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. 2, No. 9

September 1987

Where Did Pastor Baker Go Wrong?

Search the Scriptures

The Three Angels' Messages

Work Education

When the Cycles Stop, see page 8
Satan is determined that Sunday and Sundaykeeping shall supplant the Sabbath and Sabbathkeeping. In these last days Satan will seek to force the entire world to accept Sunday as the Sabbath.

"History will be repeated. False religion will be exalted. The first day of the week, a common working day, possessing no sanctity whatever, will be set up as was the image at Babylon. All nations and tongues and peoples will be commanded to worship this spurious sabbath. This is Satan's plan to make of no account the day instituted by God, and given to the world as a memorial of Creation."

"The decree enforcing the worship of this day is to go forth to all the world. . . ."

"Trial and persecution will come to all who, in obedience to the Word of God, refuse to worship this false sabbath. Force is the last resort of every false religion. At first it tries attraction, as the king of Babylon tried the power of music and outward show. If these attractions, invented by men inspired by Satan, failed to make men worship the image, the hungry flames of the furnace were ready to consume them. So it will be now. The Papacy has exercised her power to compel men to obey her, and she will continue to do so. We need the same spirit that was manifested by God's servants in the conflict with paganism." *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 976

"The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes; for it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided. . . ."

"This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed. All who prove their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious Sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will receive the seal of the living God. Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin and accept the Sunday sabbath, will receive the mark of the beast." Ibid.

Many Seventh-day Adventists believe that no one who goes to church on Saturday will receive that mark, but many will. History will be repeated. In the past history of the great controversy many have given up the faith when upon the faggot or the rack. Their faith was not founded upon the rock, Christ Jesus. They thought their relationship to God was firm. But when they looked into the fire their courage evaporated, and they yielded their convictions to save their lives.

We read in *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 136, that the majority of church members, ministers, and leaders will reject us and join the enemy. Again we are told that very few Seventh-day Adventists will endure to the end and be sealed. See *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 608-609; vol. 5, 10, 50, 80-81; *Testimonies to Ministers*, 409-410.

They failed the Sabbath test of true worship. "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. *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 353-354.

The saints of God who welcome the return of our Lord and Saviour will be those only who had a worshipful relationship with Jesus, not only on the Sabbath but also day by day who spent many days searching for present truth. God calls for a reform in Sabbathkeeping. The time of trial is just before us. How ready are you to meet it? How do you worship God on His holy Sabbath? This will be your test.

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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About the cover:

Our cover depicts some of the more noteworthy cycles of sacred history. From top to bottom, Bob Bresnahan has portrayed the deliberations of the Jewish Sanhedrin as they contemplate their reactions to the issues which forty years later were to culminate in the destruction of Jerusalem. Christians replaced the nation of Israel as the Lord’s chosen, but pride and corruption resulted in the haughty grandeur of the Papacy, represented here by the extravagance of St. Peter’s Cathedral and the papal court. Martin Luther, making good use of Johann Gutenberg’s newly invented printing press, led the Reformers out of the Catholic communion by basing their faith and teachings solely on the Word of God. Three centuries later the Lord commissioned James and Ellen White—among others—to play prominent roles in the spread of the three angels’ messages. These messages and the publications which made them known were symbolized by jets of light encircling the earth. What will be the outcome of this latest movement? See “When the Cycles Stop” on page eight.
Where Did Pastor Baker Go Wrong?

Ralph Larson

During the years 1895 and 1896 Ellen White had been putting the finishing touches on The Desire of Ages, which she planned to publish in two volumes. On May 6, 1896, she wrote to her son Edson that the first volume was completed (Letter 150, 1896). In the first chapters of The Desire of Ages, which would have been in the first volume, she had written:

"He [God] gave Him [Christ] to the fallen race." 25 (Emphasis in quotations supplied throughout)

"It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man's nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life." 49

"Notwithstanding that the sins of a guilty world were laid upon Christ, notwithstanding the humiliation of taking upon Himself our fallen nature, the voice from heaven declared Him to be the Son of the Eternal." . . . 112

"For four thousand years the race had been decreasing in physical strength, in mental power, and in moral worth; and Christ took upon Him the infirmities of degenerate humanity. Only thus could He rescue man from the lowest depths of his degradation.

"Many claim that it was impossible for Christ to be overcome by temptation. Then He could not have been placed in Adam's position; He could not have gained the victory that Adam failed to gain. If we have in any sense a more trying conflict than had Christ, then He would not be able to succor us. But our Saviour took humanity, with all its liabilities. He took the nature of man, with the possibility of yielding to temptation. We have nothing to bear which He has not endured." 117

What would have been accomplished by directing a corrective letter to a pastor in Tasmania and ignoring the continued publishing of the error in the Review?

"As the image made in the likeness of the destroying serpents was lifted up for their healing, so One made 'in the likeness of sinful flesh' was to be their Redeemer. Romans 8.3." . . . 174-175

Her interpreters have proposed that in the midst of these publishing events of 1895-96 Ellen White learned that a Pastor Baker in Tasmania, an island to the south of Australia, was teaching that Christ had come in the human nature of fallen man and wrote him an urgent letter for the purpose of correcting his error, near the end of the year 1895.

This would appear to have been a marvelously misdirected effort. If the teaching were an error that needed to be corrected, would not the pages of the Review and Herald and of the Signs of the Times and of the Bible Echoes be the appropriate place for the correction to appear? And would not the prominent church leaders who were con-
What would have been accomplished by directing a corrective letter to a pastor in Tasmania and ignoring the continued publishing of the error in the Review and Herald, in the Signs of the Times, and in the Bible Echoes, and leaving The Desire of Ages unchanged? And why would she have ignored the extensive discussion of the subject by A.T. Jones and W.W. Prescott at the General Conference in February of 1895?

It was fifty-odd years after the Baker letter was written before the church became aware of it. If it had been intended as a warning to the church it was a dismal failure, a failure that Ellen White might have corrected before her death in 1915, twenty years after the letter was written.

If Pastor Baker did believe (which I do not doubt) that Christ came to the earth in the human nature of fallen man, it would seem, as the old saying goes, that he might have come by that opinion quite honestly. Pastor Baker had no lack of opportunities to become acquainted with that particular view.

He was a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Iowa and left that state in 1882 to become associated with the church's publishing work at the Pacific Press in Mountain View, California. As an Iowa Adventist he would have been aware of the evangelistic work conducted in that state by J.H. Waggoner, whose strong opinion that Christ came to the earth in the human nature of fallen man had been published in his book, The Atonement. He would have had the opportunity to read this book.

As a reader of the Review and Herald he would have had opportunity to examine fourteen statements that Christ came to the earth in the human nature of fallen man that were published in that journal by Ellen White during the years 1870-1882. He would also have had opportunity to read the similar statements in her book Spiritual Gifts, vol. 1, 25, (1858), and in Spiritual Gifts, vol. 4, 115, (1864). In 1881 J.H. Waggoner succeeded James White as the editor of the Signs of the Times, the new missionary journal for the western states being published at the Pacific Press in California. In 1882 Baker was called to assist Waggoner in the publishing work, and continued his association with the Pacific Press until 1887. During this five-year period he was associated with editor J.H. Waggoner during the years 1882-1885; with his son, associate editor and later editor E.J. Waggoner, during the years 1884-1887, and with associate editor and later co-editor A.T. Jones during the years 1885-1887. The strong convictions of E.J. Waggoner and A.T. Jones that Christ came to the earth in the human nature of fallen man were a fundamental part of their teaching on righteousness by faith and later received a good deal of attention at the General Conference sessions of 1888, 1891, and 1895.

If Baker had taken the trouble to read the journal which was being published with his assistance, he would have had opportunity to consider five statements published in the Signs of the Times by Ellen White during the years 1882-1887, that Christ came to the earth in the human nature of fallen man, not to mention her six statements published in the Review and Herald during those same years. He would have had opportunity to read (and may have proofread) her three similar statements in Testimonies, vol. 5, 204, 346 and 746, since that volume was published by the Pacific Press in 1882.

In 1887 Baker was called to connect with the publishing work in Australia, where the Bible Echoes, a missionary journal started by J.O. Corliss and S.N. Haskell in 1886, was still in its infancy. It is not clear when he left the publishing work to pioneer the church's activities in Tasmania, but he was an occasional contributor to the Bible Echoes for several years. The strong convictions of Haskell that Christ came to the earth in the human nature of fallen man appeared in the journal as well.

There was an interim during which the president of the newly formed Australian Conference, G.C. Tenney, served also as editor of the Bible Echoes. For a sampling of Tenney's strong convictions that Christ came to the earth in the human nature of fallen man, see the editorials for May 15, 1889, and June 3, 1889. Then the editorial work was assumed by W.A. Collord. His strong convictions that Christ came to the earth in the human nature of fallen man soon appeared in front-page editorials under the dates of November 22, December 1, and December 8, 1893.

And finally, during the years 1892-1895, Baker would have had opportunity to examine eight statements that Christ came to the earth in the human nature of fallen man that were published in the Bible Echoes over the signature of Ellen White.

It would seem, therefore, that Pastor Baker would have had more than ample opportunity to become acquainted with the opinion that Christ came to the earth in the human nature of fallen man.

Since the view would have come to him with the highest of recommendations from both American and Australian leaders of his church, as well as from Ellen White, it would not be surprising if he had accepted it. It would be rather more surprising if he had not. But he surely would have been more than mildly surprised to have received a letter from Ellen White warning him against that view, as some are now insisting that he did.

Pastor Baker had more than ample opportunity to become acquainted with the opinion that Christ came to the earth in the human nature of fallen man
As the student reflects on these matters he may find himself inclined to believe that this proposed interpretation of the Baker letter strains the credulity to the breaking point. It is difficult to understand how such a proposal could ever have been taken seriously.

What then were the problems in the experience of Pastor W.L.H. Baker that called forth the letter of counsel from Ellen White? My analysis of the Baker letter, presented in the next few pages, has led me to the conclusion that Adoptionism was the error against which Ellen White was warning Baker.

It is common knowledge that the pioneers of the Adventist Church came from a wide variety of religious and theological backgrounds, and that after the great disappointment of 1844 they devoted much time and study to the development of a platform of Bible truth upon which they could unite. In their early Bible conferences they reached a common understanding of the nature of God, the nature of man, the Sabbath and justification by faith. They did not, however, successfully resolve all of their different understandings of the nature of Christ.

Arianism

As late as the turn of the century, there were still a few voices among us which were advocating in various ways limited views of the divinity of Christ. These views, generally speaking, fell within the category of what theologians have called Arianism, after a certain Arius who strongly advocated similar opinions in the great Christological controversies of the fourth century.

