Special Issue: Education
Editorial

CONSIDERING everything that God has instructed His remnant church to do through His prophet Ellen White, God's counsel to His people on education has been the most explicit. The book Education has been considered a masterpiece by non-Seventh-day Adventist educators.

The book Fundamentals of Christian Education is a compilation of the most important guidelines laid down by the Author of all true education. God Himself gave us this master blueprint to prepare our youth for service in His great harvest field for the end time.

Now in this important hour when the signs of the times are screaming from the headlines of the daily newspapers telling us that the end is here, the church seems paralyzed. See Testimonies, vol. 1, 609. As we honestly analyze the present situation in our educational institutions, we are amazed and frightened at what we now see. There is often a fearful disregard of God's instruction. Some would say No; our schools have problems, but they are not in apostasy.

What is apostasy? It begins with a slight disregard for God's counsels and orders. Strict obedience is the test of our discipleship. See Testimonies, vol. 5, 680. God speaks through His last-day prophet: “Obedience to every word of God is another condition of success. Victories are not gained by ceremonies or display, but by simple obedience to the highest General, the Lord God of heaven. He who trusts in this Leader will never know defeat. Defeat comes in depending on human methods, human inventions, and placing the divine secondary. Obedience was the lesson that the Captain of the Lord's host sought to teach the vast armies of Israel—obedience in things in which they could see no success. When there is obedience to the voice of our Leader, Christ will conduct His battles in ways that will surprise the greatest powers of earth.” Testimonies, vol. 6, 140

Remember, God says defeat comes from “depending on human methods, human inventions, and placing the divine secondary.” Are we not guilty of this great sin of leaning on the arm of flesh?

Jeremiah makes it clear that when either man or the church leans on the arm of flesh, there is a curse. “Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.” Jeremiah 17:5

God designed our institutions to be schools of the prophets to prepare an army of youth to encompass the world with their great love of the truth, the three angels' messages, the Spirit of Prophecy, and the great landmarks of our faith.

And now in our own North American Division statistics prove that 71 percent of our youth are leaving us each year and that our divorce rate is nearly equal to that of the world. Isn't this proof enough that we have failed and that there has been an alarming under-mining of God's great plan of education and of His great plan for the home?

Where did we begin our departure from God's blueprint, His master design for educating our youth? Looking back to the 20s and 30s, we see leaders concerned about accrediting our schools. In 1930, we voted accreditation. By the 40s, teachers were returning to our schools who had received their education from the worldly, evangelical, humanistic system.

Some of these men were able to retain their spiritual equilibrium and their love for the great doctrines that have set us apart from all the other churches, but many have come back with their minds warped with Calvinism and other apostate doctrines of Protestantism. They were not aware that their minds were no longer being influenced by the Spirit of Prophecy and a “Thus saith the Lord.” They were now quoting the great theologians rather than God's prophet.

This practice has been the cause of many of the humiliations suffered by God's church through the ages.

The Hebrew church began sending their bright young minds to Alexandria 300 years before Christ's first coming. Hellenism and worldliness had so captured the minds of the teachers and leaders that they finally led the church into the great apostasy which caused them to crucify Christ.

Let us remember that Hellenism and humanism are the same philosophy as "You can do anything your mind tells you to do." God says through His prophet Ellen White that we have followed in the very steps of the ancient church. This statement is made 19 times in Testimonies, vol. 5. In Testimonies, vol. 1, 129, she says:

"I saw that many who profess to believe the truth for these last days think it strange that the children of Israel murmured as they journeyed; that after the wonderful dealings of God with them, they should be so ungrateful as to forget what He had done for them. Said the angel: 'Ye have done worse than they.' I saw that God has given His servants the truth so clear, so plain, that it cannot be resisted. Wherever they go they have certain victory.'

"The sin of ancient Israel was in disregarding the expressed will of God and following their own way according to the leadings of unsanctified hearts. Modern Israel are fast following in their footsteps, and the displeasure of the Lord is as surely resting upon them." Testimonies, vol. 5, 94

Will we now accept that we have chosen our own foolish way in almost everything that God has asked us to do, or will we continue to follow a course which may well lead to another destruction of our institutions such as that visited upon Battle Creek?

This special issue on education will help the reader to better understand the serious situation we face now in our beloved church.

RON SPEAR—EDITOR
It is the mission of Hope International and the editors of *Our Firm Foundation* to clearly present Christ and His truth. The days that yet remain of this world are few, and what we do we must do quickly. We must boldly proclaim the historic truths of Adventism that place us on so firm a foundation in the midst of this troubled world.—Editors

**Table of Contents**

Vol. 4, No. 9  September 1989

**Articles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After Harbor Springs</td>
<td>Dave Fiedler</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The beginnings of educational reform</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Will and Testament</td>
<td>Arthur W. Spalding</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legacy of a veteran educator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Education</td>
<td>Ellen G. White</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root and foundation of all learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Interview With George Akers</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director, General Conference Department of Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our College</td>
<td>Ellen G. White</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational purposes must determine educational methods</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Missionary Education</td>
<td>Ellen G. White</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsels concerning the work in Madison</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reforms in Diet</td>
<td>Edward A. Sutherland</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oberlin College and the Midnight Cry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hellenism and Humanism</td>
<td>Gwen Hawkins</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The subtlety by which self is enthroned</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Departments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Editorial</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line Upon Line</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>© Berea</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hope International is a special ministry assisting in the God-given work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We believe this Remnant Church of Bible prophecy has been brought into existence by the calling of the Lord, and we look for its final triumph in purity at the second coming of Christ. That the church does not now perfectly reflect the will of our Lord is cause for sorrow, but not for discouragement. The Word of God stands pledged that all within her borders will be sifted and tried, and though the greater portion will fail the test, there will yet remain a remnant to honor the Lord by their obedience to all His commands. Therefore, Hope International urges upon all the duty of supporting the Seventh-day Adventist Church in every way possible, insofar as is consistent with the principles of the government of God and the leading of His Holy Spirit upon the heart.
"Sister White was present, and I remember well that she read Testimonies relative to our schools and their work which she had written at the time of the conception of our first college. Elder A. T. Jones, Professor W. W. Prescott, and Elder E. J. Waggoner were among the leading instructors. This gathering closed with a song of triumph."

And thus the good work began—or perhaps we should say began again. True enough, Seventh-day Adventists had begun their educational work as reformers long ago. But there were deficiencies from its very inception. Despite instruction from the pen of Ellen White published under the title “Proper Education” in 1872, Battle Creek College began life handicapped by the short-sighted decision to build on seven acres in the west end of town. James and Ellen White had strongly advocated larger parcels of property, but the decision for “economy” and “convenience” won the votes during their absence. Upon their return to Michigan in the fall of 1874, Ellen White “broke down and wept.” Still, though she may weep, she would not give up.

"Shortly after their return, a meeting of the school board was called, and Professor Sidney Brownsberger [acting president of the college] was present. Then Mrs. White read to them the testimony on proper education. All listened with deep interest. They recognized it as timely. They also admitted that it called for a broader work than they had planned, and that their beautiful location, so convenient and near, did not provide for all that was called for."

“One said, ‘Well, Brother Brownsberger, what can we do?’”

“He answered, ‘I do not know anything about the conducting of such a school, where industries and farming are a part of the work. I would not know how to conduct such a school.’

“Then it was agreed that the work of the school should be organized on the ordinary lines and that the matter of industries should be studied with a view to their [later] introduction.”

Brownsberger—sincere, honest, the product of a classical education from the University of Michigan—was simply unable to grasp the kind of education the Lord desired. Years later he would exclaim, “What a young fool I then was!”

Pictured (left to right) are J. H. Kellogg, P. T. Magan, and E. A. Sutherland, with Battle Creek College in the background.
Time passed. Students came and went. And the college bounced along through good times and bad. The entire school year of 1882–1883 was lost when the school was forced to close its doors because of internal strife and outside interference from unconverted elements of the local church membership. Industrial education was eventually given a half-hearted opportunity in 1884, with the organizing of an employment office to co-ordinate student workers and odd jobs around town. Later that year a far-from-successful four-and-a-half-year experiment with printing, tentmaking, millinery, and cooking was initiated. By the spring of 1889, the manual training program was voted out of existence; after all, what could be done on seven acres?

The 1890–1891 Catalogue shows the tenor of Adventist education at the time. Four curricula were offered: the classical (seven years), the scientific (six years), the academic (four years), and the English (three years). Each curriculum offered only two courses in religion—Old Testament and New Testament. The classical student studied Latin and Greek for three years each. The scientific course was for four years of Latin and two of Greek. No doubt these courses were the targets of Ellen White and others as they championed a Christian curriculum free of pagan and infidel authors. What point was there, they asked, in students spending their time translating the works of Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Caesar, Cicero, Seneca, Xenophon, Demosthenes, and Homer? Wouldn’t they get at least as much benefit from a study of Scripture?

Well it was, then, that the educators at Harbor Springs spent their time discussing “the elimination of pagan and infidel authors from our schools, the dropping out of long courses in the Latin and Greek classics and the substitution of the teaching of the Bible, and the teaching of history from the standpoint of the prophecies.” And well, too, that Sister White “read Testimonies relative to our schools and their work which she had written at the time of the conception of our first college.” Indeed, it was worth the effort, for when Sister White re-read her essay on Proper Education one more time, a few at least were listening. And the seed of reform was planted.

To those who pondered the words they heard from Ellen White shortly before she left for Australia, it was obvious that Adventist education needed to get back on track. But what could be done?

“With the industries abandoned and domestic labor limited to one hour a day, a restless yearning for sports developed. During the winter, skating, sledding, or sleighing occupied student time.

“The men [students] played seasonal ball games on the playfield located north of the college or on the tennis slab on the southwest corner of the campus. College students played some games against teams from the West End [of Battle Creek], a few even against other colleges in Michigan. Once unusual excitement flared (in 1893) over an intramural football game. An American team played against a British team. The British won.

A reporter depicted the ‘Great International Football Game’ in a local journal. One of the Britshers sent a copy of the paper to his parents in Australia; they lent the newspaper to Ellen G. White, who was there (1891–1900) struggling to get the denomination established on the great island continent. She was aghast that so frothy an item should originate from a denominational college.”

As might be expected, Ellen White felt compelled to raise a warning. Things were clearly getting out of hand. In due time a frank letter arrived on the desk of W. W. Prescott, president of the college.

“There is great danger that parents and guardians, both by words and actions, will encourage self-esteem and self-importance in the youth. They have become armed and equipped for this kind of training. This is all wrong, from beginning to end. It is not in any way appropriate for this time, it is not qualifying the youth to go forth as missionaries, to endure hardship and privation, and to use their powers for the glory of God.

“Amusement that serves as exercise and recreation is not to be discarded; nevertheless it must be kept strictly within bounds, else it leads to love of amusement for its own sake, and nourishes the desire for selfish gratification...

“Let all learn to save, to economize. Every dollar wasted on frivolous things, or given to special friends who will spend it to indulge pride and selfishness, is robbing God’s treasury.

“The training and discipline you undergo in order to be successful in your games is not fitting you to become faithful soldiers of Jesus Christ, to fight His battles and gain spiritual victories.

The money expended for garments to make a pleasing show in these match games is so much money that might have been used to advance the cause of God in new places, bringing the word of truth to souls in darkness of error. Oh, that God would give all the true sense of what it means to be a Christian! It is to be Christlike. He lived not to please Himself...

“A great mistake has been made in following the world’s plans and ideas of recreation in indulgence and pleasure.

Oh, that God would give all the true sense of what it means to be a Christian! It is to be Christlike. He lived not to please Himself.

Pursue a course of petting, gratifying every whim, and thus foster the desire for self-gratification so that the youth receive a mold of character that unfitts them for the commonplace duties of practical life. When these students come to our schools, they do not appreciate their privileges; they do not consider that the purpose of education is to qualify them for usefulness in this life and for the future life in the kingdom of God. They act as if the school were a place to perfect themselves in sports, as if this was an important branch of their education, and loving. This has resulted in loss every time. We need now to begin over again. It may be essential to lay the foundation of schools after the pattern of the schools of the prophets.”

As was often the case, Ellen White’s perception of the event went far deeper than the “rightness” or “wrongness” of some particular action and dealt with the basic principles involved. What was the long-range effect these amusements were exerting? Could an Adventist college conscientiously foster that which the Lord said was disqualifying their
In all our churches there should be schools, and teachers in those schools who are missionaries. It is essential that teachers be educated to act their important part in educating the children of Sabbathkeepers in the Scriptures

world tour in January. Seeing Avondale first-hand and talking with Ellen White had impressed him, and he joined the proreform forces building in Battle Creek. But the key post, president of the college, was held by George W. Caviness, and he was far too conservative-minded and slow to act for the liking of many.

The General Conference session of 1897 was held in Lincoln, Nebraska, that spring and immediately followed by a number of formal meetings held in Battle Creek to conduct the legal business of Michigan-based denominational corporations. Among these was the Seventh-day Adventist Educational Society; here was to be the scene of the real activity that would decide the future course of Battle Creek College. When the Society met to elect its trustees, the nominees suggested by the college board were voted down. Instead, Caviness and two of his supporters held sway, assuring that the classical form of education would be well supported at the level where votes really counted.

What had happened? William Aul, mathematics teacher at the college and Caviness loyalist, had garnered enough proxy votes to successfully tip the decision in his favor. Not inclined to accept defeat so easily, the reformers publicly upbraided the resistance movement, declaring the election null and void because of vote-rigging. Jones expounded on the "Principles of True Education" from the pulpit of the Dime Tabernacle, castigating textbooks from the college which contained anti-Christian sentiments, and calling for the removal from office of all who permitted their use.

