Our Firm Foundation

The 7th Day Sabbath | Immutable Law of God | The Everlasting Gospel
Non-Immortality of the Soul | Three Angels' Messages | The Sanctuary

Vol. 1, No. 11

September, 1986

Jeremiah presents The Word of the Lord, see page 7
In regards to this month's cover art—Bob Bresnahan is bringing to us the story of Jeremiah, showing his earnest efforts to reach the leadership and laity of the church with God's message of warning. He was met by strong resistance and even violence. We urge our readers to study the book of Jeremiah again very carefully, especially the 36th chapter. Ellen White tells us that the events revealed therein will be repeated in our day.

"This chapter is a record of historical events that will be repeated. Let all who desire to receive warning, read carefully." 

Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 4, 1159

Our almost total disregard for the Spirit of Prophecy counsel in all areas has fulfilled Ellen White's prophecy. (See Testimonies, vol. 5, 75, 76, 217; vol 8, 67, 68, 250, 251; Christ's Object Lessons, 304, 305; The Desire of Ages, 36, 611, 612; Selected Messages, Book 1, 406)

The situation in our churches keeps reminding us that we have far more to fear from within than without. (See Selected Messages, Book 1, 122) May all of us, leaders, pastors, and laity, awake from our spiritual condition before it is too late, for destruction is coming as an overwhelming surprise. (See Testimonies, vol. 8, 37, 28)

God gave this counsel in the pre-session of the General Conference of 1901: "In reference to our conference, it is repeated o'er and o'er and o'er again, that it is the voice of God, and therefore everything must be referred to the conference and have the conference voice in regard to permission or restriction or what shall be and what shall not be done in the various fields."

"We have heard enough, abundance, about that 'everything must go around in the regular way.' When we see the regular lines are altered and purified and refined, and the God of heaven's mold is upon the regular lines, then it is our business to establish the regular lines. But when we see message after message that God has given has been accepted, but no change, just the same as it was before, then it is evident that new blood must be brought into the regular lines."

"It requires minds that are worked by the Holy Spirit of God; and unless that evidence is given, unless there is a power that shows that they are accepted by God to impart to the responsibilities that have to be handled, then there should be a renovation without any delay. To have this conference pass on and close up as the conferences have done, with the same manipulating, with the very same tone, and the same order—God forbid! God forbid, brethren. He wants every living soul that has a knowledge of the truth to come to their senses. He wants every living power to arouse; and we are just about the same thing as dead men. And it is time that we should arise and shine because our light has come, and the glory of the Lord has arisen upon us, and until this shall come we might just as well close up the conference today as any other day."

"There is to be no man that has the right to put his hand out and say, No, you can not go there; we won't support you if you go there. Why, what have you to do with supporting? Did they create the means? The means come from the people, and those who are destitute fields. The voice of God has told me to instruct them to go to the people and to tell them their necessities, and to draw all the people to work just where they can find a place to work, to build up the work in every place they can."

Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies, 163-168

May we understand now, before it is too late, that unless this counsel is obeyed there can be no Holy Spirit to finish the work. If we continue to refuse to listen to the counsel of the True Witness, God will soon take the reins into His own hands and most of the workers will soon be surprised to see how God will quickly cut His work short in righteousness. From the plow and every vocation of life God has men and women, young people, an army in training. Our Commander and Chief will soon take to the field. The battle is about to be engaged. May God help each of us to fight the good fight of faith to the end. (See Counsels on Health, 395; Testimonies to Ministers, 300; Romans 9:28, Testimonies vol. 9, 96, 227-229)  

RON SPEAR—EDITOR
It is the mission of Hope International and the editors of Our Firm Foundation to give the straight testimony and to present Christ and Him crucified. The days that yet remain of this world are few, and what we do we must do quickly. We must boldly proclaim the truths that place us on so firm a foundation in the midst of this troubled world.—THE EDITORS

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LORD OF THE SABBATH

Ron Spear

FROM THE beginning of time God has placed a special blessing upon the seventh day. He made it a day for communion with His people.

"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made." Genesis 2:1-3

It was not in the plan of God that sin should enter. Everything was created to grow into a greater perfection. The earth was filled, by the Creator, with the good and beautiful things needed to sustain the sinless pair and make them happy. And every seventh day was a Sabbath, a day of special awareness and worship. Their minds were to be fastened upon the worship of the Most High, their Creator. Adam and Eve walked and talked with God in the cool of every day, but the Sabbath was an entire day of communion and fellowship with Christ.

When sin came to this perfect planet, all creation mourned the horrible mistake committed by our first parents. Man was separated from God and cut off from close communion. There could not be any more daily sessions of instruction by the Master Teacher, and a great gulf was fixed between heaven and earth. No longer could they spend the holy Sabbath hours in His presence.

Jesus immediately stepped in between man and his penalty of eternal death, accepted that curse and became man's substitute, our example in perfect law keeping, yes, Sabbath keeping.

The Sabbath unites God and His people

Let us study His life, His example from Scripture. We read:

"It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones. As we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our confidence in Him will be more constant, our love will be quickened, and we shall be more deeply imbued with His spirit. If we would be saved at last, we must learn the lesson of penitence and humiliation at the foot of the cross." The Desire of Ages, 83

Please study carefully the following material arranged from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy on how we need to spend the Sabbath hours so as to receive the blessing that God has promised.

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isaiah 58:13, 14

Christ made the Sabbath for man: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." Mark 2:27, 28

"The Sabbath is a golden clasp that unites God and His people." Testimonies, vol. 6, 351

"Great blessings are enfolded
in the observance of the Sabbath and God desires that the Sabbath day shall be to us a day of joy.” Ibid., 349

“The Sabbath is God’s memorial, pointing men to their Creator who made the world and all things that are therein. In the everlasting hills, in the lofty trees, in every opening bud and blooming flower, we may behold the work of the great Master Artist. All speak to us of God and His glory.” Testimonies to Ministers, 137

God’s love has set a limit to the demands of toil. Over the Sabbath He places His merciful hand. In His own day He preserves for the family opportunity for communion with Him, with nature and with one another.” Education, 251

“Moreover also I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.” Ezekiel 20:12

“But in order to keep the Sabbath holy, men must themselves be holy. Through faith they must become partakers of the righteousness of Christ.” The Desire of Ages, 283

The Distinguishing Mark

“Hallow my Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.” Ezekiel 20:20

“The Sabbath is a sign of the relationship existing between God and His people—a sign that they are His obedient subjects, that they keep holy His law. The observance of the Sabbath is the means ordained by God of preserving a knowledge of Himself and of distinguishing between His loyal subjects and the transgressors of His law.” Testimonies, vol. 8, 198

True Sabbath keeping is a sign, a seal from God to His faithful, obedient people on earth.

“Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.” Exodus 31:16, 17

“Men and women are . . . to bear God’s sign by observing the Sabbath of creation.” Testimonies, vol. 8, 196

“All who regard the Sabbath as a sign between them and God, showing that He is the God who sanctifies them, will represent the principles of His government. They will bring into daily practice the laws of His kingdom. Daily it will be their prayer that the sanctification of the Sabbath may rest upon them. Every day they will have the companionship of Christ and will exemplify the perfection of His character. Every day their light will shine forth to others in good works.” Testimonies, vol. 6, 353, 354

Let your children share in your preparation to keep the Sabbath

A Note of Warning

“Ministers of Jesus should stand as reprovers to those who fail to remember the Sabbath to keep it holy. They should kindly and solemnly reprove those who engage in worldly conversation upon the Sabbath and at the same time claim to be Sabbath keepers. They should encourage devotion to God upon His holy day.” Ibid., vol. 2, 704

Preparation

“On Friday let the preparation for the Sabbath be completed. See that all the clothing is in readiness and that all the cooking is done. Let the boots be blacked and the baths be taken. It is possible to do this. If you make it a rule you can do it. The Sabbath is not to be given to the repairing of garments, to the cooking of food, to pleasure-seeking, or to any other worldly employment. Before the setting of the sun let all secular work be laid aside, and all secular papers be put out of sight. Parents, explain your work and its purpose to your children, and let them share in your preparation to keep the Sabbath according to the commandment. . . . Before the setting of the sun let the members of the family assemble to read God’s word, to sing and pray.” Testimonies, vol. 6, 355, 356

Sabbath Activities for the Family

“Mothers . . . should not be so engrossed with the artificial and burdened with care that they cannot have time to educate their children from God’s great book of nature.” Child Guidance, 54

“The Sabbath should be made so interesting to our families that its weekly return will be hailed with joy.” Ibid., 536

“Do not weary them [the children] with long prayers and tedious exhortations, but through nature’s object lessons teach them obedience to the law of God.” Ibid., 534

Sabbath Dinner

“He required them to bake that which they would bake, and seethe (that is, boil) that which they would seethe on the sixth day, preparatory to the rest of the Sabbath. Those who neglect to prepare for the Sabbath on the sixth day, and who cook food upon the Sabbath, violate the fourth commandment, and are transgressors of God’s law.” Spiritual Gifts, vol. 3, 253, 254

“We should not provide for the Sabbath a more liberal supply or a greater variety of food than for other days. Instead of this the food should be more simple, and less should be eaten, in order that the mind may be clear and vigorous to comprehend spiritual things.” Testimonies, vol. 6, 357
**Sabbath Travel**

"I fear that we often travel on this day when it might be avoided... we should be more careful about traveling on the boats or cars on this day... it may be necessary (at times) for us to travel on the Sabbath; but so far as possible we should secure our tickets and make all necessary arrangements on some other day." *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 359, 360

**Not an Idle Day**

"Heaven’s work never ceases, and men should never rest from doing good. The Sabbath is not intended to be a period of useless inactivity. The law forbids secular labor on the rest day of the Lord;... but as God ceased His labor of creating and rested upon the Sabbath and blessed it, so man is to leave the occupations of his daily life, and devote those sacred hours to healthful rest, to worship, and to holy deeds." *The Desire of Ages*, 207

**Worship**

"Six days shall work be done; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, an holy convocation." *Leviticus* 23:3

"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker." Psalm 95:6

"But the Lord is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him." Habakkuk 2:20

**True Sabbath keeping means to be completely controlled by the Holy Spirit**

"Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil." Isaiah 56:2

The arrangement of this inspired material will quickly show us that true Sabbath keeping is not just going to church on the Sabbath. It is not just ritualism or traditionalism, but a deep relationship in true worship of our great God. It means that every thought and action from sundown on Friday to sundown on Sabbath is to be completely controlled in worship by the Holy Spirit.