According to Arius, and those who followed his thinking, Christ had not coexisted with the Father throughout all eternity, but had been created by the Father at some point in time before the history of the world. Christ was seen as the greatest and highest of God’s created beings. Thus He was not “very God of very God,” but a lower and lesser form of deity.

Ellen White did not use the technical term Arianism, but she did testify to the eternal deity of Christ in her great The Desire of Ages in such a way that the specific Christological errors of Arianism were unmistakably refuted. Thus:

“From the days of eternity the Lord Jesus Christ was one with the Father.” 19

“The name of God, given to Moses to express the idea of the eternal presence, had been claimed as His own by this Galilean Rabbi. He had announced Himself to be the self-existent One.” 469-470

“In Christ is life, original, un-borrowed, underived.” 530

Individual Adoptionists, there were three basic opinions that were generally shared. Ellen White’s response to and refutation of these opinions is found not only in The Desire of Ages but also in a personal testimony to W.L.H. Baker, then laboring in the Tasmanian district while Ellen White was living in Australia and working on the manuscript for The Desire of Ages.

In this interesting letter we find (1) a warning to Pastor Baker about spending too much time in reading, (2) a caution against accepting the

Ellen White’s response to and refutation of the opinions of Adoptionism are found not only in The Desire of Ages but also in a personal testimony to W.L.H. Baker

In the light of this clear testimony the Arian Christological errors gradually faded away, and it is doubtful that any Seventh-day Adventist Bible students now believe that Christ was a created being.

Adoptionism

In like manner, without identifying the Christological error by its specific technical name, Ellen White found occasion to refute the principles of Adoptionism. This was a view that Christ was not the Son of God at birth, nor during the first phase of His earthly life, but became the Son of God by adoption. This idea was taught in Rome during the years 189 to 199 by a leather merchant from Byzantium named Theodotus. It was developed and amplified by Paul of Samosata who served as bishop of Antioch from 260 to 269. Because of Paul’s strong influence, the opinion became quite popular in the eastern churches and in the Armenian churches, where it was held for centuries. In the eighth century it was advocated among the western churches by Elipandus of Spain.

Although there were nuances of difference in the views of individual Adoptionists, there were traditions of the Fathers (a term which, when capitalized as in the letter, is understood to refer to the church Fathers) and (3) a warning about teaching speculative theories that would not be of benefit to the church members. She also presents a specific, point-by-point refutation of the errors of Adoptionism.

1—Adoptionist view: Jesus was not the Son of God at birth. He was born of a woman as all men are. Though He may have been born of a virgin, this fact would have had no theological significance. He was born as a son of man, not as the Son of God.

Ellen White wrote to Baker:

“But Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God... His birth was a miracle of God; for, said the angel, ‘Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her,
The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.' [Luke 1:31-35]

"These words do not refer to any human being, except to the Son of the Infinite God." Letter 8, 1895

II—Adoptionist view: Jesus was not the Son of God during the first phase of His earthly existence. He was a normal human being holding exalted concepts of holiness and purity, toward which He strove not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity." Ibid.

This interesting expression, 'not for one moment' would seem to indicate that Ellen White was recoiling in horror from the above stated view of the Adoptionists. Perhaps they could contemplate with equanimity the possibility of evil propensities, corruption, or even sin in Christ's early life, but she could not. This appears to be her chief concern in the letter to Pastor Baker. In it she affirms repeatedly that Christ did not sin, mentioning

tological errors of Adoptionism that she was so forcefully rejecting, have had difficulty with the words: "Not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity."

Some have seen in this an evidence that she believed that Christ assumed in His incarnation the nature of Adam before his fall. Others, comparing it with her comments on that subject in The Desire of Ages, have drawn the unfortunate conclusion that she talked on both sides of that particular question. Neither conclusion is required by the evidence. Once it is recognized that the Baker letter is a point-by-point refutation of Adoptionism, which Pastor Baker had apparently become involved in through his reading of the church fathers, her line of reasoning in that letter becomes crystal clear. And we are certainly not required to use a fragment from a personal letter to a Tasmanian pastor to offset her statements about the human nature of Christ as found in The Desire of Ages, which is clearly her conscious and deliberate Christological position paper addressed to the whole world. To do this would be questionable hermeneutics, to say the least.

From the book The Word Was Made Flesh, 105-109, 323-327.

This volume, available through Hope International, is in our opinion the best single source for an understanding of the historic Adventist teaching on the Incarnation.—EDITORS

1. [All references listed below are available for study in The Word Was Made Flesh.—EDITORS] Review and Herald, April 19, May 31, 1876; December 24, 31, 1872; January 21, 1873; February 24, July 28, August 4, 1874; March 4, April 1, 29, May 6, 1875; October 11, 1881.

2. Signs of the Times, January 11, April 12, 1883; January 15, October 29, 1885; November 24, 1887; Review and Herald, February 10, 1885; May 25, 1886; January 4, March 15, July 3, 1887.

3. Bible Echoes, March 15, 1889; February 15, 1892.

4. Ibid., September 1, 15, 1892; November 1, 15, December 15, 1892; August 1, 1893; November 19, 1894; April 22, 1895.

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Once it is recognized that the Baker letter is a point-by-point refutation of Adoptionism, Ellen White's line of reasoning becomes crystal clear.

heroically, but He was in no sense divine. During this phase of His existence, since He was altogether and exclusively human, He would have had the same propensities of sin, and taints of corruption, that all humans have. He could have even been overcome by temptation and actually sinned. None of these things, in view of His continuing heroic struggle to achieve holiness, would have disqualified Him to become the adopted Son of God at the climax of His spiritual progress. Paul of Samosata expressed it thus:

"Mary did not bring forth the Word, for Mary was not before the ages. But she brought forth a man on a level with ourselves."

Ellen White wrote to Baker.

"Let every human being be warned from the ground of making Christ altogether human, such an one as ourselves, for it cannot be.

"Never, in any way, leave the slightest impression upon human minds that a taint of, or inclination to, corruption rested upon Christ, or that He in any way yielded to corruption.

"Do not set Him before the people as a man with the propensities of sin. . . . He could have sinned, He could have fallen, but
When The Cycles Stop

TheseSOMETHING fascinating about the future. We all know it’s coming, but what an advantage for the one who knows what is coming! Little wonder then that worldly governments spend billions on “intelligence.” And little wonder the Lord promised He would do nothing without informing “His servants the prophets.”

Throughout history the prophets, and sometimes the people of God as well, had the advantage of advance knowledge. Should it be any different today? In the Spirit of Prophecy we find oft repeated admonitions to be informed and ready for what is coming. And if the plain predic-

But what does it all mean?

Recent interpreters of Ellen White have proposed that when she wrote “history will be repeated” she actually meant “prophecy will be repeated.” After studying more than 50 examples of her use of this phrase I would volunteer one observa-

tion: If she did confuse her wording as they suggest, she did so very consistently. Only twice did I find the words “repeated” and “prophecy” in close connection:

“In [Revelation] the same line of prophecy is taken up as in Daniel. Some prophecies God has repeated, this showing that importance must be given to them. The Lord does not repeat things that are of no great consequence.”

Such a reference is scant support for the concept of repeated fulfillments of prophecy, and I don’t mean to rep-

resent anyone as trying to use it as such.

Perhaps a look at the second reference, one of those often seen to support this concept, would be in or-

der:

“We have no time to lose. Troublesome times are before us. The world is stirred with the spirit of war. Soon the scenes of trouble spoken of in the prophecies will take place. The prophecy in the eleventh [chapter] of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment. Much of the history that has taken place in fulfillment of this prophecy will be repeated. In the thirtieth verse a power is spoken of that ‘shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant. . . .’”

[Daniel 11:30-36 quoted]

“Scenes similar to those de-

scribed in these words will take place. We see evidence that Satan is fast obtaining the control of human minds, who have not the fear of God before them. Let all read and understand the prophecies of this book, for we are now entering upon the time of trouble spoken of.”

[Daniel 12:1-4 quoted]
A careful reading of this passage shows that 1) the prophecy of Daniel 11 has "nearly reached its complete fulfillment." (Does this mean that Daniel 11 has a second application, or that its first and only application is nearly completely fulfilled?) 2) "Much of the history that has taken place in the fulfillment of this prophecy will be repeated." 3) "Scenes similar to those described in" Daniel 11:30-36 "will take place." 4) "We are now entering" Daniel 12:1-4. This passage, when taken as it reads, does not support a second application of either the eleventh or the twelfth chapter of Daniel. It does say, as do many other statements, that certain aspects of history will be repeated, and it clearly points out that the history which took place in a past fulfillment of Daniel 11 will be repeated in the fulfillment of Daniel 12:1-4. I would consider this a valuable insight indeed. But I cannot yet see that it says what the uninspired heading (Much of Daniel 11 to be Again Fulfilled) supplied for the Manuscript Release seems to imply.

A Note of Caution

We are well advised to take a cautious approach to such teaching, for—whatever its merits may be—it is certain that the idea has led to mischief in the past. Indeed, the "apotletic principle" (the formal name for the concept) was the philosophical basis upon which Desmond Ford built his denial of our historic teaching of the sanctuary. He did not deny that the 2300-day prophecy had been fulfilled in 1844; he simply saw it as "a" fulfillment rather than "the" fulfillment, which so weakened its application that he was led to reject the concept of the investigative judgment.

This is not to say that all who entertain ideas of "dual applications" have abandoned the truth. Only that all such teachings deserve a thorough testing before we consider them to be true. Because the subject involves so many aspects, in this article I can hope to offer only a few suggested points of consideration.

The Problem With Prophecy

The problem, of course, is not with the prophecy itself, but with our efforts to understand it. The problem is this: if any given prophecy is to have a repeated fulfillment, what portion is to be repeated? It may not look like much at first glance, but this is a very real question which must be answered before any teaching of dual application could be seriously considered. You see, very few prophecies stand alone. Most often they are linked together in a marvelously constructed jigsaw. To see in any single piece of the puzzle an application which fails to match with the pieces around it is to invite justified skepticism of one's theory.

The 2300-day prophecy for instance. Anyone who is at all familiar with the contribution of William Miller to the Advent movement is aware that the 2300-day prophecy of Daniel 8:14 is inextricably intertwined with the 70-week prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27. If I should wish to teach a second application of Daniel 8:14, I would be compelled to define how much of the prophecy will be fulfilled. Only that found in the eighth chapter? Why is that? Is there a biblical reason? or is it simply my own deduction?

Perhaps I cannot find a solid biblical basis for separating these two chapters which God has joined together. Then I am faced with the prospect of finding a second application of the ninth chapter as well. Now what? Will I have to find a second Messiah to come 69 weeks after a second command goes forth to rebuild a second Jerusalem? And the second coming, the 2300 days, the investigative judgment, and spiritualism, not to mention the Spirit of Prophecy and the remnant church.

