I am amazed at the Adventist pioneers' grasp of the everlasting gospel, justification, and sanctification. Oh, how few of our people, even few of our pastors, understand these doctrines that the pioneers so powerfully presented! The Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy clearly define these doctrines, and we shall be without excuse if we do not incorporate these mighty truths into our Christian experience. Justification and sanctification are the two great pillars which uphold the three angels' messages.

"Christ and His righteousness—let this be our platform, the very life of our faith. "Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, 'It is the third angel's message in verity.'" Evangelism, 190.

"I saw a company who stood well guarded and firm, giving no countenance to those who would unsettle the established faith of the body. God looked upon them with approbation. I was shown three steps—the first, second, and third angels' messages. Said my accompanying angel, 'Woe to him who shall move a block or stir a pin of these messages. The true understanding of these messages is of vital importance. The destiny of souls hangs upon the manner in which they are received.' I was again brought down through these messages, and saw how dearly the people of God had purchased their experience. It had been obtained through much suffering and severe conflict. God had led them along step by step, until He had placed them upon a solid, immovable platform. I saw individuals approach the platform and examine the foundation. Some with rejoicing immediately stepped upon it. Others commenced to find fault with the foundation. They wished improvements made, and then the platform would be more perfect, and the people much happier. Some stepped off the platform to examine it and declared it to be laid wrong. But I saw that nearly all stood firm upon the platform and exhorted those who had stepped off to cease their complaints; for God was the Master Builder, and they were fighting against Him. They recounted the wonderful work of God, which had led them to the firm platform, and in union raised their eyes to heaven and with a loud voice glorified God. This affected some of those who had complained and left the platform, and they with humble look again stepped upon it." Early Writings, 258–259.

The three angels' messages are the distinctive truths that separate God's people, not only from the world but also from the other denominations. The doctrines of justification and sanctification that support the three angels' messages are rooted and grounded in the Word of God.

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

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 5:1.

"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." Romans 1:17.

"Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the Lord your God. And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the Lord which sanctify you." Leviticus 20:7–8.

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Corinthians 1:30.

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication." 1 Thessalonians 4:3.

"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." 2 Thessalonians 2:13.

The faith of Jesus is a gift of God that must be received by the sinner. The reception of this gift is achieved by the surrender of our will. Our salvation depends on the right exercise of our will. See Steps to Christ, 47.

"There is no genuine sanctification except through obedience to the truth. Those who love God with all the heart will love all His commandments also. The sanctified heart is in harmony with the precepts of God's law; for they are holy, just, and good. No one who truly loves and fears God will continue to transgress the law in any particular. When man transgresses he is under the condemnation of the law, and it becomes to him a yoke of bondage. Whatever his profession may be he is not justified, which means pardoned. 'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.' Psalm 19:17. Through obedience comes sanctification of body, soul, and spirit. This sanctification is a progressive work, and an advance from one stage of perfection to another." My Life Today, 250.

"We are to be brought into a sacred nearness with the world's Redeemer. We are to be one with Christ as He is one with the Father. What a wonderful change the people of God experience in coming into unity with the Son of God! We are to have our tastes, inclinations, ambitions, and passions all subdued, and brought into harmony with the mind and spirit of Christ. This is the very work that the Lord is willing to do for those who believe in Him." Ibid., 252.

We need to pray for heavenly discernment that we may understand that there are conditions whereupon our salvation rests. We also need to seek to meet these conditions by putting on the white raiment of Christ's righteousness as demonstrated by our obedience to all known truth. We need to acquire that faith that works by love and purifies the soul, that our lives may reflect Christ's character. We must recognize that not to receive and partake of these divine remedies is to reject the gift of salvation to our eternal loss. See Selected Messages, book 1, 366, 397.

Ron Spear, Editor
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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
triump in purity at the second coming of Christ. The fact 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.
Two Theological Streams

In the May 5, 1994, issue of the Adventist Review, Editor William Johnson presented the cover story entitled, "Seven Factors Fragmenting the Church." Of all the points that he made, perhaps the most significant was point number seven, entitled, "Two Theological Streams." Rightly, Elder Johnsson wrote, "The watershed in Adventist theology isn't, as some want to claim, 1956, when the church issued Questions on Doctrine. Not 1956, but 1888 saw the origin of two distinct theological streams."

While Elder Johnsson has certainly gone too far in saying that 1888 actually saw the origin of these two distinct theological streams, nevertheless, it is true that a present misunderstanding of that message is the root of two distinct streams today. It is thus to be recalled that Sister White supported the message of Christ our righteousness as presented by Dr. E. J. Waggoner. However, the leadership of the day overwhelmingly fought (sometimes fiercely) against this message.

The problem began while in the years prior to 1888, dedicated and sincere pastors and evangelists, noting the fact that the Protestant churches had rejected the perpetuity of the law and the special significance of the seventh-day Sabbath, preached the law and the Sabbath with great power. There is no question that many people were convinced by the unchallengeable arguments of the Word of God.

They were not wrong in sharing the biblical concept of the perpetuity of the law. Nor were they wrong in turning men and women to the great message of the Sabbath. However, they clearly were not presenting the message in all its fullness that God would have His people present.

It is plain from the Bible that there is no saving power in the law. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin... Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Romans 3:20, 28. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Galatians 2:16. The "deeds" and "works of the law" here mentioned are referring to man's own good deeds which are as filthy rags. This is not to say that obedience to the law as the result of Christ living His life of obedience in us is not essential for salvation. Thus we have such statements as: "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified" (Romans 2:13) and "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." James 2:24.

It is possible to arrive at an absolute knowledge of what is sin, and of what are its consequences, while never meeting the Saviour who alone has the remedy for sin. By being thus trained many precious souls are led into a legalistic concept of the role of human effort in salvation which leads to failure, discouragement, despondency, and even neurosis.

It was at the 1888 General Conference in Minneapolis, that the oppression of legalism was dissipated as by a summer breeze when Elder Waggoner emphasized the mighty power of the uplifted Christ. In describing this message, Sister White said: "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." Testimonies to Ministers, 91–92. All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.

Waggoner did not present a message designed to diminish the value of the commandments. "For we know that the law is spiritual." Romans 7:14. It is the law that leads us to Christ. We know that the law is
the very transcript of His character.

Nevertheless, the law alone has no saving power. That power alone is found in the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Many times the servant of the Lord expressed the problem that necessitated Waggoner's presentation at the Minneapolis conference. "The faith of Jesus has been overlooked and treated in an indifferent, careless manner. It has not occupied the prominent position in which it was revealed to John. Faith in Christ as the sinner's only hope has been largely left out, not only of the discourses given but of the religious experience of very many who claim to believe the third angel's message." Selected Messages, book 3, 168, "The third angel's message is the proclamation of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ. The commandments of God had been proclaimed, but the faith of Jesus Christ has not been proclaimed by Seventh-day Adventists as of equal importance, the law and the gospel going hand in hand. I cannot find language to express this subject in its fullness." Ibid., 172.

There is no way that God could have a people ready for the kingdom of heaven until this glorious message presenting the centrality of Christ was known, believed, lived, and preached by Seventh-day Adventists. Elder Johnsson is absolutely correct when he says that 1888, not 1956, was the key to the development of the two distinctive theological streams found today within Adventism. For had the great message of Christ our righteousness been accepted by God's people, then they never would have accepted the apostasy presented in Questions on Doctrine in 1956.

The book Questions on Doctrine represented the natural heart's response or backlash to the powerlessness of legalism. Of course, there are other responses. Some, who in dire anguish experience the repeated failures of their best human efforts, are led to, and even over, the brink of suicide. Others come to the conclusion that there is no hope for them, so they may as well enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season and accept the eternal consequences that follow. But a significant number, in their frustration, become easy prey to the concept of "sin and live." Thus, a rich harvest was reaped by those presenting this new theology in the 1970s and 80s. Frustrated legalists suddenly had hope again. Now they believed that they could be saved without living a life of victory. But how far this concept is from the truth of what Christ has done for us, and is eager to do within us! With its radiant clarity, the presentation of Paul in Romans 7 and 8 gives the only authentic Christian answer to man's sin problem.

The predicament of the man Paul describes is clear. "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." Romans 7:14. He knows, as we know, that a man living a life of carnality is sold to eternal destruction. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Romans 8:6. This man dearly wants the spiritual life. He is sincere and earnest, and is seemingly doing all he can to gain victory. But he has not found the key to victory. Thus he cries out, "Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Romans 7:17.

When we contrast this man with the man in Galatians 2:20, we see the difference between a legalist and a truly converted man. What a contrast! "It is not I, but Christ that liveth in me." Conversion is not to the law; conversion is to Jesus Christ. The Galatian experience is the experience of a man or a woman who has wholly surrendered his or her life to Jesus Christ.

The experience described in Romans 7:17 is the experience of earnest men and women who seek outside of the total surrender of their lives, to live lives of authentic Christians. Paul puts it clearly in Romans 7:24-25: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Paul clarifies this experience further: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:2-4.

Elder Johnsson is again absolutely correct in stating that "The two streams side; the other, the humans side without negating the divine. For one the key word is grace; for the other it is victory."

The message of 1888 was a message in which God's greatest truths were combined in total harmony and balance. It combined the... two key words with its message of victory through grace.

The message of 1888 was a message in which God's greatest truths were combined in total harmony and balance. It combined the above two key words with its message of victory through grace. This is the testimony that must go throughout the length and breadth of the world. It presents the law and the gospel, binding up the two in a perfect whole." Testimonies to Ministers, 94. "The soul-saving message, the third angel's message, is a message that is to be given to the world. The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus are both important, immensely important, and must be given with equal force and power." Selected Messages, book 3, 184.

To emphasize the law and victorious Christian living while neglecting the role of divine grace by means of which alone we can keep the law, results inevitably in legalism and the loss of the hope of salvation.

On the other hand, to emphasize grace while down-playing the role of God leads to antinomianism. Now, it is true that the antinomians are much happier, generally speaking, than the legalists, for they believe that they have the assurance of salvation while they continue in their sins. But tragically, at the judgment, they, like the legalists...
Elder Johnsson seems to find some tension in the thought that the human nature of Jesus and end-time perfection are linked together by Seventh-day Adventists. Of course they are linked together! They are vitally linked together. This fact is plainly stated by Paul: “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:3–4.

In another statement Elder Johnsson seems to have gone well beyond anything that we can observe among those who believe that Jesus took the fallen nature of man. He states, “Christ had to be exactly like us, they argue, in order that we might overcome sin as he overcame, thus attaining sinless perfection; and until we reach that state, Jesus cannot come back.”

Jesus does not have to be exactly like us; nor was He exactly like us. He was both the Son of God and the Son of Man from inception and birth. As to His human nature we are told:

“Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly life.”

Grace and victory are intimately linked together. It is through the grace of Jesus, and in the power of His gospel that weak, frail, helpless human beings are able to take hold of the power of God unto salvation.

ancethar. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life.” The Desire of Ages, 49.

“When Adam was assailed by the tempter, none of the effects of sin were upon him. He stood in the strength of perfect manhood, possessing the full vigor of mind and body. He was surrounded with the glories of Eden, and was in daily communion with heavenly beings. It was not thus with Jesus when He entered the wilderness to cope with Satan. For four thousand years the race had been decreasing in physical strength, in mental power, and in moral worth; and Christ took upon Him the infirmities of degenerate humanity. Only thus could He rescue man from the lowest depths of his degradation.” Ibid., 117.

“He [Christ] began life, passed through its experiences, and ended its record, with a sanctified human will.” Signs of the Times, October 29, 1894. Emphasis supplied.

“He [Christ] could have fallen, but not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 5, 1128. While we are born without a sanctified will, we obtain one at the new birth and through the power of Jesus Christ, “we need not retain one sinful propensity.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7A, 943. Once again, the incarnate Son of God is the center of man’s salvation.

Christ was like us only in that He took upon Himself our fallen nature. It was not natural to Him, as the Son of God, but He deigned to accept our fallen nature, a fact attested to by the servant of the Lord on many occasions.