When a second election was held there were no surprises. The reformers now in full control of the board, they acted quickly on the single most pressing problem; Edward A. Sutherland was elected president of the college, effective immediately. His record of reform-minded education at Walla Walla College, were occupied in learning lessons in regard to the right use of one's own physical powers, it would be much more after the Lord's order, and would elevate the labor question, placing it where idleness would be regarded as a departure from the word and plan of God. . .

"There is a science in the use of the hand. In the cultivation of the soil, in building houses, in studying and planning various methods of labor, the brain must be exercised; and students can apply themselves to study to much better purpose when a portion of their time is adopted to physical taxation, wearing the muscles."

With such counsel in mind, Sutherland and his associates planned for the inclusion of a manual-training program in the college's curriculum. Buying eighty acres a mile north of the campus opened the door for agriculture and provided employment opportunity for scores of students. A broom-making factory, printshop, and tailor shop all posted financial profits in 1899, which more than offset the two-hundred-dollar loss from the dressmaking department. Still, the unfavorable location of the school continued to plague the project.

Despite inconveniences from mistakes of the past, there was pressing work to accomplish. With the groundwork of reform laid in place, it was time to provide educational opportunities for the younger members of the Lord's household. Writing from Australia, Ellen White began to advocate the establishment of elementary-level church schools:

"In all our churches there should be schools, and teachers in those schools who are missionaries. It is essential that teachers be educated to act their important part in educating the children of Sabbathkeepers in the Scriptures"

world tour in January. Seeing Avondale first-hand and talking with Ellen White had impressed him, and he joined the proreform forces building in Battle Creek. But the key post, president of the college, was held by George W. Caviness, and he was far too conservative-minded and slow to act for the liking of many.

The General Conference session of 1897 was held in Lincoln, Nebraska, that spring and immediately followed by a number of formal meetings held in Battle Creek to conduct the legal business of Michigan-based denominational corporations. Among these was the Seventh-day Adventist Educational Society; here was to be the scene of the real activity that would decide the future course of Battle Creek College. When the Society met to elect its trustees, the nominees suggested by the college board were voted down. Instead, Caviness and two of his supporters held sway, assuring that the classical form of education would be well supported at the level where votes really counted.

What had happened? William Aul, mathematics teacher at the college and Caviness loyalist, had garnered enough proxy votes to successfully tip the decision in his favor. Not inclined to accept defeat so easily, the reformers publicly upbraided the resistance movement, declaring the election null and void because of vote-rigging. Jones expounded on the "Principles of True Education" from the pulpit of the Dime Tabernacle, castigating textbooks from the college which contained anti-Christian sentiments, and calling for the removal from office of all who permitted their use.

When a second election was held there were no surprises. The reformers now in full control of the board, they acted quickly on the single most pressing problem; Edward A. Sutherland was elected president of the college, effective immediately. His record of reform-minded education at Walla Walla College, were occupied in learning lessons in regard to the right use of one's own physical powers, it would be much more after the Lord's order, and would elevate the labor question, placing it where idleness would be regarded as a departure from the word and plans of God. . .

"There is a science in the use of the hand. In the cultivation of the soil, in building houses, in studying and planning various methods of labor, the brain must be exercised; and students can apply themselves to study to much better purpose when a portion of their time is adopted to physical taxation, wearing the muscles."

With such counsel in mind, Sutherland and his associates planned for the inclusion of a manual-training program in the college's curriculum. Buying eighty acres a mile north of the campus opened the door for agriculture and provided employment opportunity for scores of students. A broom-making factory, printshop, and tailor shop all posted financial profits in 1899, which more than offset the two-hundred-dollar loss from the dressmaking department. Still, the unfavorable location of the school continued to plague the project.

Despite inconveniences from mistakes of the past, there was pressing work to accomplish. With the groundwork of reform laid in place, it was time to provide educational opportunities for the younger members of the Lord's household. Writing from Australia, Ellen White began to advocate the establishment of elementary-level church schools:

"In all our churches there should be schools, and teachers in those schools who are missionaries. It is essential that teachers be educated to act their important part in educating the children of Sabbathkeepers in the Scriptures"

world tour in January. Seeing Avondale first-hand and talking with Ellen White had impressed him, and he joined the proreform forces building in Battle Creek. But the key post, president of the college, was held by George W. Caviness, and he was far too conservative-minded and slow to act for the liking of many.

The General Conference session of 1897 was held in Lincoln, Nebraska, that spring and immediately followed by a number of formal meetings held in Battle Creek to conduct the legal business of Michigan-based denominational corporations. Among these was the
been a one hundred percent increase, but still there were only eighteen worldwide. In 1897, Sutherland and the staff at Battle Creek set out to change what they saw as a “grievous offense.” By God’s grace, they would see the youth of this church educated by reform-minded, missionary-spiritual Christian teachers.

By every means at their command they set out to accomplish the work before them. Through the pages of the Review and Herald, through countless sermons delivered on every suitable occasion, in special summer institutes, Sutherland, Magan, and their colleagues spread the vision of suitable education for the church’s younger members. By 1900 the results were visible. Though Battle Creek College could not claim to have trained every teacher presiding over the lambs of the flock, there were now fully two hundred twenty denominational elementary schools in successful operation. For the five years from 1895 to 1900, this figure represented a more than two thousand percent increase.

But real success is seldom measured so easily. Can we judge the good done by those earnest souls of ninety years ago? That souls were saved, we may be sure. But can we form any just conception of the effort put forth, and the victories gained?

In 1931 Arthur W. Spalding wrote of the tendency on the part of some to belittle the accomplishments of what was already a rapidly receding era. Spalding knew Adventist education as few men of his time knew it, and felt a responsibility to speak up. Writing in the Review and Herald, he offered his thoughts to the church.

“Yesterday a friend old enough to have memories of thirty years remarked in my hearing, ‘Those first church schools were the greatest examples of nothing I ever saw.’ ‘Yes,’ said another, ‘they had no plan, no methods, no facilities, no anything. They just drifted along, trying to teach everything from the Bible.’

“That is not the first time I have heard such or similar remarks about the early church schools. It is a fact with some, and it seems to be a mania with others, to deify the authors and deprecate the accomplishments of the great educational reform which began among us in 1897. The detractors are either those who stood opposed to the movement at the time, or those who were too far separated in place or spirit or age to form any correct estimate of its results.

“It would be a serious error to allow the younger generation to form a picture of the character of our early elementary church schools as being crude, chaotic, fanatic and fruitless. Not only would that do injustice to the clear-sighted, courageous, and devoted men and women who gave themselves without stint to the establishment of that great work; it would cast under contempt principles and incentives which are vital to the success of our work today.

“I sat in the chapel of Battle Creek College thirty-three years ago this fall, and heard the president call for volunteers from among the students to go out and teach the children in the first churches that had called for schools.

I suspect those children could pass as good an examination in anatomy as any modern school child; but more than that, they made themselves masters of their appetites.

“There were not many volunteers. It meant the giving up of a cherished college course, at least for a time; it meant going out into a new and untried work—not the mere teaching of a primary school, for that was a common enough experience, but the establishment of a new educational work with a purpose and a standard which had leaped beyond the support of textbooks and tried methods; it meant the working out of a new educational system, under pioneer conditions and in the face of strong prejudice within the church. For there were not many yet convinced of the necessity of a church-school system, and there were many convinced of its folly.

‘Tried to teach everything from the Bible.’ ‘Well, yes, she did! Let the damning accusation stand. There were then no True Education Readers, nor even the earlier Bible Reader. She taught them to read from the Bible and from sentences she wrote on the blackboard. And somehow they came to be good readers, and the Bible did not seem to hurt them. And they learned to spell ‘Methuselah’ and ‘Mishra-shal-ul-hash-baz’ and ‘promise’ and ‘sacrifice’ and ‘faith’ and ‘obedience.’ And the copy she set for them for penmanship was more likely ‘Honor thy father and thy mother’ than ‘All good men should come to the aid of their party.’

“They had a textbook in arithmetic, but some of the examples were far from exemplary, and this teacher, somehow, could see no objection to substituting, sometimes, a measurement of Noah’s ark, with a computation of its cubical content, or a little arithmetical excursion into the New Jerusalem. She may have been frightfully unscientific, but she managed to create a varied interest in the Book of books.

“A physiology textbook they had, too, but that church school found not only information but authority and power in the first chapter of Genesis, and the tenth chapter of First Corinthians, and the second chapter of Second Timothy.... I suspect those children could pass as good an examination in anatomy as any modern school child; but more than that, they made themselves masters of their appetites.

And with that we may close our reflection on the events that sprang from the meeting at Harbor Springs. We may well respect those who braved their way through the difficult times of the last
Dear Brother Dickson:

You may sometime find the leisure and inclination to read this letter.

IT IS WITH the deepest sympathy and desire to co-operate that I greet the coming of you brethren—you, Professor Cossentine, and Elder Bradley—to Southern Missionary College, with the avowed purpose of consulting with the faculty over the broad problems of Christian education. Your few words with me after your initial talk, as well as your public utterances, reveal the consciousness of deep wounds in our educational body, the heart of all our Cause, and of the necessity of a radical cure if a solution is to be found.

The faculty are invited to discuss with you freely the causes of the malady, the effects of which are seen in spiritual lethargy, false and injurious attitudes, and lack of power to finish God's work. . . .

I am therefore moved to record briefly my convictions of the deep-seated causes of the spiritual poverty and confusion among our workers and our people, stemming chiefly from our schools. Being advanced in years, I may not live to see even the beginning of the reform; for if it comes—and come it must before this people is ready to meet the Lord Jesus—it involves so radical and consummate an overturning that, except in the inscrutable miracles of God, it cannot be accomplished in a day. But I desire to leave, to my children at least and to whoever will heed, a testament of my faith and vision.

No reform can be adequate and effective except as it goes to the root of the malady. Little doses and patches of remedies, treating symptoms and scratches, are as inadequate and futile as they are blind. They are but healing "the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly" (Jeremiah 6:14). The fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is not destroyed by rejecting one or a few wormy specimens. The tree must be rejected; we must turn to the tree of life. For brevity's sake, in the points I make following, I cite as authority only one directive from the Spirit of Prophecy; in most cases there is abundance of testimony besides.

Twenty-five years ago, in 1928, we came to our educational Kadesh-barna. The Promised Land was before us, but the majority of our spies brought back an evil report. Discouraged at the report of the giants and the walled cities, we turned away from the commands of the Lord, and rejected His instructions not to seek our education in the universities, and the schools of the world. Fundamentals of Christian Education, 347, 359, 451, 467-474. The true higher education lies in the study of God's revealed knowledge and wisdom. Education, 14. There were a few Calebs and Joshuas there, but their voices were drowned by the clamors of the multitude. We voted for affiliation and accreditation, with all that it involved of affinity with the world's education.

The result of a generation of training in postgraduate work in the schools of the world is the molding of our educational institutions and curricula after the pattern there set before us, or if not there born at least strengthened. If we had instead turned to an intensive study and faithful following of the Spirit of Prophecy, with our minds enlightened by the Holy Spirit, we would now be so far ahead of the world in our ideals and demonstrations, that we should be the head, not the tail walking in chains in the train of our captors. If that characterization seems unjustified, if they can-

---

Arthur W. Spalding

Arthur Whitefield Spalding (1877–1953), educator, author, editor, sent this letter dated May 1953 to Louis Klaer Dickson, general vice-president of the General Conference.
not see it for a fact, let me ask, What can be expected when we turn our backs upon God's directions? Are they inconsequential? Can they be explained away? Do we suffer no retribution for our disregard and disobedience? So reasoned Israel through its tortuous history of disloyalty and idolatry, till, as the Chronicler says, "there was no remedy."

I have been challenged by some officials to tell how we can meet the difficulties, the legal obstructions to our operation as individuals or institutions, without conforming to the regulations of the accrediting agencies and the laws of the States, and therefore to the education afforded by the universities. I do not know; no man knows. But when Israel came up to the Red Sea and to the Jordan in its flood, no man-made devices, no counsels of the worldly-wise, could save them from the Egyptians or enable them to enter the Promised Land. And this I know from my study of the Testimonies on education, that the blueprint of the Christian education given us sets forth the truest, the most serviceable, the wisest, the grandest system of education ever proposed, so far superior to the systems of the world as to outshine them as the sun outshines the candle. If this seems extravagant, it is only to those whom the candle has enthralled and who have not seen the light of the sun.

To many it seems ridiculous to charge our schools with fault in curriculum or method. They point to the improvements and supposed improvements, in libraries, laboratories, techniques, and affiliations, and to the more scientific methods in teaching, which are or which seem to be the fruit of co-operation with the world. Would we counsel a return to the innocent days of Mark Hopkins on one end of a log and a student on the other? Would we reduce our faculties of masters and doctors to the status of unschooled teachers like Uriah Smith, Stephen Haskell, and Goodloe Bell? It does not follow that taking heed to the Testimonies would reduce our teaching bodies to the state of ignoramuses and imbeciles. And the men who were scorned because they had no degree were yet men of wisdom and skill and ability. G.H. Bell, though he had no scholastic degree, was the one man in those early times who perceived the vision vouchedfaid by the Lord to His unschooled servant, Ellen G. White, and who sought with all his ingenuity and power to put the principles into operation. He was rejected as leader in favor of a university-trained man who later in life confessed to me that he had then been, in his own words, "an educated fool." And the culmination of the policy gave us an Alexander McLean, who put Battle Creek College out of operation for a whole year. We learn little, and we learn slowly.

Who can read, with mind enlightened by the Holy Spirit, that central masterpiece of Sister White, the book Education, and not perceive the deep wisdom, the all-embracing science of the education God has offered to us? We have never really studied, nor practiced, nor sought to attain what that book teaches. To those who could have been instructed and enlightened by the study of the Testimonies, there would have been no need of the spur of accrediting associations or statute laws to inspire improvement of our facilities and methods. We were asleep, but we needed no wine of Babylon to inflame us; we need the fruit of the tree of life.

