Our beloved Seventh-day Adventist Church is now in a terrible struggle between the conservative doctrines of our pioneers, so beautifully supported by our prophet, and the liberal Calvinistic philosophies of the evangelicals, supported by so-called Adventist theologians.

In this crisis hour, we must ask ourselves, Do we still believe that we are the remnant church of God for this final generation? Do we still believe that Ellen White is the prophet to the final generation? Or have we lost sight of our roots in Millerism and the great disappointment of 1844? Do we still believe in our divine origin? Do we understand that the cleansing of the sanctuary pertains to us individually? That this message was designated by Jesus, making us distinct from the churches of Babylon? Do we know and understand that the cleansing of our souls from sin must precede the cleansing of the Most Holy Place? As God’s remnant church do we know that the three angels’ messages are symbolic of a people who are experiencing victories in their lives over all sin, both hereditary and cultivated? See Testimonies, vol. 6, 17-18.

Let us listen as Inspiration explains this vital doctrine: “The angels are represented as flying in the midst of heaven, proclaiming to the world a message of warning, and having a direct bearing upon the people living in the last days of this earth’s history. No one hears the voice of these angels, for they are a symbol to represent the people of God who are working in harmony with the universe of heaven. Men and women, enlightened by the Spirit of God and sanctified through the truth, proclaim the three messages in their order.” Selected Messages, book 2, 387.

As we honestly look at what is taking place in Adventism today, do we not see the same formalism, worldliness, and spiritual stupor as that which has already overtaken the fallen churches of Babylon? Are we witnessing the same reverence for the theological philosophies and theories of men, to the neglect and disregard of the truth as it is in the Spirit of Prophecy and Bible?

The remnant church, in this final hour of our probation, is in possibly the worst apostasy in the history of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. We are not Babylon, but do we not have a lot of Babylon in our ranks? We were told by our prophet that at the very end-time there would be an Omega of apostasy that would be of a very startling nature. See ibid., book 1, 197-205.

Do we now see that there has been an attempt by Satan to destroy the sacred doctrines of Adventism that have made us distinct from the churches of Babylon? God warned us of Satan’s last great thrust to destroy our special warning message to the world just before the coming of Christ: “After the truth has been proclaimed as a witness to all nations, at a time when every conceivable power of evil is set in operation, when minds are confused by the many voices crying, ‘Lo, here is Christ,’ ‘Lo, He is there,’ ‘This is truth,’ ‘I have a message from God,’ ‘He has sent me with great light,’ and there is a removing of the landmarks, and an attempt to tear down the pillars of our faith—then a more decided effort is made to exalt the false sabbath, and to cast contempt upon God Himself by supplanting the day He has blessed and sanctified.” Ibid., book 3, 406.

How could this take place? Listen to God explain: “This is a time when Satan’s deceptive power is exercised, not only upon the minds of those who are young and inexperienced, but upon the minds of men and women of mature years and of broad experience. Men in positions of responsibility are in danger of changing leaders. This I know; for it has been plainly revealed to me. I have been instructed that the enemy seeks to link up with men bearing large responsibilities in the Lord’s work, in order that he may fill their minds with evil devisings. Under his influence men will suggest many things that are contrary to the mind of God.” Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 2, 48; see also Review and Herald, December 16, 1890; Testimonies, vol. 2, 439; ibid., vol. 5, 294; Testimonies to Ministers, 472-475.

Because many Adventists are following after the Calvinistic theology of salvation (being saved in sin instead of saved from all sin), we are now entering into the apostasy called the Omega. It has been building for many years and is now reaching an intensity that should alarm us, and awaken us from our Laodicean condition before it is too late.

Jesus has been waiting for nearly 150 years for His church. His remnant people, to receive the experience of righteousness by the faith of Jesus. “A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs.” Selected Messages, book 1, 121.

Decided changes must now be made all through our ranks—from the General Conference leaders and our pastors to the laity in our churches. God is now giving us His last call. May He now help us to answer this call.

“The Lord calls for a reformation all through our ranks. . . . When the church is awakened, decided changes will be made. Men and women will be converted, and so filled will they be by the Spirit of God that they will pass from country to country, from city to city, proclaiming the message of truth. With hearts filled with earnest love for souls, they will open their Bibles and present the Word.” Upward Look, 16.

Let us all now be alarmed at our rebellion, our spiritual indifference to God’s rebukes and warnings, our worldliness, our Laodicean attitude. Let us now awake before probation closes.

Let us now come up to every point without compromise that we may pass the test and be purified by the working of the Holy Spirit. May revival and reformation be our theme for 1996. Let us now return to our roots, to the waymarks of our faith.

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

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

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The Council of Trent Casts Its Shadow Across Christendom

Four hundred and fifty years ago this month the first session of the Council of Trent convened on December 13, 1545. It is usually listed as the 19th council of the Roman Catholic Church and was by far the longest ever, involving a number of popes. Seven months prior to the commencement of the council, the pope visited the Austrian city of Trent, in the Italian part of the Tyrol which is now part of Italy. By the time the council convened Pope Paul III occupied the papal throne. He was followed by Julian III, Paul IV, and Pius IV during the eighteen-year period of the council. However, because of a ten-year hiatus during the calling of the sessions, Paul IV was never directly involved in the activities of the council, although his influence on the final session was indeed very profound. There were three assemblies of the council; the first 1545-1547, the second 1551-1552, and the third 1562-1563.

The first assembly was conducted under Paul III, and the number of prelates attending never exceeded fifty-seven. The second assembly was conducted under Julian III, and the number of prelates rose to sixty-two. However, at the third assembly under Pius IV a much larger group of Catholic prelates, somewhere around three hundred, attended. The final decrees were signed by two hundred and fifty members.

Two theologians, James Lytz and Giovanni Marone, strongly influenced the councils. In the early part of the first session there arose a deep division over whether the primary emphasis of the council should be upon doctrine first or discipline first. The decision was to have them both dialogued simultaneously; however, doctrine dominated. The Council of Trent is called an ecumenical council, but, in reality, it was wholly Roman Catholic. Regardless, the decisions of the Council of Trent have a profound influence upon the ecumenical movement of today.

Protestants were urged to attend, but the Protestants were wary. Luther had launched an attack in March of 1545 against the upcoming council. Although there was no involvement by Protestant representatives at the first session, at the second session, 1551-1552 (after the death of Luther), Protestant representations did come. However, they played no significant role because of their insistence on the primacy of the Word of God, and the primacy of the council over papal authority. This stand was rejected by the papists.

It is important to recognize that the council was dominated by Italian bishops, along with a few dignitaries from France and Poland, but few from any other countries. The German bishops were too preoccupied with the war against Protestantism to attend. There was no question that those who were close to the pope dominated the decisions that were made. Over the eighteen-year period, twenty-five sessions were held during three assemblies of the delegates. Ironically, when disputes occurred they were decided by the papal legate.

In perhaps the most important session, the first session, areas that were dealt with included: 1) the role of the church as the interpreter of the Scriptures, 2) the approval of the canon of Scripture, 3) the continued acceptance of the Latin Vulgate Bible, 4) original sin, 5) justification, and 6) the seven sacred sacraments.

In reality, the council rejected any modification or compromise from the developed theology of the Dark and Middle Ages. The church’s supremacy over the Scripture was affirmed. The Scripture was held to contain the Apocrypha. The Latin Vulgate was upheld as the Bible of the Roman Catholic Church. The acceptance of the Augustinian original sin theory was confirmed. Luther’s doctrine of justification alone was rejected. The eternal sig-
significance of the seven sacred sacraments (eucharist, baptism, confirmation, marriage, holy orders, penance, and final judgment) was upheld. Thus was confirmed a false sanctification established upon the principles of sacramentalism.

The Bible teaches that sanctification, like justification, was purchased by the blood of Christ: “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.” Ephesians 5:25–27. “Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.” Hebrews 13:12. “By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” Chapter 10:10.

Just as we are justified by faith, we are also sanctified by faith. “To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.” Acts 26:18.

In 1547 the council was transferred from Trent to Bologna. Pope Paul III sensed that Charles V might take control of the council and use the outbreak of the plague to justify the transference. However, when the second assembly was convened, 1551–1552, it was convened back in Trent. It was during this time that the Protestant envoys arrived, demanding the rejection of all that had been voted at the first meetings. These delegates denied papal supremacy and the papal authority over the council. Nothing was resolved.

