge, but instead centered in feeling. Consciousness of religious truth was essentially self-consciousness. To him religion is a feeling that our being and living is a being and living in and through God. It is a feeling or consciousness of ourselves as being absolutely dependent, that is, as being in relation to God.

By placing the basis of religion within feeling, Schleiermacher broke down the distinction between the natural and the supernatural. The immanence of God in man and the world became the basis for theology. Schleiermacher felt that the old orthodox distinction between the natural and the supernatural placed Christianity in a hopeless shuttle between rationalism and Bibilicism, naturalism and supernaturalism. Schleiermacher saw the world as in basic continuity with God. God's presence is not necessarily that of a distinct concept of an object, but is felt primarily as the result of His operation on us by means of the operation of the world upon us. Within this setting Schleiermacher sought to create a relationship between science and faith that would allow a freely working science not hindered by faith, and that at the same time would not exclude faith.

Schleiermacher's theology becomes a description of the content of conversion. Theology can thus never be speculative and abstract. Christian doctrines are formulations in language or objectifications of the prior Christian feeling. The teachings of the church are the explication of Christian experience. Consciousness of truth is the objectification of self-consciousness. Christian doctrines are not determined primarily by Scripture but arise out of the consciousness of redemption that has been accomplished by Jesus.

Schleiermacher promoted the idea that religion develops by an evolutionary pattern from lower to higher forms. The Hebrew religion, for example, was lower than that of Christianity. This evolutionary concept of religion became a feeder into Darwinism. Thus, for Schleiermacher, Christianity was not the sole type of religion. But Christianity was a higher form of religion because of the nature of its founder as a mediator between man and God, not that Jesus was the only mediator, for others could and should fulfill that role, but because of Jesus' own profound idea of mediation.

Schleiermacher's theology resulted in a more critical attitude toward the Bible through a deeper historical and psychological understanding of it. Scripture was placed in the crucible of the Christian experience of redemption, and doctrines that were found irrelevant (such as the Second Coming, the virgin birth, and the Trinity) were reinterpreted. Scripture, e.g., the New Testament, played a role in the theology of Schleiermacher, for it conveyed the genuine expression of the piety of the church in New Testament times. Yet the real basis of authority lay in religious experience. Man's consciousness of that experience became the ultimate norm.

Nineteenth-century Protestant liberalism developed within the general milieu of the inception of the present scientific age. The developing sciences in the nineteenth century seemingly pointed to man's autonomy in the realm of nature, and man transferred this newly acquired autonomy to the realm of religion. If there were truly no distinction between the natural and religious worlds and if man were autonomous within the realm of nature, then he must also be autonomous within the world of religion. Through this feeling of autonomy, religion became the study of man's spiritual genius rather than of God's revelation.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Karl Barth (1886-1968) reacted to the theological method of nineteenth-century Protestant liberalism. He rejected the idea that sees continuity between the natural and the supernatural, and he stated that theology must begin with God's revelation rather than with some concept of reality or with a concept of man. Unexpectedly, however, Barth fell subject to his own critique when he developed his concept of revelation apart from revelation itself. He started with what seems to be the concept of Kierkegaard of an absolute distinction between God and man that would not allow God to speak permanently in Scripture. Barth did not accept Scripture as the Word of God, since this would mean that the Word of God had fallen into the hands of men. Thus he stated that Scripture became the Word of God only when and where God desired it to be His Word.

In a sense what happened in nineteenth-century liberalism and even in much twentieth-century Protestant thought is congruent with what happened during the scholastic period in Roman Catholic theology, for we again have an attempt to bring about a fusion of some kind between philosophy and theology. The starting point was different. Nineteenth-century liberalism
did not start within the world of metaphysics, but rather, remained within the limits of reason outlined by Kant and thus started within the realm of the subject. Nonetheless the method and goals were essentially the same—mainly to bring about a reconciliation on a human level between that which is observed to represent the real world and theology. Interestingly, this emphasis served to liberate Catholic theology to begin creatively setting about to rebuild a theological-philosophical system of thought. This time, however, not so much in terms of speculative thinking, but, as within liberalism, within the realm of reason outlined by Kant. Thus there is a basic continuity between what took place in medieval Catholic theology, nineteenth-century Protestant theology, and again in twentieth-century Protestant and Catholic theology.

An illustration for method in theology will also be taken from one of the most recent Roman Catholic theologians on the horizon. Bernard Lonergan (1904– ) has specialized in the topic of method in theology, and has attempted to build a method that will be satisfactory for all theologians, regardless of faith or religion, and even for those who operate in other disciplines such as the humanities, sciences, and arts. His method is built upon two prongs. The first is a description of the \textit{a priori} processes of the human mind. This process, he feels, is universal and may, in fact must, be used by any thinking person. The other prong upon which he builds his theology is a general description of that which is common to all religious faiths. It is then upon the basis of the consideration of the dynamic structure of the human mind and of a general description of religion that Lonergan sets about to establish a method for characterizing theology. Notice that here again this method implies a natural continuity between the natural and the supernatural world, and it builds its base within man himself.

With the exception of the early Reformation period and perhaps a few others, the theological systems that we have reviewed so far may be characterized as having several things in common. A natural continuity is assumed between the natural world, in which man exercises his reason and tends to know, and religion or the world of revelation or the supernatural world or Scripture. It is also assumed that man has capabilities to determine either the nature of reality or the nature of man, and then to use this determination as a background out of which a theological system is developed. Each of these theological systems also builds upon a starting point, which to varying degrees does not have its basis within Scripture.

\textbf{Contemporary Method in Biblical Studies}

Contemporary method in Biblical studies\textsuperscript{10} also grows out of the concept that there is a natural continuity between the world of nature and religion. To a very large extent it also accepts the presupposition that theology starts in some sense with man himself. Thus the historical-critical method and the related methods of literary criticism, form criticism, redaction criticism, and tradition criticism all move within and presuppose the natural world order.

The historical-critical method accepts the norms of contemporary historical science as a means for studying Scripture, in order to establish when and where God has \textit{actually} acted and spoken in the way in which He is recorded to have acted and spoken. The norms of historical science are employed to test the accuracy of the Written Word. The historical method is used as a tool for getting at \textit{possible} truths within Scripture. Questions are raised such as, What truth, if any, does Scripture yield about God, about the nature of man, or about his existence? Each concept of Scripture is subject to verification by means of a human method of operation.

The companion methods of literary criticism, form criticism, redaction criticism, and tradition criticism also operate within the same presuppositional world as that of historical criticism. The natural world is seen as congruent with the supernatural (if the supernatural is accepted at all), and the standards of literary method are imposed upon Scripture. Thus, for example, the form-critical method presupposes literature that arises out of the people. In fact, the general methods of form criticism are not designed to work with other kinds of literature. Scripture is assumed to have arisen by natural processes within the flux of history. That which was communicated by word of mouth and by written documents eventually became institutionalized within the Jewish nation and early Christianity. The forces that impinged themselves upon those people were sufficient to account for the type of literature that they developed. Thus the stories they told and the concepts they conveyed in some sense arose out of the needs of their individual and communal life. The influences that forced themselves upon the people, the political, sociological, psychological, and historical factors that surrounded them, must be considered sufficient to explain both the reason for the existence of the materials and the shape into which the materials were finally formed.

The basic presupposition of Biblical criticism is that the Bible has developed historically according to the same laws of history that have governed the development of other ancient national traditions. Thus most critical studies explain the content and form of Biblical material on the basis of the natural outworking of the forces of history, sociology, anthropology, psychology, politics, and the laws of literature as seen through the eyes of naturalistic and evolutionistic philosophies, rather than as the outworking of God’s efforts to speak objectively to mankind. The Bible is seen as a resultant of these forces among and within nations and societies, rather than as the record of the activity of God in history and the giving of an inspired message. It is an individual or a community speaking to itself, rather than God speaking to these entities. It is dominated by a study of the religion, culture, and history of a people, rather than a study of God’s plan in history to reconcile mankind to Himself. It is the study of pieces of Hebrew and early Christian literature, rather than a unified body of revelation.

The presuppositions of modern Biblical studies, then, are radically different from those of Scripture itself. The Bible, having been reduced to the level of a mere human book, is no longer the normative, authoritative Word of God, recording His will and purpose for mankind. As an illustration of the basic difference between method that arises out of Scripture itself, and the methods of Biblical criticism, the question will be raised at this point as to how conservative Bible scholars might best relate to a specific method, form-critical studies in particular, and to Biblical criticism in general. It must first be recognized that form criticism accepts \textit{a priori} a particular world view. If one accepts that world view, a critique of form criticism will simply deal in terms of its inadequacies and inadequacies. Insofar as the flow of human thought continually advances, and insofar as the world view is in flux, one can always find inadequacies. On the other hand, if one accepts another world view, namely that of Scripture, he can find no line of continuity with form criticism. The form critical method \textit{a priori} rejects the possibility that the existence of Scripture may be accounted for on the basis of God’s special revelation of Himself.

This critique of form criticism does not deny that it is essential for the interpreter to take account of the historical setting of the literature being interpreted. It is simply recognizing that this is not the real concern of form criticism. There is a crucial difference between the study of the historical setting as an aid in the interpretation of a passage that was addressed to that setting, on the one hand, and the study of the life setting in order to understand the forces that produced the passage under interpretation, on the other. Furthermore, the importance of the historical setting is not an insight from form criticism, for the importance of the historical setting has been variously recognized throughout the history of Christian interpretation.
In rejecting the presuppositions of form criticism, we do not reject the importance of understanding the genre of a piece of literature in the process of interpretation. The goal of form criticism is not so much the classification of literature as it is the study of the history of the various types of literature as they have been molded, shaped, formed, and filled with content within the cultural continuum that provided the life setting for the specific piece of literature. Thus the German word Formgeschichte more adequately accounts for the function of form criticism, namely the analysis of the history of the literature of the people as a means of reconstructing the history of the life settings within which that people operated.

It may be stated that form criticism is seemingly headed in a conservative direction, when compared with nineteenth-century liberalism. The possibility of knowing something of the life of Jesus, for example, has again been asserted. Yet it must also be recognized that form criticism operates out of the same general presuppositions as nineteenth-century liberalism. It has used the presuppositions of naturalism in an attempt to demonstrate the possibility or at least the probability of knowing something about the sayings and life of Jesus. Thus it is one with nineteenth-century Protestant liberalism in the concept that the traditions regarding Jesus must be historically determined by methods of historical study. The traditions regarding Jesus are thus squeezed into the preconception of history to which they are brought in order to determine the meaning, the size, the shape, and the validity of those traditions. This approach does not start within the circle of Scripture, for it asserts that the history of Jesus must be subsumed within the general history of mankind and particularly within the historian’s concept of history. Rather than testing his own conception of history by revelation, the form critic binds revelation to the confines of his conception of history.

The presuppositions of form criticism regarding the nature of Scripture, the nature of God as He functions within the universe, and the means by which He reveals Himself thus allow the imposition upon Scripture of a method that is foreign to Scripture, and this forcing of Scripture into a literary and rational mold does not allow Scripture to speak for itself. Those who hold to a method that arises out of Scripture cannot be form critics, because they start within the Biblical world view that states that Scripture is not determined by the sociological, political, psychological, economic, and religious factors that were pressing themselves upon the Hebrew and Jewish Christians. Rather, they see God Himself as the origin of Scripture, and thus its origin cannot be explained on the basis of laws operative in folk tradition.

If those who start within Scripture desire to claim to be form critics, they have at least three possible choices:

1. Accept the antisupernaturalistic world view of Gunkel and Dibelius, and thus find themselves at odds with the plain testimony of Scripture.

2. Define form criticism so broadly that everyone becomes a form critic and the term form criticism loses its meaning.

3. Define form criticism in such a way that those who affirm the authority of Scripture are the form critics, and Gunkel, Gressmann, Dibelius, Bultmann, and Schmidt are declared to be doing something other than form criticism.

Whenever we take, however, we need to make it clear that we are not in continuity with the work of those men nor are we even on a continuum with them. Rather, we are approaching Scripture from a radically different standpoint, and there is no common meeting ground with the form critics. We are starting with a hermeneutic that arises out of Scripture, and thus our starting point is totally different.

There have been refinements and modifications in the method of form criticism from that originally instituted by Gunkel in Biblical studies. Form critics often emphasize form (structure and genre of literature) and Sitz im Leben more strongly than they do the tracing of the history of the development of the literature within the Jewish and Christian communities. (The latter task is sometimes left to tradition criticism.) They also emphasize structure inherent in man himself, rather than placing the entire emphasis upon the specific sociological context. Yet, in spite of this change of emphasis, there is a basic continuity between the founders of the form-critical method and the current discipline, for the Sitz im Leben is considered to have played a determinative role in the selection of the form and content of the materials. The materials are accounted for on the basis of the communities in which they were supposedly formed, rather than on the basis of God’s special revelation.

Summary and Evaluation of Theological Options

At this point we shall attempt a generalizing summary and evaluation of the various options in theology that have been reviewed. The purpose of the summary is to provide a contrast for the sake of clarification concerning the proposal for method in theology, which will be made in the next section and which intends to start with Scripture.

What seems to be at the heart of the various methods we have been studying is the common characteristic that there is basic continuity between the natural and religious worlds, and that it is possible either to start from or to work within the framework of the natural world in the process of characterizing theology. The natural world is understood variously within the realm of theoretical reason or within the realm of the empirical experience from the point of view of what is a priori within the human subject. Religion finds itself in conformity with the resulting concept of the universe and is thus built in harmony with that concept. Theology is thus made to be part of the human disciplines. It operates in ways similar to those of other disciplines. To varying degrees Scripture has an impact upon theological method, but it does not create the basic framework out of which theology operates.

With the advent of Kant we saw a basic change in the concept of the relationship between man and nature. But this did not bring about a drastic change in the concept of the relation between nature and religion. Theology has been characterized differently since Kant, not because man redefined the relationship between nature and religion, but rather because man saw himself in a different relationship with the natural world. Because man had to start at a different point in the natural world in order to gain his concept of reality, he also had to start at a different point in theology. The theologian no longer had the task of reconciling theology with a concept of reality, but now had to reconcile theology with human life itself.

Contemporary theology has been wrestling with the question of God and has been looking to man to find the answer. The most crucial problem of Christianity is considered to be the question of the existence of God. This question, then, is answered with reference to man himself rather than by reference to Scripture. Christianity rests upon an analysis of man’s experience rather than upon God’s revelation, which ultimately means that the norm lies within man’s experience rather than within Scripture.

The contemporary concept of the fusion of the natural with the religious also has implications for the concept of Scripture. Scripture is seen as the development of the tradition handed down regarding Christ and the events of the Old Testament. It thus did not result from the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit, but developed by virtue of the power inherent within the laws operative in the development of folk literature, etcetera. Scripture is studied as one piece of data among all the others. As an expression of the human spirit, it is given value along with the historical, the scientific, the psychological, etcetera. Thus Scripture does not become the ordering principle for the carrying out of the various disciplines, but rather is itself
ordered within the rational structuring principle that determines all other academic disciplines. Scripture is methodologically examined and investigated in the same way in which investigations are carried out in any other human discipline.