It means that there is a deep love relationship being developed between God and His true church members on earth, and that the seal of God is in process of being placed upon the character of His true people. "Just as soon as God's people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come. Indeed, it has begun already; the judgments of God are now upon the land, to give us warning, that we may know what is coming." *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, 116

Ellen White tells us the majority of the church membership will one day reject us and join the ranks of the enemy. (See *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 136; vol. 8, 41)

Why is this? Because they haven't kept the Sabbath holy—they haven't learned to truly worship God on the Sabbath day. They kept Saturday, not Sabbath. To them it was a holiday, not a holy day, and they will be lost because of it.

May God help us now to enter into that holy relationship daily, and on Friday evening, let us worship by faith with Christ in the most holy place.

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**Line Upon Line**

Remember this. If you have made mistakes, you certainly gain a victory if you see these mistakes, and regard them as beacons of warning. Thus you turn defeat into victory, disappointing the enemy, and honoring your Redeemer. *Messages to Young People*, 100

When the Master receives the talents, He approves and rewards the workers as though the merit were all their own. *Christ's Object Lessons*, 361

All coarseness and roughness must be put away from us. Guard against being abrupt and blunt. Do not regard such peculiarities as virtues: for God does not so regard them. *Evangelism*, 637

The very example and deportment as well as the words of the Christian should be such as to awaken in the sinner a desire to come to the Fountain of Life. *Messages to Young People*, 424

While the humble worker for God is following his employment, angels of God stand by his side, listening to his words, noting the manner in which his work is done, to see if larger responsibilities may be entrusted to his hands. *Ministry of Healing*, 477

Nothing is drudgery to the one who submits to the will of God. "Doing it unto the Lord" is a thought that throws charm over whatever work God gives him to do. *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 150
The Word of the Lord

The Lord gave Jeremiah a message of reproof to bear to His people, charging them with the continual rejection of His counsel: "I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto Me. I have sent also unto you all My servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers." He pleaded with them not to provoke Him to anger with the work of their hands and the devices of their evil hearts; "but they hearkened not." [Jeremiah 35:14-16]

Jeremiah then predicted the captivity of the Jews, as their punishment for not heeding the word of the Lord. The Chaldeans were to be used as the instrument by which God would chastise His disobedient people, whose punishment was to be in proportion to the light they had had, and the warnings they had despised and rejected.

The Lord commanded Jeremiah to stand in the court of the Lord's house, and to speak unto all the people of Judah who came there to worship those things which He would give him to speak, that they might hearken, and turn from their evil ways. Then God would repent of the punishment which He had purposed to inflict upon them because of their wickedness.

The Lord commanded Jeremiah to say to the people: "Thus saith the Lord, If ye will not hearken unto Me, to walk in My law, which I have set before you, to hearken to the words of My servants the prophets, whom I sent unto you, both rising up early and sending them, but ye have not hearkened, then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth." [Jeremiah 26:4-6] They understood this reference to Shiloh, and the time when the Philistines overcame Israel, and the ark of God was taken.

The sin of Eli consisted in passing lightly over the iniquity of his sons, who were in sacred office. His neglect to reprove and restrain his sons brought upon Israel a fearful calamity. The sons of Eli were slain, Eli himself lost his life, the ark of God was taken from Israel, and thirty thousand of the people were slain. All of these calamities occurred because sin was lightly regarded and allowed to remain among them. What a lesson is this to men holding responsible positions in the church of God! It warns them faithfully to remove the wrongs that dishonor the cause of truth.

In the days of Samuel, Israel thought that the presence of the ark containing the commandments of God would insure them the victory over the Philistines,
whether or not they repented of their wicked works. Just so, in Jeremiah’s time, the Jews believed that a strict observance of the divinely appointed services of the temple would preserve them from a just punishment of their sinful course.

The same danger exists today among the people who profess to be the depository of God’s law. They are too apt to flatter themselves that the regard in which they hold the commandments will preserve them from the power of divine justice. They refuse to be reproved for evil, and charge the servants of God with being too zealous in putting sin out of the camp. A sin-hating God calls upon those who profess to keep His law to depart from all iniquity. Neglect to repent and to obey His word will bring as serious consequences upon God’s servants today as did the same sin upon ancient Israel. There is a limit beyond which He will no longer delay His judgments. The desolation of Jerusalem stands as a warning before the eyes of modern Israel, that the corrections given through His chosen instruments cannot be disregarded with impunity.

When the priests and the people heard the message that Jeremiah delivered to them in the name of the Lord, they were very angry, and declared that he should die. They were boisterous in their denunciations of him, crying, “Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the Lord, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant? And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the Lord.” [Jeremiah 26:9] Thus was the message of God despised, and the servant with whom He entrusted it threatened with death. The priests, the unfaithful prophets, and all the people turned in wrath upon him who would not speak to them smooth things and prophesy deceit.

The princes of Judah heard concerning the words of Jeremiah, and they came up from the king’s house and sat in the entry of the Lord’s house. “Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, This man is worthy to die; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears.” [vs. 11] But Jeremiah stood boldly before the princes and the people, declaring: “The Lord sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard. Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God; and the Lord will repent Him of the evil He hath pronounced against you. As for me, behold I am in your hand; do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you. But know ye for certain that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof; for of a truth the Lord hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears.” [vss. 12-14]

Had the prophet been intimidated, he would have lost his life

The influence of these powerful persons produced a reaction in the minds of the people. Then the elders united in protesting against the decision of the priests regarding the fate of Jeremiah. They cited the case of Micah, who prophesied judgments upon Jerusalem, saying, “Zion shall be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.” [Micah 3:12] And they asked, “Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him at all to death? Did he not fear the Lord, and besought the Lord, and the Lord repented Him of the evil which He had pronounced against them? Thus might we procure great evil against our souls.” [Jeremiah 26:19]

Through the pleading of these men of influence the prophet’s life was spared; although many of the priests and false prophets, unable to endure the truths that he uttered, exposing their wickedness, would have been pleased had he been put to death on the plea of sedition.

But Israel remained unrepentant; and the Lord saw that they must be punished for their sins. He had long delayed His judgments because of His unwillingness to humiliate His chosen people, and had pleaded with them to return to their allegiance. He had brought them out of bondage that they might faithfully serve Him, the only living and true God; but they had wandered into idolatry, they had slighted His warnings given them by His prophets. Yet He had deferred His chastisement, and had given them opportunity after opportunity to repent and avert the retribution for their sins. Through His chosen prophet, He had set before them in clear and positive terms the only course by which they could escape the punishment which they deserved—a full repentance of their sins, and a turning from the evil of their
God has instituted no new plan to preserve the purity of His people. But they would not heed His warnings and reproves, and now He would visit His displeasure upon them, as a last effort to check them in their course of transgression.

In these days He has instituted no new plan to preserve the purity of His people. As of old, He entreats the erring ones who profess His name to repent and turn from their evil ways. Now, as then, by the mouth of His chosen servants He predicts the dangers before them. He sounds the note of warning and reproves sin just as faithfully as in the days of Jeremiah. But the Israel of our time have the same temptations to scorn reproval and hate.
For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Our minds are directed in this Scripture to the realities of the Christian life. We are reminded that it is a warfare. And we are reminded that this warfare is not fought with physical weapons. Yet the weapons we use are very powerful, as is the enemy that we face.

Then we notice Paul's reference to imaginations, associated with a reference to strongholds. A stronghold to the apostle Paul would be a fortress, probably with double walls some distance apart, and the space filled with rubble. They would be places where men could stand behind battlements and pour hot lead on the foe, or throw rocks or spears at them. A tremendous amount of will, a tremendous amount of energy, and some very powerful weapons were required to batter down a stronghold.

And the imagination is associated in Paul's mind with a stronghold. It is that formidable a thing. Worse still, the imagination is cast in the role of an enemy, a formidable, a powerful enemy.

This statement agrees with other Scriptures. Genesis, chapter 6, verse 5: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

Genesis, chapter 8, verse 21: "For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." It is not only a formidable enemy, it is also a lifelong enemy. Deuteronomy, chapter 29, verse 19: "And it come to pass when he heareth the words of this curse, (that is, the curse on those who worship false gods), "that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst."

Deuteronomy, chapter 31, verse 21: "For I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I sware." Jeremiah, chapter 7, verse 24: "But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward." Jeremiah uses similar language in eight different places in his book.

In the Bible record as a whole, we find the word "imagination" or "imagine" used 36 times, and 35 of them are in a negative sense, implying that the imagination is an enemy. 1 Chronicles, chapter 29, verse 18 is the only positive use of the word "imagine" in the whole Bible. "O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of Thy people, and prepare their heart unto Thee." In all the other verses the imagination is cast in
the role of an enemy.

Is it always wrong, then, to use the imagination? No. But it is always dangerous. It needs to be used with the greatest care, prudence, and vigilance. "Why? What is so dangerous about the imagination?" you ask. "The imagination isn't doing anything." But that is a misunderstanding. The imagination is doing something, something very real, very practical, very concrete. It is doing it in your brain.

If you have ever attended one of the Five-day Plans to Stop Smoking, you have heard the physicians there explain the functioning of the brain. They state that there are two different functions performed by different portions of the brain. In one part of the brain imagining takes place: thinking, conceptualizing, the picturing of an action in your "mind's eye." In the other portion of the brain, the activating is done.

Think for a moment about an automobile. You can sit in your car with the gear shift in "park" or "neutral," with the emergency brake set, and race the engine at 7500 revolutions per minute. Since this will cause a terrific amount of vibration, we do not recommend it, but it can be done.

