Has God Ordained Independent Self-Supporting Work? see page 8
Editorial

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.” Hosea 4:6

It has been my privilege to preach the three angels' messages and the cleansing of the sanctuary in many countries of the world to people who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Sometimes the congregations are large, other times they are small, but one condition is always prevalent: there is an urgency in their souls. They have great concern for their own souls and for the souls of others. Their experience may be described with these inspired words from our prophet:

"The leaven of godliness has not entirely lost its power. At the time when the danger and depression of the church are greatest, the little company who are standing in the light will be sighing and crying for the abominations that are done in the land. But more especially will their prayers arise in behalf of the church because its members are doing after the manner of the world." Testimonies, vol. 5, 209-210

Almost every weekend this past year we have been among our people in camp meetings and weekend seminars, along with those who preach with me. Many voices are crying out against the celebration movement and Neuro-Linguistic Programming. They mourn over many of the sermons that are preached from our pulpits. See Testimonies to Ministers, 409-410. They tell stories of how they have been removed from their church offices, censored and even disfellowshipped for speaking out against the apostasy in the church. But their cries have many times fallen on deaf ears, and so they come to meet in halls or rented churches not of our faith, to hear the doctrines preached that made us God's remnant church.

God promised that when the ministers were unfaithful He would take charge of the faithful and obedient people Himself. "If all that appears to be divine life were such in reality; if all who profess to present the truth to the world were preaching for the truth and not against it, and if they were men of God guided by His Spirit—then might we see something cheering amid the prevailing moral darkness. But the spirit of antichrist is prevailing to such an extent as never before. Well may we exclaim: 'Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.' Psalm 12:1. I know that many think far too favorably of the present time. These ease-loving souls will be engulfed in the general ruin. Yet we do not despair. We have been inclined to think that where there are no faithful ministers there can be no true Christians, but this is not the case. God has promised that where the shepherds are not true He will take charge of the flock Himself. God has never made the flock wholly dependent upon human instrumentalities. But the days of purification of the church are hastening on pace. God will have a people pure and true. In the mighty sifting soon to take place we shall be better able to measure the strength of Israel. The signs reveal that the time is near when the Lord will manifest that His hand is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor." Testimonies, vol. 5, 79-80

Ellen White makes it very clear that many, yes, the majority of our people, will be lost for eternity, because they did not know the truth as it is in Jesus and therefore they could not live it by the power of the Holy Spirit. See ibid., 136; vol. 8, 41; vol. 5, 50; vol. 1, 608-609. Jesus said "for many are called, but few are chosen." Matthew 22:14. Why are so many rejected in the final judgment?

Many of those who are rejected are amazed, and challenge that rejection. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name do many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matthew 7:21-23

Those who were rejected had left their first love. They had a form of religion: they went to church and paid their tithe. This they should have done, but the love and faith of Christ were missing; they could not enter into the joy of salvation. They wanted to be saved by their own standard of righteousness. See Selected Messages, book 1, 370-371

God has men, women, and young people in this fateful hour of church history who will stand and be faithful to truth. Even though truth demands their very lives, they would rather die than sin. Only those who have conquered every weakness of character by the power of the Holy Spirit will receive the seal of the living God. See Education, 257; Testimonies, vol. 1, 144; ibid., vol. 3 106-107; Testimonies to Ministers, 507-506

The purging is now in process. God will have a purified people, a purified ministry, who will be faithful members of His last-day remnant church. The unfaithful are destroyed for lack of knowledge and experience in righteousness.

Let each member of the church study this important warning and reproof. Let each one consider whether, in contending for the truth, in debating on the theory, he has not lost the tender love of Christ.

Ron Spear—EDITOR

2 Our Firm Foundation April 1991
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

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Invitation to Writers
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WE all know that our prophet was laid to rest in 1915. But with her prophetic writings we from time to time are able to ask some vital questions for this very important end time. In this issue we want to find the answers to some of her statements about our church in the last days.

Adventists have long quoted a familiar statement by our prophet, which is here given in part. It comes from Selected Messages, book 2, 380: “We are to be ready and waiting for the orders of God. Nations will be stirred to their very center. Support will be withdrawn from those who proclaim God’s only standard of righteousness, the only sure test of character. And all who will not bow to the decree of the national councils and obey the national laws to exalt the sabbath instituted by the man of sin, to the disregard of God’s holy day, will feel, not the oppressive power of popery alone, but of the Protestant world, the image of the beast.

“Satan will work his miracles to deceive; he will set up his power as supreme. The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out—the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place. None but those who have been overcoming by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony will be found with the loyal and true, without spot or stain of sin, without guile in their mouths. We must be divested of our self-righteousness and arrayed in the righteousness of Christ.

“The remnant that purify their souls by obeying the truth gather strength from the trying process, exhibiting the beauty of holiness amid the surrounding apostasy. All these, He says, ‘I have graven... upon the palms of my hands.’ Isaiah 49:16. They are held in everlasting, imperishable remembrance. We want faith now, living faith. We want to have a living testimony that shall cut to the heart of the sinner. There is too much sermonizing and too little ministering. We want the holy unction. We need the spirit and fervor of the truth. Many of the ministers are half paralyzed by their own defects of character. They need the converting power of God.” Selected Messages, book 2, 380; Letter 55, 1886

When this letter is read in its full context it is very evident that the “church” is referring to God’s faithful, loyal and obedient people. As they face the mark of the beast, Sunday laws, and persecution, it seems that they cannot stand. They are faced with persecution from within the church. See Selected Messages, book 1, 122; Testimonies, vol. 5, 463; The Great Controversy, 608

They are challenged by laws that try to force them to give up the holy Sabbath and worship on Sunday. They are caught between these two persecutions, and from the human standpoint they cannot endure through this awful moment, but they stand. Ellen White explains in these prophetic words: “Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning. There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message

Ron Spear

An Interview With Ellen White
to be given to the world. God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness." *Testimonies to Ministers*, 300. They stand while the latter rain falls upon them as it did on the apostles at Pentecost.

But with that introduction let us now begin asking the prophet some very important questions dealing with God's remnant church in this end time.

Is it true, Sister White, that as we come near the end of the great controversy that our beloved church will follow in the same paths of apostasy that have been recorded in Scripture of the ancient church?

"I have been shown that the spirit of the world is fast leaving the church. You are following the same path as did ancient Israel. There is the same falling away from your holy calling as God's peculiar people. You are having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Your concord with unbelievers has provoked the Lord's displeasure. You know not the things that belong to your peace, and they are fast being hid from your eyes. Your neglect to follow the light will place you in a more unfavorable position than the Jews upon whom Christ pronounced a woe." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 75–76

As you have prophesied that this apostasy will come, what do you see as the main cause of our apostasy?

"I have been shown that unbelief in the testimonies has been steadily increasing as the people backslide from God. It is all through our ranks, all over the field. But few know what our churches are to experience. I saw that at present we are under divine forbearance, but no one can say how long this will continue. No one knows how great the mercy that has been exercised toward us. But few are heartily devoted to God. There are only a few who, like the stars in a tempestuous night, shine here and there among the clouds." *Ibid.*, 76

"I was pointed back to ancient Israel. But two of the adults of the vast army that left Egypt entered the land of Canaan. Their dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness because of their transgressions. Modern Israel are in greater danger of forgetting God and being led into idolatry than were His ancient people. Many idols are worshiped, even by professed Sabbathkeepers. God especially charged His ancient people to guard against idolatry, for if they should be led away from serving the living God, His curse would rest upon them, while if they would love Him with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their might, He would abundantly bless them in basket and in store, and would remove sickness from the midst of them.

"A blessing or a curse is now before the people of God—a blessing if they come out from the world and are separate, and walk in the path of humble obedience; and a curse if they unite with the idolatrous, who trample upon the high claims of Heaven. The sins and iniquities of rebellious Israel are recorded and the picture presented before us as a warning that if we imitate their example of transgression and depart from God we shall fall as surely as did they. ‘Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come,’ 1 Corinthians 10:11." *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 609

Why has the latter rain been so long delayed?

"In the vision given me in Rochester, New York, December 25, 1865, I was shown that a most solemn work is before us. Its importance and magnitude are not realized. As I marked the indifference which was everywhere apparent, I was alarmed for ministers and people. There seemed to be a paralysis upon the cause of present truth. The work of God seemed stayed. Ministers and people are unprepared for the time in which they live, and nearly all who profess to believe present truth are unprepared to understand the work of preparation for this time. In their present state of worldly ambition, with their lack of consecration to God, their devotion to self, they are wholly unfitted to receive the latter rain and, having done all, to stand against the wrath of Satan, who by his inventions would cause them to make shipwreck of faith, fastening upon them some pleasing self-deception. They think they are all right when they are all wrong.

"Ministers and people must make greater advancement in the work of reform. They should commence without delay to correct their wrong habits of eating, drinking, dressing, and working. I saw that quite a number of the ministers are not awake upon this important subject. They are not all where God would have them. The result is, some can show but little fruit of their labors. Ministers should be ensamples to the flock of God. But they are not safe from Satan’s temptations. They are the very ones whom He will seek to ensnare. If he can succeed in lulling one minister to carnal security, and by so doing divert his mind from the work, or deceive him with regard to his own true condition before God, he has accomplished much.

"I saw that the cause of God was not progressing as it might and as it should. Ministers fail to take hold of the work with that energy, devotion, and decided perseverance which the importance of the work demands. They have a vigilant adversary to contend with whose diligence and perseverance are untiring. The feeble effort of ministers and people can bear no comparison with those of their adversary, the devil. On one side are the ministers who battle for the right and have the help of God and holy angels. They should be strong and valiant, and wholly devoted to the cause in which they are engaged, having no separate interest. They should not be entangled with the things of this life, that they may please Him who hath chosen them to be soldiers." *Ibid.*, 466–467

"The Lord Jesus will always have a chosen people to serve Him. When the Jewish people rejected Christ, the Prince
of life, He took from them the kingdom of God and gave it unto the Gentiles. God will continue to work on this principle with every branch of His work. When a church proves unfaithful to the work of the Lord, whatever their position may be, however high and sacred their calling, the Lord can no longer work with them. Others are then chosen to bear important responsibilities. But, if these in turn do not purify their lives from every wrong action, if they do not establish pure and holy principles in all their borders, then the Lord will grievously afflict and humble them and, unless they repent, will remove them from their place and make them a reproach.” The Upward Look, 131

“Let men become lifted up in pride, and the Lord will not sustain them and keep them from falling. Let a church become proud and boastful, not depending on God, not exalting His power, and that church will surely be left by the Lord, to be brought down to the ground. Let a people glory in wealth, intellect, knowledge, or in anything but Christ, and they will soon be brought to confusion.” Testimonies, vol. 8, 127

How would you define the church with the inspired testimony you have been given in your writings?

“There is no other church than the assembly of those who have the Word of God, and who are purified by it.” The Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 4, 237

On several occasions in your writings you have used Revelation 2:5 and applied it to the church and to the ministry. Please explain to us what you mean.

“Some in these churches are in constant danger because the cares of this life and worldly thoughts so occupy the mind that they do not think upon God or heaven and the needs of their own souls. They rouse from their stupor now and then, but fall back again in deeper slumber. Unless they shall fully rouse from their slumbers, God will remove the light and blessings He has given them. He will in His anger remove the candlestick out of its place. He has made these churches the depository of His law. If they reject sin, and by active, earnest piety show stability and submission to the precepts of God’s Word, and are faithful in the discharge of religious duty, they will help to establish the candlestick in its place, and will have the evidence that the Lord of hosts is with them and the God of Jacob is their refuge.” Testimonies, vol. 4, 286

“I was shown the churches in different states that profess to be keeping the commandments of God and looking for the second coming of Christ. There is an alarming amount of indifference, pride, love of the world, and cold formality existing among them. And these are the people who are fast coming to resemble ancient Israel, so far as the want of piety is concerned. Many make high claims to godliness and yet are destitute of self-control. Appetite and passion bear sway; self is made prominent. Many are arbitrary, dictatorial, overbearing, boastful, proud, and unconsecrated. Yet some of these persons are ministers, handling sacred truths. Unless they repent, their candlestick will be removed out of its place. The Saviour’s curse pronounced upon the fruitless fig tree is a sermon to all formalists and boasting hypocrites who stand forth to the world in pretentious leaves, but are devoid of fruit. What a rebuke to those who have a form of godliness, while in their un-Christian lives they deny the power thereof! He who

You cannot cleanse yourselves, but by coming to Jesus in humility, in contrition, surrendering yourselves to God, through the merits of Christ’s righteousness you may have an experience in the things of God

“Treated with tenderness the very chief of sinners, He who never spurned true meekness and penitence, however great the guilt, came down with scathing denunciations upon those who made high professions of godliness, but in works denied their faith.” ibid., 403-404

“The True Witness speaks to us today, and says, ‘I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.’ Revelation 2:5. The Lord wants you to set things in order in your families, and to come back to your first love. He says, ‘Except thou repent, I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place.’ The candlestick was removed out of its place when Solomon forgot God. He lost the light of God, he lost the wisdom of God, he confounded idolatry with re-

“Treated with tenderness the very chief of sinners, He who never spurned true meekness and penitence, however great the guilt, came down with scathing denunciations upon those who made high professions of godliness, but in works denied their faith.” ibid., 403-404

“No greater evidence that those who have received great light do not appreciate that light, than is given by their refusal to let their light shine upon those who are in darkness, and devoting their time and energies in celebrating forms and ceremonies. Thoughts of the inner work, the necessary purity of heart, are not entertained. The absence of harmony with God becomes apparent. The light grows dim, goes out; the candlestick has been removed. There is much exercising of man-made authority by those to whom God has not given His wisdom because they did not feel the need of the wisdom from above. This wisdom, ‘first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and with out hypocrisy,’ (James 3:17) is contrary to their disposition. They have not the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, with which the believer in Jesus should be adorned. They do not represent the meek and lowly
When God’s people are born again, when they live the new life in Christ, with His love abiding in their hearts, their candlestick will stand securely in its place. You are telling us that when Solomon was in apostasy his candlestick had been temporarily removed. When leaders, pastors, or laity refuse to come into harmony with all truth, are they then in danger of having their candlestick removed?