At the basis of the methods we have outlined there seems, by one means or another, to have developed a predetermined notion of the nature of God and the way in which He can reveal Himself. Although this process generally took place indirectly by the imposition of an extraneous method upon Scripture, it has often also taken place directly. In some cases theology was simply seen as congruent with some basis within the natural world or within man himself. Though revelation added something new, it was nonetheless interpreted in harmony with what was naturally available to mankind. In other cases the approach was more apparent. The argument ran something like this: Based upon this data, experience, or concept, I am able to argue back to a concept of a God who is like this and that. Such a God will reveal Himself by this specific means. Thus, either implicitly or explicitly, a structuring and screening principle has been applied to Scripture. As we have seen, Origen determined to be Biblical in his theology, nonetheless the allegorical method of interpretation allowed the imposition of Neoplatonic thinking upon Scripture. Aquinas clearly posited Scripture as the basis for theological thinking. Yet the placing of reason alongside revelation allowed for the structuring and even restating of the Biblical materials in terms of Aristotelian philosophy. For Schleiermacher, the Word of God was structured anthropologically; for Gunkel, it was structured on the model of form criticism. Even Barth, who so forcefully denounced Protestant liberalism of the nineteenth century and the naturalism of Roman Catholic theology, fell subject himself to his own critique when he allowed a predetermination of the concept of God to mold his concept of revelation.

From the perspective of those who intend to start within Scripture, the net result of starting theology with some principle other than Scripture itself is that one determines beforehand both what God is and how He reveals Himself. By building a common basis acceptable to all men upon which to go in search of the Word of God, man has in effect spoken to Scripture rather than allowing Scripture to speak to him. Man has predetermined the structure within which the Word of God may operate, and man has thus screened out the possibility of receiving the total revelation of God given in Scripture.

If God, in fact, should be different from the posited pre-conception or if He should reveal Himself differently from that predetermination, this difference could not be apprehended by the theologian. The use of man's reason or experience, et cetera, in an attempt to postulate the nature and existence of God, has the limitation that man can only argue within that which is accessible to his experience and imagination. If God should be something other than what is imaginable or within the realm of possible conception or experience, these arguments fail to grasp the other possibilities. God becomes limited to man's own realm. God cannot act or speak outside that realm, because if He does so, he is rejected as being something other than God. The danger is that man may create his own God.

Natural theology might be defined as one known (man) defining another unknown (God) relative to the first unknown. Man is in a box, speaking to himself. What happens, in effect, is that the theologian says, "God, by some human basis I will determine what you are like and then I will go in search of you and your revelation." On the basis of that predetermination, a system is devised whereby one either structures or screens the possibility for the Word of God. But such a system is not open to the Word of God, for it can hear only what it has already decided God can say. For Schleiermacher, for example, God was what explained man's feeling of absolute dependence. But if God should happen to be something other than what is predetermined by the theologian or if God should happen to want to say something or do something other than what it has already been decided He can say or do, then God cannot be found, neither can His words or actions be recognized.

In effect, then, the theologian is in a situation wherein the Word of God cannot be heard, for if the Word of God should happen to be something other than what was expected, it is rejected as something other than the Word of God. If God is to be known and heard, the basis of Christianity cannot be man's search for God, but God's search for man. From that first question in the Garden, "Adam, where art thou?" through the prophets and Incarnation, and on to the Second Coming, we see God in His revelation in pursuit of man. If man is to know God, man is dependent upon that revelation. But unfortunately, like Adam, who hid from the face of God, there is a tendency on the part of man to avoid the true knowledge of God. God is somehow something or someone other than what man desires to know. Hence man goes in search of his own knowledge of God and the question remains: "Adam, where art thou?"

One example of how contemporary thinking can screen out the Word of God may be taken from process theology, which questions the foreknowledge of God regarding particular events. God cannot have foreknowledge of specific events, it is said. God is the contingent, and it is contrary to experience to know the future and to experience time successively. What is happening, in effect, is that man is reflecting upon himself in order to determine what is possible within his own experience and then he projects his own possibilities upon God. There is also a tendency to structure God under some principle that seems to be at the basis of the way in which the universe is operated. But God Himself determines how the universe will be run and, thus, He cannot be placed subject to some universal principle. Neither is God subsumed under man's concept of morality. Rather, it is God who determines morality. God's actions are right because of what He is, not because man has decided by some universal principle that they are right. Likewise, man's actions are right only when they are in harmony with God's will, not because they have been reconciled with some rational base.

It seems, at times, that the theologian puts himself in the following unfortunate situation: God addresses the theologian, saying, "I have a message for my people. I would like to speak." The theologian responds, "Well, I am not sure, God. You must recognize the almost insurmountable problems this would present to secular society. Give me a couple of years to examine the situation down here to determine the possibilities of your speaking. If I discover that it is logically or experientially possible for you to speak, I'll let you know."

A Proposal for Method in Theology

We have now surveyed many of the options that have been developed historically for method in theology. It is the purpose of this last section, in view of the historical survey, as well as the concept of the nature of Scripture as mentioned in the introductory section of the paper, to give a proposal for method in theology that specifically intends to operate under the authority of Scripture. It has been a basic principle of Protestantism that God cannot be known unless He reveals Himself to man. This principle is in harmony with the concept that the authority of Scripture can be maintained in theology only when one starts within Scripture itself.

By starting within Scripture, one comes to an understanding of Scripture's self-claim as the Word of God and also to an understanding of God as not only immanent but also transcendent, and to an understanding of the nature of man as fallen, and of the nature of the world as under the influence of both good and evil. Owing to these factors, man's rational process is inadequate not only within itself but also because the world upon which it operates is divided. Thus, if we are to come to a knowledge of God, we are dependent upon God Himself for that knowledge.
We affirm the concepts of *sola fide* and *sola gratia*, but we forget that the basis of these concepts is Scripture. When we depart from the authority of Scripture we no longer have *sola fide*, but rather some basis within human works for determining the method of salvation, for it is then necessary to start within a human work in order to affirm God's revelation in Scripture in order to come to a concept of salvation. Faith is the gift of God. Although faith is not irrational, neither does it rest on a rational base. When faith is based directly upon man's reason revelation no longer becomes a gift, and ultimately salvation is no longer a gift. Christianity, then, is not man's search for God, but God's search for man, particularly through the revelation of Himself in Scripture. It was not Adam who said to God, "God, where are You?" but rather God who said to Adam, "Adam, where are you?"

Christianity is not an intellectual search. It is given in Christ, the Scriptures, and the Holy Spirit. Man does not seek to establish or justify it, but rather to understand it. Man does not start from some conceptual, rational, or experiential base and move to Christianity; rather, Christianity molds one's intellectual understanding. The concept that truth is a given and that man must rely upon God for his concept of reality and truth is not philosophically satisfying. It is frustrating to the human spirit of self-dependence to place oneself in a position of reliance upon God. Nevertheless, the concept that truth is a given is, from a philosophical standpoint, a closed circle that must be allowed as an option.12

In essence, what we are saying is that philosophy is subject to theology, rather than theology to philosophy, and theology itself is subject to Scripture as the Word of God. The Word of God becomes a given in which God declares the nature of reality and out of which reality is then interpreted. This approach does not indicate that faith is irrational. Rather, it indicates that reason has its proper use when it operates within the realm of revelation. The call is not for the severance of the mind; it is for the use of the mind within that which has been given regarding the nature of things.

In general, method in theology has attempted to reduce theology to the study of subject matter that may be methodologically investigated in a manner similar to that in which such data as the facts of psychology, nature, and history are investigated in an attempt to establish what is truth. By contrast, method that starts within Scripture would affirm the desire to understand Scripture methodologically but not to investigate it methodologically, for truth is a given in Scripture.

There is a tendency to accept the intellectual milieu in which we exist. The world imposes its standards upon us and, having accepted them, we try to defend our cause from within those intellectual standards. During the early and medieval periods of church history this meant that theology was done within the framework of metaphysics. With the advent of Kant it meant that theology was carried out within an understanding of the *a priori* structure of some aspect of subjectivity. This would seem to have the disadvantage of establishing the nature of man and the nature of reality before coming to the source that claims to be the revelation of the nature of man and reality. Although it is true that theology is a human discipline, it must also be recognized that theology does not work on data available within the natural world, as do other academic disciplines. The goal of theology is to explicate God, who cannot be reduced to the realm of the human or fully understood in the laboratories of human science. Thus, theology is dependent upon a given, if it is to carry out its task, and that given must determine the course of the task.

There are attempts to prove the existence of God, and others to prove Scripture as the Word of God on rational and/or experiential bases. But the attempt to ground the Word of God results in the setting up of an *a priori* norm by which Scripture will be judged. If God's Word is to be authoritative, the confirmation must come from God, rather than man. When man attempts to prove the Word of God, man can only hear what can be generated on a human level. It is only when confirmation comes from God that God is free to speak.

The assumption that lies behind the idea of grounding God's Word rationally or experimentally is that there is no separation between the natural and supernatural world—that God is in the world not only as its Creator but also to support and guide it and, therefore, that God does not come into the world on a different level of affairs. However, the testimony from Scripture is that Scripture itself is not the word of man to men about God but the Word of God to men. It is not a word that can arise or be known on the human level apart from specific divine action. Thus if it is to be known as God's Word it cannot be grounded on a human level. It would not be God's Word if it could be grounded on a human base.

The supernatural cannot be verified except by supernatural means. We live in an age that emphasizes the natural. We tend, therefore, to build upon the world view of naturalism in an attempt to verify the supernatural in Scripture. But we must reject the naturalistic concept of reality and must not attempt to subsume Scripture within it. To attempt to ground the supernatural on a rationalistic, naturalistic, experiential basis is to define the limits of the supernatural in terms of the natural, the mind of God in terms of the rational. Only the supernatural can ground the supernatural. Only God Himself can ground His Word.13

Some would like to affirm the validity of Scripture because it conforms with scientific or historical evidence. They state that Scripture makes claims about man, his environment, and the universe that are open to men either for verification or refutation. Therefore, we must go to man, his environment, and the universe to see whether these claims are fulfilled, to see whether Scripture is the Word of God. If these claims can be verified, then the probabilities are that there is also a God who has revealed them to mankind. In one respect, they start within a circle of Scripture. Only then do they move out to science and history in order to determine whether indeed Scripture is confirmed by virtue of its coherence with what can be determined historically and scientifically. However, although such an approach claims to start within Scripture, it nonetheless places its norm within science and history, and the final effect is that man's reason or experience becomes the norm for determining whether or not Scripture is in fact the Word of God. If Scripture is to be the norm, then science and history must conform to Scripture, rather than Scripture to science and history.

We must also notice that it is not the purpose of Scripture to dangle truth claims in front of mankind for his verification. Rather, Scripture purposes to reveal both God and the universe as that something larger than mankind as a given in which God declares the nature of reality and out of which reality is then interpreted. This approach does not indicate that faith is irrational. Rather, it indicates that reason has its proper use when it operates within the realm of revelation. The call is not for the severance of the mind; it is for the use of the mind within that which has been given regarding the nature of things.

The philosophical and logical processes of the human mind can go no further than some level of probability. They can affirm the existence of something larger than mankind as a probable explanation for the existence and ordering of the universe. What that something is must logically be left somewhat unidentified. Yet the philosopher may write "God" across this unidentified larger something. It must be emphasized that there is no necessary relationship between that something larger that is labeled "God" and the God of Christianity. This is simply an assumption taken on the part of the philosopher. Some are satisfied to allow the rationale for Christianity to rest on probabilities. Christianity is more probable than other philosophical or theological options. But to attempt to deal with Christianity on the basis of probabilities is to force Christianity into a natural mold in which what occurs can be explained by way of probabilities.
Christianity actually is not a probability; it is totally improbable on any human basis that there should be a God in the universe who would create an earth and would send His Son to redeem that earth. The occurrences of events of the Exodus and the cross are not historical probabilities; rather, on a natural historical basis, they are total improbabilities. Christianity is a unique event that did not arise within the natural order of things. It did not arise out of man’s experience, but rather as a given within that experience. Man has ever since reacted against the atoning act of the cross as irrational.

If all knowledge of all religions were wiped from the face of the earth, it is conceivable that to some extent and in some degree the nonchristian religions could arise again. To the extent that they partake of the structure and the longing of mankind they could be brought back to life within the continuing thought processes of men. However, if Christianity were wiped from the face of the earth it would never reestablish itself without divine intervention. Christianity is a given. It is the revelation of the transcendent God. To attempt to explain its existence within the natural order is to deny its uniqueness and its dependency upon God’s action. God does not leave knowledge of His existence, attributes, or plan for mankind to probability. He has not left this world in a whirl of uncertainty regarding His existence. He has revealed not only Himself but His will, as well as the nature of the universe and mankind, which He has created.

Philip’s request show us the Father—reflects the general quest of theology throughout history. The history of theology has been man’s search for God. Man has sought to discover God by the exercise of his reason and by being sensitive to his feelings and intuitions. He has started within concepts of reality and within concepts of the human subject. Philip’s preconception of God did not allow for the possibility of Christ’s being God’s revelation. So it is, whenever man goes on his own search for God. The preconception by which God and His Word are measured does not allow for the true God to come through. God is not allowed to speak, for man has already decided what God can say.14

Those who see themselves standing in line with and hopefully in the completion of the principle authority of Scripture must guard against approaches that tend to compromise the authority of Scripture. On the one hand, there is that school of thought that sees Scripture as a mere reflection of an encounter with God and that gives to the early Christian community as a whole an influential role in the formation of the New Testament. This school looks for important religious insights in Scripture, but it is left to the interpreter to separate between that which is the Word of God in Scripture and that which simply comes from the milieu in which the prophet or apostle operated and was himself engrained. Within this system of thought man himself becomes the norm for determining what is inspired in Scripture.

At the opposite end of the pole is the school of thought that is attempting to build a scientific religion. This is a more rational approach to theology, for it attempts to utilize contemporary thought processes in order to validate the revelation of God and in order to justify its theology. It is tempting to work upon a rational basis to attempt to prove the Scriptures by means of an appeal to science, psychology, history, archeology, philosophy, etcetera. It is possible, of course, to do this with some success, since Scripture is His Word and nature comes from His Word. There are thus many correlations between what can be observed in the natural and rational order of things and that which is recorded in God’s Word. God’s revelation is not irrational, for God Himself is the source of all reason. However, the rational approach to a theological system places the final norm for knowledge of God within the mind of contemporary man.

It is also tempting to frame our criticisms of nineteenth-century liberalism and Biblical critical studies from within the camp of rationalism and naturalism. As human beings, we like to rest in that camp, because it is built upon a basis that resides within our own capabilities and with which we feel somewhat comfortable. Thus we attempt by use of a rational method to critique the more liberal method in order that we may kick it out of the hole in which we find ourselves, in order that we may feel more comfortable staying in that hole ourselves. But as Biblically oriented Christians we need to get out of the rationalistic, naturalistic hole that represents the twentieth-century mind-set. It is one thing to initially critique methods in Biblical studies and theology on their own grounds, but our final critique must be based on Scripture.