Now, observe that when you are doing that, all of the various elements that make that engine a power plant are working. The fuel pump is drawing gasoline from the tank and running it through the carburetor, which mixes it with air and passes it into the intake manifold and thence to the cylinders where it explodes. The electrical system is bringing a spark from the battery through the coil and the distributor and the spark plugs to the various cylinders, where it will provide the energy to make the gasoline fumes explode. As that explosion is occurring, the pistons are moving up and down in the chambers and turning the crankshaft delivering the power. The oil pump is pumping oil all through the engine to lubricate it, and the water pump is drawing water from the radiator and pumping it all through the water jacket of the engine to cool it. Everything then is working just as if you were sailing down the road at high speed.

In what way is the function of the engine different when it is racing at 7500 revolutions per minute with the wheels not turning, than when it is actually doing. 

Then you say, "I'll do it." Now the activating part of your brain starts functioning. And so you go to the pool and you actually walk out on the board, and take your steps and bounce, and you stretch for the sky and glide down into the water to the bottom of the pool. What is different now? The difference is entirely, the experts say, in the activating portion of the brain. In the conceptualizing portion of the brain there is no change. This part of the brain is doing, while you actually perform the thing, exactly what it was doing when you were sitting in your chair thinking about it.

Practice makes perfect, they say. This may be an over statement, but it contains truth: Maybe practice will not make perfect, but practice will certainly improve your performance in any role. The musician spends hours practicing. The golfer practices. The basketball player practices. The singer practices. Why? What learns? Do your muscles learn? I doubt it. Muscles become more flexible, and stronger. But do muscles learn? I doubt it. The learning is in the brain.

Here the experts tell us that something physical is actually happening. At this point we must retreat into symbolic language, because the experts have not yet found a way to tell us in precise detail what actually happens. But they generally agree that something physical does happen, in the brain cells. Some call it a forming

Continued on 29
are marrying into a family. And it is of great help to know that the parents of both partners contemplating marriage are in harmony with the decision and are happy to accept the other partners into the family circle. This acceptance certainly reduces the tension and the estrangements that can develop when willful marriages are contracted independent of parental advice.

Fourth, “Have we known each other long enough and in sufficiently varied circumstances to be sure that God is leading us together?” There is no reason for Christian young people to marry with little understanding of each other’s character or purposes. Of course if there has been an opportunity in group situations to get to know each other in the widest sphere, then this will be a great asset when specific courting takes place. Even so it is essential that young people be objective enough to understand the characteristics of the other, so that they may be able to make their early marital adjustment as simple and as successful as possible.

Fifth, “Have we both learned Christ-control as the basis of our relationship?” There is no way that marriage can successfully be entered into in a willful or irresponsible way. The control of Christ not only includes the area of sex but also all facets of life in preparation for marriage. This control provides a fine security for married life. Such self-control will be characterized by the avoidance of late nights together which in themselves produce pitfalls even for the Christian young person.

Sixth, “Do we have an understanding of the proper approach to Christian stewardship as a part of true Christian development and home establishment?” Finances can produce inordinate difficulties within a marital situation, and careful evaluation of how finances will be handled and the respective responsibilities of both the wife and the husband in this area ought to be understood before marriage. The responsibility to God as well as the careful disbursement of funds ought to be discussed, and compatibility on these matters sought.

Seventh, the relationship to family expectations should be explored, including the attitude toward children, the number thought desirable, as well as attitudes toward their management and education. Even attitudes toward home location, tastes and such matters should be well understood. In fact, the more areas discussed and the more agreements reached, the greater will be the possibility of forging a successful marriage, for in marriage there will be enough unexpected decisions to make without husband and wife having to be concerned with decisions which could have been faced before marriage. In making these decisions together the couple can establish a strong basis for open communication in marriage.

Then there is the relationship to God. There is importance in learning to pray together, to study God’s word together and to work for Christ together. The courtship ought to be the basis upon which subsequent home values will be established and those areas which will tend toward the happiness of the home ought to be practiced before marriage.

The home ought to be a Christian witnessing unit, and the effective establishment of this foundation surely starts in the courtship period. The fabric of society is built around the establishment of strong, secure and stable homes and not only in the mental health of the contracting parties involved but also in that of every child born into the newly established family. A high level of mental disorder in society today must be traced primarily to the instability of the home and the insecurity of the family relationships. Those homes established upon the principles of Christ, secured by Christ in love, are clearly the most effective bulwarks against the collapse of society.
portant truth to men, and He wished to impress their minds with the necessity of receiving and obeying His precepts and instructions, of doing their present duty, and His communications were of an order that imparted knowledge for their immediate and daily use.

Jesus said: “This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” [John 17:3] All that was done and said had this one object in view—to rivet truth in their minds that they might attain unto everlasting life. Jesus did not come to astonish men with some great announcement of some special time when some great event would occur, but He came to instruct and save the lost. He did not come to arouse and gratify curiosity; for He knew that this would but increase the appetite for the curious and the marvelous. It was His aim to impart knowledge whereby men might increase in spiritual strength, and advance in the way of obedience and true holiness. He gave only such instruction as could be appropriated to the needs of their daily life, only such truth as could be given to others for the same appropriation. He did not make new revelations to men, but opened to them the understanding truths that had long been obscured or misplaced through the false teaching of the priests and teachers. Jesus replaced the gems of divine truth in their proper setting, in the order in which they had been given to patriarchs and prophets. And after giving them this precious instruction, He promised to them the Holy Spirit whereby all things that He had said unto them should be brought to their remembrance.

We are in continual danger of getting above the simplicity of the gospel. There is an intense desire on the part of many to startle the world with something original, that shall lift the people into a state of spiritual ecstasy, and change the present order of experience. There is certainly great need of a change in the present order of experience; for the sacredness of present truth is not realized as it should be, but the change we need is a change of heart, and can only be obtained by seeking God individually for His blessing, by pleading with Him for His power, by fervently praying that His grace may come upon us, and that our characters may be transformed.

We have failed to perceive the beauty of the truth intrusted to us

This is the change we need today, and for the attainment of this experience we should exercise persevering energy and manifest heartfelt earnestness. We should ask with true sincerity, “What shall I do to be saved?” We should know just what steps we are taking heavenward.

Christ gave to His disciples truths whose breadth and depth and value they little appreciated, or even comprehended, and the same condition exists among the people of God today. We have failed to take in the greatness, to perceive the beauty of the truth which God has intrusted to us today. Should we advance in spiritual knowledge, we would see the truth developing and expanding in the lines of which we have little dreamed, but it will never develop in any line that will lead us to imagine that we may know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power. Again and again have I been warned in regard to time setting. There will never again be a message for the people of God that will be based on time. We are not to know the definite time either for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit or for the coming of Christ.

I was searching through my writings, before coming to this meeting, to see what I should take with me to Australia, and I found an envelope on which was written, “Testimony given in regard to time setting, June 21, 1851. Preserve carefully.” I opened it, and this is what I found. It reads: “A copy of a vision the Lord gave Sister White June 21, 1851, at Camden, New York. The Lord showed me that the message must go, and that it must not be hung on time; for time will never be a test again. I saw that some were getting a false excitement, arising from preaching time, that the third angel’s message can stand on its own foundation, and that it needs not time to strengthen it, and that it will go with mighty power, and do its work, and will be cut short in righteousness.

“I saw some were making everything bend to this next fall; that is, making their calculations, and disposing of their property in reference to that time. I saw that this was wrong for this reason, instead of going to God daily, and earnestly desiring to know their present duty, they looked ahead, and made their calculations as though they knew that the work would end this fall, without inquiring their duty of God daily.” E. G. White

(Copied at Milton, June 29, 1851. A. A. G.)

This was the document I came upon last Monday in searching over my writings, and here is another which was written in regard to a man who was setting time in 1884, and sending broad-
cast his arguments to prove his theories. The report of what he was doing was brought to me at the Jackson, Michigan, camp meeting, and I told the people they need not take heed to this man’s theory; for the event he predicted would not take place. The times and the seasons God has put in His own power, and why has not God given us this

You will not be able to say that He will come in one, two, or five years

knowledge? Because we would not make a right use of it if He did. A condition of things would result from this knowledge among our people that would greatly retard the work of God in preparing a people to stand in the great day that is to come. We are not to live upon time excitement. We are not to be engrossed with speculations in regard to the times and the seasons which God has not revealed. Jesus has told His disciples to “watch,” but not for definite time. His followers are to be in the position of those who are listening for the orders of their Captain; they are to watch, wait, pray, and work, as they approach the time for the coming of the Lord; but no one will be able to predict just when that time will come; for “of that day and hour knoweth no man.” [Matthew 24:36] You will not be able to say that He will come in one, two, or five years, neither are you to put off His coming by stating that it may not be for ten or twenty years.

It is the duty of the people of God to have their lamps trimmed and burning, to be as men that wait for the Bridegroom, when He shall return from the wedding. You have not a moment to lose in neglect of the great salvation that has been provided for you. The time of the probation of souls is coming to an end. From day to day the destiny of men is being sealed, and even from this congregation we know not how soon many shall close their eyes in death and be habited for the tomb. We should now consider that our life is swiftly passing away, that we are not safe one moment unless our life is hid with Christ in God. Our duty is not to be looking forward to some special time for some special work to be done for us, but to go forward in our work of warning the world; for we are to be witnesses of Christ to the uttermost parts of the world. All around us are the young, the impenitent, the unconverted, and what are we doing for them? Parents, in the arbor of your first love, are you seeking for the conversion of your children, or are you engrossed with the things of this life to such an extent that you are not making earnest efforts to be laborers together with God? Do you have an appreciation of the work and mission of the Holy Spirit? Do you realize that the Holy Spirit is the agency whereby

Will the truth leak out of your heart as water out of a broken vessel?

we are to reach the souls of those around us? When this meeting shall close, will you go from here and forget the earnest appeals that have been made to you? Will the messages of warning be left unheeded, and the truth you have heard leak out of your heart as water leaks out of a broken vessel?