When in 1552 war broke out again in Germany, Julius III suspended the council, beginning the ten-year hiatus before the final assembly of the council took place. It was during this time that Paul IV reigned (1555–1559). Though he did not reconvene the council, he was nevertheless extraordinarily active in setting the stage for the final assembly. In 1555 he signed the “Peace of Augsburg” in which the rights of both Catholics and Protestants to worship freely were recognized. However, while signing it the pope did not remain passive. He adamantly refused to make concessions to Protestants; indeed, he worked for the annihilation of Protestantism. He made use of the Inquisition, which he himself had introduced and organized in Italy in 1542, long before he became pope. He also introduced the index of prohibited books in 1559, which condemned certain authors and books, and forbade Catholics to read them. In many ways, not trusting the Curia, he disregarded some of the decisions and canons of the earlier assemblies of the Council of Trent.

Pius IV convened what proved to be the last assembly of the Council of Trent. Many more delegates were at this session. There was a strong battle between those who wanted to make significant concessions to the Protestants, on the one hand, and the papists who knew no such compromise, on the other hand. The latter won out. The

Many of the Roman Catholic doctrines now crafted carefully in the canons that arose out of the Council of Trent had their roots in the theology of Augustine.

eucharist, for example, became the subject of two sessions. The council eventually decided whether the chalice (the cup) should be provided for the laity or only for the clergy. This had been a prominent issue in Bohemia a century and half before. Eventually it was decided to deny the chalice to the people. Also a concern to some delegates was the cult of the saints, the veneration of the relics, and the doctrine of purgatory. Canons for each of these were, however, adopted. The final day of the Council of Trent was December 4, 1563. Because of the severe illness of Pius IV, Cardinal Marone brought the Council of Trent to an end. All canons and degrees of the council were approved by Pius VI, January 24, 1564. In 1564, a papal bull put supreme authority on all that was formulated by the Council of Trent. This formulation was called the Trident Profession of Faith. All Roman Catholic clergy and teachers were required to declare strict allegiance to this bull. Protestant converts were likewise required to accept it in its completeness.

Many of the Roman Catholic doctrines now crafted carefully in the canons that arose out of the Council of Trent had their roots in the theology of Augustine. These included the errors of predestination, once saved always saved, original sin, and Christ taking man’s fallen nature. Doctrines such as infant baptism, Sunday sacredness, and the veneration of Mary, were hardly addressed. In fact, most of these were not challenged by the Protestant Reformation.

Another shadow that was never far away from the Council of Trent was the Protestant identification of the Papacy as the antichrist of biblical prophecy. But somehow the delegates to the Council of Trent were unable to find a credible answer to this belief. It is very important to acknowledge that on the issue of doctrine the Roman Catholic Church made virtually no changes. There were reforms that were made, however. These reforms dealt with a call for better education of the clergy, stronger power of the clergy, the banning of the most obvious excesses of the church,

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port. There are other Protestants who are willing to go ahead, knowing that they will have to surrender their long heritage of beliefs and practices. They see the impotency of their church and believe that the Roman Catholic Church alone possesses the power to bring unity upon this planet. But such a hope is built upon ignorance of the clear testimony of biblical prophecy. The cruel acts of the Roman Catholic Church during the Middle Ages will be repeated on a vastly wider scale. "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." Revelation 13:7. It may bring an uneasy consensus, but lasting unity is built upon truth and righteousness alone, and that, the Roman Catholics will not honor.

At the moment, the Roman Catholic Church may appear to have a reconciling attitude. However, history will be repeated when the full fury of Roman Catholicism will be seen against those who oppose her way and her will.

**Shadows of the Council of Trent**

A review of contemporary Catholicism offers some indication of just how influential the Council of Trent was in framing contemporary Catholic thinking.

1. Persecution. There are many today who naively believe that there is a changing attitude by the Papacy to those opposing her goals. On May 21, 1995, visiting the Czech Republic, John Paul II apologized for violence by Catholics against Protestants during the Counter Reformation (the time of the Council of Trent and thereafter). How trustworthy can such an apology be? After all, Paul IV broke the Peace of Augsburg with terrible persecution. Neither can we forget that it was the prelates of the Roman Catholic Church who were responsible for urging Sigismund, holy Roman emperor, to violate his oath of safe passage to Huss, subjecting him to a cruel and terrible martyrdom. Also, we recognize the circumstances which led Pope John Paul II to his apology in the Czech Republic. The Roman Catholic Church in the Czech Republic is vigorously seeking to have returned to her the properties which were annexed by the Communists after the Second World War. There has been strong opposition to this move by many elements of the Czech citizenry, for they well-know how the Roman Catholic Church is guilty of taking many of these same properties from the Protestants during the terrible slaughters of the seventeenth century, when all twenty-seven Protestant lords were beheaded and their properties annexed by the Catholic Church.

It will be recognized that it is a time-honored belief of Roman Catholicism that no agreement made with an apostate can have validity. Always, when Catholicism has been able to play a dominant role in government affairs, her track record of religious freedom is abysmal. The present pope is urging a united world under his leadership. Should such a world be achieved, or even come close to being achieved, is there any risk that Roman Catholicism will repeat the terrible excesses of its past history? Such persecution would be inevitable.

Talking of the tragic way in which Protestants will survive the interests of the Papacy, Sister White said, "Have these persons forgotten the claim of infallibility put forth for eight hundred years by this haughty power? So far from being relinquished, this claim was affirmed in the nineteenth century with greater positiveness than ever before. As Rome asserts that the ‘church never erred; nor will it, according to the Scriptures, ever err’ (John L. von Mosheim, Institutes of Ecclesiastical History, book 3, century II, part 2, chapter 2, section 9, note 17), how can she renounce the principles which governed her course in past ages? "The papal church will never relinquish her claim to infallibility. All that she has done in her persecution of those who reject her dogmas she holds to be right; and would she not repeat the same acts, should the opportunity be presented? Let the restraints now imposed by secular governments be removed and Rome be reinstated in her former power, and there would speedily be a revival of her tyranny and persecution." The Great Controversy, 564.

2. The Primacy of the Church. It will be recalled that in the second assembly of the Council of Trent (1551 and 1552), the Protestant representation did come to the council, but played no significant role because they insisted on the primacy of the Word of God, and the primacy of the council over papal authority.

In Pope John Paul II’s twelfth encyclical, he again emphasized the primacy of the papal authority. But he declared that he had a desire, “To find a way of exercising the primacy, which, while in no way renouncing what is essential for its mission, is nonetheless open to a new situation.” Orlando Sentinel, op. cit.
The shadow of the Council of Trent can be seen in modern-day ecumenism. This form of ecumenism always calls for Protestants to surrender unconditionally to the primacy of the pope and papal teachings. Unfortunately, whereas in the sixteenth century Protestant leadership in no wise surrendered to such claims, in the twentieth century it would seem that a hypnotic spell has fallen across the minds of the Protestant leadership as they seek to embrace the wooings of the Papacy.

3. Doctrine. The Council of Trent not only reaffirmed all the medieval heresies that had been incorporated into Catholic dogma, but it systematized them in church canons. Once again the Roman Catholic Church is adamant that it will make no concessions on the issue of doctrines. Rather, it is looking forward to a unity built upon those principles that are held in common by “all Christians.” In reality, that does not include the faithful people of God, but does include most of the fallen churches of Protestantism. Such commonality includes Sunday sacredness, the immortality of the soul, original sin, and predestination. But Rome will not be satisfied until those drawn into her web embrace the whole of Catholic dogma, especially the primacy of the pope.

When Protestants refused to grow in the light of the Seventh-day Adventist message to the glorious everlasting gospel, they became imprisoned in the trap of Catholicism and became open to the wooings of the Roman Catholic hierarchy to return to the bosom of Rome in those areas where there are differences such as the mode of baptism, penance, purgatory, limbo, the rosary, the saints, Mary, and so forth. The Roman Catholic Church is shrewdly urging that those things which divide not be made the issue. But history is a wonderful teacher, and wherever two lines of belief have been allowed in common, ultimately the error always prevails. One classical example is the early commemoration of the Sabbath and Sunday. But, ultimately, Rome was never satisfied until the Sabbath was abolished and Sunday reigned as the only day of worship.

My burden is that Seventh-day Adventists will not be deceived by the wiles of the Papacy. A sweet, reasonable approach will eventually turn into ultimate ruthless fury when God’s saints refuse to violate the holy law of God by surrendering to the satanic errors of popery.

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The Sin Problem
by Ron Spear

Ron Spear’s latest book, The Sin Problem, arrives while many are continuing to cloud the issues. While some within Adventism are teaching the Evangelical gospel and making decided attacks against the pillars of Adventism, The Sin Problem presents insights into the truths which uphold and strengthen the very pillars that others strongly deny.