“Notwithstanding that the sins of a guilty world were laid upon Christ, notwithstanding the humiliation of taking upon Himself our fallen nature, the voice from heaven declared him to be the Son of the eternal.” The Desire of Ages, 112. Emphasis added. “He would take man’s fallen nature,” Early Writings, 150.

“It was in the order of God that Christ should take upon Himself the form and nature of fallen man,” Spiritual Gifts, vol. 4, 115. Thus Paul could confidently say, “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like we are, yet without sin.” Hebrews 4:15. And it is because of this fact Peter could affirm “For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.” I Peter 2:21–22.

It is likely that Elder Johnsson is confusing the term “sinless perfection” with “perfectionism.” Sister White refers to perfectionism in Early Writings: “God will not entrust the care of His precious flock to men whose mind and judgment have been weakened by former errors that they have cherished, such as so-called perfectionism and Spiritualism, and who, by their course while in these errors, have disgraced themselves and brought reproach upon the cause of truth.” Early Writings, 101.

In commenting upon perfectionism, talking of the fanatical experience of some ancestors.
persons shortly after 1844 she elucidates, "They held that those who are sanctified cannot sin. And this naturally led to the belief that the affections and desires of the sanctified ones were always right, and never in danger of leading them into sin. Armed with these sophistries, they were practicing the worst sins under the garb of sanctification, and through their deceptive, mesmeric influence were gaining a strange power over some of their associates, who did not see the evil of these apparently beautiful but seductive theories." Early Writings, 301.

The concept of character perfection encomasses no such claims. God declared Job to be perfect. "And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?" Job 1:8. Yet Job recognized the abject danger of claiming perfection. "If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse. Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul: I would despise my life." Job 9:20-21.

Victorious Christian living is a day-by-day, moment by moment walking with Jesus. Victory today in no wise guarantees victory tomorrow. No one denies that one who has been walking in the perfect example of Jesus can very quickly lose that walk with Christ.

But if I understand the implications of Elder Johnsson's statement, he appears to be questioning whether victorious Christian living is a necessary prerequisite for the return of Jesus Christ. Certainly in the light of the Spirit of Prophecy, victorious Christian living is a necessary prerequisite for Christ's return. "When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own." Christ's Object Lessons, 69.

Alarming though Elder Johnsson's statements may be to this point, unquestionably much more alarming is his conclusion. Certainly at Hartland Institute we have never charged the "official church" with apostasy because it does not endorse the fallen nature of Christ. True there is deep apostasy within our church, and apostasy always stems from doctrinal deviation, but in no wise can we state that everyone in the church is apostate.

The differing views of the fallen and the unfallen nature of Christ run across both self-supporting and denominational workers. The concept of victorious Christian living is also found in both self-supporting and denominational work, as is the concept that God's people will continue to sin until Jesus comes. It is not a "you and us" situation as Elder Johnsson appears to present it. While it is true in the Western world that probably most church members do not believe in victorious Christian living, when all of the members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are included, it is likely that an overwhelming majority believe in victorious Christian living.

Elder Johnsson has missed the real issue. The real issue is truth versus error. And are, in many churches, the very backbone of those churches.

I do believe that some of those claiming to be self-supporting workers will one day separate from the Seventh-day Adventist Church, will become offshoots and go by the wayside. But an offshoot always follows a significant deviation from truth. Many of the vilified self-supporting institutions are in the vanguard of upholding the pillars of the Seventh-day Adventist faith.

I believe it is time to pray earnestly for both our denominational work and our

Certainly . . . victorious Christian living is a necessary prerequisite for Christ’s return.

"When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own."

The real issue is righteousness versus unrighteousness. The truth is that there is to be found apostasy and worldliness within self-supporting work, just as there is within denominational work. Satan has sought to attack all areas of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Elder Johnsson contemplates a very dangerous pathway when he seeks to vilify faithful, loyal, committed, supportive Seventh-day Adventists as "radical dissidents" who are "anti-authoritarian." It is plain that Elder Johnsson needs to review the divine establishment of denominational work along with self-supporting work. Self-supporting work is not a different denomination; it is not an off-shoot. Faithful self-supporting workers unite with all God's faithful people. They work unceasingly for God's remnant church self-supporting work, that God will bring them into a unity of the truth that sanctifies. A keen student of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy can but believe in the ultimate triumph of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In the meantime, we are facing a terrible shaking that will sift both ministry and laity, but will end with all God's faithful people being united. We do not need to attempt to pull up the tares. The angels will do that at the time of the harvest. They will make no mistakes. We must pray for one another and work together for the finishing of the gospel commission and the hastening of the return of Jesus Christ. I believe when faithful ministers and faithful laity link hands together, then we will be right on the very borders of Canaan. May this goal be that of every true-hearted Seventh-day Adventist.
Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people. My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arm shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness [which is His holy law, the transcript of His character] shall not be abolished. Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.” Isaiah 51:4–8. The whole of the fifty-first chapter of Isaiah is worthy of close, earnest study, and we would do well to commit it to memory. It has a special application to those who are living in the last days.

“And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you. If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the Lord of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart.” Malachi 2:1–2. “The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy. . . . Turn ye not unto idols. . . . I am the Lord your God.” Leviticus 19:1–2, 4.

The Lord requires of all who claim to be His people far more than they give Him. He demands that all who claim to believe on Christ shall reveal to the world, in their lives, that Christianity which was exemplified in His life and character. If the Word of God is enshrined in their hearts, they will make manifest the power and purity of the gospel. A practical example of the power of the gospel in the daily life is of much more value to the world than sermons or professions of godliness that are not accompanied by good works. Let all who name the name of Christ remember that, individually, they are making an impression, favorable or unfavorable to Bible religion, on the minds of all with whom they come in contact.

Christ declared: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind. . . . This do, and thou shalt live.” Luke 10:27–28. This commandment, which He gave when enshrined in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, He again lays down as the condition of eternal life.

In Leviticus 19 are recorded words given by Christ to Moses to speak to the children of Israel. Read what the people of God in ancient times were commanded to do, and what not to do; for these are the principles contained in the royal law: “Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.” Verse 15. Personal preferences and partiality are not to appear in the life-practice of the Christian.

“Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord.” Verse 18. “The stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure. Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin,
shall ye have: I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt. Therefore shall ye observe all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: I am the Lord.” Verses 34-37. “Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the Lord your God. And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the Lord which sanctify you.” Leviticus 20:7-8. “And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.” Verse 26. “Ye shall observe to do therefore as the Lord your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. Ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess.” Deuteronomy 5:32-33.

Here is shown the work of the minister of righteousness: “The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.” Malachi 2:6-7. But a solemn charge is made by the God of Israel: “Ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts. Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law. Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers? Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the Lord which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god. The Lord will cut off the man that doeth this, the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering unto the Lord of hosts. And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand. . . . Ye have wearied the Lord with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?” Verses 8-17.

The words of the Lord in Malachi 3:1-3 lay down the work essential to be done in the church of God: “Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purge the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.” A message which is as a two-edged sword must be given to the people, to clear away the evils that are seen among them. A living testimony that will awaken the paralyzed conscience is to be borne.

“And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts.” Verse 5. All the sins here specified have been coming in among the people who claim to be the people of God; and it is high time that there was a reformation, a transformation, of character. Who among us, who are called commandment-keepers, have been “partial in the law,” neglecting the living principles which are a transcript of the character of God? Has not the imperfect example of those who have departed from the law of God caused many to stumble at the law? “Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law.” Malachi 2:9.

The Lord commands His people, “Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.” Leviticus 19:17. Here faithful dealing with the sins of those who claim to be children of God is enjoined. Be they men in the most humble condition, or men entrusted with power and responsibility, no partiality is to be shown to those in the wrong; no hypocrisy is to be practiced in dealing with them. If a man’s position involves sacred interests, God’s watchmen are to be the more earnest and faithful in dealing with him. Not one evil principle will pass...
over the face of the whole earth; for every one that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side according to it; and every one that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side according to it. I will bring it forth, saith the Lord of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief; and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof.” Zechariah 5:1-4.

In our dealings with our fellow men, as well as in our relations with God, we all their period of probation. And even when they shall refuse His warnings, His righteousness; when they continue to sin in the face of light and evidence, still He will not break forth upon them in His great anger. He leaves all judgment to His Son, whom He gave as a sin offering for the world.

God has a yearning desire to save the purchase of the blood of Christ from the sure result of a wrong course of action; for sin, if persisted in, will bring upon them the wrath of the rejected Lamb. Mercy, rich and free, is presented in the gift of Christ's righteousness. Those who scorn this precious gift, who despise and reject the Saviour, who refuse the invitation, “Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me,” (Isaiah 27:5) reject the offer of the attributes of character which will constitute them sons and daughters of God. For “as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name [What name?]—Immanuel, the Son of God;” which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” John 1:12-14.

The Word is our Instructor. All who will be doers of the Word, in sincerity and truth, will behold His glory—"the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” Verse 14. Then there is indeed a new birth, a transformation of character.

All who will be doers of the Word, in sincerity and truth, will behold His glory—“the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” Verse 14. Then there is indeed a new birth, a transformation of character. "Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." Verse 16. This makes us living epistles, "known and read of all men." "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 on the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” John 3:33–36.

"It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.” Lamentations 3:22–23. “Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts.” Malachi 3:7.

This is the message which must be proclaimed; “Return unto me, and I will return unto you.” “But ye said, Wherein shall we return?” God gives His people reproofs, warnings, and instruction, because there is a manifest neglect of righteous principles. He sends messengers to bear to the churches His reproofs and warnings, that their wrongs may be corrected. He gives the invitation, “Return unto me, and I will return unto you,” and yet self-vindication is shown in the words, “Wherein shall we return?”

The reproof and warning promise of the Lord are given in definite language in Malachi 3:8: “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee?” The Lord answers, “In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.” Verses 8–9. The Lord of Heaven challenges those whom He has supplied with His bounties to prove Him. “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” Verse 10.

This message has lost none of its force. It is just as fresh in its importance as God’s gifts are fresh and continual. There is no difficulty in understanding our duty in the light of this message, given through God’s holy prophet. We are not left to stumble along in darkness and disobedience. The truth is plainly stated, and it can be clearly understood by all who wish to be honest in the sight of God. A tithe of all our income is the Lord’s. He lays His hand upon that portion which He has specified that we shall return to Him, and says, I allow you to use my bounties after you have laid aside the tenth, and have come before Me with gifts and offerings.

The Lord calls for His tithe to be given into His treasury. Strictly, honestly, and
faithfully, let this portion be returned to Him. Besides this, He calls for your gifts and offerings. No one is compelled to present His tithe or His gifts and offerings to the Lord. But just as surely as God's Word is given to us, just so surely will He require His own with usury at the hand of every human being. If men are unfaithful in rendering to God His own, if they disregard God's charge to His stewards, they will not long have the blessing of that which the Lord has entrusted to them.

"Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? Ye have said, It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully [in black] before the Lord of hosts?" Verses 13-14. God does not require His people to do this. Christ is the light of the world, and He says, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12. But the mournful complaint continues: "And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered." Malachi 3:15. This is the language of a soul in darkness. The condition here revealed is the sure result of disobedience. Those who make the complaint are neglecting their obligation to give to the Lord His own. It is because so little heed is given to the Lord's special injunctions that darkness and temptation and trial are brought upon the church.

The tithe is set apart for a special use. It is not to be regarded as a poor fund. It is to be especially devoted to the support of those who are bearing God's message to the world; and it should not be diverted from this purpose.

The great object of our work is to carry the light to those who are in darkness. Our work is worldwide. God's delegated messengers are not to hover about the people who have been long in the truth. Altogether too much labor is devoted to the churches. God's people are not to depend on others to do their work for them. Let the Lord's messengers carry the triumphs of the cross into the regions beyond, calling upon the members of the church to send their prayers as sharp sickles into the harvest field. Let the church appoint pastors or elders who are devoted to the Lord Jesus, and let these men see that officers are chosen who will attend faithfully to the work of gathering in the tithe. If the pastors show that they are not fitted for their charge, if they fail to set before the church the importance of returning to God His own, if they do not see to it that the officers under them are faithful, and that the tithe is brought in, they are in peril. They are neglecting a matter which involves a blessing or a curse to the church. They should be relieved of their responsibility, and other men should be tested and tried.