The apostle says, “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will?” [Hebrews 2:1-4]

The third angel’s message is swelling into a loud cry, and you must not feel at liberty to neglect the present duty, and still entertain the idea that at some future time you will be the recipients of great blessing, when without any effort on your part a wonderful revival will take place. Today you are to give yourselves to God, that you may be emptied of self, emptied of envy, jealousy, evil-surmising, strife, everything that

The blessing of God will fill every soul that is purified from every defilement

shall be dishonoring to God. Today you are to have your vessel purified that it may be ready for the heavenly dew, ready for the showers of the latter rain; for the latter rain will come, and the blessing of God will fill every soul that is purified from every defilement. It is our work today to yield our souls to Christ, that we may be fitted for the time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord—fitted for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Review and Herald, March 22, 1892
In spite of great uncertainties associated with marriage as revealed in ongoing divorce statistics, there nevertheless seems to be an almost indecent haste for young people to enter into the marital state. Modern society has placed unreasonable pressures upon the immature, thus sowing seeds for problems in later life. Much of this pressure could be traced back to the elementary school where children totally unable to handle the issue of dating, are almost forced by circumstances into accepting a role designed for much older and more experienced human beings. Frequently, banquets and other social events force immature youngsters into dating arrangements in such a way that these immature children are led to believe that unless they have a partner of the opposite sex, somehow they are not being accepted. The dangers of early dating and romances cannot be overstressed. Such a course stimulates the sexual drive and leads naturally toward the habituation of promiscuous practices at a time when youngsters are too immature to handle, or even understand, the consequences of their action.

This situation persists into the academy-age level where there is a great intensification of relationships, and long before these young people have the opportunity of fully surrendering their lives to Christ, many of them have succumbed to the pressure of premarital sexual relationships, which often haunt them for the rest of their lives. These immature romances do much to frustrate the educational and emotional development of young people, for when they have “fallen in love” they find it very difficult to concentrate upon their study programs. When the immature relationship breaks, they are distressed and there is a concomitant loss of emotional poise and academic achievement. Dating encourages trifling with the affections and the emotions of members of the opposite sex and cannot but have many harmful consequences.

There are suggestions that young people are more mature today than they were in former generations, but this assertion may not be borne out if the evaluation is based upon emotional maturity rather than general knowledge. Certainly the complexity of modern society dictates that it will take a much more mature person today than in previous generations to forge a successful marriage. Thus in general, wisdom indicates that there should be a slowing down rather than a speeding up of the movement toward marriage.

There is always resistance to any reactionary suggestions, but it does seem that there is a need to return to “the old paths, where is the good way,” (Jeremiah 6:16)

It is obvious that our forefathers were able to establish more secure and more lasting marital relationships. In an age where fifty per cent of all marriages are destined to end in divorce, there is good reason for the Christian to look back to those situations which helped facilitate the security and the endurance of the marriage relationship.

College has often become a time of frantic expectation on
the part of many mothers, hoping against hope that their daughters may find a young man to marry. To many young people, it appears that the most important reason for being at college is to find a life partner. While this achievement may be a very excellent spin-off from a college education, nothing should detract from the primary emphasis of the education of young men and women to play their roles in developing the talents that God has entrusted to them. Anything which seriously detracts from this purpose, even if it is a romance, ought not to be encouraged. In general, many young people are taking upon themselves inordinate responsibilities during their college life. They find it almost impossible to meet the financial strains upon them. Often at least one of the partners has to drop out of school, sometimes both. And if both do succeed in remaining in school, unless they have a strong financial support, perhaps from parents, they are likely to establish huge debts by accepting money from loan programs, and therefore are faced with the added strain of financial difficulties for years to come.

The seeds of infidelity have often already been sown.

It is usually best if young people can complete their academic work and have the security of a steady income before the responsibilities of marriage are accepted. It must be granted that this aim is sometimes difficult to realize, especially in professional areas where in America postgraduate programs are necessary before employment can be obtained (e.g., in medicine, dentistry, law and other professions). However, the further this step can be postponed, the greater the likelihood of reducing the pressures competing against the balanced development of the young people concerned. Nevertheless, it is most difficult to resist the social pressures placed upon the youth in their early years, and often an early marriage is considered the answer.

One does not here advocate the segregation of the sexes until young people are mature. On the contrary, there is an essential need for young men and young women to fellowship together in an open and relaxed environment. It would be much safer however, and would lead to more mature relationships later if young people were allowed to mix in small groups over a considerable period of time without engaging in any specialized relationships. In this way they would get to know each other in more informal relationships, beginning to understand the qualities and the weaknesses of one another and to make firmer evaluation when later they may seek a more intimate, individualized relationship with one of the group. Too often young people who do not know each other and perhaps have hardly met before, date, and before long an emotional relationship and attachment have developed. It is obvious that in these first experiences, both have little concept of the character of the other, and when the true character begins to be revealed, the emotional attachment is often too strong and the courage too little, for a proper decision to be made. Thus before any specialized dating takes place, it is wise if both already have a firm knowledge of the character of each other, and both are old enough to act in a responsible way.

The concept so rampant in society today of dating about could hardly be consistent with God's pattern for His children. Frequently young people have dated scores of other young people and have cast their affections, often most passionately, upon a wide range of members of the opposite sex. Humans are creatures of habit and the development of a pattern of intimate relationships with a large number of members of the opposite sex in itself is habit forming and will militate against holding the marriage inviolate when one is eventually chosen as a life partner. It will be more difficult to break the habit of casting affection on other individuals. Thus the seeds of infidelity and marital discord have often already been sown. This practice becomes even more critical if there have been sexual relationships with some of these other individuals. Whereas commonly accepted dictums indicate that premarital relationships are sound, or at least acceptable, preparations for marriage, in reality they are one of the greatest causes of marital break down, for there is a direct relationship between the amount of promiscuity before marriage and the prospect of a successful marriage. In fact, it would be fair to say that very few marriages in which there has been much promiscuousness by both parties before marriage, are likely to survive inviolate, unless there is a deep later acceptance of Christ in the lives of both partners. Habit patterns are strong, and after a short period of time, the partners will become bored with, and disinterested in, the partner they have chosen. There will be the tendency to look for "new fields to conquer." In the promiscuity of youth are sown the seeds of infidelity in marriage.

There will be a tendency to look for new fields to conquer.
Neither can we overlook the effect of promiscuousness upon the total emotional development of young people. There are the inevitable feelings of guilt associated with illicit sexual relationships, and this result is especially true in the life of those who have a Christian background. Often this guilt is hard to live with, and frequently leads to feelings of inadequacies and low self-esteem. Tragically there is frequently a vicious circle in which, because of the developing low self-esteem, the individual accentuates the promiscuous behavior, and that in turn only reinforces the low self-image.

A life of purity and chastity is still a wonderful safeguard against inferiority feelings, and even parents who think that by dispensing the pill to their daughter they have safeguarded her against the possibility of a pregnancy, have in no wise overcome the psychological and spiritual loss that is associated with pregnancies contracted outside of marriage. Once again, conflict is thrown into the life of the immature youth. Those who have strong moral convictions will recognize that abortion is certainly not an acceptable solution to their wrong practices. Two wrongs do not make a right. And while there are conflicting reports as to the emotional response to abortions, nevertheless, there is a wide spectrum of evidence to indicate that at least a large percentage of women suffer considerable, if not irreparable, emotional damage as a result of abortions. Irrespective of the emotional reaction, there are deep spiritual reasons why a Christian will not want to subject herself to a permissive abortion.

Permissive abortion fits into the hedonistic culture of modern society where men and women are most concerned in avoiding the consequences of wrong acts. But certainly one sin should not be used to efface the consequences of another, and this surely is the basis of permissive abortion.

Unfortunately, in contemporary society, where the goddess of sex has been established just as effectively as it was established among the heathen nations in times past, it has become increasingly popular to allow the counseling of young people to be dominated by discussions of sex as if it were the most essential aspect of a successful marriage. Thus young people are reinforced in the view that sex is the prime purpose of marriage. They come to believe that any problem that might be experienced or that anything less than their ideal of a sexual relationship is grounds for marital dissatisfaction.

There are many vital questions needing to be asked by young people facing marriage, for the quality of courtship influences the later direction of the marriage. The first and most important questions are, "Will the marriage honor God?" The next is, "Will the union allow us to better fulfill God's purpose in each of our lives?" To come into unity with God is to forge a solid unity with each other in courtship and marriage. Two young people seeking to link their lives together should be convinced that they are one in purpose and one in objectives. This conviction of course does not mean that one must subordinate his interest to the other, but that there will be a harmony of direction as each complements and supplements the other in fulfilling the call of Christ. Each needs to understand the other's relationship to God and determination to follow His leading. The character, actions and habits of the other should be weighed carefully. There is no way in which a Christian can be united in marriage with a non-Christian and honor God. The Bible calls it an unequal yoking together. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Corinthians 6:14) Neither is it good enough that the planned partner is a professing Christian. True and complete Christian commitment is the only basis for a happy, fulfilling Christian marriage.

Second, each must understand the many responsibilities that marriage brings and the selfless foundation upon which true marital happiness is established. Both must honestly ask the question as to whether they are seeking marriage purely to subserve their own personal interests, or whether there is such a genuine love for the other that their primary purpose in marriage is to seek the fulfillment and happiness of the partner that they are accepting in marriage.

A third important question is, "Have we sought wide counsel from spiritual people, especially our parents?" if these are committed Christians. Good parents seek only the happiness and success of their children. And in

The character of the other should be weighed carefully.

God's provisions for young people it is a counsel that they can receive both from their own parents and then from other Christian adults. Often it will not be completely possible for these persons to fully verbalize their reservations if they have them, but nevertheless the wisdom of age should not be flouted for the impulsiveness of youth. Even in this nuclear society, young people
An Interview with Ellen G. White

When perplexities arise, it is natural to seek some source of safe counsel. Every Seventh-day Adventist has surely, at one time or another, thought wistfully of the "early days" when there was the possibility of an interview with Sister White.

In past issues of Our Firm Foundation we have printed compiled and arranged "interviews" with Sister White. This month we break that trend and bring you the verbatim account of an actual interview between Ellen White and a number of her brethren. The subject under discussion is the health work of the church. The date is April 13, 1902.

Since lack of space prevents the printing of the complete transcript, we will join them now, with the discussion already in progress.

W.C. White: Another question, Mother, that we have been considering is, What is our duty in the matter of establishing restaurants? We have heard you say in private and in public, and have read in what you have written, something with reference to the advantages to the cause, of establishing vegetarian restaurants. Recently there have seemed to be some good openings. The difficulty that we have been considering is the expense. To establish a restaurant according to the plan on which they are usually conducted, means an investment of from seven hundred to a thousand dollars.

