My Last Will and Testament on the Subject of Education

Jehovah Is Our King

A Wheel Within a Wheel

A Young Person’s Views on Sabbath Observance

Be Ye Transformed

How would you answer these important questions?

1. Was the atonement final and complete on the Cross?
2. Can man, by God’s power obey the commandments?
3. Is there an investigative judgement?
4. Did Christ take the post-fall nature at his incarnation?
5. Is justification forgiveness only?
6. Is Christ our example?

Contending for the Faith, see page 4
THE love of God is a mystery to us fallen human beings. We love those who love us—our children, wives, husbands, friends and relatives, but how quickly our love can change! The divorce courts testify of how quickly our human love can turn to hate, and when one hates another, the other hates back. Lawyers become rich because of the hatred of the unregenerated heart. But God is love. Lucifer despised this unfathomable love, and his once great love for God and His law turned to hatred. Hate is the source of all rebellion. The war in heaven is a historical fact of what hate can do in an absolutely perfect atmosphere. The hatred of Satan for God and His law reached new heights at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. As Adam and Eve poured out their remorse for their sin, Jesus stepped in between the penalty and the sinner and became man's Substitute, "for the wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23. In offering Himself as our Substitute, He also became our Example in victory over sin and temptation.

What a sacrifice! The God who could make a world by His word, who could speak and command and it stood fast (Psalm 33:6, 9), was willing to come down to the level of fallen human beings. Yes, God is love. Self-sacrificial, self-renouncing love—love that is way beyond our ability to understand in our fallen condition, but we can understand, we must understand, by experiencing that love in our daily life in Christ. We must know Him, and to know Him is to love Him. To love Him is to serve Him with all our heart, soul and body. Sin originated in self-seeking. If allowed to grow in man's character, he can become a demon or a seemingly good person, but unsavable. For good is not good enough for God. Perfection and holiness are the standard of righteousness.

"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." 1 Peter 1:15–16

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matthew 5:48

This beautiful description of God's love comes from our prophet:

"In the beginning, God was revealed in all the works of creation. It was Christ that spread the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth. It was His hand that hung the worlds in space, and fashioned the flowers of the field. 'His strength setteth fast the mountains.' 'The sea is his, and he made it.' Psalm 65:6; 95:5. It was He that filled the earth with beauty, and the air with song. And upon all things in earth, and air, and sky, He wrote the message of the Father's love.

"Now sin has marred God's perfect work, yet that handwriting remains. Even now all created things declare the glory of His excellence. There is nothing, save the selfish heart of man, that lives unto itself. . . .

"The angels of glory find their joy in giving—giving love and tireless watchcare to souls that are fallen and unholy. Heavenly beings woo the hearts of men; they bring to this dark world light from the courts above; by gentle and patient ministry they move upon the human spirit, to bring the lost into a fellowship with Christ which is even closer than they themselves can know.

"But turning from all lesser representations, we behold God in Jesus. Looking unto Jesus we see that it is the glory of our God to give. 'I do nothing of myself,' said Christ; 'the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father.' 'I seek not mine own glory,' but the glory of him that sent me. John 8:28; 6:57; 8:50; 7:18. In these words is set forth the great principle which is the law of life for the universe. All things Christ received from God, but He took to give. So in the heavenly courts, in His ministry for all created beings: through the beloved Son, the Father's life flows out to all; through the Son it returns, in praise and joyous service, a tide of love, to the great Source of all. And thus through Christ the circuit of beneficence is complete, representing the character of the great Giver, the law of life." The Desire of Ages, 20–21

So God's great plan of redemption is to bring the character back to the original in which man was created.

"Those only who through faith in Christ obey all of God's commandments will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression. They testify to their love of Christ by obeying all His precepts." The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 6, 1118

Again and again the expressed, dynamic love of God has been presented to the fallen race. We are told that in every generation there have been men and women who were obedient to God's law and were transformed by the renewing of their minds, (see Romans 12:1–2), from day to day until they reflected the love of God, and that love was no longer a great mystery, but a living reality as they walked among the corruption of the sinful race. Jesus lived by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of the Lord. See Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4. By this simple method of loving obedience He revealed the grand purpose of God for all creation. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16 will be understood when we desire with all our hearts for Jesus' self-sacrificing love to be expressed in our daily lives. This love will soon make the final demonstration to the world in the loud cry message. It will generate tireless watchcare for souls, and then they will see Jesus in us.

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

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Hope International is a special ministry assisting in the God-given work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We believe this Remnant Church of Bible prophecy has been brought into existence by the calling of the Lord, and we look for its final triumph in purity at the second coming of Christ. That the church does not now perfectly reflect the will of our Lord is cause for sorrow, but not for discouragement. The Word of God stands pledged that all within her borders will be sifted and tried, and though the greater portion will fail the test, there will yet remain a remnant to honor the Lord by their obedience to all His commands. Therefore, Hope International urges upon all the duty of supporting the Seventh-day Adventist Church in every way possible, insofar as is consistent with the principles of the government of God and the leading of His Holy Spirit upon the heart.
How would you answer these important questions?

1. Was the atonement final and complete on the Cross?
2. Can man, by God's power obey the commandments?
3. Is there an investigative judgment?
4. Did Christ take the post-fall nature at his incarnation?
5. Is justification forgiveness only?
6. Is Christ our example?

Contending for the Faith

There has been a long history of God's people contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, and the need today in this final crisis is perhaps the greatest need of all. After the fall of our first parents, Abel was the first martyr for the faith when he contended with his brother, Cain.

Below is a partial list of vital subjects that should be understood. They were largely understood by our people in times past, but now they are blurred. Why are they blurred?

1. Was the atonement final and complete on the cross?
2. Can man, by God's power, obey the Ten Commandments?

3. Is there an investigative judgment?
4. Is Christ our example?
5. Did Christ take the pre-Fall or post-Fall nature at His incarnation?
6. Is justification forgiveness only?

"Contending" is a strong word, and in this discussion, it means standing for, and in defense of, the truth. To really understand the issues could be essential to our salvation.

In the Olympic Games last summer there were hundreds of youth contending for a medal, and particularly a "gold." They were completely dedicated to their task. Contending for the faith is infinitely more important than a medal, because it helps keep the faith pure and helps keep others from falling into Satan's traps.

An insert in the Adventist Review of November 5, 1992, named a number of Independent Ministries that were "divisive" and, according to its authors, acted in a way that was destructive to the church body. The report also said that these ministries accused the church of being in apostasy, and so on. We may understand whether these ministries are divisive, or whether in fact we have many leaders in apostasy, by looking into what God designed for the three angels' messages to accomplish. If we find that many of our denominational workers are largely in contradiction to what God intended for the third angel's message to accomplish, then these Independent Ministries, rightfully and responsibly, are contending for the faith.

It has been 149 years since 1844 and Jesus could have poured His love into human hearts to such an extent that the work could have been finished and Jesus could have come by 1893. He could have, but His people were not ready. God wants to arouse His people, but the time has dragged on and on and every means has failed in preparing His people for the latter rain. If this state continues, inspiration says, heresies will come in to separate the chaff from the wheat. See Testimonies, vol. 5, 707. With this clear prediction, what else could we expect with such a long delay?

These heresies will develop two parties. One party stands firm for the third angel's message; the other discards the message. Some might say that it is impossible, and it does sound impossible, but inspiration proves it to be true. In Selected Messages, book 2, 114, we have a description of a division coming in the church that is in opposition to the third angel's message of righteousness by faith. It says:

"This is our message, the very message that the three angels flying in the midst of heaven are proclaiming. The work to be done now is that of sounding this last message of mercy to a fallen world. A new life is coming from heaven and taking possession of all God's people. But divisions will come in the church. Two parties will be developed." All emphasis added unless otherwise noted.

Lowell Scarbrough, an author and retired building contractor, writes from Oroville, California.
This new life is the promised latter rain. Then the passage says:

"The work will grow deeper and become more earnest to the very close of time. And all who are laborers together with God will contend most earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. They will not be turned from the present message, which is already lightening the earth with its glory. Nothing is worth contending for but the glory of God."

The context reveals very clearly a conflict between these two parties. This passage was written in 1896. The context was in giving the third angel's message. The present message mentioned here that was lightening the earth with its glory identifies it to be the 1888 message of righteousness by faith. It was, and is a "latter-rain" message. A new life is coming from heaven which is the "latter rain." The party that brings division is in opposition to the "latter-rain party." The same scenario is given in Early Writings, 270–271, which it states that some will rise up against the straight testimony and it will cause a shaking among God's people. It is also in the context just preceding the latter rain. See also Selected Messages, book 1, 363. Compare with 234–235.

To summarize, Party I will represent those proclaiming the three angels' messages of righteousness by faith. Party II will represent those causing the division developing as they oppose the three angels' messages of righteousness by faith. As we shall see, this opposition will bring a false view of salvation to the third angel's message. Party I is contending most earnestly for the faith. This matter is extremely serious in our beloved church, but Party I refuses to be turned from the message. This refusal will bring about the "shaking" predicted by God's messenger.

In Testimonies to Ministers, 91–92, we are told that God sent a most precious message by Waggoner and Jones, and here is a synopsis of this passage. It presented justification through faith in its surety. All power is given to Christ, and He will impart His righteousness for keeping all the commandments of God. God commanded the message to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message that will be proclaimed with a loud voice and attended by the outpouring of His Spirit.

The statement that Christ imparts His righteousness for keeping all the commandments of God is not idle words. It is in God's plan. "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12. God commanded this message to be given to the world, and it will be attended by the outpouring of His Spirit.

What is described is Party I which holds to the third angel's message. How could division come into our church over such a wonderful message of hope? This same message that we read about in Selected Messages, book 2, 114, Party I was contending for, and Party II was in opposition to. The answer is very obvious from the vantage point of today.

At the beginning of this article some vital questions were asked. The answers, their hard-core beliefs, will be given by Party I and Party II.

1. Was the atonement final and complete on the cross? Party I answers, "No. The sacrifice was complete, but Christ is completing His work of atonement in heaven now." Party II answers, "Yes. The atonement was finished at the cross."

2. Can man, by God's power, obey the law completely? Party I answers, "Yes." Party II answers, "No. Do the best you can, but don't worry. Christ gives the assurance that you will receive a perfect character when Jesus comes."


4. Was there an investigative judgment begun in 1844? Party I answers, "Yes." Party II answers, "No. All God requires is that we 'be in Christ.' There is no need for an investigation as God knows every case."

5. Is Christ our Example? Party I answers, "Yes." Party II answers with a qualified, "Yes, partially, insofar as our human frailties allow."

6. Did Christ take our fallen nature to be our Example? Party I answers, "Yes." Party II answers, "No. He took the nature of the unfallen Adam and therefore cannot be our Example in all things."

7. Does justification by faith include forgiveness and being born of the Spirit? Party I answers, "Yes." Party II answers, "No, only forgiveness."

8. Do we take Ellen White's writings as truth? Party I answers, "Yes." Party II answers, "Partially. One must use his own discernment in deciding what is truth and what is error."

With the clarification of the 1888 message of justification by faith, the answers to these questions by Party I are the answers that our pioneers and Ellen White believed and taught. No doubt there are many who sincerely do not know which party they are in. Many in Party II have made some modifications to the above answers which could only make their teachings more deceptive than the hard-core position.

The question was asked at the beginning, Why are these vital subjects blurred when they were clear to our people for so many years? The answer lies in the fact that these doctrinal errors have been gradually creeping into our church for nearly four decades. Much of the error can be traced from the University of Manchester in England through Desmond Ford, to Avondale College in Australia, to Pacific Union College and Andrews University, and from there to nearly every Seventh-day Adventist college. Today, few of our young seminari-

Why are these vital subjects blurred when they were clear to our people for so many years? The answer lies in the fact that these doctrinal errors have been gradually creeping into our church for nearly four decades.
will love God supremely and our neighbors as ourselves. God’s love in the heart and obedience cannot be separated.

Jesus Himself said, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” John 17:3. If we want eternal life, we must know God. And how can we know that we know Him?