This has been a decided inconvenience to many good Adventists with inventive, inquiring minds—and praise the Lord for it! To those now studying the prophecies with renewed vigor I would say, Be careful that you don't force your way over the boundaries the Lord has set up. If you take an interest in a prophecy, take an interest in every point of the prophecy, or find a clear biblical reason not to. To do otherwise is too great a risk.
Perhaps my next point is so basic that it doesn't need to be made. I would hope so, but I fear some may have overlooked the simple principle of allowing the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy to define themselves. This is especially important when dealing with the specifications of prophecy. If we open the door to uninspired definitions of the prophetic symbols, where will we stop? There may be a great deal of plausible logic to suggest that a certain symbol may represent such-and-such, but if that logic is not clearly based on the Word of God, of what value is it? What account will we offer when our Lord inquires as to the use we have made of His Word? Would any dare to say that they saw greater light in the definitions of their own making than in those He chose to give?

How Long, O Lord?

Revelation 6:9 depicts those who "were slain for the word of God" churches. The history is clear. When the Jewish church failed in their mission, they were replaced by the Christian church. As the mainline church of the day sank into gross error during the Dark Ages, the Lord called for the Reformation movement of Protestantism to come out from Catholicism. When the Protestant denominations rejected the first angel's message, God raised up the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Now comes the stickler: when do the cycles stop? Is it not a bit simplistic to say that we have finally arrived that "the church will go through"? Such questions are being asked more often in recent years, and too often with considerable reason. The deterioration of church standards and the aberrations of theology being taught among us have given pause to many, and rightly so.

But, when do the cycles stop? If we assume that this church is to fall in apostasy, what is to prevent its replacement from doing the same? Will the plan of salvation ever be completed, or must we consign ourselves to the never-ending cycles of paganism?

I believe there is a clear answer, a simple circumstance that will end the cycles. We call it the death decree.

In the past, when the new and purified movement has risen up at God's behest, the old and corrupted form continued its existence. We can still today find Judaism, Catholicism, and apostate Protestantism, coexisting side-by-side with the remnant church. But the Lord has planned for His church a test which will end the cycles. Having adopted the name Seventh-day Adventist, His people took a stand which—when confronted by the determined animosity of the devil—could be retreated from, but not held in apostasy.

You will never see an apostatized Seventh-day Adventist Church retaining that name when the Sunday law and the death decree go into effect.

as crying out in uncertainty, questioning how long it would be before the Lord should judge the wicked. In the context of repeated prophesies, or even repeated history as some would present the subject, the same question might be asked.

How many times will the prophecies be repeated? If twice, could it be three times? Three times for some and two for others and only once for still others perhaps? Once again, we find a need for a clear answer from the Lord Himself before we could with confidence accept any opinion as the truth.

Of special interest in this regard is the matter of apostatizing.

1. Manuscript 107, 1897, found in Manuscript Release 667, 1-2
2. Letter 103, 1904, found in Manuscript Release 489, 1-2
Please continue our subscription. I was putting off resubscribing for some insignificant reasons until I read Elder Ron Spear's article (Editorial, August 1987) in your last issue.

I had just picked up the new issue and was halfway through that first article when God's Spirit impressed me very strongly that I needed to resubscribe. Each article has been such a blessing.

It seems with every coming issue that the Holy Spirit speaks with greater force through the truth-filled pages you publish.

I was especially blessed with the article by Beth Jennings on how you all got started, and how God has sustained you.

Tim, Lisa, and Sarah Yates
Upland, Indiana

Though all of you are very busy, I think you will appreciate feedback from the recent camp meeting. Personally, I saw a clear, vital Bible truth combined with a living experience—a faith that works by love, resulting in unity, conviction, commitment, and action.

We especially appreciated the absence of criticism, the avoidance of names, and the recognition that the conflict is between truth and error, not between conference and self-supporting.

I suggest more accurate and less debatable terminology. In Africa we were truly self-supporting and supported others. But most "self-supporting" institutions receive donations. I would say there are two categories: 1) tithe-supported, conference-directed work, and 2) privately supported voluntary work.

Moses and Jesus forbade none. Every member should be a missionary volunteer, every home a Christian educational and evangelistic institution, while supporting the clergy also. None are "independent," all are "church." I consider myself as definitely a representative of Seventh-day Adventists as the conference officers, with all proper respect for them.

Maurice Butler, MD
Sheridan, Oregon

I just wanted to send my support and thanks for the beautiful campmeeting at Eatonville. My sister (who had not listened to "present truth" before) attended with me, and she sat through every single meeting and came away inspired—never to be the same again! Thanks so much for your hard work and earnest effort to get God's message to the entire world.

Name Witheld
Gresham, Oregon

Enclosed you will find a check for a subscription to your fine magazine, Our Firm Foundation.

As a relatively new Sabbathkeeper formerly in the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement I truly enjoy the straight message that your magazine presents. Keep presenting the truth at all costs and may the Lord be with you and your staff during these last days.

Jeffrey Burger
Dallastown, Pennsylvania

Response From Truth for Today Television Program

Just by accident I happened to turn my TV on this afternoon about 1:30 and watched the last part of your program. I was greatly impressed with the discussion that was in progress, and, as a result, I will begin watching each week.

I've enclosed a donation and am requesting a copy of The Great Controversy.

Ernest Jones
Proctorville, Ohio

I would like to tell you what a blessing it was to hear your program on TV today. It answered several questions I had. Please send me Truth for Today and the Truth for Today Bible Study correspondence course.

Deborah Faye Cobb
Jacksonville, Arkansas

I'd like to order your magazine Truth for Today and the book Great Controversy.

I have been a Sunday Christian until this year; but now I feel I am a Sabbathkeeper as much as possible. There are times when I have to work on Saturday (I'm in the Navy), but I am willing to follow and obey God's law.

John Van Druten
FPO San Francisco, California

You will find enclosed my donation for the book Great Controversy and the magazine Truth for Today.

Your program has answered questions I've had about Sunday and the Sabbath. Our prayer is for you to continue to reveal the truth.

Ernest Edwards
Columbia, Kentucky

We are pleased with the increasing response to the Truth For Today program on TV. It airs nationwide at 1 p.m. EDT, 12 p.m. CDT, 11 a.m. MDT, 10 a.m. PDT on the Tempo Satellite/Cable Network. Your friends can find it on cable TV or on Satcom 3, Transponder 6.

—EDITORS
CHRIST HAS said: “Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” [John 5:39] The duty of searching the Scriptures is enjoined upon every son and daughter of Adam. Jesus says, “And they are they which testify of me.” The Father was revealed in the Son, and in studying Christ we shall learn of the Father. Then let us come to search the Word of God with softened, subdued hearts, and read the testimony concerning our Lord and Master. Shall we not with intense interest seek to catch His spirit, copy His example, and breathe in the atmosphere of His presence, which is light and love? How eagerly should we study every lesson that fell from His divine lips! How we should cherish His instruction! How ardently we should seek to imitate His character and life, and press on to know more and more of the heavenly truths He taught. If we would but practice the truths He has given, we should perfect an experience that would be of the highest value to us, and to the world.

Jesus presented new views of truth to His disciples, and how much deeper was the meaning of His utterances than the meaning of any lesson ever taught by human lips! “God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” [1 Timothy 3:16]

How shall we search the Scriptures? Shall we drive our stakes of doctrine one after another, and then try to make all Scripture meet our established opinions, or shall we take our ideas and views to the Scriptures, and measure our theories on every side by the Scriptures of truth? Many who read and even teach the Bible, do not comprehend the precious truth they are teaching or studying. Men entertain errors, when the truth is clearly marked out, and if they would but bring their doctrines to the Word of God, and not read the Word of God in the light of their doctrines, to prove their ideas right, they would not walk in darkness and blindness, or cherish error. Many give the words of Scripture a meaning that suits their own opinions, and they mislead themselves and deceive others by their misinterpretations of God’s Word. As we take up the study of God’s Word, we should do so with humble hearts. All selfishness, all love of originality, should be laid aside. Long-cherished opinions must not be regarded as infallible. It was the unwillingness of the Jews to give up their long-established traditions that proved their ruin. They were determined not to see any flaw in their own opinions or in their expositions of the Scriptures; but however, long men may have entertained certain views, if they are not clearly sustained by the written Word, they should be discarded.

Those who sincerely desire truth will not be reluctant to lay open their positions for investigation and criticism, and will not be annoyed if their opinions and ideas are crossed. This was the spirit cherished among us forty years ago. We would come together burdened in soul, praying that we might be one in faith and doctrine; for we knew that Christ is not divided. One point at a time was made the subject of investigation. Solemnity characterized these councils of investigation. The Scriptures were opened with a sense of awe. Often weFast, that we might be better fitted to understand the truth. After earnest prayer, if any point was not understood, it was discussed, and each one expressed his opinion freely; then we would again bow in prayer, and earnest supplications went up to heaven that God would help us to see eye to eye, that we might be one, as Christ and the Father are one. Many tears were shed. If one brother rebuked another for his
dullness of comprehension in not understanding a passage as he understood it, the one rebuked would afterward take his brother by the hand and say, "Let us not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. Jesus is with us; let us keep a humble and teachable spirit;" and the brother, addressed would say, "Forgive me, brother, I have done you an injustice." Then we would bow down in another season of prayer. We spent many hours in this way. We did not generally study together more than four hours at a time, yet sometimes the entire night was spent in solemn investigation of the Scriptures, that we might understand the truth for our time. On some occasions the Spirit of God would come upon me, and difficult portions were made clear through God's appointed way, and then there was perfect harmony. We were all of one mind and one Spirit.

We sought most earnestly that the Scriptures should not be wrested to suit any man's opinions. We tried to make our differences as slight as possible by not dwelling on points that were of minor importance, upon which there were varying opinions. But the burden of every soul was to bring about a condition among the brethren which would answer the prayer of Christ that His disciples might be one as He and the Father are one. Sometimes one or two of the brethren would stubbornly set themselves against the

We have many lessons to learn, and many, many to unlearn.

view presented, and would act out the natural feelings of the heart; but when this disposition appeared, we suspended our investigations and adjourned our meeting, that each one might have an opportunity to go to God in prayer, and without conversation with others, study the point of difference, asking light from Heaven. With expressions of Friendliness we parted, to meet again as soon as possible for further investigation. At times the power of God came upon us in a marked manner, and when clear light revealed the points of truth, we would weep and rejoice together. We loved Jesus; we loved one another.