Man is dependent upon God for revelation. Knowledge of God comes through such avenues as the Holy Spirit, history, providential leadings, Christ, nature, and Scripture. How does man come to a knowledge of God through the various means by which God can be known? Does man put all the data from the various means of revelation into a computer and then wait for the computer printout for his coherent view of God? Does man find some natural base within himself by which to order and screen that revelation? Does man allow the revelation itself to order itself? When we go to that revelation we find that the revelation itself gives a clue by which man may appropriately gain a knowledge of God. Scripture becomes the basis upon which knowledge of God in other forms may be understood. God’s revelation of Himself through Scripture points to the priority of Scripture for a knowledge of God.

The Holy Spirit operates not only within Scripture but also operates within the world. He who guided the prophets is also present operating in the lives of men. But the Holy Spirit does not guide the world in a way that is out of harmony with His revelation in Scripture. The Holy Spirit does not speak contrary to Scripture, and if one is to understand the source of the promptings in his heart, he must evaluate them in terms of Scripture.

Although God’s acts in history are also revelations, history by itself is not an adequate guide to knowledge of God, for God’s actions within history are inexplicable apart from special revelation. The Exodus, for instance, would simply be the migration of a people from Egypt to Palestine sometime in the second millennium B.C. Its meaning would be unintelligible apart from special revelation. The revelation of God through Christ is without question the supreme revelation of God to this world. Yet even Christ verified His mission by the Old Testament, and Christ Himself is known only through Scripture.

Nature also requires special revelation if it is to be understood with reference to God. Not only was the priority of Scripture over nature as the revelation of God necessitated by the fall of man and the entrance of sin into the natural world but also it was necessary even in the Garden of Eden. Imagine the bewilderment that would have been Adam’s if the Creator had not been present to tell Adam of his origin. Revelation through nature was not even sufficient to tell Adam how to live. How could Adam have known of the danger involved in the center tree of the Garden, apart from the word of God? Revelation through nature by itself was incomplete. It could not lead to a satisfying relationship with a personal God.

The entrance of sin into the world has made the picture of God in nature even more confusing. If a God of love promotes the good, why is evil so apparent in nature? Would a good God create evil? Is God of such a nature that He is both good and evil? Are there two gods, one representing the good and the other the evil? Thus we see that sin has created within the natural world a situation that even further necessitates the revelation of God. The personality of God cannot be communicated through the natural world alone. It is only in Jesus Christ and in Scripture that an adequate knowledge of God may be obtained.

The problem with knowledge available in the natural world
Method in theology which arises out of the world is limited to the horizontal plane. Man is in a box speaking to himself about God.

Method in theology which arises out of Scripture includes the vertical plane. The perspective is broader than possible natural experience because God has revealed Himself.

God the Creator reveals the structure of reality which He created. When man accepts the Bible, he accepts a broader horizon than that available to natural human experience. God’s revelation shatters the categories of man.

is further complicated by the entrance of sin not only into the natural world but also into man himself. Thus not only is the data upon which man operates in the natural world distorted but the reasoning powers by which man interprets the data have also been distorted by the entrance of sin. The natural world is not sufficient as a revelation of God; neither can the natural world itself be understood apart from God’s special revelation.

The danger in developing concepts of God by rational, philosophical, and existential concepts is that one may accept information that does not adequately represent God and that may in fact produce a false image of God. Adam and Eve, for example, sinned because they disobeyed the word of God. It was their desire to follow a reasoned course of action that caused the sin. Instead of obeying the word of God, they reasoned that a God of love would not withhold such beautiful fruit from one whom He loved by creation. By contrast, Christ conquered in the wilderness not because He followed a rational sequence of thought, but because He accepted the word of God.

A theology that starts within Scripture entirely reverses the process of method in theology. Instead of starting within the natural world as a structure upon which to account for the world of revelation, theology starts with God’s revelation in Scripture. The principle of the authority of Scripture means that no external principle may be used to open up Scripture, rather Scripture is used apart from Scripture to develop theology. Thus one does not come either to theology or to Scripture by way of philosophy, history, reason, intuition, or nature. Scripture is interpreted from within itself, and Scripture provides the only proper basis for building a theology. Any method or system that reverses the direction of flow by allowing external elements to flow into Scripture must be rejected. Thus, for example: We do not think of special revelation as continuous with, ordered by, or determined by, nature. Rather, nature must be understood and ordered within the context of revelation. We do not believe in the Biblical Flood because of the fortuitous existence of geoscience, which is able to demonstrate the geological probabilities that a flood has taken place. Rather, we believe in the Flood because within God’s Word it is said to have taken place.

Nor do we come to the Bible or to theology on the basis of some system of reality. Revelation must not be included within a system of reality. Rather, we come to reality on the basis of God’s Word. Reality is intelligible only when we come to it through revelation.

We do not come to the concept of God because we think we have discovered the image of God in man. Rather, we come to a concept of God out of what God has revealed about Himself in Scripture. Neither do we come to Scripture or theology on the basis of a study of history. Neither the acts nor the Word of God may be subsumed within history; rather, history must be subsumed within the Word and acts of God.

It is not my purpose to issue a call to remove Scripture from history in the process of its interpretation, but to remove Scripture from any domination of the historical method. Scripture itself, in fact, calls for its placement within a historical context for the sake of interpretation. But this placement within the historical context is not for the sake of explaining its existence, but rather for the sake of understanding its meaning. There is a temptation to say that Scripture, including the Gospels and the life of Christ, is rooted in history. However, although the acts of God were performed within time and space, they were not determined within the causal nexus of history. Thus it is not history that makes Scripture meaningful, rather it is Scripture that makes history meaningful. Scripture is the record of God’s action by which history was changed. Scripture is not the product of history; rather, history is the product of God’s action, and His Word interprets that action. Neither is Scripture the result of historical forces. It is the
declaration that God is the force that changed and is changing history from heathenism and atheism to Christianity, in my personal life from sin to conversion. Scripture is not the objec-
tification of previous conversions. It is the Word of God that declares the need for, and defines the nature of, conversion. Thus Scripture must not be imprisoned with any concept of history, but must itself be allowed to form the concept of history.

The general presupposition that underlies contemporary theology is that the universe, or at least a portion of it, is in some way intelligible to the human mind—that the universe cannot be nonsensical. It is generally assumed that the natural world and the supernatural (if the supernatural is accepted) mutually form a part of an interlocking system that may be methodologically studied. The world is generally the starting point from which this study is made. Thus, both the natural world and the world of religion are made to present truths to the minds of men that are discovered by means of methods that are inherent within man and the world. It is claimed that truth is truth wherever it may be found, whether it be in the natural world or in the spiritual realm. Seeing that God is the Creator of both, there can be no contradiction between them.

This paper, however, has questioned the validity of the integral relationship between nature and revelation, and of the ability of man by the use of reason to discover the God of nature through nature alone. Because of the distortion caused by sin, not only in the world but also within man, it is only too easy for him to misrepresent and misinterpret the experiences that come to him in the test tube and in his life. If man is to interpret these experiences aright, he must interpret them as seen through the divine guidance available within Scripture.

It is not my intent to deny that there is continuity within the universe, but rather to reverse the direction by which man comes to understand the relationship between the natural world and revelation. Owing to the limitations within the natural world, both before and after sin, we must not move from the natural world or from man to God. Rather we must move from God's Word—His revelation in Scripture—to the natural world and to man. It is only within the context of an understanding of revealed reality that man may also understand himself and the world surrounding him.

When one starts with the natural world, one develops an a priori mold into which Scripture must flow. Whatever portions of revelation do not fit that mold must be altered or chopped off until the revelation eventually fits the mold. What in effect takes place is that man writes his own Bible by observing the world around him and by observing his own inner life. He then sits in awe and reverence before the tape recorder as his highest thoughts are played back to him. But the result is that the Word of God is screened by the prior structure that is placed upon it, and in some cases it is eliminated. The Word of God can speak fully only when continuity is seen as taking place from revelation to the natural world.

The approach to theology that arises out of Scripture does not rule out human disciplines. It simply says that they must be ordered on the basis of principles from Scripture and that human disciplines must not impose their methodologies upon Scripture. In a sense, a spiral is suggested, with its base in Scripture. Human disciplines open up options that might not otherwise be available to the interpreter. However, these options are evaluated on the basis of Scripture alone. Scripture thus becomes the controlling principle for the study of nature, history, psychology, sociology, et cetera. Philosophy and science, for example, can raise questions regarding the nature of the universe and the nature of God, but they cannot answer these questions. Philosophy can raise the question regarding God's foreknowledge relative to experience and human freedom. It can ask, "If God is a personal God in real relationship with mankind to whom has been granted freedom, how is it possible for God at the same time to have foreknowledge?" Foreknowledge would deny real successive experience and it would also call into question the freedom of man. But philosophy cannot answer that question, for to attempt to do so would be to impose man's logical thinking upon God and to limit His nature to what is conceivable within the realm of human thinking. That question can be answered only if God reveals Himself. And if God reveals Himself, then man is dependent upon that revelation for the answer to the question.

Method in theology must not be determined by an a priori consideration of the nature of man, of the universe, or of any aspect of these two. Rather, method must be determined totally by Scripture itself. The method by which Scripture is studied must not be the same as that applied to human literature. Since God's revelation is distinct from that which takes place within the human sphere, the method applied to its interpretation is not the same as that which is applied to what is produced within the human sphere. Thus the nature of revelation itself must be considered within the context of the method for its interpretation.

Method begins by asking Scripture what it has to say about its own nature and the principles by which it is to be interpreted. The inquiry may then go on to such questions as the nature of God and of man as portrayed by Scripture itself. On the basis of this study, a hermeneutic develops that is in harmony with the nature of each of these aspects as they have been revealed by God. Thus Scripture, as studied under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, becomes its own interpreter. We do not reject the value of philosophy, science, history, psychology, archeology, et cetera, but simply place these disciplines within their right relationship to divine revelation. Every discipline of human life, whether it be in the academic or professional world or in the trades or in mundane affairs, must start with Scripture as its norm to guide and to ground the basic concept upon which one structures his approach, his method, the way in which he conducts his lifework, as well as his personal affairs.

Thus one does not start with Plato, Aristotle, or Heidegger as the base upon which to build his theology, nor even as a framework within which to mold his theology. Rather, he starts within Scripture itself, and Scripture confronts the basic philosophical models of mankind. Neither Scripture nor reality must be squeezed into a Heideggerian mold. Rather, Scripture must be the basis upon which one builds his concept of reality and his method in theology. In the conducting of one's life work it is also essential to start, not with some concept outside of Scripture itself, but rather with Scripture as the base upon which to build and to make decisions within one's profession.

Thus, for example, the psychologist does not build his concept of psychology upon any kind of naturalism. Rather, he goes to Scripture to learn of the nature of man and the power of God. Scripture then becomes the viewpoint from which one sees and understands the world and out of which one's entire life is ordered. It becomes the controlling principle for the study of nature, history, psychology, sociology, et cetera, and most important of all, the basis for the functioning of our personal lives.

The material presented in this supplement is condensed from Edward Zinke's Bible Conference paper on this topic. The full presentation and full footnotes are available from the Biblical Research Institute, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012, for $1.00 (includes postage).
It is not the intention of this paper to review the Biblical data relating to Scripture's understanding regarding its own nature. This work has already adequately been done elsewhere. See Raoul Dederen, "Revelation, the Church, and Hermeneutics," in A Symposium on Biblical Hermeneutics, ed. Gordon M. Hyde (Washington: Biblical Research Committee of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1974), pp. 1-15; Raoul Dederen, "Toward a Seventh-day Adventist Theology of Revelation-Inspiration," North American Bible Conference, 1974, produced by the Biblical Research Committee of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (Washington: General Conference of SDA, 1974). This paper simply assumes the position that Scripture is the result of God's word conveyed through human instrumentality, as a particular instance of the harmony of the Word of God with the Word of God. This paper also assumes the principles for the interpretation of Scripture that have been developed within conservative Protestantism with the intention of developing a method in harmony with Scripture itself. Again, this work has been adequately cared for elsewhere, and it is not the intention of this paper to attempt to build a hermeneutic out of Scripture itself. See also Gerhard F. Hasel, "General Principles of Interpretation," A Symposium on Biblical Hermeneutics, pp. 163-193; Gerhard F. Hasel, General Principles of Biblical Interpretation, North American Bible Conference, 1974; and Gerhard F. Hasel, "The Unity of the Bible," Inserted in The Ministry, 48 (September, 1975). This hermeneutic arises out of the concept of the nature of Scripture described above. It affirms the necessity of understanding the meaning of words, sentences, and units of literature within the historic background in which God conveyed His message through the prophet, and particularly within the context of the unity of the Canon. The principle that Scripture must be interpreted within itself is affirmed as the only adequate principle of the interpretation of Scripture, in view of its origin in God and its resultant unity. For a more detailed description of the theology of the patristic and medieval periods, see David Knowles, The Evolution of Medieval Theology: Theologians From Augustine to Thomas Aquinas (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Torch Books, 1966).


For a more detailed account of Aquinas' concept of the normative role of Scripture within theology, see Erik Persson, Sacra Doctrina (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970).

The term sola Scriptura within the Protestant Reformation was not always used with the same meaning. Questions were raised even by Luther himself about the value of such books as Esther, Revelation, and James. In spite of the various uses to which the term sola Scriptura was put, there was nonetheless a basic continuity within the Reformation that placed Scripture over other sources for doctrine. Thus Scripture was given an authority above statements of popes, councils, the traditions of the church, the assertions of reason, and Christian experience.


Ferre, p. 222.


The Seventh-day Adventist Church rose out of the concept that Scripture is the sole norm for the determination of faith and practice. The constant appeal of the church has been to the Scriptures. The Seventh-day Adventist Church, in fact, sees itself as bringing about the fulfillment of the stunning anticipation of words, sentences, and units of authority of Scripture, for the church sees itself as bearing the complete message that God intended to give mankind within Scripture.

"God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and diverse cordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority—not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain 'Thus saith the Lord' in its support. —Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1990), p. 595.

Frederick Ferre, Basic Modern Philosophy of Religion, admits that the positing of God's Word as the source of truth is a logical possibility, p. 24.

At this point it may be well to answer some questions that may be raised regarding the use of reason, the possibility of evangelism, and the manner in which one might approach the whole subject from within the context of the Reformation and within the context of Scripture. The emphasis upon the priority of Scripture for the development of theology does not arise out of fear that faith might be destroyed if one starts within philosophy or science. It is not an attempt to run from reason in order to safeguard one's treasure. Rather, it is the desire to avoid any approach that predetermines what the Word of God is or what it can say. The starting point is the Word of God as the structuring principle within which all else may properly be understood. The goal, then, is understanding rather than to give an intellectual understanding.

May also be raised regarding the possibility of evangelism under the concept of the authority of Scripture, for a secular man does not receive Scripture as the Word of God. The general intention of theology, historically, has been to interpret the gospel in a way that takes into consideration the temporal and historical situation of the hearer and the particular needs of that specific culture, that is, to translate the gospel to that specific culture, that is, to translate the gospel to a culture that is being addressed. Rather, it is the task of the theologian to translate the gospel to that specific culture, that is, to communicate the gospel to a culture in such a way that the message is not heard but not structed in terms of the culture being confronted.