“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” 1 John 2:3–4

The message is clear and without equivocation: Those who claim to have the assurance of Jesus that they will be saved in His kingdom, while continuing to transgress God’s law, are liars and the truth is not in them. So loving obedience to the law becomes the condition of our salvation. Furthermore, because God made us free moral agents, granting us the privilege to choose between right and wrong, and that freedom we will always have, we must be trustworthy to save. We could say that being born and led by the Spirit is the condition of salvation, which is true, and love is the condition of our salvation. In the true sense they are the same.

Now let us look at some of the goals God designed the third angel’s message to accomplish. In Revelation 14:5 we have a description of the 144,000 without fault or guile before God. These are said to be the first fruits unto God and the Lamb. There is no doubt that this group will be developed just before the latter rain falls.

If this conclusion is true, the following will describe the message the 144,000 will believe and act upon. In Testimonies, vol. 1, 190, we are told that the third angel’s message is leading a people up higher and higher. Pages 187–188 describe the preparation: “Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation.”

Testimonies, vol. 5, 214, tells us that no one will ever receive the seal of God or the latter rain while one spot or stain is upon his or her character. We must remedy the defects in our characters and cleanse the soul temple of every defilement; then the latter rain will fall upon us.

The Great Controversy, 623, says that Satan could find no sin in Christ that he could use to his advantage, and this purity is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble.

Signs of the Times, vol. 4, 398, says Christ came to prove that human beings, through the power of God can live sinless lives.

On page 216 Inspiration quotes Christ: “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48) because He knows that it is possible for us to reach perfection. Party I accepts the statements above as facts. Party II does not believe them. We can now begin to see what universities, who had already accepted his doctrine.

When Ford gave his Forum talk at Pacific Union College, he stated that he had not believed in our sanctuary message for 30 years. He knew he had a large following before he came out in the open. His message has appealed to many, including many college professors. The pendulum has swung largely to his view on righteousness by faith in our church. Many hold a modified view in various forms, which could be just as dangerous to our salvation.

Dr. Ford’s views have brought in another concept on salvation. Now we have pluralistic views, and the church is desperately trying to bring unity to an impossible situation. To say that obedience to the law is a condition of salvation is unacceptable in our beloved church, yet the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy clearly teach it. The ruler came to Christ to ask the question, “What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” Christ said, “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” Matthew 19:16–17. A lawyer asked Jesus the same question and received the same answer. Jesus said, “This do and you shall live.” Luke 10:25–28

In The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 972, we read, “The gospel that is to be preached to all nations, kindreds, tongues and peoples presents the truth in clear lines, showing that obedience is the condition of gaining eternal life.”

If this truth had been made clear to our people through the years we could have largely avoided the present crisis. Evidently the truth that obedience is required for salvation has been rejected for many years.

There is a statement in Review and Herald, vol. 2, 397, giving further light on the present crisis in our church. Ellen White is rebuking the people for the
mistreatment of Waggoner and Jones. Then she says the third angel’s message will not be comprehended. It will be called a false light by those who refuse to walk in its advancing glory.

The advancing glory has reference to God’s people preparing for the latter rain. They know what God requires and their love for Him makes obedience to Him a delight, knowing all the while they must gain higher ground. On the other hand, Party II calls ceasing from sin a false light. Can you imagine ministers standing in the pulpit, claiming to believe the third angel’s message and at the same time denying that one can cease from sin? They do not know that they are calling the third angel’s message of righteousness by faith a false light.

Here is a statement from Testimonies to Ministers, 409, telling what happens when one discards the message that God gave us. It clearly has reference to discarding the 1888 message of righteousness by faith.

“Let the sin of deceit and false witness be entertained by a church that has had great light, great evidence, and that church will discard the message the Lord has sent, and receive the most unreasonable assertions and false suppositions and false theories. Satan laughs at their folly, for he knows what truth is.

“Many will stand in our pulpits with the torch of false prophecy in their hands, kindled from the hellish torch of Satan. If doubts and unbelief are cherished, the faithful ministers will be removed from the people who think they know so much. ‘If thou hadst known,’ said Christ, ‘even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.’ Luke 19:42.”

Our church received great light and evidence in 1888. It was a message to fit God’s people for the final crisis. It was to show to the world what His love could do in restoring man to His likeness. Though delayed, it will yet be done and perhaps much sooner than we realize.

But let us go back to the statement about discarding the message the Lord had sent and its results. The aftermath was to have unreasonable assertions and false suppositions, with many standing in our pulpits and preaching them. The faithful ministers would be removed from those who think they know so much.

There are quite a number of faithful ministers who have seen our message compromised in many areas and have decided to contend for the faith. They have been barred from speaking in our churches for several years.

Ellen White then quotes Luke 19:42. In this passage Jesus wept over Jerusalem. The Jews could have been saved from the destruction of Jerusalem, but they had rejected Christ. Is it not true that to reject God’s last message is to reject Christ?

The new gospel in our church has been a springboard to bring in many changes that have brought in a more worldly environment for our families. Ministers are desperately needed, independent or denominationally employed, to contend for the most glorious message ever given to mankind.

Is the minister, who faithfully stays with the message and contends for the truth, divisive, or is it the ones who changed the message? Contending for our faith is a scriptural responsibility. Jude 3 reads, “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

Philippians 1:27: “Stand fast in one Spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.”

Philippians 1:17: “Knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.”

The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 952: “In these days of delusion, every one who is established in the truth will have to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. Every variety of error will be brought out in the mysterious working of Satan, which would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect, and turn them from truth.”

This statement aptly describes the present situation developing rapidly in our church. If our church leaders would come in line with Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy, the “Independent Ministries” and those who support them would be delighted to give their support to the conference. Then unity would be obtainable and a joyful event.

I say to Party II, I have no bitterness against you. Your position does not exclude you being my friend. I only appeal to you to restudy Party I’s position. You may be grateful you took another look.
A while ago some of the brethren visited my home in Little Creek and expressed themselves as greatly pleased with what they saw in the program of the place. This led to a discussion of our educational program and to the telling of some of my experiences in it. At the close of the interview they stated that they wished our discussion could have been recorded, and asked that I state my views of education and relate some of my experiences and send them. I shall endeavor to do the best I can in complying with their request.

The dictionary says education is the systematic development and cultivation of the natural powers by inculcation. Herbert Spencer said, "Education is the preparation for complete living." And Dr. John Dewey, the great philosopher and educator of Columbia University said, "No definition of education was ever given...that does not rest upon the assumption that what is acquired in the school is to operate and produce fruit outside the school."

From these three angles, I wish to discuss this problem. If education is the preparation for complete living, it is clear that to live right one must have a worthy goal toward which to strive and a method by which that goal may be reached. And if education is the development of the natural powers to enable one to reach life's goal, two assumptions must be apparent: One is that those who have reached the state of adulthood have some experiences and information that would be of value to those who are now in the stages of development. Two is that those who are mature and have completed their education and now make out the curriculum for the younger and immature, know what life is all about and can direct the younger in reaching life's goal.

However, unfortunately the majority of those in the higher strata of education who make out the program for those of the younger years have a one-sided view of life. They are very familiar with book learning, but have little knowledge or experience in vocations and the practical fields of endeavor, the fields in which

This article, the first in a four-part series, was written many years ago by Walter E. Straw, now deceased. He was the head of the Theology Department at Emmanuel Missionary College and taught Bible for 14 years. He also served the Church as a Union Educational Secretary and as a missionary in Africa.

Walter E. Straw
the majority of the young will some day earn their livelihood. Further, the majority of those who outline the program for the young are modernists and have accepted the evolutionary theory of development, so contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures, the only book that claims to tell us how we got here and where we are going when the things of this life are over. If one does not know where he came from nor where he is going, it is apparent that he does not know why he is here nor what he ought to do in the meantime. So how can such people outline a curriculum for the young to follow to meet life's goal, when they do not know what that goal is? All this seems to show how inconsistent it is for those who believe the Bible and what it teaches about life and its ideals to follow a program outlined by those who do not know what the goal of life really is.

I give below a program by one in whom we profess to believe, and who claims to know the way, Mrs. E. G. White says, "True education means more than the pursuit of a certain course of study. It means more than a preparation for the life that now is. It has to do with the whole being, and with the whole period of existence possible to man. It is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers." Education, 13

This information comes from one who claims to know the goal of life and the way to reach it because she got her information from God, the Source of all wisdom and knowledge. It emphasizes the physical and spiritual as well as the mental. It takes into consideration the whole man with every phase of his development. The public schools can do very little by way of vocations and practical experience for lack of vision and inclination, and they can do almost nothing in the spiritual because of the confusion among the people in their religion and life. However, the years of educational endeavor are the adolescent years of teen-agers when ideals and goals are established in the minds of the young. What a pity that during those formative years there is no religious instruction to give a basis for forming the right ideals of life, and still more pitiful that in many instances the young have to read books that contradict the Bible, and, in some instances, sit under teachers who ridicule its teaching! And it is still more foolish and absurd for those who claim to believe

the third angel's message to send their children to be informed and directed by such teachers and guided by their curriculum and ideas.

One of the distressing facts of our time is the lack of ideals and proper conduct of the present teen-agers. It is discussed and deplored by citizens and officials in all parts of the land. But it is the result of our present godless program for the young, and it reveals the fact that no preparation can be made by the average person for proper conduct in this life without a view and goal of something beyond this life. This life cannot be explained from its own standpoint. Something more and beyond it is needed in order to explain the life that now is. That explanation is found in the teaching of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.

But the instruction goes farther than what we have thus far discussed. It says, "Daily, systematic labor should constitute a part of the education of youth, even at this late period." Fundamentals of Christian Education, 44. Few have realized what that means. Several schools have provided work as a means of helping the youth to defray expenses while attending school. But they did not consider it a part of the education needed. It was only a means to an end, and the end was book learning. However, when we take time to analyze the problems, we realize that in most instances it is work that has more to do with preparing for life's problems than much that is learned in books. Then why should not more thought be given to this in the future, and more vocational training and systematic work be incorporated into the curriculum?

The same author states further, "Under the guidance of experienced workmen . . . the students themselves should erect buildings on the school grounds and make needed improvements . . . Culture on all these points will make our youth useful in carrying the truth to foreign countries. . . . Study in agricultural lines should be the A, B, and C of the education given in our schools. This is the very first work that should be entered upon." Testimonies, vol. 6, 176, 179

Those words sound strange indeed to our ears. They are so different from what we have been taught and from what we see. It seems to us strange, and perhaps absurd. How can credit in subjects like that be used in going on to higher schools of learning? And what benefit is such study to a doctor in his practice? And how does it prepare one to preach the gospel and give the message in the great distant lands of earth? So the many, many questions arise from those who look at things as the world does, and try to solve their problems the same way. These are, and will be, our questions as long as we follow the world in our program and in our thinking.

These things to look just as strange as things did to Israel when Moses, in leading them out of Egypt, started straight for the Red Sea. That certainly looked foolish and absurd from any human standpoint. Yet that was the way God led them, and the way He had of demonstrating His power and glory before the world. When Israel followed the Lord's instruction His glory was manifest. But we cannot see the sense in following the instruction of the Lord

We refuse the Lord's counsel and follow the way of our own choosing, and try to solve our problems by following the world and doing as they do. As a result, we are getting farther and farther from the program set before us by God now, and we refuse His counsel and follow the way of our own choosing, and try to solve our problems by following the world and doing as they do. As a result, we are getting farther and farther from the program set before us by God.

It is reasoned that if we are going to train our youth for medical work that we shall have to prepare the youth to pass the tests set for them by the world. That is the way Israel reasoned when Moses started with them into the desert where there was neither food nor water. All these arguments sound reasonable and
plausible from a human standpoint. And that is all the standpoint many people have, because they are human, and see things the way they occur and as they were taught. But evidently God had something more than human in mind for Israel; and we are told that the same experience will come to God's people before the end. Who knows but that God is ready to begin now? At least that may be possible.