When Dr. Kellogg was here last, he was much interested in our food stores, and the Doctor suggested that we consider the advisability of establishing restaurants in an inexpensive way in connection with these stores. We have thought that such beginnings could be made with an outlay of two or three hundred dollars in a place. What would you think of that plan?

Mrs. E.G. White: That would be a very small outlay, would it not? Could you limit the expenditure to that amount? I should think that you would have to expend a little more than that.

W.C. White: If the restaurants succeed at all, they would grow and require more. That is the case with our children—as they grow larger, and we see them develop, we are ready to spend more on them.

There is a question in our minds as to whether it would be right to make the Food Company more independent, more self-reliant, than it has been in the past, and then encourage it to take up the restaurant business, and introduce restaurants in connection with its stores...

Mrs. E.G. White: I have much to say in regard to hygienic restaurants, sanitariums, and the health foods. I am perplexed to know where to begin.
The light given me is, that instead of presenting the subject of health reform abruptly to a congrega-
tion of unbelievers, our laborers should first reach
the hearts by presenting Christ and Him crucified.
Many unbelievers know no more of health reform
than do babies. True, the laborers must dwell on
reforms; but let them first endeavor to touch and
tender the hearts of the people and lead them to be
converted. After conversion, men and women will be
ready to receive instruction in regard to further
reforms, and will permit their teachers to lead them
along step by step into the full light of the present
truth.

While in New York last winter, I received light in
regard to hygienic restaurants. Night after night the
course that our brethren should pursue in that city
passed before me. They have a vegetarian restaurant
in Brooklyn. They should go forward in the estab-
lishment of other hygienic restaurants. Instead of
resting satisfied with having only the one that has
been opened, they are to open other restaurants in
various sections of the city. The people living in one
part of Greater New York do not usually know what
is going on in the other parts of that great city; and
therefore it is necessary to establish many restaur-
ants. As men and women eat at these places, they
will become conscious of an improvement in health.
Their confidence once gained, they are more ready to
accept God's special message of truth.

Whenever in our large cities there is a strong
educational missionary work being carried forward,
there should be some sort of hygienic restaurant es-
ablished, which shall demonstrate to the people right
methods in the selection and preparation of food.

When in Los Angeles, I was shown that not only in
various sections of that city, but in San Diego and in
smaller tourist resorts of Southern California, health
restaurants and treatment rooms should be estab-
lished. Our efforts should include the great seaside
resorts.

H. H. Haynes: Here is a question that has been
asked me by a great many of our people within the
last year. They say, "We could open a health board-
ing house; but would it be right to do this and serve
guests on the Sabbath, and have them around on that
day as we should in an ordinary boarding-house?"

Mrs. E. G. White: I have had no special light in
regard to its being the duty of our people to conduct
boarding-houses something after the order of hotels.
Years ago the brethren began to work in that line in
Battle Creek, but the Lord forbade them to continue.

It began in the sanitarium before Dr. Kellogg
came into the institution. Persons who came there to
board and room brought in chess playing and many
other amusements. This was not right, and the Lord
rebuked the management. Our sanitariums are not to
cater to the perverted tastes of worldly people. The
same evils have existed in the sanitarium on the hill-
side. A few years ago the managers made it more of a
hotel than an institution for healing the sick. In the
rooms of the guests could be seen the wine bottles
that they had brought with them. The boarders in-
dulged appetite for many harmful things. God was
not at all pleased with the course pursued by the
management in allowing such indulgence; for His
purpose in the establishment of the institution was
not being carried out. He sent light in regard to it,
and the result was that some in leading positions
withdrew. They said, "If we refuse to serve meat, we
cannot hold the patrons." But whether patronage in-
creases or decreases, right principles must be upheld
in the Lord's institutions. In all our work we are to
show the advantage of a health-reform diet. Between
us and the world there is to be a distinct line of
demarcation.

We are not building sanitariums for hotels.
Receive into sanitariums, only those persons who
desire to conform to right principles. Let them use
the foods that we place before them. If we should al-
low them to have intoxicating liquors in their rooms,

or should serve them with meat, how can we give
them the help they should receive in coming to our
sanitariums? We must let them know that we have
principle enough to keep such articles out of the in-
nstitution. The same is true in the hygienic restaur-
ants. We must be as true to principle as the needle to
the pole. We have no time to dally. Do we not have a
desire to see our fellow beings freed from disease
and infirmity and in the enjoyment of health and
strength?

To return to the question concerning board-
ing-houses: I have not seen, and cannot now see, any light
in opening a boarding-house for the purpose of
taking in every tourist that desires merely food and
lodging. I have had light, however, that in many
cities it is advisable for a restaurant to be connected
with treatment rooms. The two can work in harmony,
and uphold right principles. In connection with our
treatment rooms and restaurants in the cities, it is
sometimes advisable to have rooms where we can pro-
vide lodging for the sick. But we are not to erect in
the cities immense buildings in which to care for the
sick, because God does not want them to remain in
the cities...

All the way along from the beginning, we have
found it necessary to educate, educate, educate. God
desires us to continue the work of educating the
people. We are not to neglect this work because of the
effect we may fear it will have on the sales of the
goods prepared in the health food factories. That is
not the most important matter. Our work is to show
the people how they can obtain and prepare
wholesome food, how they can cooperate with God in
restoring His moral image in themselves. In the effort to help them, difficulties will arise. Some have written to me about the recipes for using the nut preparations, saying that the foods as prepared do not agree with them, and that they have written to the Sanitarium and to others, but have not learned the cause of the difficulty. In replying to such inquiries, I have suggested that they use only one-fifth part of the nut preparations called for in the recipes. This is the instruction given me. It would be a blessing if our cookbooks were pruned of some of the recipes appearing in them.

In the use of foods we should exercise good judgment, and sound sense. When we find that something does not agree with us, we need not write letters of inquiry to learn the cause of the disturbance. We are to use our reason. Change the diet; use less of some of the foods; try other preparations. Soon we shall know the effect that certain combinations have on us. We are not machines; we are intelligent human beings; and we are to exercise our common sense. We can experiment with different combinations of foods.

There are persons who would be more benefited by abstinence from food for a day or two every week than by any amount of medicine or treatment or medical advice. To fast one day a week would be of incalculable benefit to them. It is foolish for one to keep on eating day after day, and yet wonder why he is in distress. Let such an one relieve himself from distress by changing his diet or by eating less. If he wills to do so, he can soon obtain relief.

God never intended that the manufacture of health foods should be committed to any one man or set of men. Knowledge in regard to the preparation of health foods is God's property, and has not been entrusted to a few men only, to be kept to themselves. God communicates to man in order that man may communicate to his fellow men. In saying this, I do not refer to the special preparations that it has taken Dr. Kellogg and others long study and much expense to perfect. I refer especially to the simple preparations that all can make for themselves, instruction in regard to which should be given to those who desire to live healthfully, and especially to the poor.

There is one thing that our brethren have done, which has wrought great injury to the work. God has given us knowledge in the manufacture of foods, as a means of helping to sustain the cause; yet there are some who have been so indiscreet as to disclose to worldly men secrets in regard to the preparation of health foods. Thus they have abused their God-given trust. They ought to have kept their own counsel, and allowed the Lord to lead.

It is the Lord's design that in every place men and women shall have the privilege of developing their talents by preparing healthful foods from the natural products of their section of the country. No man is to forbid them. If they look to God, exercising their skill and ingenuity under the guidance of His Spirit, they will learn how to prepare natural products into healthful foods. Thus they will be able to teach the poor how to prepare foods that will take the place of flesh meat. Those thus helped can in turn instruct others. Such a work will yet be done. If it had been done before, there would today be many more people in the truth than there are, and we should have had many more who could give instruction, than we have.

Let us learn what our duty is, and then do it. We are not to be dependent and helpless, trusting in human beings.

In reform movements, too often our leaders do not take the people with them. My husband was very particular in regard to this point. He tried to move no faster than he could lead the people. He regarded it as beneficial to the cause of truth to counsel with the brethren and sisters, as we have met for counsel today. After laying his plans before the council, he would say, "If you all agree to these plans, we will place them before our people. They support the work in the field, and we must bring these things to their attention, that we may all move understandingly, working to one point."

I cannot enter into the minutiae in regard to the health food business. The details must be worked out by others, and these must be men and women of consecration and common sense. Many ask, "What would you do in such and such a case?"

My brethren and sisters, find out what to do when you come to the perplexity. You cannot learn everything at once. You must learn as you advance. Constantly advance. There should be a gradual development. Learn from another. Pray for divine enlightenment. God has skill and understanding for His people. He who gave manna to the Israelites for forty years, who kept their shoes and clothing from waxing old and worn, still has a care for His children. If we place ourselves in right relation to Him, and daily commune with Him, we shall be taught of Him, and shall receive His blessing.

"Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples.... If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love. These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." [John 15:8, 10, 11] Into every department of God's work there is to be brought hope, courage and joy—the joy of Christ. Then spiritual things will be spiritually discerned. The joy of the Lord is as far above every other joy as holiness is above unholiness. It gives strength to the physical, mental, and spiritual powers.

*The Kress Collection, 141-146*
Seventh-day Adventists have long taken an active interest in the workings of the "right arm of the message," and this is as it should be. Understandably, when changes are made, they seek to be intelligent as to the reasons for the changes, and the effect upon the cause of God. One such change, concerning the diet provided for patients at Adventist medical institutions, is clearly explained in the following selection from The Rise and Decline of Vegetarianism in Seventh-day Adventist Health Care Institutions, a "shelf document" written in 1978 by A.L. White and printed by the Ellen G. White Estate.

In 1953 the dietary program of the Porter Sanitarium and Hospital was changed to allow the serving of some meat. The steps taken and the reasons for those steps were explained by a member of the board and the manager of the nearby Boulder Sanitarium in a letter addressed to a General Conference vice-president. . . .

In his letter written September, 1956, he first gives the background: "The Porter Sanitarium and the Boulder Sanitarium for many years followed a very strict and rigid dietary program which in all sincerity, we believed represented the staunch support of our principles. In an effort to evaluate our own strong points and weaknesses, some few years ago, we embarked on a program of sending out questionnaires to our former patients asking for their appraisals. These questionnaires covered many aspects of service, including adequacy of our nursing care, courtesy of our personnel, and appraisal of our food service . . . . As we began to receive replies from these questionnaires, we became concerned, for the replies pointed up to us a situation we did not realize existed.