The Lord's messengers should see that His requirements are faithfully discharged by the members of the churches. God says that there should be meat in His house, and if the money in the treasury is tampered with, if it is regarded as right for individuals to make what use they please of the tithe, the Lord cannot bless. He cannot sustain those who think that they can do as they please with that which is His.

The Lord has given to every man his work. His servants are to act in partnership with Him. If they choose, men may refuse to connect themselves with their Maker; they may refuse to give themselves to His service, and trade upon His entrusted goods; they may fail to exercise frugality and self-denial, and may forget that the Lord requires a return of what He has given them. All such are unfaithful stewards. A faithful steward will do all he possibly can in the service of God; the one object before him will be the great need of the world. He will realize that the message of truth is to be given, not only in his own neighborhood, but also in the regions beyond. When men cherish this spirit, the love of the truth and the sanctification they receive through the truth, will banish avarice, overreaching, and every species of dishonesty.

It will not be long before probation will close. If you do not now serve the Lord with fidelity, how will you meet the record of your unfaithful dealing? Not long hence, a call will be made for a settlement of accounts, and you will be asked, "How much owest thou unto my lord?" Luke 16:5. If you have refused to deal honestly with God, I beseech you to think of your deficiency, and if possible to make restitution. If this cannot be done, in humble penitence pray that God for Christ's sake will pardon your great debt. Begin now to act like Christians. Make no excuse for failing to give the Lord His own. Now, while mercy's sweet voice is still heard, while it is not yet too late for wrongs to be righted, while it is called today, if ye will hear His voice, 

God calls for fathers, mothers, and children to become partners with Him in the great work of rescuing their own souls from Satan's power. Let them unite with Christ, and strive with heart and mind and strength to save themselves through faith. When through the grace of Christ you have been converted, God calls upon you to wear His yoke, and labor in His lines to save other souls who are bound up with Satan, and who do not realize their peril. Hear me, for Christ's sake, hear me. The season of God's mercy will soon be ended. The call for sinners to repent and be converted will soon be heard no more. That God whose invitation you have refused, that Saviour whose Spirit you have grieved and insulted, will soon rise in His anger to punish transgressors. Dare we think what the wrath of the Lamb means?

The great object of our work is to carry the light to those who are in darkness. Our work is worldwide. God's delegated messengers are not to hover about the people who have been long in the truth.

Every day you remain in sin you are grieving God by your impenitence. Will you not remember that the time is just upon you when the last day of mercy will come? Then God will rise up out of His place to punish the world for its iniquity. Then the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her stain. The clouds of wrath which have been gathering will burst with pitiless fury upon the world. I beg of you who shall read these words to hear for your soul's sake. Venture not one step further in your impenitence. "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little." Psalm 2:12.

Review and Herald, December 1, 1896.
Fanaticism in Diet

Without question, the health reform message has suffered dire neglect in the contemporary Adventist Church. Despite weekly reports on network news offering fresh vindication of the counsel God gave to us a hundred years ago, many of us continue to de-emphasize this topic for fear of falling victim to the label of "legalism." Perhaps the late Walter Martin best epitomized this mentality in a lecture on Adventism more than ten years ago, in which he distorted the message of Romans 14 as implying that Adventists should "get off the day boat, get off the food boat, and get on the love boat." (Strangely enough, when Dr. Martin himself got sick several years later, he ended up at Weimar.)

Former Newsweek editor Larry Martz, in his book on the fall of televangelist Jim Bakker, described Bakker's Heritage USA complex in South Carolina as including "candy and ice cream shops to cater to the one vice that evangelicals seem to embrace without shame." How sad that many Seventh-day Adventists, who have God's health message, do not seem to be much different.

At the same time, Ellen White's writings contain some very strong warnings against dietary extremism. Sad to say, such extremism seems to have become a problem within the historic Adventist ranks. Several years ago a pastor-friend of mine, very much a historic Adventist, spoke to me of how some of his historic Adventist Church members were disrupting his congregation by insisting that all Adventists should give up extracted oils and white bread. The obsession of these persons with issues of this kind caused my friend to refer to their theology as "righteousness by food." More recently another pastor spoke of how his conference president, also a historic Adventist, had expressed concern at the way some conservative members were in the habit of visiting church potlucks and denouncing congregations if any free fats or dairy products were being served.

We will address each of the issues cited above as they relate to the health reform message found in Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy. It is certainly not this article's purpose to downplay the necessity or significance of health reform. Neither is it my purpose to belabor the indispensable importance of maintaining the right spirit whenever we summon God's people to higher ground.

The principles of fanaticism as addressed in this article transcend the issue of whether or not one has the right spirit. Indeed, history gives examples of many persons who promoted and practiced extreme lifestyles, yet who presented a very gracious spirit in so doing. I think of the medieval monk Bernard of Clairvaux, who wrote two of the most beautiful hymns in our Adventist hymnal, "Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts" and "Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee." It would be hard to describe Bernard as anything but a loving and sincere Christian. Yet it would be equally hard to describe the monastic lifestyle he pursued and the system which promoted it as anything but fanaticism.

The sacred record is clear that faithfulness to the commands of God virtually assures one of being tagged with the fanatic label. The scoffers and thought leaders of Noah's day assured the multiitudes of that time: "Be at peace; fear not. Noah is a wild fanatic." Jesus Himself was seen in this light by His youthful associates, who Ellen White says "pronounced Him narrow and strait-laced." Little wonder that she writes elsewhere, "When we reach the standard that the Lord would have us reach, worldlings will regard Seventh-day Adventists as odd, singular, strait-laced extremists." Certainly it is safe to conclude that many of the worldlings described in this passage can be found within the church.

This fact makes it all the more crucial for us to correctly identify true fanaticism and proceed to purge it from our witness as reformers. Two specific features of fanaticism are the focus of this discussion:

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1. Teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men

We all remember Christ's declaration concerning the Jews: "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:9. We need to notice carefully what Jesus says in this verse, and what He does not say. He does not forbid, under any and all circumstances, the teaching of human ideas. God does not do our thinking for us. Events and issues do at times require us to use our own sanctified judgment in applying a larger principle to a specific situation. Of course, inspired counsel often makes these applications for us. But not always. In such matters our own wisdom and discernment, guided by the Holy Spirit, must be called upon.

What Jesus does forbid is the teaching of human ideas for doctrines. In other words, the judgments we render in the situations described above should not be made an absolute standard for others. Ellen White offers the following warning to the church on this point:

"From the light given me of the Lord, men will arise speaking perverse things... They already have been working and speaking things which God has never revealed, bringing sacred truth upon a level with common things. Issues have been and will continue to be made of men's conceived fallacies, not of truth. The devisings of men's minds will invent tests that are no tests at all, that when the true test shall be made prominent, it shall be considered on a par with the man-made tests that have been of no value. We may expect that everything will be brought in and mingled with sound doctrine, but by clear, spiritual discernment, by the heavenly anointing, we must distinguish the sacred from the common which is being brought in to confuse faith and sound judgment, and demerit the great, grand testing truth for this time."

It is fair to say that even sanctified judgment, as we described it earlier, can fall victim to a conceited fallacy if it permits an issue to become normative in the absence of a plain "Thus saith the Lord." (The word normative in this context refers not simply to tests of fellowship, but to any standard of conduct based on the Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy.) The damage thus inflicted on the work and prosperity of the church is painful and often far-reaching. Not a few who have rejected the faith and lifestyle of historic Adventists have done so, not because of issues raised by inspired counsel, but because of man-made standards mistakenly promoted as sacred.

2. Mistaking "Holier, Holier Still" as Meaning "Stricter, Stricter Still"

This assumption is often a basic one of those who teach for doctrines the commandments of men. Many who do so are not merely seeking to bind heavy burdens on people for no good reason. Rather, they correctly believe that the upward path of sanctification requires more and more self-discipline, and thus they conclude that the stricter they become with themselves and with others, the holier they become. Such persons soon decide, like the Pharisees of old, that following the counsel of Inspiration is not enough. They assume that it is not enough, for example, simply to follow the health-reform message as revealed in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. For the truly sanctified, so the thinking goes, more and more restriction is necessary. Those not following this ever-accelerating path of restriction are looked upon as less sanctified than those who do. The modern prophet tells what happened to the Jews of Christ's time when they followed this recipe for holiness:

"With all their minute and burdensome injunctions, it was an impossibility to keep the law. Those who desired to serve God, and who tried to observe the rabbinical precepts, toiled under a heavy burden. They could find no rest from the accusings of a troubled conscience. Thus Satan worked to discourage the people, to lower their conception of the character of God, and to bring the faith of Israel into contempt. He hoped to establish the claim put forth when he rebelled in heaven—that the requirements of God were unjust, and could not be obeyed. Even Israel, he declared, did not keep the law."

How sad that zeal for God's law should actually result in bolstering Satan's attacks against the law! But we need to ask ourselves whether, in some respects, historic Adventists have at times pursued a similar course.

With these principles in mind, let us examine three areas where, in the present writer's view, modern Adventist health reformers need to exercise caution.

The No-Oil Diet

The attempt by some to expunge all free fats from the Adventist diet became a well-publicized crusade in the late 1970s. We should clarify from the outset that the issue here is not whether abstinence from visible fats might have some hygienic value, especially as a mechanism for weight loss. Rather, the issue before us is whether total abstinence from all free oils is upheld by inspired writings as a standard for the church.

The devisings of men's minds will invent tests that are no tests at all, that when the true test shall be made prominent, it shall be considered on a par with the man-made tests that have been of no value.

No one has claimed support for the no-oil diet in Scripture. But some have claimed the existence of such support in the Spirit of Prophecy. Let us examine the evidence they have produced.

The claim is set forth that because Ellen White stresses the need to return to man's original diet, refined products such as oil should not be used. But Ellen White defines specifically what she means by the original diet in the following statement:

"Again and again I have been shown that God is bringing His people back to His original design, that is, not to subsist upon the flesh of dead animals."

In other words, the original diet here referred to by Ellen White is one devoid of flesh meat. If we understand Ellen White's "original diet" statements as implying abstinence from all refined foods, we find ourselves at variance with some of her other statements. For example, Ellen White says that white bread may at times be used, and that some sugar is permissible as well. She also says that a certain amount of salt is needed in the diet. A careful reading of her statements about salt and sugar makes clear that she is not speaking of the natural presence of these items in various foods, as some have claimed. She is plainly talking about the
disciplined use of the extracted products we know on our tables as salt and sugar.

We cannot force Ellen White’s original-diet statements to say more than the context and consensus of her writings indicate. Total abstinence from refined products such as oil and sugar is simply not the focus of these statements.

Some have said that Ellen White’s statements against the use of “grease” are in fact a prohibition against all visible fats. But again, this understanding contradicts other Ellen White statements, such as those speaking of using butter for cooking purposes. It should be noted that these favorable statements about butter were made after her strong warnings against grease.

Concerning vegetable preparation, she writes elsewhere, “Vegetables should be made palatable with a little milk or cream, or something equivalent.” She also states, regarding vegetables prepared only with water: “This kind of cookery is health deform” rather than health reform. The debate surrounding Ellen White’s “grease” statements is easily resolved by looking at a Webster’s Dictionary of 1877, which defines grease as animal fats, such as lard. This definition not only harmonizes with the use of this term in Ellen White’s time but it also harmonizes with Ellen White’s other statements, as we have seen.

Still others have referred us to Ellen White’s statement that “the oil, as eaten in the olive, is far preferable to animal oil or fat.” The assumption is thus made that while Ellen White supports the use of olive oil while it remains in the olive, she forbids its use once the oil is extracted. But we need to look at this sentence in context. Here is the whole paragraph:

“... When properly prepared, olives, like nuts, supply the place of butter and flesh meats. The oil, as eaten in the olive, is far preferable to animal oil or fat. It serves as a laxative. Its use will be found beneficial to consumptives, and it is healing to an inflamed, irritated stomach.”