I heard the argument of our need to meet the world's standard over and over again when schools were trying for accreditation. And I was in a position to know, for I was a member of two different faculties when they were trying for it. For a time, I thought perhaps that was a good thing. We were told that we could carry out our special program when accredited just as well as if we were not. I taught in one of those schools before it was accredited, and I taught in it for years after. When I went there in the early days the buildings were constructed by teachers and students, and games were seldom mentioned. A few games might be played at picnics or on special occasions.

However, when I left there the buildings were being erected by non-Adventists who were paid $20.00 a day while the students were playing baseball with fourteen organized teams on the campus. In those days I had students come to me and ask why they had to read certain rot required in some classes. I would tell them to ask the teacher. Invariably, they would return with the reply that it was required because we were accredited. The school compromised first on one point and then on another until they were following the world almost entirely except for a few Bible classes. One day I was reproving a student for cheating in his work, when another student broke in and told me I was out of my place because all the students cheat, as that was the only way they could get through their work.

Although this is bad, it is not the worst part of the program. The system of education we have was not prepared for the purpose of fitting the average person for the place he is to fill in life. It is partly a carry-over from earlier times when those who received it were of the elite and were not supposed to work for a living; and partly an eliminating process to keep the masses from glutting the higher professions and fields of learning. To do this, a program is provided in which the average person is not interested, and for which he is not adapted. The program is largely impractical with many technical subjects for which the average person sees no need. This program is arranged for the few, not for the masses. And it seems that this end is reached by providing a grading system which was followed by the college in which I taught.

The system required that in grading students there should be 7 percent A's, 24 percent B's, 38 percent C's, and 24 percent D's, and 7 percent F's. In that same school it was required that each student must have a C average in all his classes and a B-C average in his major field to graduate. That meant D and F grades were of no value to them. That meant that 32 percent of their credits were useless to the students, and that 31 percent of the students were to be eliminated as incompetent and misfits, in order for the program to be carried out. Further, that plan of grading was supposed to be followed throughout the entire four years the student was in college. Many an honest, devoted young person have I seen great depressed and discouraged because he or she was unable to follow that unnatural, and I might say, inhuman program.

I kept the figures of those who entered a certain college and who dropped out before the second school year. I wanted to see if the results were actually what it seemed to me they must be under that system. I found that over a period of years, more than 35 percent of the freshmen never went on for the second year's work in school. Those who dropped out were not necessarily dumb. They were those who wanted to study something they could see would be of benefit to them in life, something they could put to practical use. Some of this group are the great men of the earth. Thomas A. Edison, the great scientist and inventor, made no progress in formal education in school. Winston Churchill, one of the greatest statesmen of Great Britain, and possibly of the world, failed three times in the educational program of the British Empire. And when he was granted an honorary degree from the Missouri University I heard him say that the only reason he could see that that degree was conferred upon him was that he had failed in so many examinations.

At the time I was teaching in Emmanuel Missionary College, one summer when I was sent out into the field to drum up students for the school, I asked the pastor of one of the districts how many evangelistic efforts he had held that year. He answered, "Efforts? I have not held an effort in four years. How can I do that with all the work I have in the churches to get them to reach their

Do we run our schools to follow good educational practice, or to fit students for what they are to do in life?

goals?" I asked why he did not leave that with the church elders to do, and he go on with the work he was ordained to do. He said that that would not work, because the elders were not qualified to do it. I replied, "Suppose twenty-five years ago the college had provided majors in agriculture and minors in theology, and majors in auto mechanics or other vocations and minors in theology, and majors for the girls in Bible and minors in home economics, or home nursing, and these people now lived in your district, and were now leaders in your churches. Would that help any?" He replied, "That would relieve the situation wonderfully." I said, "Perhaps that is where the college has fallen down in its work, by following the program of the world, instead of preparing the youth for what they will do in life and to meet the needs of the denomination."

At the college I tried to get the authorities to allow theology students to minor in agriculture or some vocation so that if they were not taken on by the conference, they could make a living and yet preach the gospel for which they were striving. But it was not allowed, because it was not in harmony with the best educational practice. Some educators seem more con-
cerned about good educational practice than with fitting students for what they are to do in life after they get out of school. Do we run our schools to follow good educational practice, or to fit students for what they are to do in life? How can we expect a worldly program to fit our youth for our special work of giving this message to the world? The ordinary person is interested in school if he can see some benefit from what he is studying to what he will do in life. That brings special enthusiasm. I could never see why the whole school program should not head in that direction.

I could not harmonize the program in our schools with the statements in Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 192, 229, which say: “The dull pupil needs much more encouragement than he receives.” “He [the teacher] should see in every pupil the handiwork of God—a candidate for immortal honors. He should seek so to educate, train, and discipline the youth that each may reach the high standard of excellence to which God calls him.” I was unable to harmonize those statements with the program followed in eliminating students. I could not see how I could eliminate 31 percent in the first year of college and, at the same time, see in every student a candidate for immortal honors. Also, I could not harmonize that program with the statement in Fundamentals of Christian Education, 41, that says: “If the youth can have but a one-sided education, which is of the greater consequence, a knowledge of the sciences, with all the disadvantages to health and life, or a knowledge of labor for practical life? We unhesitatingly answer, The latter. If one must be neglected, let it be the study of books.”

I was troubled about the statement in The Ministry of Healing, 449-450, which says: “It is not well to crowd the mind with studies that require intense application, but that are not brought into use in practical life. Such education will be a loss to the student. For these studies lessen his desire and inclination for the studies that would fit him for usefulness and enable him to fulfill his responsibilities.” It says those subjects are a loss because they lessen the desire and inclination for the things that are useful and would enable one to bear responsibilities. I could not see how the program we had could be harmonized with this counsel, so I withdrew from that institution.

I do not wish to convey the impression that I think no good is being accomplished by our schools, or that I think the Lord has forsaken the denomination. But I do know that I could not harmonize the program of the school with the instruction we had received. I believe the Lord is still working with the denomination and is anxious for the educational program to line up with His counsel. The Lord worked for Israel after they called for a king contrary to His will. He still worked for them when they went into captivity, and after. So why should He not work with this people even if they do not fully conform to His program? We are told that our schools are still prisoners of hope.

To be continued
Jehovah Is Our King

God has revealed many things to me which He has hidden me give to His people by pen and voice. Through this message of the Holy Spirit, God's people are given sacred instruction concerning their duty to God and to their fellow men.

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.

It is right for the workers to counsel together as brethren; but that man who endeavors to lead his fellow workers to seek his individual counsel and advice regarding the details of their work, and to learn their duty from him, is in a dangerous position and needs to learn what responsibilities are really comprehended in his office. God has appointed no man to be conscience for his fellow man. It is not wise to lay so much responsibility upon an officer that he will feel that he is forced to become a dictator.

A Constant Peril

For years there has been a growing tendency for men placed in positions of responsibility to lord it over God's heritage, thus removing from church members their keen sense of the need of divine instruction and an appreciation of the privilege to counsel with God regarding their duty. This order of things must be changed. There must be a reform. Men who have not a rich measure of that wisdom which cometh from above should not be called to serve in positions where their influence means so much to church members.

In my earlier experiences in the message, I was called to meet this evil. During my labors in Europe and Australia, and more recently at the San José camp meeting in 1905, I had to bear my testimony of warning against it, because souls were being led to look to man for wisdom, instead of looking to God, who is our wisdom, our sanctification, and our righteousness. And now the same message has again been given me, more definite and decisive, because there has been a deeper offense to the Spirit of God.

An Exalted Privilege

God is the Teacher of His people. All who humble their hearts before Him will be taught of God. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James 1:5. The Lord wants every church member to pray earnestly for wisdom, that he may know what the Lord would have him do. It is the privilege of every believer to obtain an individual experience, learning to carry his cares and perplexities to God. It is written, "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you." James 4:8

Through His servant Isaiah, God is calling His church to appreciate her exalted privilege in having the wisdom of the Infinite at her command: "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and

Ellen G. White
carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

"Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All nations before him are as nothing: and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." Isaiah 40:9-17

"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Isaiah 40:28-31

In the forty-first to the forty-fifth chapters of Isaiah, God very fully reveals His purpose for His people, and these chapters should be prayerfully studied. God does not here instruct His people to turn away from His wisdom and look to finite man for wisdom. "Remember these, O Jacob and Israel," He declares, "for thou art my servant; . . . O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." Isaiah 44:21-23

"Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the Lord? and there is no God else beside me. . . . Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." Isaiah 45:21-25

**Every Yoke to Be Broken**

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 word is spoken, "Break every yoke." Isaiah 58:6. 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. We are to treat one another as brethren, as fellow laborers, as men and women.

Paul’s Experience

We would do well to study carefully the first and second chapters of 1 Corinthians. “We preach Christ crucified,” the apostle declared, “unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, and not many mighty, and not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteous-

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**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**

who are, with us, seeking for light and understanding of the way of the Lord, and who are jealous for His glory.

God declares, “I will be glorified in my people;” but the self-confident management of men has resulted in putting God aside, and accepting the devisings of men. If you allow this to continue, your faith will soon become extinct. God is in every place, beholding the conduct of the people who profess to represent the principles of His Word. He asks that a change be made. He wants His people to be molded and fashioned, not after man’s ideas, but after the similitude of God. I entreat of you to search the Scriptures as you have never yet searched them that you may know the way and will of God. Oh, that every soul might be impressed with this message, and put away the wrong!
but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” 1 Corinthians 2:3–8

Taught by the Spirit

In the next words the apostle brings to view the true source of wisdom for the believer: “God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. . . . Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” 1 Corinthians 2:10–11, 13

These words mean very much to the soul that is trying to run the race set before him in the gospel. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.” Verses 14–16

Read also the third chapter of this book, and study and pray over these words. As a people our faith and practice need to be energized by the Holy Spirit. No ruling power that would compel man to obey the dictates of the finite mind should be exercised. “Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils;” (Isaiah 2:22) the Lord commands. By turning the minds of men to lean on human wisdom, we place a veil between God and man, so that there is not a seeing of Him who is invisible.

In our individual experience we are to be taught of God. When we seek Him with a sincere heart, we will confess to Him our defects of character; and He has promised to receive all who come to Him in humble dependence. The one who yields to the claims of God will have the abiding presence of Christ, and this companionship will be to him a very precious thing. Taking hold of divine wisdom, he will escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust. Day by day he will learn more fully how to carry his infirmities to the One who has promised to be a very present help in every time of need.

This message is spoken to our churches in every place. In the false experience that has been coming in, a decided influence is at work to exalt human agencies, and to lead some to depend on human judgment, and to follow the control of human minds. This influence is diverting the mind from God. God forbid that any such experience should deepen and grow in our ranks as Seventh-day Adventists. Our petitions are to reach higher than erring man—to God. God does not confine Himself to one place or person. He looks down from heaven upon the children of men; He sees their perplexities, and is acquainted with the circumstances of every experience of life. He understands His own work upon the human heart, and needs not that any man should direct the workings of His Spirit.

“This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, we heareth us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.” 1 John 5:14–15.

God has appointed the angels that do His will to respond to the prayers of the meek of the earth, and to guide His ministers with counsel and judgment. Heavenly agencies are constantly seeking to impart grace and strength and counsel to God’s faithful children, that they may act their part in the work of communicating light to the world. The wonderful sacrifice of Christ has made it possible for every man to do a special work. When the worker receives wisdom from the only true source, he will become a pure channel of light and blessing: for he will receive his capability for service in rich currents of grace and light from the throne of God.

Testimonies to Ministers, 477–484

Spalding and Magan’s Unpublished Testimonies

This book is a union of the private collections of five men who were prominent leaders and pioneers in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and who received numerous personal and general testimonies from the Lord through Ellen G. White regarding many areas of labor.

In this 500-page volume, you will encounter a wealth of the Lord’s counsels on a broad range of subjects. Stirring, straight messages are presented regarding education, finance, church government, the home, health, prophecy, and other topics. These messages contain what is probably the largest collection of guidance as to how the Lord wants us as individuals and as a church to relate to the self-supporting work.