Man has been seeking a universal system of verification—a system that would be acceptable to any rational individual and that would verify the existence of God and His revelation. He has virtually declared: "If religion cannot be brought before the court of reason, it must be ignored or discarded." But religion is the personal relationship between man and God, and it is the result of a personal decision that takes place between man and God. The decision to accept or reject God is always an act of the free will, an act of the universal rational powers inherent within man. It is rather a decision that takes place between each individual and God under Scripture through the operation of the Holy Spirit. It is the responsibility of the theologian to confront man with the gospel. It is the responsibility of the Holy Spirit to confront the individual with a message that will confront the individual with a message that will come from God Himself rather than from rational arguments, for otherwise the Word of God is encompassed within the rational arguments and is not free to bear its message to man. If the conviction is encompassed within the rational arguments, then final authority lies within man rather than with God and His Word.

The apologetic value of philosophical and rational arguments for the existence of God and the validity of His revelation seems to be an open question at this point whereby arguments are used, not to prove Scripture to be the Word of God, but to demonstrate that it is not. Such a task is not that of the theologian, but that of the scholar. The theologian must be a scholar. He must verify the existence of God and His revelation. He has virtually been asked to confront the culture with the gospel in such a way that the message is to be understood within the rational possibilities.

Thus it is not the responsibility of the theologian to translate the gospel into a culture that is being addressed. Rather, it is the task of the theologian to translate the gospel to that specific culture, that is, to communicate the gospel to a culture in such a way that the message is not heard but not structed in terms of the culture being confronted.

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The question may also be raised regarding the relationship between Ellen G. White and the concept of the authority of Scripture. The declaration of the authority of Scripture does not rule out spiritual gifts but it does say that those activities of the Holy Spirit that have not been established in the pages of Scripture are not to be reasoned away. Thus the authority of Ellen G. White rests upon Scripture itself. She continually saw herself in relation to Scripture for the purpose of uplifting Scripture in order to demonstrate that it is not.

Rather, he brings the gospel and leaves the decision to the man and his God.

The term "special revelation" is used here with reference specifically to the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.
Suggestions for Dynamic Fall Prayer Meetings

Charismatic Countdown

The Charismatic Movement is not dying out but is stronger and more ecumenical than ever. The 1977 Conference on Charismatic Renewal, meeting in Kansas City, drew 50,000 from nearly every denomination and was promoted as the largest charismatic gathering ever. The eight-night Charismatic Countdown series uses Roland Hegstad's *Rattling the Gates* as a textbook and builds a positive approach to understanding the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the last days. *Instructor's Manual* and information on supplies can be ordered through the General Conference Ministerial Association for $1.80 (includes postage in U.S.).

Better Living Breakthrough

Designed to train church members to appreciate the eight natural remedies and how to apply them in medical-missionary work, this eight-night series features the Loma Linda Prevention Series of slide-tape programs. *Instructor's Manual* and sample set of eight booklets used can be ordered through the General Conference Ministerial Association for $3.20 (includes postage in U.S.).

Daniel and Revelation Series

A series of seventeen four-page full-color handouts (eight and one-half inches square) is currently being produced by the General Conference Ministerial Association. These are prepared for use in individual Bible studies, prayer-meeting series, prophetic seminars, and as handouts in large-scale public evangelistic campaigns. They contain charts, illustrations, text of the section being studied, and a limited amount of notes. They should be available by the time this notice appears in print. For information concerning availability and price, write to the General Conference Ministerial Association.

The Golden Eight

An eight-night series that develops the eight dynamic golden rules that lead to total health. These are not the eight natural remedies developed in the Better Living Breakthrough series but eight laws of life and health that apply equally well in the mental, social, and spiritual dimensions of life as in the physical. This series is designed to help fill the need outlined in the commission given us to "educate people in the laws of life so that they may know how to preserve health" (*Medical Ministry*, p. 259). This program is being revised in cooperation with the Department of Health and the Temperance Department, but the preliminary materials developed for field-testing purposes are now available. Sample syllabus and *Instructor's Manual* can be ordered through the General Conference Ministerial Association for $3.50 (includes postage in U.S.).

How to Be a Victorious Christian

Based on the book with this same title by Thomas A. Davis, this series deals with the dynamics of the science of salvation—how to know Jesus as a personal Saviour and Lord, and how to live a victorious daily life through Him. A study guide provides an organized practical outline for prayer meetings. Both textbook and study guide are available from your local Adventist Book Center.

God's Footprint on My Floor

Based on the book with this same title by Leo R. Van Dolson, an eight-to-ten-night prayer-meeting series can be readily developed following the analysis charts in the book and supplementing it with material from *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, by Ellen White. Each Beatitude from Christ's Sermon on the Mount is analyzed from the viewpoint of the human predicament, Jesus' solution to the problem, and the practical implications for Christian living. The step-by-step progression outlined by Jesus to becoming children of God is fully developed. These books are available from your local Adventist Book Center.
"I Don’t Heal... God Does"

CUSTODIAN kills six employees at California State, Fullerton, wounds three others!

Bank robber kills manager, and wife held as hostage!

Reality screams from our radios and TVs, leaps from the bold type of our news media. Everywhere we see violence, strife, hunger, illness, and death, and although men deceive themselves with the illusion of peace and the delusion that there is no death, sickness and death are the lot and heritage of every human being on this earth.

But there is a balm in Gilead; there is a physician there. God Himself has provided an antidote. He is the source, the substance, and the completion of all healing. It comes from His mind, from the river of life, from the tree of life. "And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations" (Rev. 22:2). A profound yet very simple statement is made in Psalm 107:20: “He sent his word, and healed them.” God declares, “My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways... For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isa. 55:8, 9).

As a physician I can line up the ends of a broken bone and put the whole thing in a case, but after that point I have very little control over the healing process. It is all done by God’s silent word stamped on every cell of the human body.

Let’s take a quick glance at how a fracture heals. First there is the shedding of blood and the formation of a clot. Millions of red blood cells fill in the gap and form a bridge over the interrupted relationship. Without the blood there can be no healing. The white blood cells are agents of cleansing, smoothing the rough edges and removing dead cells and debris. The serum brings the nutrients necessary for the reconstruction process, and specialized cells form a callus that is eventually perfected into new bone that is stronger than the original.

Healing of even a simple fracture is a cooperative communal process in which all systems of the body are involved. The lungs furnish oxygen; the muscles and body fluids splint and protect; the digestive system furnishes the nutrients; the kidneys eliminate the poisons of injured tissue; the heart pumps the life-giving blood; and all act in unison as directed by the nervous system.

Healing Operates According to the Laws of Nature

What rich spiritual lessons can be learned from what we call natural physical healing. Healing operates according to the laws of nature, and it is God who is the Author of these laws. Mental and spiritual healing operate along the same line. In fact, healing and salvation are the same process. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction" (Ps. 103:2-4).

Everything that God has done throughout this vast universe was done by His word. Creation of matter was by His word. Energizing the billions of suns in our Milky Way system was by His word (Isa. 40:26). Incarnation and redemption was by the Word (John 1:1-3, 14). While on earth Christ lived and resisted evil by the Word (Matt. 4:4). All His miracles were performed by His word, and when He spoke, the dead came to life.

"For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Heb. 4:12, R.S.V.).

With all this reservoir of power on display, is it not easy to see why God sent His Word as the dynamic of healing?

In the Garden of Eden, there was a tree called the tree of life. It was a literal tree planted by a literal river called the river of life. But both tree and
river were rich in symbolisms that pointed to divine realities. Neither is the tree just a historical curiosity. Before this world was destroyed by the Flood, the heavenly Gardener transplanted the tree of life to His headquarters, perhaps some billions of light-years distant, and there it exists today (see Testimonies, vol. 8, p. 288). John saw it in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 22:2), and he saw its healing dynamic.

This literal reality is a symbol of Christ Himself and of His unending life, which He shares with man. It is a symbol of righteousness by faith and of redemption. Please note these inspired comments from the pen of Ellen White: "Christ ... was the tree of life to all who would pluck and eat."—The SDA Bible Commentary, Ellen G. White Comments, on Rev. 22:2, p. 989. "The Word of God is to us the tree of life. Every portion of the Scripture has its use. In every part of the Word is some lesson to be learned. Then learn how to study your Bibles."—Ibid. "The physician who loves Christ and the souls for whom Christ died will seek earnestly to bring Healing is all done by God's silent word stamped on every cell of the human body.

into the sickroom a leaf from the tree of life. He will try to break the bread of life to the sufferer. Notwithstanding the obstacles and difficulties to be met, this is the solemn, sacred work of the medical profession."—Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 230.

To say that the Word of God is the dynamic of healing is more than a theological abstraction. It must be a practical reality. The prescription must be filled and taken according to the doctor's instructions. The Word of God must be studied daily and assimilated into one's daily living. Saturate the mind with its principles and promises. Recirculate its message through your mental computer until you are programmed for love. "The brain nerves which communicate with the entire system are the only medium through which Heaven can communicate with man, and affect his inmost life."—Counsels on Health, p. 616.

And there is basic physiology in this point of view: "The electric power of the brain, promoted by mental activity, vitalizes the whole system, and is thus an invaluable aid in resisting disease."—Education, p. 197. This statement, made a century ago, has been confirmed by recent neurophysiological research.

The words of John come echoing down nineteen centuries: "My prayer for you, my very dear friend, is that you may be as healthy and prosperous in every way as you are in soul" (3 John 2, Phillips).*

Each one of us has in his hand the keys to unlock the answer to that prayer. The marvelous brains God has given us should be saturated with the Word of God. It is our privilege to live by His principles, including health reform. And by so doing we can claim and possess God's promise, "I will take sickness away from the midst of thee" (Ex. 23:25).

But even greater than physical healing is the spiritual healing that flows from God's Word and is mediated by His Spirit. Spiritual healing comes from our belief in the good news about God. We learn that the universe is not a hostile unknown, but that its very core is love. And so the burden is lifted and a new life begins. Our life style and attitudes change. We have joy, which is the consciousness of love; peace, which is the state of love; and long-suffering, which is the attitude of love. At that moment we receive the down payment on life everlasting.

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The Ministry/October, 1977/27
"IT IS A wonderful process that transforms the food into blood and uses this blood to build up the varied parts of the body."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 295. Ellen White wrote these words at a time when it was thought that tissues "wear and tear." There was no idea of "the dynamic equilibrium of body constituents," yet she advanced some bold theories that hard work and dedication have since confirmed.

"A wonderful process"—this is especially true of proteins, those substances that are found in all the foods we eat and that help us to grow and to maintain our body tissues. The word *protein* itself has a connotation of essentiality. Coined from the Greek word *proteios*, by Mulder in 1839, it meant "to take first place." Since then, it has come to be understood that not only proteins but all the essential nutrients take first place.

Structurally, all proteins are made of about twenty amino acids. These building blocks are linked together in a sequence that is specific for each protein. One protein may be composed of hundreds of amino-acid units. Thus, proteins may have different functions according to their amino-acid makeup.

Our bodies cannot manufacture eight of the twenty amino acids. The foods we eat must supply them. Thus, the quality of a protein is measured by the kind and amounts of the essential amino acids it contains.

How does this "wonderful process," the integration of a food into blood and tissue, take place? It is not simple. There are yet unknown details. But the overall pathway is known—the transformation of food into usable particles that can enter the body and, transported in the bloodstream, nourish and become part of every cell.

It is a step-by-step process. In the mouth the food is mashed by the teeth, which are aided by the tongue. With saliva providing the moisture, it is kneaded to a semisolid paste—the bolus. Pushed by the tongue against the palate, the bolus is forced into the open pharynx with muscles coming into play in such a way that the mass is propelled down the esophagus into the stomach.

Once the food is in the stomach, a churning, mixing, milling, and pushing takes place so that some constituents can be separated. The juice secreted by the stomach lining contains hydrochloric acid and enzymes. Pepsin is the main enzyme that starts the breakdown of proteins into smaller protein sub-units, and the protein links are broken at certain sites, thus preparing the proteins for further enzyme attacks in the intestine. The work of digesting proteins merely begins in the stomach. This task is completed in the small intestine.

As the content of the stomach is emptied into the small intestine, a concerted effort immediately begins on all fronts. The pancreas sends its enzyme-rich juices into the small intestine. During the churning and propelling of intestinal content, enzymes unhinge or separate other specific links, starting from the outside or from the inside of the protein structure. This attack proceeds seemingly without letup until the protein is broken down into its constituent amino acids. The resulting mixture little resembles the original protein. Consequently, the protein has not only lost its identity but its function and its form. At this point, whether or not the original source of the protein was flesh meat or plant makes no difference at all. What is important is that the essential amino acids the body needs are there.

Then the passage of amino acids across the cell membrane of the small intestine begins. They cannot freely cross that obstacle by themselves, but there are a few mechanisms called carrier systems that actively move specific amino acids across into the cells that make up the lining of the small intestine.

The lining cells use some amino acids for their own needs, but the greater portion proceed into the blood through vessels that take nutrients from the intestines to the liver.

The liver, like a great factory, uses the incoming amino acids to form proteins for its own refinements or for manufacturing such export products as blood albumin. It also strips some amino acids of their nitrogen and uses the
skeleton for making glucose. The nitrogen is recycled to form urea, an excretion product, or it is incorporated into a suitable carbon skeleton to form other amino acids. However, the most important function of the liver is the regulation of the flow of amino acids into the bloodstream so that a certain level is constantly maintained.

The amino acids in the bloodstream reach the most remote cells of the body. This free amino-acid pool, or reservoir, is maintained not only by the liver but also by the constant give-and-take between the tissues and the bloodstream in a process called "the dynamic equilibrium of body constituents."

Ellen White explains it this way: "There is a constant breaking down of the tissues of the body; every movement of every organ involves waste, and this waste is repaired from our food. Each organ of the body requires its share of nutrition."—Ibid.

**The Cell Likened to an Estate**

When amino acids enter a body cell, the business of building body protein really begins. If, in our imagination, we enlarge a cell to the size of a house and its surrounding gardens, many features become clear. The large surrounding gardens you visualize represent the cytoplasm, in the middle of which stands the house (nucleus) and many other smaller buildings where work is done. The nucleus guards the information of the cell, thus maintaining its identity and integrity. In it are 23 pair of chromosomes that contain valuable coded messages situated in a twisted double-stranded structure known as DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid). Located along this strand are the genes that have the key to our inheritance. This information can be transcribed in a coded message to a mirror-image strand, the RNA (ribonucleic acid). Thus the coded message in RNA will tell what kind of protein will be formed and for what purpose.

In the gardens there are various smaller structures called ribosomes along covered paths (endoplasmic reticulum) that crisscross the property. Some paths end in flat structures (the Golgi apparatus) beside the nucleus. The messenger RNA (the strand with the coded message formed in the nucleus) lines the ribosomes. Here protein molecules are assembled.