The “it” in the last two sentences obviously refers to the oil and not to the olives, and is clearly a reference to the use of this oil in cooking, not just for medicinal purposes. This is why she speaks of it being “beneficial to consumptives”—a clear reference to its value in food preparation. Neither this nor any other inspired statement can be properly construed to support total abstinence from extracted oils.

Ellen White’s statement that fruits, grains, nuts, and vegetables, “prepared in

No one is denying the value in some cases of abstaining from free fats. But to make total abstinence from visible fats a normative standard on a par with the counsels of Inspiration is a serious mistake.

The church should never permit itself to be divided by arguments between nutritionists. Only standards based on a plain “thus saith the Lord” are worth risking disagreement over.

As we stated earlier, no one is denying the value in some cases of abstaining from free fats. Neither are we denying that our intake of fats should be limited. But to make total abstinence from visible fats a normative standard on a par with the counsels of Inspiration is a serious mistake. If historic Adventists provoke hostility from other church members by dogmatically promoting such uninspired rules, it is hard not to conclude that they have created their own trouble.

To be Continued

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11 Ibid, 334.
13 Ibid, 207.
14 Ibid, 488.
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"Those who have but a partial understanding of the principles of reform are often the most rigid, not only in carrying out their views themselves, but in urging them on their families and their neighbors. The effect of their mistaken reforms, as seen in their own ill-health, and their efforts to force their views upon others, give many a false idea of dietetic reform, and lead them to reject it altogether," Counsels on Diet and Foods, 198
I am writing to you, for I am interested in learning about you as much as possible. I have learned by reference that you have an excellent work related to Ellen White; and this is a subject that interests me a great deal, for it has been greatly distorted by some very influential thinkers. On the other hand, I want to tell you that I have plans, with a group of Adventist youth here, to create a center for the spreading of the thoughts and the works of Ellen White. Maybe you can help me in this respect if it is possible; it would be a great help for us Cubans.

Cuba

We are thankful for Firm Foundation, for it brings our minds back to Christ and instills in our hearts the desire to be more like Him and to keep all His commandments.

MP, Texas

I hope Jesus comes soon. I want to weep every time I go to church. I see much worldliness in it—makeup, jewelry, rings, short dresses, pant suits, and rompers. I pray for the church, but the problems seem to worsen. I pray for your work and hope God blesses you.

MW, Washington

Enclosed is a check for $100. I am sorry that I cannot send more at this time. I thoroughly enjoy Our Firm Foundation and consider it to be one of the very best of all publications put out by any of the independent ministries.

It has been at least five years since we have had a message of any kind based on the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy preached from the pulpit in our local church.

Our Firm Foundation, therefore, fills a very special void in the carrying forth of the work the church should be doing. I pray that you may be able to continue your work in like manner as you have in the past and the present.

KE, California

I want to tell you how much I appreciated the Delaware, Ohio, camp meeting. I had really felt discouraged before camp meeting, but I certainly received the blessing I came for.

AW, North Carolina

I hope you saw encouragement in the Sabbath school lesson last quarter. I look upon your ministry as a Jeremiah-type of ministry. As you know from experience, doing the Lord's will often is unpopular and involves bearing a cross. Keep looking up! Jesus is coming soon!

DC, Oregon

A very faithful brother invited me to one of your meetings. It was a great blessing to me, for I realized what God wants from me. It saddens me that in fourteen years of being an Adventist I didn't know what God really wants of His children. I know that I have lost a lot of time and that I have not taught my family that which is correct. I need God's help and your prayers for me and for my family that we may do God's will.

MA, California

We know your ministry has brought hope to thousands of Seventh-day Adventists who were confused about the issues of the church.

We pray that you will continue to point the people to Christ and the wonderful truths He has presented through the Spirit of Prophecy. We must unite our efforts and give each other support in these unstable times in which we are living. To keep the blessed hope before us and be shining lights in a dark world should be our objective.

We are thankful for Christian fellow workers who stand firm for the standards of the Bible. May God be your helper and Counselor.

TH, Texas

Greetings from India in the holy name of our Lord Jesus. Perhaps you may be surprised over this letter coming from another corner of the world. I write this to thank each and every one, especially you for sending me the January 1990 through October 1990 issues of Our Firm Foundation. I sent a letter requesting used or back issues of this good magazine. Many thanks once again for your promptness and generosity.

You see, I am a Catholic. Naturally I cannot agree with every article that appears in your magazine. However, there are very thought-provoking articles, worthwhile reading. I should say worth studying with great attention.

I have read about Seventh-day Adventists from a book entitled Religions of the World. It deals with nineteen major religions of the world. If you think this book will be of use to you, I will be glad to post a new book to you. I am enclosing herewith some religious tracts for you. I hope they will interest you.

GM, India

Responses From Evangelistic Literature

I have never read a more interesting paper than yours. I loved it! I am sure not many people would agree with it or understand it.

I have always believed in the seventh-day Sabbath, the one you agree with. I had a wonderful dad who followed the Bible laws all my life.

People do not want to heed warnings. Nor listen to truth. Your paper is a good way to open their eyes... I am glad there is a paper like yours. Many people already know what lies ahead for the world. Please send any future issues to me.

BJ, New Jersey

Greetings to you from Bloemfontein, South Africa. Things are moving in South Africa as far as the work of the Lord is concerned. With the many changes taking place in this country, it has become "ripe" for the harvest.

I received a copy of your booklet, World Peace or Final War [now entitled Heralds of Peace]. I was wondering if you could send me a box of 100 copies. I would really appreciate this very much. They could really be put to very good use.

BH, South Africa
The Sanctuary

Part 4

2. Is the Land of Canaan the Sanctuary?

The arguments which show that the earth is not the sanctuary of the new covenant, bear with equal force against the view which would claim that honor for the land of Canaan. But as there are, out of the 146 times of occurrence of the word sanctuary in the Bible, some two or three texts which are urged in favor of this view, we will examine them and see if they will bear the meaning which they have been supposed to convey. The first, Exodus 15:17, reads as follows: “Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established.” Before it is decided, however, that this text fixes the application of the sanctuary to the land of Canaan, let the psalmist’s commentary on this very passage be taken into consideration. He says; “And he led them on safely, so that they feared not; but the sea overwhelmed their enemies. And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary, even to this mountain which his right hand had purchased. . . . And he built his sanctuary like high palaces, like the earth which he hath established forever.” Psalm 78:53–54, 69.

It will be observed that here David speaks of the same events to which Moses referred. There is just this difference in their records; what Moses writes is a prediction. The psalmist, living after the events had been fulfilled, speaks of them as a matter of history. Now what David gives as a fulfillment will surely be a good and safe commentary on the prediction; and while Moses did not say that the mountain of God’s inheritance was the sanctuary, the psalmist plainly declares that that mountain was only the border of the sanctuary, and that there God built His sanctuary like high palaces, like the earth which He hath established forever. That any one in view of this language should confound the sanctuary with the mountain on which it was built, is a marvelous exhibition of mental confusion.

Listen also to the distinction between the land of Canaan and the sanctuary as pointed out by a king of Judah: “Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever? And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying, If, when evil cometh upon us; as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence (for thy name is in this house), and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help.” 2 Chronicles 20:7–9.

There is another text claimed by some as proof that Canaan is the sanctuary: Isaiah 63:18, “The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.” It is by no means certain that the land is here referred to, since anything else may be trodden down as well as the land. Nothing therefore but an inference can be drawn from it: and there is one plain fact which is sufficient to annihilate the claim: When God’s people were driven out of the land of Canaan (as the prophet here predicts, using the past tense for the future) they were not only dispossessed of their inheritance, but the sanctuary of God built in that land was laid in ruins. This fact is plainly stated in 2 Chronicles 36:17–20, which divests the passage of all mystery.

Only one text more remains to be urged in favor of the land of Canaan. As such we present it. “The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.” Isaiah 60:13. Had the distinction ever been kept in view, between the sanctuary and the place of the sanctuary, we should have had no occasion to notice this text. But if people persist in ignoring this distinction, we would remind them that the same text calls the place of the sanctuary, the place of the Lord’s feet also; and if by being the place of the sanctuary it becomes the sanctuary itself, by being the place of His

James White, husband of Ellen White, was ten years president of the General Conference as well as editor of several church publications.
feet, it becomes, by parity of reasoning, His feet also. When any just grounds can be shown for avoiding this conclusion, it will be time to notice the passage further. We can only conclude then, that the land of Canaan is not the sanctuary, but that it is simply the place where the typical sanctuary was located.

3. Is the Church the Sanctuary?

We answer, It is not. Do you ask for our reasons? One fact alone is sufficient to annihilate the idea: It is never once in the Word of God called the sanctuary. Another definite object is invariably called the sanctuary, and the church is uniformly connected with that object as the host or worshippers; the sanctuary itself being the place of that worship, or toward which their prayer was directed. There is one text that may be urged on this point and we therefore notice it: “When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language; Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion.” Psalm 114:1. This would however only prove that one of the twelve tribes was the sanctuary and that the whole church was not. But if the fact be remembered that God chose Jerusalem which was in Judah, as the place of His sanctuary, we think the following from another psalm will fully explain the connection between Judah and the sanctuary of God, and show that Judah was the tribe with which God designed to locate His habitation: “But chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved. And he built his sanctuary like high palaces (see I Chronicles 29:1), like the earth which he hath established forever.” Psalm 78:68–69. But could a single text be produced in favor of the view that the church is the sanctuary, it could not even then be the sanctuary of Daniel 8:13–14; for the church is there represented by the word “host.” This none will deny. “To give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot.” The church and the sanctuary then, are two things.

We have now seen that the earth is not the sanctuary; that the land of Canaan is not the sanctuary, but simply the place where the typical sanctuary was located; and that the church is not the sanctuary, but simply the worshippers connected with it. We now inquire,

4. What Is the Sanctuary?

Turn to the Revelation given through John, and while bearing continually in mind that he is looking not to any spot on earth, nor to the church, but into heaven, mark some of the objects which he there beholds. First he beholds a door opened in heaven. Chapter 4:1. Mark, he does not say that he saw heaven opened, but he saw a door opened in heaven. He then sees seven lamps of fire burning before the throne. Verse 5. He beholds an angel with a golden censer offering incense upon the golden altar which was before the throne. Chapter 8:3. And again, he sees the temple of God opened in heaven, (mark, he does not see heaven opened, but the temple of God opened in heaven,) and there beholds the ark of His testament. Chapter 11:19. But we know nothing of the golden candlestick with its seven lamps, the golden censer, the altar of incense, and the ark of the testament, only as they are connected with the sanctuary. To the sanctuary all these instruments owed their existence. Had there been no sanctuary, these would never have been formed. From this fact may we not reason concerning the heavenly things. As here on earth, these instruments resulted from the sanctuary, so when we learn from the language of John that such instruments exist in heaven, may we not more than infer that there is a sanctuary there, and that these are its sacred vessels; more especially when John speaks definitely of a heavenly temple, and tells us that in this temple these things were seen. Are not these the patterns from which the earthly vessels were formed? and is there not in heaven a literal sanctuary, also, the antitype of the earthly building?

But an abundance of direct testimony waits to come in on this subject. That the reader is acquainted with the first seven chapters of the book of Hebrews, we take for granted. Paul there discourses upon the new covenant and the superiority of Christ's priesthood over that of Aaron's. He then opens in the eighth chapter as follows: “Now of the things which we have spoken is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man.” He declares plainly in chapter 9:23–24, that the holy places made with hands were “figures of the true,” and that the earthly tabernacle and its sacred vessels, were “patterns of things in the heavens.” Here is positive testimony that there is a tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man, and that this tabernacle is in the heavens, (not heaven itself,) and that of this sanctuary, Christ is

As the great offering for the world, made on Calvary was literal, and as our great High Priest, Jesus, the Son of God, is a real and literal personage, so must He have a literal sanctuary in heaven, in which to perform His priestly office.