The closer affinity we make with the schools of the world, the farther we depart from the presence of God. To read the first article in Testimonies, vol. 6, in the section, "Education," "The Need of Educational Reform," is to feel a dagger struck into our education policies. Are we receiving the mark of the beast and his image, or the seal of God? Page 130.

Yet our schools are infinitely better than the schools of the world. They are "cities of refuge" for our youth. The principles of our faith have had much effect upon our lives and our policies. Slighted and neglected though they have been in great degree, yet their impact upon our lives has been considerable. In our schools there are observed and inculcated correct principles of social behavior, diet and health, avoidance of narcotics, studiousness, reverence and devotion which have greater or less effect upon the students.

And the high moral character of our teachers in general, their varying degrees have retrograded. We say we are different from the world's schools—because we teach the Bible. But other church schools teach Bible too; the question is, How true is the teaching? Minds that turn from the light of God in any phase or any respect are dim in perception of the spirit of Bible truth. The truth of God goes deeper than a creed. Doctrine is the framework of truth, but without the life it becomes a stark skeleton.

But so subtle is the influence which has made us depart from the divine
blueprint that it is imperceptible to those involved, and like Malachi’s people, they ask in injured innocence: “Wherein have we departed from the blueprint? Give us specific instances.”

I will cite five areas of disharmony with the Word of God in educational theories and practices in our schools. They are only a few examples of disobedience; there are others, as for instance, the social structure and code, agriculture as the “ABC” of educational effort; industries, ostentation in place of simplicity, the character of entertainment, preoccupation with things of the flesh and the world… I will now list the five transgressions:

1. Incentive, motivation. In our first meeting here, discussion turned for a time upon unlovely and even scandalous self-urge of workers to be recognized as great men, to covet position and authority, to engage in rivalry for honor and lordship. The question was timidly raised whether the school policy of clothing students with responsibility and bestowing honors and emolument upon them was responsible for inculcating this spirit. The problem goes much deeper than that. Developing youth need to be judiciously accorded increasing responsibility; but what is the incentive offered to work and organize and im-

mingle with, and often let become domi-
nant, the incentive of competition. We honor the temple and offer sacrifices there, because it is beautiful and gives us prestige; but we keep the high places also, and bow down before the images of Baal and Astarte. In what? In our class incentives, with marks and gradings and prizes and special honors, in our social life, in our recreations, and ultimately in the professional life of our students when they leave school and enter the work of God. We stage contests and give rewards and prizes for the winners. And this is so common and time-honored a practice that we stare in amazement if it is challenged. To the end of Israel and Judah, save for the spasmodic reforms of Josiah, the high places remained and were considered to be, in a degree, a part of the worship of Jehovah. We are repeating the history. But the incentive and the worship place of the Christian is not competition, rivalry, but the pure urge of love, the love of God. . .

2. Literature. Despite clear and explicit instruction in the Testimonies (Education, 226–227), a great volume indeed of instruction upon the evil of subjecting our students to the influence of pagan authors, our courses in literature continue to present such writers and to enforce their study. Some teachers of English seem unable to distinguish between the good and the evil in literature, except the extremes. From Homer to Shakespeare and such modern pygmies as Walt Whitman, they induct their students into pagan and neopagan masses of crime, blood, obscenity, and blasphemy. That there are cases of beauty and probity in all these authors is true; the devil clothes his progeny in purple and gold. But the waters of purity are fouled in puddles of mud. Our study of literature should be selective, as Professor Bell demonstrated, and not comprehensive, as all worldly concepts of the study of literature dictate. Our objective in education must be, not to reach the level and copy the ways of the schools of the world; but rather to adjudge the needs of the Church in its particular work. What Christian education aims at is character building; what the Church and the world need is “young men and women . . . fit to stand at the head of their families. Such an education is not to be acquired by a study of heathen classics.” The Ministry of Healing, 444 . . .

The teaching of such classic filth and evil, perversely, defeats its own objective, by lowering the taste of students and leading them to indulge in the poorest types of fiction and sports news and comics. By such means, even the teaching of Biblical Literature as a school study is rendered distasteful, and along with uninspired teaching adds to the aversion of students for the Scriptures. What are we doing to our prospective ministers and teachers?

3. Recreation. The instruction of the Spirit of Prophecy upon recreation is constructive and not merely negative. Education, 207–222. But it is sufficiently explicit in condemning competitive games to be definitive in this field; and all the fallacious reasoning, the “change of venue” falls so short of conviction that, in the end, there comes to be only the bold and open-faced defiance of the instruction, as being unrealistic and oppressive. Counsels to Teachers, 350 and following pages. There was a time, forty to fifty years ago, when competitive sports were banished from nearly all, if not all, of our colleges. But they have come back with force, and their adoption is increasing. Teachers seem unable to meet, constructively or even defensively, the headlong demand of students for sports. And the reason again is that we have failed to study and follow and develop the instruction of the Testimonies of God’s Spirit.

There is such an inspiration, such a healthy recreation, combining science and the study of nature in its activities; from hiking to gardening, such a wealth of wisdom, the wisdom of God’s Word, to be garnered from its use, as far outstrips the trivial and debasing rewards of sports. On the other hand, there is no greater ally of the evil incentive of rivalry than the competitive sports. And this stronghold of the devil is one of the hardest to take. I do not believe in harshly removing sports from the life of the school, without substituting true recreation in their place. And this cannot be done suddenly and arbitrarily. The substitution must be a growth, not a dis-

The incentive and the worship place of the Christian is not competition, rivalry, but the pure urge of love, the love of God

prove?—that is the determining factor in whether that social and managerial education is beneficial or injurious.

The world’s chief incentive is competition, rivalry. I could write a treatise upon the nature and ramifications of this selfish urge; that I have done in my book, Who Is the Greatest? It deserves study. Both the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy condemn rivalry (and competition, its genesis) as the motivation of the Christian. Mark 10:42–45; Education, 225–226

The Christian incentive is unselfish love, the love of Christ, co-operation, ministry. We acknowledge this, but we

Our Firm Foundation September 1989
5. **Parent education.** We started our educational edifice at the top, with a college. We were nearly a quarter of a century late in instituting elementary education. We have never applied ourselves to laying the foundation, the preschool education of the child. Yet all this is laid out for us in the Testimonies, and it is told us that the early years are the most determinate in the education of the individual. *Counsels to Teachers*, 107. The earliest counsels on education were devoted to the home life and the training which parents should give their children. *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 131 and following pages. Very specific outlines of instruction were laid out, and the instruction, before the assumed and probable cost. There is money for magnificent buildings of science, for ornate temples of worship, for everything but the foundation work of education, the training of parents for the preschool education of their children.

Seventeen years after she had effected the institution of the elementary church-school work, Sister White said to me of the training of parents: “This is the most important work before us as a people and we have not begun to touch it with the tips of our fingers.” Forty years ago, and we have not even yet begun to touch it with the tips of our fingers. How shall we lift the level of piety and power

Sister White said to me of the training of parents: “This is the most important work before us as a people and we have not begun to touch it with the tips of our fingers.”

(far anticipatory of scientific findings) was given that until a child is eight or ten years of age, his only school be the home and his only teachers the parents. *Counsels to Teachers*, 79–80, 107. But this presupposes the competency of the parents as teachers. Ibid. 108. Fatuously, disingenuously, perversely, this statement has been taken by many educators and administrators to excuse them from any participation in this program: “Let the parents do it.”

But parents have received no training from the church’s schools for their assumption of the role as teachers. What knowledge and ability any of them may have has been inherited from their parents or picked up by casual reading or chance instruction. Seldom is this most important branch of study organized, integrated, complete. The church in its educational system has had no place for this. Yet the church is directed to give that education to parents. *Education*, 275–276. There should be instruction given to all students in college, and probably in the academy, in the duties, privileges, and responsibilities of home life and parenthood. *Ministry of Healing*, 444...

Yet our college boards shrink from and choose to ignore this basic need. Intent upon economics, their minds fall in the church while we neglect the very foundation of our educational work? “If the foundations be destroyed, what shall the righteous do?”

Even in this the world is rapidly forging ahead of us, of us who had the light and instruction seventy-five years ago... When will our authorities awake to the vital and pressing necessity and act? *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 196.

Never, for all our alarms and challenges and calls to repentance and prayer and revival efforts, never shall we effect a reform, till we go to the roots of the matter, face up as Christian men to the stark facts, repent of our folly and indifference and neglect, and turn with all our heart to God whose work we expected to finish in this generation. Joshua 7:10–13.

May the Lord so direct and control us that our colleges shall become more like God’s schools of the prophets than like Rome’s College of the Propaganda. Here lies our only hope of being the instrument in God’s hands to finish His work, rather than being rejected and cast off as were His chosen people the Jews.

Sincerely,

A.W. Spalding
CHRIST PRAYED for His disciples, not that they should be taken out of the world, but that they should be kept from evil—that they might be kept from yielding to the temptations they would meet on every hand. This is a prayer that should be offered up by every father and mother. But should they thus plead with God in behalf of their children, and then leave them to do as they please? Should they pamper the appetite until it gets the mastery, and then expect to restrain the children?—No; temperance and self-control should be taught from the very cradle up. Upon the mother must rest largely the responsibility of this work. The tenderest earthly tie is that between the mother and her child. The child is more readily impressed by the life and example of the mother than by that of the father, because of this stronger and more tender bond of union. Yet the mother’s responsibility is a heavy one, and should have the constant aid of the father. . . .

Let the evenings be spent as happily as possible. Let home be a place where cheerfulness, courtesy, and love exist. This will make it attractive to the children. If the parents are continually borrowing trouble, are irritable and fault-finding, the children partake of the same spirit of dissatisfaction and contention, and home is the most miserable place in the world. The children find more pleasure among strangers, in reckless company, or in the street, than at home. All this might be avoided if temperance in all things was practiced, and patience cultivated. Self-control on the part of all the members of the family will make home almost a paradise. . . .

Our artificial habits deprive us of many privileges and much enjoyment, and unfit us for usefulness. A fashionable life is a hard, thankless life. How often time, money, and health are sacrificed, the patience sorely tried, and self-control lost, merely for the sake of display. If parents would cling to simplicity, not indulging in expense for the gratification of vanity, and to follow fashion; if they would maintain a noble independence in the right, unmoved by the influence of those, who, while professing Christ, refuse to lift the cross of self-denial, they would by their example itself give their children an invaluable education. The children would become men and women of moral worth, and, in their turn, would have courage to stand bravely for the right, even against the current of fashion and popular opinion.

Every act of the parents tells on the future of the children. In devoting time and money to the outward adorning and the gratification of perverted appetite, they are cultivating vanity, selfishness, and lust in the children. Mothers complain of being so burdened with care and labor that they cannot take time patiently to instruct their little ones, and to sympathize with them in their disappointments and trials. Young hearts yearn for sympathy and tenderness, and if they do not obtain it from their parents, they will seek it from sources that may endanger both mind and morals. . . . The parents deplore the children’s faults, but are blind to the fact that they are but reaping the crop from seed of their own planting.

Christian parents, take up your life burden, and think candidly of the sacred obligations that rest upon you. Make the Word of God your standard, instead of following the fashions and customs of the world, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. The future happiness of your families and the welfare of society depend largely upon the physical and moral education which your children receive in the first years of their life. If their tastes and habits are as simple in all things as they should be, if the dress is tidy, without extra adornment, mothers will find time to make their children happy, and teach them loving obedience.

Ellen G. White
Do not send your little ones away to school too early. The mother should be careful how she trusts the molding of the infant mind to other hands. Parents ought to be the best teachers of their children until they have reached eight or ten years of age. Their schoolroom should be the open air, amid the flowers and birds, and their textbook the treasures of nature. As fast as their minds can comprehend it, the parents should open before them God's great book of nature. These lessons, given amid such surroundings, will not soon be forgotten. Great pains should be taken to prepare the soil of the heart for the Sower to scatter the good seed. If half the time and labor that is now worse than wasted in following the fashions of the world were devoted to the cultivation of the minds of the children, to the formation of correct habits, a marked change would be apparent in families. . . .

Cleanliness and order are Christian duties, yet even these may be carried too far, and made the one essential, while matters of greater importance are neglected. Those who neglect the interests of the children for these considerations are tithing the mint and cummin, while they neglect the weightier matters of the law—justice, mercy, and the love of God.

Those children who are the most indulged become willful, passionate, and unlovely. Would that parents could realize that upon judicious early training depends the happiness of both the parents and the children. . . .

Whatever may be his calling and its perplexities, let the father take into his home the same smiling countenance and pleasant tones with which he has all day greeted visitors and strangers. Let the wife feel that she can lean upon the large affections of her husband—that his arms will strengthen and uphold her through all her toils and cares, that his influence will sustain hers, and her burden will lose half of its weight. Are the children not his as well as hers?

Let the father seek to lighten the mother's task. In the time that he would devote to selfish enjoyment of leisure, let him seek to become acquainted with his children—associate with them in their sports, in their work. Let him point them to the beautiful flowers, the lofty trees, in whose very leaves they can trace the work and love of God. He should teach them that the God who made all these things loves the beautiful and the good. Christ pointed His disciples to the lilies of the field and the birds of the air, showing how God cares for them, and presenting this as evidence that He will care for man, who is of higher consequence than birds or flowers. Tell the children that however much time may be wasted in attempts at display, our appearance can never compare, for grace and beauty, with that of the simplest flowers of the field. Thus their minds may be drawn from the artificial to the natural. They may learn that God has given them all these beautiful things to enjoy, and that He wants them to give Him the heart's best and holiest affections.