This is actually the first time this Spirit of Prophecy collection has been typeset in an unabridged, easy-to-read edition. Previous editions have been photocopies of typewritten manuscripts. This convenient-sized volume (5½ x 8½) is now available from Hope International in two bindings:

Hardback: $15
High-quality paperback: $10

Please add 15% for postage and handling. Washington residents add 7.5% sales tax.
A Wheel Within a Wheel

He was different from his brothers. Unlike them he wanted to do what was right. He loved his brothers, and even though they were older than he, he sought to influence them to be obedient to the God of their father—the God of heaven. Their father favored him over the others, for he was one of only two sons of his favorite wife. Consequently his brothers were very jealous of him.

In addition, he had told his brothers of a dream he had had in which they bowed down to him, and that was more than they could handle. This younger brother must be put out of the way. Influenced by the wrong spirit, which was allowed to come in through jealousy and a lack of submission to God in their lives, Joseph's older brothers sold him to slave traders to be taken to Egypt.

But God had a plan for Joseph, and in spite of Satan's devices, God would prevail. In speaking of Joseph's being sold into slavery, Ellen White stated: "But, in the providence of God, even this experience was to be a blessing to him. He had learned in a few hours that which years might not otherwise have taught him. His father, strong and tender as his love had been, had done him wrong by his partiality and indulgence. This unwise preference had angered his brothers and provoked them to the cruel deed that had separated him from his home. Its effects were manifest also in his own character. Faults had been encouraged that were now to be corrected. He was becoming self-sufficient and exacting. . . He then and there gave himself fully to the Lord, and he prayed that the Keeper of Israel would be with him in the land of his exile.

. . . One day's experience had been the turning point in Joseph's life. Its terrible calamity had transformed him from a petted child to a man, thoughtful, courageous, and self-possessed." Patriarchs and Prophets, 213-214

But this tragedy was only the beginning of his training in the school of affliction. Satan had other plans to bring about his downfall. He became a slave in the house of Potiphar. Because of diligence in his working habits, his honesty, and the closeness he had to his God, and blessings that seemed to come from that closeness, Joseph was soon put in charge of Potiphar's estate. Joseph, however, was then tempted by Potiphar's wife while "with inexpressible anxiety angels looked upon the scene." Ibid., 217

"Joseph's answer reveals the power of religious principle. He would not betray the confidence of his master on earth, and, whatever the consequences, he would be true to his Master in heaven." Ibid.

Jail was his reward. But in spite of Satan's harassment, God's purposes will be enacted if we will totally trust our lives to Him. Joseph's "years of faithful service had been most cruelly repaid, yet this did not render him morose or distrustful. He had the peace that comes from conscious innocence, and he trusted his ease with God. He did not brood upon his own wrongs, but forgot his sorrow in trying to lighten the sorrows of others. He found a work to do even in the prison. God was preparing him in the school of affliction for greater usefulness, and he did not refuse the needful discipline. In the prison, witnessing the results of oppression and tyranny and the effects of crime, he learned lessons of justice, sympathy, and mercy, that prepared him to exercise power with wisdom and compassion." Ibid., 218

Joseph, as we know, eventually became prime minister of Egypt, second only to Pharaoh; he was able to set up the circumstances for the salvation of his family from famine, as well as to provide a witness for the God of heaven in a pagan country. The dream God gave him

Clark Floyd
of his brothers bowing before him was brought about through the initiation of his brothers, and even they realized character growth through all the chain of circumstances. Satan’s plans were overruled by the providence of God. Character growth for the whole family was the end result.

“There are few who realize the influence of the little things of life upon the development of character. Nothing with which we have to do is really small. The varied circumstances that we meet day by day are designed to test our faithfulness and to qualify us for greater trusts. By adherence to principle in the transactions of ordinary life, the mind becomes accustomed to hold the claims of duty above those of pleasure and inclination. Minds thus disciplined are not wavering between right and wrong, like the reed trembling in the wind; they are loyal to duty because they have trained themselves to habits of fidelity and truth. By faithfulness in that which is least they acquire strength to be faithful in greater matters. . . .

“The formation of a noble character is the work of a lifetime and must be the result of diligent and persevering effort. God gives opportunities; success depends upon the use made of them.” Ibid., 222–223

And through it all, God triumphed, because God is in control. The course of Joseph’s brothers “was overruled by God to bring about the very event that they designed to hinder. So the Jewish priests and elders were jealous of Christ, fearing that He would attract the attention of the people from them. They put Him to death, to prevent Him from becoming king, but they were thus bringing about this very result.” Ibid., 239

In Ezekiel, chapter one, God’s total control is symbolized in the vision of the wheels, “and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel,” (verse 16) perhaps appearing to the human eye to be in a state of confusion.

Ellen White refers to this symbolic vision. Ezekiel “was a stranger in a land where ambition and cruelty reigned supreme. As on every hand he beheld tyranny and wrong, his soul was distressed, and he mourned day and night. But the symbols presented to him revealed a power above that of earthly rulers. . . .

“The wheels were so complicated in arrangement that at first sight they appeared to be in confusion; but they moved in perfect harmony. Heavenly beings, sustained and guided by the hand beneath the wings of the cherubim, were compelling these wheels; above them, upon the sapphire throne, was the Eternal One; and round about the throne a rainbow, the emblem of divine mercy. As the wheellike complications were under the guidance of the hand beneath the wings of the cherubim, so the complicated play of human events is under divine control. Amidst the strife and tumult of nations, He that sitteth above the cherubim still guides the affairs of the earth.” Education, 177–178

“In Ezekiel’s vision, God had His hand beneath the wings of the cherubim. This is to teach His servants that it is divine power that gives them success. He will work with them if they will put away iniquity, and become pure in heart and life. The heavenly messengers seen by Ezekiel, like a bright light going among the living creatures with the swiftness of lightning, represent the speed with which this work will finally go forward to completion. He who slumbers not, who is continually at work for the accomplishment of His designs, can carry forward His great work harmoniously. That which appears to finite minds entangled and complicated, the Lord’s hand can keep in perfect order.

He can devise ways and means to thwart the purposes of wicked councilors, and those who plot out mischief.

“Those who are called to responsible positions in the work of God often feel that they are carrying heavy burdens, when they may have the satisfaction of knowing that Jesus carries them all. We permit ourselves to feel altogether too much care, trouble, and perplexity in the Lord’s work. We need to trust Him, believe in Him, and go forward. The tireless vigilance of the heavenly messengers, their unceasing employment in their ministry in connection with the beings of earth, show us how God’s hand is guiding the wheel within a wheel. The divine Instructor is saying to every actor in His work, as He said to Cyrus of old, ‘I girded thee, though thou hast not known me.’ Isaiah 45:5.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 4, 1161

God is truly in control. Often circumstances that we see happening bring discouragement and sometimes loss of faith. But if we study the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, we will find that those things that our eyes or senses often behold and which seem to indicate victory for the wicked, are only temporary smoke screens for Satan. The true victory belongs already to Jesus. The only question now is, How many will have the opportunity of that victory in their lives snatched from them through the skillful delusions of Satan’s agents?

In Psalm 73 Asaph almost had the victory taken from him. In verse 2, he states, “But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.” Why? Because as he looked at the world, it seemed that only the wicked prospered. They did not seem to have the trouble other men have. Even in their pride, they apparently prospered. They could speak wickedly and act corruptly. They could even blaspheme God. Yet they would increase in riches.

As the wheellike complications were under the guidance of the hand beneath the wings of the cherubim, so the complicated play of human events is under divine control.
accomplishment. It was thus with the house of Israel throughout the history of the divided monarchy; it is thus with spiritual Israel today."

Brothers and sisters, do you have heartaches, troubles, persecutions or fears? Does Satan seem to be constantly at your doorstep? Have courage. Do not let your relationship with Jesus slide. God is in control. "And we know that all things work together for good to those that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28

Ellen White, in commenting on this verse, says, "The Father's presence en-circled Christ, and nothing befell Him but that which infinite love permitted for the blessing of the world. Here was His source of comfort, and it is for us. He who is imbued with the spirit of Christ abides in Christ. Whatever comes to Him comes from the Saviour, who surrounds Him with His presence. Nothing can touch Him except by the Lord's permiss-ion. All our sufferings and sorrows, all our temptations and trials, all our sadness and griefs, all our persecutions and privations, in short, all things work together for our good. All experiences and circumstances are God's workmen whereby good is brought to us." The Ministry of Healing, 489

God is in control. He wants you to be in His kingdom. However, He does not force or compel. The choice is yours based on His conditions.

"God has set forth in His Word the conditions upon which every soul will be elected to eternal life—obedience to His commandments, through faith in Christ. God has elected a character in harmony with His law, and anyone who shall reach the standard of His requirement will have an entrance into the kingdom of glory. . . .

"Every soul is elected who will work out his own salvation with fear and trembling. He is elected who will put on the armor and fight the good fight of faith. He is elected who will watch unto prayer, who will search the Scriptures, and flee from temptation. He is elected who will have faith continually, and who will be obedient to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. The provisions of redemption are free to all; the results of redemption will be enjoyed by those who have complied with the conditions." Patriarchs and Prophets, 207–208

God is in control. Will you not make that full surrender to Him today? Purpose in your heart now to do all that He asks, not out of a legalistic duty to do so, but out of a heart flowing with love for your Saviour, knowing that He would not ask it unless it were best for your eternal good.

And remember, "Above the distractions of the earth He sits enthroned; all things are open to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He orders that which His providence sees best." The Ministry of Healing, 417

God is in control. □

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

God bless you. We appreciate the work which you are doing, especially the last Our Firm Foundation on church organization. The Lord plans on carrying on to the end, and He is organizing the work at all times. He is the Author and Finisher of everything. I am grateful for the unity that is forming on the platform of truth.

SS, Montana

I was not surprised to see things take place as they have in regard to "issues." It has been working up to this at a fast rate of speed. I could only hope and pray it would never have taken place; and now that it has come to the point of all-out confrontation, only God can turn things around. But let us not give up. We can "trust and obey, for there's no other way." Let us pray God to send His Spirit to those who oppose and all who will turn to Him in humbleness.

—CG, Missouri

You are doing a good work. Please don't be discouraged by the criticism you are receiving.

—CK, North Carolina

The furor going on now within is unbelievable. It strikes fear to the heart—fear for our beloved church. We can only trust that God will set matters straight.

God bless you all. Keep up the good work. It can't be long now until 1 Thessalonians 4:16–18 is fulfilled.

—FB, Tennessee

I just received the current issue of Our Firm Foundation. I greatly appreciate this journal! We bring you before the Lord in our prayers.

Sad, but also exciting days to believe that Jesus would soon return to this planet which is in rebellion.

I would like your new video to show with as many Seventh-day Adventists as possible. Our people need to know both sides of this issue.

—GB, Washington

Courage my brothers and sisters. The darkest part of the night is just before dawn. Be faithful to your calling in Jesus Christ.

I was really disappointed to hear and read of the General Conference's reac-
tion to your ministry. I have no idea of what really has caused such a negative response to such a positive ministry. I am sad to see such persecution coming from within the church and from our fellow brothers and sisters in Jesus.

I trust that you are receiving all your marching orders from our Lord God and that you are doing nothing out of jealousy, anger, or resentment; that in all things you are seeking to let the Spirit of God work through you and His character be seen in every action.

I am a young pastor from ——, working in Thailand. I praise the Lord for the freedom still available in this country. I was first exposed to your ministry in 1988. Since then I have done much study on my own. I have read a few of your materials when I had access to them through various friends. I would love so much to be on your mailing list. It is so hard to find worthwhile materials here.

May God bless you and encourage you even more than ever before as we work together to hasten the soon coming of our Lord Jesus.

—Thailand
Be Ye Transformed

Why was his experience not like that of the apostles Peter, James and John after Calvary? Why had God not worked in his behalf to save him not only from the penalty of sin, but also from its power? Was there something God had failed to do for him that he had done for others, such as the apostle Paul? Or perhaps, was there something missing on his part? Perhaps his faith was not a genuine faith, a faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Could it be that he did not understand what his part was in this divine-human relationship?