Meanwhile the amino acids in the garden (cytoplasm) wait for a special guide to take them to the ribosomes. The amino acids are first groomed (activated) so that they can be picked up more easily by a "guide" (transfer RNA). There is at least one guide for each amino acid, and each guide easily recognizes its own charge. Once together, the guide and the amino acid search for the specific space where that particular amino acid is needed. Then carefully the amino acid is placed in the allotted spot. There can be no error. Just one malfunction and the protein would be faulty and unable to perform its function. The guide has to read his cue accurately.

And so the protein strand grows with the incorporation of each of the amino acids in the predesigned model to form a chain characteristic for that tissue or function. Some of the completed protein strands are used within the cells, and some are taken through the covered paths (endoplasmic reticulum) to the flattened structures (the Golgi) to be readied for their integration into other body tissues or body functions.

In writing of the process of transforming food into blood and thus building up the varied parts of the body, Ellen White adds, "This process is going on continually, supplying with life and strength each nerve, muscle, and tissue."—Ibid. Thus the protein of food is incorporated into blood and tissue by a concerted effort of all the important machinery of the body.

When the body has no further use for a given protein molecule, it is broken down in a way we do not yet clearly understand. To return to our simile, there are incinerators in the garden for removing leftover or nonusable things. The cell also has some disposal units, the lysosomes, containing powerful en-
zymes to digest any nonusable protein and incorporate the resulting amino acids into the storage areas of the garden. Thus, constantly, proteins are built up and degraded, a turnover that varies with each kind of protein. Proteins of the small intestine have a turnover of a few days, whereas collagen, from the connective tissue, has a turnover measured in years. But the process is continuous, according to the functions and needs of specific tissues.

**How Much Protein Do We Need?**

We should eat some protein daily. The requirement is not large. It is recommended that an average man (154 pounds) needs about 56 grams, whereas an average woman (128 pounds) needs about 46 grams. These amounts are more than adequate and can be met by a varied diet. "Grains, fruits, nuts, and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. These foods, prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible, are the most healthful and nourishing. They impart a strength, a power of endurance, and a vigor of intellect, that are not afforded by a more complex and stimulating diet."—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 81. Ellen White also adds: "In grains, fruits, vegetables, and nuts are to be found all the food elements we need."—*Ibid.*, p. 92.

Although there is a continual breaking down and building up of body proteins, there is no increased need for protein for physical activity. The notion that an athlete has to eat a big red steak comes from custom or from a misconception about the role of protein. Von Liebig, in the past century, said that protein is needed for activity. Later, other scientists, including Voit and Pettenhofer, found that nitrogen excretion is not increased during exercise, which indicates that protein is not involved in physical activity, as once was thought.

Ellen White put it this way: "It is a mistake to suppose that muscular strength depends on the use of animal food. The needs of the system can be better supplied, and more vigorous health can be enjoyed, without its use."—*Ibid.*, p. 396.

The information explosion has touched every phase of knowledge. We now have more specific details than ever before about proteins and their utilization by the cells of the body. Such information only helps strengthen our confidence in the God-given principles of health reform.

"THE WAY TO a man's heart is through his stomach," says the familiar proverb. 1977 finds the church applying this sage advice to the physical and spiritual health of its members and to evangelistic outreach to the community through various methods of nutrition education, including cooking schools. This emphasis on nutrition can provide us with unusual opportunities, because nutrition is a topic of universal interest. However, sometimes we find our efforts to improve the diet of others have disappointing results. Many members and potential members have been "turned off" by nutrition advice and education. Ellen G. White in *Testimonies*, volume 2, pages 384-387, describes the unfortunate situation that may arise when unwise statements or efforts concerning health reform are made. What can be done to make nutrition education more effective and avoid alienating those we seek to reach?

First, we must recognize that nutrition is not a cut-and-dried topic. Much of what we know about nutrition is continually being updated by new research findings, so it is a subject that always represents the "state of the art" rather than absolutes. Furthermore, every person is an individual biochemically, just as their hair, eyes, and personality differ. Therefore, no one dietary pattern will be right for everyone. In *The Ministry of Healing*, pages 319 and 320, is described the need for broad principles to prevail: "It is impossible to make an unvarying rule to regulate everyone's habits, and no one should think himself a criterion for all. Not all can eat the same things. Foods that are palatable and wholesome to one person may be distasteful, and even harmful, to another." In group education, we should take care to convey broad guidelines for better health and not give the impression that there is only one way to eat properly.

Related to this is the all-too-common idea that there is a dietary "checklist" necessary for salvation. Almost no area of doctrine is so susceptible to legalism as is nutrition. Disgust at the extremely legalistic practices and advice of some
leads others to think that diet is of no importance whatever. Both are wrong, physically and spiritually. We need to teach that good health through good diet promotes spiritual growth because it allows us to have a clear mind with which to communicate with God, and a healthy body with which to serve Him. But what we eat or fail to eat doesn’t save us. A fundamental part of all health education must be a component that directs our minds to the saving grace of Christ, inviting us to surrender our will and appetite to Him. When that relationship is achieved, changes in diet, though slow, will come willingly out of love for Him. But changes in diet without that relationship are of no spiritual value and may even serve to drive away those who are interested.

Second, for balanced and scientifically sound education, we must clarify the relationship of diet to health. Health has been defined to be “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (World Health Organization, 1970). Therefore, nutrition education should direct the hearer to more “healthful” diets. Any dietary proposal that does not meet this test should not be used. This seems an obvious point, but upon reflection we recognize that often diets that purport to be “healthful” really are not. Furthermore, we observe, from the definition, that true health is more than not being sick. It is an optimal state of being. This is in harmony with God’s plan for the restoration of man (John 10:10) and with inspired counsel: “In teaching health principles, keep before the mind the great object of reform—that its purpose is to secure the highest development of body and mind and soul.”—Counsels on Diet and Foods, p. 457.

Two levels of nutritional requirements exist: minimal and optimal. As individuals, each of us has a unique “minimum” nutrition requirement. This minimum level is what is needed to prevent deficiency symptoms. Advice given for groups of individuals must allow for this variability, and requires a margin of safety in order to accommodate both high and low requirements. Also, advice needs to direct the hearer to optimal nutrition intakes that promote optimal health. Optimal nutrient intakes, well above minimal, provide for body stores and reserves for fighting off disease and meeting emergency needs. For these reasons, the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) in the United States and similar standards in other countries are used for nutrition education and the feeding of groups, ensuring optimal health and providing the needed margin of safety. The RDA standard should be used to assess the value of any dietary plan used in group education.

Whether one uses a broad food guide, such as the Four Food Groups, or similar general pattern, the soundest rule of thumb remains to eat a wide variety of foods in the amount that maintains the correct body weight. The Four Food Groups ensures this by teaching choices from the major classes of foods; since it is easy to learn, it is a useful tool, though not the only way to learn good nutrition.

Often the acid test of how healthful a diet really is will be the personal appearance of those who follow it. Attractive nutrition education is that done by vibrantly healthy individuals; the witness of pale, sickly, undernourished or overnourished instructors is counterproductive.

A third factor that will influence nutrition-education success is the choice of material and recipes for presentation. Broad principles of nutrition are the best choice, because they do not rely on isolated facts or ideas. Not all research data is validated sufficiently to present to the public. Some information applies only to medical situations, and is not relevant to well individuals. In educating groups, there is always the danger that some will misinterpret what they hear, to their detriment. The same care exercised in presenting controversial theological issues to an audience should be used in presenting controversial nutrition issues. Sometimes, one is not sure whether an idea is correct. Even nutritionists with years of experience...
must sometimes reserve judgment on a nutrition theory until more facts are available. Probably the safest course is to remain with those broad principles in teaching nutrition that have received general consensus of opinion.

In this respect, we are counseled by Ellen White to educate in a progressive, step-by-step approach. Often in public-nutrition efforts, we go too quickly for our listeners. If we have grown up with health reform, a healthful diet may seem simple and obvious to us. But our hearers have grown up differently. Food habits are deeply ingrained in family custom and culture, and change will come slowly. "If you err, let it not be in getting as far from the people as possible, for then you cut the thread of your influence and can do them no good."—Ibid., p. 211. We must always bear in mind how difficult change is, both for the individual with established taste preferences, and for the family accustomed to their usual meal patterns.

The selection of practical ideas is crucial. Specific food directions useful in the nineteenth century may no longer be appropriate with today’s technology. The Pure Food and Drug Law of 1906 vastly improved the safety and sanitation of our food supply. Pasteurization of dairy products was not mandatory until the 1930’s. Today we are also blessed with a year-round array of fruits and vegetables that was unknown to our forefathers.

Also, time-consuming recipes do not find wide acceptance in the United States, particularly with the working homemaker. We are accustomed to preparing food in minutes rather than hours. Some techniques, such as learning to make bread or prepare homemade meat substitutes, though useful under certain situations and enjoyable for many, are not essential to adequate diet. The availability of whole-grain breads is widespread, and the commercial meat analogs offer a ready bridge to the homemaker accustomed to meat recipes. We may raise a barrier to acceptance by the busy mother if we imply these methods are needed for good nutrition. The income level of the audience should be considered. Gourmet recipes or exotic dishes are not possible for low-income families. Sometimes we give the impression in cooking schools that one must have a blender to be well-nourished, though in actuality a family can do very well in food preparation without this convenient device.

Every recipe intended for presentation must be pretested.

Perhaps most important is the selection of palatable and easy-to-follow recipes and menus. This is the most frequently overlooked factor in a successful cooking school or public dinner. What may taste good to our tastes, adapted to a meatless diet, may taste terrible to our hearers. Many entree mixtures, for instance, represent a totally new and strange food, and sometimes they are heavy, or poorly seasoned. One way to avoid this pitfall is to have every recipe intended for public presentation pretested and approved by a recipe committee. Have nonvegetarians try out the dish. This is also an ideal time to evaluate the nutritional value of recipes and to eliminate those that are exclusively high in total fat, cholesterol, or refined sugar. In this connection, nutritional inaccuracies often creep in when we substitute for white sugar large quantities of dates, raisins, brown sugar, or honey. Although most of these are "natural" sugars, it is sugar to the body all the same. Fructose, or fruit sugar, is metabolized slightly differently than glucose, but both are present in white sugar and "natural" sugars, and calorically they are the same. All sweeteners should be used in moderation, and many recipes can be reduced substantially in sugar with little effect on flavor. Carob, often freely used instead of chocolate, is another food high in sugar.

Calculating Nutrient Content

A useful guide to nutritional values of recipes or menus is the USDA Handbook No. 456, Nutrient Values of American Foods, which gives data for more than 2,400 food items in household measures. It can help determine whether a "health" recipe is really any more healthful than what it replaces. Nutrition labels on meat analogs and many other packages are also valuable in assessing its nutrient content. The food companies will supply data on their products upon request, as well. The ability to calculate nutrient content and compare to other recipes or the Recommended Dietary Allowances is a fundamental and useful skill for the nutrition teacher. For example, many "entree" recipes are too low in protein content to qualify for the term. A recipe intended to replace meat in the diet should contain at least eight to ten grams of protein per serving (meat usually contains eighteen to twenty-two grams/serving). If it does not, then it should be referred.
to as a starch dish, for that is what it probably is. Once a recipe has been analyzed for nutrient content, passes the approval committee, and appears to be a practical one, it is suitable for public nutrition education and probably will be well-received. Placing some nutrient information with the recipe is helpful also in educating.

**Involvement of Learner Mandate in Cooking Schools**

A frequently ignored learning principle in cooking schools is that of involvement of the learner. Without involvement, a cooking school becomes primarily entertainment, in which much hard work is done by the teachers, with little learning achieved by the hearers. Nutrition education may well be entertaining, but more will be accomplished if the audience learns and applies the principles to their personal eating habits. Making at-home practice assignments of recipes seen in the school, with share-and-compare opportunities at the next meeting, is one way to get class members involved and to help new ideas seem feasible.

Another workable method is to teach church members how to prepare several basic meals, then organize them into teams who will invite the new or potential members into their homes to help prepare a vegetarian meal, and then share the meal in a warm, social atmosphere. This has the dual advantage of getting church members involved and also of establishing friendships between them and the learners, forming the basis for witnessing and Bible-study efforts in the future. Nutrition education in the informal atmosphere of the home, where the actual preparation can be experienced, can be highly effective.

As plans for all these endeavors are laid, who can assist and lead out? Many churches lack leadership for health education, and the time demands on the pastor and his wife may prevent their taking this role. Also, greater involvement by the lay members would be desirable. Two sources of leadership may be tapped. The most knowledgeable leader would be a professional Seventh-day Adventist dietitian, but in many churches such a person is unavailable. In every union in the North American Division, however, there is a union resource dietitian, who is a volunteer consultant for nutrition education. This person is known to the union health secretary, and can often put the church in touch with a nearby professional dietitian, who may be able to serve at least as an adviser. Also, physicians, nurses, health educators, and other health professionals whose education includes some nutrition or who have educated themselves in nutrition may be available and willing to lead out.

The second source of leadership is the home nutrition instructor. This is an individual who has completed a thirty-clock-hour course in nutrition and demonstration techniques, and is certified by the General Conference Department of Health to be qualified to give cooking schools. The course includes basic nutrition concepts, and techniques of food demonstration and organizing cooking schools. Many churches have sent teams of two or three competent and interested lay members, men or women, to take this course when it is offered at a college or hospital nearby. The General Conference Department of Health sometimes can offer the course for conference workers' meetings and camp meetings. If no course has been offered recently, the union resource dietitian may be able to plan or arrange for one.

In turn, the certified home nutrition instructor can train other members of the church to be assistants for the cooking school and follow-up programs. Well-organized follow-up to maintain interest and to continue to teach is needed to implement the idea of “progressive” diet reform. Potluck church meals, for instance, are an excellent teaching tool if they are organized to be representative of good nutrition. Holding advanced classes in the home or using a buddy system, particularly with the new members or one trying to achieve dietary change, are effective ideas. All follow-up should be tied to the invitation to have a growth relationship with Christ, whether through evangelistic efforts or personal study.

The fascinating topic of nutrition can be used with great effectiveness to reach and help people spiritually, if the concepts discussed above are used. Patience and time must be given to its study and to the changes that will be made. As a major segment of the health-reform message, improving nutrition should continue to be emphasized both within the church and in outreach efforts. We may always appropriately claim the promise in James 1:5, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not."
MANY TYPES of individuals pass through the doors of your church each Sabbath morning, and *Life and Health* can minister effectively to each of them.

You, of course, teach your members that their bodies are to be temples for the Holy Ghost and that their responsibility to their Creator is to care for themselves in the best possible way. Natural laws, such as the laws of health, are every bit as divine as the Ten Commandments. The people in your church need the latest information on how to prevent disease and maintain optimum health. The better one's health, the more pronounced the sense of vitality and well-being, the easier it is to live for Christ.

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS—Much of the health-related material on the market today is strictly faddist in nature, some of it even detrimental. The health professional in your congregation will appreciate a journal that is scientifically accurate and that can be placed with confidence in the hands of a patient.

HOMEMAKERS—The homemaker will find information in *Life and Health* to meet family health needs. Youngsters can learn how the human body functions and how it can best be taken care of. Articles on simple home treatments can be filed away until a specific need arises. And then there are those delicious recipes.