As is always Elder Spear’s style, he uses the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy to shed light upon Adventism’s pillars. He presents several themes which concern the sin problem:

- the leaven of truth,
- the sanctuary,
- the three angels’ messages,
- the sabbath,
- the crescent,
- righteousness by faith,
- the born again experience, and
- the great delay.

Order The Sin Problem today for just $5.00. Please see page 3 for shipping and sales tax information.

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When God Asked Women to Wear Pants
by Vernon Sparks

Hardly any discussion in Adventism can become more heated than one surrounding whether Christian dress for women includes slacks or pants.

What does Inspiration tell us is healthful? What is modest? What are the principles we can apply today? By a study of human physiology and the Inspired Counsels, the author draws some interesting, thought-provoking, and challenging observations.


Joining the Independence Party

On Monday, September 25, 1995, Mr. Ross Perot, a 1992 candidate for President of the United States, announced the intention of forming a third political party in the United States. This proposed third party is called the Independence Party. This effort to form a party independent from the present Republican and Democratic Parties is bred by an ongoing dissatisfaction with how America is being governed. It is an effort on the part of freethinking men and women to do what they believe is right in the political and social arenas. This freedom of America's citizens to do what is right in their own eyes, the freedom to be independent from the status quo, is what strengthened America and made her a leader in the rest of the world.

However, it is one thing to join a party independent from other political or social groups, but completely another matter to become a member of a group independent from the established leadership of one's government. For example, a soldier in the army of his country who joins with those doing what is right in their own eyes can be tried for treason. Furthermore, he runs the risk of execution for rebellion.

Serious consequences can also be the fate of members of a religious body who choose to join an independent-from-leadership party. Thus, when exercising our God-given privilege to do what is right in our own eyes, we need to be certain that what we are separating from is in the right, and that what the separation will enable us to do is in the right. Above all else, we clearly need to be certain that our search for "freedom of expression," and for "fulfillment," does not lead us to independence from God and His truth.

During the 1994 General Conference Fall Annual Council, Elder A. C. McClure, president of the North American Division, presented an appeal to the General Conference to allow each division to decide for itself whether or not to ordain women to the gospel ministry. He reminded them that previous authority had been given to the divisions to decide for themselves as to whether or not to ordain women as local elders. He reported that more than one thousand women were currently serving as ordained elders in the North American Division. He went on to state that from this previously given authority to "make a decision on ordination of women," that "there is no turning back."

As most Adventists know, the delegates to the recent General Conference session in Utrecht, Netherlands, voted to deny the request of the North American Division for each division to have the authority to ordain women if they so choose. The vote was 673 in favor of the request and 1,481 against. This decision was determined after the evaluation of Scripture in which the majority basis their view upon a literal interpretation of the Divine Word.

But, true to Elder McClure’s words, "there is no turning back" by some in the North American Division, from the ordination of women to the gospel ministry—even if it means going directly contrary to God’s highest human authority. On Saturday afternoon, September 23, 1995, there was a laying-on-of-hands ordination service for three women at the Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church in Takoma Park, Maryland.

Some portray this ceremony as merely an ordination of women as local elders, but they fail to note that the three women had previously been ordained as local elders and had already been functioning with that authority. Others portray this event as merely "an affirmation" of women to ministry—deaconesses, dorphas leaders, Bible workers, local elders, and so on. This explanation, however, is belied by the list of attending guests from across the United States, such as Charles Scriven, president of Columbia Union College, Louis Venden, professor of ministerial studies at Pacific Union College, Lawrence Geraty, president of La Sierra University, and Fritz Guy, professor of theology at La Sierra University. It is belied by the special service, with its distinctive, beautifully printed program, just as is usually reserved for the ordination of men to the gospel ministry. It is also belied by the response of one of the candidates who referred to the ongoing embarrassment she had experienced in her ministry when she had to interact with non-Adventist colleagues in activities where ordination was expected. She said "It was hard being a chaplain and not ordained, but harder still was belonging to a church that will not ordain women." Now it does, she said."
Such activities by a local church creates serious difficulties for church administration. If the local church continues to follow protocol by sending its tithe to the local conference office, which in turn pays the salary of the ordained woman pastor, then the conference is party to the rebellion. If the local church pays the ordained woman pastor directly, then it has broken from organizational protocol in how to handle the tithes. These are indeed serious problems for church officials. The most serious aspect of the situation, though, is that it is open rebellion against the General Conference in world session, God’s highest human authority on earth. We, each one, need to lift up in prayer the leadership of our church that they will know how to apply appropriate discipline to this open rebellion.

We should not be overly surprised by this incident of independence from some in the leadership of God’s church. As a people we were recognized as being in the Laodicean condition as early as 1856, some nine years prior to being organized as a church. For many years now we have, in many ways, acted independently from God’s directives regarding the operation of His educational, health, and publishing institutions. As we have rejected light from God in one area, we eventually have become spiritually blind in other areas. Beginning in the 1950s, our doctrinal unity was disrupted by the entrance of New Theology teachings. In order to please inquiring Evangelicals we printed the book Questions on Doctrines, purporting that Adventists believe that the atonement was completed on the cross, and that Christ came to this earth in a sinless, human nature like that of Adam before the Fall. From that time on, our doctrinal unity has continued downhill to the point that today there is acknowledged to be at least five distinct versions of the gospel being preached by well-known, professed Seventh-day Adventists. We, who pride ourselves on being a people of the Book, are in disagreement regarding what Inspiration teaches about how men are saved. Clearly, there can be only one true version of the gospel. All others are perversion of the truth and are thus formulated independent of Inspiration.

Today, we are not only operating our institutions, in many ways, independent of the Lord’s directives, but we are also formulating and giving to the world an independent—from the Lord version of the three angels’ messages. These independent—from God versions of the gospel are borrowed from the fallen, so-called Christian churches, and are truly new-to-Adventist beliefs.

The various false gospels in Adventism have a common theme. In one way or another they downplay or negate the necessity of—or the possibility of—overcoming sin in this present life.

The following appeared in the November 6, 1995, issue of the Gleaner, the official paper of the North Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists with headquarters in Portland, Oregon, U.S.A. It is part of an article, “North American Women in Ministry” by the president of the Union, Bruce Johnston.


“Because we believe that God calls both women and men to the gospel ministry, we were disappointed by the General Conference vote in Utrecht to deny ordination to women. While loyal to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, we still firmly believe in the biblical rightness of women’s ordination.

“We appreciate the leadership role that Elder A. C. McClure, our North American Division President, exhibited at Utrecht as he represented our division’s request that the decision to ordain women be made regionally by the various world divisions. We are pleased that Elder McClure has already taken steps to establish a Presidential Commission on Women in Ministry to find ways to validate our commitment to women in ministry.

“Therefore, in support of the work of the Presidential Commission and our desire for full equality of men and women in ministry, we ask that the following steps be taken and pledge our vigorous support:

“1. Authorize full equality of practice in ministry: Grant women and men full equality in the practice of ministry by eliminating all policies where ordination is a prerequisite and/or men and women ministers are treated differently, including the authority to, A. Hold any church office, including being a conference, union, division or General Conference president; B. Ordain local elders and deacons; C. Organize and disband churches; D. Perform pastoral functions outside one’s own district.

“2. Enhance the Commission Service: We encourage enhancing the currently authorized Commissioning Service as a public affirmation of women set apart for a life of ministry.
"God demands of us perfect obedience to His law—the expression of His character. ‘Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.’ Romans 3:31. This law is the echo of God’s voice, saying to us, ‘Holier, yes, holier still.’ . . .

‘God has plainly stated that He requires us to be perfect; and because He requires this, He has made provision that we may be partakers of the divine nature. God through obedience to the truth. Our conscience must be purged from dead works to serve the living God. We are not yet perfect; but it is our privilege to cut away from the entanglements of self and sin, and advance to perfection. Great possibilities, high and holy attainments, are placed within the reach of all.’

“But the gospel of good news was not to be interpreted as allowing men to live in continued rebellion against God by transgressing His just and holy law. Why cannot those who claim to understand the Scriptures, see that God’s requirement under grace is just the same [as] He made in Eden—perfect obedience to His law. In the judgment, God will ask those who profess to be Christians, Why did you claim to believe in My Son, and continue to transgress My law? Who required this at your hands—to trample upon My rules of righteousness? ‘Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.’ 1 Samuel 15:22. The gospel of the New Testament is not the Old Testament standard lowered to meet the sinner and save him in his sins. God requires of all His subjects obedience, entire obedience to all His commandments. He demands now as ever perfect righteousness as the only title to heaven. Christ is our Hope and our Refuge. His righteousness is only imputed to the obedient. Let us accept it through faith, that the Father shall find in us no sin. But those who have trampled on the Holy Law will have no right to claim that righteousness. Oh that we might view the immensity of the plan of salvation as obedient children to all God’s requirements, believing that we have peace with God through Jesus Christ, our Atoning Sacrifice!”