Parents should seek to awaken in their children an interest in the study of physiology. Youth need to be instructed in regard to their own bodies. There are but few among the young who have a definite knowledge of the mysteries of life. . . .

If parents themselves would obtain knowledge upon this subject and feel the importance of putting it to a practical use, we should see a better condition of things. Teach your children to reason from cause to effect. Show them that if they violate the laws of their being, they must pay the penalty by suffering. If you cannot see as rapid movement as you desire, do not be discouraged, but instruct them patiently, and press on until victory is gained. Continue to teach them in regard to their own bodies, and how to take care of them. Recklessness in regard to bodily health tends to recklessness in morals.

Do not neglect to teach your children how to prepare healthful food. In giving them these lessons in physiology and in good cooking, you are giving them the first steps in some of the most useful branches of education, and inculcating principles which are needful elements in a religious education.

All the lessons of which I have spoken in this article are needed. If properly heeded, they will be like a bulwark that will preserve our children from the evils which are flooding the world. We want temperance at our tables. We want houses where the God-given sunlight and the pure air of heaven are welcomed. We want a cheerful, happy influence in our homes. We must cultivate useful habits in our children, and must instruct them in the things of God. It costs something to do all this. It costs prayers and tears, and patient, oft-repeated instruction. We are sometimes put to our wit's end to know what to do; but we can take the children to God in our prayers, pleading that they may be kept from evil, praying, "Now, Lord, do Thy work; soften and subdue the hearts of our children." And He will hear us. He hearkens to the prayers of the weeping, careworn mothers. . . .

Parents ought to be the best teachers of their children until they have reached eight or ten years of age. Their schoolroom should be the open air, amid the flowers and birds, and their textbook the treasures of nature.
An Interview With George Akers
Director
General Conference Department of Education

Education is a many-faceted subject, and there are probably as many views and evaluations of the subject as there are viewers and evaluators. Dr. George Akers was kind enough to share his assessment in a recent interview.

FIEDLER: We welcome you to the pages of Our Firm Foundation, Dr. Akers. It’s a privilege to have you as the world leader of Adventist education update our readers about the Adventist school system around the world and apprise us of some of the challenges facing our educational work these days. By way of introduction to our readers, would you give us some idea of your background and responsibilities?

AKERS: Well, I’ve been around awhile now in Adventist education, about four-plus decades, that is. I’ve spent twelve years in academic work in a number of our day- and boarding-schools, six as a dormitory dean and English/history/Bible teacher, and six as a boarding academy principal. Ten years were spent in college administration doing the work of dean of students, academic dean and president (Loma Linda, Walla Walla, Columbia Union College). The largest segment of my career has fallen in the area of graduate teaching and academic administration, primarily at Andrews University, where I started as superintendent of the lab schools and taught classes in various aspects of professional education. Later I specialized in religious education as teaching professor and curriculum co-ordinator, serving along the way as associate dean of the graduate school and director of doctoral programs in education. My last assignment at Andrews was as chairman of the Department of Education, becoming its first dean when the department was upgraded to school status in the University. And of course I’ve been four years now with the General Conference education department. God has been good to me, to permit me to interact with so many dedicated and competent teachers at all levels of our system in North America, and now all around the world. I’m humbly grateful, Dave, to have had this privilege.

FIEDLER: You were going to tell us also a little about your present responsibilities in the General Conference Department of Education.

AKERS: Oh, yes. But first permit me to share with you and your readers a little secret—a big one, in fact. Not too many of our people know that their little church of only five and a half million members owns and operates the world’s largest Protestant parochial school system, second only to that of the Catholic Church worldwide. This network of 6,000 schools, kindergarten through university, operates in over a hundred countries and comprises almost 60,000 teachers and over three quarters of a million students. That's quite a commitment to Christian education, isn't it? It shows how deeply we are convicted as a people that we must insure this spiritual legacy for our children and youth, and train workers for the church. And God has greatly blessed in it all.

As director I steer the world educational work through our world team of ten division directors responsible for the educational work in their respective divisions. In this assignment I have three associates here in the general department (Doctors Griffiths, Rasi, and Segovia) who serve as liaisons with these world divisions. We sponsor special Christian education emphases, gather and issue system statistics and specialized professional reports and publications, and endeavor to monitor educational quality in the system, like controlling the orderly development of new institutions and participating in the in-servicing and professional upgrading of our teachers at all levels of the system. That really keeps us on the move around the world. Helping to keep the vision refreshed with our Adventist educators is what I consider the most important work I do here—the prophetic thrust. Certainly we need to exert our professional expertise, that is imperative. But keeping our vision and assigned mission clear is "Job One." At this level of organizational activity, the departmental director's leadership thrust amounts to a kind of broad co-ordination of continental effort, administered loosely.

FIEDLER: That's an interesting disclaimer you just made. What do you mean by "loosely"?

AKERS: The way things are organized in our church, Dave, the real locus of initiative and power lies with the world division presidents and the major officers of the General Conference. These are the real "directors" of the world church program. The departments of the church are essentially middle management, operating within the budget constraints and programs authorized by that world-leadership group. Even in this intriguing power structure, though, the General Conference follows the lead of the field. As the old saying goes, "The president may propose, but it is the people who dispose." The working relationship between the leader and the led in our organization is a cordial interplay of power that is fascinating to behold. But in the final analysis, the General Conference is largely only advisory, as constitutionally mandated. Its real leadership power is spiritual authority, the power of moral suasion and initiative—prophetic power, (used in the sense of "speaking forth"). That is. And that is primarily our
posture and role as a department, as I see it. This organizational thrust in modern Adventism is altogether appropriate for a church, I suppose, although our people become frustrated at times because it's difficult to precisely blame someone at the top when things drag or drift.

FIEDLER: That leads me conveniently into one of the questions I've wanted to ask: Do you think the Seventh-day Adventist school system is drifting?

AKERS: Well, that depends to a large degree on what comes out of the Annual Council next month with respect to the church's position on interschool varsity sports. In that area we have drifted badly. Sports have become an idol, a false god of our age, (actually a religion to its devotees!) and in my opinion they have no place in our corporate assignment for the finishing of God's work in the earth. In my heart of hearts I just can't conceive how this church could ever endorse a radical shift in its educational mission where winning ball games moves onto the agenda, and winning souls moves off. If this movement succeeds, Dave, it won't be a question of "drift" in my opinion; the school system will have founded on the rocks. Mistakes of mission are always incremental, you know, just a notch at a time, but the final slip can spell disaster. And I have the nagging feeling that this one may be in that category. I may be mistaken, but I doubt that our rank-and-file membership will approve when it finally dawns on them what has happened. (Although several of the college presidents and their union presidents/board chairmen tell me they have thoroughly discussed this question in their college boards and that it is the laymen on the board who are the most supportive of getting into varsity sports. I don't know; I'm beginning to wonder who's leading whom.)

Dr. Johnsson in his sober editorial about this situation in a recent Review called it the Moment of Decision for the church—that we need to take a long, long look down that road before we take the trip, so ruinous has it been for other school systems. We're not talking here about another innocuous extra-curricular activity; this craze brings with it an intoxication that is capable of completely reorganizing a school's sociology and denailing its mission. Another central organizing principle takes over.

That solemn reminder by Johnsson was one of the high prophetic enunciations of our church journal, I feel. He had a clear view of the dangers ahead and he spoke out bravely on the matter. I want to reiterate that Elder Wilson and his officer-group in Washington have also stood solidly with our department in resisting varsity sports in our schools. Most of our colleges in North America seem to have no real convictions on the matter and want the freedom to engage (or not to) in varsity sports and see no real problem with a permissive church policy on it. One of our United States colleges, though, did prepare a position paper on this matter and sent it to me, declaring that a varsity sports program does not fit into their institutional mission, and it isn't likely it ever will. We were encouraged by that communiqué, of course. Not all of our colleges have taken the slide. Yes, the debate on this at the Annual Council could be historic and climactic, and we should all be praying that God will preside over that debate and get us back on course with respect to runaway athletics in our schools.

FIEDLER: In your years of work with Adventist education, what would you personally rank as the single most positive development?

AKERS: That's a hard choice, but I think I'd put at the top of the list the "Adventist-ification" of our teacher corps through our own credentialing program, which endeavors to insure that our young Seventh-day Adventist teachers entering the teaching ministry fully comprehend their role, professionally and pastorally, so that our schools can be thoroughly Adventist, thoroughly Christian. It all starts with the faculty, you know. All else is scaffolding and props. At the institutional level, it is our Adventist Board of Regents that monitors academic quality and Adventist distinctiveness. Among the top three nominees for positive accomplishments would certainly have to be our serious approach to the Bible curriculum, grades 1-12, in the last 15 years (especially). I suspect that we have put more than a million dollars into restructuring and fine-tuning our whole instructional scheme for that pivotal subject. You asked me a while ago about whether I thought our system has been drifting. And I was frank to admit a grave concern I have concerning a very present threat on that front. But you know, looking at the larger picture with respect to "drift," this critical matter of Bible study gives reason for us to take courage in a very positive trend—say in the last forty years. It is important that we keep a clear and fair view of the history of our educational work ever since Battle Creek. The facts of the case are, Dave, we started drifting right from the onset and never really did get on course. It vexed Ellen White's soul to the core, as you well know. They didn't even have scheduled Bible classes (the brethren from the Review office would come over once in a while and present a spiritually sterile lecture on prophecy). And they were caught up in the sports apostasy, too, and came in for their well-deserved reproofs from the prophets. Whatever we do, let's not depict Battle Creek College as the golden age of Adventist education! Far from it.

We've come a long way in the serious, objective pursuit of our goals in Christian education since then, and some of the critics of our system seem to be oblivious to that glaring historical fact. The faculty at old Battle Creek College were so secularized they lionized the classical curriculum of the day and advocated it for all they were worth, advising their promising students not to waste their time and talents in the work of the young church, but to move on to the University of Michigan and on to deserved worldly acclaim. Quite the op-

The debate at the Annual Council could be historic and climactic, and we should all be praying that God will preside over that debate and get us back on course with respect to runaway athletics in our schools.
The ubiquitous media culture—TV, video amusement, recorded music, and so on—without a doubt is the greatest challenge facing Adventist education.

Prime emphasis of our teacher-training now. That's what these post-doctoral in-service IFL (Integration of Faith and Learning) seminars are all about that we're conducting with our college teachers around the world—endeavoring to insinuate that our Christian world view gets into every classroom, not just Bible. It's to help our college teachers understand what it means to "think Christian" themselves, and thus model a truly biblically infused mindset before their students. As this method is practiced in every aspect of the curricula, from both sides of the desk as it were, our schools become more pervasively spiritual, and the Bible becomes the very basis (and grand filter) of everything in life. This is a very deliberate, concerted attempt to put the Bible back in the center of things where it belongs.

Incidentally, have you seen our academy Bible-study materials and the new elementary reading series—and the science series that presents Creation so scientifically and persuasively? First rate! Our young people love them, and we have become the envy of the Christian education profession in America because of our attractive and compelling learning aids in Bible/science/reading.

FIEGLER: There has been considerable concern generated recently by the decision to increase salaries within Adventist Health Systems. Some see this matter, coupled with the questions raised over the accreditation of Loma Linda University, as exerting a serious and hurtful influence on Adventist education. Do you share these concerns?

AKERS: Indeed. Many of us in the educational quarter are still shell-shocked over that Spring Council vote, and we don't know what to expect next. But something tells me that our dedicated teachers who have made a lifetime commitment of sacrificial living in exchange for the privilege of getting close to students as Ministers of Education on a shielded from it and taught to recognize and resist, they'll fall under the master deception. It's just around the corner. Our schools are needed now more than ever to serve as "cities of refuge" for our children. I cry inside for them when I see what's ahead. Oh, how solemn is our responsibility, and how great our challenge to pluck these brands from the burning—our own children! If there was ever a time that the home and school and congregation ought to be pulling together, it's now.

FIEGLER: The issue of competitive varsity sports seems to be coming to the fore. What is the history of this situation, and what has changed to attract attention to this matter now? How is it that such a major distinction seems to be made between "varsity" sports and the intramural sports which have long been a prominent part of our Adventist colleges?

AKERS: I plan to deal specifically with this history of the problem in my remarks to the Annual Council, but to summarize the story as succinctly as I can, it's simply this: twenty or so years ago the first systematic experimentation began in the testing of the church's policy, on the technical evasion that the church really had no "policy against varsity sports, that there only existed "guidelines," and that obligated no one to conformance. When it was seen that neither the church nor the educational system had any mechanism for sanctions against the miscreant institution, the virus spread. Then several years ago when the Adventist health and physical education teachers of North America reversed themselves and decided to foster varsity sports, the aneurysm in the policy was well underway. The latest survey by their association reports that 55 percent of Adventist institutions, secondary and college, were participating in some kind of interschool play. The fait accompli strategy has proved successful beyond all expectations, and the tacit taunt is now, "It's too far gone, too extensive and is irreversible; stop it if you can." Of course a sophisticated rationale has been advanced which seeks to establish that times have changed, and we must accept the realities and flow with it.

FIEGLER: Since the mid-thirties in Adventism, there has been a nagging suspicion by some that the decision of the
church at that time to permit its colleges to seek accreditation was a bad decision, deflecting our schools from their original mission—what do you think?

AKERS: That was a real moment of truth, of course, for our leading brethren at the time. And I’m still in the air in my own thinking as to whether I would have voted Aye or Nay had I been in the assembly forced to grapple with the awful dilemma they faced that year. (Twenty-twenty hindsight is a marvelous luxury we enjoy a half-century later, you know. Those custodians of the future were really on the spot, to put it mildly, and they deserve much charity in our assessment of their action.) The issue was pretty clear-cut—whether to commit the church to a mono-dimensional model in education, the conventional Bible college of the day, and limit our young people to quite a narrow range of opportunity of career choices (mostly within the organized church work, and in the evangelistic, pastoral modality at that), or to join the mainstream national educational modality and make it possible for our youth to pursue the wide range of preparations for life work and become fully recognized, certified professionals in all walks of life.