"The times of ignorance God winked at, but now, with the blazing light of truth shining all around us, with warnings, with reproofs, with increasing light if we will but open our eyes to see it, there is no excuse for any, even the weakest child of God, that they should not disperse light to the world. The four angels are holding the four winds that a special work may be accomplished: the saints of God are to be sealed in their foreheads. Brethren, how long before you will be ready for the seal of God? Every step you advance upon the path which God forbids, toward your own pleasure and in sin, is a step nearer your destruction. Every act of disobedience to the word of the Lord is exposing you to irreparable loss. Every moment of ease, of self-indulgence, secured by you in neglecting the divine admonitions and call to duty in earnest work for the Master, is placing you under the power and control of the prince of darkness. Your candlestick may at any moment be moved out of its place." Ibid., vol. 2, 144

"When God’s people are born again, when they live the new life in Christ, with His love abiding in their hearts, their candlestick will stand securely in its place. But the principles they have followed in their connection with one another need revising. In their unity with one another and with God through Christ is their strength." Manuscript Releases, vol. 15, 109

Will the Seventh-day Adventist Church then go through?

"The remnant that purify their souls by obeying the truth gather strength from the trying process, exhibiting the beauty of holiness amid the surrounding apostasy. . . . The great issue so near at hand will weed out those whom God has not appointed, and He will have a pure, true, sanctified ministry prepared for the latter rain." Letter 55, 1886

"The way of the world is to begin with pomp and boasting, exalting human agents. But all this will come to naught. God’s way is to make the day of small things the beginning of the glorious triumph of truth and righteousness. Bear in mind that human power and human inventions did not establish the church, and neither will they destroy her." Signs of the Times, vol. 4, 208

"The Lord has declared that the history of the past shall be rehearsed as we enter upon the closing work. Every truth that He has given for these last days is to be proclaimed to the world. Every pillar that He has established is to be strengthened. We cannot now step off the foundation that God has established. We cannot now enter into any new organization; for this would mean apostasy from the truth." Selected Messages, book 2, 390

Yes, our prophet makes it clear the church will go through shaken and purified, made up of faithful, loyal, obedient pastors, leaders, and laity. But the greater proportion, the majority, will stand with the world. "To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test." Testimonies, vol. 5, 136. See also ibid., 10, 50; ibid., vol. 1, 608–609

Brothers and sisters, that test will soon be made. May God help us now to make the needed preparation. □

You may order The Candlestick and God’s Church, a comprehensive compilation of Ellen G. White statements regarding Revelation 2:5, for $1.25 each plus 15% shipping ($1.50 minimum).
The idea of independent self-supporting work is very old. Some people think that it has existed only within the last few years. There were independent self-supporting workers in Bible times. We do not mean independent in the sense of a person going off and doing his own thing. God's people are never independent in that sense.

We need to understand the word "independent." In Matthew 24:3-4 the disciples came to Jesus and said: "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" And what did Jesus answer? "Take heed that no man deceive you." The first thing that Jesus said when they asked for the sign of his coming and the end of the world was "Be careful that somebody does not deceive you."

The Bible teaches that in the multitude of counselors there is safety. In Bible times God's people counseled with one another. They counsel with other people whom the Lord is leading, and they work together. That is the way things are done in heaven. The angels are organized. And all of God's work is organized. If we are not organized, the Lord cannot work with us, the angels cannot work with us, and we cannot have the success that the Lord wants to give us.

When I say independent I mean independent from the control of the denomination. Has God authorized independent self-supporting work? Matthew 21:23 says: "And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?" Have you ever heard that question asked? "Who gave you authority to do this? Has your meeting been authorized? Is your preacher duly credentialed? Have you been given permission to give Bible studies?"

Are you authorized to do what you are going to do? Is there a conference representative on your board? Have you been given permission? Have you been recognized? Often the conclusion is that since you have not been authorized, you are against the church.

Eventually it comes to a threat. "If you cannot follow directions, you are going to be disfellowshipped, or your ordination is going to have to be taken away, and you will not be part of the church."

Let us read again Matthew 21:23. They asked: "By what authority?" Did Jesus have authority from the Sanhedrin? No, He did not. Did He have a certificate from any of the schools? No. Did John the Baptist? No, he did not have one either. Neither John the Baptist nor Jesus had permission from the "right sources" to do what they were doing. They were not authorized. Their meetings were not authorized. Their ministries were not authorized. See The Desire of Ages, 132-133

Friends, I want you to see how current this subject is. I am holding in my hand a paper published March 30, 1991, which states ten questions that people ought to ask to find out whether they should listen

John Grosboll is the director of Steps to Life, Wichita, Kansas.
to somebody or not. The third question is: “Are you authorized by the General Conference Committee?” If someone had asked you that question in Jesus’ day, would you have gone to listen to Jesus? Would you have gone to listen to John the Baptist? Let us go back a little farther. If someone had asked you that question in Isaiah’s day, would you have gone to listen to him? Would you have gone to listen to Elijah? Would you have gone to listen to Elisha? If that question would have caused you to reject the Messiah; if it would have caused you to reject John the Baptist— the greatest of the prophets, I wonder if that is a good question to ask today.

This is the question that we need to ask today: “Has God authorized independent self-supporting work?” Jesus was challenged as to His authority. “Who gave you the authority to do this? Who gave you the authority to teach? Who gave you the authority to come here to the temple and talk in public?”

Please notice how Jesus answered that question. “And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.” Matthew 21:24-27

Notice what Jesus did here. They asked Jesus: “Who gave you the authority to do what you are doing? Where did you get permission?” And Jesus led them back in the providence of God to the time of John the Baptist. He said: “Where was the authority for the baptism of John? Was it from heaven? or was it human authority?” Suppose they had answered the truth. They knew the answer to the question, but they thought that telling the truth would get them in trouble. One of the great shocks that I had as a young minister was being in a meeting with other young ministers when a man in a very high position in the church said to us, Do not do this, because if you do, you will make us tell a lie. Well, that is the way the priests and elders who came to Jesus felt. “If we tell the truth, Jesus will get us in trouble in public, and we will be embarrassed.” If they had told the truth, saying that the baptism of John was from heaven, what would Jesus have said? Did John the Baptist recognize who Jesus was? He told everybody who Jesus was. “I [John the Baptist] ... bare record that this is the Son of God.” John 1:34. If they had recognized that John the Baptist’s authority came from Heaven, their question as to where Jesus’ authority came from would have been answered. But since they did not want that answer, they told a lie.

The answer to the question Has God authorized independent self-supporting work? is the same today as it was in Jesus’ day. The way to find the answer to the question is to go back in the providence of God and see what He has authorized or done in the past.

Do you understand the difference between a Protestant and a Roman Catholic? For a Protestant the highest authority is God’s Word, and underneath it is every other authority, including the authority of the church. Ellen White said that Jesus was a Protestant, she was a Protestant, Adventists are Protestants, and if you and I are Seventh-day Adventists, we should be Protestants also. For a Roman Catholic the supreme authority is the authority of the church, and even the Bible is not the church’s authority. That is the difference between a Protestant and a Roman Catholic. You have to understand that, if you are to understand this subject.

In 1888 we had reached a crisis point in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Read from the book Testimonies to Ministers what happened then. One of the primary problems that the Seventh-day Adventist Church had in 1888 was that of finite men putting themselves in God’s place, taking a Roman Catholic position. “Finite men should beware of seeking to control their fellow men, the control of their fellow men take into their finite hands a work that devolves upon God alone.

“That men should keep alive the spirit which ran riot at Minneapolis is an offense to God. All heaven is indignant at the spirit that for years has been revealed in our publishing institution at Battle Creek.” Testimonies to Ministers, 76

Do you want to manifest the spirit that causes all Heaven to be indignant at what you are doing? It happened in our work in the 1880s, and it reached the crisis point at Minneapolis in 1888—the idea of finite men trying to control and rule God’s work.

“There are men whose character and life testify to the fact that they are false prophets and deceivers. These are we not to hear or tolerate. ... Men can become just as were the Pharisees—wide-awake to condemn the greatest Teacher that the world ever knew. ... There are those who are today doing the very same things. ... These men who presume to judge others should take a little broader view.
and say, Suppose the statements of others do not agree with our ideas; shall we not pronounce them heresy? Shall we, uninspired men, take the responsibility of placing our stakes, and saying, This shall not appear in print?...

"Has not our past experience in these things been sufficient?" Notice the next sentence: "Will we ever learn?" Does it sound as if the prophet is frustrated? She says: "Will we ever learn the lessons which God designs we shall learn? Will word is spoken, 'Break every yoke.' Unless you cease the work of making man amenable to man, unless you become humble in heart, and yourselves learn the way of the Lord as little children, the Lord will divorce you from His work." Ibid., 480–481

Oh, friend, I do not want God to divorce me from His work, do you? If I lose everything else in this world, I do not want to lose the Lord.

This problem did not cease at Minneapolis. We reached a crisis point at that time, but it did not cease at Minneapolis in 1888. "The prejudices and opinions that prevailed at Minneapolis are not dead by any means; the seeds sown there in some hearts are ready to spring into life and bear a like harvest. The tops have been cut down, but the roots have never been eradicated, and they still bear their unholy fruit to poison the judgment, pervert the perceptions, and blind the understanding of those with whom you connect, in regard to the message and the messengers." Ibid., 467

I hope that you have seen from these statements that the Adventist Church in 1888 was in the midst of a gigantic apostasy from truth. And what did this apostasy involve? It involved men in positions of responsibility dictating and controlling what other people should do. And the problem came when some men had convictions about how something should be done, but they could not carry them out. They were men trying to do God's work, and were not able to do what in their consciences they thought they should do, because they were receiving orders and instructions from men of responsibility who said: "We are in authority and you are going to do it this way."

Because of this gigantic apostasy there were sincere-hearted men in the Seventh-day Adventist Church who found it impossible to carry out God's instructions within the organization of the denomination. This dilemma eventually led to what we call today self-supporting work.

Apparently, the educational work was the first to be reformed on a self-supporting basis. Two young men by the names of Sutherland and Magan were trying to follow the counsel of the Spirit of Prophecy in regard to education, and found it impossible to do so. The development of self-supporting work at Madison, Tennessee, came into being because our church leaders would not listen to the counsel from the Spirit of Prophecy about God's method of education.

"A great many of the difficulties that have come into our work in California and elsewhere have come in through misunderstanding on the part of men in official positions concerning their individual responsibility in the matter of controlling and ruling their fellow laborers. Men entrusted with responsibilities have supposed that their official position embraced very much more than was ever thought of by those who placed them in office, and serious difficulties arose as the result.

"Simple organization and church order are set forth in the New Testament Scripture." Paulson Collection, 298

If your church organization is not following the New Testament plan, it is not divinely inspired.

In the book of Galatians, is the apostle Paul writing to a world-headquarters organization, or is he writing to the believers in the church in Galatia? He is writing to the brethren in the local churches. See Galatians 1:2. What is he telling them? "And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage; to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whateoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person)." Galatians 2:4–6. The New Testament teaching is that if somebody comes to your church, wherever he comes from, if he says something not according to the truth, you should oppose it.

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Galatians 1:8. Paul says that even if an angel from heaven comes to tell you something that is contrary to truth, oppose it in a Christlike manner. That is the New Testament position.

Men entrusted with responsibilities have supposed that their official position embraced very much more than was ever thought of by those who placed them in office, and serious difficulties arose as the result we ever realize that the consciences of men are not given into our command? If you have appointed committees to do the work which has been going on for years in Battle Creek, dismiss them; and remember that God, the infinite God, has not placed men in any such positions as they occupied at Minneapolis, and have occupied since then.

"I feel deeply over this matter of men being conscience for their fellowmen." Ibid., 294–295. This took place at the General Conference level. What about in the local church, or the conference?