“Now, while we point the sinner to Jesus Christ as the One who can take away sin, we must explain to him what sin is, and show him the necessity of being saved from his sins, not in them. He must be made to feel that he must cease to transgress the law of God, which is to cease to sin.” (Emphasis in the original.)

The true gospel teaches that sin is “the transgression of the law”—rebellion—the choice of an intelligent mind to live contrary to God’s will.

Only thus can we gain success in our striving for eternal life. The power is given by Christ. ‘As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.’ John 1:12.”

Other false gospels in Adventism, by exalting justification (pardon) and downplaying sanctification (transformation with obedience), portray as unnecessary the goal that Inspiration not only holds up before us but demands of us—perfect obedience.

“True sanctification means perfect love, perfect obedience, perfect conformity to the will of God. We are to be sanctified to the very image of Christ. To this end, we must be holy, set apart, as God is holy. We are to avoid all sin and all stain, all guilt and all stain, so that there is nothingsoever to grieve the Holy Spirit of God.”

3. Increase the role of women in the church: We believe that we must take steps to increase the presence and participation of women in ministry by, A. Encouraging conferences to call more women into pastoral ministry; B. Recruiting women to greater leadership and officer roles at all levels of the church.

4. Clarify our theology of ordination: We request that the General Conference initiate a study process to clarify our understanding of ordination so that it more fully reflects biblical theology and Adventist mission. We need confidence that our practice of ministry ordination is grounded in the Word of God and not in church history. The dialogue at Utrecht regarding ordination of women demonstrated the church’s need to increase our members understanding and application of basic Biblical hermeneutical principles.

"While we support the vote at Utrecht, we are also committed to the goal of women’s ordination. We believe that the same Holy Spirit who calls, leads, and blesses women in pastoral ministry is also calling our entire church to increased faithfulness in its affirmation and validation of women in gospel ministry. We ask all our brothers and sisters in the North American Division to actively and prayerfully join that journey. Let us be a ‘priesthood of all believers’ in proclaiming together the Good News that Christ is coming soon.

Union Conference Presidents
North American Division"

This statement clearly places the North American Union Conference Presidents in a head-on collision course with the recent decision of the General Conference in world session to not allow regional decisions regarding the ordination of women to the gospel ministry. We wonder, how can this position of leadership be used to discourage or deter local congregations, or other groups, from following in the openly rebellious footsteps of the Sligo Church? The most alarming aspect of this statement of commitment, however, is that it well documents the formation of two groups within Adventism based upon a difference of how we interpret and relate to Inspiration. One might ask, Is the North American Division forming its own “independent ministry”? We can be certain that when two major groups in the Seventh-day Adventist Church differ in their “understanding and application of basic Biblical hermeneutical principles” that the “Independence Party” gains great momentum.—EDITORS
ago, and by His present life of perfect obedience in us today. We are saved by faith in His pardoning grace, along with faith in His enabling grace to obey. His pardon of our past sins is our title to heaven, and His life of victory over sin in our present life is our fitness—what qualifies us—for heaven.

“But we are bound to give thanks always 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.

Christ came not merely to save us from the condemnation of our past sins but also independence from large portions of Christ’s directives through the Spirit of Prophecy as to how we are to live and work for Him. We are practicing and promulgating the same popular gospel of the fallen churches of Christianity that teaches that we can pick and choose the portions of God’s expressed will to obey and still be assured of salvation. Such spiritual blindness will prove fatal unless we awaken.

Another harmful aspect of these independent-from-God gospels, is that they downplay or negate the uniqueness, importance, and relevance of the third angel’s message which must be carried to the whole world. If perfect obedience to God’s express will is impossible or unnecessary, why do we feel obligated to preach that God requires that we observe the seventh-day Sabbath? If justification alone provides qualification, as well as our title to heaven, then it is logical to conclude that the “gospel” preached by the Baptists, Lutherans, or any of a number of other denominations will help us to finish the gospel commission. Will their sharing of a partial gospel relieve us of our need to share the full gospel message to every person on planet earth? If obedience to unique beliefs is neither possible nor essential to salvation, then why need I sacrifice and put forth special effort to carry them to the far corners of the earth? Attempts have been made to palm off on God’s remnant people just such conclusions. If God can save me while I am in known disobedience to Him, then why do I need to be a Seventh-day Adventist? Or why does the Seventh-day Adventist Church even need to exist? If complete obedience to God’s will is neither possible nor necessary, then why do I need to be willing to suffer persecution, even possible death, over which day of the week to keep holy? Indeed, such false teachings and gospels, that downplay or negate obedience as essential for salvation, are deadly.

Tragically, we are indeed witnessing some deadly gospels being taught by independent parties forming and growing among us today. But, we need not be discouraged. Because of our refusal to arouse from our Laodicean lethargy, God has allowed, as He said He would, here-sies to come in among us. The purpose of these false gospels today is to force us to study for ourselves that we might awaken from our spiritual blindness and lethargy. Unquestionably, we are well into the prophesied end-time shaking of Adventism which will separate the tares from the wheat under the persecutions related to Sunday laws.

Laodicea has disobeyed the Lord for so long in the operation of His institutions, as well as in our personal lives, that our increasing lack of spiritual discernment has led us to evolve perversions of the gospel.

to save us from the power of sin in our present life. This is the true gospel that must be given to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people before Christ can come. This is the true three angels’ messages, the true righteousness by faith that looks not only to the cross for the pardon of sin, but equally to Christ’s ongoing ministry in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary for enabling grace to be righteous. “Righteousness is right doing.”

This common error, taught by the independent-from-Inspiration gospels, that downplays or negates the necessity of obedience to God’s requirements in this life, threatens God’s people with great danger. Human nature being what it is, we will surely not achieve that which we do not believe is possible or necessary. We never achieve higher objectives than that for which we aim, by the grace of God. In reality, these false gospels turn the true gospel upside down by claiming that man is saved in his sins, rather than from his sins. Laodicea has disobeyed the Lord for so long in the operation of His institutions, as well as in our personal lives, that our increasing lack of spiritual discernment has led us to evolve perversions of the gospel. These erroneous gospels comfort us by teaching that perfect obedience to God in this life is not really possible, nor is it required.

We are lulled into carnal security by the message that we can be saved in spite of our

Books recommended for further reading:

- **Adventism’s New View** ($6.75) and **Those Who Do Not Remember the Past** ($8.50)—These books unmask the false gospels of overemphasized justification to the neglect of sanctification.
- **Heaven’s Health Service** ($5.75)—An overview of God’s plan for His health work.
- **Laodicea: Her Authority, Organization, and Destiny** ($12.50)—A wide-ranging discussion on the organization and authority of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, its Laodicean condition, the role of supportive ministries, the shaking of Adventism, the church militant, and the church triumphant.
- **The Sin Problem** ($5.00)—This book explains how the sin problem is our—Laodicea’s—problem.

Each of these books may be ordered from Hope International. Please see page 3 for shipping and sales tax information.
Whither Goeth Our Church?

U TRECHT 1995 is now history. Over fifty alterations to the Church Manual were considered along with seventy-two alterations to the Church Constitution and Bylaws. Some alterations voted will make minimal impact upon God's church; others will live on to haunt us.

My own pervading perception of Utrecht 1995, was one of an almost utter lack of a sense of urgency. It was as if the great climactic event enshrined in our denominational name possessed no imminence whatsoever. "Toronto 2000" was spoken of as if its occurrence were a certainty. All true believers will pray that Utrecht will have been the final General Conference session in the history of eternity. One presentation alone provided a reminder of the Second Advent, and one recalled the Bible doctrines so precious to past generations of Seventh-day Adventists.

That our church is in decline is evident. Such reality is heartbreaking to a generation of Seventh-day Adventists who have grown up in this truth and have recall of the pre-1956 era in which we saw ourselves as "a peculiar people" (1 Peter 2:9), unique in doctrine, unique in purpose, unique in standards, and unique in concepts of education and health. This generation grew up with a vision of their church progressing from one victory to another until, imbued by the latter rain power, it should embrace the entire earth with the light of the everlasting gospel, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners" (Song of Solomon 6:10), until every nation, kindred, tongue, and people would be compelled to make the decision of all decisions, and Christ would return.

How nostalgic the thirties and forties now appear! How unrealistic the expecta-
tions! How starry-eyed the youth of those bygone days!