"Many replies disclosed an entire lack of understanding on the part of the patient as to why we were serving a vegetarian diet. They related it quite entirely to the peculiarity of our religion and attributed it to theology and not to health. . . ."

The sanitarium manager who was writing explained that after the board had determined that the vegetarian program was a matter of health and not of religion, they concluded that it should be "so understood and so presented," and they gave careful study to the various features of the course they should follow:

"We addressed ourselves to a careful study of the Spirit of Prophecy to determine whether we were taking a few clear instructions directed to us for benefit of our own lives and applying them by coercion to others who did not understand them or believe them. We found many statements in the Spirit of Prophecy which led us to the conclusion that Sister White plainly taught that a vegetarian diet was the better diet from a point of view of better health, that it was the diet we ought to follow in our own lives, that this was to be presented to our own people, particularly the workers in our medical institutions, and that the benefits of it ought to be presented to our patients, and that they ought to be taught and encouraged every possible way to claim these benefits as their own by practicing them in their own lives. We found many statements which led us to question whether it ever was the intent that this be a matter of duress and compulsion."

He then quoted a number of E.G. White statements . . . [some of which may be found in Medical Ministry, 226, 284-285, and Counsels on Diet and Foods, 281-298, 405-416], and set forth the conclusion of the board as to the direction they should take. The letter from which we quote outlines a strong educational program:

"This program includes a very material strengthening of our teaching program. We then were faced with a question as to how to most efficiently teach in view of the shortened stay. When these testimonies were written, patients came and stayed anywhere from one to three months in our institutions. Most of these patients were ambulatory and came to the parlor for lectures. Today practically all of our patients are confined to their beds and the average stay is little more than seven days. When these testimonies were given the institutions were staffed entirely by physicians concurring in these principles and endeavoring to carry them out in their practice of medicine. Today, regrettably, this is not the case.

"One of the first steps we took was to hire a nurse and assign her the task of teaching our patients by lectures, over the public address system, by distributing printed material, and by personal contacts. . . ."

"We also concluded that the health program was much, much
more than refraining from eating meat, and included the avoidance of excessive usage of sugar; avoidance of overeating, eating between meals, and eating late at night; proper preparation of simple foods in their natural state as far as possible; adequate rest; exercise, and many, many other elements. We thought these were just as important to bring to our patients as was the importance of a vegetarian diet.

"Next, we desired to present a selective menu to our patients. We determined that this menu would clearly state our best counsel on many of these suggestions. The menu regularly presents the following material:

[For space considerations, we have deleted the five points which followed. They offer good general counsel on sugar, cold drinks, green and yellow vegetables, whole-grain flours, and stimulants.]"

"After giving the people our very best counsel as to what we feel they should do and the scientific reasons supporting it, we then place [on the menu] a vegetarian entree, a clean-meat entree, and a fruit plate, then give the people their choice. The first meal that is served each patient is a vegetarian meal and in this they do not have a choice. After the first meal, the choice is theirs.

"Now you rightly question why we chose this method and why we did not leave it merely to doctor's orders. We would have pursued this method of leaving it to doctor's orders had we a staff educated along this line and committed to it, but following such a program with a staff both of our own doctors and those not of our own faith who are not entirely in harmony with the program, we felt it would immediately result in simply blanket orders on most of the patients to give them meat as desired, and that this would result in a far less controlled program than the one we adopted.

"These elective menus are used at the noonday meal only six days a week. No meat is served on Sabbath in our effort to minimize labor, and only one kind of our own choosing is served at the noonday meal of other days. When we serve around 3,200 meals, of this number about 600 will be meat meals."

The manager from whom we have quoted at length concludes with these observations:

"We believe that we are more nearly in harmony with the overall teaching of the Spirit of Prophecy than we were before. We believe our health principles are much better understood as principles of health and not as theology. We have eliminated a practice that was very common before and that was of having friends and doctors and relatives all carrying in under their arms to their patient friends all kinds of meat dishes. We believe it is the most reasonable approach to the program that has been taken in many years.

"I should also say that this entire program and these changes which we made here were not brought about by any pressure from the outside staff or any economic pressure from the institution, but our beds were full and not empty when we embarked upon this study." Letter dated September, 1956

All will agree that the program outlined in this letter written by an administrator who had lived his whole life in close proximity to sanitariums, for his father was a successful sanitarium manager before him, had many impressive features. If carried out it would provide a strong and favor-winning educational program, thus meeting one of the basic reasons for the Seventh-day Adventist Church to be engaged in operating healthcare institutions.

Now, my father early taught me that there is more than one right way to do some things. And it is altogether likely that this might be so in dealing with this delicate question. It would be difficult to fault the strong, broad educational program outlined by the board of the Porter Sanitarium and Hospital, and no doubt it would have gone a long way if carried out. But as is so often the case after a new program, based on and supported by a number of factors, is adopted, it is easy to lose sight of the supporting factors which got the program through the boards and committees and retain only the point on which there had been some seemingly justified compromise. [Emphasis in original]

At any rate, the much-loved sanitarium manager, now a part of the General Conference staff, became particularly zealous in urging all Seventh-day Adventist health institutions to modify the dietary program to include meat. There was some resistance, but the arguments were persuasive, so much so that probably not more than two major Seventh-day Adventist medical institutions in the United States today hold to a meatless dietary. A number of the self-supporting ASI institutions do.

At any rate, the arguments calling for the strong and effective educational efforts to keep the program within the perimeters of the God-given Spirit of Prophecy counsels were either largely forgotten or abandoned. This leaves most Seventh-day Adventist hospitals in the United States with the negative part of the program without the positive.

During the fifty years Seventh-day Adventist medical institutions operated on a vegetarian program, there was but little accepted scientific support for our stand. But this most certainly is not now the case. With the present-day support of science, if there was ever a time that Seventh-day Adventist healthcare institutions should be in the lead in dietetic reform, is it not just now? Would this not be so with us as reformers even without the guidelines of the Spirit of Prophecy? What an opportunity we are missing!

In the light of God's instructions to us, is our work being carried forward in a manner that the "Well done" may at last be said by the Judge of all the earth? If not, what course would God lead us to follow?
The peace that Christ calls His peace, and which He bequeathed to His disciples, is not a peace which prevents all divisions; but it is a peace which is given and enjoyed in the midst of divisions. The peace that the faithful defender of the cause of Christ has, is the consciousness that he is doing the will of God, and reflecting His glory in good works. It is an internal rather than an external peace. Without are wars and fightings through the opposition of avowed enemies, and the coldness and suspicion of those even who claim to be friends.

Christ enjoins upon His followers to “love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.” [Matthew 5:44] He would have us love those who oppress us and do us harm. We must not express in words and acts the spirit they manifest, but improve every opportunity to do them good.

But while we are required to be Christlike toward those who are our enemies, we must not, in order to have peace, cover up the faults of those we see in error. Jesus, the world’s Redeemer, never purchased peace by covering iniquity, or by anything like compromise. Though His heart was constantly overflowing with love for the whole human race, He was never indulgent to their sins. He was too much their friend to remain silent while they were pursuing a course which would ruin their souls—the souls He had purchased with His own blood. He was a stern reprover of all vice, and His peace was the consciousness of having done the will of His Father, rather than a condition of things that existed as the result of having done His duty.

He labored that man should be true to himself in being all that God would have him, and true to his higher and eternal interest. Living in a world marred and seared with the course brought upon it by disobedience, He could not be at peace with it unless He left it unwarmed, uninstructed, and unrebuked. This would be to purchase peace at the neglect of duty.

Every one who loves Jesus and the souls for whom He died will follow after the things that make for peace. But His followers are to take special care lest in their efforts to prevent discord, the truth is surrendered, lest in warding off divisions, they make a sacrifice of its principles. True brotherhood can never be maintained by compromising principles. As surely as Christians approach the Christlike model, and become more and more pure in spirit and in action, searching out and reproving sin, so surely will they experience the strength and the venom of that old serpent the devil. The opposition of the children of disobedience is excited by a Christianity that is spiritual.

“If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.” [Romans 12:18] A duty is here enjoined upon us. We are to strive to live at peace with all men. Every care should be taken on the part of Christians to give no offence, that the truth be not evil spoken of. But the text suggests that no amount of diligence and care will preserve this harmony in all cases. Dissensions will arise even between individual members of the church, because they are not Christlike in character.

But there will be a point where members must be separated from its fellowship because of their unchristian course of action. In the home they are oppressive, and a reproach to the cause of Christ. Their practices are inconsistent with truth and religion, and to retain them in church fellowship would be faithless to the Master.

The church as a body, is to do all in its power to promote union, and prevent schisms. This rule is designed to guide every individual member in his treatment of others. If unsound doctrine is introduced, it will endanger the flock of Christ. It is the duty of those in authority, who are jealous for the truth as it is in Jesus, to make a firm, decided protest. This expression of rebuke will often be used to create sympathy for the reproved. The harm that is thus done to precious souls and to Christ’s kingdom is not considered. At this crisis is the time to decide who are God’s faithful sentinels, who will be true to principle, who will bear in mind that truth is too dearly purchased for its least principle to be surrendered. That peace and harmony is not worthy of the name which is secured by mutual con-
cessions to avoid all differences of opinion. On points of feeling between man and man, concessions should sometimes be made; but never should one iota of principle be sacrificed in order to obtain harmony. All our words and actions pass in review before God, and if we wish to stand in the judgment as having done all that we could to have a correct influence over our fellowmen, we must repay kind acts for acts of mischief and malice. Christ is our Pattern: He would have us to follow Him.