Our forebears apparently felt it was better to be in the action in some manner and try to reshape it to our envisioned ends than to be out of it altogether. It must be said in their defense, that they could cite a pretty clear directive from Sister White in her counsel 20 years before on the topic of the young and struggling Loma Linda medical school aggressively seeking accreditation in order to stay in the physician-training business. It is reported by the private committee who were commissioned to seek special audience with her for counsel about the dilemma that she said in effect, “Gentlemen, go for it!” (Although I’m inclined personally to believe that she was talking about the medical/technical requirements only. We’ll never know what really went on in that room, but I suspect that an endorsement of the full-scale liberal arts college with its classical humanistic bias was not in Ellen White’s thinking. It does not agree with all her strong views of compromising ties with pagan education, or her unique educational model in general; but it was indeed a splendid leverage for the proponents of accreditation at the time who made maximum use of the prophetess’ purported private counsels).

Of course, that’s where the judgment call comes into this half-century-old post-mortem: Did we reshape accreditation to fit our mission or did it reshape us? Have I to honest in my answer to you on that, Dave; I fear it largely shaped us. Yes, I think it has been a deflection, but certainly no derailment. And whether it was a test of pragmatic prudence they passed, or a crisis in faith they failed, I’m not certain. That’s going to be one of the first “cosmic video reruns” I’m going to request of my angel tutor. Something tells me that it was a severe test of faith, but I’m not prepared to pronounce unequivocally on it from this limited perspective.

The situation, though, is recoverable, and we’re serious about that retrieval. The “what if?” imaginative scenarios are not really too constructive at this point. We have to face reality; credits and grades are the coin of the academic realms; we weren’t then—and aren’t now—in a position to produce and deal in our own currency. The challenge of the burgeoning national college system in the United States (networked through accreditation) at the time our brethren were wrestling with this dilemma was the fact of a new mobile society, a phenomenon of which our own Seventh-day Adventist families were not exempt. That’s what agonized our educators and leading brethren of the day—how to give our own people the benefit of institutional reciprocity in transcript recognition, and convenient transfer of college credits. A new stellar critical mass was coalescing, no doubt about it, and we were drawn into orbit about it.

My personal view of the matter now is that our situation today is quite analogous to that of the three Hebrew worthies in captivity in Babylon: they couldn’t escape their captivity, so they made every possible effort to witness faithfully for God from within it. It’s either that or go out of the educational business altogether, and I don’t believe God has signaled that radical course of action to us yet. Defective though we be, we’re still the apple of His eye. I take a great deal of hope and encouragement in the Testimonies, vol. 6, 145 pronouncement that if we co-operate with Him, He will lead our schools back to their “upright position.” And we’re co-operating the best we know how and claiming the promise in faith.

I wish I had time here, Dave, to trace the shift from the old Bible college of 1880–1940 to the Christian liberal arts college—a significant 60-year transition for religious education of all denominations—which enshrined intellectualized humanism as a renewed organizing principle and emphasis in higher education (“Man, how great thou art!”) as opposed to the theistic principle (“God, how great Thou art!”). The romanticized version of the “higher learning” promised to restore to American colleges and universities the two-pronged taproot of western civilization, the Judeo-Christian tradition and the Graeco-Roman, combining them in a complementary balance that would return to campus the original educational unity as in the days of their medieval potency. The beguiling ideology was that the former would con-

Those custodians of the future were really on the spot, to put it mildly, and they deserve much charity in our assessment of their action

day Adventist families were not exempt. That’s what agonized our educators and leading brethren of the day—how to give our own people the benefit of institutional reciprocity in transcript recognition, and convenient transfer of college credits. A new stellar critical mass was coalescing, no doubt about it, and we were drawn into orbit about it.

My personal view of the matter now is that our situation today is quite analogous to that of the three Hebrew worthies in captivity in Babylon: they couldn’t escape their captivity, so they made every possible effort to witness faithfully for God from within it. It’s
tinue to preserve our religious faith heritage: God, the great Author/Energizer; and the latter would preserve our rationalistic heritage: Man-the-Irrepressible Achiever. And American higher education would soar to new heights in the grand fusion of cultural legacies. Well, the Bible colleges heard the siren call and answered, and were all caught in it together (including us), and discovered too late that the secular tug of the humanistic tradition of the Graeco-Roman heritage with its authority base of human reason had all but eclipsed the Judeo-Christian heritage with its authority base of divine revelation, and some-
thing very precious was almost lost in the transaction—and has been struggling for the ascendency for six decades. But the good news in this academic seduction and its sorry aftermath is that many Christian school systems and individual institutions have awakened and are now assiduously at work remediating the situation, and are in dead earnest about restoring the Judeo-Christian revelation as the organizing principle of Christian higher education. That certainly describes us right now, and God is blessing the effort, I believe. Yes, accreditation was a deflection, but need not have been. It was we who let secularity get the upper hand.

God has been very patient with us, praise Him! We are not incorrigible, and He is speaking to us about educational reform. And we're listening. And responding. That's why I'm optimistic about the future of Adventist education.

FIEDLER: That was quite an array of statistics you gave when I asked you to describe the Seventh-day Adventist school system around the world. Anything particularly noteworthy in the way the system is moving?—any significant trend going on?

AKERS: The most exciting aspect of the current Adventist educational profile, I think, is that we have several new first-rate graduate level institutions overseas now, with several other new ones coming on. That is in addition to Loma Linda and Andrews Universities here in the States and many colleges and pastoral/teacher training institutions we've had all along around the globe. The point is that we're well underway now in progress to the goal of six universities worldwide, in order to provide accessible post-baccalaureate educational opportunities for our youth outside the United States. The deliberate global strategy is to provide fully accredited quality educational offerings there at home for them, right in their own hemisphere and culture, so that it is no longer imperative for our church entities overseas to sponsor young professionals to the States for advanced studies (many of whom never return to their countries to work for the church). That policy was just about bankrupting our church abroad, almost a self-destruct for our mission work. So we made a command decision a few years back to close and desist from contributing to the third-world brain drain. I believe Adventist history will record that we finally effected a much-needed "mid-course correctional maneuver" (as the astronauts say) that was far more realistic and viable. The work overseas will prosper much more with this indigenous approach to worker training, we hope.

FIEDLER: A while ago you mentioned the Graeco-Roman tradition within educational circles. Many of the laity feel that even our schools have been very seriously compromised by this influence. What counsel would you give to the average man who wants to work for improvement on this—or any other—issue within the church structure?

AKERS: Once in a while I hear a lay member agonize aloud, "Why doesn't the General Conference do something about ______ (whatever)? Why does the General Conference allow that to go on?" That's the greatest myth of Adventism—the belief that the General Conference is ultimately responsible for everything that goes on in the church anywhere. The General Conference is ultimately responsible once every five years when it meets in high corporate session: whatever sweeping changes are made, or new directions to be undertaken, they are accomplished then; the rest of the time the work is largely in the hands of the ecclesiastical bureaucrats (like me) who try to follow their marching orders as faithfully as possible. But there are other significant leadership locations for the laity. They reside in the division, union, and local conference constituency meetings. The sophisticates among us know that all too well; that if they're going to change the church into their likeness, they need to get themselves into the real backstage action arenas. So they get themselves elected to influential conference/union boards, executive committees, lay representative groups, and so on. That's where the real "movers and shakers" of the modern Adventist Church achieve their agendas. They know that you don't change much in this church from the top, but from the bottom. That's reality, Dave, regarding the real power flow in the Adventist organization. Our people own and operate this church. The mistaken notion they seem to have is that it is the General Conference at the top that makes things happen; no, it's really the other way around—change begins at the bottom. The General Conference is largely in the responding role. The inherent power of the laity at the local and union constituency level is awesome. When they flex their muscle there, they get attention, quick. That's one of the things I've learned in my four years in the General Conference.

FIEDLER: A very frank question now: Isn't it just a little risky for you to have your name appear like this in an independent Adventist publication?

AKERS: Not at all, Dave. We genuinely believe in pluralism in the modern Adventist Church, and we want to affirm and encourage every legitimate expression of lay leadership. We certainly don't have the exclusive franchise on

The sophisticates among us know that if they're going to change the church into their likeness, they need to get themselves into the real backstage action arenas
THERE IS danger that our college will be turned away from its original design. God's purpose has been made known that our people should have an opportunity to study the sciences and at the same time to learn the requirements of His Word. Biblical lectures should be given; the study of the Scriptures should have the first place in our system of education.

Students are sent from a great distance to attend the college at Battle Creek for the very purpose of receiving instruction from the lectures on Bible subjects. But for one or two years past there has been an effort to mold our school after other colleges. When this is done, we can give no encouragement to parents to send their children to Battle Creek College. The moral and religious influences should not be put in the background. In times past, God has worked with the efforts of the teachers, and many souls have seen the truth and embraced it, and have gone to their homes to live henceforth for God, as the result of their connection with the college. As they saw that Bible study was made a part of their education, they were led to regard it as a matter of greater interest and importance. . . .

Too little attention has been given to the education of young men for the ministry. This was the primary object to be secured in the establishment of the college.

To give students a knowledge of books merely is not the purpose of the institution. Such education can be obtained at any college in the land. I was shown that it is Satan's purpose to prevent the attainment of the very object for which the college was established. Hindered by his devices, its managers reason after the manner of the world and copy its plans and imitate its customs. But in thus doing, they will not meet the mind of the Spirit of God.

A more comprehensive education is needed, an education which will demand from teachers and principal such thought and effort as mere instruction in the sciences does not require. The character must receive proper discipline for its fullest and noblest development. The students should receive at college such training as will enable them to maintain a respectable, honest, virtuous standing in society, against the demoralizing influences which are corrupting the youth.

It would be well could there be connected with our college land for cultivation and also workshops under the charge of men competent to instruct the students in the various departments of physical labor. Much is lost by a neglect to unite physical with mental taxation. The leisure hours of the students are often occupied with frivolous pleasures, which weaken physical, mental, and moral powers. Under the debasing power of sensual indulgence, or the untimely excitement of courtship and marriage, many students fail to reach that height of mental development which they might otherwise have attained.

The young should every day be impressed with a sense of their obligation to God. His law is continually violated, even by the children of religious parents. Some of these very youth frequent haunts of dissipation, and the powers of the mind and body suffer in consequence. This class lead others to follow their pernicious ways. Thus, while principal and teachers are giving instruction in the sciences, Satan, with hellish cunning, is exerting every energy to gain control of the minds of the pupils and lead them down to ruin.

Generally speaking, the youth have but little moral strength. This is the result of neglected education in childhood. A knowledge of the character of God and our obligations to Him should not be regarded as a matter of minor consequence. The religion of the Bible is the only safeguard for the young. Morality and religion should receive special attention in our educational institutions.

No other study will so ennable every thought, feeling, and aspiration as the study of the Scriptures. This Sacred Word is the will of God revealed to men. Here we may learn what God expects of the beings formed in His image. Here we learn how to improve the present life and how to secure the future life. No other
book can satisfy the questioning of the mind and the craving of the heart. By obtaining a knowledge of God's Word, and giving heed thereto, men may rise from the lowest depths of ignorance and degradation to become the sons of God, the associates of sinless angels.

A clear conception of what God is, and what He requires us to be, will give us humble views of self. He who studies aright the Sacred Word will learn that human intellect is not omnipotent; that, without the help which none but God can give, human strength and wisdom are but weakness and ignorance.

As an educating power the Bible is without a rival. Nothing will so impart vigor to all the faculties as requiring students to grasp the stupendous truths of revelation. The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is allowed to dwell. If occupied with commonplace matters only, to the exclusion of grand and lofty themes, it will become dwarfed and enfeebled. If never required to grapple with difficult problems, or put to the stretch to comprehend important truths, it will, after a time, almost lose the power of growth...

If morality and religion are to live in a school, it must be through a knowledge of God's Word. Some may urge that if religious teaching is to be made prominent our schools will become unpopular; that those who are not of our faith will not patronize the college. Very well, then, let them go to other colleges, where they will find a system of education that suits their taste. Our school was established, not merely to teach the sciences, but for the purpose of giving instruction in the great principles of God's Word and in the practical duties of everyday life.

This is the education so much needed at the present time. If a worldly influence is to bear sway in our school, then sell it out to worldlings and let them take the entire control; and those who have invested their means in that institution will establish another school, to be conducted, not upon the plan of popular schools, nor according to the desires of principal and teachers, but upon the plan which God has specified.

In the name of my Master I entreat all who stand in responsible positions in that school to be men of God. When the Lord requires us to be distinct and peculiar, how can we crave popularity or seek to imitate the customs and practices of the world? God has declared His purpose to have one college in the land where the Bible shall have its proper place in the education of the youth. Will we do our part to carry out that purpose?...

Our college stands today in a position that God does not approve. I have been shown the dangers that threaten this important institution. If its responsible men seek to reach the world's standard, if they copy the plans and methods of colleges, the crown of God will be upon our school.

The time has come for me to speak decidedly. The purpose of God in the establishment of our college has been plainly stated. There is an urgent demand for laborers in the gospel field. Young men who design to enter the ministry cannot spend a number of years in obtaining an education. Teachers should have been able to comprehend the situation and adapt their instruction to the wants of this class. Special advantages should have been given them for a brief yet comprehensive study of the branches most needed to fit them for their work. But I have been shown that this has not been accomplished...

Connected with God, every instructor will exert an influence to lead his pupils to study God's Word and to obey His law. He will direct their minds to the contemplation of eternal interests, opening before them vast fields for thought, grand and ennobling themes, which the most vigorous intellect may push all its powers to grasp and yet feel that there is an infinity beyond.