Yes, we were aware that a shaking would take place. We knew that some of our brightest stars would go out in darkness and that a time was foretold when our own former brethren would become our worst enemies. But never for a moment did we anticipate that these events would transpire in a time when there were so few outside pressures impinging upon our church. We confidently anticipated that these events would occur when the Sabbath became such a test that universal economic boycotts and death decrees would be promulgated. Surely, we mused, nothing less than such dire tests of faith would drive believers to turn to the strong arm of the state to punish fellow brothers and sisters, to desert the truth, or to compromise with the fallen churches of Babylon. That such matters would transpire in a time of peace and safety was unthinkable.

In truth, we have seriously misread the evidence of Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy. Contemporary Seventh-day Adventist history shows this fact. What has so disturbed our beloved church? Numerous causative factors may be cited, but I believe they can be condensed into two fundamental alterations in direction.

The first of these damaging alterations is a current failure to ask the vital question, "Is there a word from the Lord?" See 1 Kings 22:5. Instead, when confronted with different decisions, we now ask, "What do the experts say?" We are no longer people of the Book. Little by little the 'wisdom' of the world, both secular and ecclesiastical, has become the norm by which we seek to solve our difficulties. Yet Inspiration uniquely reveals the solutions of our all-wise God, solutions which alone will ensure success.

Thus, we expend large sums to hold seminars on many aspects of our church's work. We construct a detailed Church Manual to direct the function and discipline of our church. We seek closer and closer ecumenical ties with the fallen churches of Babylon, and seek to follow their ecclesiastical innovations. We go to courts of law endeavoring to solve internal church disputes. We follow current business and professional practices in our medical, educational, and publishing work. And all this time Scripture is less and less a Source of reference for us. From this negligence stems a reduction in personal Bible and Spirit of Prophecy study. For many, man-constructed books are judged to be more apt than God's Word in providing insights into the complex situations of the nineties, even

Russell R. Standish
to the point where numerous novels now adorn the shelves of our Adventist Book Centers.

The result of our growing disregard for Inspiration is the ever-expanding teaching of apostate doctrines in our colleges, a growing indifference towards sin in our midst, associated with an increasing intolerance of those who cry out for fidelity and purity among us. In turn, these matters dictate harsher and harsher rules in vain efforts to silence the voices of concern. Doctrinal agnosticism is proclaimed in high places. In Issues, page 109, the leaders of the North American Division claimed that our church had no settled understanding of the doctrines of sanctification, the nature of sin, and the human nature of Christ. Pagan practices, such as charismatic worship services, hypnotism, religious processions, and Easter sunrise services, are being transported from Babylonish churches into our church. Our schools, medical institutions, and publishing houses have so departed from the paradigm as to be virtually worthless as propagators of our distinctive Bible-based beliefs. Indeed, our disregard of Inspiration is so pervasive that it now appears that the precious Adventist message will not be passed on to the next generation. See Adventist Review, March 7, 1991, North American Division leaders.

Unless God’s church returns to Inspiration it will splinter into small fragments; it will lack spiritual power, losing its focus and becoming an easy prey to the deceptions of the antichrist.

The Bible specifically sets forth the reasons why our church is in this present deplorable state:

"But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee." Deuteronomy 28:15. But, should we repent with sincere hearts, God’s certain promise to us is: “And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth.” Verse 1. How my heart yearns for God’s remedy to come to His church!

The second general reason for the rapid decline of God’s church is that every effort is being undertaken to transform God’s people from the vibrant upholders of truth and righteousness, with their position on the cutting edge of proclamation, into a docile flock, covered by a domineering clergy who act as if they perceive the laity’s dual role to consist solely of supplying funds for their purposes and giving unquestionable support for all of their acts.

In many churches, the elders have been displaced from their duty to shepherd the local congregation. Ineffectual pastors largely assume this role, the elders being reduced to the duties of hymn announcement, prayer presentation, and offering calls. Ordination is not required for such duties.

Many pastors, apparently valuing their future prospects in what is rapidly becoming a profession rather than a calling, know full well which human agents control their upward mobility in the work. Most have lost the concept that they have reached the pinnacle of their calling when they have humbly accepted and dutifully performed the role that our God assigned to them. Those pastors who do not understand this fact often assume the dual task of molding the congregation to comply with conference policies, whether righteous or not, and act like conference intelligence agents, reporting any signs of protest against the current plans to alter faith and practices in the conference. In this manner ministers trust that they will not be overlooked when “promotions” are considered. Under these circumstances the laity become spiritual pygmies, mere conformers, not to Christ and His Word, but to the ecclesiastical whims of the moment. There can be no other explanation for the ease with which glaring apostasy, profane worship services, and appalling Christian standards sponsored by the church administrators, have been placidly accepted by laypeople who full well know their peril.

It is common for church members to attest that they do not enjoy or appreciate worship trends in our church, but they accept the foolish claim that these disgraceful alterations are essential for “the youth.” How church members can believe such manifest foolishness when every criterion of Inspiration declares these approaches to be false, one does not know. We have never lost such a high percentage of our youth to the world as since we began to utilize the devil’s methods in order to “save our youth.” It seems that any compromise with the world which our church wishes to make is said to “benefit the youth.” This immediately appeases the consciences of the great majority of church members. These programs are not only a curse to senior church members, but they are a far greater curse to the youth they were intended to bless. Surely it is wake-up time for God’s laypeople.

A recent public program “for the youth” held in Mildura, Australia, and reported in the South Pacific Record, July 15, 1995, invited an overseas speaker and a Sydney singing group called Iron and Clay to participate. The godless music of that band could be heard blocks away. This group followed a growing trend of selecting a sacred title for their unsacred presentations. Another example is the Western Australian group which has chosen to call itself The Midnight Cry. Instead of pleading with these young people to turn to the purity and sacredness of our Lord, we encourage them by placing them on display as if their worldliness is approved of God. The Mildura Church pastor was quoted as stating, “Music is the god of this age, and if we don’t exploit it, the devil will.” How it hurts to see laypeople permitting the pastors to agree to the devil exploiting his music in our churches! Even worse, this program was an ecumenical presentation in which people were given a smorgasbord of churches from which they could select to study God’s Word. To offer people fellowship with the churches of Babylon is a scandal in God’s church. It is an utter denial of the task our God has entrusted to us as His remnant people.

Many church programs designed ostensibly for the youth are no more than excuses to totally alter our sacred worship of God. In the British Union Youth Department magazine, Encounter, no. 2, 1995, in an
article written by the communications director of the Columbia Union Conference (U.S.A.), the youth were encouraged not only to use their senses of hearing and speech in worship, but they were also introduced to touch by holding hands, taste by eating bread and drinking fruit juices, and smell by adding incense to the worship service. The Western Australian Conference Youth magazine, French Bread, April 1995, quoted the concept that the purpose of worship is excitement, and that the youth band would bring such excitement. That parents and grandparents sit in their seats mute while such blasphemy is permitted to be served up to the young people for whom Christ died, is a matter of profound mystery. God’s call to our youth is to “worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.” 1 Chronicles 16:29.

Any concerned member may discover degrading teachings in our official youth programs and materials. All one has to do is to read conference and union youth publications, such as the Youth Sabbath School Quarterly, Guide, Insight, reports in denominational magazines on youth activities, and local church programs, in order to find documentation of a startling character, widely scattered throughout our church. In at the end.’ The angel calls a huge, angry woman with rollers in her hair and says, ‘Samson, I’d like you to meet the woman who will be your wife.’ Samson looks horrified. Next, the angel brings a woman who looks like Claudia Schiffer’s prettier little sister, by far the prettiest woman you could imagine. I am the next person in line and can’t believe my luck. But the angel says to her, ‘You’ve made a lot of bad mistakes.’ I’m her punishment!’

In this passage we learn: (1) that we line up to get into heaven; (2) that angels will remind us of our earthly sins in heaven (This fact is emphasized twice); (3) that the only basis for our salvation is our repentance, not God’s grace; (4) that there will be obese people in heaven; (5) some will be angry in heaven; (6) some women will wear rollers in their hair in heaven; (7) there will be marriage in heaven; (8) people will have horrifying looks in heaven; (9) there is luck in heaven; and (10) punishment will continue in heaven.

That same quarterly presents a hedonistic life of surfboard riding on perfect waves on a planet containing only water designed for that purpose. Others will play baseball with Babe Ruth’s angel, basketball with Michael Jordan’s angel, and cricket with Dan Brad-

“...And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flock? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock.” Ezekiel 34:1-3.

Here God depicts the fearful situation in which we now find our church. “For the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the Lord: therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered.” Jeremiah 10:21.

A day of fearful retribution is at hand. God declares, “For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the Lord. . . . I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Go-

norrah.” Chapter 23:11, 14.