In those days God wrought for us, and the truth was precious to our souls. It is necessary that our unity today be of a character that will bear the test of trial. We are in the school of the Master here, that we may be trained for the school above. We must learn to bear disappointment in a Christlike manner, and the lesson taught by this will be of great importance to us.

We have many lessons to learn, and many, many to unlearn. God and heaven alone are infallible. Those who think that they will never have to give up a cherished view, never have occasion to change an opinion, will be disappointed. As long as we hold to our own ideas and opinions with determined persistence, we cannot have the unity for which Christ prayed.

Could those who are self-sufficient see how the universe of God regards them; could they see themselves as God sees them; they would behold such weakness, such manifest want of wisdom, that they would cry to the Lord to be their righteousness; they would want to hide from His sight. The apostle says, "Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." [1 Corinthians 6:19-20] When our schemes and our plans have been broken; when men who have depended upon our judgment conclude the Lord would lead them to act and judge for themselves, we should not feel like censoring, and like exercising arbitrary authority to compel them to receive our ideas. Those who are placed in authority should constantly cultivate self-control. I am thankful that God is a wise ruler, and every one who is a true disciple of Christ will be humble, lift his cross, and meekly follow where the self-denying, self-sacrificing Jesus leads the way. Disappointment may prove to be the greatest of blessings to us. We must learn that others have rights as well as we have, and when any of our brethren receive new light upon the Scriptures, he should frankly explain his position, and every minister should search the Scriptures

Disappointment may prove to be the greatest of blessings to us

with the spirit of candor to see if the points presented on a new subject can be substantiated by the inspired Word. "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." [2 Timothy 2:24-25] Every soul must look to God with contrition and humility, that God may guide and lead and bless. We must not trust to others to search the Scriptures for us. Some of our leading brethren have frequently taken positions on the wrong side, and if God would send a message and wait for these older brethren to open the way for its advance, it would never reach the people. These brethren will be found in this position until they become partakers of the divine nature to a greater extent than ever they have been in the past. There is sadness in heaven over the spiritual blindness of many of our brethren. Our younger ministers who fill less important positions must make decided efforts to come to the light, to sink the shaft deeper and still deeper into the mine of truth.

The rebuke of the Lord will be upon those who would be guardians of the doctrine, who would bar the way that greater light shall not
come to the people. A great work is to be done, and God sees that our leading men have need of greater light, that they may unite with the messengers whom He shall send harmoniously to accomplish the work that He designs they should. The Lord has raised up messengers and endowed them with His Spirit, and has said, “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.” [Isaiah 58:1] Let no one run the risk of interposing himself between the people and the message of heaven. The message of God will come to the people; and if there were no voice among men to give it, the very stones would cry out.

Seek the Lord, put away pride, put away strife after supremacy

I call upon every minister to seek the Lord, to put away pride, to put away strife after supremacy, and humble the heart before God. It is the coldness of heart, the unbelief of those who ought to have faith, that keeps the churches in feebleness.

I would rejoice with all my heart to see all who have been connected with the work, take their places to hold high the banner of Jesus, that when their work shall be done, they may say as did Paul, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” [2 Timothy 4:7-8]  

Review and Herald, July 26, 1892

Warren E. Howell (1869-1943) served as educator, missionary, secretary of the General Conference Department of Education, and secretary to the president of the General Conference.

THE SPIRIT of simplicity and distinction from the world [was] inculcated from the very beginning of the Advent movement until now. These practices [reducing separation from the world] seemed much at variance with the sacrifices and deprivations of our hard-working missionaries, with their meager means and facilities, on the other side of the globe, where these same graduates may sooner or later be called.

Yet, on the other hand, these various things, though serving as straws to show the direction of the wind, can hardly be called the most important factors... under the topic of separation from the world. In our educational convention of 1910, a warning was sounded, which was not altogether untimely, against the menace of a disease then called “universititis.” What was then a possible two or three isolated cases has since become epidemic. The very psychology of building up our standards to match those of the educational world, seemed to breed the idea that if we were going to measure up to the standards of the world in our teaching, we must resort to the world for our training and our standing to teach up to those standards...

While the logic of this reasoning must be admitted, its fallacy lies in the false premise that we ever meant to adopt the world's standards or its methods of reaching them. Our aim was to produce educational values equivalent to, and in our own estimation much superior to, anything the world gives. We should not dare make such an assumption of superiority were we not depending on the principles and methods of education that God has graciously given us. To the extent that we live up to these shall we have that prosperity and good success in true education vouchedsafe to all God's children...

While our teachers were resorting to centers of learning in increasing numbers, followed to no small degree by student graduates and undergraduates, a new menace arose from an unexpected quarter. Wisely or unwise, our medical college had linked up with an organization which assumed the task of defining and dictating standards for medical schools, with a view to eliminating incompetent institutions. While the step we took looked innocent enough at first, the inevitable result of tying up an institution of our own with an organization of entirely different aims, soon showed itself in a surprising way. A new standard was promulgated, requiring that all entrants to a standard medical college should present their credits from a school that was registered as standard by an association of educators who had assumed a similar task of standardizing literary schools.

From that day to this, the idea has been kept before our educators of registering our colleges in a secular standardizing association, thus tying them by much more than a thread to the educational policies of those who do not discern the voice of God and who will not hearken to His commandments. Only two colleges have taken such a step, on the most moderate scale that could be discovered—that of registering only the junior college department. Where this step will lead these schools and any others that may take it, only He who reads the future as well as the past, can predict. It would almost seem like tying ourselves to the tail of a kite, to be carried whither the holder of the string may list—seemingly in the direction of less efficiency to serve the cause of God.

Separation From the World,” Review and Herald, July 12, 1923
Religious Liberty Update

UFOs: After a 10-year lull in public interest about UFOs, 1987 looks to be the Year of the Saucer. Americans like to think of themselves as a hard-headed, pragmatic people. In fact, we are a nation of astrology-ridden, palm-reading, born-again superstitious. Forty-two percent of adults say they have had contact with the dead, and 31 percent have experienced clairvoyance. One UFO believer says, "They are here, whoever they are, to bring a kind of spiritual technology." Author Whitley Strieber, who has been abducted by a UFO and written a book, Communion, says "Maybe I'm looking for a Savior." Washington Post, March 9, 1987

Moral Crisis: Pollster George M. Gallup, Jr. says the United States is facing "a moral and ethical crisis of the first dimension" and needs to find spiritual answers to deal with the situation. He said it was shocking to discover that church attendance makes little difference in a people's ethical views and behavior. The Wanderer, May 7, 1987 (Catholic)

Calls for Unity: Pope John Paul II ended his West Germany visit by calling for the union of divided Christian churches and for "a new united Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals." The pontiff linked the prospect of a free and united Europe with a Christian unity that would bring moral and religious forces to all European governments. "On this laborious road to unity we shall defend and esteem all that the divided Christians still have in common and avoid everything that might again deepen the rift." Los Angeles Times, May 5, 1987

Devotion to Mary: John Paul's Encyclical on the Virgin Mary appeals to East and West Christian churches to seek unity in common devotion to the mother of Christ, helping the ecumenical movement. "Why should we not all together look to her as our common mother, who prays for the unity of God's family?" Protestants generally reject Mary's birth without original sin and her bodily assumption into heaven. Los Angeles Times, March 26, 1987

Modern Paganism: An idea designed to unite conservatives and moderates has been suggested by Paul Weyrich, a founder of the Heritage Foundation. The central premise: that Judeo-Christian values are necessary for the survival of Western society. Cultural Conservatism identifies four themes: traditional values are necessary for individual fulfillment; current cultural trends "are deeply disturbing"; government and society must support and uphold traditional values—government force may be necessary; and the long view—backward to the original intent of the Founding Fathers. Cultural Conservatism does not require a belief in God or in religious absolutes. All that is required is the conviction that the Judeo-Christian tradition is the keystone of Western civilization. Education Update, First Quarter, 1987

Where We're Headed: Critics liken Judge Brevard Hand's banning of 45 secular humanist textbooks to "judicial bookburning" and "government censorship of the school curriculum." The religious right, on the other hand, hails Hand as a hero. Controversy is nothing new. Of his boyhood during the Great Depression, he said: "I was never permitted the luxury of not being in Sunday School on Sunday mornings." Los Angeles Times, March 16, 1987

Unconstitutional: A federal district judge ruled that provisions of a 1981 law designed to discourage adolescent sexual activity were unconstitutional because they violated the requirement for separation of church and state. Under the law, the Reagan administration has given more than $92 million, some to religious organizations, especially Roman Catholic charities. Under the law, federal funds have been used by "pervasively sectarian institutions for education and counseling that amounts to the teaching of religion." San Diego Union, April 16, 1987

Hidden Agenda: Gary North writes that everyone who is attempting to impose a world-and-life view on a majority always uses some version of the liberty doctrine to buy himself and his movement some time and some power. "We must use the doctrine of religious liberty to gain independence until we train a generation who know no religious, legal, educational or governmental neutrality. Then we will construct a Bible-based social, political and religious order which finally denies the religious liberty of the enemies of God." The Humanist, May/June, 1987

Government Agency: It appears that the Roman Catholic Church is finally getting paid by the government to increase the ranks of Catholics in the U.S. by registering aliens. For each alien person registered, the Catholic Church will receive $15, expected to bring millions of dollars into its coffers. Battle Cry, March/April, 1987 (Evangelical)

Serpent Gospel: Robert Schuller, proponent of self-esteem, has called for a "new reformation," stating that the 16th century movement (under Luther and Calvin) was a "reactionary movement" because it emphasized that men are sinners. Schuller tells us, "Once a person believes he is an 'unworthy sinner,' it is doubtful if he can honestly accept the saving grace God offers in Jesus Christ." Evangelist, March, 1987 (Protestant)
The Three Angels’ Messages

The third angel’s message is the message of 1888. Listen to God speak through Inspiration.

“Christ and His righteousness—let this be our platform, the very life of our faith.” Review and Herald, August 31, 1905

“Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel’s message, and I have answered, ‘It is the third angel’s message in verity.’” Review and Herald, April 1, 1890

“This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.

Christ is pleading for the church in the heavenly courts above

“The uplifted Saviour is to appear in His efficacious work as the Lamb slain, sitting upon the throne, to dispense the priceless covenant blessings, the benefits He died to purchase for every soul who should believe on Him. John could not express that love in words; it was too deep, too broad; he calls upon the human family to behold it. Christ is pleading for the church in the heavenly courts above, pleading for those for whom He paid the redemption price of His own life-blood. Centuries, ages, can never diminish the efficacy of this atoning sacrifice. The message of the gospel of His grace was to be given to the church in clear and distinct lines, that the world should no longer say that Seventh-day Adventists talk the law, the law, but do not teach or believe Christ.