To those who have been injured without a cause, the words of this Scripture apply: “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.” Their failure to comply with the instruction given in the text is not due to the course of action that they themselves have pursued, but is the envy, jealousy and evil surmising of those who have been in the wrong. Thus a division is caused. How can it be healed? Shall the man that has been sinned against, misjudged, and maligned be called to an account, to find something in his past course by which he can humiliate himself, and acknowledge himself in the wrong for the sake of making peace?—No; if he has conscientiously gone forward under the oppression of wicked feelings that have been welcomed in the hearts of the faultfinding, if he has been patient under the abuse, if he has tried to do his duty, he is not to humble himself to acknowledge that he is guilty. He does the offenders a great wrong thus to take their guilt upon his soul, admitting that he has given them occasion for their course of action, when he has done no such thing. This is very gratifying to those who have done the work of the enemy, but heaven’s books record the facts just as they stand. Concessions that are not true from the one who has been wrongfully treated gratifies the feelings of the carnal heart. Their position has been interpreted by them as zeal for God, when in truth it is zeal to do the work of the adversary of souls. They do not dig out from their hearts the root of bitterness, but leave the fibers to spring up when Satan shall stir them up again to active growth. But the axe must be laid at the root of the tree. Heart work is needed. True conversion is essential: the nature must be renewed after the divine image, until the work of grace is completed in the soul.

There is a work for us to do. We must begin here to cultivate the meekness of Christ. There are stern battles for us to fight against our traits of character which lead us to err in decisions that will make it hard and unfavorable for others. This is giving advantage to the enemy. We are not commended for a zeal that savors of Pharisaism: for this is not of Christ. We should not go to an extreme in false charity, neither of unbending severity in cases where kindness and mercy and love would have a telling power.

Manuscript 23b, July 25, 1896

Religious Liberty Update

Bad News for Freedom: The combined influence of William Rehnquist and Antonin Scalia may exceed the sum of their separate influence because the combination brings to the court a potential for leadership conspicuous by its absence since 1969. If so, drifting Supreme Court coalitions will be replaced with a consistent majority coalition committed to Rehnquist’s and Scalia’s moral vision of America, bad news for minorities, women, criminal defendants and other underdog litigants. But it will be good news for their appointing President.

The Arizona Republic, June 22, 1986

Malignant Merger: Americans United for Separation of Church and State will challenge a federal appellate court decision upholding U. S. diplomatic ties with the Vatican. Said Executive Director Robert L. Maddox, “We have a popular President and a popular pope. But that must not obscure the fact that our nation is governed by the Constitution. The President has no authority under the Constitution to set up a formal relationship with a church. In fact, he is expressly forbidden to do so by the First Amendment.”

Southern Baptist Convention TODAY, May, 1986

Sweeping Document: The Catholic Church has issued a sweeping document, the “Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation,” by the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (formerly Order of Inquisition). “The right to private property is inconceivable without responsibilities to the common good.” The “serious socio-economic problems” around the globe call for “new fronts of solidarity,” including institutions, social organizations, and governments.

California AFL/CIO News, May 2, 1986
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What a wonderful lady Ellen White was. I just used some information she wrote that appeared in a National Health Directory concerning weak and painful eyes. It works and it has been a real blessing to know something so simple to relieve a lot of pain. God bless you!

Enclosed is my check for six copies of the 32-page Health Emphasis issue. Do you have other material?

Susan Tyrrell
North Little Rock, Arkansas

We would be surprised, brethren, how many non-Adventists would praise the Lord for what we take for granted. Incidentally, we still have copies of the Health Emphasis issue on hand. In quantity they are just 50 cents each. —EDITORS

We were excited and blessed when we read your first copy of Our Firm Foundation at our daughter's place in Peachland, and have enjoyed every copy since. You are publishing material that satisfies the needs of our souls. Others with whom we've shared have expressed the same thoughts.

Jack and Nora McKinley
Chetwynd, British Columbia

I want to thank you for the complimentary copy of the March issue. I would like to subscribe. I think you are doing a good work. Keep it up. Enclosed is payment for a seven-year subscription. Thank you, and God bless.

Caleb Hill
Franklinton, North Carolina

Brother Hill's appreciation is an encouragement to us in our work, but we hope this publication—along with all else of this world—will be far behind us seven years from now. —EDITORS

Please send us a subscription of your wonderful Our Firm Foundation publication. It has been instrumental in our family recommitting our lives to Jesus. Thank you.

Linda Nichols
Chetwynd, British Columbia

God has blessed the Seventh-day Adventist Church with a great message. That is why I became an Adventist. My heart is deeply burdened, though, by the lack of commitment of the people to that message. They seem to see, yet they don't see, the holiness God has called for from His people.

I pray your publication of Our Firm Foundation will result in a greater commitment to God's message by His people.

James O. Mecks
Jacksonville, Florida

As one just returning to the church after a bout with doctrinal doubts and confusion (I almost joined Herbert Armstrong's Worldwide Church of God), I attribute much of my renewed confidence in our remnant church and its truths to the straightforward testimonies that I found in your God-inspired magazine.

Michael G. Titon
Niagara Falls, New York

It is "meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." —EDITORS

In answer to your little note at the bottom about the 50 July issues on the way, friends we "Thank you." We can't tell you how very much this is appreciated here.

We are almost finished distributing the first lot we received from you and people are so thankful. Some we mailed out and some we delivered ourselves.

Last Sabbath (the small group we attend in Orbost being closed 'til spring) we drove 3 hours to the next little church at Bega.

The sister taking Sabbath School taught a beautiful lesson, full of Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, true in all respects. We shared Firm Foundation and some good tapes with her later and will send more. She was so thirsty for truth and had obviously not many she felt she could speak to—wanted lots of tapes but no money—so some are ready to be posted. They will bless her and she will pass them on.

All the wonderful programmes going on over there almost made us cry. We wish we were millionaires and could help you. We wish too that we had them here!

We are praying for you each day and will send postage for your next batch as soon as we have a little more to hand.

God bless and keep you all.

Val Nelson
Victoria, AUSTRALIA

September, 1986 Our Firm Foundation 25
The Danger of Talking Doubt

Ellen G. White

Our Light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." [2 Corinthians 4:17, 18] If our minds are fixed upon the things that are eternal, and not on the things of earth, we shall grasp the hand of infinite power, and what can make us sad? What can make us doubt? What can separate our souls from the Lord? Paul says, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." [Romans 8:38, 39]

I am thankful that we need not be left a prey to Satan's power. We need not be left to be driven this way and that. We need not be blinded by the delusions of Satan, but may have our eyes anointed so that we may see things as they really are. The children of God should not permit Satan to place himself between them and their God. If you permit him to do this, he will tell you that your troubles are the most grievous, the sorest troubles that any mortal ever bore. He will place his magnifying glasses before your eyes, and present everything to you in an exaggerated form to overwhelm you with discouragement. You should have your eyes anointed with the heavenly eye-salve. You should take the word of God as the man of your counsel, and humble your doubting soul before God, and with contrition of heart say, "Here I lay my burden down. I cannot bear it. It is too heavy for me. I lay it down at the feet of my compassionate Redeemer."

We must not think that we shall escape trials; for the apostle says, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." [1 Peter 1:7] Gold is tried in the fire, that it may be purified from dross; but faith that is purified by trial is more precious than refined gold. Then let us look upon trials in a reasonable way. Let us not come through them with murmuring and discontent. Let us not make mistakes in getting out of them. In times of trial we must cling to God and His promises. Some have said to me, "Do you not get discouraged at times when you are under trial?" And I have answered, "Yes, if by discouragement you mean sad or cast down." "Didn't you talk to any one of your feelings?" "No; there is a time for silence, a time to keep the tongue as with a bridle, and I was determined to utter no word of doubt or darkness, to bring no shade of gloom upon those with whom I was associated. I have said to myself, I will bear the Refiner's fire; I shall not be consumed. When I speak, it shall be of light; it shall be of faith and hope in God; it shall be of righteousness, of goodness, of the love of Christ my Saviour; it shall be to direct the minds of others toward heaven and heavenly things, to Christ's work in heaven for us, and our work upon earth for Him."

Christ is cleansing the temple in heaven from the sins of the people, and we must work in harmony with Him upon the earth, cleansing the soul temple from its moral defilement. If we will work thus, we shall find that the sweet influence of God's Spirit will be wrought into our life. Grace and peace and strength will take the place of strife and weakness, and instead of talking of discouragement and gloom, we shall speak of God's light and love and joy. We shall be looking at the things that are not seen, which are not temporal, but eternal. When we engage in this work, the angels of God will draw near to communicate divine power, and combine heavenly strength with human weakness. Then we shall grow into the image of our Lord. We shall be learning how to believe in Him, learning how to commit our souls
to Him, as unto a faithful Creator. The apostle says, "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." [Philippians 2:13] And as a result, our mental and spiritual powers increase. As we learn of Christ, we shall understand how to keep our spiritual strength, we shall feed on the word of God, and we shall have the blessed experience described by the apostle in these words: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." [1 Peter 1:17]

The children of God may rejoice in all things and at all times. When troubles and difficulties come, believing in the wise providences of God, you may rejoice. You need not wait for a happy flight of feeling, but by faith you may lay hold of the promises, and lift up a hymn of thanksgiving to God. When Satan tempts you, breathe not a word of doubt or darkness. You may have your choice as to who shall rule your heart and control your mind. If you choose to open the door to the suggestions of the evil one, your mind will be filled with distrust and rebellious questioning. You may talk out your feelings, but every doubt you utter is a seed that will germinate and bear fruit in another's life, and it will be impossible to counteract the influence of your words. You may be able to recover from your season of temptation, and from the snare of Satan, but others that have been swayed by your influence may not be able to escape from the unbelief you have suggested. How important it is that we speak to those around us only those things which will give spiritual strength and enlightenment! Let us seek to lift souls to Jesus, whom having not seen we may love, and be filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Memory's hall should be hung with sacred pictures, with views of Jesus, with lessons of His truth, with revelations of His matchless charms. If memory's hall were thus furnished, we would not look upon our lot as intolerable. We would not talk of the faults of others. Our souls would be full of Jesus and His love. We would not desire to dictate to the Lord the way that He should lead. We would love God supremely, and our neighbor as ourselves. When the joy of the Lord is in the soul, you will not be able to repress it; you will want to tell others of the treasure you have found; you will speak of Jesus and His matchless charms. We should devote all to Him. Our minds should be educated to dwell upon those things that will glorify God; and if our mental powers are dedicated to God, our talents will improve, and we shall have more and more ability to render to the Master. We shall become channels of light to others.