"A strange thing has come into our churches. Men who are placed in positions of responsibility that they may be wise helpers to their fellow workers have come to suppose that they were set as kings and rulers in the churches, to say to one brother, Do this; to another, Do that; and to another, Be sure to labor in such and such a way. There have been places where the workers have been told that if they did not follow the instruction of these men of responsibility, their pay from the conference would be withheld." Ibid., 477

"I write thus fully, because I have been shown that ministers and people are tempted more and more to trust in finite man for wisdom, and to make flesh their arm. To conference presidents, and men in responsible places, I bear this message: Break the bands and fetters that have been placed upon God's people. To you the
"Simple organization and church order are set forth in the New Testament Scriptures, and the Lord has ordained these for the unity and perfection of the church." Ibid.


But here is what the leader should not do. "But he is not appointed to order and command the Lord's laborers. The Lord is over His heritage. He will lead His people if they will be led of the Lord in the place of assuming a power God has not given them." Ibid.

"Position does not give a man kingly authority. The meekness of Christ is a wonderful lesson given to the fallen world. Learning this meekness from the great Teacher, the worker will become Christlike." Ibid., 298–299

As I study this subject my great desire is that the work that I do for Jesus will become Christlike. Do you want your work for Jesus to become Christlike? If that is going to happen, you and I are going to have to humble ourselves. I am very much concerned because as I study I realize that unless you and I learn a lesson of penitence and humiliation at the foot of the cross, we will not be saved. See The Desire of Ages, 83–84

Because of these problems with kingly authority, the rule-or-ruin principle, the desire to control others, Ellen White began to encourage self-supporting work and helped to set up a self-supporting school near Madison, Tennessee. She counseled them to incorporate, and she told them to remain separate from the General Conference. The basic issues were always the same.

Sutherland and Magan were opposed by the General Conference, and especially by the president of the General Conference, who said, in effect, You should not work independent of the Conference, and you must not ask Seventh-day Adventists for any money to do a project which the General Conference has no vote or control over. That was the issue.

On May 14, 1907, Ellen White wrote to Magan from Loma Linda, California, and said: "I bare positive testimony that you and your fellow workers in Madison are doing the work that God has appointed to you. . . . The attitude of opposition or indifference on the part of some of your brethren has created conditions that have made your work more difficult than it should have been. You have not received from some many words of encouragement, but the Lord is pleased that you have not been easily discouraged.

"Some have entertained the idea that because the school at Madison is not owned by a conference organization, those who are in charge of the school should not be permitted to call upon our people for the means that is greatly needed to carry on their work. This idea needs to be corrected. In the distribution of the money that comes into the Lord's treasury, you are entitled to [a] portion just as verily as are those connected with other needy enterprises that are carried forward in harmony with the Lord's instruction." Spalding-Magan Collection, 411

"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 let them do so within the organization. That was the precise problem. It cannot be denied by anyone who candidly looks at the evidence.

"The work that has been done there is approved of God, and He forbids that this line of work shall be broken up." Ibid.; emphasis supplied. These words are strong, friends. Did you read the second part of that sentence?

When Madison was organized Ellen White did not permit its leaders to place themselves under the control of the conference.

When Madison was organized Ellen White did not permit its leaders to place themselves under the control of the conference. 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 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." Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 11, 31–32

Did God approve independent self-supporting work in 1907? He did because of the difficulties that we were experiencing as a church. People could not follow the dictates of their conscience and follow the counsels of the Lord because their brethren would not

Ellen White was very emphatic about how the title should be held and where the controls of this property at Madison should be.

P. T. Magan's diary, August 8, 1904: He says that he "worked with W. C. White during the forenoon getting articles and plans ready regarding the incorporation of the school at Nashville. In the afternoon he met with Daniells, the General Conference president, Prescott, field secretary of the General Conference, Griggs, Washburn, Byrd, and W. C. White to consider our plan of organization. Daniells did not like it."

We ought to think about that a little while. Here is a plan that the Spirit of Prophecy had authorized and said to follow, but the General Conference president does not like it.

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"Prescott thought that we traveled too much; so did Daniels. Bland thought other teachers would envy our independence and would like to do likewise."

August 9, 1904, one day later: "Talk with Mrs. E. G. and W. C. White regarding our plan for organization. She said we were not to go under the dominion of the Southern Union Conference."

April 14, 1906: "Spent forenoon with Daniels. . . . Told him why our school was independent and would have to eat showbread." That is something that you ought to study a little bit. What did he mean when he said that they would have to eat showbread?

May 7, 1907, Paradise Valley: "Talked with Sister White regarding attitude of General Conference toward us. Mrs. Sara McEnteer and Lillian present. Told Sister White that the administration held we had no right to go and get money unless we were owned by the conference. She replied: 'You are doing double what they are. Take all the donations you can get. The money belongs to the Lord and not to these men. The position they take is not of God. The Southern Union Conference is not to own or control you. You cannot turn things over to them.' " Why? Because when things were turned over to them, they forced people to go against their conscience and not follow the counsels.

May 14, 1907: "I talked to her [E. G. White] about the General Conference position that concerns non-conference owned [institutions] should have no money. She answered: 'Daniells and those with him are taking a position on this matter that is not of God.' She said she had something written on this and would try to find it." We have just read it in the Spalding-Magan Collection, page 411.

May 23, 1907, St. Helena. "Spent the forenoon with W. C. White. He gave me Sister White's letters to Daniells regarding us. He told me he did not agree with the administration at Washington in insisting that all monies pass through their hands. Said that he would not agree to our going under conference domination."

Ellen White wrote on January 19, 1907: "Today I have been carrying a heavy burden on my heart. . . . You have a work to do to encourage the school work in Madison, Tennessee. . . . The brethren who have influence should do all in their power to hold up the hands of these workers by encouraging and supporting the work at the Madison school. Means should be appropriated to the needs of the work in Madison—that the labor of the teachers may not be so hard in the future." Spalding-Magan Collection, 395-396

I want to ask some questions. This self-supporting school that was begun in Madison, Tennessee, around the turn of the century, was it a Seventh-day Adventists school? Yes, it was. Here is a school not owned or controlled or operated by the conference, but it is a Seventh-day Adventist school. It was not some school owned by some other supporting school? No. They were just wanting to be Seventh-day Adventists, but they wanted to be able to follow the counsel.

Now, one of the questions that always comes up is this article from a Seventh-day Adventist paper dated March 30, 1991. It says: "All genuine independent ministries will encourage their supporters to return their tithe and offerings to the appropriate channels." Let us examine the validity of this statement.

You cannot have a candid discussion about self-supporting work without discussing finances; it is impossible. God is not raining manna from heaven to support us today. However, He has given us guidelines and taught us what we should do and how His work is to be supported. Do you think that God has designed for any work to be done and not had any idea about how He would support it? Can you comprehend such a thing? For each kind of work that God wants to be done, He has figured out how it is to be supported. Did God have a plan how His ministers would be supported? Yes, He did. Did He have a plan how literature evangelists would be supported? Yes, He did. Did He have a plan how sanitariums would be supported? Yes, He did. Did He have a plan how Bible workers should be supported? Yes, He did. Now do you think it would be at all safe for you or me to try to figure out our own way about how things

Were Sutherland and Magan starting a new church when they started a self-supporting school? No. They were just wanting to be Seventh-day Adventists, but they wanted to be able to follow the counsel.

**Starting a New Church?**

Is it then possible for a local church that is not controlled or operated by the conference to be a self-supporting congregation and still be Seventh-day Adventist? It most certainly is. I am not telling people to separate from a conference church. But people have been forced to do that because of repeated influences which are detrimental to the spiritual welfare of their family. Were Sutherland and Magan starting a new church when they started a self-

church. These people were Seventh-day Adventists. Did they start a sanitarium at Madison? Was this a Seventh-day Adventist sanitarium? Was it owned and operated by the conference? No, it was self-supporting. It was independent from the conference, but it was Seventh-day Adventist. Did they later start a printing operation? Did Madison start many self-supporting schools and sanitariums and print shops all over this area of the United States? Yes. And were those printing shops that were self-supporting and not owned and controlled by the conference, were they Seventh-day Adventist? Yes.

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The Spirit of Prophecy, Part 2

The following is but an abstract of Elder Jones's remarks.

On account of many having arrived since the previous meeting, it was necessary to consume considerable time in rehearsing the points brought out on the preceding day. In addition to this, the speaker said that the trouble with us as a people was not that we do not nominally believe the Testimonies are from God; but what we need to know is how to believe them. If the only way that we have of expressing our belief in the Testimonies is by telling the people that we believe in them, our belief amounts to nothing. We thus open the way for the people to doubt the sincerity of our faith. If we really do believe the Testimonies, we will not need to tell the people so. Our lives will be a testimony to the faith that is in us.

There is a departing from God, and the temple needs cleansing just as it did in the days of old in Jerusalem. We have been brought into this condition by disregarding the Testimonies of the Spirit of God. But many of those who disregarded them believed in them, and at the time held those Testimonies in their hands, and did not suppose that they were disregarding them. Consequently, what we want to know is how to regard the Testimonies of the Spirit.

And we are not to think for a moment, when a testimony is given, and a man is named, that God is making an attack upon him to destroy him. The Lord's purpose is to separate him from the faults that are injuring him and hindering the work of God. It is to save the man and destroy the fault. God will not destroy or condemn a man unless he is inseparably connected with the sin. When this man turns his back on his wrong course, acknowledges the testimony, and puts himself right in the sight of God, he no longer stands in the position in which the testimony found him. That testimony may then be used as a warning for others, but must never be used to condemn the man who has recognized his wrong.

God's way is to make man something that he is not; to give man something that he has not. We cannot apply the Testimonies to others. No, nor even to ourselves from without. We must open the heart to God, to receive the testimony, that the Lord may implant the divine principle, giving us that which we have not, making us something that we are not, and thus Himself by His Holy Spirit really making the application of the testimony. Then there will appear in our lives, there will be worked out in our actions, that which God has implanted within. That is accepting the Testimonies. Anything short of that is not accepting them.

The power which God implants, taken into the heart, will enable the man to stand under temptation, and in the midst of his weakness. It will give him that which he does not possess, and it will make him what he is not by nature.

When a man makes a failure in a position in which he is placed, we are

Alonzo T. Jones
liable to think that God has made a mistake in allowing him to be placed there; but this does not follow. God made no mistake in having Saul to be king of Israel; but Saul made a mistake in not becoming what God wanted him to be. He made a mistake in following his own ways and schemes, rather than listening to the voice of God. So also God made no mistake in making Jereboam king over Israel. Although the purpose of God in separating the ten tribes from Judah was not carried out on account of the perversity of the people, yet God had a plan, but Jereboam would comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

God comforts us that we may comfort others; God helps us that we may help others. We are brought in a place where we need the comfort of God, that we may be able to comfort others. He has others in mind when He comforts us. "And if we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation." If I am afflicted, it is for the consolation and salvation of some other man. I may not by the devices of men." Testimonies to Ministers, 319

How were they "evaded"? Here is the answer: "Why did you frame flimsy excuses?" "Oh, how ashamed should those be who have turned away from the counsel of God, and have tried to cover up the impression God would have made!"

How were they "interpreted"? Here is the answer: They "put their own construction upon them, saying that they did not mean to do so."

And that was how the Testimonies were evaded, and interpreted, and made void, by those who thought they believed them, and who thought they were accepting them. Now, have you been evading them by flimsy excuses? Have you been interpreting them and making them void by putting your own construction upon them, saying they did not mean thus and so? Of course you have; you know you have. Then let us stop it this moment.

How, then, shall we be received? How shall we know what they mean? Here is the answer: "They meant just as stated." They mean what?—"Just as stated." Can you tell what they say?—Yes, easy enough. Then take them just as they say. Open the heart wide to God, that by His good Spirit He may implant there the principle that is in just what it says, then that principle will appear, it will shine in your life; then you have accepted the Testimonies. Then you know that you believe the Testimonies. Then there will be no danger of mistake about it. Others will know it, for you will make impressions on hearts that will never be effaced, and they will glorify God in the day of visitation.

"The Word of God is our standard. Every act of love, every word of kindness, every prayer in behalf of the suffering and oppressed, is reported before the eternal throne, and placed in heaven's imperishable record. The divine Word pours light into the most darkened understanding, and that light makes the most cultivated feel their inefficiency and sinfulness." Testimony, No. 31

The 1897 General Conference Bulletin, 21–22

The work of reformation begins with self. I can make impressions upon other hearts only when I have reformed myself. God reaches others by reaching us, and reaches others through us

not permit it to be carried out. God may call me or you to a position, and if we have some point of weakness which will prevent our usefulness, and God sends us a message, that message is to make us what He wants us to be, that through His grace we may stand where He wants us to stand. "Day by day men are revealing whether the kingdom of God is in them. If Christ rules in their hearts, they are gaining strength of principle, power, ability to stand as faithful sentinels, true reformers; for there can be no reform unless there is a thorough co-operation with Jesus Christ. Through the grace of Christ men are to use their God-given faculties to reform themselves [not to reform others, but to reform themselves]; by this self-denying action, which the Lord of heaven looks upon with approval, they gain victories over their own hereditary and cultivated tendencies. Then, like Daniel, they make impressions upon other hearts that will never be effaced. The influence will be carried to all parts of the world."