After some discussion, it was quite evident that he did not understand how this transformation takes place on a practical level, that once the person has, through faith in Christ, accepted the free gift of salvation, genuine faith always and continually brings a response of love. A response of love, this is our part of the equation in the science of salvation. God had been wooing this man, drawing him to Christ, but he was not inclining his will to the will of God.

Are we resisting the grace of Christ? When God awakens us early in the morning and bids us to “come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28; emphasis supplied in all quotations), does our faith awaken, from a response of love and then rise to meet with our Saviour and there find our strength and help for the day’s duties and trials? Or is our faith a slumbering faith, one that is asleep in the flesh rather than awake in

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Jim Hohnberger
the Spirit? Christ found His strength in meeting with His Father at the very beginning of every day. And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place and there prayed.” Mark 1:35. This early morning praying is the example of genuine faith, a faith which recognizes its need of a power outside of self to sustain and keep oneself throughout the day. Such was the example of Christ. We are told, “As a man He supplicated the throne of God till His humanity was charged with a heavenly current that should connect humanity with divinity. . . . His experience is to be ours.” The Desire of Ages, 363. Is it your experience? If not, is it no wonder that you have a floundering experience? We are all to follow the example of Christ, and by a response of love meet in fellowship with Him every morning of our life, and there so connect with our Source of life and strength that we can and will go out into the day with an abiding trust in the One mighty to save.

Dear friends, once we have connected with Christ on our knees, we need to remain connected with Him on our feet. Throughout the day Christ will continually call for the surrender of our thoughts, words and actions. Here we need to watch and pray constantly, that we will not choose to let go of Him and give way to the flesh. Here so many Christians flounder again and again. The apostle Paul in his epistle to the Galatians cautions us, “Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” Galatians 3:3.

In other words, if God has called for the surrender of our lives and we have co-operated by a response of love through the Spirit, will He not also continue to call to us throughout our entire day by His Spirit? See Isaiah 30:21. Will not the Spirit impress upon our conscience, which has been enlightened by His Word, which thoughts are safe to think, (see Philippians 4:8) and which thoughts we must choose to resist? See James 1:13–15. Will not the Spirit of the Lord impress us to be “swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath”? James 1:19. Yes, God is faithful to remind us, for He says, “Lo, I am with you always.” Matthew 28:20.

God promises to guide us through every day of our life and every hour of that day. But we have a part to play. We must be willing to be made willing. We must be willing to choose between the voice of the flesh and the voice of His Spirit. Our choice, motivated by a response of love through genuine faith, will determine whether we fight against God or against the flesh. The apostle Paul was not entirely unlike us. When God called for a surrender of his life on the road to Damascus, he had a choice to make. He could resist God and reap the flesh, or he could resist the flesh and receive the Spirit. His response is one which we all need to enter into continually throughout our entire life and day. It is found in Acts 9:6, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” Is that not a beautiful response, simple to understand yet transforming in application? As Paul responded to the Spirit, his character was transformed into the character of Christ. He was no longer seen as Saul, the man in the flesh, but as Paul, the man in the Spirit.

So it is to be with us. As God calls for the surrender of our life to Him and continues to ask us to die to self daily, (see 1 Corinthians 15:31) we find ourselves in the process of transformation from living in the flesh to living in the Spirit. For the Spirit always encourages us to “turn not aside from following the Lord but serve the Lord with all your heart.” 1 Samuel 12:20. As we respond to this call of grace upon our hearts, God restores us into His image. This response is what is meant in Philippians 2:12–13 by “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”

God does not bid us fear that He will fail to fulfill His promises, that His patience will weary, or His compassion be found wanting. We are to fear lest our will shall not be held in submission to Christ’s will, lest our hereditary and cultivated traits of character shall control our life. We are to fear lest self shall interpose between our soul and the great Master Worker. Fear lest self-will shall mar the high purpose that through us God desires to accomplish. Fear to trust to our own strength, fear to withdraw our hand from the hand of Christ and attempt to walk life’s pathway without His abiding presence.

Friends, this fear is healthful. It is a fear that puts our dependency in Christ and not in self. Here besetting sins are overcome; evil thoughts are not allowed in the mind; evil habits are purged from the soul temple. The tendencies which have been biased in a wrong direction are turned in a right direction. Wrong dispositions and feelings are changed, new principles of actions are supplied and there is born a new creature in Christ Jesus our Lord. An entire transformation of our character takes place, day by day, as we consent to say Yes to God and No to self.

It is just that simple: “Submission to God is restoration to one’s self.” That is the science of salvation from the power of sin as well as from its penalty. It is not works, friends, but it is genuine faith, faith that works by love and purifies the soul. It is the faith of the martyrs, the faith of the apostles and the faith of the Reformers. They all consented to let God have them fully, completely and utterly. It is the faith willing at all times and in all places to say, “Not my will, but thine, be done.” Luke 22:42. And when we consent to let God so have us that we will even allow all our thoughts, words and actions to be filtered through Christ before they find expression, then truly we shall be transformed.

O friends, let us make our “calling and election sure.” 2 Peter 1:10. We are elected to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling by continually saying Yes to God and No to self. We are elected to put on the armor, to fight the good fight of faith. We are elected to use the means God has placed within our reach to war against every unholy lust, while Satan is playing the game of life for our souls. We are elected to watch unto prayer, to search the Scriptures and to avoid entering into temptation. We are elected to have faith continually. We are elected to be obedient to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, that we may not be a hearer only but a doer of the word. Such is Bible election. Such is genuine faith that co-operates at all times and in all places with divine grace.

This life of absolute dependence, absolute trust, absolute surrender which brings entire transformation is available to us all today. Now! Friends, we have heretofore lived a life to our own liking. Will you not begin today, by the grace of heaven, to live a life fully and completely given to the lordship of Jesus Christ? Will you not now choose a life in which Christ shall be All and in All? Colossians 3:11. Such a life is what it means to “Be Ye Transformed.” Romans 12:2 □
In the first part of “God’s Plan Misused” we discussed how for many years we as a people have been in disobedience in many ways to the Lord’s directives of the way to operate the branches of His work. We have noted also that over the past forty years there has been an increasing conflict over a number of doctrinal issues. We have discussed this disobedience and doctrinal confusion as signs of insubordination and apostasy. The fact that we are still here on this earth is stark evidence that we as a people are falling far short of the spiritual health needed to usher in Christ’s kingdom. In this article we will delve further into the root causes of our continued rebellion to Christ’s leadership and the continued delay of His second coming.

“We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel, but for Christ’s sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action.” Spalding-Magan’s Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies of Ellen G. White, 202

The root cause of our insubordination to Christ’s leadership and thus of the delay of His return in glory is that self has not died. The natural, fallen human nature has self on the throne. We naturally live to serve self. Our fallen nature evaluates all social relationships and all of life’s circumstances by what benefits there are to self. The principle of Satan’s kingdom is love for self—self first, God, Christ and others last. The principle of Christ’s kingdom is the exact reverse—God, Christ and others first and self last.

When self is alive, it rules in our life, and Christ is kept outside the heart’s door. We manifest our serving of self by seeking the company of those whose actions and words do not condemn us. We manifest that self is alive by seeking and supporting religious beliefs and leaders that are tolerant of self. When self is alive we tend to seek the leadership of man, for natural man will assure us that we can continue to serve self and be saved anyway. Thus selfish man looks to man for spiritual counsel and direction. Those who are serving self lean on the arm of flesh, placing fallible man in their life where only Christ should be.

In our love for approbation we are more concerned about what other people think of how we eat and dress and live than we are about what Christ thinks about these issues. In our seeking of praise for self, we seek out, exalt and support pliant leaders who will teach us smooth things.

If a leader of God’s people is serving self, his method of administration will be patterned after that of pliant Aaron. Seeking more the approbation of the people than of God, he will tolerate, and even promote, forms of “religious” activities and preach doctrines that approve of lifestyles pleasing to the natural man. Filled with self-esteem and self-confidence, such a leader will not feel the need of consulting the counsels of Christ in Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy as to how to carry on the Lord’s work. Since the world and not God praises and exalts human leadership and human wisdom, leaders, serving self, seek more the approbation of human (even worldly) accrediting bodies than they seek the approbation of Christ in the operation of “His” publishing, educational and health institutions. Leaders serving self and not Christ
will feel confident of their own wisdom and will lead God’s people and God’s work contrary to a “Thus saith the Lord.” Being wise in their own eyes they will feel qualified to tell others what to do and what not to do. In other words, self-serving leaders will tend to exercise kingly authority. They will tend to rule rather than to serve. They will tend to say and do more of what self and other men say than what Christ says about the issues. Such a leadership has usurped the role of Christ as ruler of His people.

As people look to man for direction, they encourage and educate the leader to rule rather than serve.

“Satan exults as he sees men looking to men, and trusting in men to be wisdom for them. The soul that looks to men as to God, is left exposed to the temptations and assaults of the enemy, and the evil one sees to it that human defects shall mar the work of God. Satan will make the man whom the brethren look up to as to God, a target for his fiery darts, and will ply him with his fiercest temptations. Though at first the brother may be reluctant to take so great a responsibility as that of being a counselor to his brethren, if he does do it, he will finally encourage the very dependence that he once lamented, and he will come to feel grieved if matters are not brought to his attention. He will want to understand the reason for movements made in the cause, that have no connection with his branch of the work.” Review and Herald, vol. 3, 175

By looking to man, the members injure the leader, for God’s wisdom is removed from him. This removal then harms the members because they receive only man’s wisdom.

“The people of God have educated themselves in such a way that they have come to look to those in positions of trust as guardians of truth, and have placed men where God should be. When perplexities have come upon them, instead of seeking God, they have gone to human sources for help, and have received only such help as man can give. If as brave soldiers of Jesus Christ, they had borne their burden, doing their work with courage, with fidelity, and in faith, they would have received great blessings. Christ has sounded the invitation, ‘Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest’; but instead of carrying their perplexities and difficulties to Jesus, as He has told them to do, they have laid their burdens upon human souls, and have looked to human beings and human counsels, and they have received accordingly; for God removes His wisdom from men who are looked up to as God. Those who occupy positions of trust are greatly injured when they are tempted by their brethren to think that they must always be consulted by the workers, and that the people should bring to them their difficulties and trials. It is a mistake to make men believe that the workers for Christ should make no move save that which has first been brought before some responsible man. Men must not be educated to look to men as to God. While it is necessary that there be a counseling together and a unity of action among the laborers, one man’s mind and one man’s judgment must not be the controlling power.” Ibid., 173

Leaders who have a tendency to rule educate the members to look to man rather than to Christ.

“The exercise of authority has been carried to such extremes that it is now time to call a halt; for church members are receiving a false education. A mistake has been made that should be corrected before it is too late. Those who dare to accept responsibilities that are contrary to the Gospel plan are in a dangerous place. They need to see its course of action in its true light. Their permissions and their forbiddings have fed their example—have sought for the approval of man with far greater anxiety than for the approval of God. They have looked to man for help and counsel more than to God. They have made men their burden-bearers, and have accepted human wisdom just when and where they should have depended upon God. And too often those of whom they sought counsel needed help themselves; for their souls were not right with God. The presidents of our conferences have become weak and inefficient by making flesh their arm. Trust in the wisdom of man does not facilitate growth in grace and in the knowledge of Christ.” Gospel Workers, 414-415

Such an education is a great blunder.

“His church is built on the rock Christ Jesus; and when men miscalculate their positions of trust, and suppose that this gives them power to rule the minds and work of their fellow men, they have made a great blunder, which the Lord will not sustain. They are drawing men away, and educating them to look to men and depend upon men and receive their instruction almost entirely from finite beings.” The Home Missionary, June 1, 1897

God permits this spiritual weakness in order to help us realize what is our true source of wisdom and help.

“God has a purpose in leaving men in their weakness when they turn from fostered wrong ideas regarding the responsibility that individuals should carry, and have led believers to look to man instead of looking to God.” Loma Linda Messages, 221

Looking to man educates leaders to exercise kingly power, and the exercise of kingly power educes laity to look to man. This vicious cycle leads to spiritual weakness in the laity and in the leadership alike.