The minister. That there are literal things in heaven the Scriptures abundantly testify. As the great offering for the world, made on Calvary was literal, and as our great High Priest, Jesus, the Son of God, is a real and literal personage, so must He have a literal sanctuary in heaven, in which to perform His priestly office.

With a few Scripture testimonies concerning the existence of this temple in heaven, and a few of its declarations that it is the great original of which the earthly sanctuary was but a type, figure or pattern, we close this part of the subject.

Revelation 11:19. “And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament.”

Revelation 14:17. “And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven.”

Revelation 15:5. “And after that I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened.”

Revelation 16:17. “And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven from the throne, saying, It is done.”

Psalm 11:4. “The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven.” Hebrews 9:11–12. “But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect taber-
nacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” Hebrews 8:1–2 has already been quoted. This heavenly sanctuary is called by Jesus “my Father’s house;” John 14:2; by David, Habakkuk and John, “the temple of God in heaven;” Psalm 11:4; Habakkuk 2:20; Revelation 11:19; Revelation 16:17. God’s “holy habitation,” a holy and a Most Holy Place. The heavenly sanctuary therefore has the same; for a sanctuary in heaven with only one apartment would not cast a shadow upon earth with two. And if the pattern had but one holy place, and Moses erected a building with two, he did not follow the pattern; for there would then have been a great dissimilarity. But Moses did build it according to the pattern. Accordingly we hear Paul speaking of the holy places (plural) of the heavenly sanctuary. See Hebrews 9:8, 12; 10:19. The word rendered, holiest, or holy place, in each of these texts is in the original plural (holy places), and is so rendered in many translations.

But Paul makes use of expressions still stronger on this point. Speaking of the earthly tabernacle and its instruments of service, he says in Hebrews 9:23: “It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these”; that is, with the blood of calves and goats. What was cleansed by these? The two apartments of the earthly sanctuary and the altar. See Leviticus 16. And Paul explicitly tells us that these were patterns of things in the heavens. Is there need of more testimony here? Apparently not; but yet more is given. As if anticipating that some would endeavor to be incorrigibly skeptical upon this point, the apostle makes use of still stronger language. “For Christ,” says he, “is not entered into the holy places made with hands [the earthly sanctuary], which are figures of the true.” Hebrews 9:24. Thus does Inspiration, by applying to the earthly sanctuary these strong and unequivocal expressions “shadows of heavenly things,” “patterns of things in the heavens,” “figures of the true,” teach us that there is in heaven a greater and more perfect tabernacle, a true sanctuary which the Lord pitched and not man, of which the earthly was a true shadow, resemblance, type or figure. At the close of the seventy weeks, when the old covenant gave place to the new, the typical sanctuary of that covenant was superseded by the true sanctuary in heaven. The type could not reach beyond its antitype. The shadow must have ceased when it reached the substance. The offering of goats and calves was no longer serviceable when the Great Offering for the world had died on Calvary. Christ declared to the Jews as He departed from the temple, “Behold your house is left unto you desolate.” Matthew 23:37. And when amid the terrific scenes of the crucifixion day, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom, it was a solemn demonstration that its services were forever finished. That blood was then shed that was to be ministered for us in the heavenly sanctuary, and there, from henceforth, the world was to look for salvation and pardon.

The way into the heavenly holy places, says Paul, “was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing.” Hebrews 9:8. That is, God did not during the typical dispensation, lay open the true tabernacle, but gave to the people a figure or pattern of it. But when the time came that the services of the worldly sanctuary ended, when the dying Saviour cried with a loud voice, It is finished, and darkness overspread the land, and the earth quaked, and the rocks burst, then the way of the temple of God in heaven was laid open. The true church has had since that time neither sanctuary nor priesthood in old Jerusalem, but it has had both in heaven.

We have before shown that only 490 years of the 2300 belonged to the Jews and the earthly sanctuary. Gabriel, in his instructions to Daniel concerning the events to transpire at that time, shows him, first, that the earthly sanctuary should be destroyed shortly after their rejection of the Messiah, and never be built, but he desolate till the consummation. See Daniel 9:26–27.

Second, he brings to view the new covenant: “He (the Messiah) shall confirm the covenant with many for one week.” Verse 27. Third, he brings to view the new-covenant church, or host, namely, the “many” with whom the covenant is confirmed. Fourth, he brings to view the new-covenant sacrifice, namely, the cutting off of the Messiah, but not for Himself. He brings to view also the Mediator of the new covenant. Verse 25; chapter 11:22; Hebrews 12:24. And, fifth, he brings to view, lastly, the new covenant sanctuary, viz., to anoint the Most Holy. Verse 24. This has reference, doubtless, to an act preapparatory to the commencement

At the close of the seventy weeks, when the old covenant gave place to the new, the typical sanctuary of that covenant was superseded by the true sanctuary in heaven. The type could not reach beyond its antitype.
of the ministration of the sanctuary, which was, to anoint both the holy places and all the sacred vessels. Exodus 40:9–11. On this point we quote the following from the *Advent Shield*, No. 1, 75:

"And the last event of the 70 weeks, as enumerated in verse 54, was the anointing of the 'Most Holy' or the 'Holies of holies,' or the 'Sanctum sanctorum.' Not that which was on earth, made with hands, but the true tabernacle, into which Christ, our High Priest, is for us entered. Christ was to do in the true tabernacle, in heaven, what Moses and Aaron did in its pattern. See Hebrews 6–9; Exodus 30:22–30; Leviticus 8:10–15.

The fact that the Most Holy of the heavenly sanctuary is mentioned in Daniel 9:24, is proof that it has two apartments, as otherwise this distinction would not exist, while it cannot be claimed because only the anointing of the Most Holy is mentioned that Christ commenced His ministration in that apartment, as the sanctuary when anointed was anointed in both its departments, and immediately following that event, the ministration commenced, not in the Most Holy, but in the holy place.

There can be no doubt, then, concerning the object which the angel had in view when he said, "Unto 2300 days then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." What that cleansing is, and how it is to be accomplished, we shall find made equally clear in the sacred record.

Having become satisfied of the existence of a sanctuary in heaven, a true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man, the subject of its ministration and cleansing can furnish little ground for controversy. On this point, as on every other concerning the glorious heavenly things, and the more excellent ministry of the Melchisedec priesthood, in the person of our Lord, we must reason from type to antitype, from the earthly shadow to the heavenly substance.

The priests on earth, says Paul, serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things. This being so, it follows that the work connected with the earthly tabernacle was the example and shadow of a like work in heaven. Let us then briefly examine.

5. The Ministration and the Cleansing of the Earthly Sanctuary

This ministration was accomplished by the Levitical order of priesthood, and consisted of two great divisions: the daily ministration in the holy place, and the work in the Most Holy Place at the end of the year. The daily ministration embraced the regular morning and evening burnt offering [Exodus 29:38–43], the burning of sweet incense on the golden altar, every morning when the high priest dressed the lamps, and every evening when he lighted them [Exodus 30]; also the additional work appointed for the Sabbaths of the Lord, and the annual sabbaths, new moons and feasts [Numbers 28 and 29], besides the particular work to be accomplished for individuals as they should present their offerings throughout the year.

This latter was an important part of the service, and was performed as follows: Whoever had sinned brought his victim, that was to be offered up for him, to the door of the tabernacle. He then laid his hand upon the head of the victim which signified that his sin was transferred to it; it was then slain on account of that transgression, and the blood borne in by the priest and sprinkled in the sanctuary. Leviticus 1:3–4. Thus the sin of the individual was transferred first to the victim, and then through his blood to the sanctuary itself.

In this manner went the typical service forward through the year. Day after day, sanctuary was thus carried on through the year.

But what at length became of these sins? Were they suffered to remain in the sanctuary? They were not. There was another ministration at the close of the year, by which they were forever removed from the sanctuary, and a final disposition made of them. This was the yearly ministration, or the cleansing of the sanctuary. Leviticus 16. It took place on the tenth day of the seventh month. Verse 29. To accomplish this, the work of the high priest was changed from the holy place, to the Most Holy, within the veil. Here he entered with the blood of a bullock as a sin-offering for himself. Verse 3. He was then to take of the congregation of the children of Israel (verse 5) two kids of the goats for a sin offering. Upon these he was to cast lots, (verse 8) one lot for the Lord, for a sin-offering for the people (verse 15), and bear his blood within the vail, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward, and before the mercy seat seven times.

This blood was offered for two purposes:

1. To make an atonement for the transgression of the children of Israel in all their sins.

2. To cleanse, or make atonement for the holy sanctuary. This fact is plainly stated in Leviticus 16:15–22, a part of which we here transcribe: Verse 15. "Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat. Verse 16. "And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation.

Verse 17. "And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when

The fact that the Most Holy of the heavenly sanctuary is mentioned in Daniel 9:24, is proof that it has two apartments, as otherwise this distinction would not exist.
he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.

Verse 20. “And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat:

Verse 21. “And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness.

Verse 22. “And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited.” Tradition has it, that the goat thus led away, was hurled from a precipice and so killed. With this act the yearly round of service was completed. The work of the priest is again summed up in verse 33-34, as follows:

“And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar; and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation. And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins, once a year.”

In the foregoing testimony, is presented a general outline of the ministration and the cleansing of the earthly sanctuary. This was performed unto the example and shadow of heavenly things. From this, therefore, we are to reason concerning places made with hands [the earthly sanctuary], which are figures of the true.

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In the June 2 and 16, 1994, issues of the Adventist Review, Myron Widmer, associate editor, reported a recent interview of his with Mardian Blair, president of Adventist Health System/Sunbelt. The interview was about “the more than fifty Adventist hospitals across North America.” In the interview they discussed topics such as Seventh-day Adventist or non-Seventh-day Adventist institutions, effectiveness in soul winning, institutional indebtedness, competition with non-Adventist institutions, and whether or not we should continue to operate acute-care hospitals under the present circumstances.

God instructed the leaders of ancient Israel to publicly read and give to all Israel the meaning of the Ten Commandments and the instructions given through Moses as to how His people were to live and work for Him. See Joshua 8:35, Deuteronomy 31:12-13 and Patriarchs and Prophets, 500-503. In troublous times for our health institutions, it behooves us to review the divine counsels and to ask God what He has to say regarding His healthcare institutions.

In an editorial accompanying the second part of the above-mentioned interview, Brother Widmer concluded unfortunately that we should accept our present hospitals “not as a direct soul-winning agency, but as one that continues the healing ministry of Jesus and awakens interest in spiritual matters.” Adventist Review, June 16, 1994, 4.

“If we are to go to the expense of building sanitariums in order that we may work for the salvation of the sick and afflicted, we must plan our work in such a way that those we desire to help will receive the help they need. We are to do all in our power for the healing of the body; but we are to make the healing of the soul of far greater importance. Those who come to our sanitariums as patients are to be shown the way of salvation, that they may repent and hear the words: ‘Thy sins are forgiven thee; go in peace, and sin no more.’” Testimonies, vol. 7, 96.

An institution’s success depends largely upon its workers, and it cannot provide that which its workers do not personally possess and share. The purposes and practices of any institution are determined by the sum of the purposes and practices of its individual workers.

“If ever there was a time when our work should be done under the special direction of the Spirit of God, it is now. Let those who are living at their ease, arouse. Let our sanitariums become what they should be—homes where healing is ministered to sin-sick souls. And this will be done when the workers have a living connection with the Great Healer.” Counsels on Health, 542.

“Those who have no burning desire to save souls are not the ones who should connect with our sanitariums.” Medical Ministry, 191.

“In one hand they are to carry the gospel for the relief of sin-burdened souls; and in the other hand they are to carry remedies for the relief of physical suffering. Thus they will be true medical missionaries for God.” Ibid., 328.

“A work of reformation is to be carried on in our institutions. Physicians, workers, nurses, are to realize that they are on probation, on trial for their present life, and for that life which measures with the life of God. We are to put to the stretch every faculty, every nerve and muscle, in order to bring saving truth to the attention of suffering humanity. This work must be carried on in connection with the work of saving the sick. Then the work will stand forth before the world in the strength which God designs it shall have.” The Kress Collection, 59.