The work of reformation begins with self. I can make impressions upon other hearts only when I have reformed myself. God reaches others by reaching us, and reaches others through us. Turn to 2 Corinthians 1:3–4: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all meet for years that man whom I am to comfort; but sometime I shall meet him, and the experience I have had prepares me to sit down by his side, or take him by the hand, and be a help and a comfort to him. He receives from me that which I have received from God, and he receives it that he may in turn communicate it to others, and these to others; and thus the influence of God's grace imparted to us extends to all the earth, although we may not move out of the state in which we live. Brethren, that is what God wants to do with us, and then our influence will be carried to all parts of the world.

Now to the question, How shall we take the Testimonies? Let us read how they have been really rejected when it was thought they were being accepted. Then we shall know how to avoid that mistake, and know how to accept them. Here I read of one whose "example has done much to unsettle confidence in the Testimonies." How did he do this?—"He himself has walked directly contrary to the light which God has given." But he did not suppose that he was walking directly contrary to them. He thought he was doing the right thing toward them. How, then, did he so miss the mark? Here is the answer: "The reproofs and warnings from the Lord have been evaded and interpreted and made void
Winds in Our Health Message and Practices

GOD'S final message to the world is presented in Revelation 14:6-11. Verse 12 tells the impact of this message on the final generation. "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12. In the end-time there will be a group referred to as 'saints' who will heed God's final call and by the faith of Jesus will be living in harmony with all of God's revealed will.

Daniel 12:4 prophesied an increase in knowledge in the time of the end. This increase has certainly occurred in the understanding of Scripture and especially in relation to the time prophecies referred to as being sealed.

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Daniel 12:4

The unsealing of the book of Daniel in the time of the end gave our pioneers an understanding of the 2300 day/year time prophecy. Through much disappointment and searching they came to the knowledge of Christ's entering into the Most Holy Place in heaven in 1844. Because of the understanding that by God's grace we can bring our lives into full victory over disobedience to the Creator's natural and spiritual laws, it is possible for the final generation to participate with Christ in the cleansing of the sanctuary presently going on. Thus the prophesied increase of knowledge has given rise to the remnant church of God known as the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Without doubt, God has been and is behind the increase of knowledge in the spiritual realm, and we each need to keep pace with unfolding light as God opens it to us.

We need not look far to realize that there has also been an explosion of increased knowledge in essentially every field and activity known to man. Is God behind the increase of knowledge in these areas also? Does it matter if we know? What relation does this increased knowledge in other than Scripture have in perfecting a final generation prepared to walk into heaven without seeing death?

"God has permitted a flood of light to be poured upon the world in both science and art." Patriarchs and Prophets, 113

"The world has had its great teachers, men of giant intellect and wonderful research, men whose utterances have stimulated thought, and opened to view vast fields of knowledge; and these men have been honored as guides and benefactors of their race. . . . As the moon and the stars of the solar system shine by the reflected light of the sun, so, as far as their teaching is true, do the world's great thinkers reflect the rays of the Sun of Righteousness. Every gem of thought, every flash of the intellect, is from the Light of the world." The Desire of Ages, 464-465

In this time of the end God has permitted man to think His thoughts after Him. Knowledge or teachings in any field that are true (that is, in harmony with natural law) are a reflection from the Creator.

God has not revealed all of His reasons for permitting and/or promoting the marked increase of knowledge in the many facets of man's activities. But an understanding of some of His reasons and relating properly to them will not only be helpful but will also be essential to the finishing of His final work on earth.

"The knowledge current in the world may be acquired; for all men are God's property, and are worked by God to fulfill His will in certain lines, even when they refuse the man Christ Jesus as their Saviour. The way in which God uses men is not always discerned, but He does use them. God instructs men with talents and inventive genius, in order that His great work in our world may be accomplished. The inventions of human minds are supposed to spring from humanity, but God is behind all. He has caused that the means of

Vernon Sparks
rapid traveling shall have been invented, for the great day of His preparation.” Fundamentals of Christian Education, 409

Thus the increase of knowledge resulting in modern rapid transit has been ordained by God to help finish His work. This fact is undoubtedly true also for modern communications.

“The greater the length of time the earth has lain under the curse, the more difficult it has been for man to cultivate it, and make it productive. As the soil has become more barren, and double labor has had to be expended upon it, God has raised up men with inventive faculties to construct implements to lighten labor on the land groaning under the curse.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 1, 1089

Thus the modern inventions in agriculture are a manifestation of God’s love and compassion for sinful man. Many of the inventions of modern medicine are undoubtedly also in this category. Through the progress of modern science smallpox, once a cause of devastating plagues, has apparently been eradicated from this planet. Vaccinations have been developed which prevent or markedly decrease the severity of many previously feared infectious diseases. Severed limbs can be restored to active use. Blocked blood vessels can be restored to nearly new. Progress in modern medicine, as in many other fields, seems endless. Such progress is evidence that God honors strict obedience to His natural laws just as He honors obedience to His moral laws.

“But God has not been in all man’s inventions. Satan has controlled the minds of men to a great extent, and has hurried men to new inventions which has led them to forget God.” Ibíd., 1089

Certainly Satan motivates sinful man to misuse the knowledge which God created and has made known to man. However, those endeavors which benefit man physically, mentally, or morally that are the result of a knowledge of and obedience to His laws are ordained by Him.

“Wherever there is an impulse of love and sympathy, wherever the heart reaches out to bless and uplift others, there is revealed the working of God’s Holy Spirit. . . . [Such] acts show the working of a divine power.” Christ’s Object Lessons, 385

Satan’s end-time power to “tempt and deceive is tenfold greater than it was in the days of the apostles.” Spiritual Gifts, vol. 2, 277

Just as sin and wickedness will be perfected in the last days, just so will obedience and righteousness be perfected. To be right and to do right (righteousness) one must acknowledge, and, by His enabling power, live in harmony with all the truth that God has revealed. “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:32

End-time freedom from disease of the soul involves obedience to natural law. “Everything that conflicts with natural law creates a diseased condition of the soul.” Health Reformer, 215

“To make plain natural law, and urge the obedience of it, is the work that accompanies the third angel’s message to prepare a people for the coming of the Lord.” Testimonies, vol. 3, 161

“It is as truly a sin to violate the laws of our being as it is to break the Ten Commandments. To do either is to break God’s laws. Those who transgress the law of God in their physical organism, will be inclined to violate the law of God spoken from Sinai.” Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene, 53

“It should be made plain that the violation of God’s law, either natural or spiritual, is sin, and that in order for them to receive His blessing, sin must be confessed and forsaken.” The Ministry of Healing, 228

God cannot introduce into His eternal universe one who has not cooperated with the removal of all rebellion from his or her life. Successful end-time living involves surrender to all of God’s revealed will.

“The laws that govern the heart’s action, regulating the flow of the current of life to the body, are the laws of the mighty Intelligence that has the jurisdiction of the soul. From Him all life proceeds. Only in harmony with Him can be found its true sphere of action. For all the objects of His creation the condition is the same—a life sustained by receiving the life of God, a life exercised in harmony with the Creator’s will. To transgress His law, physical, mental, or moral, is to place one’s self out of harmony with the universe, to introduce discord, anarchy, ruin.” Education, 99–100

To demonstrate that we are safe to be saved we must know and by divine grace live in harmony with God’s physical, as well as His moral, laws.

“This living machinery is to be understood. Every part of its wonderful mechanism is to be carefully studied.” My Life Today, 127

“A practical knowledge of the science of human life is necessary in order to glorify God in our bodies. It is therefore of the highest importance that among studies selected for childhood, physiology should occupy the first place.

“It is well that physiology is introduced into the common schools as a branch of education. All children should study it. It

Those who transgress the law of God in their physical organism, will be inclined to violate the law of God spoken from Sinai.
done in ministerial lines but medical missionary work.” Ibid., 533

As we near the end, God’s faithful remnant will come more and more into unity regarding spiritual truth. Also as they understand natural law they will come more and more into unity in how they live and also how they work for others. As we understand more fully natural law we will come into greater unity regarding “disease, its causes, prevention, and cure.” As error in the physical, mental, and moral realms is perceived and put aside, a harmony of behavior and words will characterize God’s people. They will come more and more into the unity for which Christ prayed as recorded in John 17.

In spite of the great increase in knowledge of natural law, there are still many differing theories as to how the human body is constructed and how it functions. This variance results in different ideas as to how to care for the human body in health and disease throughout the various cultures and nationalities of the world. Some of these differing concepts and practices relating to natural law are also reflected in how we as Seventh-day Adventists apply the health message to ourselves and how we relate it to others.

There is one interpretation of anatomy and physiology which states that there are 12 or 24 vertical lines or meridians spaced around the human body. Three hundred and sixty specific points along these meridians are believed to be connected in a special way to specific internal organs. Inserting needles or massaging or applying pressure to these special points can produce “analgesia” or other beneficial effects. This system also purports to use the same methods to treat and cure disease of the various organs.

Other interpretations of anatomy and physiology state that all of the internal organs are represented in a special way to specific points on the external ear, the palm of the hand, the sole of the foot or the iris of the eye. It is believed that evaluation of the specific points can diagnose the health status of the specific organs. Again, needling, applying pressure, or massaging some of these sites supposedly affects the health of the specific organ. It is true that every part of the human body is connected by the nervous system to all other parts of the body. Repeated studies however have not been able to identify any special anatomic or physiologic connection between the previously mentioned specific points and their purported organs. Natural law does not appear to support these theories.

Another interpretation of anatomy and physiology states that certain muscles are related in a special way to specific internal organs. It is believed that the evaluation of the strength or weakness of a given muscle tells the health status of its associated internal organ. Again there has been no discovery of any special anatomic or physiologic connection between any certain muscle and a certain internal organ.

There are a number of systems of diagnosis and treatment based on differing beliefs related to energy forces within the body. One states that disease is caused by the imbalance between good (positive) and bad (negative) energy forces referred to as the “Yin” and the “Yang.”

Another system states that there is an electromagnetic energy in all living tissues radiating out from the tissues. This radiation of energy is referred to as the “aura.” Certain “skilled” individuals purportedly are able to detect this aura with their hands and can thus evaluate the health status of the tissue, be it plant or animal. “Manipulation” of the energy field is also believed to be able to treat any diseased organ.

This concept of the aura also gives rise to the use of a “pendulum” to diagnose the health status of plant or animal. A suspended object on a string held over the human body is said to rotate clockwise or counter-clockwise depending on the condition of the aura. This again is said to enable the “skilled” practitioner to diagnose and know how to treat the disease.

The concept of the aura is also used to explain how a sample of blood, urine, hair, or body secretion can be placed in one of several types of machines or in a special box referred to as “Abram’s box” and the presence or absence of certain diseases can be determined.

Another interpretation of anatomy and physiology states that disease of the internal organs (all emphasis is supplied by the author) is caused by the interference with organs are completely separated from the brain by the severing of the spinal cord, their muscle tissues and cells continue to function in essentially normal ways, thus disproving the above concepts. The primary problems are control of bladder and bowel evacuation which is dependent upon the skeletal or external muscles which do not function at all until told to by an electrical stimulus. The brain utilizes its nervous energy in helping to direct and coordinate the other organs in their activities, but it does not provide any energy for them to do those activities.

Science has shown that manipulation and massage that relieve muscle spasm, improves local circulation and joint motion and is beneficial in many musculo-skeletal problems.

All of these above-mentioned systems, although apparently contradictory to each other, have some things in common. Most, if not all, hold that a universal energy force pervades all nature. They vary in their explanation of how to “tap into” it, and how to “measure” and “manipulate” it. All of these interpretations of human anatomy and physiology are widely used in the current “New Age” health movement. Many new-agers are quite frank about their rejection of standard anatomy and physiology textbooks. They say that we need an alternative model, one that is based on energy rather than matter. “We are not
primarily physical forms. We are primarily energy—or magnetic or whatever you like—forms around which matter adheres. Our primary nature is not physical." *The Journal of Holistic Health*, 1977, 13-14. Therefore illness is not seen as a physical problem, but as an imbalance of energy. Cure focuses on the manipulation of this energy to remove blockages and to balance its flow. The Bible teaches us that we are physical beings formed of the dust of the ground (matter). God has breathed into us the breath of life; but the breath of life is not to be devalued to the level of some kind of energy force which we can manipulate at will.

The above-mentioned theories of anatomy, and physiology, though perhaps containing some truth, are in varying degrees contrary to our best understanding of the laws of our being based on the discoveries of true science. Many of their concepts that are apparently not in harmony with natural law or with the Bible have had their origins in a variety of mystical religions. See *Mystical Medicine*, Warren Peters, M.D.