LAY EVANGELISM—*Life and Health* is very much an evangelistic journal. In fact, it is often the very first contact in effective soul winning. Jesus first ministered to the people's physical needs; when their confidence in Him had been established, then He bade them, "Follow me." If those we want to see in the kingdom are bound by prejudice, a bridge of understanding can be built with our wonderful health message. Once they discern our sincere interest in their physical well-being, their hearts will be open to a fuller revelation of truth.

EDUCATORS—Throughout our nation's school systems, educators are beginning to realize that true education includes a concern for the health of our young people. *Life and Health* is proving to be a valuable aid in showing the importance of sound health principles. A monthly Teacher's Guide is available to assist the educator in using the health journal in the classroom.

YOUTH—As perhaps never before, young people are showing an interest in good health. They will find material in *Life and Health* they can grasp, along with special sections designed particularly for them, such as "Accent on Youth" and "Children's Corner." Help the young people in your congregation to develop health habits that will prepare them for a lifetime of service. Recently *Life and Health* initiated a program whereby some particularly important facet of health is stressed over the period of a year. Each monthly issue contains one or more major articles on the topic in question. In a year's time, the subject is covered thoroughly and is then readily available for review. Here is what we have done previously, what we are dealing with just now, and what we plan for the future:

1976 Physiology of the Human Body
1977 Nutrition
1978 Mental Health

As a pastor you recognize the importance of the topic chosen for the coming year. Make sure the members of your congregation will have available to them this vital information coming from the pens of the denomination's leading authorities in the field of mental health.

The first week in October is Health Emphasis Week for the church and is listed in the calendar of events as such. *Life and Health* magazine and the promotion of it have become very much a part of this particular week.

Don Hawley is the editor of *Life and Health* magazine.
“The Ark of Noah,” dealing with LaRue’s own expedition. When entering Turkey he intentionally misrepresented his reasons for coming. Asking for, and receiving, permission to film a travelogue of Turkey, he went directly to Mount Ararat. After arriving in Dogubayazit, he bribed some Kurdish guides to lead him up the mountain. Then he bribed the commander of the Turkish army garrison in the vicinity to let him pass by “unnoticed.” Shortly after he arrived at the site of Navarra’s find a message reached him that a warrant had been issued for his arrest and that troops were on the way to apprehend him. He escaped arrest, however, by descending the mountain on the other side and fleeing into Iran. This kind of activity makes Middle East governments even more suspicious of archeologists and explorers who ask permission to enter and conduct research in their lands.

The production of “In Search of Noah’s Ark” was a more ambitious undertaking. It begins by citing several lines of archeological evidence to substantiate the historicity of Genesis. It then briefly refers to some geological arguments for the Flood. These are followed by a dramatization of the Biblical account. The legendary accounts of some of the early supposed sightings of the ark are then simulated in some detail. The recent expeditions to Ararat are covered next, concluding with the 1974 expedition of the Holy Ground Changing Center from Frankston, Texas.

Errors in Both Films

There are some errors in both films. They identify the site of Noah’s antediluvian residence as the ancient Mesopotamian city of Shuruppak. They use traditions contained in the etymologies of the names of the towns around Agri Dagh (“Mount Ararat”) to demonstrate that the ark landed there. They confuse the local flood theory in Mesopotamia with the universal Deluge. They wrongly place the site of an ark-shaped geological formation on Ararat when it actually is located in the Tendurek Mountains, southwest of Ararat. They also accuse the Turkish government of holding up the search for the ark.

The idea that the hero of the Flood was a resident of the antediluvian city of Shuruppak comes from Mesopotamian sources, but there is no mention of it in the Bible.
A major defect in "In Search of Noah’s Ark" is the number of historical and archeological errors made in it. It is evident that those who produced this film did not know the difference between Egyptian hieroglyphs and cuneiform writing from Mesopotamia. In one place they refer to an "Egyptian cuneiform" account of the Flood, and in another they speak of the Babylonian flood story and show an inscription written in Egyptian hieroglyphs.

Most of the examples cited for archeological support of the Bible are poorly selected. They mention the tower of Babel at Babylon, apparently unaware that Alexander the Great swept its site clean when he prepared to do some building there. The archeologist interviewed in this film cited his excavations at Hebron as lending support to the historicity of the patriarchal narratives in Genesis, although no reports on those excavations have been published. The movie declares that the Flood legends are as old as writing. All of the available written texts of Flood stories from Mesopotamia postdate 2000 B.C., although writing began substantially earlier. Though the tablets recently discovered at Ebla are said to contain a flood story, and are somewhat older, the scribes at that ancient center borrowed an already-developed script from the Sumerians, who had possibly invented writing.

A basic concern in identifying the ark is finding the right mountain upon which to search for it. The Bible states that the ark landed in the “mountains” of Ararat (Gen 8:4). How do the film producers know that Agri Dagh is the right mountain? They answer: “History and tradition.” Kurdish, Turkish, Armenian, and Christian (but not Babylonian or Islamic) traditions identify Agri Dagh as the mountain upon which the ark landed; but none of these antedate the third or fourth centuries A.D.

The film "In Search of Noah’s Ark" shows some photographs of the Ararat area taken by a satellite, but unfortunately the resolution is not good enough to permit the delineation of the object supposed to be the ark. The site selected for closer investigation in this scene is the same as that discussed by John Warwick Montgomery, one of the technical advisers to the producers of the film, on page 313 of his book The Quest for Noah’s Ark. This site is located on a precipice along the eastern edge of the Ahora Gorge. This gorge is the product of a tremendous eruption of the mountain. Most Creationists would deny that such an eruption occurred in antediluvian times. If it occurred after the ark landed on that spot, the boat would surely have been destroyed. In spite of this logical difficulty, the presentation of the satellite’s imagery is still one of the more interesting scenes in this movie.

"In Search of Noah’s Ark" concludes with two photographs said to have been taken by the Holy Ground Changing Center. The second of these two photographs shows horizontal striations on a surface, which have been interpreted as lines of the planking of the ark. This photograph is supposed to present a telephoto close-up of a more distant scene pictured in another photograph, which may have been taken across the Ahora Gorge. I question whether the two photographs are even related. It is also interesting to note how Balsiger and Seller changed their comments on this photograph between the writing of their book and the producing of their film. In the book they note, “Many serious Ark researchers question whether the photo is genuine. Some critics contend that the photo has been retouched. Only further expeditions will solve this mystery.”—In Search of Noah’s Ark, plate 28, following page 106. In their movie, on the other hand, this photograph is interpreted as strongly positive evidence for the presence of the ark.

Dating of Wood Samples

Another crucial issue is the dating of samples of wood brought by Navarra from Ararat in 1955 and by the SEARCH group in 1969. These pieces of wood are obviously handworked and appear very old. In "In Search of Noah’s Ark" the filmmakers attempt to discredit the validity of the radiocarbon method, pointing out that sea shells of modern age may be given radiocarbon dates of great antiquity. A possible explanation for the recent date on the wood (A.D. 500-600) might be contamination, although it is difficult to see how this would have occurred under the circumstances. Lacking indications of such contamination, the argument is rather weak.

"The Ark of Noah" film contains one scene that helps provide a credible explanation for the presence of sixth-century wood. That scene portrays some crosses carved in the mountain at six points, beginning at the 10,000-foot
level. These stations are in a line leading up to the rocky platform near which the wood was found. In at least some of these stations there are eight crosses present. Crosses are Christian symbols. In addition, a series of steps was cut in the side of the mountain. These items—the stairs, the stations of the crosses, and the radiocarbon dates on the wood—take on added significance when they are considered with some Armenian Christian inscriptions at the foot of the mountain.

These inscriptions were copied by ark searchers and brought to the United States, where experts have dated one of them at A.D. 586. One might therefore conjecture that some Armenian Christian pilgrims cut these steps and built a shrine honoring Saint Noah. Such practices were common in Byzantine times.

Makers of these two films have violated a fundamental rule in archeology: you must find the object before you tell the world you have it. It is premature to say the ark rests on Agri Dagh, and it is unfair to raise the hopes of the faithful when such expectations may very well be disappointed. There is nothing wrong with making travelogue movies, of course, but these two films seek in rather dogmatic ways to convince the viewer that the ark does indeed rest under the glacier at the 14,000-foot level of Agri Dagh and that the Turkish government is the only hindrance to the virtually immediate recovery of the treasure.

The Turks, of course, have permitted some thirty expeditions to go up that mountain in the past quarter of a century, and none of them have brought back anything more promising than Navarra's wood sample. Many other people have gone up illegally. This mountain is in a militarily sensitive area on the border with Russia. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Turkish government is unenthusiastic about more such expeditions.

Fortunately, the Christian's faith in Christ and Creationism need not depend upon the recovery of the ark from the mountains of eastern Turkey, interesting and significant as such a discovery might be.
by his side
Sponsored by Catherine Dower
for the Shepherdess.

Dear Shepherdess: A few months ago some of us in the Washington, D.C., area attended a Seminar Workshop for Women taught by Verna Birkey. I was very impressed to see and hear the several hundred Christian women in attendance singing the hymns of the church, quoting Scripture, and praying earnestly for God to be the “blessed controller” of their lives, their homes, their families.

A large group of ministers’ wives attended this same workshop in Los Angeles in 1976. I asked Fern Calkins, the busy wife of the president of the Southern California Conference, to write a short summary from her class notes. Here it is:

"You asked how the ladies received the seminar.
"Several of the women in the Southern California Conference have spoken and written of the blessing and practical help they received from it, both for themselves and for those whom they counsel. One of our secretaries, who is raising a teen-ager alone (and with difficulty), shared how she went home and applied the insights she received in dealing with the strained relationship with her son. To her great joy, in two weeks he made a marked change and wanted to attend a series of evangelistic meetings. He was recently baptized, and is now experiencing a wonderful transformation.

"One of our pastors’ wives, who had a marriage problem in her home, and only reluctantly attended, said afterwards, 'I'm so glad you saw to it that I went to the seminar. It really straightened me out on women's lib. I went right home and told my husband that I saw I was wrong and asked his forgiveness.'

"A wife of the pastor of one of our larger churches said, 'It was like a fresh breath of air.'"

This is truly continuing education—giving one new insights and helping in Christian growth. By reading and conversing we expand our horizons. I read of one minister’s wife who thought, If Elder H. M. S. Richards can read the Bible through in a month, maybe I can, too. And she did, with a few days to spare. So let’s set new goals for ourselves and by God’s grace achieve higher ground. With love, Kay.

DO YOU think that the average Christian finds the greatest satisfaction and happiness within his own family? Are the thoughts of your greatest happiness and love associated with your home?

God created every individual with basic needs—to love and to be loved, to feel a sense of worth to others and to himself. Home should be where you feel at ease and safe from the conflicts of the “world,” where you are understood by others and are at one with them, where you feel you belong because people and things there belong to you. Excepting your personal relationship with God, nothing should give you more happiness than your family. What goes on in the confines of your home after friends are gone and the doors are closed is very important. None of us will ever be content and happy until our family life becomes more and more what God wants it to be.

We prepare for the professions of medicine, nursing, teaching, and business, but what preparation do we make for a home after God’s design? We need to learn how to apply Bible principles to interpersonal relationships so that conflicts will be avoided and so that, instead of being fragmented, we can be whole persons—able to give ourselves wholly to God.

What is the greatest hindrance to two individuals living together in love as one? It is selfishness that is quick to take offense and insist on its right. "I want my way," each may say, and hang on, refusing to give up. Or one may say, "If you were to give up your selfish way, we could have harmony." If one will give in to the other, then there’s a possibility, at least, that the two can go in the same direction.

God gives specific instructions in Ephesians 5: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands. . . . For the husband is the head of the wife” (verses 22, 23). "Let . . . the wife see that she reverence [respect] her husband” (verse 33). A wife’s voluntary giving of lead-
ership rights (and responsibilities) to the husband meets man’s basic need to be respected and looked up to. When the wife thus does her part, not only will God bless her for it, but her husband will love her for it. (This avoids conflict, whether he deserves this respect or not.) “If you treat a man as he is, he will stay as he is, but if you treat him as if he were what he ought to be, and could be, he will become that bigger and better man.”—Goethe.

There is a cost: denying self. What is denying self? Is it to abstain from eating desserts in December, except for parties and when with company? Not really. To deny self is to give up my right to do things “my way”—to give up priorities on “my rights.” Sometimes we read Luke 9:23: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross yearly, and follow me.” (The text, of course, says “daily.”) Someone has quipped that the three words a bride thinks of most on her wedding day are: aisle, altar, hymn. (Sometimes after the ceremony she may switch from altar to alter.) Her attempted alteration of her husband will never succeed in bringing happiness to her and certainly not to him. When one attempts to change another person, one is actually saying, “I don’t really like you as is, but I would if you would become what I want you to.” How important it is to accept each other “as is,” without altering. Ephesians 1:6 says that we are “accepted in the beloved [no conditions attached].”

But what about “my rights”? Does “denying self” sound morbid and destructive of personality? Christ says, “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). Not just in the future, but now.

God gave specific directions to Noah for building the ark, and to Moses for constructing the sanctuary. He has also given directions for the building of the family. Consider applying these principles with your mate:

1. **Honor and respect.** “Let each esteem [the] other better than themselves” (Phil. 2:3), or, “Think more of each other than you do of yourselves” (verse 3, Phillips), or practice treating “one another as more important than himself” (verse 3, N.A.S.B.).

2. **Give support** (but not advice!) with your sympathy and understanding during times of discouragement or failure. “Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted” (Eph. 4:32).

3. **Have a forgiving attitude** toward thoughtless actions or blunders, “forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you” (verse 32, R.S.V.).

4. **Take an interest in things that interest the other.** Listen to each other with real attention—to the person the other one really is. Be geared to filling each other’s needs. “None of you should think only of his own affairs, but consider other people’s interests also” (Phil. 2:4, Phillips). “Stop looking after your own interests only but practice looking out for the interests of others too” (verse 4, Williams).‡ These same principles are also effective with our children, our parents, and in other interpersonal relationships.

When we thoughtfully consider the alternatives, it will seem that the cost of denying ourselves is small because the reward is so great. Remember, it’s never too late. No matter where we are in our pilgrimage, the mercy and grace of God can always change a situation.

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**Prayers From the Parsonage**

CHERRY B. HABENICHT

I feel timid, Father, as I stand among these ladies tonight. Across the street is the Lutheran parsonage, and each of us waits for someone to volunteer to knock on the door of that lighted house. “You’re the one who should . . .,” they tell me. “You’ll know what to say.” But what if the minister answers? He may think me presumptuous to consider asking him for a contribution to our church’s world mission appeal. “You’re the one who should . . .,” they tell me. “You’ll know what to say.” But what if the minister answers? He may think me presumptuous to consider asking him for a contribution to our church’s world mission appeal.

Maybe he dislikes Seventh-day Adventists.

Possibly he’ll try to involve me in a theological debate.

(Oh, why didn’t I volunteer to serve mulled cider at the church or to babysit the children?)

Help me to forget my fears, dear God. May I warmly greet whoever opens that door. And, please, keep my voice from cracking as I make my presentation. Thank You.