“The efficacy of the blood of Christ was to be presented to the people with freshness and power, that their faith might lay hold upon its merits. . . .

“For years the church has been looking to man, and expecting much from man, but not looking to Jesus, in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. Therefore God gave to His servants a testimony that presented the truth as it is in Jesus, which is the third angel’s
message, in clear, distinct lines." "Testimonies to Ministers," 91-93, 1896

We find from these inspired statements that the third angel's message in verity is justification by faith and sanctification by faith. You cannot separate them; when you are justified, you are being sanctified, and the process will continue so long as you remain in right relationship to God. This is the platform on which the church was to experience the power of living testimony to finish God's work on earth. It was to bring an understanding through the faith of Jesus, that obedience to all ten of God's commandments by the faith of Jesus is the standard by which God will judge the world. This message was to present to the world the uplifted Saviour in all His beauty in the everlasting gospel of Revelation 14:6-7. This gospel of complete victory was presented by Ellen White, E.J. Waggoner and A.T. Jones in clear distinct lines.

The reason the message of 1888 failed in its mission is that we have never accepted more than half of the message at a time. Adventists of the past preached the law until their preaching was as dry as the hills of Gilboa, but they rejected the other half which gives power to keep the law. In our day many have preached a great deal on what they term faith and justification, but fail to see that the end of true faith is keeping the commandments.

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12.

There is salvation in the blood of Jesus Christ alone

"The only safety for the Israelites was blood upon the doorposts. God said, 'When I see the blood, I will pass over you.' Exodus 12:13. All other devices for safety would be without avail. Nothing but the blood on the doorposts would bar the way that the angel of death should not enter. There is salvation for the sinner in the blood of Jesus Christ alone, which cleanseth us from all sin. The man with a cultivated intellect may have vast stores of knowledge, he may engage in theological speculations, he may be great and honored of men and be considered the repository of knowledge, but unless he has a saving knowledge of Christ crucified for him, and by faith lays hold of the righteousness of Christ, he is lost. Christ 'was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.' Isaiah 53:5. 'Saved by the blood of Jesus,' will be our only hope for time and our song throughout eternity." Selected Messages, book 3, 172-173.
"Elder E.J. Waggoner had the privilege granted him of speaking plainly and presenting his views upon justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ in relation to the law. This was no new light, but it was old light placed where it should be in the third angel's message. . . . What is the burden of that message? John sees a people. He says, 'Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' Revelation 14:12. This people John beholds just be-

The faith of Jesus is not comprehended

...fore he sees the Son of man 'having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.' Verse 14

"The faith of Jesus has been overlooked and treated in an indif-
ferent, careless manner. It has not occupied the prominent position in which it was revealed to John. Faith in Christ as the sinner's only hope has been largely left out, not only of the discourses given but also of the religious experience of very many who claim to believe the third

angels message.

"At this meeting I bore testimony that the most precious light had been shining forth from the Scriptures in the presentation of the great subject of the righteousness of Christ connected with the law, which should be constantly kept before the sinner as his only hope of salvation. This was not new light to me, for it had come to me from higher authority for the last forty-four years, and I had presented it to our people by pen and voice in the testimonies of His Spirit. But very few had responded except by assent to the testimonies borne upon this

subject. There was altogether too little spoken and written upon this great question. The discourses of some might be correctly represented as like the offering of Cain—Christless." Ibid., 168-169

"The soul-saving message, the third angel's message, is the message to be given to the world. The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus are both important, immensely important, and must be given with equal force and power. The first part of the message has been dwelt upon mostly, the last part casually. The faith of Jesus is not comprehended. We must talk it, we must live it, we must pray it, and educate the people to bring this part of the message into their home life. 'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.' " Philippians 2:5. Ibid., 184

The law has been preached, but the true faith of Jesus has not been given equal importance by Seventh-
day Adventists. Until the faith of Jesus is experienced in the life there is no power for victory over sin and temptation. For this reason we have not been able to finish God's work in over one hundred years. The gospel is not complete until the true faith of Jesus is preached with equal importance with the law.

May God hasten the day when all God's leadership, pastors, and laity realize their great need of this

revitalizing experience of the 1888 message! We may then expect to see the Lord's work on earth go forward like "fire in the stubble."
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The human agent sees what he has to contend with—a strange power opposed to the idea of attaining the perfection that Christ holds out. But with Christ there is saving power that will gain for him victory in the conflict. *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1098

Have you considered that if you fail to teach [your children] to respect you, their father and mother, and to yield to your authority, you are educating them to dishonor God? *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 323

The parents, especially the father, should guard against the danger of their children learning to look upon him as a detective, peering into all their actions, watching and criticizing them, ready to seize upon and punish them for every misdemeanor. *Health Reformer*, 172

Regard as a sin, the practice so common, even among Seventh-day Adventists, of becoming the echo of any man, however lofty his position. *Paulson Collection*, 53

As surely as you allow your natural temperaments and dispositions to control you, just so surely will they appear in your labors, to mar the work of God. If you should bring souls into the truth, they would imitate your defects of character. *Historical Sketches*, 151
Work Education

Work education has always been an integral part of God-centered education. In the Garden of Eden our first parents were given a beautiful garden in which to develop their physical resources. "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed." Genesis 2:8. After sin, work was an entirely different proposition for man; nevertheless, it was still to be a blessing. "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground." Genesis 3:18-19. This work education, however, had deeper significance than the physical development of Adam and Eve. "To Adam and Eve was committed the care of the garden. . . . Though rich in all that the Owner of the universe could supply, they were not to be idle. Useful occupation was appointed them as a blessing, to strengthen the body, to expand the mind, and to develop the character." Education, 21. It will be seen that work not only is essential to physical health and development, but also to the development of the mind and the character.

In today's age, dominated by apartment living and almost unlimited labor-saving devices, this insight alone might give us some idea of the reason for the intellectual and moral weakness of the present age. While many see work as a burden, it was indeed given to be a blessing so that the character of man might be rounded and complete. Every Jewish child learned a trade, irrespective of his direction in life. Christ learned the trade of a carpenter.

"Jesus lived in a peasant's home, and faithfully and cheerfully acted His part in bearing the burdens of the household. . . . He learned a trade, and with His own hands worked in the carpenter's shop with Joseph.

"As Jesus worked in childhood and youth, mind and body were developed. He did not use His physical powers recklessly, but in such a way as to keep them in health, that He might do the best work in every line. He was not willing to be defective, even in the handling of tools. He was perfect as a workman, as He was perfect in

The decided diminution of work opportunities for children in most homes has made the development of work education in school even more critical

Russell R. and Colin D. Standish

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character. By His own example He taught that it is our duty to be industrious, that our work should be performed with exactness and thoroughness, and that such labor is honorable. The exercise that teaches the hands to be useful, and trains the young to bear their share of life’s burdens, gives physical strength, and develops every faculty. All should find something to do that will be beneficial to themselves and helpful to others. God appointed work as a blessing, and only the diligent worker finds the true glory and joy of life. The approval of God rests with loving assurance upon children and youth who cheerfully take their part in the duties of the household, sharing the burdens of father and mother. Such children will go out from the home to be useful members of society.” The Desire of Ages, 72

Likewise, the highly educated Paul was trained in a trade. “And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them [Aquila and Priscilla], and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.” Acts 18:3. Because there has been such a decided diminution of work opportunities for children in most homes, the development of work education in school becomes even more critical. Without this education the students cannot be given the balance that God has required of them. Many will be called to do special self-supporting work for God, and the acquisition of a trade and manual skills will allow them the greatest opportunity to support themselves and their families in this ministry. Even those who are being called to professional lines will benefit greatly from the ability to ply a skill, thus giving them the opportunity to balance their life’s activities, giving refreshment to the mind and the opportunity to have the fulfillment of tasks well accomplished. Work education provides for the students lifelong physical activity which will not militate against the service orientation of true Christian commitment, but indeed will enhance the ministry of all. The development of careful skills not only is a challenge to the mind, but also facilitates in the development of moral attitudes.

Even to the simplest tasks of life. The satisfaction of a task well accomplished is an altogether different satisfaction from that which is obtained in the victory on the sporting field. Indeed it is not the heightened, transitory exhilaration of defeat of another individual or of another team, but it is the joy of seeing something well accomplished which is of value and of purpose and which, in no wise depreciates the efforts of another.

No education which ignores the development of practical skills can be authentic Christian education, for manual labor is integral to God-centered education

Much modern-day counsel has been given concerning this much-neglected form of education. “In establishing our schools out of the cities, we shall give the students the opportunity to train the muscles to work as well as the brain to think. Students should be taught how to plant, how to gather the harvest, how to build, how to become accepted missionary workers in practical lines. By their knowledge of useful industries they will often be enabled to break down prejudice; often they will be able to make themselves so useful that the truth will be recommended by the knowledge they possess.” Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 309-310. The authors well remember the experience of a pastor that once served his church. Some years before, he had been located in a country town where he occasionally spent time with the local blacksmith. The pastor himself had been well educated as a blacksmith in his younger days, and on one occasion when the town blacksmith was seeking to determine how best to join two different metals together, the pastor was able to offer to him the best solution. This opening wedge led ultimately to the conver-

cloud, gave directions to Israel that every youth should be taught some line of useful employment. Therefore it was the custom of the Jews, the wealthy as well as the poorer classes, to teach their sons and daughters some useful trade, so that, should adverse circumstances arise, they would not be dependent upon others, but would be able to provide for their own necessities. They might be instructed in literary lines, but they must also be trained to some craft. This was deemed an indispensable part of their education.

“Now, as in the days of Israel, every youth should be instructed in the duties of practical life. Each should acquire a knowledge of some branch of manual labor by which, if need be, he may obtain a livelihood. This is essential, not only as a safeguard against the vicissitudes of life, but also from its bearing upon physical, mental, and moral development.” Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 307

Thus even those planning to enter a profession should be trained in some manual skill. “The benefit of manual training is needed also by professional men. A man may have a brilliant mind; he may be quick to
A well-balanced work, study, and outreach ministry program provides the basis for the development of the physical, mental, and spiritual facets of the life

details of everyday life, and ordering every transaction according to the standard of God's Word. But this is what the Lord requires.” Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 279

"It was God's purpose to alleviate by toil the evil brought into the world by man's disobedience. . . . And though attended with anxiety, weariness, and pain, labor is still a source of happiness and development, and a safeguard against temptation. Its discipline places a check on self-indulgence and promotes industry, purity, and firmness. Thus it becomes a part of

when practical education was greatly depreciated by many educational theorists, to the point that many referred to academic preparation as education and the learning of physical tasks as training. Even today there is still a tendency to rate much more highly the work of the mind than the work of the body. But such does not bear consistency with the counsel of God.