God has breathed into us the breath of life; but the breath of life is not to be devalued to the level of some kind of energy force which we can manipulate at will

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Another interpretation of anatomy and physiology states that the majority of, if not all, diseases are the result of retained "poisons" or "toxins" within the body. This concept has much truth in it, but it frequently leads to a failure to recognize other proven causes of disease and to the neglect of a balanced use of other remedies that are in harmony with natural law, including all the eight natural remedies. Great emphasis is placed on the elimination or removal of these "retained toxins" through vigorous treatments which stimulate the organs of elimination to a greater than normal function. This unbalanced approach becomes the emphasis and message rather than the harmonious use of all eight natural remedies.

There are normal waste products from metabolism always present in the cells and blood. These become harmful or "toxic" only if present in excess amounts. This condition definitely occurs in pulmonary, liver or kidney failure. It may also occur to varying degrees when there is poor posture contributing to poor breathing, when impure air is breathed, when there is constipation or when the skin is not kept cleansed. Excess levels can also occur in local tissue areas when there is local congestion or sluggish blood flow. This congestion can be related to such things as local infection, constrictive clothing, inadequate exercise and chilling of the extremities, driving excess blood into the internal organs. In some infections there are true poisons produced.

When there is fermentation rather than digestion of our ingested food there are abnormal chemicals produced which may be harmful or toxic in varying degrees. It is therefore recognized that an initial cleansing program is beneficial in many acute illnesses and that all disease states are benefited by a healthy lifestyle and the use of natural remedies that aid in the restoration of every organ to its proper function. "The Lord will bless the physician who depends on natural methods, helping every put together and how it functions in health and disease. Acceptance of these and other varying interpretations determines how we live, how we encourage others to live and what we do when there is disease. These varying beliefs create contradictory and confusing winds of doctrine and practice in our health work, which is to be an essential part of the three angels' messages."

It is beyond the scope of this article to explain in greater detail the differences between the various systems of beliefs and practices. The purpose of the writer is to help us to recognize that all of these varying interpretations cannot be based on truth, and that for us to participate in the giving of the true health message in association with the three angels' messages we must be able to determine which are based on truth. The writer believes that the Lord has given counsels and examples in the Spirit of Prophecy to help us to know what is truth in the natural world as well as in the spiritual.

We have seen how God is behind the explosion of knowledge in the understanding of natural law. In the early days of our church, the Lord instructed us to train physicians and nurses to be the core of our health work. This counsel was undoubtedly given in part because of all of the differing types of health workers. These trained workers have best kept pace with the God-ordained explosion of knowledge in natural science. The more that science has discovered as to how the human body is constructed and how it truly functions in health and disease, the more it has come into harmony with the revealed truth of the Spirit of Prophecy and Scripture.

Although our core medical missionaries were to be trained physicians and nurses, they were to be given the opportunity to know the very best things done by other systems of health care. After being trained in the most up-to-date system of natural science, they were then to adopt all methods of health care that were in harmony, first, with Scripture, the Spirit of Prophecy and then with natural law. The Spirit of the Lord counseled them that "You are not justified in advocating one school [system of health care] above the others, as though it were the only one worthy of respect." *Pamphlets in the Concordance*, No. 66, 40

We have the example of how Ellen White related to physicians and to the discoveries of science in her day. Whenever she or her family were ill and needed professional assistance, she tended to ask for help from those who were the most up-to-date in their knowledge of natural
law. As advances in modern medicine were made, she related to them in a positive way. She repeatedly acknowledged the legitimate place for surgery, which is invariably associated with anesthetics. See Selected Messages, book 2, 284; Manuscript Releases, vol. 14, 269. She herself used or approved the use of coffee (see Selected Messages, book 2, 302–303) and tea (see ibid., 302) if needed for their medicinal effects. She personally received X-ray treatments (see ibid., 303) for a skin lesion. She received and recommended smallpox vaccination (ibid.). She spoke of the potential benefit of blood transfusions (ibid.). When asked about the use of quinine to save the life of a malaria patient, she is quoted as stating, “We are expected to do the best we can.” Ibid., 282.

Her example reveals that she recognized that methods of diagnosis and treatment based on obedience to natural law can be a part of Heaven’s health program when they are needed. She related to modern technology in a positive way, resorting to it when it offered the best results possible under the circumstances. Her example reveals that God wants us to first prevent disease by healthful living. If we do become ill, He wants us to do for ourselves what we can through the simple, natural remedies. If we need professional assistance, the health professional is to improve our utilization of the eight natural remedies. However, if improvement is not made, it is not a denial of our faith in God’s miracle-working power to utilize methods of diagnosis and treatment to save life and prevent disability if they are based upon a knowledge of, and obedience to, His natural laws.

As Seventh-day Adventists we are accustomed to being in the minority in regard to our spiritual beliefs. We are used to standing for truth even when the majority go the other way. Thus we seem to naturally choose the minority views even in the areas of science. We are first to test all purported truth by measuring it with the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. Beliefs regarding natural law are then to be measured by the most widely accepted understanding of natural law. We may not agree with how sinful man applies much of his knowledge of the natural sciences, but we will accept the scientific understanding of the majority as to how the human body operates in health and disease unless it is contrary to a “Thus saith the Lord.”

All the differing interpretations of anatomy, physiology, and pathology have their supporters. All will have at least some scientists and physicians who will propose various possible explanations as to how their chosen method of diagnosis and health-care is in “harmony” with natural law. Many use systems of health-care, believing that in time scientific discoveries will show that their methods are based on natural law. The only way to know whether or not a method of diagnosis and health care may be utilized in giving the third angel’s message is to know that it is in harmony with the Bible, the Spirit of Prophecy and the majority understanding of natural law when not contrary to a “Thus saith the Lord.” We should avoid systems of diagnosis and treatment that are not yet generally acknowledged as being in harmony with natural law. This caution will help to protect us from Satan’s false systems, which are mixtures of truth and error.

Some will say that they have used successfully, or they have observed others use successfully, one or more methods of diagnosis and treatment not yet widely acknowledged as being in harmony with natural law. They accept their successful personal or observed “experience” as evidence of the truthfulness of their methods. Experience alone is not a safe guide in arriving at truth.

“Experience is said to be the best teacher. Genuine experience is indeed valuable. But habits and customs gird men and women as with iron bands, and these false habits and customs are generally justified by experience, according to the common understanding of the word. Very many have abused precious experience. They have clung to their injurious habits, which are decidedly enfeebling to physical, mental, and moral health, and when you seek to instruct them, they sanction their course by referring to their experience. But true experience is in harmony with natural law and science . . . .

“Genuine experience is a variety of experiments entered into carefully, with the mind freed from prejudice and uncontrolled by previously established opinions and habits; marking the results with careful solicitude, anxious to learn, improve, and reform, on every or any habit, if that habit is not in harmony with physical and moral law. With some, the idea of others gainsaying that they have learned by experience seems to them to be folly and even cruelty itself. But there are more errors received, and firmly retained, under the false idea of experience, than from any other cause; for this reason, that which is generally termed experience is no experience at all, because there has never been a fair trial by actual experiment and thorough investigation with a knowledge of the principle involved in the action . . . .

“Genuine experience is in harmony with the unchangeable principles of nature. Superstition, caused by diseased imagination, is frequently in conflict with science and principle. And yet the unanswerable argument is urged, 'I must be correct, for this is my experience.' ” Health Reformer, 78–79.

There are several reasons why personal experience is not a reliable method of determining truth in the health area. One is the placebo effect. It has been shown repeatedly that if one believes in a method of treatment, sixty to seventy percent of the time he will feel benefited by that treatment. Also, if one does not have faith in a given treatment he will feel that he is worse sixty to seventy percent of the time after receiving that treatment. Another confounding factor is that most illnesses get better regardless of the treatment given. A third confusing factor is that usually more than one treatment is given at a time—such as a change in diet, rest, increased fluids, poultice, herb or medication. Thus without controlled studies it is nearly impossible to determine whether or not a given treatment is beneficial, neutral, or counterproductive—for the patient recovers in spite of the treatments. If we are using methods of health care that we know are in harmony with divine revelation and natural law we can thank God for the results and not be
overly concerned about determining which remedy had which effect. It is too easy to
give excess credit to the remedy and not
evenly useful, a quick cure. This approach is not in har-
mony with the counsels from the Lord;
neither is it in harmony with good science.

Many of us want to be known as the
defenders of historic Adventism. Right-
fully, we want to participate in the repairin-
g of the breach. This desire leads us to the
study of the writings of our health-reformer
ancestors. We quote from such stalwarts as
Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, Julius Gilbert
White and Jethro Kloss. These men gave
present truth for their time, and much of
their works are still of value. However,
knows that sooner or later He will find it
easier to get us to go contrary to a
"Thus saith the Lord" in other areas. Be-
cause a method of health care gives seem-
ingly good results is not evidence that it is
based on truth and thus safe to use. The
closer we get to Satan’s personation of
Christ, the more crucial it becomes that we
are certain that our practices and messages
are in harmony with truth and that they are
not a mere reflection of our “experience,”
or that of others.

In these closing days of earth’s history,
let us purpose that our love for the truth will
lead us into a knowledge of and a practice of all of
God’s revealed will in physical as well as in mental and moral realms. Let us
determine that by God’s grace we will learn
the true meaning of the following counsel:

In these closing days of earth’s history, let us
purpose that our love for the truth will lead us
into a knowledge of and a practice of all of
God’s revealed will in physical as well as in
the mental and moral realms.

certain portions of their understanding of
physiology, and the causes of disease, and
thus how best to treat disease, even as to
which simple remedy to use and when to
use it, are no longer accurate. Our present-
day health work must be in harmony with
the present-day understanding of anatomy
and physiology. Present “truth” must keep
pace with present light.

Satan first deceived Eve by getting her
to believe her senses and her “experience.”
After perceiving no evil results from touch-
ing the fruit, she proceeded to taste of it. “It
was grateful to the taste, and as she ate, she
seemed to feel a vivifying power, and
imagined herself entering upon a higher
state of existence.” Patriarchs and Proph-
eth, 56. Her “experience” in opposition to a
direct “Thus saith the Lord” was then used
to mislead Adam into error and disobedi-
ence. See Health Reformer, 80. In these
last days Satan is appealing, and will con-
tinue to appeal, to our senses and to our
“experiences” to lead us to live and work in
disobedience to truth as written by God’s
hand in Scripture, the Spirit of Prophecy
and in the physical world. If Satan can get
us to base our health message and practice
on an “experience” contrary to a “Thus
saith the Lord” in the natural world He

There are many ways of practicing the
healing art, but there is only one way that
Heaven approves.” Testimonies, vol. 5,
443. Let us purpose that by God’s grace we
will unite with our fellow believers in
speaking and in sharing with one voice. As
we achieve this unity of faith and witness
we will be better protected from Satan’s
multiple buffetings winds of doctrine and
better able to finish the Lord’s work. May
that be our desire. 

1 Enquire of Hope International regarding training
programs in these remedies, ranging from a
weekend to several months in duration.

Recommended sources for further information:
1. Anatomy and Physiology texts used in our
Adventist school system.
2. Mystical Medicine, Warren Peters, M.D.*
3. The Creator’s Masterpiece, Life Abundant
Missionary Institute, Anatomy and Physiology
correspondence course.*
4. Get Well at Home, Richard Hansen, M.D.*
5. Home Remedies, Natural Remedies, and More
Natural Remedies, Drs. Calvin and Agatha
Thresh.*
6. Take Care of Yourself, Donald Vickery, M.D.,
and James Fries, M.D.*

*Request further information regarding these
from Hope International, P.O. Box 940, Elsinorville,
Washington 98328

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The Feast Days
Should We Keep Them?

It is of utmost importance for each one of us to study God’s Word and know our duty for ourselves. If we choose to remain ignorant of God’s revealed will, we will perish. See Hosea 4:6

No doubt many readers of this article are confident that they know why the feasts were instituted and believe that the period of time in which the laws concerning the feasts were to be enforced is now past. However, some Adventists today are teaching that we have been neglecting the feast days and that they should be observed even in our day. For this reason let us review the purpose of each feast and then examine some of the reasons for and against observing the feasts today.

The three major feast days were first mentioned in Exodus 23:14-17, and the instructions for how to keep the feasts are given in Leviticus 23. They are commonly known as the Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles (or Booths). It would be well for all to review the chapter entitled “The Annual Feasts” in Patriarchs and Prophets, 537-542.

The Passover was observed on the fourteenth day of the first Jewish month.

It was followed by the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread. At this time the Jews commemorated their experience of leaving Egypt and anticipated the sacrifice of Christ, the antitypical Passover Lamb, that would bring them deliverance from the bondage of sin and death.

The Jews were not to begin harvesting their crops until after the firstfruits were offered at the Passover. Likewise, Christ, the firstfruits of the harvest of souls, had to die and rise to life again in order to establish the hope of the resurrection (harvest) of the righteous. See 1 Corinthians 15:12-23; The Great Controversy, 399

Pentecost came fifty days after the Passover and represented the harvest of souls by the gospel message. It was partially fulfilled when, at the Pentecost following Jesus’ death and resurrection, three thousand Jews accepted Jesus as their Messiah. An even greater harvest is yet to come, following the latter rain.