“Some of our conferences are weak in Christian experience because their leading men—and the people have followed their example—have sought for the approval of man with far greater anxiety than for the approval of God. They have looked to man for help and counsel more than to God. They have made men their burden-bearers, and have accepted human wisdom just when and where they should have depended upon God. And too often those of whom they sought counsel needed help themselves; for their souls were not right with God. The presidents of our conferences have become weak and inefficient by making flesh their arm. Trust in the wisdom of man does not facilitate growth in grace and in the knowledge of Christ.” Gospel Workers, 414-415

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The Lord pities our weakness; He is grieved because of the error that has come in, because of the education that has been given to believers to look to men for wisdom and help
self-confidence and self-esteem is our failure to have clear views of Jesus.

"Some are self-confident, self-sufficient, exalted in their opinion of themselves, because they do not have clear views of Jesus. If they lived near to Him, they would see His purity, His matchless benevolence, His self-sacrifice and infinite love, which would lead them to see their deficiencies; and when viewing the cross of Calvary, and the sufferings that Christ endured that they might be rescued from ruin, they could not have one exalted feeling in regard to self." Review and Herald, vol. 1, 383–384

This placing of man where Christ belongs limits what Christ can do for us.

"I wish that every minister and every one of our workers could see this matter as it has been presented to me. Self-esteem and self-sufficiency are killing spiritual life. Self is lifted up; self is talked about. Oh, that self might die! 'I die daily,' said the apostle Paul. When this proud, boastful self-sufficiency and this complacent self-righteousness permeate the soul, there is no room for Jesus. He is given an inferior place, while self swells into importance and fills the whole temple of the soul. This is the reason why the Lord can do so little for us. Should He work with our efforts, the instrument would appropriate all the glory to his own smartness, his wisdom, his ability, and he would congratulate himself." Testimonies, vol. 5, 538–539

In these last days the most dangerous of Satan's snares has come into our ranks—that of looking to man, who in turn is looking to man.

"From this record we may learn how little dependence can be placed in men who trust in men, and do not make God their reliance. Those who are living in these last days are in the greatest danger of placing their confidence in men rather than in the true and living God. The Lord has given instruction that the history of the apostasy of Israel is now to be presented, because men who in the past have had great light have become self-sufficient and are looking to man, trusting in human leaders, who are themselves practicing evil. Men who ought to stand as firm as a rock to principle are treading in the same path that the Israelites followed. 'Some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.' 1 Timothy 4:1. This is the snare that has come into our ranks. There are wrong sentiments that have to be met. There are men who are acting the part of Aaron at the very time when every soul should be working to seal the law among God's disciples. They are building up the very things that God has specified should not be built up." Review and Herald, vol. 5, 493

"The great sin which has been entering the ranks of Seventh-day Adventists is the sin of exalting man, and placing him where God should be." The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, 1619

This tendency of man to look to man, thus replacing Christ in the life and in the work, became so prevalent among us prior to 1888 that God sent a special message of righteousness by faith, through E. J. Wagner and A. T. Jones, to the church at the 1888 General Conference session. They presented the "truth as it is in Jesus, which is the third angel's message" with the purpose to cure us of the malady of looking to man.

"Now, it has been Satan's determined purpose to eclipse the view of Jesus and lead men to look to man, and trust to man, and be educated to expect help from man. For years the church has been looking to man and expecting much from man, but not looking to Jesus, in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. Therefore God gave to His servants a testimony that presented the truth as it is in Jesus, which is the third angel's message, in clear, distinct lines. John's words are to be sounded by God's people, that all may discern the light and walk in the light: 'He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.' John 3:31–36. Testimonies, 93–94

This "most precious message" of the third angel was to be carried to the whole world by the loud cry of the power of the latter rain.

"The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God.

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Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure." Ibid., 91–92

Unfortunately, G. I. Butler, General Conference president, along with other leaders held to preconceived opinions regarding the messages of Jones and Wagner at the 1888 General Conference session. Because of the tendency of leaders to rule and the others to look to man, the message of righteousness by faith—"the third angel's message in verity" (Selected Messages, book 1, 372)—along with its accompanying Holy Spirit power of the latter rain was resisted, and to a great measure was shut away from God's people and the world.

"An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth,
lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren [E. J.] Waggoner and [A. T.] Jones. By excusing that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world." Ibid., 234–235

The very reasons why it was given—man looking to man and man ruling man—was the cause of the rejection of the third angel's message of righteousness by faith in 1888.

"If our brethren were all laborers together with God, they would not doubt but that the message He has sent us during these last two years is from heaven. Our young men look to our older brethren, and as they see that they taken wrong positions, and had misapprehended my words, and had false ideas in reference to my position and work. The prejudice of Elder Butler was greater after hearing the various reports from our ministering brethren at that meeting in Minneapolis." The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, 251–252

If the third angel's message is a call to look to Christ, to follow Christ and to obey Christ rather than man, then we can understand why Ellen White's angel guide was able to tell her in 1886 that few who claimed to believe the message understood it.

"Two years ago, while in Switzerland, I was addressed in the night season by a voice which said, ... 'There are but few, even of those who claim to believe it, that comprehend the third angel's message, and yet this is the message for this time. It is present truth. But how few take up this message in its true bearing, and present it to the people in its power! With many it has but little force.' " Ibid., 165–166

Thus in 1888, with self on the throne in the lives of leaders and laity, there was a looking to man. The exercise of kingly, human authority led our people to go contrary to the councils of the Spirit of Prophecy and to reject the message of righteousness by faith—the third angel's message in verity—and the latter rain. Thus the finishing of the Lord's work and His second coming were delayed.

What of our day? Has self died, or is Christ still outside of the Laodicean heart knocking to be let in? Have we ceased from man, from leaning on the arm of flesh? Has leadership ceased from ruling, rather than being servant to God and His people? Has leadership ceased from exercising human, kingly power? Do we understand and have we accepted the message of righteousness by faith—the third angel's message?

Tragically and sorrowfully we must answer No to the above questions. As long as we are looking to the wisdom of worldly accrediting bodies in the operation of our educational and health institutions, contrary to the clear counsels of Christ in the Spirit of Prophecy, we are following the actions of our 1888 predecessors in looking to man rather than to Christ. As long as we are operating the branches of the Lord's work in disobedience to Christ's will, we are placing man where Christ should be as Head of His people and His work. As long as we continue in this insubordination to Christ we are unrighteous by lack of faith in Christ's leadership. We do not understand that righteousness by faith—the third angel's message—consists of full obedience to Christ, through His enabling grace, in all areas of our life and work. Not understanding the third angel's message, we are incapable of giving it to the world, and the Holy Spirit power in the form of the latter rain has not and cannot be poured out upon us.

Yes, we are today rejecting the very same messages for the very same reasons as did our 1888 predecessors.

During the 1888 General Conference session, as Ellen White saw that her counsels from the Lord were being rejected, she purposed to leave. However, the Angel of the Lord instructed her not to leave and clarified what was really occurring. To place the words, counsel and direction of man before the Bible and/or the Spirit of Prophecy was to repeat the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. By rejecting Christ's directives they were not rejecting the messenger but rather the Holy Spirit, an act which needed to be repented of.

"When I proposed to leave Minneapolis, the Angel of the Lord stood by me and said: 'Not so; God has a work for you to do in this place. The people are acting over the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram."

" 'It is not you they are despising, but the messengers and the message I sent to My people. They have shown contempt for the word of the Lord. Satan has blinded their eyes and perverted their judgment; and unless every soul shall repent of this their sin, this unsanctified independence that is doing insult to the Spirit of God, they will walk in darkness.' " Ellen G. White, Volume 3: The Lonely Years, 1876-1891, 406

Nothing less than apostasy kept the children of Israel out of the Promised Land, and nothing less than apostasy...
today is keeping God's people out of the heavenly Canaan.

Yes, sad but true, "We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel, but for Christ's sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action." Spalding-Magan's Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies of Ellen G. White, 202

Our problem today, as always, is that self has not died. With self-esteem and self-confidence much alive, we feel that we can improve upon the Lord's directives as to how to operate the branches of His work. Feeling self-confident we have not felt the need to study the Scriptures and the Testimonies in order to have the spiritual discernment to keep out doctrinal errors. Feeling self-confident and not knowing what God has said on the many issues, we have felt that our positions have entitled us to rule over rather than serve God's heritage. Being filled with self-esteem and self-importance we hurry on in our insubordination interpreting our apparent success and prosperity as a sign of God's approval. Being wise in our own wisdom, our "conscientiousness" leads us to be "servants of the cause" but at the same time we will not do things the way the Lord has instructed us. See Mind, Character, and Personality, 725

We can take assurance that even if visible leaders fail, our Invisible Leader neither slumbers nor sleeps and He has us in His hands.

"The undershepherds may sleep, they may fail to rightly divide the word of truth, they may fail to point the flock to the pastures provided for them. Instead of being a light to the world, they may be walking in darkness. They may stumble upon the dark mountains of unbelief. But the true Shepherd, He that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep." Review and Herald, vol. 2, 359

"Christ is in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, walking from church to church, from congregation to congregation, from heart to heart. He who keeps Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. If the candlesticks were left to the care of human beings, how often they would flicker and go out. But God has not given His church into the hands of men. Christ, One who gave His life for the life of the world, is the Watchman of the house. He is the Warden, faithful and true, of the temple courts of the Lord. We are not dependent on the presence of priest or minister. We are kept by the power of God. The presence of Christ is the secret of our life and light." Signs of the Times, vol. 4, 222

To human Laodiccan eyes we appear to be doing a great work and to be prospering on every side. But what is God's plan for the church that persistently knows not that she is "wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked"? Revelation 3:17. What is God's relationship to the church that is persistently insubordinate in operating His institutions? What is to be the fate of God's visible church on earth that has refused to understand, experience and thus carry to the world the third angel's message of victory over sin in this life by faith? What is to be our relationship to a church whose authority has permitted untested and unproven doctrines to poison, divide and scatter the flock? How are we to relate to the church that, though organized and authorized to finish Christ's work on earth, has, through insubordination and failure to reproduce Christ's character, actually interfered with and delayed His second coming?

The answers to these questions are crucial to our welfare. May the Lord guide us as in future articles we seek to understand God's reserve plans for church organization and authority. □

"Issues:"
Confusion or Solutions

It is sad but true—tension exists between the leaders of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventist, (NAD), and certain Independent Ministries, including Hope International. Many of God's people are burdened and confused concerning the reasons for this tension, and the question is frequently asked, "Are there no solutions?"

We at Hope International sincerely believe that the "solution" to the present crisis can be found in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, yet it will require a death to self, and a full-hearted commitment to follow, not Hope International or Our Firm Foundation, but "the lamb whithersoever He goeth." Revelation 14:4

Does the NAD authorized booklet, "Issues: The Seventh-day Adventist Church and Certain Private Organizations," address the "real issues" and offer "true solutions"? or are we left with confusion?

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There are today many who pursue a similar course. Like Saul, they are blinded to their errors. When the Lord seeks to correct them, they receive reproof as insult, and find fault with the one who brings the divine message.

Had Saul been willing to see and confess his error, this bitter experience would have proved a safeguard for the future. He would afterward have avoided the mistakes which called forth divine reproof. But feeling that he was unjustly condemned, he would, of course, be likely again to commit the same sin.

The Lord would have His people, under all circumstances, manifest implicit trust in Him. Although we cannot always understand the workings of His providence, we should wait with patience and humility until He sees fit to enlighten us. We should beware of taking upon ourselves responsibilities which God has not authorized us to bear. Men frequently have too high an estimate of their own character or abilities. They may feel competent to undertake the most important work, when God sees that they are not prepared to perform aright the smallest and humblest duty.

Saul was in disfavor with God, and yet unwilling to humble his heart in penitence. He desired to devise some plan by which to establish more firmly his royal authority, as well as to revive the courage of the people. What he lacked in real piety, he would endeavor to make up in pretension and display. Saul was familiar with the terrible history of Israel's defeat when the ark of God was brought into the camp by Hophni and Phinehas; and yet, knowing all this, he determined to send for the sacred ark and its attendant priests.