We can have a close connection with God and with our Saviour; and when we are connected with God, we shall be all light in the Lord, for in Him is no darkness at all. But if we connect with Satan, we shall have only darkness, for he is the ruler of the darkness of this world. We shall be filled with murmuring and complaining and evil surmising. You will have only the spirit of accusation against your brethren, and your soul will be separated from the Source of your strength. We should be thankful that it is not too late in the day to make wrongs right. We still have the privilege of coming to the Source of light and power. We still may grow up unto the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. But in order to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus, you must meditate upon His love, you must talk of His power and extol His grace.

While I was in England, one day there was a great parade in the streets. It was the Queen's Jubilee. Everyone was talking about it. The shop windows were filled with her pictures, and all were extolling the Queen of England. Could we have taken from the shop windows the pictures of the Queen, and the signs of her glory, and placed instead expressions of the glory and the majesty of Jesus, would not the people have regarded us as religious fanatics? They would have thought that we were carrying religion too far, and that we did not know what we were about. But did not our Master lay aside His royal robes, His crown of glory? Did He not clothe His divinity with humanity, and come to our world to die man's sacrifice? Why should we not talk about it? Why should we not dwell on His matchless love? O that our tongues might lose their paralysis, that we might speak forth His praise! O that the spiritual torpor which has come upon the souls of men might be removed, that we might discern the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ! We are to be the representatives of our Lord upon earth.

Is it not time to change the order of things? You who have lived only for self, will you not make haste to connect with Christ, the Light of the world? He can communicate heaven's light through you to those who sit in darkness. You that have claimed to know the Lord, you who profess to have tasted and seen that the Lord is good, reveal it to those around you. Show forth the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. If men can make so much ado over the Queen's Jubilee, if they can manifest so much enthusiasm over a finite being, can we not speak to the glory of the Prince of Life, who is so soon to come in majesty to take His weary, worn followers to Himself; to unlock the prison bars of death, and set the captives free; to give His loved ones who sleep, a glorious immortality? Why cannot Christ be introduced into our conversation? We are almost home. Let us speak courage to the weary soldiers of the cross. Let us cheer the toiling travelers. Let us tell the pilgrims and strangers of earth that we shall soon reach a better country, even a heavenly.

Review and Herald, February 11, 1890
HE SHOWED Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: and, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power." [Acts 1:3-7]

The disciples were anxious to know the exact time for the revelation of the kingdom of God; but Jesus tells them that they may not know the times and the seasons; for the Father has not revealed them. To understand when the kingdom of God should be restored was not the thing of most importance for them to know. They were to be found following the Master, praying, waiting, watching, and working. They were to be representatives to the world of the character of Christ. That which was essential for a successful Christian experience in the days of the disciples is essential in our day. “And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.” [1:7-11] And after the Holy Ghost was come upon them, what were they to do? “And ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Juden, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.” [1:8]

This is the work in which we also are to be engaged. Instead of living in expectation of some special season of excitement, we are wisely to improve present opportunities, doing that which must be done in order that souls may be saved. Instead of exhausting the powers of our mind in speculations in regard to the times and seasons which the Lord has placed in His own power, and withheld from men, we are to yield ourselves to the control of the Holy Spirit, to do present duties, to give the bread of life, unadulterated with human opinions, to souls who are perishing for the truth.

Satan is ever ready to fill the mind with theories and calculations that will divert men from the present truth, and disqualify them for the giving of the third angel's message to the world. It has ever been thus; for our Saviour often had to speak reprovingly to those who indulged in speculations and were ever inquiring into those things which the Lord had not revealed. Jesus had come to earth to impart im-
of a pattern; some call it a "registration." Some call it a development of a pathway, or a building of a road, or a plowing of a furrow. We recognize that this is not literal language. But something literal does happen in the brain. And the more it happens, the easier it is for it to happen again. That is why it is true that the more you practice a thing, the easier it is to do it. Not because your hand learned or your feet learned, or your vocal chords learned, but because your brain learned.

And that learning, that physical registration, or pattern, or path, or groove, or furrow, or whatever you want to call it, is created by the thought just as much as by the deed. While you were sitting there in your chair imagining yourself going to the pool, a pattern was being physically registered in your brain. Does this fact help you to see why the imagination is dangerous? The imagination can form a habit before the deed is actually done even once. And when the pattern is physically registered in the brain, it tends to remain there active and strong.

I was born and reared on a farm. I milked cows from my infancy up, and cows have to be milked early every morning and also every evening, no matter how you feel. I milked all through my early life, and because of that background, when I went to Walla Walla College I was put in charge of the dairy herd. The two years I continued to work with cattle at college formed a pattern in my brain, and it is still there. Although it has been many years since I milked a cow, I still wake up every morning at milking time. In a way, this is a nuisance, because there are times when I would like to sleep longer. But I have learned how to work around the problem. In the morning, if I think I need some extra sleep, when those brain cells say, "Larson, get up! It's time to milk the cows!" I obediently get up and put on my bathrobe and go out and walk around the front room for ten minutes, then I go back to bed and sleep some more. In this way I bypass the problem. I have to do this because the registration has remained in my brain. Just by imagining something, you can form a habit. The imagination is dangerous.

In the area of human relationships, this problem can do great damage. A man looks at a woman and admires her beauty. If he stops there, there is no problem. But then he lets his imagination start working, and he imagines himself embracing that woman. It is all in his imagination. He has not touched her, or even spoken to her about embracing her. He just does it in his "mind's eye"; he imagines it. He sees her the next day, and again he imagines himself embracing that woman. After that has happened many times, a habit pattern has been physically registered in his brain. And suddenly one day, unexpectedly, they are alone together, and it happens. The imagination has prepared the way.

A student suddenly leaves school in the middle of the year and throws away all of the time and money invested. Why? Because of his imagination. There were tensions between himself and a teacher or the school administration or other students. He imagined himself taking revenge by doing this utterly foolish thing. And the imagination has prepared his mind for the action.

A wife, in the midst of a disagreement with her husband, suddenly walks away and goes back home to mother. Or a husband, in the midst of a disagreement with his wife, suddenly walks out the door and never comes back. Why did that happen? Because of the imagination. They had had disagreements before, and they had imagined how they could have revenge on one another. By the imagination a habit is formed.

We may control ourselves outwardly, but we need to go all the way and control the imagination too. Otherwise we are laying up a storehouse of trouble for a future day.

The imagination may be controlled by the will. The will is our kingly power, our deciding power. God will never force the will, and Satan is not permitted to force it. The will is absolutely supreme, insofar as our inner being is concerned. It is not supreme above God, but it is supreme above everything in our minds.

The Desire of Ages, page 125: "While Satan can solicit, he cannot compel to sin. The tempter can never compel us to do evil. He cannot control minds unless they are yielded to his control. The will must consent. Faith must let go its hold upon Christ before Satan can exercise his power upon us." But, "Every sinful desire we cherish affords him a foothold." How do you cherish a sinful desire? In the imagination.
You imagine yourself doing the forbidden thing. That is how you cherish something. And that is how Satan takes control of the will. It is a selling job.

I can remember very clearly an experience that happened many years ago. I was a young man fighting forest fire in the Northwest. A huge area was being ravaged by the flames. Emergency appeals had been made for every able-bodied man to come and fight the fire. So I was there, and found, to my surprise, some old friends from high school days who were also there. Some of us had not seen each other for years. We had put in a long, hard day on the fire trail, and the forest service had supplied us with a tent and some sleeping bags and a little food. We had pitched the tent and had cleaned up as best we could, and were ready to sleep. We had a gasoline lantern, and in its pale glow half a dozen young men were sitting and talking to each other about the draft.

This occurred on the eve of World War II. These young men, my high school friends and I, were talking about the fact that another war had broken out in Europe. The signs were multiplying that American young men were going to be asked to go over there and get themselves all shot to pieces in another European conflict. Can you guess how we felt? "We're not going to do it!" That's how we felt. "We won't go!" But what we didn't understand is that there is a selling job that comes ahead of the draft. When newspapers begin to glorify war heroes, the imagination is drawn out. The theaters begin to show pictures glorifying war heroes, and your imagination is drawn out again. Public speakers and the media glorify the war hero, and before long you are casting yourself in your imagination in that role. I have never heard that any of those men refused to go when the draft came, because, through their imagination, the will was finally brought to give its consent.

That is the way the devil has to work, too. He cannot force the will. We are perfectly secure unless we let the devil influence our imagination, leading our minds to visualize an undesirable action. This seems to give some kind of release for our feelings. But it is dangerous.

I know that I should not do this, we say, but it would not it out. Your will can control your imagination if you want it to.

Next, feed your mind with good things upon which the imagination can work: good literature, good music, and so forth. Let your mind imagine the glories of the kingdom of God. Let your imagination dwell upon the scenes of Christ's sacrifice for you. And in those moments of

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The will must control the imagination.
In those moments of tension, imagine what Christ would have done

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hurt to just imagine it a little bit. Yes, it hurts, because when you imagine it, a registration is being established in your brain, and you are preparing yourself to do it. When the sudden strong temptation comes, you yield before you even think, because you have yielded in your imagination many times.

What is the solution? It is in Proverbs 4, verse 23: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." It is not enough just to bite your lip and hold back the angry words. You must not walk away and start thinking about them. It is not enough to control your temper outwardly. You must control it inwardly. It is not enough to guide your feet and your hands in proper pathways. You must guide the imagination in proper pathways. The will must control the imagination.

What shall you do then with your imagination? First, make up your mind that your will is going to control it. Every time your imagination starts visualizing something, say, Is that what Christ would have done? If not, cancel tension, instead of imagining what you wish you could have done or said, start imagining what Christ would have done or said. You can use the imagination positively as a powerful tool if you will.

The Desire of Ages, page 668: "All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ, and if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him, we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us."

Then guard your imagination. Discipline your imagination well. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."
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Campmeeting Was a Success

A larger attendance than was expected necessitated our renting the Eatonville High School auditorium, a mile and a half from Hope International.

Each one received a rich spiritual blessing as we worshiped and fellowshipped together.

The upper floor of our barn, where last year's campmeeting was held, would only contain the turnout to the early morning meetings. Betty Spear led the Primary and Junior children's meetings here.

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