Work education is a requirement for the Christian school and we have often been greatly neglectful in it, thus depriving our children and youth of the unlimited value of the program. When children

have a well-balanced work, study, and outreach ministry program, they have the basis for the development of the physical, mental and spiritual facets of their lives in a way that will maximize the claims of God upon their lives and service. Thus work should not be simply an addendum to the curriculum. It should be an integral part of the curriculum in which the teachers in an apprenticeship manner work with and educate the children in their care. For this reason, our schools should provide adequate land so that agriculture and industries can be developed. These should not be industries that cause a burden to the financial operation of the school. Indeed, on the contrary, they should be so well planned and executed that they alleviate much of the crippling debt which now is afflicting so many of our schools. It is important that the children be trained in careful financial management, for if they are going to use these skills in later life in self-supporting ministry, they need to know how to do so profitably and in a manner which will support their ministry. With enthusiastic and capable management, these industries could so profit the finances of the school that major reductions could be made in the cost of student tuition, thus encouraging many of the thousands of young people now being educated in public schools to return to a Christian environment.

In many instances, serious consideration should be given to the converting of large, expensive gymnasiums into work industries by which the students could profit in every way. There are some who have sought to operate a work-study—sports program. This is not according to God's plan, for almost inevitably the excitement and thrill of the sports will overshadow the work, depreciating it in the life and experience of the students. Sports are inimical to Christian growth and development, for they foster rivalry and egocentric goals. Work, on the other hand, provides cooperative ventures and worthwhile and valuable ends which are at the heart of Christian education.
Food for Thought

HOW CAN anyone who is in fellowship with Christ's sufferings, refuse to obey His will and do His work? Yet there are people who know the terms of salvation, which are plainly revealed in the Word of God. They listen to the message which the Lord sends through His delegated servants, but, although they assent to the truth, they will not obey. They have not genuine faith to appropriate God's promises to themselves. They do not regard Him as their personal Saviour, in whom they may trust as a child trusts its loving parents. They do not regard God as a loving heavenly Father, who has provided for them a perfect Saviour, never-failing Friend, an infallible Guide and Teacher.

It is surprising that they can read all the promises in the Word of God, the gracious calls to the heavenly feast, and yet refuse to accept them. Holding themselves aloof from the Source of their strength and efficiency, they are as sapless branches. Not having become united with the Living Vine, can we suppose that they will have spiritual eyesight to discern the exalted privilege of those who serve God, and the unfavorable position those are placed in who fail to follow Him?

So many have not the real faith that works by love and purifies the soul; therefore they choose to labor for the approbation of men rather than of God. No real heavenly brightness is brought in to their religious life, and the future is devoid of the assurance which leads them to trust and hope. Many are living in transgression and rebellion against God. They choose to indulge their carnal impulses rather than to yoke up with Christ, lift the cross, and follow Jesus. There is a cross to lift, and self-denial to practice, in all the ways of practical godliness. It is through care and helpfulness toward others that we learn the precious lessons God designs for us. The great sacrifice of love made by the only begotten Son of God, won the victory on our behalf. When will the people of God become pure and true and Christlike? When will they come out from the world and be separate? When will they open the door of their hearts and welcome the heavenly Guest?

We can not overestimate the value of simple faith and unquestioning obedience. It is by following the path of obedience in humble faith that the character attains perfection. Adam was required to render strict obedience to God's commandments, and no lower standard is presented to those who desire salvation today. Christ has promised us sufficient power to reach this high standard. He says: " whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world can not receive." John 14:13-17

Why cannot the world receive truth? "Because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." John 14:17

The world is leagued against the truth, because it does not desire to obey the truth. Shall I, who perceive the truth, close my eyes and heart to its saving power because the world chooses darkness rather than light? Shall I bind myself up with the bundles of tares because my neighbors refuse to be bound up with the wheat? Shall I refuse light, the evidence of truth which leads to obedience, because my friends and relatives choose to follow in the path of disobedience which leads away from God? Shall I close my mind against the knowledge of the truth because my neighbors and friends will not open their understanding to discern the truth as it is in Jesus? Shall I refuse to grow in the grace and knowledge of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ because my neighbors choose to remain dwarfs spiritually? "Be ye therefore perfect," said Christ, "even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matthew 5:48

Apples of Gold Library, No. 30 (November 1895), now available in Ellen G. White Pamphlets in the Concordance, vol. 1, 513-514

The target of YOUR CHOICE magazine is the final generation of youth. Our goal is to inspire all with a love for Christ that goes beyond what can be said in words alone. It is our prayer that each reader will be drawn to receive the gift that our Lord yearns to impart.
CRY ALOUD, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1

From time immemorial, this task has been the work of the prophets of God. (Daniel's assignment, in the court of heathen kings, was a rare exception.) "John the Baptist met sin with open rebuke in men of humble occupation and in men of high degree." Selected Messages, book 2, 149. His daring testimony to King Herod cost him his life.

The prophetess to the Seventh-day Adventists was not exempt. "The message we bear," she wrote in 1897, "must be as direct as was the message of John. . . . There are special duties to be done, special reproofs to be given in this period of the earth's history. The Lord will not leave His church without reproofs and warnings." "The Lord has been giving messages to His people, through the instruments He has chosen, and He would have all take heed to the admonitions and warnings He sends." Ibid., 151, 150

Do we notice that plural word, "instruments"? "Does anyone suppose that the messages of warning will not come to those whom God reproves? The ones reproved may rise up in indignation and seek to bring the law to bear upon God's messenger, but in doing this, they are not bringing the law upon the messenger, but upon Christ, who gave the reproof and the warning. When men endanger the work and cause of God by their own wrong course of action, shall they hear no voice of reproof?" She goes on to declare that when the wrongdoer's "course of action is doing positive harm to the cause of truth, and souls are imperiled, God requires that the warning be as broad as the injury done." Ibid., 153. The writer herself, inspired by God, did this fearlessly when occasion demanded. But now this chosen messenger has long been sleeping in her grave. Must the church be without any such voice today? No indeed! For even in that very same letter of 1897 from which the above words have been taken, notice this urgent call:

"God calls for men of decided fidelity. He has no use in an emergency for two-sided men. He wants men who will lay their hand upon a wrong work and say, 'This is not according to the will of God.' " Ibid.

As a most challenging illustration of what these words might mean, note what Mrs. White wrote "To Our Leading Physicians" in 1904. It was at a most critical time in the history of this movement, when Dr. J. H. Kellogg, head of the

Paul Felt
famous Battle Creek Sanitarium, was leading the way into apostasy. Here are a few excerpts:

"Where are His watchmen? Are they standing on the high tower, giving the danger signal, or are they allowing the peril to pass unheeded?...

"Will the men in our institutions keep silent, allowing insidious falacies to be promulgated to the ruin of souls?...

"For years our physicians have been trained to think that they must not give expression to sentiments that differ from those of their chief. Oh, that they had broken the yoke! Oh, that they had called sin by its right name!...

"My message to you is: No longer consent to listen without protest to the perversion of truth...

"Has your obedience to men become rebellion against God?" Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 2, 13-17

These were not physicians in private practice, on an independent income. They were denominational employees, directly accountable to the man God was calling upon them to rebuke. As medical missionaries, He intended them to consider their work not a "job," but a sacred calling.

What then, on occasion, may be the responsibility of our conference workers, or of Adventist workers employed in our Adventist Health System, or perhaps of the faculty members in our educational institutions? Is there danger today that "obedience to men" may even now become "rebellion against God?"

To keep our balance in this delicate area, will it not be well for us all to remember "how great are the responsibilities of men in holy office," and be slow to find fault with them in bearing heavy burdens? It is forty years since I was called to pastor Seventh-day Adventist churches, working under the leadership of local and higher conference officials. During this time I have known at least some of these to whom I believe the following testimony could apply:

"In this perilous time the Lord has given us men of His choice to stand as the leaders of His people." The next words remind me of God's conditional promises made to Solomon: "If these men will keep humble and prayerful, ever making Christ their confidant, listening to and obeying His words, the Lord will lead and strengthen them. God has chosen Elder Daniels to bear responsibilities, and has promised to make him capable by His grace of doing the work entrusted to him. The responsibilities of the position he occupies are great, and the task upon his strength and courage is severe; and the Lord calls upon us to hold up his hands, as he strives"

The victim of malicious tongues needs constantly to beware

with all powers of mind and body to advance the work. Let us refuse to listen to the words of censure spoken regarding the men upon whom rest such weighty responsibilities." Ibid., 41

And another solemn warning we need to keep constantly in mind: "Satan would be pleased to have anyone and everyone become his allies to weaken the confidence of brother in brother, and to sow discord among those who profess to believe the truth...." What a tragedy when "the tongue that should have been used to the glory of God in speaking words of hope and faith and confidence in God's workmen has turned away a soul from Jesus Christ!" Selected Messages, book 2, 70

Has the prophetic Voice been contradicting itself? No indeed! It is just that we must ever keep in mind that "impossible" but most necessary partnership in God's true church, the partnership between separation and unity. This delicate balance is beautifully expressed in the following paragraph:

"As they assimilate their character to the divine Pattern, men will not guard their own personal dignity. With jealous, sleepless, loving, devoted interest, they will guard the sacred interest of the church from the evil which threatens to dim and cloud the glory that God intends shall shine forth through her. They will see that Satan's devices have no place or countenance in her by encouraging fault-finding, gossiping, evil-speaking, and accusing of the brethren; for those things would weaken and overthrow her." Testimonies to Ministers, 406-407.

True, it is all too often the reformer, the stalwart defender of the faith who becomes the innocent victim of malicious tongues. But he himself needs constantly to beware lest, perhaps in defending himself, he be sucked into rendering evil for evil.

Sheep Versus Shepherds

"Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds; Wo e be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flock?" Ezekiel 34:2

"Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the Lord." Jeremiah 23:1

A growing number of our most conscientious and intelligent church members consider the church they deeply love to be in a condition of general apostasy. The rapid growth of membership in neighboring and

If only God had never spoken with such clarity and power

distant lands is small comfort to them. If only God had never spoken with such clarity and power through His chosen messenger to the remnant, they could find encouragement in things as they are. But they have caught a vision of
The counsel given us by inspiration was not for this sort of program

Schools more and more. Campuses have been built, curriculums have been set up, recreational programs have been developed, to resemble those of the world's institutions. And a large proportion of our church membership, who want what the world has to offer, are only dissatisfied that it is not more so. Most disconcerting of all, perhaps, is the disturbing realization that practically all of the teachers who for a generation or two have been training our ministers have secured their advanced degrees at schools of spiritual Babylon. The memory of what led to the council at Glacier View, and what was learned there of the opinions and beliefs of many of our most influential leaders and scholars, raises questions as to who should be chosen to instruct our children.