The evils of self-esteem and an unsanctified independence, which most impair our usefulness and which will prove our ruin if not overcome, spring from selfishness. "Counsel together" is the message which has been again and again repeated to me by the angel of God. By influencing one man's judgment, Satan may endeavor to control matters to suit himself. He may succeed in misleading the minds of two persons; but, when several consult together, there is more safety. Every plan will be more closely criticized; every advance move more carefully studied. Hence there will be less danger of precipitate, ill-advised moves, which would bring confusion, perplexity, and defeat. In union there is strength. In division there is weakness and defeat.

God is leading out a people and preparing them for translation. Are we, who are acting a part in this work, standing as sentinels for God? Are we seeking to work unitedly? Are we willing to become servants of all? Are we following our great Exemplar?

He who studies aright the Sacred Word will learn that human intellect is not omnipotent; that, without the help which none but God can give, human strength and wisdom are but weakness and ignorance

Fellow laborers, we are each sowing seed in the fields of life. As is the seed, so will be the harvest. If we sow distrust, envy, jealousy, self-love, bitterness of thought and feeling, we shall reap bitterness to our own souls. If we manifest kindness, love, tender thought for the feelings of others, we shall receive the same in return.

Our college at Battle Creek is a place where the younger members of the Lord's family are to be trained according to God's plan of growth and development. They should be impressed with the idea that they are created in the image of their Maker and that Christ is the pattern which they are to follow. Our brethren permit their minds to take too narrow and too low a range. They do not keep the divine plan ever in view, but are fixing their eyes upon worldly models. Look up, where Christ sat at the right hand of God, and then labor that your pupils may be conformed to that perfect character.

If you lower the standard in order to secure popularity and an increase of numbers, and then make this increase a cause of rejoicing, you show great blindness. If numbers were evidence of success, Satan might claim the pre-eminence, for in this world his followers are largely in the majority. It is the degree of moral power pervading the college that is a test of its prosperity. It is the virtue, intelligence, and piety of the people composing our
churches, not their numbers, that should be a source of joy and thankfulness.

Without the influence of divine grace, education will prove no real advantage; the learner becomes proud, vain, and bigoted. But that education which is received under the ennobling, refining influence of the Great Teacher will elevate man in the scale of moral value with God. It will enable him to subdue pride and passion and to walk humbly before God, as dependent upon Him for every capability, every opportunity, and every privilege.

As colaborers with Christ, with so favorable opportunities to impart the knowledge of God, our teachers should labor as if inspired from above. The hearts of the youth are not hardened, nor their ideas and opinions stereotyped, as are those of older persons. They may be won to Christ by your holy demeanor, your devotion, your Christlike walk. It would be much better to crowd them less in the study of the sciences and give them more time for religious privileges. Here a grave mistake has been made.

The object of God in bringing the college into existence has been lost sight of. Ministers of the gospel have so far shown their want of wisdom from above as to unite a worldly element with the college; they have joined with the enemies of God and the truth in providing entertainments for the students. In thus misleading the youth they have done a work for Satan. That work, with all its results, they must meet again at the bar of God. Those who pursue such a course show that they cannot be trusted. After the evil work has been done, they may confess their error; but can they as easily gather up the influence they have exerted? Will the "Well done" be spoken to those who have been false to their trust? These unfaithful men have not built upon the eternal Rock. Their foundation will prove to be sliding sand. "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." James 4:4

No limit can be set to our influence. One thoughtless act may prove the ruin of many souls. The course of every worker in our college is making impressions upon the minds of the young, and these are borne away to be reproduced in others. It should be the teacher's aim to prepare every youth under his care to be a blessing to the world. This object should never be lost sight of. There are some who profess to be working for Christ, yet occasionally go over to the side of Satan and do his work. Can the Saviour pronounce these good and faithful servants? Are they as watchmen giving the trumpet a certain sound?

Every man will at the judgment receive according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or evil. Our Saviour bids us: "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Mark 14:38. If we encounter difficulties, and in Christ's strength overcome them; if we meet enemies, and in Christ's strength put them to flight; if we accept responsibilities, and in Christ's strength discharge them faithfully, we are gaining a precious experience. We learn, as we could not otherwise have learned, that our Saviour is a present help in every time of need.

There is a great work to be done in our college, a work which demands the co-operation of every teacher; and it is displeasing to God for one to discourage another. But nearly all seem to forget that Satan is an accuser of the brethren, and they unite with the enemy in his work. While professed Christians are contending, Satan is laying his snares for the inexperienced feet of children and youth. Those who have had a religious experience should seek to shield the young from his devices. They should never forget that they themselves were once enchanted with the pleasures of sin. We need the mercy and forbearance of God every hour, and how unbecoming for us to be impatient with the errors of the inexperienced youth. So long as God bears with them, dare we, fellow sinners, cast them off?

We should ever look upon the youth as the purchase of the blood of Christ. As such they have demands upon our love, our patience, and our sympathy. If we would follow Jesus we cannot restrict our interest and affection to ourselves and our own families; we cannot give our time and attention to temporal matters and forget the eternal interests of those around us. I have been shown that it is the result of our own selfishness that there are not one hundred young men where now there is one engaged in earnest labor for the salvation of their fellow men. "Love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12), is the command of Jesus. Look at His self-denial; behold the manner of love He has bestowed upon us; and then seek to imitate the Pattern.

Testimonies, vol. 5, 21–35

Brief, Comprehensive Preparation for Gospel Service

Life Abundant Missionary Institute

Home Health Instructor Program—3 Months: An introductory program for those interested in medical missionary work, literature evangelism, and giving Bible studies.

Lifestyle Instructor Program—5 Months: An in-depth continuation of the Home Health Instructor Program. Additional training is given in natural medicine, health assessments, vegetarian nutrition, and in conducting public evangelistic programs, and health seminars.

For more information write or call
Life Abundant Missionary Institute
40416 123d Ave. Ct. E.
Eatonville, Washington 98328
(206) 832-6602

September 1989 Our Firm Foundation 21
A Missionary Education

In the work of soul-saving, the Lord calls together laborers who have different plans and ideas and various methods of labor. But with this diversity of minds, there is to be revealed a unity of purpose. Oftentimes in the past the work which the Lord designed should prosper has been hindered because men have tried to place a yoke upon their fellow workers who did not follow the methods which they supposed to be the best.

No exact pattern can be given for the establishment of schools in new fields. The climate, the surroundings, the condition of the country, and the means at hand with which to work, must all bear a part in shaping the work. The blessings of an all-round education will bring success in Christian missionary work. Through its means souls will be converted to the truth.

"Ye are the light of the world," Christ declares. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:14, 16. God's work in the earth in these last days is to reflect the light that Christ brought into the world. This light is to dissipate the gross darkness of ages. Men and women in heathen darkness are to be reached by those who at one time were in a similar condition of ignorance, but who have received the knowledge of the truth of God's Word. These heathen nations will accept eagerly the instruction given them in a knowledge of God.

Very precious to God is His work in the earth. Christ and heavenly angels are watching it every moment. As we draw near to the coming of Christ, more and still more of missionary work will engage our efforts. The message of the renewing power of God's grace will be carried to every country and clime, until the truth shall be set a premium. Many millions who are living in darkness, to the knowledge of God are a message to the lost of their salvation. The nations of the earth, as God's agents, are in the world to seek and save that which is lost. They are in the world to extend the truth of God's word.

God will bless the work of those schools that are conducted according to His design. When we were laboring to establish the educational work in Australia, the Lord revealed to us that this school must not pattern after any schools that had been established in the past. This was to be a sample school. The school was organized on the plan that God had given us, and He has prospered its work.

I have been shown that in our educational work we are not to follow the methods that have been adopted in our

Ellen G. White
older established schools. There is among us too much clinging to old customs, and because of this we are far behind where we should be in the development of the third angel’s message. Because men could not comprehend the purpose of God in the plans laid before us for the education of the workers, methods have been followed in some of our schools which have retarded rather than advanced the work of God. Years have passed into eternity with small results that might have shown the accomplishment of a great work. If the Lord’s will had been done by the workers in earth as the angels do it in heaven, much that now remains to be done, would be already accomplished, and noble results would be seen as the fruit of missionary effort.

The usefulness learned on the school farm is the very education that is most essential for those who go out as missionaries to many foreign fields. If this training is given with the glory of God in view, great results will be seen. No work will be more effectual than that done by those who, having obtained an education in practical life, go forth to mission fields with the message of truth, prepared to instruct as they have been instructed. The knowledge they have obtained in the tilling of the soil and other lines of manual work, and which they carry with them to their fields of labor, will make them a blessing even in heathen lands.

Before we can carry the message of present truth in all its fullness to other countries, we must first break every yoke. We must come into the line of true education, walking in the wisdom of God, and not in the wisdom of the world. God calls for messengers who will be true reformers. We must educate, educate, to prepare a people who will understand the message, and then give the message to the world.

There has been a decided failure to meet the requirements of God in the Southern field. We need to ask the Lord to give us understanding that we may see our lack, and take in the situation in the South, and the need of doing the missionary work that lies right at hand. The uneducated people of the South need the knowledge of the gospel just as verily as do the heathen in far-off lands. God requires us to study how we may reach the neglected classes of the white and the colored people in the South, and with all the skill we can gain, to work for the souls of these men and women.

The Madison School

It was quite a problem with Brethren Sutherland and Magan and their faithful associates as to how, with limited means, they were to adapt themselves to the work in Madison, Tennessee. They had many obstacles and difficulties to meet, some of which need never have come into the work.

The reason these brethren were persuaded to purchase the place now occupied by the Madison school, was because special light was given to me that this place was well adapted for the educational work that was most needed there. It was presented to me that this was a place where an all-round education could be given advantageously to students who should come from the North and the South for instruction. In what has already been accomplished by the Madison school, the Lord is making it manifest that He is blessing the work carried forward there, and is leading the teachers who are associated together in bearing the burdens of the work.

Many obstacles have been placed in the way of the pioneers at the Madison school of a nature to discourage them and drive them from the field. These obstacles were not placed there by the Lord. In some things the finite planning and devisings of men have worked counter to the work of God.

Let us be careful, brethren, lest we counterfeit and hinder the progress of others, and so delay the sending forth of the gospel message. This has been done, and this is why I am now compelled to speak so plainly. If proper aid had been given to the school enterprise at Madison, its work might now be in a far more advanced stage of development. The work at Madison has made slow advancement, and yet, in spite of the obstacles and hindrances, these workers have not failed nor become discouraged; and they have been enabled to accomplish a good work in the cause of God.

The Lord does not set limits about His workers in some lines as men are wont to set. In their work, Brethren Magan and Sutherland have been hindered unnecessarily. Means have been withheld from them because in the organization and management of the Madison school, it was not placed under the control of the conference. But the reasons why this school was not owned and controlled by the conference have not been duly considered.

The lack of interest in this work, by some who should have valued it highly, is decidedly wrong. Our brethren must guard themselves against the repetition of such experiences.

The Lord does not require that the educational work at Madison shall be changed all about before it can receive the hearty support of our people. The work that has been done there is approved of God, and He forbids that this line of work shall be broken up. The Lord will continue to bless and sustain the workers so long as they follow His counsel.

Brethren Sutherland and Magan are as verily set to do the work of the Lord as Madison as other workers are appointed to do their part in the cause of present truth. The light given is that we should help these brethren and their associates, who have worked beyond their strength, under great disadvantages. Let us seek to understand the situation, and see that justice and mercy are not forgotten in the distribution of funds.

The leaders in the work of the Madison school are laborers together with God. More must be done in their behalf by their brethren. The Lord’s money is to sustain them in their labors. They have a right to share the means given to the cause. They should be given a proportionate share of the means that comes in for the furtherance of the cause. (June 18, 1907)

Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 11, 27–32
After Harbor Springs
continued from 7

century, paving the way for the advantages we enjoy. But can it stop there? Dare we fail to learn the most vital of all lessons that may be drawn from this experience?

Our educational work today faces challenges fully as serious as those faced resolutely by our spiritual forebears of a century past. Yet we need not be despondent; the Lord has promised divine aid for every such emergency. But we must not be presumptuous, for this aid is clearly stated to be subject to the wise and loving conditions laid down by the greatest Teacher the world ever knew.

“Though in many respects our institutions of learning have swung into worldly conformity, though step by step they have advanced toward the world, they are prisoners of hope. Hate has not so woven its meshes about their workings that they need to remain helpless and in uncertainty. If they will listen to His voice and follow in His ways, God will correct and enlighten them, and bring them back to their upright position of distinction from the world.”

We are blessed with material benefits, organizational facilities, and the advantages that come from years of experience; yet it rests with us to ensure that our Lord will not be forced at last to conclude that we yet lack the one thing most essential. We must listen; we must follow. The conditions are plain—let every soul who lays claim to the name Seventh-day Adventist ponder them well.


2 Counsels on Education, Introduction, vi, by Arthur L. White


4 Ibid., 62–63

5 Letter 47, 1893, emphasis supplied (portions taken from both Manuscript Release 367, 2–4 and Manuscript Release 143, 3).

6 For the best readily available discussion of the struggle for reform in 1897, see The Wisdom Seekers, 68–79

7 Spalding-Magan’s Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies of Ellen G. White, 96–97

8 Ibid., 100

9 Ibid., 103

10 E. M. Cadwallader, A History of Seventh-day Adventist Education, 290

11 Arthur W. Spalding, Review and Herald, January 8, 1931, 8–9 (quoted in Cadwallader, 301–303)

12 Testimonies, vol. 6, 145, emphasis supplied

© Berea

The work of publishing has been inextricably bound up with the growth and history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Its influence, both in the strengthening of church members and as an evangelistic tool to reach those not of our faith, can scarcely be estimated. As this work and influence continue, it is the purpose of Copyright Berea to direct our readers’ attention to publications of merit and usefulness.