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† From The New American Standard Bible. Copyright 1972 by The Lockman Foundation.

Several speakers had addressed large and attentive congregations at the camp meeting at Rome, N.Y., on first day, Sept. 12, 1875. The following night I dreamed that a young man of noble appearance came into the room where I was, immediately after I had been speaking. He said:

"You have called the attention of the people to important subjects, which, to a large number, are strange and new. To some they are intensely interesting. The laborers in word and doctrine have done what they could in presenting the truth. But unless there is a more thorough effort made to fasten these impressions upon minds, your efforts will prove nearly fruitless. Satan has many attractions ready to divert the mind; and the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches all combine to choke the seed of truth sown in the heart.

"In every effort such as you are now making, much more good would result from your labors if you had appropriate reading matter ready for circulation. Tracts upon the important points of truth for the present time should be handed out freely to all who will accept them. You are to sow beside all waters.

"The press is a powerful means to move the minds and hearts of the people. The men of this world seize the press, and make the most of every opportunity to get poisonous literature before the people. If men, under the influence of the spirit of the world and of Satan, are earnest to circulate books, tracts, and papers of a corrupting nature, you should be more earnest to get reading matter of an elevating and saving character before the people.

"God has placed at the command of His people advantages in the press, which, combined with other agencies, will be successful in extending the knowledge of the truth. Tracts, papers, and books, as the case demands, should be circulated in all the cities and villages in the land. Here is missionary work for all.

"There should be men trained for this branch of the work who will be missionaries, and will circulate publications. They should be men of good address, who will not repulse others or be repulsed. This is a work which would warrant men to give their whole time and energies as the occasion demands. God has committed to His people great light. This is not for them to selfishly enjoy alone, but to let its rays shine forth to others who are in the darkness of error.

"You are not as a people doing one twentieth part of what might be done in spreading the knowledge of the truth. Very much more can be accomplished by the living preacher with the circulation of papers and tracts than by the preaching of the word alone without the publications. The press is a powerful instrumentality which God has ordained to be combined with the energies of the living preacher to bring the truth before all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples. Many minds can be reached in no other way.

"Here is true missionary work in which labor and means can be invested with the best results. There has been too great fear of running risks, and moving out by faith, and sowing beside all waters. Opportunities have been presented which have not been grasped and made the most of. There has been too great fear of venturing. True faith is not presumption, but it ventures much. Precious light and powerful truth need to be brought out in publication without delay."

Life Sketches, pp. 216-218.
Another Look at "Adventists and Politics"

Londis Questions

C. MERVYN MAXWELL’S article "Adventists and Politics" (October, 1976) was characteristically well done. But "politics" seems to be implicitly defined in the article as forming "political alliances" and engaging in partisanship on controversial issues. Yet the classic view of politics is "anything pertaining to government," the art of governing.

In the United States the church does involve itself selectively in politics in this large sense by testifying before congressional committees about legislation it believes unfair to Sabbathkeepers and nonunion workers. We also support "temperance" legislation and dry up towns when we are able. We throw our influence behind certain issues and against others. Is it intrinsically inappropriate to do this? What criteria can we employ to help us decide that these issues require our involvement, but the issue of economic exploitation of the poor by large U.S. corporations here and abroad does not? Should we be speaking out against hunger as the evangelicals are doing? (See July 16, 1976, Christianity Today.)

My questions emerge from the fact that sin infects not only individuals but also structures, that an attack on personal evil while ignoring social evil is to perpetuate evil even in the individual. Are there not some issues that transcend "political alliances," issues that have little or nothing to do with party politics but have a great deal to do with how orphans and widows are treated, for example? Very little discussion of these questions has transpired in my lifetime; I believe that many would profit from a careful examination of them.

JAMES J. LONDIS, Pastor
Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church
Takoma Park, Maryland

Maxwell Replies

My unabridged Random House Dictionary gives seven different definitions for the word "politics." The phrase "anything pertaining to government" is not one of them. It is likely that this phrase is offered by some dictionaries. It is a good etymological definition, based on ancient Greek usage, but it seems to me that it is not much help in discovering the will of the Lord for twentieth-century Adventists. After all, by this classic definition, strictly construed, merely paying income tax turns us all into politicians. Even talking about staying out of politics becomes a political activity, and Ellen White’s counsels about politics are vitiated at the outset.

In denying politics while demanding temperance activity Ellen White evidently sensed nothing inappropriate or contradictory. What, then, were her criteria and what were the criteria of Seventh-day Adventists in general during our first one hundred years?

A few paragraphs of history may be of help. The early Adventist position against political involvement grew directly out of something quite basic and significant to the SDA way of thinking, namely, our early Sabbath theology as related to the third angel’s message.

The third angel’s message, of course, directs special attention to Sabbathkeeping at the end of time. Hence it also calls attention implicitly to the seal of God (perfection of character) and explicitly to the mark of the beast (rebellious Sundaykeeping). By further implication, since natural law is a part of God’s commandment in the broadest sense, the third angel’s message also calls attention to physical hygiene and medical ministry.

From the third angel, Adventist pioneers derived not only the content of our characteristic message but also the dynamic of our unique sense of mission. They came to believe that they were called to carry a special Christ-centered warning to the world at a special point in earth’s history.

These concepts were well worked out by the early 1850’s. Within the 1850’s, Bible study also led to the conclusion that the second beast of Revelation 13 is a symbol of the United States of America and that the U.S.A. would some day enforce the mark of the beast and persecute observers of the seventh-day Sabbath. Also in the 1850’s, it should be remembered, the U.S.A. was both condoning and conducting the practice of slavery. Adventist pioneers in general were so opposed to slavery that it was very easy for them to believe that America was already speaking "like a dragon" in anticipation of the ultimate fulfillment of Revelation 13. It seemed true beyond a doubt that a nation that would enslave a racial minority would someday persecute a religious minority.

With the United States providing such clear evidence that it was out of harmony with God, Adventists questioned whether they should so much as register to vote, let alone cast their ballots. Some Review correspondents, such as R. F. Cottrell and Joseph Clarke, answered with an emphatic No. James White, however, was not willing to share their stand. In the Review for April 21, 1860, White allowed that any Adventist could vote if he wished to, provided, of course, that he did so privately and did not get caught up in party spirit—for the spirit of party politicking, White emphasized, is contrary to the spirit of present truth, the third angel’s message. (After all, to quarrel and debate hardly helps a person perfect a
Christlike character in preparation for the seal of God."

The American Civil War was preeminently a political affair, with the voting for America's future carried out with bullets instead of ballots. During the Civil War Ellen White urged Adventists *not* to enter the army, her basis being that military service would unavoidably conflict with observance of the Sabbath of the third angel (Testimonies, vol. 1, p. 361). Instead she called upon Adventists to pray, not fight, for the end of both slavery and the rebellion. (See Testimonies, vol. 1, pp. 355-368.) As they responded to her appeals, Adventists prayed that the outcome of the war would be such that the slaves could hear about the Sabbath and be free to accept and observe it.

Not warfare or the machinations of men but "God alone" could put an end to slavery (ibid., p. 266). Forty years later she attributed emancipation to the same Source (ibid., vol. 7, p. 223). Ellen White's deep spirituality apparently led her to eschew superficial activism. She saw the *sinfulness* of oppression as being so deep that no human device can remedy it. Not because she cared so little about the oppressed, but because she cared so much, Ellen White sought an ultimate divine solution to their plight.

Should we, who honor her memory so highly, do any less?

After the Civil War was over, temperance and religious liberty issues assumed a new prominence. Ellen White, as we know, considered medical missionary work—including temperance work—to be the right arm of the third angel's message. Consistent with this understanding, she counseled Adventists to vote for temperance legislation at every opportunity. At the same time, however, consistent with her characteristic convictions, she reminded Adventists that God expected every one of them to avoid all ordinary politicizing and party spirit, which have nothing to do with the proclamation of the third angel's message (Fundamentals of Christian Education, pp. 475-484).

In the year 1882 an ordained Adventist minister, William C. Gage, accepted a one-year term as part-time mayor of the city of Battle Creek. In the Review of April 11, 1882, editor Uriah Smith and General Conference president G. I. Butler hastened to apologize for this development. They reaffirmed their conviction that Adventists ordinarily have no business getting involved in politics, and explained that absolutely no non-Adventist could be secured to run on the temperance ticket. As things turned out, Gage chose not to run again the following year, and neither did any other Adventist. In November, 1882, in the midst of Gage's term as mayor, Ellen White delivered an earnest public rebuke to him and to other leaders at Adventist headquarters. Of William Gage she stated, "He has has ever been a curse to the church in Battle Creek." She added: "I warn the people of God *not to take this man as their pattern*" (Special Testimony to the Battle Creek Church, Nov. 30, 1882, p. 6; italics supplied).

Gage had run for a merely local election. On the national level the banishment of slavery by the United States brought about an appropriate softening of attitude among American Adventists toward their national government. A consequence of this changed attitude was that some Adventists here and there began to engage enthusiastically in party politics. In the late 1890's some ministers, even preached on the politics of economic and social change. Ellen White (Fundamentals of Christian Education, pp. 475-484; Testimonies to Ministers, pp. 331-340); and the Review editors (Review, April 11, 1882; May 16, 1899) scathed such persons, apparently with success. They reminded our people that our role in this world is to advance the third angel's message.

Adventists learned their "no politics" lesson so well that when Senator H. W. Blair introduced his Federal Sunday-closing bills in 1888 and 1889, many of them took no action to oppose this radical new development. Predictably, Ellen White pointed out that the relationship between Sunday legislation and the mark of the beast is so close that opposing Sunday laws is an integral part of the third angel's message (Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 715). Then, lest anyone assume that appealing to government for religious freedom is tantamount to engaging in politics, a Review editor pointed out that "all that Christianity asks of kings is to be let alone" (Review, Nov. 24, 1896). Well said! Religious liberty work is not so much a political as an antipolitical enterprise. It is an endeavor to keep government out of the church.

Repeatedly, as the years went by, Ellen White urged young people to study hard and prepare for the crucial moment when they might need to stand in legislative or deliberative assemblies to appeal for religious freedom—for some day the United States most certainly would undertake to enforce anti-Sabbath legislation. (See such references as Fundamentals of Christian Education, pp. 82, 87; Education, p. 262; Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 463.)

In one statement (Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 82) made during an extensive discourse delivered to the Battle Creek College students about preparation for a life of service, Ellen White's stenographer recorded her as saying that the students should prepare to "sit" in deliberative and legislative assemblies. The word "sit" was a departure from her customary use of "stand" or "appeal to" when speaking of Adventist activity in legislative and deliberative assemblies. Well aware of her strong stand against politicizing, no one thought anything of this substitution at the time. Nobody then or for long years thereafter supposed that Ellen White in that college address advised Adventist youth to prepare to be politicians. How could they have?

In almost every presidential election year during our denomination's existence articles have appeared in the Review to guide Adventists in their relationship to the political process. The advice soon became standard: (1) Vote if you wish for candidates and ordinary issues, and (2) vote without fail for clear moral issues such as temperance and religious freedom, but (3) keep your political views to yourself, avoiding all party labels (compare the General Conference recommendation published in the Review, May 23, 1865).

So far as I know, the year of change was 1960. In that presidential-election year, more than forty years after Ellen White's death and eighty years after the publication of her Battle Creek College address, a writer in the Review drew the conclusion that by using the word "sit" Ellen White had endorsed careers in government service for SDA's (Review, May 19, 26, 1960). Eight years later another writer in the Review innocently cited William C. Gage as a helpful example for Adventists to follow when making their political decisions.

Some Adventists thereupon proceeded to turn our denomination's historical position and the characteristic counsel of Ellen G. White upside down and stand them on their heads.

**Summary:** Adventists evidently should engage in temperance and religious liberty work but *should not* engage publicly in ordinary social legislation or in party politics. The basic criterion involved in this distinction is the *third angel's message,* with its spiritual, legislative, and missionary implications.
Ten Qualifications of a Preacher

He should be able to preach plainly and in order. He should have a good head, good power of speech, good voice, and a good memory. He should be sure of what he means to say, and be ready to stake body and life, goods and glory on its truth. He should know when to stop. He should study diligently, and suffer himself to be vexed and criticised by every one.—M. Luther

Quoted From Quote: "The ability to speak several languages is an asset, but to be able to hold your tongue in one language is priceless!"—Dr. J. Harold Smith.

..."I don't fully understand God, yet I refuse to grope in spiritual darkness because of that. Lord Kelvin, the British physicist, told us, 'I do not know what electricity is, but I'm not going to sit in the dark until I understand its secret.'"—Gloria Pitzer. ... What most folks need is an alarm clock that will ring when it's time for them to rise to the occasion. ... A preacher was leaving his church, and the congregation gave him a farewell gift. The chairman of deacons, speaking on behalf of the members, said that since the pastor had announced his plans to depart, "the congregation was eager to give him a little momentum."

I stood at a little table in front of a set of heavy iron gates. The guard checked a list of names before him, and, finding my name on that list, took out a large key and clanked it into the lock. The gates swung open just enough for me to step through, but immediately they closed with a bang, with the guard on the outside.

In front of me was a second set of gates, and another guard, who repeated the same process. I was being admitted to a State penitentiary for a personal visit to a group of alcoholics who were meeting to find ways to kick their habit.

But I was not through all the gates yet. A third set of gates and yet another guard, and finally I was standing alone at the end of a long corridor, armed only with instructions as to how to find that place of meeting.

Loneliness pressed down on me as I walked along that gray, forbidding hallway and turned into a narrow stairway and up two flights of hard, cold stone steps. Soon I was seated with a group of trustee prisoners, listening to their stories of why they were in prison.

Theirs were not new stories. They were there because of intemperance of one form or another, which led them into crime and eventual imprisonment. All of them were hoping and longing to get out, to be free once more. It was prophesied of Christ, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (Isa. 61:1).

Today, as it was in the days of Christ, it is the purpose of the gospel to set men free from evil habit, free from sin. Especially is this true of the temperance phase of the gospel. The Spirit of Christ can set men free from both evil habits and sin.

The theme for the World Temperance Sabbath this year is "Set the Captives Free." The annual Temperance Offering is intended to help provide tools to release these captives and give them opportunity to find complete freedom in the gospel. The offering goal has been set at $200,000.

"Earnest effort should be made in behalf of those who are in bondage to evil habits."—The Ministry of Healing, p. 171.
Evangelistic Handbill Service

At the most recent meeting of the Ministerial Association Advisory Committee it was voted that the Ministerial Association set up an evangelistic handbill center as follows. All evangelists and pastor-evangelists are asked to send to the Ministerial Association 100 copies of each handbill printed. These will be stocked. Those wishing samples of handbills will then make their requests to the association and a sample of each will be sent from this assortment. It is believed that such sharing will be helpful to many, particularly to our younger men who are eager for ideas. So this notice is an appeal to those holding evangelistic campaigns, whether in public facilities or churches, to please send us handbills from your last campaign and keep us in mind in the campaigns to come. Soon we hope to be in a position to respond to the requests for handbill samples that we know will be coming to us.