With a spirit of exultation he enters upon the accomplishment of his plans. He hopes to inspire the hearts of Israel with fresh courage, to reassemble his scattered army, and to vanquish the Philistines. He will now dispense with Samuel's presence and support, and thus free himself from the prophet's disagreeable criticisms and severe reproofs. He feels that Samuel does not rightly appreciate the position and authority of a king, and hence does not treat him with proper respect. He expects that Ahiah the priest will be awed by royal dignity, and will readily yield to the king as to a superior.

The Holy Spirit had been granted to Saul to enlighten his understanding and soften his heart. He had received faithful instruction and reproof from the prophet of God. And yet how great his perversity! The history of Israel's first king presents a sad example of the power of early wrong habits. In his youth, Saul did not love and fear God; and that impetuous spirit, not early trained to submission, was ever ready to rebel against divine authority.

The lesson is one which all would do well to ponder. Men cannot for years abuse the noblest powers which God has given them for His service, and then, when they choose to change, find these powers fresh and free for an entirely opposite course. Those who in early life cherish a sacred

Ellen G. White
regard for the authority of God, and who faithfully perform the duties of their position, will be prepared for higher service in after years. If we would conquer in the battle of life, we must take counsel of infinite wisdom, first and last and always.

Saul's efforts to inspire the people with hope and courage proved unavailing. Finding his force reduced to six hundred men, he left Gilgal, and retired to the fortress at Geba, so lately taken from the Philistines. This stronghold was situated on the south side of a deep, rugged valley, or gorge, a few miles north of the site of Jerusalem. On the north side of the same valley, at Michmash, the Philistine force lay encamped, while detachments of troops went out in different directions to ravage the country.

On the one hand was a little company of almost unarmed men, on the other, vast numbers of well-drilled troops, with their thousand chariots of iron. What marvel that the hearts of the men of Israel were filled with fear! God had permitted matters to be thus brought to a crisis, that He might rebuke the perversity of Saul, and teach His people a lesson of humility and faith.

Jonathan, the king's son, a man who feared God, was chosen as the instrument to deliver Israel. Moved by a divine impulse, he proposed to his armor-bearer that they should make a secret attack upon the enemy's camp. "It may be," he urged, "that the Lord will work for us; for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few." 1 Samuel 14:6

The armor-bearer, a man of faith and prayer, encouraged the design, and together they withdrew from the camp of Israel, secretly, lest their purpose should be opposed as presumptuous. With earnest prayer to the Guide of their fathers, they agreed upon a sign by which they might determine how to proceed. Then passing down into the gorge separating the two armies, and which here stretched out to half a mile in width, they silently threaded their way, under the shadow of the cliff, and partially concealed by the mounds and ridges of the valley. Approaching the Philistine fortress, they were revealed to the view of their enemies, who said tauntingly, "Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they have hid themselves," then challenged them, "Come up, and we will shew you a thing," meaning that they would punish the two Israelites for their daring. Verses 11–12

This challenge was the token which Jonathan and his companion had previously agreed to accept as evidence that the Lord would prosper their undertaking. Passing now from the sight of the Philistines, and choosing a secret and difficult path, the warriors made their way to the summit of a cliff before deemed inaccessible, and therefore not very strongly guarded. Thus they reached the enemy's camp, and slew the sentinels, who were so overcome by surprise and fear as to offer no resistance.

The whole army was seized with consternation, which was increased by an earthquake miraculously occurring at the same time. The Philistines imagined that a vast army was upon them, and in their confusion they began to slay one another.

Soon the noise of the battle was heard in the camp of Israel. Upon inquiry it was found that none were absent but Jonathan and his armor-bearer. Saul at first desired to consult the Lord as to whether an attack should be made upon the Philistines; but the confusion among them evidently increasing, his impatient spirit could not brook delay. Marching his little force, he advanced against the enemy. The Hebrews who had deserted to the Philistines, strong and courageous to push the battle against the foe. And then to confirm this inconsiderate prohibition by a solemn oath showed Saul to be both rash and profane. Such a course could not be prompted by a zeal for the glory of God. The king declares his object to be, not "that the Lord may be avenged on his enemies," but only "that I may be avenged on mine enemies." Verse 24. Yet the fact was, that Saul had no real share in the battle; the victory had been virtually gained without his knowledge or co-operation.

Fearing the kings displeasure, the soldiers refrained from partaking of the spoil of their enemies, and even from eating the wild honey which was found in great abundance as they passed through a forest. But Jonathan was ignorant of his father's prohibition, and unwittingly transgressed by eating a little of the honey.

In the evening, being hungry, and faint with labor, many of the people hastily swelled the cattle which they had taken, and ate the flesh with the blood, contrary to the law. Thus did Saul's injudicious severity lead to disregard of the divine command. When, however, the monarch learned that was

Those who in early life cherish a sacred regard for the authority of God, and who faithfully perform the duties of their position, will be prepared for higher service in after years

now joined their fellow countrymen; great numbers also came out of their lurking-places, and as the Philistines fled, desemted, Saul's army committed terrible havoc upon the fugitives.

When Saul beheld the Philistines fleeing in terror from Michmash, he determined to make the most of his advantage. To avoid unnecessary delay, he forbade the pursuers to partake of food for the entire day, enforcing his command by the solemn imprecation, "Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies." Verse 24

The king might properly have warned his soldiers not to waste time in feasting upon the spoil of their enemies; but to deprive them of food for a whole day was unwise in the extreme. The long abstinence rendered them weak and exhausted at the very time when they should have been going on, he interposed his authority, and directed that a sacrifice be first offered unto the Lord, and then the animals be properly slaughtered and the blood separated, as the Mosaic law required.

When the people had satisfied their hunger, Saul proposed to continue the pursuit that night; but the priest suggested that it would be wiser first to ask counsel of God. This was done in the usual manner; but no answer came. Regarding this silence as a token of the Lord's displeasure, Saul determined to discover the cause. Had he properly realized the sinfulness of his own course, he would have concluded that he himself was the guilty one. But failing to discern this, he gave command that the matter be decided by lot. "Draw ye near hither, all ye chief of the people; and know and see wherein this sin hath been this day. For, as the Lord liveth, which saveth Israel,
though it were Jonathan my son, he shall surely die." Verses 38-39. The people listened in silence, their hearts thrilled with fear, as they saw the rash, impetuous spirit of their king.

Again the monarch commanded, "Be ye on one side, and I and my son Jonathan on the other." Verse 40. The lot was cast; it fell upon Saul and Jonathan. Again it was cast, and Jonathan was taken. The Lord was pleased that the course of Jonathan should be brought to light, to manifest more fully the spirit of Saul. Thus the people would be led to see their great error in rejecting the government which God had given them. They had exchanged the pious prophet whose prayers had brought down blessings, for a king who in his blind zeal had prayed for a curse upon them.

When the lot fell upon Jonathan, the king demanded with great sternness, "What hast thou done?" Jonathan replied frankly, acknowledging the act, and deprecating the direful penalty. Now at last we might expect Saul to see and deplore his folly in making so rash a vow. Now, surely, paternal affection will rise superior to royal authority. But no; Saul wished his people to see that the justice of the king was superior to the affection of the father. He had not shared the honor of the victory; but he hoped now to secure honor by his zeal in maintaining the sacredness of his oath. Even at the sacrifice of his son, he would impress upon his subjects the fact that the royal authority must be maintained. How terribly significant the words which fell from that father's lips—"God do so, and more also; for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan." Verse 44.

At Gilgal, but a short time previous, Saul had presumed to officiate as priest, in direct violation of the command of God. When reproved by Samuel, he had stubbornly justified his own course. Now, upon the bare suspicion of sin in another—before the lots were cast—he had sworn that the offender should surely die; not considering whether the offense might not be a sin of ignorance, to be expiated by a sin-offering, instead of a willful transgression punishable with death.

When the offender is pointed out, and it is known that his only crime is the ignorant violation of an unreasonable requirement, the king and father coldly sentences his son to death. What a contrast between the boldness with which Saul himself violates the law of God and defies reproof, and the cruel severity manifested by him toward one whom God had honored!

The people refused to allow this unjust sentence to be carried into effect. They could see where the guilt belonged; that Saul himself was the one whom God was rebuking. Unheeding the anger of the king, they boldly declared, "Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day," Verse 45. Noble decision! wise and courageous people! The proud monarch dared not disregard this unanimous verdict, and the life of Jonathan was preserved.

Saul could but feel that his son was preferred before him, both by the people and by the Lord. Jonathan's deliverance was a severe reproof to the king's rashness. Honor and authority were dearer to him than justice, mercy, or benevolence.

The Lord bears long with the waywardness of the children of men, and grants to all ample opportunity to see and forsake their sins. Yet He will maintain His own glory, and care for His own people; whatever the course of the rebellious and backsliding. He may appear to prosper those who disregard His will and despise His warnings; but in His own time He will surely make manifest their folly.

By one wrong decision, men may subject themselves to untold perils. One mis-step may cost a lifetime of care, anxiety, and sorrow. Had not the men of Israel interposed to save the life of Jonathan, that intrepid warrior would have perished by the

There are many today, like Saul, bringing upon themselves the displeasure of God. They reject counsel and despise reproof. Even when convinced that the Lord is not with them, they refuse to see in themselves the cause of their trouble.

ness. He felt a presentiment that his curses would fall upon his own head. He did not longer continue the war with the Philistines, but returned to his home, moody and dissatisfied.

Those who are most ready to excuse or justify themselves in sin are often most severe in judging and condemning others. There are many today, like Saul, bringing upon themselves the displeasure of God. They reject counsel and despise reproof. Even when convinced that the Lord is not with them, they refuse to see in themselves the cause of their trouble. How many cherish a proud, boastful spirit, while they indulge in cruel judgment or severe rebuke of others really better in heart and life than they. Well would it be for such self-constituted judges to ponder those words of Christ: "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Matthew 7:2.

To exalt self, to glory in what we have done or what we can do, is proof of extreme ignorance or folly. Those who have an undue estimate of themselves are often brought into positions where their true character will be developed. It was thus in the case of Saul. His own course convinced the people that kingly decree of their chosen leader. With what misgivings must that people afterward have followed Saul's guidance! How bitter the thought that he had been placed upon the throne by their own act!

God's people of today are in danger of committing errors no less disastrous. We cannot, we must not, place blind confidence in any man, however high his profession of faith or his position in the church. We must not follow his guidance, unless the Word of God sustains him. The Lord would have His people individually distinguish between sin and righteousness, between the precious and the vile.

Those who labor faithfully and unselfishly in the cause of God should be highly esteemed for their works' sake. We may, like the children of Israel, be tempted to exchange the devoted, self-sacrificing laborer for one who appears more pleasing, but whose faith and steadfastness are yet untied. Let us beware how we manifest ingratitude or contempt for those whom God has made burden-bearers in His cause. Those who smile the soldiers of the cross are smiting the hand of God that covers them as a shield.

*The Signs of the Times*, vol. 1, 315-316 (August 10, 1882)
A Young Person's Views on Sabbath Observance

The Lord can work mightily through the young people of our church as well as the new converts if they will only be submissive to Him. We have such wonderful truths of the gospel to share. The following article was submitted to Our Firm Foundation by a young man, fourteen years old, who has been a Seventh-day Adventist for less than a year. May his love for the Sabbath, as evidenced by this article, flow over into your life.—The Editors

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:9-12. Inspiration tells us that “John was called to behold a people distinct from those who worship the beast and his image by keeping the first day of the week. The observance of this day is the mark of the beast.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 979. Notice here that Mrs. White said “distinct,” stressing that we have to be keeping Sabbath correctly and distinctly from Sundaykeepers.

Again Ellen White comments, “God has designated the seventh day as His Sabbath. Thus the distinction is drawn between the loyal and the disloyal. Those who desire to have the seal of God in their foreheads must keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. Thus they are distinguished from the disloyal, who have accepted a man-made institution in place of the true Sabbath. The observance of God’s rest day is a mark of distinction between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.” Ibid., 981. This quotation fully brings to our attention that if we do not keep the Sabbath in its entirety (doing just a little work now and then or maybe going into the Sabbath without preparation) we are in danger of missing the seal of God. Also, if the distinction is not very plain and we are lax or indifferent in our Sabbathkeeping, then we might have to drink of the “wine of the wrath of God.”