The Feast of Tabernacles, also called the Feast of Ingathering, was a time of thanksgiving. It was especially meaningful to the Jews because it reminded them of the booths or tabernacles that they lived in during their journey through the wilderness. The cares of gathering and storing another year’s harvest were over. Yet the greatest reason for thanksgiving was the joy and peace which followed the Day of Atonement, which had just ended. This joy God wants us to experience today, and it will culminate as we meet around the great feast tables of heaven.

“At these yearly assemblies the hearts of old and young would be encouraged in the service of God, while the association of the people from the different quarters of the land would strengthen the ties that bound them to God and to one another. Well would it be for the people of God at the present time to have a Feast of Tabernacles—a joyous commemoration of the blessings of God to them. As the children of Israel celebrated the deliverance that God had wrought for their fathers, and His miraculous preservation of them during their journeyings from Egypt, so should we gratefully call to mind the various ways He has devised for bringing us out from the world, and from the darkness of error, into the precious light of His grace and truth.

“With those who lived at a distance from the tabernacle, more than a month of every year must have been occupied in attendance upon the annual feasts.
This example of devotion to God should emphasize the importance of religious worship and the necessity of subordinating our selfish, worldly interests to those that are spiritual and eternal. We sustain a loss when we neglect the privilege of associating together to strengthen and encourage one another in the service of God. The truths of His Word lose their vividness and importance in our minds. Our hearts cease to be enlightened and aroused by the sanctifying influence, and we decline in spirituality. In our intercourse as Christians we lose much by lack of sympathy with one another. He who shuts himself up to himself is not filling the position that God designed he should. We are all children of one Father, dependent upon one another for happiness. The claims of God and of humanity are upon us. It is the proper cultivation of the social elements of our nature that brings us into sympathy with our brethren and affords us happiness in our efforts to bless others.

"The Feast of Tabernacles was not only commemorative but typical. It not only pointed back to the wilderness sojourn, but, as the feast of harvest, it celebrated the ingathering of the fruits of the earth, and pointed forward to the great day of final ingathering, when the Lord of the harvest shall send forth His reapers to gather the tares together in bundles for the fire, and to gather the wheat into His garner. At that time the wicked will all be destroyed. They will become 'as though they had not been.' Obadiah 16. And every voice in the whole universe will unite in joyful praise to God. Says the revelator, 'Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.' Revelation 5:13

"The people of Israel praised God at the Feast of Tabernacles, as they called to mind His mercy in their deliverance from the bondage of Egypt and His tender care for them during their pilgrim life in the wilderness. They rejoiced also in the consciousness of pardon and acceptance, through the service of the Day of Atonement, just ended. But when the ransomed of the Lord shall have been safely gathered into the heavenly Canaan, forever delivered from the bondage of the curse, under which 'the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now' (Romans 8:22), they will rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Christ's great work of atonement for men will then have been completed, and their sins will have been forever blotted out." Patriarchs and Prophets, 540–542

As we read this statement carefully, we can see that the emphasis is not that we should observe the Feast of Tabernacles (held on the fifteenth day of the seventh month), but rather that there are some important lessons in this feast that would be well for us to learn and practice in our lives: 1) We need to gratefully recall the ways the Lord has led (and is leading) us out of bondage to sin and into a victorious, saving experience; 2) the blessings of character development and encouragement that can result from these gatherings is well worth the necessary sacrifice of time and expense. This point is also made in the Testimonies:

"Brethren and sisters, it would be far better for you to let your business suffer than to neglect the opportunity of hearing the message God has for you. Make no excuse that will keep you from gaining every spiritual advantage possible. You need every ray of light. You need to become qualified to give a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. You cannot afford to lose one such privilege.

"Anciently the Lord instructed His people to assemble three times a year for His worship. To these holy convocations the children of Israel came, bringing to the house of God their tithe, their sin offerings, and their offerings of gratitude. They met to recount God's mercies, to make known His wonderful works, and to offer praise and thanksgiving to His name. And they were to unite in the sacrificial service which pointed to Christ as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Thus they were to be preserved from the corrupting power of worldliness and idolatry. Faith and love and gratitude were to be kept alive in their hearts, and through their association together in this sacred service they were to be bound closer to God and to one another.

"In the days of Christ these feasts were attended by vast multitudes of people from all lands; and had they been kept as God intended, in the spirit of true worship, the light of truth might through them have been given to all the nations of the world. . . .

"If the children of Israel needed the benefit of these holy convocations in their time, how much more do we need them in these last days of peril and conflict! And if the people of the world then needed the light which God had committed to His church, how much more do they need it now!

"This is a time for everyone to come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty. . . . The Lord has need of you. He does not do His work without the co-operation of the human agent. Go to the camp meeting, even though you have to make a sacrifice to do so." Testimonies, vol. 6, 39–40; see also vol. 2, 573–574; 598–599

We find here also that the way the Jews were to observe the feast days is an example of how we should appreciate the actual feasts should be observed.

We find here also that the way the Jews were to observe the feast days is an example of how we should appreciate camp meetings and other opportunities for fellowship and study—not that the actual feasts should be observed.

Foreshadowing Sabbaths

Let us note that each of these feasts was to be observed as a ceremonial sabbath—set aside from work, for worship and self-examination. See Leviticus 23. Thus God made them "holydays" which foreshadowed the antitype. The feasts also marked the beginning and end of the two seasons in Palestine—wet and dry.

In the New Testament times the apostles encountered those who believed that Christians should continue keeping these feasts, but what did Paul say concerning them? "But now, after that ye have known
God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.” Galatians 4:9–11. “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.” Colossians 2:16–17. Here Paul spoke of the sabbaths (including the feast days) which were a shadow of things to come—clearly excluding the seventh-day Sabbath.

Some have suggested that, because “new moons” and “times” are mentioned among the events that were observed, these Christians to whom Paul was writing must have been worshiping on pagan holidays. However, let us read the following comments from the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary, 735: “Among the Hebrews the day of the new moon, or the 1st of the month, was set apart as a day for special worship and feasting (1 Samuel 20:5). Trumpets were blown to announce the day (Psalm 81:3; see also Numbers 10:10), ordinary labor was suspended (Amos 8:5), and additional sacrifices were prescribed (Numbers 28:11–14). The new moon of the 7th month was the civil New Year’s Day.”

Please note that the Jews observed the beginning of each month and the beginning of the new year. Of the civil New Year’s Day, God commanded, “In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation. Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord.” Leviticus 23:24–25

Young’s Analytical Concordance notes that the word “times,” as used in Galatians 4:10, is translated from a Greek word which also means “seasons.” Thus Paul was here exhorting the Christians not to turn back to observing the feast days, which marked the beginning and end of their seasons.

Moral or Ceremonial Law?

Because some are teaching that the feasts were part of the moral law, let us consider several reasons that indicate that they were part of the ceremonial law: 1) The feasts were shadows of future events, in contrast with the Ten Commandments and the civil laws which were not “shadowy types.” 2) In order to observe the feasts, sacrifices and offerings were made. Daniel 9:27 says that the Messiah would cause the “sacrifice and the oblation to cease.” The Hebrew word from which “oblation” was translated is translated “meat offering” in Leviticus 23:13, 16, 18, 37, thus indicating that the offerings made during the feast days were to cease, along with the sacrifices, at the crucifixion. 3) The laws (“statutes”) concerning the feasts were given around the same time that the rest of the ceremonial law was given (at Mount Sinai), whereas the moral law existed before sin entered the universe.

Ellen White understood the “moral law” to be synonymous with the Ten Commandments, as we see in these two quotations: “It is this law of ceremonies, God of adding to, and then subtracting from, the moral law. Instead, “the moral law was never a type or a shadow. It existed before man’s creation, and will endure as long as God’s throne remains. God could not change or alter one precept of His law in order to save man; for the law is the foundation of His government. It is unchangeable, unalterable, infinite, and eternal.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 6, 1097. “While the Saviour’s death brought to an end the law of types and shadows, it did not in the least detract from the obligation of the moral law. On the contrary, the very fact that it was necessary for Christ to die in order to atone for the transgression of that law, proves it to be immutable.” Patriarchs and Prophets, 365

The laws (“statutes”) concerning the feasts were given around the same time that the rest of the ceremonial law was given (at Mount Sinai), whereas the moral law existed before sin entered the universe

Statutes

One writer has reminded us that the feast days were “statutes,” and then he has presented us with this quotation of Sister White: “Christ gave to Moses religious precepts which were to govern everyday life. These statutes were explicitly given to guard the Ten Commandments. They were not shadowy types to pass away with the death of Christ. They were to be binding upon man in every age as long as time should last.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 1, 1104

The conclusion is then drawn that to diminish the importance of observing the feasts is a species of idolatry. However, please turn to the article entitled “The Law of God,” by Ellen G. White, in this issue of Our Firm Foundation, pages 25–27. In the tenth paragraph of this article you will find the sentences which were quoted above. As you read the article, especially the sixth paragraph, you will find that the context clearly indicates that the “statutes” Sister White was referring to were “the statutes concerning marriage, inheritance, and strict justice in dealing with one another.” Regarding these three
areas of law, it is easy to see that they were not shadowy types and that they were indeed upholding or guarding the Ten Commandments.

The ceremonial law was a system of worship established by God to illustrate the plan of salvation, including Christ’s death on the cross—shadows of what was yet future. However, as we have seen with the annual feasts, many of the symbols pointed beyond the death of Christ. The Day of Atonement is another well-known example, which not only symbolized the life and death of Christ, but also pointed forward in time to Jesus’ work of cleansing the heavenly temple and to the eternal banishment of Satan and sin. Yet we are not exhorted to continue observing the Day of Atonement. The fact that these holy days were declared to be “a statute for ever in your generations,” means that these days were to be observed as long as the ceremonial laws were in effect, for this same declaration is made of several aspects of the ceremonial system which have nothing to do with any of the feast days. See Exodus 27:21; 30:21; Leviticus 6:18, 22; 7:34, 36; 10:9, 15; 16:29, 31; 23:31, 41; 24:3; Numbers 18:23

Example of the Apostles

What about the apostles? Did they keep the feasts? One writer recently gave eight scripture references which were supposed to give abundant evidence that the apostles did keep the feasts. However, in examining them we find that each text fell into one of these categories:

1) The feast day was mentioned to give a time frame for the context (Acts 12:1–3; 2:1; 27:9).

2) Paul earnestly endeavored to be at Jerusalem during the feasts because this afforded opportunities to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to people from around the world (Acts 18:21; 20:16; 1 Corinthians 16:8). Since on one occasion he was delayed in his efforts to reach Jerusalem in time for the Passover, he spent the time with some of his converts at Philippi (Acts 20:6; Sketches from the Life of Paul, 194–196).

3) The spiritual—not literal—application of the feast-day symbols is the subject (1 Corinthians 5:7–8).

Thus we find that none of these references supports the idea that the apostles kept the feast days because they were yet significant—only that it was a time to witness to others.

In conclusion, we find no indication in the inspired writings that the feast days are to be kept by us today in a literal manner.

Responding to “New Light”

If someone came to you with what seemed to be new light, how would you respond? If it seemed plausible, would you accept it without carefully studying it for yourself? Or would you reject it simply because it presented requirements which would be a burden? Let us not measure that which claims to be truth by our own logic or convenience, but rather by God’s Word.

“Truth is eternal, and conflict with error will only make manifest its strength. We should never refuse to examine the Scriptures with those who, we have reason to believe, desire to know what is truth as much as we do. Suppose a brother held a view that differed from yours, and he should come to you, proposing that you sit down with him and make an investigation of that point in the Scriptures; should you rise up, filled with prejudice, and condemn his ideas, while refusing to give him a candid hearing?

“The only right way would be to sit down as Christians and investigate the position presented, in the light of God’s Word, which will reveal truth and unmask error. To ridicule his ideas would not weaken his position in the least if it were false, or strengthen your position if it were true. If the pillars of our faith will not stand the test of investigation, it is time that we knew it. There must be no spirit of Pharisaism cherished among us. When Christ came to His own, His own received Him not; and it is a matter of solemn interest to us that we should not pursue a similar course in refusing light from heaven.

“We must study the truth for ourselves. No living man should be relied upon to think for us. No matter who it is, or in what position he may be placed, we are not to look upon any man as a perfect criterion for us. We are to counsel together, and to be subject to one another; but at the same time we are to exercise the ability God has given us to learn what is truth. Each one of us must look to God for divine enlightenment. We must individually develop a character that will stand the test in the day of God. We must not become set in our ideas, and think that no one should interfere with our opinions.” Counsels to Writers and Editors, 44–45

“My soul is much burdened, for I know what is before us. Every conceivable deception will be brought to bear upon those who have not a daily, living connection with God. Satan’s angels are wise to do evil, and they will create that which some will claim to be advanced light and will proclaim it as new and wonderful; yet while in some respects the message may be truth, it will be mingled with human inventions and will teach for doctrine the commandments of men. If there was ever a time when we should watch and pray in real earnest, it is now.