God has given specific advice to the laity in the current circumstances. “Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They say still unto them that despise me, The Lord hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you.” Verses 16-17.

Is the solution God recommends that we separate from the Seventh-day Adventist Church? No! a thousand times, No! God has provided us with His solution: “And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord.” Verses 3-4.

Let us never forget that at the sealing time God’s people will be in His church—the Seventh-day Adventist Church—Jerusa-

lem, but so will be the unfaithful. The sealing angel of Ezekiel 9 does not go to a separated city, anymore than do the slaughtering angels. At the conclusion of the sealing process, then, and only then, will the wheat and the tares be separated.

“And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the

Did our Lord not foresee the tragic state of His church? Did He not provide a solution? The answer to both questions is “Yes.”

North America, Western Europe, and the South Pacific, the degradation has reached a point where it mandates that parents and earnest church members must assume that denominationally produced materials and organized programs for our youth are a danger to their souls unless proven otherwise.

Just one example from the Youth Sabbath School Quarterly produced by the General Conference Church Ministries Department, second quarter, 1994, suffices to illustrate the fact that nonsense is taught from the highest levels of our church:

“You and I are waiting in the green to get into heaven, right behind Samson. “Samson,” the angel is saying, “you made a lot of bad mistakes. The only reason you’re here is that you asked forgiveness man’s angel. There will be competitive basketball matches between the pre-Flood patriarchs and the 144s (chosen from the 144,000), with Jesus joining in this competitive sport. Supposedly, this shocking material is designed to make heaven desirable to unconverted, sports-crazed youth.

When will the laity, filled with the Holy Ghost, cry “Hail!”? Do we now believe that blatant error is sanctified if it is supported by ministers and denominational administrators?

Did our Lord not foresee the tragic state of His church? Did He not provide a solution? The answer to both questions is “Yes.” Let us not forget that “The ancient prophets spoke less for their own time than for ours, so that their prophesying is in force for us.” Selected Messages, book 3, 338.
foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity;" Ezekiel 9:4–6.

Ezekiel, chapter 9, is a powerful warning against separation. Whither goest our church? The Seventh-day Adventist Church, shaken and purified, will complete the commission of the everlasting gospel. This church is assured that it will go on to the glorious fulfillment of all God's promises.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Jeremiah 23:5–6.

Then will faithful pastors receive their rewards. "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away," 1 Peter 5:4.

But who will be these pastors whom the Lord will provide? Inspiration testifies that the vast majority of our present-day pastors will not be among them. Sister White defines the ancient men of Ezekiel 9 as "those to whom God had given great light and who had stood as guardians of the spiritual interests of the people." Testimonies, vol. 5, 211. Thus, the ancient men are the pastors and administrators. These, Sister White declares, "had betrayed their trust." Ibid. None who betray their sacred responsibility by misleading God's flock will be selected as those shepherds whom God has chosen to set up over His flock.

Will these pastors include faithful, self-supporting pastors along with the faithful ones in the organized work? Yes, many will! But, before we rush into self-congratulatory exaltation, let us soberly consider the fact that as with the organized work, even so it will be with the self-supporting work. A self-supporting pastor who is adulterous, avaricious, self-exalted, or promotes false doctrine, is as far from the standard required by God for the task of final-day shepherds as are his counterparts in the organized work who are in apostasy.

God will call only pastors who humbly bring the joy of true salvation to the flock, who see themselves as servants, not domineering leaders. "Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand." 2 Corinthians 1:24. These God-appointed pastors will be men of virtue and fidelity. "Receive

None who betray their sacred responsibility by misleading God's flock will be selected as those shepherds whom God has chosen to set up over His flock.

condemning ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Verse 2.

Our Lord informs us that He "will work through humble instruments" and that His "laborers will be qualified rather by theunction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions." The Great Controversy, 606. The reasons that God rarely chose His pastors from graduates of the rabbinical schools at the time of the First Advent are precisely those same reasons prevailing today. Pastors who will be the John the Baptist of the Second Advent era, who will present the Elijah message, and who will complete the gospel commission, will have wisely avoided embracing the errors taught at our theological schools and seminaries. They will have studied truth as a preparation to preach truth.

It is a scaled and sanctified laity and ministry which will complete the work commited to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Sanctified workers will gloriously fulfill this task in God's power, for Christ Himself has promised, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14.

The Great Judgment Day
by John L. Shuler

The Great Judgment Day is an excellent witnessing booklet from the pen of a very respected evangelist and Bible scholar. The book explains how the longest time prophecy of the Bible is pointing to the appointment Jehovah has made with each human being. The author explains how the cleansing of the sanctuary spoken of in Daniel 8:14 began the judgment of God's people in 1844.

The account is given of how the Millerite movement was raised up to announce that great event and how Seventh-day Adventists are appropriately continuing to call attention to humanity's appointment with their Creator. The judgment of the wicked is also explained. Shuler tells of Christ's ministry in the two apartments of the heavenly sanctuary to blot out the sins of those who have accepted Christ's pardon.

Colorful and attractive cover; 96 pages. Only $2.50 each. 25% discount for 10 or more copies. See page 3 for shipping and sales tax information.
“Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.” Acts 24:16.

“I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.”

1 Timothy 1:12-13.

The Jews Anxious to Follow God

Because of the bitter experience through which the seed of Abraham passed in the captivity of Babylon for seventy years, after their deliverance from their Babylonian exile, the leaders determined never again to reject the counsel of God’s Word. The influential men of Israel feared the serious consequences which might overtake them if they were again led away from the true God. The following statement from Ezra is to the point:

“Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping?” Ezra 9:14.

A Jewish book entitled Ethics of the Fathers, written about the second century before Christ, chapter 1, paragraph 2, says: “Be deliberate in judgment; train up many disciples; and make a fence for the law.” The sages of Israel put forth their best effort to fence in the law. They multiplied comments, explanations, tretises, targums, and other religious helps, in order that the people might better understand the teaching of the Word of God. Unfortunately, in their endeavor to familiarize the people with the requirements contained in Scripture for following God, they stumbled over a great stumbling stone.

After Alexander the Great worshiped in the temple at Jerusalem, following his reception by Jaddua the high priest, a spirit of friendliness developed between the Greeks and the Jews. Alexander’s generals found it difficult to understand why their chief embraced the high priest, when they met on Mount Scopus, instead of putting him to death. Alexander told his officials that what occurred that day was shown to him in a vision when he was in Macedonia, and he wanted the privilege

Frederick Carnes Gilbert (1867-1946), known in Adventism as an evangelist to the Jews, was himself a converted Jew.
of entering the temple and worshiping the God of Jaddua.

Greece assured the Jews that they desired to be their true friends and benefactors. They were desirous of learning more of the God of the Hebrews. An arrangement was entered into that allowed a large number of rabbis from Jerusalem to go to Alexandria and translate the writings of the Jewish Scriptures into the Greek language. Greek scholarship and learning was seeking every possible avenue of information to enhance the value of its own culture and refinement. It was also suggested by the Greeks that the Jews send their talented young men to Alexandria for training and instruction in the philosophies, sciences, and learning of the Greeks.

Many of the elders of Israel feared the results of such a course; the sages remembered the sorrows of their ancestors who came into contact with heathen manners and customs. They counseled the younger men against such a procedure. These, in turn, argued that it would be an advantage for strong, thoughtful, vigorous young men to enter the schools of Greece, as they might influence the philosophers and Greek scholars to see the value and beauty of the Jewish religion, and some of the learned Greeks might embrace Judaism. Yet, the aged men of Israel advised against it. They maintained that should the younger men be given encouragement to come into contact with the learning of the heathen, it might be ruinous to the future of the Jewish race.

Greece assured the fathers of Israel that they might hold to their own standards of religion. They were encouraged to believe that the synagogues where the children were taught their religion would not be interfered with; their Beth Hamedrosh (house of learning, their high schools), where their young people received preparatory training, would continue as heretofore; the Talmud Torah (their colleges where advanced studies were conducted) would be strengthened if the teachers of the law should only imbibe the wisdom and learning of the scholars of Greece; and by receiving recognition from the world's greatest nation, the graduates of Jewish schools would find it greatly to their advantage.

Many of Israel's influential men yielded to Greek insistence. The former said that God would help their young men to be true to their religion, and the training schools of Jewry would have a better standing in the eyes of the nations. The men of Israel were made to feel that the advantages to the Jewish scholars would be immeasurable, for they would have incentives or goals to reach. The young men would gain knowledge, influence, prestige; and the more they advanced in learning, the higher would be their attainments.