These conscientious members are thrilled and thankful for our health message, and for the well-developed program of preventive medicine and treatment with simple natural remedies, developed before the end of the last century. But before most of us were born, our sanitariums were losing the distinctive features that name was intended to represent, until the name itself became a symbol of hypocrisy and was discarded. Today the scene is dominated by our national Adventist Health System, carefully structured to carry on the world's medical program under the Adventist name. Because many of its workers are true believers and loving and lovable Christians, meeting the public where and when it hurts the most, it is indeed a means through which souls are being won to Christ and His message for this hour. For this we are deeply thankful. The labors of these consecrated workers are not in vain.

Here again it's easy for those of us on the sidelines to expound as "armchair generals," in condemnation of those who for many years have been having to make the hard decisions. Our organized medical work did not become what it is overnight. One step has led to another. Policies become institutions. Administrators must start, not with what they want, but with what exists. As a consequence, it needs to be frankly recognized that the counsel given us by inspiration was not for this sort of program at all. The principles involved in the divine "blueprint" have gradually become so compromised that they cannot be consistently followed within the structure we now have. We are "unequally yoked" with unbelievers in that system at so many points that no true reform is possible without a most drastic reversal of policy. Our church and medical leadership, therefore, on whom the present responsibility rests, need both our sympathy and our most earnest prayers.

Even without the peril of our present indebtedness, we had abundant cause to tremble. "Sanitariums were to reform the medical practices of physicians," Medical Ministry, 27. What these words could have meant fifty or more years ago is being remarkably demonstrated today in small "self-supporting" institutions such as Weimar, Wildwood, and Uchee Pines. It is to such as these that a surprising number of prominent church leaders have had to turn in recent years for help that standard medical practice is not equipped to provide.

This same class of faithful church members are deeply concerned with the tide of worldliness that has been sweeping into the church now for many years. It has come to be regarded as "legalistic" and definitely out of style to preach on Christian standards, such as dress, recreation, and even diet. Our children generally are so influenced by TV watching that such members often prefer teaching their own children at home to subjecting them to the constant influence of even their "Adventist" peers. This course of action should not be interpreted as snobbishness, but as faithful stewardship of the priceless faith of our fathers. Unless our children, like Jesus, can be raised sufficiently "separate from sinners," their lives and influence can never be a true and lasting benefit to a sinful and perishing world. It is not enough today to get out of the city. The spirit and the lifestyle of "city" must be gotten out of the home—at any cost. Too few today are willing to pay that price.

What, then, are these "laymen" to do, in the face of predominant trends in today's Seventh-day Adventist Church? The best solution many of these have been able to find is to go "self-supporting." In practice, over a period now of many years, this expression has come to be understood in more than merely financial terms. It means a degree of institutional independence sufficient to permit free experimentation with policies and practices patterned after God's revealed will. There may not be a divine "blueprint" that continues unaffected by changes of time and
circumstance. But beyond question there are principles, broad and firm outlines, that were intended to govern the policies of our schools and medical institutions, as well as of individual and family life.

One gifted leader in this “self-supporting” work went into it after fifteen years as a successful evangelist. Central to his whole ministry has been an inflexible determination to build, and not tear down, the general work and organization of the church. Though viewed with suspicion and sometimes with disdain by many church administrators, enterprises of this type have made remarkable progress.

It is of interest that this “self-supporting” leader, though he had entered upon his work in counsel with church leaders, was thought of by many as a “former minister.” Because of technicalities of official policy, he served without ministerial credentials for many years. In practice, however, this fact made no difference to those who believed in his ministry and appreciated the fruitfulness of his labors. Had he not been called by God, and that calling publicly recognized by His church in formally ordaining him to the gospel ministry? Most certainly. Had he not continued to faithfully pursue that calling, even when no longer directly supervised by church officials and supported by tithe? Indeed. Then was he not truly a Seventh-day Adventist minister during the years when a mere technicality of church policy prevented him from being granted credentials? Those who have heard him preach, whether in the Wildwood Chapel or on the camp meeting circuit, have never—or hardly ever—questioned whether or not to call him “Elder” W. D. Frazee.

There are others, however, who have felt conscience-bound to follow a more radical approach. Most of these have been “laymen.” A few have been veteran ministers and educators. They see that the revival and reformation, so earnestly called for in the early 70s have not materialized. They are convinced that something more than a loving, loyal, constructive example is needed. Without minimizing the great blessing that has come through our self-supporting institutions, they believe it is long past time for someone to “cry aloud.”

God’s prophet to Seventh-day Adventists is sleeping in Jesus. When it comes to these perplexing issues, what counsel has been left us through this inspired channel? Here believing students of this literature are not now fully agreed. The calls for both separation and unity are so evenly balanced, and so inseparable, that our emphasis may well depend on our experience.

But it is our business! Every member shares the responsibility

Is our sighing and crying to be done only in the secret of our prayer closet? From one point of view that seems to be the only answer. How can we hope to effectively win souls, gathering them into the fellowship of the church, without showing respect for its leadership and loyalty to its policies and institutions? “We must keep before the world a united front. Satan will triumph to see differences among Seventh-day Adventists,” Counsels to Writers and Editors, 76

“There is no need to doubt, to be fearful that the work will not succeed. God is at the head of the work, and He will set everything in order. If matters need adjusting at the head of the work, God will attend to that, and work to right every wrong.” Selected Messages, book 2, 390. It is not surprising, therefore, that “self-supporting” workers under the influence of Wildwood leadership do their best to combine loyal co-operation with church leadership with their own reform-minded standards and policies. Though deeply distressed by what they believe to be downward trends in the church, they confine their protests to a positive example.

There is a danger here, however, that has long brought concern to some in and out of this movement. This danger is that too often the little institutional family becomes satisfied with its own correctness, washing its hands of responsibility for the conduct of the rest of the church and its institutions. The thought surfaces, “Well, if that’s what they want to do, let them do it. It’s not our business.”

But it is our business! Every church member has a share of responsibility for the management of the church organization and its institutions. We have a representative government, and a share in electing at least the local conference officers. The conference academy is our academy. The union conference college is our college. Even the Adventist Health System and all its hospitals and business enterprises belong to the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its North American membership. When our study of the counsel of God convinces us that our church is in a deepening condition of apostasy, what does He want us to do? Preach the truth where we are; live exemplary lives; run our little schools, our health-care and other projects as faithfully as we know how according to God’s counsel. These certainly come first, and are indispensable. Then what? No more?

Though given in heaven-born love, it requires very plain speaking

The “shaking,” by which the purification of the remnant church is to be accomplished, is to be “caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans... Some will not bear this straight test...continued on 31
FOLLOW THE LEADER

Stanley West

JESUS HAD joined His disciples in an upper room in Jerusalem. He was very quiet, for He knew that His hour had come. His little church was gathered together for the last service He would have with them. This band of disciples would carry on His work. He had endeavored to train them well, but there was a conflict among them. The issue was who would be the greatest in His new government when the Jews no longer were in bondage to the Romans. Jesus had never been able to convince them that His kingdom was spiritual and not political. Who would be the greatest was therefore important to them.

Taking a towel Jesus girded Himself and washed the disciples' feet. Judas was the first to be served, but his heart did not submit to His Saviour. After this service each of the disciples, except Judas, was willing to concede the highest place to another. Jesus ended the service by stating, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done." John 13:15. This same thought was emphasized later by Peter: "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example." 1 Peter 2:21. And we sing in Sabbath school, "Be like Jesus, this my song, in the home and in the throng."

We read in Scripture that Jesus is our example. But do we spend time each day studying His life so that we can be like Him? Is this idea just a nice cliche to talk about, or is it a real part of the philosophy that governs our life? Let us scrutinize each detail of His life so that we may fully understand what it means to take Jesus as our example.

Jesus did not need to prove His divine Sonship

In Matthew 4:1-3, Satan said, "If thou be the Son of God." His very words implied disbelief in God, a kind of reasoning not new to him. He had used it very successfully when he said to Eve, "Hath God said, 'Ye shall not eat of the tree?" implying that it was incredulous

that God should say such words. He insinuated that of course God did not want them to eat of the tree because He knew that if they did eat of it they would become as gods. To protect Himself He had given that counsel and threatened them with death. Satan gave a positive denial of God's warning, saying, "Thou shalt not surely die." Eve now had the choice of believing God or Satan. Satan had shaken Eve's confidence in God's word. He repeated this strategy with Jesus, saying to Him, "If thou be the Son of God." At the baptism of Jesus, just a few weeks earlier, the Father had said clearly that Jesus was His Son, and Jesus had heard it with the others who were gathered there. Jesus did not need to prove His divine Sonship to Satan. Satan's first temptation, usually the most successful, was to endeavor to cause Jesus to doubt the word of His Father.

This kind of reasoning is too successful with us today. One of the most beautiful promises in the Bible is Matthew 6:33. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God... and all these things shall be added unto you." We are now faced with the same question that Eve and Jesus faced. Will we allow Satan to shake our confidence in God's word? Shall we
be the major issue between those who serve God and those who do not serve Him. Satan brought to Joe the temptation of not having confidence in God’s word, as he had brought it to Eve and Jesus before him. Would his confidence be shaken in the word of God, or would he stand firm on it?

Joe followed the example of Jesus, in the same way that we are to do. His decision was to keep the Sabbath. When Joe told the manager of his department that he would not be able to come to work the following Saturday, his manager, whom we will call Bill, said that he could take the day off and call it sick time.

The next Friday Joe went again to Bill and told him that he could not come to work the following day because it was the Sabbath. Bill told him that he must come to work, or he would surely be fired. That Sabbath was a day of great anxiety to Joe, but he didn’t go to work. On Monday he went to the cashier to get his pay and was told that he had not been fired and that he should go to work.

The following Friday he again went to Bill and said that he would not be at work the following day.

This statement caused a minor explosion in the shop. Bill was really angry with him. Joe was told that this was his last opportunity and that he would be fired if he did not come to work. Satan will use every means at his command to cause us to fail in following God’s word.

The following Monday Joe again went to the cashier and there was his check. Joe had taken God’s promise and acted upon it. Now he expected God to fulfill His promise. Day after day he looked for work. Sometimes it seemed as if he had a job, but something would come up and he wouldn’t get it. After six weeks without work, Joe was quite depressed, but he still trusted God. He saw a fellow worker who told him Bill was looking for him. Joe went to the shop and was told that ever since he had been fired, he had been watched. But now the company had a much better job opening in which he would be able to keep the Sabbath and would get an increase in salary. “A man with these convictions,” Bill said, “is too valuable to lose.” God fulfilled His promise. This experience should give us courage to take Jesus as our example and not allow our confidence in God’s word to be shaken. We sing the song, “Will your anchor hold in the storm of life? . . . When the strong tides lift, and the cables strain, will your anchor drift, or firm remain?” If we allow our confidence in God’s word not to be shaken, our anchor will hold.