God called for reformation of Sabbath observance by Nehemiah during the time when Jerusalem was being restored and rebuilt (see Nehemiah 13:15-20; Prophets and Kings, 669-678), and in our day God calls for reform by our special last-day messenger.

“God has called us to uplift the standard of His downtrodden Sabbath. How important, then, that our example in Sabbathkeeping should be right! ... We must be guarded, lest the lax practices that prevail among Sundaykeepers shall be followed by those who profess to observe God’s holy rest day. The line of demarcation is to be made clear and distinct between those who bear the mark of God’s kingdom and those who bear the sign of the kingdom of rebellion.” Testimonies, vol. 6, 352-353

It is easy to see how important it is that we as Sabbathkeepers must keep the Sabbath in every point, for James 2:10 states: “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” How sad it is that “The Sabbath has not been kept. By some the work of six days has been carried into the seventh. One hour, and even more, has often been taken from the commencement and close of the Sab-

Cody Francis writes from Mt. Sterling, Iowa.
Preparation for the Sabbath

"While preparation for the Sabbath is to be made all through the week, Friday is to be the special preparation day." Ibid., 354

"On Friday let the preparation for the Sabbath be completed. See that all the clothing is in readiness and that all the cooking is done. Let the boots be blacked and the baths be taken. It is possible to do this. If you make it a rule you can do it. The Sabbath is not to be given to the repairing of garments, to the cooking of food, to pleasure seeking, or to any other worldly employment. Before the setting of the sun let all secular work be laid aside and all secular papers be put out of sight. Parents, explain your work and its purpose to your children, and let them share in your preparation to keep the Sabbath according to the commandment.

"There is another work that should receive attention on the preparation day. On this day all differences between brethren, whether in the family or in the church, should be put away. Let all bitterness and wrath and malice be expelled from the soul. In a humble spirit, 'confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.' James 5:16." Ibid., 355-356; all emphasis added by author

"Many need instruction as to how they should appear in the assembly for worship on the Sabbath. They are not to enter the presence of God in the common clothing worn during the week. All should have a special Sabbath suit, to be worn when attending service in God's house. While we should not conform to worldly fashions, we are not to be indifferent in regard to our outward appearance. We are to be neat and trim, though without adornment. The children of God should be pure within and without." Ibid., 355

"In many families [on Sabbath] boots and shoes are blacked and brushed, and stitches are taken, all because these little odd and ends were not done on Friday. They did not 'remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.'

"On Friday the clothing of the children is to be looked after. During the week they should be all laid out by their own hands under the direction of the mother, so that they can dress quietly, without any confusion or rushing about and hasty speeches." Child Guidance, 528

At family worship let the children take a part. Let all bring their Bibles and each read a verse or two. Then let some familiar hymn be sung, followed by prayer

During the Sabbath

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

The Lord has promised very rich blessings to those who keep the Sabbath in its entirety. I am sure that everyone will want these blessings promised in Isaiah 58. In order to receive these blessings, we must know how to keep the Sabbath. Because we must follow what we have learned, I feel it is important that every Seventh-day Adventist should have a knowledge of exactly how to keep the Sabbath.

"Before the Sabbath begins, the mind as well as the body should be withdrawn from worldly business. God has set His Sabbath at the end of the six working days, that men may stop and consider what they have gained during the week in preparation for the pure kingdom which admits no transgressor. We should each Sabbath reckon with our souls to see whether the week that has ended has brought spiritual gain or loss." Testimonies, vol. 356

"God has directed that the sick and suffering be cared for; the labor required to make them comfortable is a work of mercy, and no violation of the Sabbath; but all unnecessary work should be avoided. Many carelessly put off till the beginning of the Sabbath little things that might have been done on the day of preparation. This should not be. Work that is neglected until the beginning of the Sabbath should remain undone until it is past. This course might help the memory of these thoughtless ones, and make them careful to do their own work on the six working days." Patriarchs and Prophets, 296

"I was shown that there has been too much slackness in regard to the observance of the Sabbath. There has not been promptness to fulfill the secular duties within the six working days which God has given to man and carefulness not to infringe upon one hour of the holy, sacred time which He has reserved to Himself. There is no business of man's that should be considered of sufficient importance to cause him to transgress the fourth precept of Jehovah. There are cases in which Christ has given permission to labor even on the Sabbath in saving the life of men or of animals. But if we violate the letter of the fourth commandment for our own advantage from a pecuniary point of view we become Sabbathbreakers and are guilty of transgressing all the commandments, for if we offend in one point we are guilty of all." Testimonies, vol. 5, 531-532

At family worship let the children take a part. Let all bring their Bibles and each read a verse or two. Then let some familiar hymn be sung, followed by prayer

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Too often so large an amount of food is eaten on the Sabbath that the mind is rendered dull and stupid, incapable of appreciating spiritual things.

Eating has much to do with religion. If we eat right and do not eat too much of even healthful food, we will be better able to grasp spiritual truths. If we have defiled our temple of the Holy Spirit, we may not be able to receive His precious light. Yet we will still be held accountable for it. Eating right is especially important on the Sabbath:

“We should not provide for the Sabbath a more liberal supply or a greater variety of food than for other days. Instead of this, the food should be more simple, and less should be eaten, in order which involves eternal interests to be placed on a lower level than the temporal affairs of life.” Testimonies, vol. 6, 361

“None should permit themselves, through the week, to become so absorbed in their temporal interests, and so exhausted by their efforts for worldly gain, that on the Sabbath they have no strength or energy to give to the service of God.” Child Guidance, 530

I think that most of you know this counsel, but it is always good to review. (In fact, I hope that most of you already know everything in this article and are following it.) Nehemiah 13:16–17 reads, “There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which bought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the Sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. Then I contended with the nobles of Judah and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day?” You see, the people were buying on the Sabbath day and Nehemiah called it “profaning” the Sabbath. Thus, we can learn that we should not buy on the Sabbath, and if we do, we are profaning it.

Everything we say should be appropriate for the Sabbath, since Isaiah said, “nor speaking thine own words.” “Those who discuss business matters or lay plans on the Sabbath are regarded by God as though engaged in the actual transaction of business. To keep the Sabbath holy, we should not even allow our minds to dwell upon things of a worldly character. And the commandment includes all within our gates. The inmates of the house are to lay aside their worldly business during the sacred hours. All should unite to honor God by willing service upon His holy day,” Patriarchs and Prophets, 307–308

“God requires not only that we refrain from physical labor upon the Sabbath, but that the mind be disciplined to dwell upon sacred themes. The fourth commandment is virtually transgressed by conversing upon worldly things or by engaging in light and trifling conversation. Talking...
If all the counsel given is heeded, the Sabbath will definitely become a delight, and we will long for many more Sabbaths

should be put into the treasury of the Lord, to be used for the worthy poor, who need medical skill but cannot afford to pay for it.” Medical Ministry, 216

Children and the Sabbath

"Above everything, take care of your children upon the Sabbath. Do not let them violate it, for you may just as well violate it yourself as to let your children do it. When you suffer your children to play upon the Sabbath, God looks upon you as a commandment breaker. You transgress His Sabbath.” Selected Messages, book 3, 257

"I have found that on the Sabbath day many are indifferent and do not know where their children are or what they are doing.

“Parents, above everything take care of your children upon the Sabbath. Do not suffer them to violate God’s holy day by playing in the house or out-of-doors. You may just as well break the Sabbath yourselves as to let your children do it, and when you suffer your children to wander about and suffer them to play upon the Sabbath, God looks upon you as Sabbath-breakers.” Child Guidance, 533

“Fathers and mothers should make it a rule that their children attend public worship on the Sabbath, and should enforce the rule by their own example.” Ibid., 530

“Parents should explain to their children the things spoken from the pulpit, that they also may understand and have that knowledge which if put into practice brings abundant grace and peace.” Ibid., 531

“The Sabbath school and the meeting for worship occupy only a part of the Sabbath. The portion remaining to the family may be made the most sacred and precious season of all the Sabbath hours. Much of this time parents should spend with their children.

"In pleasant weather let parents walk with their children in the fields and groves. Amid the beautiful things of nature tell them the reason for the institution of the Sabbath. Describe to them God’s work of creation. . . . Show that it was sin which marred God’s perfect work; that thorns and thistles, sorrow and pain and death, are all the result of disobedience to God. Bid them see how the earth, though marred with the curse of sin, still reveals God’s goodness. . . .

"Tell them of the way of salvation; how ‘God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whomsoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ John 3:16. Let the sweet story of Bethlehem be repeated. Present before the children Jesus, as a child obedient to His parents, as a youth faithful and industrious, helping to sup-
port the family. Thus you can teach them that the Saviour knows the trials, perplexities, and temptations, the hopes and joys, of the young, and that He can give them sympathy and help. From time to time read with them the interesting stories in Bible history. Question as to what they have learned in the Sabbath school, and study with them the next Sabbath’s lesson.” Testimonies, vol. 6, 358-359

“Parents can and should give attention to their children, reading to them the most attractive portions of Bible history, educating them to reverence the Sabbath day, keeping it according to the commandment.” Child Guidance, 532

“The parents may take their children outdoors to view God in nature. . . .

“We are not to teach our children that they must not be happy on the Sabbath, that it is wrong to walk out-of-doors. Oh, no. Christ led His disciples out by the lakeside on the Sabbath day and taught them. His sermons on the Sabbath were not always preached within enclosed walls.” Ibid., 533-534

“As the sun goes down, let the voice of prayer and the hymn of praise mark the close of the sacred hours and invite God’s presence through the cares of the week of labor.

“Thus parents can make the Sabbath, as it should be, the most joyful day of the week. They can lead their children to regard it as a delight, the day of days, the holy of the Lord, honorable.” Testimonies, vol. 6, 359

“The Sabbath and the family were alike instituted in Eden, and in God’s purpose they are indissolubly linked together.” Child Guidance, 535

If all the counsel given is heeded, the Sabbath will definitely become a delight, and we will long for many more Sabbaths; but please, parents, do not let your children do as they please on the Sabbath: “Many of these youth have been allowed to transgress the Fourth Commandment, by seeking their own pleasure upon God’s holy day. . . . Many go where they please, and do what they please; and their parents are so fearful of displeasing them that, imitating the management of Eli, they lay no commands upon them.

“These youth finally lose all respect for the Sabbath and have no relish for religious meetings or for sacred and eternal things.” Ibid., 527

Let us all pray that we can be better Sabbathkeepers and that we will one day keep the Sabbath with Jesus in heaven.
So many misrepresentations and falsehoods concerning the ministry of Hope International are found in the November 5, Adventist Review insert entitled, "Issues: The Seventh-day Adventist Church and Certain Private Organizations," the book entitled "Issues: The Seventh-day Adventist Church and Certain Private Ministries," and the Newsbreak report entitled "NAD Action on Private Organizations," in the Adventist Review, December 3, 1992, that Hope International cannot, in good conscience, allow these false accusations to remain unchallenged and unanswered.

Brothers and sisters, the book "Issues: Clarified" has not been written for the purpose of retaliation, self-justification or self-preservation. Nor does this book claim infallibility on behalf of Hope International. This book does reject unequivocally the charge that forms the thesis of all three sources mentioned above, that Hope International is unnecessarily divisive and that we have started our own church.

The book "Issues: Clarified" has been written for the following three reasons:

1. To accurately and thoroughly clarify the many false charges made against this ministry from the above mentioned sources.

2. To clarify from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy the one and only basis for church authority and unity.

3. To clarify what are the real issues and problems facing the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In addition to a point-by-point clarification of specific accusations leveled against Hope International the book "Issues: Clarified" also includes the following:

• Appendix A: "A Declaration of the Fundamental Principles Taught and Practiced by Seventh-day Adventists." Battle Creek, Michigan, 1872

"Issues: Clarified"

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