“Every medical practitioner, whether he acknowledges it or not, is responsible for the souls as well as the bodies of his patients. The Lord expects of us much more than we often do for Him. Every physician should be a devoted, intelligent gospel medical missionary, familiar with Heaven’s remedy for the sin-sick soul as well as with the science of healing bodily disease.” Medical Ministry, 31.

Vernon Sparks, M.D.
A special effort should be made to secure the services of conscientious, Christian workers. It is the purpose of God that a health institution should be organized and controlled exclusively by Seventh-day Adventists; and when unbelievers are brought in to occupy responsible positions, an influence is presiding there that will tell with great weight against the sanitarium. God did not intend that this institution should be carried on after the order of any other health institute in the land, but that it should be one of the most effectual instrumentalities in His hands of giving light to the world. It should stand forth with scientific ability, with moral and spiritual power, and as a faithful sentinel of reform in all its bearings; and all who act a part in it should be reformers, having respect to its rules, and heeding the light of health reform now shining upon us as a people.” Testimonies, vol. 4, 556.

Brother Blair stated in his interview with Myron Widmer (Adventist Review, June 2, 1994, 14) that labor expenses are the largest costs of our hospitals and that this expense places “enormous pressure” on those in the present highly competitive atmosphere of acute health-care. God’s counsel regarding this aspect of our health institutions was that the health-care workers were to be employees of the church.

“The gospel of Christ is to be bound up with medical missionary work, and medical missionary work is to be bound up with the gospel ministry. The world needs the efforts of medical missionaries who are bound up with the gospel message.” Medical Ministry, 252.

“Medical missionary work is not to be drawn apart and made separate from church organization.” Testimonies, vol. 8, 164.

Counsel to a physician in perplexity follows:

“You were apparently undecided as to what you would do in the future. I asked, ‘Why are you perplexed?’ You replied, ‘I am perplexed in regard to what is the best course for me to pursue.’ Then One who has authority stepped up to you and said: ‘You are not your own. You have been bought with a price. Your time, your talents, every jot of your influence, is the Lord’s. You are His servant. Your part is to do His bidding, and learn daily of Him. You are not to set up in business for yourself. This is not the Lord’s plan. You are not to unite with unbelievers in medical work. Neither is this the Lord’s plan. His word to you is, ‘Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with un-righteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.’ 2 Corinthians 6:14–16.

“You are to receive the grace of Christ, the great Medical Missionary. His divine wisdom will be given to you if you will refuse to yield to the inclination to link up with the world.” Medical Ministry, 44–45.

Some would follow a worldly fashion in the drawing of their salaries; but the Lord does not view matters as these men view them. He views our duties and responsibilities in the light of Christ’s self-denying example.

There is also counsel for teachers of medical missionaries:

“Temptations will come to you to think that in order to carry forward the medical missionary work you must stand aloof from church organization or church discipline. To stand thus would place you on an unsound footing. The work done for those who come to you for instruction is not complete unless they are educated to work in connection with the church.” Counsels on Health, 523.

Our health institutions would presently be much more competitive if their administrators and health workers were in line with Christ’s self-denying example.

“Let not the idea prevail for a moment that a man’s power to command high wages is a measure of his value in the sight of God as a worker.” Selected Messages, book 2, 193.

“Some would follow a worldly fashion in the drawing of their salaries; but the Lord does not view matters as these men view them. He views our duties and responsibilities in the light of Christ’s self-denying example. The gospel must be so presented to the world that precept and example will harmonize.” Ibid., 198.

“Why should the Christian physician, who is believing, expecting, looking, waiting, and longing for the coming and kingdom of Christ, when sickness and death will no longer have power over the saints, expect more pay for his services than the Christian editor or the Christian minister? He may say that his work is more wearing. That is yet to be proved. Let him work as he can endure it, and not violate the laws of life which he teaches to his patients. There are no good reasons why he should overwork and receive large pay for it, more than the minister or the editor. Let all who act a part in the Institute and receive pay for their services, act on the same liberal principle. No one should be suffered to remain as helper in the Institute who does it simply for pay. There are those of ability who, for the love of Christ, His cause, and the suffering
Strange principles, like evil leaven, permeated nearly the entire body of believers. Many ceased to deny self, and not a few withheld their tithes and offerings.

"But in time a change came. The spirit of sacrifice was not so manifest. In some of our institutions the wages of a few workers was increased beyond reason. Those who received these wages claimed that they deserved a greater sum than others, because of their superior talents. But who gave them their talents, their ability? With the increase of wages came a steady increase of covetousness, which is idolatry, and a steady decline of spirituality. Gross evils crept in, and God was dishonored. The minds of many who witnessed this grasping after higher and still higher wages, were leavened with doubt and unbelief. Strange principles, like evil leaven, permeated nearly the entire body of believers. Many ceased to deny self, and not a few withheld their tithes and offerings." Review and Herald, January 4, 1906.

As a church we have failed for many decades to study out, to promote and to win converts to God's plan for His health workers. This failure has resulted now in the separation of the majority of Seventh-day Adventist health workers from a sacrificial, denominational pay scale. This unfortunate situation with its resulting separation and the 1989 General Conference Executive Committee's approval of yearly salaries up to "nearly $150,000.00" for "top administrators" of North American Division hospitals (Adventist Review, April 20, 1989, 6) may very well be eggs of covetousness laid by the "golden-egg-laying goose" that have now hatched and are permeating "nearly the entire body of believers."

In his editorial for June 16, 1994, Brother Widmer found it "an enigma [puzzling, inexplicable] that in spite of the North American Adventist hospitals offering "some of the latest medical advance possible anywhere," that church members still long for a return to the early days of Battle Creek Sanitarium. We should not be puzzled by a desire of our members to see a return to health-care institutions operated in harmony with the Lord's clear directives.

"A wealth of moral influence has been brought to us in the last half century. Through his Holy Spirit the voice of God has come to us continually in warning and instruction, to confirm the faith of the believers in the Spirit of Prophecy. Repeatedly the word has come. Write the things that I have given you to confirm the faith of my people in the position they have taken. Time and trial have not made void the instruction given, but through years of suffering and self-sacrifice have established the truth of the testimony given. The instruction that was given in the early days of the message is to be held as safe instruc-

William Johnson, of an interview with R. S. Folkenberg, and D. E. Robinson, president and under-treasurer respectively, of the General Conference. The report was entitled "The State of the Church's Finances." The purpose of these three articles seemed to be to explain the financial crisis resulting from tithe and offerings in the North American Division not keeping up with the loss in buying power created by inflation and the increase of church expenses due to church-membership growth.

This tithe-and-offering shortfall has resulted in Division-wide "painful cutbacks of personnel and programs in recent years." Adventist Review, April 21, 1994, 12. Since the North American Division has historically been "the golden-egg-laying goose" (ibid.) for much of the world church, the present financial shortfalls are having serious effects upon the world church.

In our search for solutions to our financial difficulties as a church, it behooves us to seek God's counsel as to the cause or causes of such a problem. According to the following reference our North American Division's shortfall in tithes and offerings impacting adversely the world church is undoubtedly the result of the less than sacrificial remuneration received by many Adventist health-care workers.
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 and Magan Collection, 202.

To imply that because the world is not operating thousands of “sanitarium-style” centers proves that an obedient-to-God Seventh-day Adventist organization could not successfully operate such institutions is to misrepresent how God blesses obedience by faith of His chosen people. Those who are brought into strait places by their obedience to the Lord’s directives have the promise of His deliverance. Those who come to strait places because of disobedience do not have that assurance unless there is an accompanying acknowledgment of, and a turning away from, that disobedience.

“And when we are brought into strait places, we are to depend on God. We are to exercise wisdom and judgment in every action of life, that we may not, by reckless movements, place ourselves in trial. We are not to plunge into difficulties, neglecting the means God has provided, and misusing the faculties He has given us. Christ’s workers are to obey His instructions implicitly. The work is God’s, and if we would bless others His plans must be followed. Self cannot be made a center; self can receive no honor. If we plan according to our own ideas, the Lord will leave us to our own mistakes. But when, after following His directions, we are brought into strait places, He will deliver us. We are not to give up in discouragement, but in every emergency we are to seek help from Him who has infinite resources at His command. Often we shall be surrounded with trying circumstances, and then, in the fullest confidence, we must depend upon God. He will keep every soul that is brought into perplexity through trying to keep the way of the Lord.” The Desire of Ages, 369.

Our medical missionary work was to have been a distinct work from that of other denominations and of the world. Lowliness and consecration. Thus we shall be enabled to do a work distinct from all other missionary work in our world.” Testimonies, vol. 8, 183–184.

“The purpose of our health institutions is not first and foremost to be that of hospitals. The health institutions connected with the closing work of the gospel in the earth stand for the great principles of the gospel in all its fullness. Christ is the One to be revealed in all the institutions connected with the closing work, but none of them can do it so fully as the health institution where the sick and suffering come for relief and deliverance from both physical and spiritual ailment. Many of these need, like the paralytic of old, the forgiveness of sin the first thing, and they need to learn how to ‘go, and sin no more.’” Medical Ministry, 27–28.

“From the light I have received, I know that if ever there was a country where a sanitarium was needed it is New South Wales, and I may say also, Victoria. There is indeed a great necessity for such an institution. The people say, ‘But we have our hospitals.’ Some may go to the hospitals and get benefit from the treatment, but it would mean death for others to go there. We should have a sanitarium under our own regulations, that the truth of God on health reform may be given to the world. Those connected with such an institution, who are being educated as nurses, should be trained to go forth from the institution as solid as a rock upon the principles of health reform and other points of the truth.” The Australasian Union Conference Record, July 21, 1899.

In seeking God’s answers as to whether we should continue operating our present acute-care hospitals, we need to prayerfully include the following inspired counsels.

“Better for the work to go crippled than for workers who are not fully devoted to be employed. It is unseemly, unconvinced, unconverted men who have given the work of God. The Lord has no use whatever for men who are not wholly consecrated to His service.” Medical Ministry, 207.

“The Saviour is inviting every one, ‘Look unto Me, and live. Come unto Me, and find rest.’ Those who in meekness and love present the hope of the gospel to afflicted souls so much in need of this hope, are the mouthpiece of the One who gave Himself for all mankind that He might become a healer, a tender, sympathetic, compassionate Saviour. Let every means be devised to bring about the saving of souls in our medical institutions. This is our work. If the spiritual work is left undone, there is no necessity of calling upon our people to build these institutions.” Ibid., 191.

Indeed, the situation of our health care institutions today raises many perplexing questions. But it behooves us to turn to a “Thou saith the Lord” for our answers. Such an approach is both constructive and corrective rather than critical, as some tend to portray it. God’s work and His people deserve such an approach. If we are truly repentant of our turning back from following Christ’s directives in how to operate His institutions, we can then claim His promises that He will deliver us from our strait circumstances. May that be our desire and experience is my prayer.
CHRIST says, “Without me ye can do nothing.” John 15:5. How often have we spoken these words and lacked understanding as to how they apply to our lives in our every day experience! “Without me”—without an ever-present and abiding, ever-loving and drawing Saviour—we can do nothing.

You see, friends, we need a Saviour not just to forgive us of our sins (see 1 John 1:9), but a Saviour who can and will keep us from entering into sin (see Jude 24) and who will cleanse us from all unrighteousness. See 1 John 1:9. But I am afraid that all too often the self in us is the ruling power. It is our self that likes to be in control, to make decisions and hold opinions that strengthen our selfish nature. We prefer me first—I’m right—my way. Our self, outside of Christ is naturally agreeable to, and in harmony with, the “power of darkness.” We are told “Unless we do yield ourselves to the control of Christ, we shall be dominated by the wicked one. It is not necessary for us deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. We have only to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light.” The Desire of Ages, 324. Allying ourselves to Christ is the yielding of self to His control. It is not a onetime once-saved, always-saved surrender. Neither is it a once-a-day submission. It is a moment-by-moment decision to yield self to the rulership of Jesus Christ, for without Him we are hopeless; but with Him “all things are possible.” Matthew 19:26. All emphasis supplied.