Let us return to the experience of Jesus. Satan said, “Command that these stones be made bread.” After Satan was unsuccessful in causing Jesus to lose confidence in God’s word, he then proceeded to tempt Jesus to do that which He was not to do. Jesus was hungry, but He would not perform a miracle for Himself. He could not do that which was impossible for man to do, and continue to be our example. Even though He was hungry and wanted to eat, Jesus could not perform this miracle.

The process was the same with Eve. She wanted to eat of the fruit of the forbidden tree, but God had commanded, “Thou shalt not eat of the tree.” Satan said that she could, and that what God had promised would not actually happen. Because she wanted to eat, the temptation fit with her desires. She followed Satan’s suggestion and ate. God had said she would die. She did. God had said her eyes would be opened to know evil. They were. What God had said would happen, happened. As we investigate the way Jesus dealt victoriously with temptation, let us take Him as our example and deal with temptation in the same way. We will be victorious, too.

Jesus answered, “It is written.” When the temptation came to Jesus to lose confidence in God’s word, Jesus answered with Scripture. Let us take Jesus as our example and when a temptation comes for us to lose confidence in God’s word, quote Scripture to find strength for victory. When we are tempted to do that which we want to do but are endeavoring to avoid, our strength will be in the scripture, “It is written.” If a person must ask the question, “What’s wrong with . . . ?” the very asking of that question is a flag raised to warn us that we are on shaky ground. Satan is tempting us to do that which we already want to do. Until we have a “thus saith the Lord” that it is the right thing to do, we would do well to avoid that which we question.

When we are faced with this dilemma we should be like the missionary in the African veldt. He was out in the bush and had been very carefully looking for animals that might be looking for missionaries when he became aware that he

They made provision for the fleshly lusts

was being stalked by a lion. Now we know that Satan goes about like a lion. 1 Peter 5:8. What could this missionary do? If he ran, the lion would attack. Since the lion could run much faster than he, he could not escape that way. There weren't
any trees to climb, and he probably couldn't climb fast enough anyway. He had no gun to shoot with.

He called to mind James 4:7. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." And since the devil is like a lion he decided to resist. He jumped in the air, waved his arms, kicked his feet, and with all the volume he could muster he shouted, "No! No! No!" The lion was so surprised that he turned and ran away. It is like the statement in The Desire of Ages, 130. "We may resist temptation, and force Satan to depart from us." When we have a temptation let us take Jesus as our example and meet the temptation with scripture.

Since Satan is always ready with his next temptation, let us examine what comes next. Have you ever felt that if there hadn't been a certain set of circumstances you would not have fallen into sin? Romans 13:14 declares, "Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." This text was ignored in the days of the Holy Flesh movement. They made provision for the fleshly lusts to be fulfilled, and they fell into sin. They believed that nothing they did could be sin because they had holy flesh. A part of the example of Jesus is that we make no provision for sinning. The person who wants to quit smoking is tempted to keep a package of cigarettes so that just in case he isn't strong enough to quit he will have some close at hand. His weakness is provided for. God says, Don't make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. Don't make it easy to sin.

The answer of Jesus was, "It is written." He could give that answer only because He knew Scripture.

When we take Jesus as our example, to give that answer we must know Scripture. And we do. The more of Scripture we know, the better will we be able to answer Satan's temptation with "It is written." All scripture is given by inspiration of God. 2 Timothy 3:16. It is not sufficient merely to read Scripture. The example of Jesus was not to scan a certain number of chapters of the Bible a day so that in a year He could say He had read the Bible. It is a matter of rightly dividing the Word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15. Unless we scrutinize closely, there is much that we are likely to miss.

Out in Wyoming a long time ago a man picked up some rocks that were lying around. He sent them to a lapidary for evaluation. His friends laughed at him. They said, "These rocks have lain around here for a long time. They're not good for anything." But the lapidary sent the man a sizable check and asked for more. When his friends heard about it they said, "They are all over out here, and we haven't paid much attention to them. Why would he want them?" The rocks contained very precious jade and were in demand. Until we understand the great value of the words of the Bible, we may trample them underfoot as this man's friends did the precious jade.

God has given a warning. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." Hosea 4:6. We can lose our salvation if we don't know God's Word and how to apply it when a temptation comes. We have Him as our example, and unless we follow that example without deviation our salvation is not assured. But if we follow Him, we have full assurance of salvation. God has promised it and we accept it. "In times like these you need a Savior; in times like these you need an anchor. In times like these you need the Bible. Be sure your anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock!"

Another suggestion Jesus has given in dealing with temptations is to combine prayer with the study of His Word. Sometimes what is termed praying is merely saying prayers. And there is a difference. Saying prayers is referred to in Matthew 6:7. "Use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do." The rosary similar to what our friends the Catholics use was found in India, Japan, and Mexico when the Catholic missionaries first arrived. It was used by the Phoenicians in honor of their god Astarte. The Brahmans used it in honor of their god Vishnu. The Buddhists used it in honor of their god as did the Moslems in honor of Allah.

While we don't finger beads as some of these worshipers do, it is an easy temptation to fall into the way of just saying oft-repeated phrases a moment before slipping into bed and think that we have prayed. What did Jesus do? He went out early in the morning and there prayed." Mark 1:35. Jesus started His day with prayer and communion with His heavenly Father. If we expect to have the same victory that Jesus had, we need to start our day in the same way. We sing, "Sweet hour of prayer." Is that only a song, or is it a part of our life? Let us enter into our closet alone and talk with the Lord (Matthew 6:6), and not just repeat some well-learned phrases.

On occasion Jesus spent all night in prayer. Luke 6:12. He was so concerned with the selection of His disciples that He spent the entire night in prayer to make sure that He chose the right ones. When we are so concerned to do God's will that we spend all night in prayer, we will have the victory that He had. Then we can sing, "Christ, only Christ, no idle words e'er falling." Only when our life becomes a life of following the Leader will we have the victory that our Leader had.
timony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God's people." Early Writings, 270. It is a John-the-Baptist ministry, "in the spirit and power of Elijah." The very "destiny of the church" hangs upon it. Though given in heaven-born love, it will require some very plain speaking, for "the Lord will not leave His church without reproofs and warnings." "God calls for men of decided fidelity. He has no use in an emergency for two-sided men. He wants men who will lay

God does not ask His people to believe everyone who comes to them

their hand upon a wrong work and say, 'This is not according to the will of God.' " Selected Messages, book 2, 151, 153

More than sixty years ago the courageous editor of our church paper dared to stand up for some whom others must have been calling "critics." "We need to be careful," he counseled, "that while we decry extremes, we do not refrain from advocating right, consistent standards. A thousandfold more honor to the simple-minded believers who in their lack of experience and possibly their ignorance, take extreme positions while they are endeavoring to cry out against the growing license and evil of the present day; than to the intelligent and liberal-minded Seventh-day Adventists who hold their peace because they fear that they will be classed with the radical and the extreme." Review and Herald, May 26, 1926

There are among us today some who have given up the comfort and security of denominational employment in the hope of setting a good example and crying out against what they believe to be wrong. Should all of these be banned from our pulpits and shunned by loyal church members? This is certainly a most delicate matter. Discernment is needed if we are to know what spirit is working through such a person.

"Satan well knows that success can only attend order and harmonious action." There are "devout souls" who "consider it a virtue to boast of their freedom to think and act independently. They will not take any man's say-so. They are amenable to no man. I was shown that it is Satan's special work to lead men to feel that it is God's order for them to strike out for themselves and choose their own course independent of their brethren." Testimonies to Ministers, 29

Perhaps the secret is found in the following counsel: "When the Lord gives a man a message, He gives it to him in such a manner whereby His people may know that the message is from Him. God does not ask His people to believe everyone who comes to them with a message. The Lord sends warnings to His people, not to destroy them, but to correct their errors." Selected Messages, book 2, 71. In the words of Jesus Himself, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

We have seen that, as important as unity is to the success of God's cause, truth is even more so. "We are to unify, but not on a platform of error." Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 2, 47. "The ministry,

The ministry, the pulpit, and the press demand men like Caleb

the pulpit, and the press demand men like Caleb, who will do and dare, men whose eyes are single to detect truth from error, whose ears are consecrated to catch the words from the faithful Watcher." Testimonies to Ministers, 407

"Satan has laid every measure possible that nothing shall come among us as a people to reprove and rebuke us, and exhort us to put away our errors. . . . In the past God has raised up men, and He still has men of opportunity waiting, prepared to do His bidding—men who will go through restrictions which are only as walls daubed with untempered mortar. When God puts His Spirit upon men, they will work. They will proclaim the word of the Lord; they will lift up their voice like a trumpet. The truth will not be diminished or lose its power in their hands. They will show the people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins." Ibid., 411

Down through all the ages, this call to reformation has been the work of the prophetic voice. And God will choose any individual He can best use to give it, regardless of occupation, sex, rank in His church, or degree of education. "When light goes forth to lighten the earth, instead of coming up to the help of the Lord," there are some who "will want to bind about His work to meet their narrow ideas. Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning. . . . God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness." Ibid., 300

Separation and unity—an impossible partnership! Whatever our position in God's true church, may He give us grace to humble our hearts, to put away our sins and petty differences, to pray for the outpouring of His Holy Spirit, and to follow at whatever the cost, "all the counsel of God." Paul did not shun to declare it. Acts 20:27. We dare not refuse to obey. Then, and then alone, can we ever be truly one.

Elder Paul Felt is a retired Seventh-day Adventist pastor now living in Franklin, Georgia
Summertime brought around warmer weather and a near-perfect setting for our annual camp meeting. Since early indicators pointed to a much larger group than last year, we kept reminding ourselves to "think big," especially when it came to accommodating all our guests. Long delays in the process of obtaining a building permit brought on a down-to-the-wire construction effort which finished a full twenty-five minutes before the first meeting. Praise the Lord for just enough time.

Attendance tripled from last year, but all went off smoothly thanks to everyone's co-operation. The speakers' topics included health, prophecy, history, doctrine, standards, personal religion, the challenges before God's people, and the certainty of eventual triumph by God's church.

We wish all our readers could have joined us, but for those who couldn't we suggest a set of cassette tapes. A complete set (including postage and handling) is only $50, admittedly much less than airfare. If you are interested in particular meetings or speakers, call or write for more information.

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