“Many apparently good things will need to be carefully considered with much prayer; for they are specious devices of the enemy to lead souls in a path which lies so close to the path of truth that it will be scarcely distinguishable from it. But the eye of faith may discern that it is diverging, though almost imperceptibly, from the right path. At first it may be thought positively right, but after a while it is seen to be widely divergent from the way which leads to holiness and heaven. My brethren, I warn you to make straight paths for your feet, lest the lame be turned out of the way.” Mind, Character, and Personality, 42

Would not Satan be delighted to see us begin observing Jewish ceremonies which God is no longer requiring us to keep? The Sunday-keeping churches would then feel more strongly that the seventh-day Sabbath is simply one of the Jewish laws done away with at the cross.

When someone presents us with what may be “new light,” let us respond as the Bereans did and study to see whether it is so, whether it is present truth, whether it will truly help us prepare our characters for Christ’s soon coming.
The Law of God

The fact that the holy pair in disregarding the prohibition of God in one particular, thus transgressed His law, and as the result suffered the consequences of the Fall, should impress all with a just sense of the sacred character of the law of God. If the experience of our first parents in the transgression of what many who profess to fear God would call the lesser requirements of the law of God, was attended with such fearful consequences, what will be the punishment of those who not only break its most important precepts, as clearly defined as is the fourth commandment, but also teach others to transgress?

All will yet understand, as did Adam and Eve, that God means what He says. Men who pass on indifferently in regard to the especial claims of God’s holy law, and who turn from and reject the light given upon the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and seek to ease their consciences by following traditions and customs, will be held responsible by God, and in a greater degree, than if Christ had not come to the earth, and suffered on Calvary. The fact that the redemption of man from the penalty of the transgression, required this wonderful sacrifice on the part of Christ, gives unmistakable proof of the unchanging nature of the law of God.

God gave a clear and definite knowledge of His will to Israel by especial precepts, showing the duty of man to God and to his fellow men. The worship due to God was clearly defined. A special system of rites and ceremonies was established, which would secure the remembrance of God among His people, and thereby serve as a hedge to guard and protect the Ten Commandments from violation.

God’s people, whom He calls His peculiar treasure, were privileged with a twofold system of law; the moral and the ceremonial. The one, pointing back to Creation to keep in remembrance the living God who made the world, whose claims are binding upon all men in every dispensation, and which will exist through all time and eternity. The other, given because of man’s transgression of the moral law, the obedience to which consisted in sacrifices and offerings pointing to the future redemption. Each is clear and distinct from the other. From the Creation the moral law was an essential part of God’s divine plan, and was as unchangeable as Himself. The ceremonial law was to answer a particular purpose of Christ’s plan for the salvation of the race. The typical system of sacrifices and offerings was established that through these services the sinner might discern the great offering, Christ. But the Jews were so blinded by pride and sin that but few of them could see farther than the death of beasts as an atonement for sin; and when Christ, whom these offerings prefigured, came, they could not discern Him. The ceremonial law was glorious; it was the provision made by Jesus Christ in counsel with His Father, to aid in the salvation of the race. The whole arrangement of the typical system was founded on Christ. Adam saw Christ prefigured in the innocent beast suffering the penalty of his transgression of Jehovah’s law.

The law of types reached forward to Christ. All hope and faith centered in Christ until type reached its antitype in His death. The statutes and judgments specifying the duty of man to his fellow men, were full of important instruction, defining and simplifying the principles of the moral law, for the purpose of increasing religious knowledge, and of preserving God’s chosen people distinct and separate from idolatrous nations.

Ellen G. White
The statutes concerning marriage, inheritance, and strict justice in dealing with one another, were peculiar and contrary to the customs and manners of other nations, and were designed of God to keep His people separate from other nations. The necessity of this to preserve the people of God from becoming like the nations who had not the love and fear of God, is the same in this corrupt age, when the transgression of God’s law prevails and idolatry exists to a fearful extent. If ancient Israel needed such security, we need it more, to keep us from being utterly confounded with the transgressors of God’s law. The hearts of men are so prone to depart from God that there is a necessity for restraint and discipline.

The love that God bore to man whom He had created in His own image, led Him to give His Son to die for man’s transgression, and lest the increase of sin should lead him to forget God and the promised redemption, the system of sacrificial offerings was established to typify the perfect offering of the Son of God.

Christ was the angel appointed of God to go before Moses in the wilderness, conducting the Israelites in their travels to the land of Canaan. Christ gave Moses His special directions to be given to Israel. “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.” 1 Corinthians 10:1–4

“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.” John 7:37. These words were called out by witnessing a representation by the Jews of water flowing from the flinty rock. This commemoration of bringing water from the rock in the wilderness moves the heart of the Son of God to tenderest compassion and pity for their darkened understanding; for they will not see the light which He has brought to them. Christ tells them that He is that rock. I am that living water. Your fathers drank of that spiritual rock that followed them. That rock was Myself. It was through Christ alone that the Hebrews were favored with the especial blessings which they were continually receiving, notwithstanding their sinful murmurings and rebellion.

In consequence of continual transgression, the moral law was repeated in awful grandeur from Sinai. Christ gave to Moses religious precepts which were to govern the everyday life. These statutes were explicitly given to guard the Ten Commandments. They were not shadowy types to pass away with the death of Christ. They were to be binding upon man in every age as long as time should last. These commands were enforced by the power of the moral law, and they clearly and definitely explained that law.

Christ became sin for the fallen race, in taking upon Himself the condemnation resting upon the sinner for his transgression of the law of God. Christ stood at the head of the human family as their representative. He had taken upon Himself the sins of the world. In the likeness of sinful flesh He condemned sin in the flesh. He recognized the claims of the Jewish law until His death, when type met antitype. In the miracle He performed for the leper, He bade him go to the priests with an offering in accordance with the law of Moses. Thus He sanctioned the law requiring offerings.

Christians who profess to be Bible students can appreciate more fully than ancient Israel did the full signification of the ceremonial ordinances that they were required to observe. If they are indeed Christians, they are prepared to acknowledge the sacredness and importance of the shadowy types, as they see the accomplishment of the events which they represent. The death of Christ gives the Christian a correct knowledge of the system of ceremonies and explains prophecies which still remain obscure to the Jews. Moses of himself framed no law. Christ, the angel whom God had appointed to go before His chosen people, gave to Moses statutes and requirements necessary to a living religion and to govern the people of God. Christians commit a terrible mistake in calling this law severe and arbitrary, and then contrasting it with the gospel and mission of Christ in His ministry on earth, as though He were in opposition to the just precepts which they call the law of Moses.

The law of Jehovah, dating back to Creation, was comprised in the two great principles, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.” Mark 12:30–31. These two great principles embrace the first four commandments, showing the duty of man to God, and the last six, showing the duty of man to his fellow man. The principles were more explicitly stated to man after the Fall, and worded to meet the case of fallen intelligences. This was necessary in consequence of the minds of men being blinded by transgression.

God graciously spoke His law and wrote it with His own finger on stone, making a solemn covenant with His people at Sinai. God acknowledged them as His peculiar treasure above all people upon the earth. Christ, who went before Moses in the wilderness, made the principles of morality and religion more clear by particular precepts, specifying the duty of man to God and His fellow men, for the purpose of protecting life, and guarding the sacred law of God, that it should not be entirely forgotten in the midst of an apostate world.

Professed Christians now cry, Christ! Christ is our righteousness, but away with the law. They talk and act as though Christ’s mission to a fallen world was for the express purpose of nullifying His Father’s law. Could not that work have been just as well executed without the only beloved of the Father coming to...
Self-Supporting Work
Continued from 12
should be supported instead of following God's directions? Do you think that would be safe?

Individual Responsibility

Inspiration has given us this solemn warning regarding our responsibility in the support of God's work: "If God pronounces a woe upon those who are called to preach the truth and refuse to obey, a heavier woe rests upon those who take upon them this sacred work without clean hands and pure hearts. As there are woes for those who preach the truth while they are unsanctified in heart and life, so there are woes for those who receive and maintain the unsanctified in the position which they cannot fill." Testimonies, vol. 2, 552

"I call upon God's people to open their eyes. When you sanction or carry out the decisions of men who, as you know, are not in harmony with truth and righteousness, you weaken your own faith and lose your relish for communion with God." Testimonies to Ministers, 91

When efforts were made to urge writers to return to the conference or publishing house all of the profits derived from their writing, Sister White counseled, "The Lord has made us individually His stewards. We each hold a solemn responsibility to invest this means ourselves."

"While it is not your own property that you are handling, yet you are made responsible for its wise investment, for its use or abuse. God does not lay upon you the burden of asking the conference or any counsel of men whether you shall use your means as you see fit to advance the work of God in destitute towns and cities, and impoverished localities." Pamphlets in the Concordance, vol. 2, 467

When Madison was started, the comments in the diaries showed that one of the main points of contention between the General Conference and those who were trying to start Madison was over money.

Inspiration has given us no right to feel that all the means should be handled through one organization.

"All the means are not to be handled by one agency or organization. . . . To those in our conferences who have felt that they had authority to forbid the gathering of means in certain territory I now say: This matter has been presented to me again and again. I now bear my testimony in the name of the Lord to those whom it concerns. Wherever you are, withhold your forbiddings. The work of God is not to be thus trammled. . . . This wonderful burden of responsibility which some suppose God has placed upon them with their official position, has never been laid upon them." Spalding-Magan Collection, 421–422

"You ask me what you shall do in view of the fact that so little help is given to that department of the work in which you are working.

"I would say, 'Trust it with the Lord. There is a way opened for you in regard to securing help for the Southern field. Appeal to the people. This is the only course you can pursue, under the circumstances.

"Send no statement of the situation through our religious papers; because it will not be honored. Send direct to the people. God's ways are not to be counterworked by man's ways. There are those who have means, and who will give large and small sums. Have this money come direct to your destitute portion of the vineyard. The Lord has not specified any regular channel through which means should pass.' " Ibid., 498; italics supplied

If we cannot understand language as plain as that, I do not know what we will do.

Because of what happened, because of the great apostasy, God authorized independent self-supporting work as one of the means through which He would finish His work. Do not let anybody tell you that self-supporting work is not Seventh-day Adventist, that something that is not controlled, directed or authorized by the conference is not Seventh-day Adventist. It is. A self-supporting school can be Seventh-day Adventist, a self-supporting sanitarium can be Seventh-day Adventist, a self-supporting printing press can be Seventh-day Adventist, and a self-supporting local congregation can be Seventh-day Adventist. The important thing is to test the work by what Paul says in Galatians 2: Is it according to the truth? And if it is according to the truth of inspiration, you can depend on it.

Whatever happens, one of these days very soon the truth is going to triumph. And when the truth triumphs, I want to be with it, do you? Let us dedicate ourselves in prayer to be faithful to the truth, no matter what happens.

\[\text{Christ recognized the claims of the Jewish law until His death}\]

\[\text{death of Christ all this system was meaningless. The Jews reject Christ, and therefore their whole system of religion is to them indefinite, unexplainable, and uncertain. They attach as much importance to shadowy ceremonies of types which have met their antitype, as they do to the law of the Ten Commandments, which was not a shadow, but a reality as enduring as the throne of Jehovah. The death of Christ elevates the Jewish system of types and ordinances, showing that they were of divine appointment, and for the purpose of keeping faith alive in the hearts of His people.} \]

\[\text{Review and Herald, vol. 1, 164–165 (May 6, 1875)}\]
As we draw closer to the coming of Christ, some "independent ministries" seem to be a bigger and bigger thorn in the side of leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Meetings are being held regularly by leadership to discuss how to deal with these ministries. More articles are being written in an attempt to diffuse their impact on the church. Calculations are being made as to the best way to strike those involved in them from the church rolls with the least hurt to the membership and tithe funds of the church.

The Perth Declaration has been declared, an open letter to Ron Spear has been written by the new leader of ASI, articles and editorials have appeared in the *Adventist Review*. Roger Coon has written a pamphlet on tithe; Wayne Dull has written an article directed against the "troublesome" independents; Elder Folkenberg has made strong statements regarding the "end" of these "divisive" independents within the near future. A strong campaign is on to paint a picture of the independents as dissident right-wing fanatics.

The answer to the dilemma at this point seems to be to first discredit these independents in the eyes of the rest of the church membership and then disfellowship them. But will this tactic really end the problems in the church? Will it result in spiritual prosperity, spiritual revival and in more church members being ready for the soon return of Jesus? Is it really the remedy for this particular "cancer," or should the church leadership be searching deeper to find the root cause instead of attempting to just cut off the "cancer"? Should not the question be asked, "Why do these independent ministries exist in the first place?" Do we cut off this "cancer" while other "cancers" in the body are allowed to grow? Is it possible that some of these independent ministries have been raised up by God to help draw the people back to Him? Remember, Jesus was an independent Minister within the church who was finally "cut off" because it was better that one man be eliminated than for a whole nation to suffer.