Why is my need of a Saviour so great? Because I know how strong the self in me is. God is showing me that my failure is coming from within. It is not the trials and circumstances that cause me to fall. It is not my husband misunderstanding me that is the blame for my hurt feelings. It is not my child’s action that is the reason for my agitation. Neither is my problem family, friends, neighbors, co-worker or the church. The problem is that self is unsubdued, and “while self is unsubdued, we can find no rest,” The Desire of Ages, 336.

Praise God that He loves us enough to show us where the real battle lies—in my (our) own heart(s). Mark 7:15 says, “There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.”

Friends, how easy it is to assent with this in theory—but in our practical everyday experience we continue to believe and act as if the problem lies outside of ourselves, I well know this to be true. That is why my need of a Saviour is real to me. I have prayed that I would not only be forgiven of my sins, but that He would also cleanse me from all unrighteousness.” See 1 John 1:9. And it has been through this desire, this prayer, that God is answering in a mighty way to show me where the real battle lies—within self. “Self is the enemy we most need to fear.”

Ministry of Healing, 485. The problem is not the trials, circumstances or people who enter into our day—those are but the vehicles or means, “God’s workmen.” Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 10. They are God’s “chosen methods of discipline, and His appointed conditions of success,” (The Acts of the Apostles, 524) in refining and purifying our characters. They are not our enemy! They are not the battle! The warfare is against self.

This warfare is great because it deals with the “roots of self.” In The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7A, 962, we are told our problem is threefold: self-deception, self-justification and self-love (pride). It is because of these sources that self is tenaciously strong. I have seen

Alane Waters

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that these roots lie at the very foundation of my failures. I would like to share with you some personal experiences illustrating this truth clearly. They have been the means by which I have seen my own self honestly. They have helped me to understand more fully why I have such a great need of Jesus as my Saviour.

**Self-deception:** "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Jeremiah 17:9.

**Self-justification:** "And he [Jesus] said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." Luke 16:15.

**Self-love (pride):** "The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee." Obadiah 3.

One beautiful summer afternoon we were sitting by the pond in our backyard visiting with some friends. As we were talking, the name of a family whom we all knew came up. They were not present. After a few minutes in conversation I shared something that was true about our experience with this family and about their response to us. No sooner had I finished talking when I had the overwhelming conviction that what I said was not necessary, (I had prayed that morning that I would be kept by my Saviour.) God is faithful—He was calling to me to live by His Word.

Philippians 4:8 says: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report," think and speak on these things. Are the words we are speaking about someone else making us look good to the person we are sharing with? Are the words belittling needlessly the other person? Are our words going to change the way the person we are speaking to will view the other person? We need to examine carefully the motives for what we share with others.

You see, friends, I needed a Saviour—first for forgiveness for speaking my own words, and second, to give me the power to overrule my natural nature to justify myself, because what I had said was true.

As I heard (in my conscience) my Saviour call to me, I knew in my heart that He had a better way for the discussion to go. I realized I needed to confess before my friends that what I had shared was inappropriate and unnecessary. Self was tempted to excuse, justify and defend its position, but I yielded myself fully to Christ to be my Saviour, and in His power humbled myself before my husband and friends, I confessed my fault, and asked their forgiveness without making any excuses. It was then that I had peace. And it took the power of God to accomplish it.

As I thought back over this experience I realized that even before I spoke those words my Saviour had called to me to not say the thoughts that were running through my mind. We have a faithful Saviour who is trying to save us from sin and to cleanse us from within. We are told, "...Christ is ever sending messages to those who listen for His voice." Ministry of Healing, 509. At that time when the message to be saved from self came, I was so busy thinking about self and what I wanted to say that I deceived myself into thinking that it was all right to speak. After all what I had to say was true, therefore I justified myself into going ahead. The Lord showed me that the real issue was the love of self, the pride in my own heart making me want to be viewed by our friends as having done my "Christian duty" to this other family.

Self-love is the root of our problem. It is the love of self that leads us to self-deception and self-justification. I liken self-love to the root of a vine (or any plant). There is always a taproot or main root from which all other roots branch. consumed with them when Christ comes and the glory of His righteousness burns up anything remaining of sin.

Oh, friends, are we really willing to have all of the self-deception, self-justification and self-love removed from us here and now? Christ wants to be our Saviour to cleanse us fully and completely while there yet remains time.

One hot summer afternoon I was in town with my three children getting supplies for our home. We had just come out of a store and I was carrying a sack with two oil filters for our Bronco. These were the large heavy oil filters used in trucks. Just as we got to the truck door I thought to hand the sack to one of my children who I felt needed a little more practical responsibility in handling things carefully. My thought was to let him hold the sack while I unlocked the door. At the very moment that I handed the sack to my child I had a flash thought that “something is going to go wrong”; and it did! Right then and there, at that very moment, the sack of oil filters fell and smashed my toes. The pain was awful.

At that moment, friend, I needed a Saviour, because at that moment when self was wounded, self wanted to rise up and take over. The "battle" was on, the wrestling inside as to who would rule. I spoke no words at that point. I opened the door for my children who could see I was

**Branches do not have their own roots, but rather are connected to the vine. We must be severed from the roots of self and grafted into Christ that we may bring forth His fruits.**

Then off the main or taproot there are usually a few secondary roots, also very large and strong. That is why Jesus said, “I am the vine, ye are the branches,” John 15:5. Branches do not have their own roots, but rather are connected to the vine. We must be severed from the roots of self and grafted into Christ that we may bring forth His fruits. We may try to lop off ugly branches and bad fruit. We may endeavor to hide them in the foliage of other branches. But unless we are willing to be severed from self and grafted to Christ, the roots of self will strengthen and grow deeper. If they are left intact we will be struggling. Then I walked around to the other side of the truck, got in, shut the door, started the motor and opened my mouth. What poured forth were not the words or spirit of my Saviour who was trying to keep me. They were the words of self. I thought that my children must be corrected for their carelessness, especially since I had specifically chosen this opportunity to help them grow in that area. I did not yell. I did not curse. I did not even use bad words. I did not have to, but the message was loud and clear. They were being chastised with my frustration and irritation. You see, friends, I just felt that if
I could express myself I would “feel better.” But as I began to do so, I felt worse. Why? Because “while self is unsubdued, we can find no rest.” The Desire of Ages, 336. There is no peace. And I had no peace. Self-rule did not bring me relief; I did not feel better. I felt worse.

Praise God, we have an ever-loving, ever-drawing and pleading Saviour who wants to redeem us from the power of sin and to live within. Christ continued to call to my heart even in the midst of my turmoil. Even as I was speaking to my child He was earnestly bidding me, “Let go of self!” I heard His call and realized my awful condition. Immediately I yielded to His control. Oh, that I had surrendered the first time when He warned me of the trial, and in the first moments of the battle when He was pleading with my stubborn heart, “Let Me rule”!

At the very instant I was willing to let myself be yielded to Him, He gave me true repentance, and brokenly I humbled myself before all three of my children who had tears running down their little cheeks. I told them how sorry—oh, how sorry—I was for not letting Jesus be my Saviour. I then asked their forgiveness which they gladly gave and we prayed together. It was here, friends, that I had real peace. It was the rest I wanted from the very beginning. However, I had been self-deceived into thinking I could handle it and would feel better by chastising my children. You see, I had justified self by saying the accident was their fault and that correction was needed.

As the wrestling was going on in my own heart before I spoke, I felt I had a “good reason” to be upset, and I rationalized my self-justification because the love for self was wounded both physically and emotionally. It was my love for self, my desire to let self be in control that brought the self-deception of feeling better to let it out.

Oh, friends, I can never take back those unloving, unkind, selfish words. I can never remove from my children’s minds the picture of myself in control (or should I say out of control). But my Saviour has used this experience to paint in my mind a very real and vivid picture of my need for Him. It served as a lesson for me and my children that we need Jesus in everything, regardless of how small a thing we may be doing, even to buying oil filters. They have seen that without Christ the little things can turn into big ones, for mind and allowed Him to guide me through the entire situation. I had no disposition to want to “set my child straight.” I wanted only the peace and rest that comes from my heart being under the control of Christ. My children, who felt very bad, had to suffer no wrath from mother, and they saw how it was to be kept with Jesus through the “little trials” of the day. What a blessing this experience has been to our entire family!

Oh, friends, that we could realize our need of a Saviour to keep us in all things, through the entire day, not just to forgive us, but to cleanse us from the sin and self that remain within! Let us individually examine our own hearts in the light of God’s Word, and let us question our motives and every action of our lives. See Testimonies, vol. 5, 610.

Jesus says: “A new heart also will I give you: and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.” Ezekiel 36:26. If we are willing, our Saviour will warn us as we are tempted to enter into self-deception and self-justification because of our self-love. He longs to transform us so that our old ways of acting and reacting are replaced by conscious choices to maintain our vital connection to Him through every trial and temptation. That is why we need a Saviour! ☉

This article is taken from the audio series The Work That Lies Nearest. This series may be ordered from Tom and Alane Waters, 1100 Sherman Cr. Rd., Eureka, MT 59917, for $16.00.

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### Fall 1994 Camp Meetings

You are cordially invited to attend the following camp meetings. It is our desire that these meetings will be an encouragement to God’s remnant people.

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Moses and Aaron

UPON Mount Hor Aaron died and was buried. Moses, Aaron’s brother, and Eleazar, his son, accompanied him. The painful duty was laid upon Moses to remove from his brother Aaron the sacerdotal robes and place them upon Eleazar, for God had said he should succeed Aaron in the priesthood. Moses and Eleazar witnessed the death of Aaron; and Moses buried him in the mount. This scene upon Mount Hor carries our minds back and connects it with some of the most striking events in the life of Aaron.

Aaron was a man of amiable disposition, whom God selected to stand with Moses and speak for him, in short, to be a mouthpiece for Moses. God might have chosen Aaron as leader; but He who is acquainted with hearts, who understands character, knew that Aaron was yielding, and lacked moral courage to stand in defense of the right under all circumstances, irrespective of consequences. Aaron’s desire to have the goodwill of the people sometimes led him to commit great wrongs. He too frequently yielded to their entreaties, and in so doing dishonored God. The same want of standing firmly for the right in his family resulted in the death of two of his sons. Aaron was eminent for piety and usefulness, but he neglected to discipline his family. Rather than perform the task of requiring respect and reverence of his sons, he allowed them to follow their inclinations. He did not discipline them in self-denial, but yielded to their wishes. They were not disciplined to respect and reverence parental authority. The father was the proper ruler of his own family as long as he lived. His authority was not to cease, even after his children were grown up and had families of their own. God Himself was the Monarch of the nation, and from the people He claimed obedience and honor.

The order and prosperity of the kingdom depended upon the good order of the church. And the prosperity, harmony, and order of the church were dependent upon the good order and thorough discipline of families. God punishes the unfaithfulness of parents to whom He has intrusted the duty to maintain the principles of parental government, which lie at the foundation of church discipline, and the prosperity of the nation. One undisciplined child has frequently marred the peace and harmony of the church, and incited to murmuring and rebellion a nation. God has enjoined, in the most solemn manner, upon children their duty to affectionately respect and honor their parents. God required, on the other hand, of parents to train up their children, and with unceasing diligence to educate them in regard to the claims of His law, and to instruct them in the knowledge and fear of God. These injunctions which God laid with so much solemnity upon the Jews, rest with equal weight upon Christian parents. Those who neglect the light and instruction given of God in His Word, in regard to training their children and commanding their household after them, will have a fearful account to settle. Aaron’s criminal neglect to command respect and reverence of his sons resulted in their death.

God distinguished Aaron in choosing him and his male posterity for the priesthood. His sons ministered in the sacred office. Nadab and Abihu failed to reverence the command of God, to offer sacred fire upon their censers with the incense before Him. God had forbidden them to use the common fire to present before Him with the incense, upon pain of death.