Gradually the Jewish schools came to confer degrees upon their graduates. There was the Rav, or rabbi, the Tana, the Gayon, the Sadi, and the Rabbon. It was thought necessary for the graduates of the rabbinical schools to show the mark of their rank by wearing different clothing. The man with a degree must wear a peculiar, distinctive gown and cap. Little by little an educational aristocracy was formed, which was called the Sanhedrin. This term is of Greek origin, the Hebrew name being Beth Din Hagodol, Great House of Judgment.

Decline of Spirituality

While the religious schools continued to operate, a marked declension in spiritual influence and power was visible. Year by year the Word of God was studied less, as the courses of studies based on culture and philosophy increased. The curriculum of the rabbinical schools was influenced toward intellectualism. As the years passed, man became exalted and God was less thought of. The rabbi was exalted; the unlearned were depreciated. Piety gradually diminished as form and ceremony increased. Many laws were passed favoring rabbinism and school customs, yet students were encouraged to love and obey God.

In Ethics of the Fathers, the rabbis taught: "A child of five years should study the Bible, at ten the Mishna, at fifteen the Gemara."

The Mishna is a voluminous commentary of the Bible; the Gemara is the commentary of the Mishna. So, as the student advanced in years and developed in men's acumen, he studied God's Word less, and man's writings more.

Intellectualism Sets Aside Inspiration

In order for men to be accepted by Jewish assemblies, they must have completed a course in the rabbinical schools. Those who failed to follow the procedure mapped out by the Great Sanhedrin (or by the lesser Sanhedrin located in cities and towns of Palestine outside the city of Jerusalem, headquarters of the Beth Din Hagodol, the Great House of Judgment), received no recognition by the populace. The graduate rabbi was known by his garb. It was vital that rabbinical qualifications be met in order for a person to gain a hearing by the children of Abraham.

Such were existing conditions in the land of Judaea at the time when John and Jesus appeared in the land of Israel.

The following from The Desire of Ages, 28-29, is pertinent here:

"By the Babylonish captivity the Israelites were effectually cured of the worship of graven images. During the centuries that followed, they suffered from the oppression of heathen foes, until the conviction became fixed that their prosperity depended upon their obedience to the law of God . . .

"After the return from Babylon, much attention was given to religious instruction. All over the country, synagogues were erected, where the law was expounded by the priests and scribes. And schools were established, which, together with the arts and sciences, professed to teach the principles of righteousness. But these agencies became corrupted . . . In many things they conformed to the practice of idolaters.

"As they departed from God, the Jews in a great degree lost sight of the teaching of the ritual service . . . The Jews lost the spiritual life from their ceremonies, and clung to dead forms . . . In order to supply the place of that which they had lost, the
priests and rabbis multiplied requirements of their own; and the more rigid they grew, the less of the love of God was manifested. They measured their holiness by the multitude of their ceremonies, while their hearts were filled with pride and hypocrisy."

"As the Jews departed from God, faith had grown dim, and hope had well-nigh ceased to illuminate the future. The words of the prophets were uncomprehended." Ibid., 32.

Since John and Jesus were not attendants at rabbinical schools, the people would not recognize their authority as teachers. However, God gave these men a message filled with divine power and with the heavenly Spirit. Because the leaders of Israel failed to accept the message of John as coming from God, they were unprepared to receive the message of the Saviour, although He assured them that His life and advent were based on the Sacred Scriptures. The rabbis argued, "How knowest this man letters, having never learned?" John 7:15.

Since the family of Jesus was loyal to the synagogues, His own brothers did not believe on Him as the Messiah. See verses 4-5. Because the standards of learning were set up by the Sanhedrin, and none who refused to accept the teaching of the rabbis were given recognition, it is not difficult to understand why, when the Saviour came to those who were custodians of the Oracles of God, they failed to recognize Him as the fulfillment of the types and prophecies noted in Moses and the prophets. By mingling human philosophy with the Word of God, teachers and laymen had come to lack the spiritual force and power of the Scriptures in their lives. They did not have spiritual discernment. Greek philosophy, Alexandrian and Athenian culture had sapped the spiritual strength of the house of Israel. The influence of this worldly religious training unfitted all classes to meet Him when "He

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**The Lutheran-Adventist Dialogue: Will It Hasten the Coming of Jesus?**

by Colin D. Standish

IN 1928, F. C. Gilbert, the converted Jewish Adventist minister, wrote a most penetrating article discussing why the Jews rejected Jesus as the Messiah. In this article Gilbert identifies the rationale that was used to convince the Jews to send their best students "to enter the schools of Greece, as they might influence the philosophers and Greek scholars to see the value and beauty of the Jewish religion"—an action which led the Jews to adopt various aspects of Greek philosophy, and ultimately influenced them to reject their Messiah.

Is it possible that we Adventists are making a similar mistake today? Are we treading the dangerous pathway of dialogue with those who are not following in the pathway of truth and righteousness, only to discover too late that we have accepted some of their false teachings?

The September 14, 1995, issue of the Adventist Review contained a newsbreak report entitled, "Lutherans Vote to Continue Dialogue With Adventists."

"Members of the Lutheran World Federation Council (LWF) have recommended that a dialogue with Adventist theologians started in 1994 be continued annually, reports the Adventist Press Service."

"At the initial meeting in Darmstadt, Germany, participants exchanged views on several doctrines. In proposing the recommendations, Eugene Brand, Assistant LWF General Secretary for Ecumenical Affairs, called the dialogue 'a unique opportunity.'"

"Both Lutheran and Adventist leaders believe the dialogue is useful in achieving mutual understanding, breaking down false stereotypes, and discovering the basis of faith and points of real and imaginary friction between the two churches."

"The LWF represents 120 Lutheran denominations, with more than 56 million of the world's nearly 60 million Lutheran members. The next meeting is expected to convene in 1996."

Immediately, the question arises, "What will be the outcome of these ongoing annual dialogues between the Lutheran Church and the Seventh-day Adventist Church?" 1) Will they hasten the coming of Jesus? 2) Will they lead to clearer understanding of the everlasting gospel and the three angels' messages? 3) Will they help Seventh-day Adventists to call men and women out of Babylon into the marvelous light of the Adventist faith? 4) Will they lead to the conversion of many Lutherans to the Adventist message?

This more recent statement follows the account given in the Adventist Review January 1995, monthly edition, which reported that our church had been involved in a dialogue with the Lutheran World Federation. We often have short memories concerning the effectiveness and the results of such consultations. Immediately, as I read this, my mind went back forty years to the time when we agreed to dialogue with Dr. Donald Barnhouse, editor of Eternity magazine and pastor of the Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, and Walter Martin, later to become one of the best known proponents of Evangelical Prot-estantism and a staunch foe of those who strongly believed in the authentic Adventist message.

Few of us who saw the dialogue on the Ankerberg Show involving Dr. Walter Martin and Dr. William Johnson, the editor of the Adventist Review, will forget the ruthless assault that Dr. Martin made upon such wonderful truths as the Sabbath, the incarnation of Jesus, the Spirit of Prophecy, and other areas that we hold so dear. Have we not learned that consultations and dialogue with those not of our faith has been responsible for the unbelievably rapid drift towards ecumenism in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the erosion of the pillars of our faith?

It is well to keep in mind that the Lutheran World Federation is also in continuing dialogue with Roman Catholicism. One of the focal dialogue issues between Lutherans and Roman Catholics is justification. The Christian News, February 27, 1995, the voice of conservative Lutherans in the United States, stated, "[Ishmael] Noko hopes that the next LWF assembly, in Hong Kong in 1997, will agree to a joint statement with the Roman Catholic Church allowing the two confessions to lift mutual condemnations, which date back to the sixteenth century, about the 'doctrine of justification by faith.'"

There has been plain evidence that leaders of the Lutheran Church in Germany have been seeking to apologize for Martin Luther, the man who stood so courageously and nobly against the doc-
came to his own,” and “his own received him not.” Chapter 1:11. His claims were heavenly; the people were of the earth, earthly. Heaven and earth did not harmonize.

At the beginning of His work, Jesus told the people that the populace would kill Him. The Pharisees accused Him of being a Samaritan and of having a devil. Being blinded by sin, influenced and hypnotized by human learning and rabbinical tradition, the masses were void of spiritual intuition. In the end they rejected their only hope, their one source of deliverance. No honesty, zeal, or earnestness could deliver or save them from sin. Only Jesus, the Light of the world, the Saviour of men, could bring deliverance.

The leaders of Israel had, to a great extent, yielded to the demands of Greek culture and learning, thereby hoping to gain prestige and influence. They had been led to believe that they could make better progress in their God-given task by assimilating worldly standards of education than by clinging with tenacity to the old standards bequeathed to them by their godly ancestors. So the Israelites lost much of their influence, failed to retain their prestige, and rejected their long-looked-for Messiah and Saviour.

trivial and practical excesses of the Roman Catholic Church.