Studies in Christian Education. 160 pages. E. A. Sutherland, The Upward Way, Dodge Center, Minnesota, $6.95

Simply put, this volume should be a part of every Adventist’s educational philosophy on the subject of education. You may or may not agree with every aspect of the author’s thesis, but you owe yourself the inspiration that comes from seeing our educational work in the wider context of the final days of the Great Controversy.

Originally published in 1915, this volume carries the subtitle, “Educational Experiences Before the Midnight Cry Compared with Educational Experiences Before the Loud Cry.” Tracing the history of religious education from the time of the Protestant Reformation down to the time of the Millerite movement, Sutherland lays out a convincing case of cause and effect: Christian principles of education produce Christians, worldly (or papal) principles of education produce backsliding and spiritual decay.

“What,” you ask, “are these ‘Christian principles’ that we need in our schools?” A partial list would include the proper place of the Bible in education, elective courses of study, degrees, student motivation, the place of health reform (see “Reforms in Diet,” on page 25 of this magazine), school setting and location, manual training and vocational education, student self-government, missionary emphasis, and the qualifications of teachers.

Such a list sounds imposing. Too complicated and involved for the layman. To the contrary, this volume is a classic in its simplicity and clarity.

Prominent in Sutherland’s account is the story of Oberlin College and the reform movement fostered there in the early years of the nineteenth century. Without the Spirit of Prophecy counsels from which we benefit, Oberlin College and her supporters adopted many of the “reforms” which Ellen White later sought to incorporate into the educational work of our church. The result was a co-educational, work-study program with a very strong emphasis on both health reform and missionary effort. If that base had been successfully built upon in the years leading up to the Millerite movement and the Midnight Cry, there would have been much more pleasant history to record.

But the gains made in many of the schools of the early 1800s were lost by the wayside by the 1840s when they were needed. Thus we have the overriding point of Sutherland’s book—we can’t afford to let it happen again. Some very real and specific safeguards need to be put in place if we expect to succeed in the work of the Lord at the time of the loud cry.

It should be frankly admitted that this book is not the product of an inspired pen. Ellen White both commended Sutherland for his application of the true principles of education and cautioned him not to go to extremes. Some will say that this volume does just that. Others will as stoutly deny it. Nonetheless, this volume has been a classic in its field for nearly 75 years. Now that it is available in an attractive new edition, you really ought to read it. It should be noted as well that this is a reprinting of the original edition and includes the section on academic degrees that was edited out of the small edition available for many years.

Order from The Upward Way, P.O. Box 717, Dodge Center, MN 55927, 1-800-367-2665
The true science of education gives the student a knowledge of the laws governing his body, and a love for those laws. Every Christian school should give its students a knowledge of the proper diet, proper clothing, and should acquaint him with those phases of life that make a successful missionary. A wave of reform in the matters of diet, clothing, and other important health principles swept over the country, and many educational reformers endeavored to introduce these practical subjects into their schools. The spirit of God was preparing them for the crucial test in 1844.

"Among the studies selected for childhood, physiology should occupy the first place." Health Reformer, August 1866. "It should be regarded as the basis of all educational effort." Ibid., November 1871. "While the schools we have established have taken up the study of physiology, they have not taken hold of the matter with that decided energy they should. They have not practiced intelligently that which they have received in knowledge." The Kress Collection, 45. "The health should be as sacredly guarded as the character." Fundamentals of Christian Education, 147

The Founders of Oberlin, moved by the spirit of reform said, "That we may have time and health for the Lord's service, we will eat only plain and wholesome food, renouncing all bad habits, and especially the smoking and chewing of tobacco, unless it is necessary as a medicine, and deny ourselves all the strong and unnecessary drinks, even tea and coffee, as far as practicable, and everything expensive that is simply calculated to gratify appetite." Leonard, Story of Oberlin, 86

In 1832, Mr. Sylvester Graham, the inventor of Graham flour, "began to call men to repent of the sins of the table. According to this classical authority, vegetables and fruit should constitute the substance of every meal, and should be eaten as nearly as may be in their natural state. Bread should be made of unbolted wheat flour (that being the natural condition), though rye and Indian are allowable if unbolted, likewise rice and sago, if plainly cooked. Good cream may be used instead of butter, though milk and honey are somewhat better. Flesh meat and fish in all forms had better be banished from the table. No fat or gravy is to be tasted, nor any liquid foods like soup and broth. Pastry is an abomination, and cakes in which any fat or butter has been used. Bread should be at least twelve hours from the oven, and twenty-four hours are better. And as for condiments, pepper, mustard, oil, vinegar, and so on, and stimulants like tea and coffee, they are to be by all means eschewed as deadly foes to health." Leonard, Story of Oberlin, 218–219

Professors Shipherd and Finney of Oberlin both confessed to being restored to health through the Graham diet reform. "The Oberlin pulpit became aggressively Grahamite. The boarding department of the school was placed in charge of a disciple of Graham. Tea and coffee were not introduced into the college boarding hall until 1842—possibly a little later. Many of the families discarded tea and coffee, and a few adopted the vegetarian diet." Concerning the vegetarian diet, we read, "For two or three years longer the students were furnished at the hall with 'Graham fare.' They were not restricted to this. A table was still set for those who preferred a different diet." Fairchild, Oberlin, The Colony and the College, 83

Diet Reform in Other Schools: Oberlin was not alone in these reforms. "In Williams College an association was formed in 1831 comprising the majority of the students with board based upon the principles of abstinence from tea and

Edward A. Sutherland

Edward Alexander Sutherland (1865–1955), was a Seventh-day Adventist educator, physician, and college founder.
coffee, and the use only of food the simplest in every respect.” “The same reform was recorded in the history of Hudson College.” In Lane Seminary “It was the wish of the students to dispense with tea, coffee, and all luxuries, and to live on the principles of Christian simplicity and economy.” In Danville, Kentucky, and Maryville College, Tennessee, it was the same, because we wish our ministeries from dyspepsia and liver complaint.” Oberlin’s historian writes that “the company was large that used neither flesh nor fish, neither butter nor milk, neither tea nor coffee.” Leonard, Story of Oberlin, 222–223

Horace Mann said, “We must pay far more attention to the health of the students, not only by teaching the physiological laws of health, but by training students to an habitual obedience to them. Solomon does not say teach a child in the way he should go, but he says train him, which means that the child should be required to do the thing himself, and to repeat it again and again, and ten times again until it becomes a habit.”

Mr. Mann says further, “As physical exercise enters so largely into the means of securing health, it is certain that no college can ever maintain a general condition of high health among its students unless they spend some hours every day in muscular effort. Hence the faculty of Antioch College requires exercise of its students every day.... We encourage manual labor in every practicable way, and if a liberal public or a liberal individual would give us land for agricultural or even for horticultural purposes, we promise them that the old injunction to till the ground and dress it shall not be forgotten.”

One will look far for a writer with a clearer grasp of the health principles as taught by the Word of God. After describing the increase of disease in the world because of the departure of man from God’s original plan, Mr. Mann says, “It comes solely because man will break heaven’s laws; because for the sake of money or for pride, disease will marry disease because when God commanded man to work—that is, to take some form of exercise—in the garden—that is, in the open air—men will not exercise, and will live in dwellings which add artificial poisons to natural ones, and then breathe the virulent compound.” Life and Works of Horace Mann, vol. 5, 342, 415

If health reform must be taught by Seventh-day Adventist ministers and teachers, and understood and practiced by all who will triumph in the loud cry, we are forced to conclude that the Lord was giving the Protestant churches, through their schools, this health reform light because it was as necessary for them to understand and practice it before the Midnight Cry as for us before the loud cry. We are forced also to conclude that their failure to live up to the light on health reform unfitted them to appreciate and accept other light. So it is extremely dangerous for students now to carelessly relate themselves to this reform....

Selecting Teachers: Undoubtedly, more failures have come to educational reforms and to schools, through the inability of the founders to select teachers in sympathy with Christian education, and who have the ability to teach the essential branches as directed by the angels who wait to co-operate in the teaching of every class, than through any other one weakness. Teachers have been employed in Christian schools “who could pass well in a worldly institution of learning,” but who could not follow the divine pattern as revealed to the founders. For this reason, many schools established by reformers soon patterned after the popular schools.

“God has revealed to me that we are in positive danger of bringing into our educational work the customs and fashions that prevail in schools of the world.” Special Testimonies, Series B No. 11, 28. “Let not managers, teachers or helpers, swing back in their old customary way of letting their influence negative the very plan the Lord has presented as the best plan for the physical, mental and moral education of our youth. The Lord calls for steps in advance.” Spalding-Magan Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies of Ellen G. White, 204

Oberlin was terribly pressed by her own brethren who were ignorant of the nature and value of the educational light God had so generously revealed to her. But severe as was the criticism and pressure from the outside, Oberlin might have carried out God’s plan in the preparation of an army of missionaries to give the Midnight Cry, had not some of her teachers continued to cling to the principles and methods of worldly schools. The germ that finally caused her to stagger in her course was planted in her vitals by members of her own faculty. One example of the many that might be given is sufficient to make this matter clear. “Professor J.P. Cowles never looked with favor upon such dietetic vagaries; he did not scruple to ridicule and otherwise oppose them, and as he himself states, furnished pepper boxes, and kept the tables supplied with pepper for months, although eventually the prudential committee took them away.” The influence of this teacher with some others who were opposed to President Finney’s position on pepper and other condiments, tea, coffee, flesh foods, and so on, and who failed to realize this health reform as an entering wedge, is thus stated, “Under the pressure of this panic, they rushed with precipitous and confused haste back to their flesh pots; and here, under the exhilarating influence of fresh infusions of the Chinese herb, the Mocha bean, with the riotous eating of swine’s flesh, and drinking the broth of abominable things, they succeeded in arresting a necessary renovating work.” Leonard, Story of Oberlin, 422–424

Opposition From Without, Trying From Within, Serious: The nagging, the sneers, and the falsehoods of those outside Oberlin’s walls, who were out of sympathy with her reforms, were unpleasant and serious obstacles, but the opposition of certain teachers who were continually undermining the love and respect of students for health reform was fatal to progress in all reform. In yielding on health reform, Oberlin began to relinquish her reforms one by one until she was unable to meet the test in 1844. Thus Oberlin failed in the great mission.

In yielding on health reform, Oberlin began to relinquish her reforms one by one until she was unable to meet the test in 1844
to which she was called by the First Angel, because some of her teachers were not in sympathy with Christian education. On those reforms where the faculty agreed, Oberlin made a worldwide record.

Walking With God, but Not With a Perfect Heart: Of certain kings of Judah it is written that they “did that which was right in the sight of the Lord but not with a perfect heart.” God used Professor Finney and gave him a view of the spiritual condition of the popular churches. He knew what the results would be if they did not reform. “Professor Finney of Oberlin College said, ‘The churches generally are becoming sadly degenerate. They have gone very far from the Lord, and He has withdrawn Himself from them.’” The Great Controversy, 377. Stewart, Shiperd, President Mahan, all founders of Oberlin, understood the situation as well as Professor Finney. They all recognized that the only sensible way to bring about a permanent reformation in the Protestant denominations was through a system of Christian education, for “the hope of the future missionary work lies with the young.” These men fought a good fight. They were all reformers of the highest type. They belong in the class with William Miller, Fitch, Himes, and others.

Oberlin Hears the First Angel’s Message as Preached by William Miller and Fitch: “William Miller, having long since discovered things most marvelous in Daniel and the Revelation, proceeded for half a generation to turn the world upside down in preparation for the end of this dispensation, which this farmer-prophet fixed for 1843.” Leonard, Story of Oberlin, 66. “The Reverend Charles Fitch came to preach the doctrine of the immediate second coming of Christ. He was a man of much personal magnetism, intensely in earnest, profoundly convinced of the truth of his message, and called as he felt, to bring the better light to the good people of Oberlin.” Fairchild, Oberlin, The Colony and the College, 86.

The founders were greatly stirred, as were many of the students. But we have already seen the weakness on the part of some Oberlin teachers toward preliminary reforms. We have seen the terribly bitter spirit manifested by most of the denominational leaders. These things almost crushed Oberlin’s reforms until she was unable to meet the higher demands made upon her by the Midnight Cry. Oberlin College was not perfect in her heart, but God rewarded the institution for the loyalty she had shown, and she became a powerful factor in certain reforms in the world’s history, although she failed to have a part in that reform of all reforms, the third angel’s message. It is well for Seventh-day Adventists to remember that these things happened to Oberlin as an example for those upon whom the ends of the world are come. Oberlin teachers did not “break every yoke” of worldly education, but “placed on the necks of their students worldly yokes instead of the yoke of Christ.” To us it is said, “The plan of the schools we shall establish in these closing years of the work is to be of an entirely different order from those we have instituted,” but Oberlin decided to follow the methods adopted in the older established schools. She yielded to pressure, and thus began that “clinging to old customs, and because of this, we are far behind, where we should be in the development” of God’s work. Oberlin men, just before their test came, failed to comprehend the purpose of God in the plans laid before them for the education of their workers. “They adopted methods which retarded the work of God. Years have passed into eternity with small results that might have shown the accomplishment of a great work.” Oberlin, by yielding to opposition, unfitted herself to carry the message of present truth in all its fulness to other countries “because she failed to break every educational yoke.” She failed at the last to come “into the line of true education,” and as a result she could not give the final message to the world. See Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 11, 28–30.

Hellenism and Humanism

When one traces from the Patriarchal Period the transference of information by oral communication to the beginnings of the simplest of writings, two lines of reasoning permeate literature: biblical revelation, the wisdom of God, and secular humanism, the wisdom of man. Thus writers have been able to have the greatest impact on the minds of men for either good or evil.