Here was seen the result of loose discipline. As Aaron’s sons had not been educated to respect and reverence the commands of their father, as they disregarded parental authority, they did not realize the necessity of explicitly following the requirements of God. When indulging their appetite for wine, while
under its exciting stimulus their reason was clouded. They could not discern the difference between the sacred and the common. Contrary to God's express direction they dishonored Him by offering common fire instead of sacred. God visited them with His wrath—fire went forth from His presence and destroyed them.

Aaron bore his severe affliction with patience and humble submission. Sorrow and keen agony wrung his soul. He was convicted of his neglect of duty. He was priest of the Most High God, to make atonement for the sins of the people. He was priest of his household, yet he had been inclined to pass over the folly of his children. He neglected his duty to train and educate his children to obedience, self-denial, and reverence for parental authority. Through feelings of misplaced indulgence he failed to mold the characters of his children with high reverence for eternal things. Aaron did not see any more than many Christian parents now see that their misplaced love and the indulgence of their children in wrong, is preparing them for the certain displeasure of God, and for His wrath to break forth upon them to their destruction.

While Aaron neglected to exercise his authority, the justice of God awakened against them. Aaron had to learn that gentle remonstrance, without exercising, with firmness, parental restraint, and his imprudent tenderness toward his sons, were cruelty in the extreme. God took the work of justice into His own hands and destroyed the sons of Aaron.

When God called for Moses to come up into the mountain, it was six days before he was received into the cloud, to the immediate presence of God. The top of the mountain was all aglow with the glory of God. And even while the children of Israel had in their very sight the glory of God upon the mount, unbelieving was so natural to them, because Moses was absent they began to murmur with discontent. While the glory of God signified His sacred presence upon the mountain, and their leader was in close converse with God, they should have been sanctifying themselves to God by close searching of heart, humiliation, and godly fear. God had left Aaron and Hur to take the place of Moses. The people were to consult and advise with these men of God's appointment in the absence of Moses.

Here Aaron's deficiency as a leader or governor of Israel was seen. The people beset him to make them gods to go before them into Egypt. Here was an opportunity for Aaron to show his faith and unwavering confidence in God, and in firmness and with decision meet the proposition of the people. But the natural love of Aaron to please, and to yield to the people, led him to sacrifice the honor of God. He requested them to bring their ornaments to him, and he wrought out for them a golden calf, and proclaimed before the people, “These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.” Exodus 32:4. And to this senseless god, Aaron made an altar, and proclaimed on the morrow a feast to the Lord. All restraint seemed to be removed from the

God had appointed Nadab and Abihu to a most sacred work; therefore He honored them in a most wonderful manner. God gave them a view of His excellent glory, that the scenes they should witness in the mount would abide upon them, and the better qualify them to minister in His service, and render to Him that exalted honor and reverence before the people, which would give them clearer conceptions of His character, and awaken in them due obedience and reverence for all His requirements.

Moses, before he left his people for the mount, read to them the words of the

Aaron had to learn that gentle remonstrance, without exercising, with firmness, parental restraint, and his imprudent tenderness toward his sons, were cruelty in the extreme.

covenant God has made with them, and they with one voice answered, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.” Exodus 24:7. How great must have been the sin of Aaron, how aggravating in the sight of God!

While Moses was receiving the law of God in the mount, the Lord informed him of the sin of rebellious Israel, and requested him to let them go, that he might destroy them. But Moses plead before God for the people. Although Moses was the meekest man that lived, yet when the interests of the people were at stake over whom God had appointed him as leader, he loses his natural timidity, and with singular persistency and wonderful boldness, pleads with God for Israel. He will not consent that God shall destroy His people, although God promised that in their destruction He would exalt Moses, and raise up a better people than Israel. Moses prevailed. God granted his earnest petition not to blot out His people. Moses took the tables of the covenant, the law of Ten Commandments, and descended from the mount. The boisterous, drunken revelry of the children of Israel reached his ears, long before he came to the camp of Israel. When he saw their idolatry, and that they had broken in a most marked manner the words of the covenant, he became overwhelmed with grief and indignation at their base idolatry. Confusion and shame on their account took possession of him, and he there threw down the tables and
broke them. As they had broken their covenant with God, Moses, in breaking the tables, signified to them, so, also, God had broken His covenant with them. The tables, whereupon was written the law of God, were broken.

Aaron, with his amiable disposition, so very mild and pleasing, sought to conciliate Moses, as though no very great sin had been committed by the people that he should feel thus deeply over. Moses asked in anger, "What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?"

Exodus 32:21: "And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief. For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us: for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf." Verses 22–24.

Aaron would have Moses think that some wonderful miracle had transformed their golden ornaments into the shape of a calf. He did not relate to Moses that he had, with other workmen, wrought out this image.

Aaron had thought that Moses had been too unyielding to the wishes of the people. And if he had been less firm, less decided at times; if he had made a compromise with them, and gratified their wishes, he would have had less trouble, and there would have been more peace and harmony in the camp of Israel. He, therefore, had been trying this new policy. He carried out his natural temperament of yielding to the wishes of the people, to save dissatisfaction and preserve their goodwill, and thereby prevent a rebellion, which he thought would certainly come if he withstood their wishes. But had Aaron stood unwaveringly for God; had he met the intimation of the people for him to make them gods to go before them to Egypt, with the just indignation and horror their proposition deserved; had he cited them to the terrors of Sinai, where God had spoken His law in such glory and majesty; had he reminded them of their solemn covenant with God to obey all He should command them; had he told them that they would not at the sacrifice of His life yield to their entreaties, he would have had influence with the people to prevent a terrible apostasy. But when his influence was required to be used in the right direction in the absence of Moses, when he should have stood as firm and unyielding as did Moses to prevent them from pursuing a course of sin, his influence was exerted on the wrong side. He was powerless to make his influence felt in vindication of God's honor in keeping His holy law. But on the wrong side he had swayed a powerful influence. He directed, and the people obeyed. When Aaron took the first step in the wrong direction, the spirit which had actuated the people imbued him, and he took the lead, and directed as a general, and the people were singularly obedient. Here Aaron gave decided sanction to the most aggravating sins, because it was attended with less difficulty than to stand in vindication of the right. When he swerved from his integrity in giving sanction to the people in their sins, he seemed inspired with decision, earnestness, and zeal, new to him. His timidity seemed suddenly to disappear. He seized the instruments to work out the gold into the image of a calf with a zeal he had never manifested in standing in defense of the honor of God against wrong. He ordered an altar to be built, and with assurance, worthy of a better cause, he proclaimed to the people that on the morrow would be a feast to the Lord. The trumpeters took the word from the mouth of Aaron and sounded the proclamation from company to company of the armies of Israel.

Aaron's calm assurance in a wrong course gave him greater influence than Moses could have had in leading them in a right course, and subduing their rebellion. What terrible spiritual blindness had come upon Aaron that he should put light for darkness, and darkness for light! What presumption in him to proclaim a feast to the Lord over their idolatry of a golden image! Here is seen the power that Satan has over minds that are not fully controlled by the Spirit of God. Satan had set up his banner in the midst of Israel, and it was exalted as the banner of God.

"These," said Aaron (without hesitation or shame), "be thy gods, O Israel, which bring thee up out of the land of Egypt." Exodus 32:4. Aaron influenced the children of Israel to go to greater lengths in idolatry than had entered their minds. They were no longer troubled lest the burning glory like flaming fire upon the mount had consumed their leader. They thought they had a general who just suited them. They were ready to do anything he suggested. They offered peace offerings, and sacrificed to their golden god, and gave themselves up to pleasure, rioting, and drunkenness. They were then decided in their own minds that it was not because they were wrong, that they had so much trouble in the wilderness; but the difficulty, after all, was with their leader. He was not a right kind of a man. He was too unyielding, and was continually keeping their sins before them, warning and reproving them, and threatening them with God's displeasure. A new order of things had come, and they were pleased with Aaron, and pleased with themselves. They thought if Moses had only been as amiable and mild as Aaron, what peace and harmony would have prevailed in the camp of Israel! They cared not now whether Moses ever came down from the mount or not.

When Moses saw the idolatry of Israel, and his indignation was so aroused at their shameful forgetfulness of God, that he threw down the tables of stone and broke them, Aaron stood meekly by, bearing the censure of Moses with commendable patience. The people were charmed with Aaron's lovely spirit, and were disgusted with Moses' rashness. But God seeth not as man seeth. He condemned not the ardor and indignation of Moses against the base apostasy of Israel.

The true general then takes his position for God. He has come direct from the presence of the Lord, where he pled with Him to turn away His wrath from His erring people. Now he has another work to do as God's minister, to vindicate His honor before the people, and let them see that sin is sin, and righteousness is righteousness. He has a work to do to counter-
Many professed Christians look upon men who do not reprove and condemn wrong as men of piety, and Christians indeed, while men who stand boldly in the defense of right, and will not yield their integrity to unconsecrated influences, they think lack piety and a Christian spirit.

Those who stand in defense of the honor of God, and maintain the purity of truth at any cost, will have manifold trials, as did our Saviour in the wilderness of temptation. The yielding temperaments, who have not courage to condemn wrong, but keep silent when their influence is needed to stand in the defense of right against any pressure, may avoid many heartaches, and escape many perplexities, and lose a very rich reward, if not their own souls.

Those who in harmony with God, and through faith in Him, receive strength to resist wrong, and stand in defense of the right, will always have severe conflicts, and will frequently have to stand almost alone.

The mild and yielding spirit of Aaron to please the people, blinded his eyes to their sins, and to the enormity of the crime he was sanctioning. His course in giving influence to wrong and sin in Israel cost the lives of three thousand men. The course of Moses, in what contrast! After he had evidenced to the people that they could not trifle with God with impunity; after he had shown them the just displeasure of God for their sins, in giving the terrible decree to stay friends or relatives who persisted in their apostasy, after the work of justice to turn away the wrath of God, irrespective of their feelings of sympathy for loved friends and relatives who continued obstinate in their rebellion, Moses was now prepared for another work. He evidenced who was interwoven with his life, that he comes with boldness to God, and prays for Him to forgive His people. If their sin, he pleads, is so great that God cannot forgive them, if their names must be blotted from His book, he prayed the Lord to blot out his name also. When the Lord renewed His promise to Moses, that His Angel should go before him in leading the people to the Promised Land, Moses knew that his request was granted. But the Lord assured Moses that if He was provoked to visit the people for their transgressions, He would surely punish them for this grievous sin also. If they were henceforth obedient, He would blot out this great sin out of His book.

Review and Herald, July 29, 1873.
**Dowsing: Divine or Devilish?**
by Kathie Bartholomew

To many Christians, water dowsing (water witching) is an innocent, scientific method which may be used to locate water, perhaps to determine where to dig a well. However, in this 18-page booklet the author Concisely presents evidence which will stimulate discussion and warn of the dangers of dowsing.

Questions addressed in this booklet include “Is dowsing a manifestation of occultism, a scientific phenomenon, or a divine gift?” “What light do the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy shed on this subject?” “Is Grandpa’s favorite hobby safe?”

Order one or more copies of Dowsing: Divine or Devilish from Hope International for only US $1.50 per copy.

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**What Is the Church?**
by Ron Spear

In the foreword to Ron Spear’s book on this controversial topic, Colin Standish writes: “For many there are serious doubts as to whether the Seventh-day Adventist Church, as presently organized, will go through to the kingdom of heaven. There are those who believe that we should separate completely from the church. Some believe that a new organization needs to be established. There are others who believe that the church has reached such a state that it is now a partaker of Babylon, and therefore ‘Ichabod’ has been written across its portals. Others, though recognizing the terrible apostasy in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, still believe that this church, thoroughly shaken and sifted until every apostate has been removed, is the church that will go through to glory. . . .

“The fragmentation of the clear meaning of the church has led to further division among the remnant whom God is drawing to Himself. In this book, Elder Ron Spear seeks to paint a clear picture of what the church is. He uses for his brush the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. . . . I trust that as each reader considers the testimony of Inspiration, he will come to the conclusion mandated by a careful study of the Word.”


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