Likes March Tape

"I want to take this opportunity to write and thank you for the production of the Tape of the Month, March, 1977. If we are willing to listen, obviously Bob and June Thompson have some very penetrating comments to make."—Harley J. Stanton.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The March tape is the interview of J. R. Spangler with Bob and June Thompson. The Thompsons relate their experience as Jehovah's Witnesses and how they became Seventh-day Adventists. Those wishing to secure this special release please send $4.50 to Aspire Tape of the Month Club, General Conference of SDA, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012.

Sermon Ideas

One of our pastors used the following form to solicit sermon ideas from his members. They responded beautifully; perhaps you would like to try a similar plan.

"The Ear of the Wise Seeketh Knowledge"

Dear Fellow Member,

May I ask you to take a few moments and give some serious thought to our Sabbath worship service, especially the presentation of the Word of God. During this next year I would like to share messages that would be "meat in due season." Thus, would you jot down a few subjects that would aid in your spiritual growth? I cannot promise to cover them all, but will endeavor to consider each one.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,
Your Pastor

SERMON SUBJECTS FOR NEXT YEAR:

___ _____________________________
___ _____________________________
___ _____________________________

—Ablaze

A Meaningful Week of Prayer

H. M. Wright, pastor of the Columbus, Ohio, Ephesus church, led his people in a very unusual Week of Prayer and follow-up program. It went like this: First week: Neighborhood Prayer Circles using the Week of Prayer readings, focusing on the items for discussion listed at the end of each reading. Second week: follow-up week.

Pastor Wright has conducted for some time a homiletics class for church elders, lay preachers, and any other interested persons. During follow-up week, they selected a group of lay preachers who led out in public meetings at the church, Sunday through Thursday night. Members were encouraged to bring their friends and Bible school interests. A guest speaker was brought in for the final weekend, with meetings being held Friday night, Sabbath, and Sunday night. Pastor Wright and the Columbus church have a weekly television program that is aired on a major network station Sunday mornings at 9:30.

Signs of our Times

A Wesleyan church in Crosswell, Michigan, devised the following attention-getting idea: Members of the church were given yard signs similar to those used by political candidates. The signs read as follows: "The family that lives here attends the Crosswell Wesleyan church. Come and worship with us." We could do that for our Adventist churches and call to the attention of the community where our members live that we are Adventists.

On the Air

Have you ever looked for an opportunity to broadcast the Adventist hope for our times? You don't need to know about microphones, tape recorders, studios, and script writing.

Someone else will operate the microphones and tape recorders. And someone else has already
Need Something Special?

The Ontario, California, church had some needs for a few minor capital improvements. With little fanfare or promotion they put the insert shown below in their bulletin, and in one week got pledges to underwrite the needs. The members could get a handle on costs this way and could readily visualize what their donations would accomplish. One church member got the vision and bought the Bell & Howell 16 mm. projector for the church.

A Christmas Gift for Your Church

What could be nicer than to give a Christmas gift to your church? The church budget cares for many items, but it seems there is not enough left at the end of the month to make purchases of other items the church is in need of. Following is a Christmas list your church has made out:

1. Metal folding chairs—100 @ $5.82.
2. Chair truck-holder—2 @ $64.00.
3. Folding tables, 96" by 36"—12 @ $51.45.
4. Table truck-holder—2 @ $68.25.
5. Janitorial cart—$65.00.
6. Draperies for sanctuary transept—with blackout lining—to be able to show pictures in the daytime. Total: $500.00, or 20 widths @ $25.00 per width.
8. Bell & Howell 16 mm. projector—$575.00.
9. Motion picture screen, 8' by 8'—$120.00.
10. Portable chalkboard—$55.00.

The above gifts are top quality items priced through the SDA Institutional Services. If you would like to give one of these gifts to your church, please mark the item you would like to give and turn your sheet in to Harold Lance, head elder, after church today.

NAME
ADDRESS
PHONE

The Ministry/October, 1977/45

Fulfilled Womanhood Seminar

Insights on a wide-ranging variety of topics from the woman’s point of view is the unique characteristic of the Fulfilled Womanhood Seminar. Created by a wife and mother, the seminar reflects the experience of one woman’s quest for meaningful insights in the Bible, Ellen White’s writings, and current literature.

“I need to feel better about myself,” is a typical comment to seminar developer Nancy Van Pelt. The seminar seeks to challenge women toward the discovery of insights that promote growth in relationships with husband, children, and others.

The seminar format follows one of two patterns. It can be operated over a weekend (typically Thursday and Friday evenings, Saturday afternoon and evening, and all day Sunday) or once a week for six weeks. Total time is about 13 hours.

General subjects considered include how to understand the male—his thinking process and characteristics; creating harmony at home; principles in accepting others; accenting the positive—eliminating the negative; increasing a sense of self-worth; removing barriers; establishing communication; and achieving sexual satisfaction.

Mrs. Van Pelt has developed this program over the past six years and presented it more than 30 times in the United States and Canada, even adapting it for television. For information, address her at 366 North Lind, Fresno, California 93727 (phone: 209-251-9790).

A Reminder

Bill Clark keeps 7 folders in his briefcase, one for each day of the week. If someone asks him to do something, he immediately writes it down, and drops it in a particular folder. Each day he consults the folder for that day.

—Reprinted with permission from Ablaze, a publication of the Ministerial Association of the Mountain View Conference.

H. M. S. Richards

Lectureship on Tape

H. M. S. Richards, Sr., returned to Columbia Union College to give the 1977 spring lectureship on preaching. Now you can have this valuable material on tape. The six cassettes are available for $12.95. Send check or money order to: Aspire Tape of the Month Club, General Conference of SDA, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012.
Christian evangelism. Christian evangelism concentrates much harder on winning the lost than on keeping the recently converted. One of the disappointing facets of evangelism has been the high dropout rate within the first year or two after baptism, and the book suggests at least one method of looking at this problem.

Griffin, who teaches communication at Wheaton College, has written a book that should do more than just sit on a minister's shelf. Kermit Netteburg


This is a well-written presentation of the development of the school system of the Roman Catholic Church from the time that it was operated for the benefit of the moneyed membership to the present time when it is available to the poorer class via free tuition; from the time that it was strictly a parish school, being the only one, through the era when it was a common school, to the time when it again was a parish school, serving as an alternate to the public school.

It depicts the various phases of development, describing the struggle between the liberal Irish immigrants and others whose objective was assimilation into the American nation and the Germans, whose desire was the maintenance of their own culture, using the schools to reach this objective. This disparity in views had a definite effect on the growth and type of Catholic schools. The intervention of the popes in these matters was not always felicitous, since they were unable, it appears, to understand the American way of thinking and doing.

As to the present, the author feels that Catholic schools have played an important part in the success of the church in the United States. In his opinion the present drop in enrollment in relation to the increase in church membership is due not mainly to financial problems, but is caused instead by a lack of member interest in parochial education. The real problem, he says, is faith, not finance.

He points out the peril of Federal aid in the Catholic school system in the following words (page 110): "One of the necessary concomitants of government aid is public regulation. The more state supervision, the more Catholic schools will become like public schools. The more that parochial schools appear to be carbon copies of state institutions, the less Catholics are needed to do without to support them."

Walton J. Brown


Certainly every Christian minister is in the business of persuasion. For that reason alone, Em Griffin's book is a worthwhile addition to any minister's library. Griffin reviews much of the research of the past twenty years in persuasion and presents it in a style that reads more like a storybook than like the scholarly work it is. A weakness is that it is written so completely in story style that it suffers from a lack of references, with only thirty-five footnotes and references and no bibliography.

However, that criticism is minor, since the book was not written for scholars but for non-scholar Christians who use persuasion. Griffin examines specific techniques that aid the persuasion process, and gives illustrations to show how these techniques can apply to Christian persuasion.

The author develops his own model for persuasion, based upon a candlemaking analogy. He says the three steps are (1) melt, (2) mold, and (3) make hard.

Candles cannot be fashioned until the wax is melted and made soft. Likewise, individuals are not open to Christian messages until they have been melted, or made aware of their need of Christ. Candle wax that is melted but unmolded is of no particular value. Likewise, Christian persuasion must not only point out needs but mold the person to the pattern of Jesus Christ.

One of the unique aspects of Griffin's book is its emphasis on the third step, making hard. Griffin shows how the softened candle loses its shape quickly unless it is made hard. He relates this to Christianity by showing that often people who have accepted Christ have not been successfully churched.

This three-step process, especially the make-hard step, has some interesting implications for the three steps are (1) melt, (2) mold, and (3) make hard. Griffin shows how the softened candle loses its shape quickly unless it is made hard. He relates this to Christianity by showing that often people who have accepted Christ have not been successfully churched.

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Most instructive to the reviewer were the chapters on the "Sermon as Creation" and the "Sermon as Charisma." Rarely does one find such clear analyses of the role of imaginative creativity and the thrust of personal identity (pathos) in preaching. The preacher must see, feel, and hear the scenes he endeavors to place before his hearers. He must also deliver his message with a force bathed in the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the crucial extra in preaching.

Reading books can't do the work for us. But this one surely kindles new inspiration for the task of preaching.

Jerry Gladson

TEST TUBES AND CHALK DUST, Barbara Phipps, Andrews University Press, Berrien Springs, Michigan, paperback, $3.95; cloth, $5.95.

We can use a few heroes. Granted that the Christian must draw his finest inspiration from the Greatest of heroes, it is still heartwarming to come in contact with people who set examples worthy of emulation. Burton Phipps, whose life story is told by his daughter, Barbara, in Test Tubes and Chalk Dust, is such a person. The book is a sensitive portrayal of a frail child's development through boyhood to a respected place in a highly competitive field. Phipps, who taught and served as administrator for several academies, is best known for his long-time service as head of the biology department at Emmanuel Missionary College, now Andrews University.

Designated the "Mr. Chips of AU" by the alumni association, Burton Phipps used both sympathy and humor in his relationships with students. He was known as a careful scholar, and his classroom was a lively place where the search for truth was uninhibited.

The book abounds in anecdotes, many of which could be used as sermon illustrations. Most moving is an incident that occurred at Burton's graduation from college. He could not afford a new suit and was fiercely embarrassed to wear his four-year-old pin-stripe suit he'd worn to class all year.

"Man, you have a new suit, don't you?" questioned the puzzled Burton at the end of the program.

"Yes, it's up in my closet," said the friend. "I just thought I'd wear this old one and keep you company, Burt."

Bobbie Jane Van Dolson


Here's a book that is particularly valuable for pastors, teachers, and leaders who have responsibility for counseling youth—and adults—in the drug age in which we live.

It is nearly impossible to find a clear account of what we know of our mind, the functional part of the brain where we live with our perceptions and thoughts. Sensual Drugs provides such an understandable account.

This work also explains the basic value of our pleasure and pain reflexes and how they condition us, providing our motivation and capacity to think. It explains how these reflexes can be turned on artificially but only at a hazard to sensory deprivation.

Many have come to realize that the body cannot be well-developed without good diet and physical conditioning. Here is a book that explains the wisdom and benefit from natural use of the mind, and the erosion of mental powers by artificial stimulation of the pleasure mechanisms. The fact that all forms of artificial, chemical-induced pleasure cause loss of natural capacity for pleasure establishes why the term drug abuse is used in this connection.

The book is equally advantageous and interesting for any person who deals with the effects of tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, the hallucinogenic drugs, or narcotics.

Special mention should be made of marijuana, because of the prevalence of misleading information on this subject. The Drs. Jones show that this drug can have devastating physical, mental, and emotional effects.

Sensual Drugs explains mental, and emotional effects.

Sensual Drugs will explain away the romantic notion that drugs are recreational outlets that might as well be enjoyed. Another benefit for the person who has already begun the cycles of conditioning by drug-taking is that a new understanding of effects and dependency will be gained that can lead to regaining a drug-free, happier life.

Francis A. Soper
Principle of Evolution Affirmed in Humanist Association Statement

BUFFALO—A statement by 175 leading scientists, educators, and theologians, affirming evolution as a basic principle of science, is being circulated to major U.S. school districts by the American Humanist Association.

The statement was prompted by "the steady assault on the teaching of evolution in the public schools and the demand that the theory of creation be given equal time," according to the association.

"Since the public is led to believe, thanks to the creationist clamor so characteristic of this century, that an open choice between these two alternatives exists within the science itself, it becomes imperative to state that this view is rubbish, lest science education in America become the laughing stock of the civilized world," Bette Chambers, association president, wrote in The Humanist magazine.

"Religious Awakening" Among Women Major Finding in a National Study

NEW YORK—A new survey by Redbook magazine reveals that an "impressive number of American women have embarked on a religious awakening" in the last five years and have felt themselves "in the presence of God."

Furthermore, a new positive image of the "religious" woman is emerging, according to the survey based on the responses of 65,000 American women to a Redbook questionnaire.

"The more religious a woman is the happier she is," Redbook said. "The very religious woman, for example, is least likely to report frequent feelings of anxiety, tension or worthlessness. The 'moderately religious' woman is more apt to have these negative emotions. They are commonest to the woman who says she is only 'slightly religious.'"

Redbook said, "Health is another blessing for the 'very religious' woman. She suffers less from headaches and stomach upsets than do women who are less sure of their beliefs. The symptoms of poor health increase as the firmness of faith diminishes."

Methodism Held Closer to Catholicism Than to Churches of the Reformation

DUBLIN—United Methodist Bishop William R. Cannon, of Georgia, told the World Methodist Conference here that Methodism is closer to Roman Catholicism than to the Protestant churches of the Reformation.

In a major address on ecumenism, the 60-year-old bishop declared that Methodism and Catholicism are close "both in spirituality and in our views of moral attainment here on earth."

According to Bishop Cannon, who was co-chairman of the decade of Methodist-Catholic dialogues, John Wesley "and the great teachers of Roman Catholicism taught an ethic of human realization in the here and now, believing that the God who forgives sin likewise effects righteousness in the lives of them who believe."

Growth of Evangelicalism Held Forcing a Liberal Stress on Basic Theology

ATLANTA—The president of one of the nation's leading "liberal" seminaries predicts that the growth of the evangelical movement will force liberal denominations to concentrate more on basic theology.

Dr. Donald Shriver, of Union Theological Seminary in New York, made that assessment in an interview with Alice Murray, of the Atlanta Constitution, while he was visiting there.

Screen Actors Guild Board Protests Violence on TV

NEW YORK—The board of directors of the 32,000-member Screen Actors Guild has passed a resolution deploring excessive violence in T.V. programming.

Violence in entertainment shows has become a "staple component" of television shows, and has the potential of increasing aggressive violence among viewers, the resolution charged.

"Degrees of violence exist in our society," the resolution noted, but it stressed that what was disturbing was "the emphasis on violence and the degree of violence portrayed."

Guild board members charged that "the network programmers believe that violence yields high ratings. As a result, programs containing violence are selected in order to yield high network profit margins."

Many members of the Screen Actors Guild appear in television action shows.

Unless otherwise credited, these news items are taken from Religious News Service.

Change of Address

MINISTRY

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Moving? Please send your change of address four weeks in advance. Give your new address label when writing concerning your subscription.

48/The Ministry/October, 1977