Again, instead of attacking independent ministries, which are a symptom of the problems in our church, should not the church seek to find why these ministries arose in the first place, and then apply the remedy at that point?

Let us look at the issues:

1. The Nature of Christ

Roger Coon in his recent article on tithe indicated that the big issue with independents is in the area of the nature of Christ. He said that there are three positions within the church:

1. Jesus in His human nature was like Adam before the Fall;
2. He was like Adam after the Fall, and
3. He was both like Adam before the Fall and after the Fall.

Brother Coon then says that most of our pastors believe in number three. He indicates that how one believes in this area is no reason for division within the church, that we should have unity in our differences. It has never been one of the twenty-seven fundamental doctrines of the church; therefore, it should not be an issue.

But let us look a little deeper, at the root. What one believes about the nature of Christ also influences whether we believe Him to be both our substitute and our example, or just our substitute. If just our substitute, then we no longer see the
power of Divinity working in our lives as it did in His life to help us overcome sin.

Ellen White writes, "Abundant grace has been provided that the believing soul may be kept free from sin; for all heaven, with its limitless resources, has been placed at our command." *Selected Messages*, book 1, 394. "He who has not sufficient faith in Christ to believe that He can keep him from sinning, has not the faith that will give him an entrance into the kingdom of God." *Review and Herald*, vol. 5, 24

"We believe without a doubt that Christ is soon coming. This is not a fable to us; it is a reality. We have no doubt, neither have we had a doubt for years, that the doctrines we hold today are present truth, and that we are nearing the judgement. We are preparing to meet Him who, escorted by a retinue of holy angels, is to appear in the clouds of heaven to give the faithful and the just the finishing touch of immortality. When He comes He is not to cleanse us of our sins, to remove from us the defects in our characters, or to cure us of the infirmities of our tempers and dispositions. If wrought for us at all, this work will all be accomplished before that time. When the Lord comes, those who are holy will be holy still. Those who have preserved their bodies and spirits in holiness, in sanctification and honor, will then receive the finishing touch of immortality. But those who are unjust, unsanctified, and filthy will remain so forever. No work will then be done for them to remove their defects and give them holy characters. The Refiner does not then sit to pursue His refining process and remove their sins and their corruption. This is all to be done in these hours of probation. It is now that this work is to be accomplished for us." *Maranatha*, 221

The question should not be solely whether something taught is in opposition to the twenty-seven fundamental doctrines of the church, but whether it will adversely affect the salvation of precious souls, and if so, should it not be eliminated from the teachings of the church as nonbiblical? Yes, we can have our differences in the church as long as we are not speaking of salvation issues. But, we cannot allow a doctrine to stand that leads to the conclusion that we will go on sinning until Christ comes.

2. Celebration

Celebration-style worship services are springing up throughout some of our conferences. Are they wrong? Will they affect the salvation of our people? I agree that we cannot automatically say that all churches having a service called "celebration" are leading people to perdition, although where some are now and where they are heading needs to be examined. But there are churches within our denomination emphasizing the outward forms of worship rather than the inward experience. We are in the day of aonement in which we need to be afflicting our souls and asking the Lord to reveal the sin in our lives which needs to be confessed and forsaken in order that we may be prepared for our soon-coming Saviour. Will our people be lulled into a sense of security, or will they be "entertained" to a point where they will be kept from making that preparation through Jesus Christ that is needed at this time? Should our church just allow any type of service to occur, come what may? Should we speak out against certain kinds of music that are coming into the church?

"Some are not satisfied with a meeting unless they have a powerful and happy time. They work for this and get up an excitement of feeling. But the influence of such meetings is not beneficial. His gospel does not consist of outward methods and performances through which the science of an evil work may be introduced as a great blessing, afterward to prove a great curse." *Our High Calling*, 109

3. NLP

Neuro-Linguistic Programming is being taught to our pastors. John Savage, a retired Methodist minister, has put this particular program together from information he has gleaned through New Age sources. Have we, as a church, examined the techniques being taught to see whether they do or do not conflict with the counsels we have in the Spirit of Prophecy for dealing with the human mind?

"Jesus said, 'Beware of men.' They were not to put implicit confidence in those who knew not God, and open to them their counsels; for this would give Satan's agents an advantage. Man's inventions often counterwork God's plans. Those who build the temple of the Lord are to build according to the pattern shown in the mount—the divine similitude. God is dishonored and the gospel is betrayed when His servants depend on

Remember, Jesus was an independent Minister within the church who was finally "cut off" because it was better that one man be eliminated than for a whole nation to suffer
ous deception, none more certain to separate man from God, than is this.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 243

“The experience of the past will be repeated. In the future, Satan’s superstitious will assume new forms. Errors will be presented in a pleasing and flattering manner. False theories, clothed with garments of light, will be presented to minds will be hypnotized.” *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 293

4. There Is No Sanctuary

Do all of our pastors believe there is a sanctuary in heaven? This doctrine is contained within the twenty-seven fundamental beliefs. The investigative judgment is closely associated with the sanctuary in heaven. The investigative judgment is part of the three angels’ messages. *Eternity* magazine submitted a questionnaire to the Seventh-day Adventist pastors in one of our California conferences. They were asked about their belief in our sanctuary doctrine. Many gave the indication that they did not believe that there was a sanctuary in heaven. Should pastors who do not believe in our doctrines be allowed to preach from our pulpits? Should our church leaders, including the leader of the ASI, be speaking up in regard to this? Should we not examine the beliefs of our pastors more closely? If they do not believe it, how can they teach it?

“The subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be clearly understood by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. Otherwise it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith which is essential at this time or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill.” *The Great Controversy*, 488

“In the future, deception of every kind is to arise, and we want solid ground for our feet. We want solid pillars for the building. Not one pin is to be removed from that which the Lord has established. The enemy will bring in false theories, such as the doctrine that there is no sanctuary. This is one of the points on which there will be a departure from the faith. Where shall we find safety unless it be in the truths that the Lord has been giving for the last fifty years?” *Review and Herald*, vol. 5, 137

“He [Satan] is working with all his insinuating, deceiving power, to lead men away from the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with mighty power. If Satan sees that the Lord is blessing His people and preparing them to discern his delusions, he will work with his master power to bring in fanaticism on the one hand and cold formalism on the other, that he may gather in a harvest of souls. Now is our time to watch unceasingly. Watch, bar the way to the least step of advance that Satan may make among you.” *Selected Messages*, book 2, 19–20

5. Our Stand in Regard to Other Churches

Do we still see Roman Catholicism and apostate Protestantism in contradicricion to the teachings of God? Or have we assigned that idea to the “trash heap”? Is the doctrine of the antichrist of the Bible no longer as clear as it used to be? Do our leaders feel that it was appropriate to give a medallion to the pope? Do they believe that it was right to invite a Catholic representative to our last General Conference session? Why does the recent leader of ASI not speak out against issues like this? By his silence in this area, is he acquiescing to this sort of activity? Did not the Catholic Church martyr millions of God’s true people?

Has she changed since then? Has she seen the error of her ways? No. Why has a conference leader recently sent out a letter to the non-Seventh-day Adventist clergy in his state apologizing for the booklet entitled *The National Sunday Law*, which was distributed in his area? This same booklet has recently brought thousands of members of the Apostolic Church into keeping the Sabbath. As the time of the end is upon us, shall we water down our doctrine? Shall we no longer preach “Babylon is fallen. Come out of her, my people,” in regard to Sunday-keeping churches?

“Many urge that it is unjust to judge the church of today by the abominations and absurdities that marked her reign during the centuries of ignorance and darkness. They excuse her horrible cruelty as the result of the barbarism of the times and plead that the influence of modern civilization has changed her sentiments.

“Have these persons forgotten the claim of infallibility put forth for eight hundred years by this haughty power? So far from being relinquished, this claim was affirmed in the nineteenth century with greater positiveness than ever before. As Rome asserts that the church ‘never erred; nor will it, according to the Scriptures, ever err,’ how can she renounce the principles which governed her course in past ages?

“The papal church will never relinquish her claim to infallibility. All that she has done in her persecution of those who reject her dogmas she holds to be right; and would she not repeat the same acts, should the opportunity be presented? Let the restrictions now imposed by secular governments be removed, and Rome reinstated in her former power, and there would speedily be a revival of her tyranny and persecution.” *The Great Controversy*, 563–564

“There is to be no compromise with those who are worshiping an idol sabbath. We are not to spend our time in controversy with those who know the truth, and upon whom the light of truth has been shining, when they turn away their ear from the truth to turn to fables. I was told that men will employ every policy to make less prominent the differences between the faith of Seventh-day Adventists and those who observe the first day of the week. In this controversy the whole world will be engaged, and the time is short. This is no time to haul down our colors.
“A company was presented before me under the name of Seventh-day Adventists, who were advising that the banner or sign which makes us a distinctive people should not be held out so strikingly, for they claimed it was not the best policy in securing success to our institutions. ... I saw some reaching out their hands to remove the banner, and obscure its significance.” Selected Messages, book 2, 385

6. Other Issues

There are many other areas of concern that could be mentioned: worldliness within the church; lowering of our standards; failure to follow the counsel of God as contained within the Spirit of Prophecy in regard to our educational and health systems; misappropriation and misuse of the tithe funds; meditation based on self-hypnosis; New Age books in our schools (specifically, The Master Student); lack of Spirit of Prophecy books in foreign countries; moves to ecumenism within the church; lawsuits against other Christians; and evangelism without conversion.

It is recognized that our church has over six million members and that in a body that size mistakes and errors will happen. But we need to have godly leaders who will stand up and oppose error as fiercely as they are opposing independent ministries. Let us admit errors when we make them and confess them as a church.

We may have differences of theology within this large body, but let us make sure that those differences are not in areas affecting salvation. We have precious souls who cannot be allowed to be led into false paths and heresy. Let us really proclaim the vital messages that we have for these last days, and not just state that we should, as in the Perth Declaration. Words are fine, but actions show whether we believe what we say.

In order to successfully proclaim a message, we need to have the blessings of God with us. In order to have the blessings of God, we need to, as a church, be walking in His counsel as contained within the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy in all areas of church organization: in our individual churches, in our conferences, in our unions, in our divisions, in our hospitals, in our educational systems, in our publishing work, in every area. And if we are not walking in the counsel in any given area, that area needs to be addressed by leadership. Is that happening?

“Our people need to understand the reasons of our faith and our past experiences. How sad it is that so many of them apparently place unlimited confidence in men who present theories tending to uproot our past experiences and to remove the old landmarks! Those who can so easily be led by a false spirit show that they have chosen to follow their own way instead of God’s way because self was not crucified in them. Thus the light has had but little effect upon minds and hearts.” Testimonies, vol. 5, 719-720

Brothers and sisters, what “means” has God devised to awaken the churches? Could He have possibly called some of the independent ministries for this purpose? I know that we at Hope International are convicted that God has called us to do what we are doing here. It is not a joyful task; we have been following the wrong captain for some time—so long that they do not discern that they are departing from the faith, or that they are not building upon the true foundation. We need to urge all to put on their spiritual eyeglasses, to have their eyes anointed that they may see clearly and discern the true pillars of the faith. Then they will know that ‘the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.’ 2 Timothy 2:19. We need to revive the old evidences of the faith once delivered to the saints. ...

“We have reached a time when things are to be called by their right name. As we did in the earlier days, we must arise, and, under the Spirit of God, rebuke the work of deception.” Selected Messages, book 2, 25-26

“The rebuke of God is upon us because of our neglect of solemn responsibilities. His blessings have been withdrawn because the testimonies He has given have not been heeded by those who professed to believe them. Oh, for a religious awakening! The angels of God are going from church to church, doing their duty; and Christ is knocking at the door of your hearts for entrance. But the means that God has devised to awaken the church to a sense of their spiritual destitution have not been regarded. The voice of the True Witness has been heard in reproof, but has not been obeyed. Men do not enjoy having those we still see as honest brothers and friends standing up and crying out against us, saying we are divisive and fighting against God’s church. It is especially difficult to hear when they are not crying out against anything else in the church. Is heresy all right? Is “divisiveness” the only area to be corrected? Should independents be disfellowshipped, while there is so much needed correction or reproof in other areas?

Independents should be dealt with. Not by attacking them directly, but by honestly listening to the concerns they are voicing on behalf of many sincere church members. Let us follow the comprehensive message our church has. Let us follow God’s counsel for our church, and not go to the worldly churches for our doctrine. Let us uphold the high standards God has set before us as children of the heavenly kingdom. Let us truly surrender our lives to Jesus, so that sin can be dealt with and our characters prepared for His soon coming.

This, and this alone, is the “remedy” for the existence of the independent ministries, and when it is applied, these ministries will gratefully and wholeheartedly unite in spirit and truth with our brethren in leadership as we give the loud cry of the three angels’ messages and proclaim that the coming of the Lord is at hand. □
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