The Greek thinkers were the first to systematically lay out philosophy founded on man’s wisdom. An early Greek philosopher, Protagoras, in the fifth century B.C. said, “Man is the measure of all things.”

The educational centers during the time of Christ were Corinth, Ephesus, and Athens. The apostle Paul spent eighteen months at Corinth preaching the truth of Jesus. After he left Corinth, he said this about Greek education: “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” 1 Corinthians 1:21

The world had strayed from God and knew Him not. It was by “wisdom” the world had reached this point, but whose wisdom? Man’s—his philosophy, his science, his education. Paul, through inspiration, tells us that the “wisdom” accepted by the world as education was itself the means of their not knowing God.

“The leaders of Israel had, to a great extent, yielded to the demands of Greek culture and learning, thereby hoping to gain prestige and influence. They had been led to believe that they could make better progress in their God-given task by assimilating worldly standards of education than by clinging with tenacity to the old standards bequeathed to them by their godly ancestors. By mingling human philosophy with the Word of God, the spiritual force and power of the Scriptures was lacking in the lives of teacher and layman. They did not have spiritual discernment. Greek philosophy, Alexandrian and Athenian culture had sapped the spiritual strength of the house of Israel. The influence of this worldly religious training unfitted all classes to meet Him when ‘He came unto His own,’ and ‘His own received Him not.’ His claims were heavenly; the people were of the earth, earthly. Heaven and earth did not harmonize.”

At the time Jesus came to this earth it was the darkest period of earth’s history. “God’s greatest gift was bestowed to meet man’s greatest need. The Light appeared when the world’s darkness was deepest. Through false teachings the minds of men had long been turned away from God. In the prevailing systems of education, human philosophy had taken the place of divine revelation.”

Gwen Hawkins has provided a home schooling curriculum and counseling service for many years, and has recently joined the teaching staff of Harland College.
None can deny that, intellectually, Greek education reached a point unsurpassed to this time. Their mental attainments were developed to the fullest in languages, art, and physical culture. But what did these attainments accomplish in character development?

"It is impossible to walk amongst even the ruins of Greek art without being constantly offended with perpetual portrayal and even deification of drunkenness and lust, in the otherwise marvelous productions. In poetry, the highest form of that wonderful language, it is the same. The Greek poets developed a mythology in which the gods were portrayed as perpetually indulging the basest of human passions, and in which every idea of divinity was debased to the most degraded level." 33

Socrates was the great educator of Greece, and what was his theory of education? A profound and consistent skepticism. Few people understand the paganistic beliefs he fused into society. His teachings can be very misleading, for he spoke strongly of truth and virtue, but according to the Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia, he "taught that every person has full knowledge of ultimate truth contained within the soul and needs only to be spurred into conscious reflection to become aware of it." Thus, to summarize his philosophy: truth originates within man, without any external or supernatural authority.

Plato was the great voice and continuator of Socrates. Aristotle was a disciple of Plato. They perpetuated the theory of education developed by Socrates that doubt is the way to knowledge. For with Aristotle it was a maxim that "to frame doubt well" is a service to the discovery of truth.

Today, inductive or inquiry teaching, discovery learning, search, or by whatever name, is simply the repetition in modern times of the Socratic theory of education—begin with doubt. It follows then that Greek education, founded in doubt, was essentially ignorance. The Bible pierced to the very core of the whole system when it repeatedly defined that education as "ignorance." Those who are "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Timothy 3:7) are the result of this method.

With a renewed emphasis on the Socratic method of education, is it any wonder America is producing such a high percentage of illiterate students? A nation that considers itself the greatest and best educated in the world (because its citizens average 15.2 years of formal schooling, more than those of any other nation) has a growing illiteracy problem. Of the 18-29 age group, only forty-nine percent have minimal basic educational functional skills.

The results of this downward trend in education are being attributed by educators to everything from dyslexia (a learning disability), to poor parenting and underpaid teachers. Students with thirteen years of education can't read, can't write, can't compute mathematically, wouldn't know a language rule if they heard one, yet can expound for hours on their innermost feelings. It is evident that something is seriously wrong with education.

Is the education of Socrates worthy of revival or emulation? Socrates neglected his wife and children and wandered the streets of Athens in his rumpled tunic, persistently asking probing questions designed to instill doubt concerning accepted moral values. Young people flocked after this pied piper, eager for something "new"—eager to abandon the values of their elders, delighting in "free-dom" to "reach within their own souls" for answers to life's questions and justification for any conduct.

The result? The historian, Will Durant, speaks of some who "laughed in their fathers' face." The demoralization, disintegration, and decline of Greece is a matter of history. "A disintegrating individualism had weakened the Athenian character, and left the city a prey at last to the sternly natured Spartans. The revolution came and men fought for and against it, bitterly and to the death. When the democracy won, the fate of Socrates was decided... They decreed that he should drink the hemlock (poison)." The philosophy of Socrates not only helped destroy Greece but also resulted in his own destruction.

Those who were questioned so persistently by Socrates were unaware of his aim to subtly lead them to doubt or reject established values in favor of the god-within concept. Not that there is anything wrong with using questions as an educational tool. Questions are forceful and effective in any search for truth. But where should truth-seekers go for answers? To the God of all virtue and truth? Or to fallible, fickle, ignorant, vacillating, and sinful man? This is the crux of the entire issue, no matter how foolishly and eruditely it may be expressed. To which source does the Socratic method lead students? The latter, of course, since Socrates contended that ultimate truth was contained within each person.

The question "What is right?" has been replaced with "What do you think is right?" or "What do you feel is right?" By this process God is in effect dethroned and man is enthroned in His place for answers to life's questions and justification for any conduct.

The result? The historian, Will Durant, speaks of some who "laughed in their fathers' face." The demoralization, disintegration, and decline of Greece is a matter of history. "A disintegrating individualism had weakened the Athenian character, and left the city a prey at last to the sternly natured Spartans. The revolution came and men fought for and against it, bitterly and to the death. When the democracy won, the fate of Socrates was decided... They decreed that he should drink the hemlock (poison)." The philosophy of Socrates not only helped destroy Greece but also resulted in his own destruction.

The question "What is right?" has been replaced with "What do you think is right?" or "What do you feel is right?" By this process God is in effect dethroned and man is enthroned in His place for answers to life's questions and justification for any conduct.

The result? The historian, Will Durant, speaks of some who "laughed in their fathers' face." The demoralization, disintegration, and decline of Greece is a matter of history. "A disintegrating individualism had weakened the Athenian character, and left the city a prey at last to the sternly natured Spartans. The revolution came and men fought for and against it, bitterly and to the death. When the democracy won, the fate of Socrates was decided... They decreed that he should drink the hemlock (poison)." The philosophy of Socrates not only helped destroy Greece but also resulted in his own destruction.

The question "What is right?" has been replaced with "What do you think is right?" or "What do you feel is right?" By this process God is in effect dethroned and man is enthroned in His place for answers to life's questions and justification for any conduct.

The result? The historian, Will Durant, speaks of some who "laughed in their fathers' face." The demoralization, disintegration, and decline of Greece is a matter of history. "A disintegrating individualism had weakened the Athenian character, and left the city a prey at last to the sternly natured Spartans. The revolution came and men fought for and against it, bitterly and to the death. When the democracy won, the fate of Socrates was decided... They decreed that he should drink the hemlock (poison)." The philosophy of Socrates not only helped destroy Greece but also resulted in his own destruction.

The question "What is right?" has been replaced with "What do you think is right?" or "What do you feel is right?" By this process God is in effect dethroned and man is enthroned in His place for answers to life's questions and justification for any conduct.

The result? The historian, Will Durant, speaks of some who "laughed in their fathers' face." The demoralization, disintegration, and decline of Greece is a matter of history. "A disintegrating individualism had weakened the Athenian character, and left the city a prey at last to the sternly natured Spartans. The revolution came and men fought for and against it, bitterly and to the death. When the democracy won, the fate of Socrates was decided... They decreed that he should drink the hemlock (poison)." The philosophy of Socrates not only helped destroy Greece but also resulted in his own destruction.
prise system and the sovereignty of nations. The Humanist Manifesto states:

"We have reached a turning point in human history when the best option is to transcend the limits of national sovereignty and move toward the building of a world community in which all sectors of the human family can participate."

One of the ways humanism is taught is through the teaching technique of "values clarification." This technique is being used to convince the child that he has the right to develop his own personal values, free from parental influence and authority, free from religious influences. It can further convince the child that there are no absolutes, no right, no wrong. It is a means of reprogramming the moral consciousness. This is accomplished through the following strategies: brain-storming, role-playing, negative teaching, an abnormal obsession with "choices" and "feelings," open-ended questions, fantasy, decentralization of authority, and group approval.

In the humanist book, Values Clarification, A Handbook of Practical Strategies for Teachers and Students, the authors state:

"The values-clarification approach tries to help young people answer some of these questions and build their own value system."

This value system teaches the child to come up with his own values—not the morals of right and wrong. Parenthetical comments are added by the author.

1. Choose the value freely. (Free from parental guidance and religious values of his parents or his teachers. In other words, "Ye shall be as gods." From the same book:

"Thus, the values-clarification approach does not aim to instill any particular set of values. Rather, the goal of the values-clarification approach is to help students utilize seven processes of valuing in their own lives."

The child is told that whatever value he chooses is right for him, as long as he uses their seven-step method to arrive at his value:

1. Choose the value freely. (Free from parental guidance and religious influences)
2. Find an alternative. (An alternative, chosen by the student, is one which is different from parental values, such as to have premarital sex or not to have premarital sex)
3. Choose after considering the consequences. (What child can see far enough ahead to fully realize the adverse consequences of such a blind course of action?)
4. Prize and cherish the value. (Cherish the value because his own personal feelings have guided him to choose what is most important to him.)
5. Publicly confess or affirm the value. (Be courageous enough to bravely take a stand and influence peers.)
6. Act on the value. (If he chooses premarital sex as his value, he is to take action and carry it out.)
7. Act upon the value regularly. (Live by the value consistently to establish it as his chosen behavior. He does his own thing.)

"The values-clarification approach is based on the approach formulated by Louis Raths, who, in turn, built upon the thinking of John Dewey. Unlike other theoretical approaches to values, Raths is not concerned with the content of people's values, but the process of valuing."

Since most people do not know what humanism is, or what it teaches, it is possible for teachers to be trained to promote humanism without their being aware of it.

In the humanist book, Readings in Values Clarification edited by Howard Kirschenbaum and Sidney Simon, there is a chapter entitled, "Three Ways to Teach Church School." In this chapter Mr. Simon explains that there are three ways to teach, that is, facts level, concepts level, and values level. He states that the most desirable kind of teaching is the values level. He says in this chapter:

"It directly involves a student in examining his own values. It asks many 'You-centered' questions and insists that the student confront issues suggested by the content. These issues should involve him in choices which are relevant to his day-to-day life. Can this third level of teaching be done with the typical content of a typical church-school course? I would answer with a resounding Yes. Not only can it be done, it must be done if we are to make of church school more than a once-a-week platter of platitudes."

Just what, do you suppose, does he mean when he refers to "platter of platitudes"? Is it logical to have anti-Christian, anti-God, humanistic educators instructing Christian teachers in how to teach values to the students in church schools; values that state there is no right and no wrong? Many teachers are blind to this deception. Since most people do not know what humanism is, or what it teaches, it is possible for teachers to be trained to promote humanism without their being aware of it. This kind of teaching is taking place in many Christian schools. It may be time to ponder the fact that we can produce Christian-school-educated humanists.

Ellen White relates the following night vision, "The Speaker then took from the hands of the teachers books which they had been making their study, some of which had been written by infidel authors and contained infidel sentiments, and laid them on the floor. Then he placed the Bible in their hands, saying, 'You have little knowledge of this Book. You know not the Scriptures nor the power of God. When you have taken your students through the course of study you have followed in the past, they will have to unlearn much that they have learned, and this they will find very difficult to do. Objectionable ideas have taken root in their minds, like weeds in a garden, and some will never be able to distinguish between right and wrong. The good and the evil have been intermingled in your work. Doctrines containing a little truth, but with which are woven the opinions and sayings and doings of men, are repeated. The youth will never know the way of life so long as they depend on such instruction.'"

The effect of values education is to destroy home and church-taught values that conflict with humanistic values. "Christian teachers say they use values clarification to teach Christian values. They don't seem to realize that it is impossible because values clarification teaches a process that gives a child skills with which to decide for himself what is right or wrong. Most assuredly, the process can lead to a right decision. But
Christian faith does not rest on “feelings,” yet these curriculums are bulging with teachings on “feelings”
The Great Teacher calls for every youth to learn the true philosophy of education—

What Shall I Do to Be Saved?

Find Inspired Answers

The Great Controversy: Old Testament Times
by
Ellen G. White
The Spirit of Prophecy, volume one
1870 Edition

Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ
by
Ellen G. White
The Spirit of Prophecy, volume three
1878 Edition

Triumphant Living
by
Ellen G. White
Steps to Christ
Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing
The Sanctified Life

Life, Teachings and Miracles of Our Lord Jesus Christ
by
Ellen G. White
The Spirit of Prophecy, volume two
1877 Edition

The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan
by
Ellen G. White
The Spirit of Prophecy, volume four
1884 Edition

Full of divine instruction, these five volumes each contain 12 cassettes narrated by James Ayars and are neatly packaged in a vinyl case.

The suggested donation per volume is $29.95, plus 10% to cover postage and handling. Orders over $75 are shipped at no charge.

Hope International
P.O. Box 940
Eatonville, WA 98328

Address Correction Requested
Forwarding and Return Postage Guaranteed