Thus, to any perceptive Seventh-day Adventist, the article in the September 14 Adventist Review should have raised very high the red flags of warning. After all, it will be noted that Eugene Brand is the LWF’s Assistant General Secretary for Ecumenical Affairs. Can our leaders stand back and not see these dialogues as pathways fraught with terrible dangers? Obviously, we are walking with our eyes wide open into the ecumenical trap. It will also be noted that Brand called the dialogue, “A unique opportunity.” We ask the question, “What kind of a unique opportunity?” Is this an opportunity for truth and enlightenment, or is it another opportunity to erode the distinctiveness of the one message that God has declared will go to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people?

I wonder if due consideration has been given as to what such a dialogue will actually achieve. The idea is to break down false stereotypes and to discover the basis of faith and points of real and imaginary friction. It is normal in such dialogues to see how closely we can present our viewpoints so that they are not offensive to the other party.

But will the center themes of our faith be fully explored? Will these Lutherans be presented with the issue of the Sabbath and its relationship to sanctification, creation, and the seal of God as defined in contrast to the mark of the beast—the final test of loyalty at the end of time? Will there be a clear understanding of the sanctuary message, which details the completion of the atonement, the blotting out of sin, and the judgment of the living, as well as the judgment of the dead? Will the state of the dead be explored? Will there be a bold and clear presentation made concerning the abomination of the concept of predestination which declares that God predetermines myriads of humans to burn in excruciating agony forever and ever, even though they had no opportunity to make a choice in the decision of loyalty or disloyalty to God? Will the concept of an eternally burning hell, combined with the falsehood of predestination, be shown to reveal a god who would be a monster? Satan would pale into insignificance in contrast to such a god. Will the true concepts of righteousness by faith be placed before these men? Will there be a strong stand against the concept of once saved always saved, infant baptism, and other such unbiblical doctrines? Past history has shown that such dialogues are designed to erode the clarity of the differences between truth and error, and of good and evil. There is no evidence that truth is ever elucidated by such dialogues.

It was ironic that about the same time I was reading the Review article, I was also reading the report on the retirement of the head bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. His comment was, “I have enjoyed taking a leadership role in the Lutheran World Federation and helping move the LWF towards being a communion of churches.” Christian News, September 11, 1995. In the same issue of Christian News, this same bishop is quoted as follows: “Chilstrom said his own perspective had changed from thinking homosexual acts were perverted to viewing gays and lesbians as people who ‘are no different from us than people who are left-handed.’ ” It is time we ask ourselves the question, “What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness and what communion hath light with darkness?” 2 Corinthians 6:14.

We need to urge our leaders to pray most fervently before making these arrangements with any of the fallen churches of Babylon. It is always argued that such a dialogue is an opportunity to witness for our faith, but history attests to the fact that the results are inevitably in the opposite direction. Let us write our leaders telling them that we want them to cease such dangerous dialogues. Let thousands of letters be written in protest to our General Conference President. I intend so to do. Please join me.
The True Remedies—V

Exercise

"God made Adam and Eve in Paradise, and surrounded them with everything that was useful and lovely. He planted for them a beautiful garden. No herb nor flower nor tree was wanting which might be for use or ornament. The Creator of man knew that the workmanship of His hands could not be happy without employment. Paradise delighted their souls, but this was not enough; they must have labor to call into exercise the wonderful organs of the body. The Lord had made the organs for use. Had happiness consisted in doing nothing, man, in his state of holy innocence, would have been left unemployed. But He who formed man knew what would be for his best happiness, and He no sooner made him than He gave him his appointed work. In order to be happy, he must labor." Testimonies, vol. 3, 77.

"Those who do not use their limbs every day will realize a weakness when they do attempt to exercise. The veins and muscles are not in a condition to perform their work and keep all the living machinery in healthful action, each organ in the system doing its part. The limbs will strengthen with use. Moderate exercise every day will impart strength to the muscles, which without exercise become flabby and enfeebled. By active exercise in the open air every day, the liver, kidneys, and lungs also will be strengthened to perform their work. Bring to your aid the power of the will, which will resist cold and will give energy to the nervous system. In a short time you will so realize the benefit of exercise and pure air that you would not live without these blessings." Ibid., vol. 2, 533.

"Riches and idleness are thought by some to be blessings indeed; but those who are always busy, and who cheerfully go about their daily tasks, are the most happy and enjoy the best health. The healthful weariness which results from well-regulated labor secures to them the benefits of refreshing sleep. The sentence that man must toil for his daily bread, and the promise of future happiness and glory, both came from the same throne, and both are blessings." My Life Today, 168.

"God designed that the living machinery should be in daily activity; for in this activity or motion is its preserving power." Healthful Living, 131.

"Each faculty of the mind and each muscle has its distinctive office, and all require to be exercised in order to become properly developed and retain healthful vigor. Each organ and muscle has its work to do in the living organism. Every wheel in the machinery must be a living, active, working wheel. Nature's fine and wonderful works need to be kept in active motion in order to accomplish the object for which they were designed. Each faculty has a bearing upon the others, and all need to be exercised in order to be properly developed. If one muscle of the body is exercised more than another, the one used will become much the larger, and will destroy the harmony and beauty of the development of the system. A variety of exercise will call into use all the muscles of the body." Testimonies, vol. 3, 77-78.

"God has given us all something to do. In the discharge of the various duties which we are to perform, which lie in our pathway, our lives will be made useful, and we shall be blessed. Not only will the organs of the body be strengthened by exercise, but the mind also will acquire strength and knowledge through the action of those organs. The exercise of one muscle, while others are left with nothing to do, will not strengthen the inactive ones any more than the continual exercise of one of the organs of the mind will develop and strengthen the organs not brought into use." Ibid., 77.

"Brethren, when you take time to cultivate your gardens, thus gaining the exercise needed to keep the system in good working order, you are just as much doing the work of God as in holding meetings." Healthful Living, 129.

"If they worked intelligently, giving both mind and body a due share of exercise, ministers would not so readily succumb to disease." Ibid., 132.

"The human body may be compared to nicely adjusted machinery, which needs care to keep it in running order. One part should not be subjected to constant wear and pressure, while another part is rusting from inaction. While the mind is taxed, the muscles also should have their proportion of exercise. Every young person should learn how many hours may be spent in study, and how much time should be given to physical exercise." Ibid., 127.

"By pursuing one line of thought exclusively, the mind often becomes unbalanced. But every faculty may be safely exercised if the mental and physical powers are equally taxed and the subjects of thought are varied." Education, 209.

"In what contrast to the habits of the active farmer are those of the student who neglects physical exercise... His blood moves sluggishly; his feet are cold; his head hot. How can such a person have health?" Healthful Living, 134.

"If physical exercise were combined with mental exertion, the blood would be quickened in its circulation, the action of the heart would be more perfect, impure matter would be thrown off, and new life and vigor would be experienced in every part of the body." Testimonies, vol. 3, 490.

"Useful employment would bring into exercise the enfeebled muscles, enliven the stagnant blood in the system, and arouse the torpid liver to perform its work. The circulation of the blood would be equalized, and the entire system invigorated to overcome bad conditions." Healthful Living, 134.

"There is no exercise that will prove as beneficial to every part of the body as walking. Active walking in the open air will do more for women, to preserve them in health if they are well, than any other means. Walking is also one of the most efficient remedies for the recovery of health of the invalid. The hands and arms are exercised as well as the limbs." Ibid., 130.

"Walking, in all cases where it is possible, is the best remedy for diseased bodies, because in this exercise all the organs of the
body are brought into use. Many who depend upon the movement cure could accomplish more for themselves by muscular exercise than the movements can do for them. In some cases want of exercise causes the bowels and muscles to become enfeebled and shrunked, and these organs that have become enfeebled for want of use will be strengthened by exercise. There is no exercise that can take the place of walking. By it the circulation of the blood is greatly improved." Testimonies, vol. 3, 78.

"If work is performed without the heart's being in it, it is simply drudgery, and the benefit which should result from the exercise is not gained." Healthful Living, 129.

"Morning exercise, in walking in the free, invigorating air of heaven, or cultivating flowers, small fruits, and vegetables, is necessary to a healthful circulation of the blood. It is the surest safeguard against colds, coughs, congestions of the brain and lungs, inflammation of the liver, the kidneys, and the lungs, and a hundred other diseases." Ibid., 130–131.

"Exercise will aid the work of digestion. To walk out after a meal, hold the head erect, put back the shoulders, and exercise moderately, will be a great benefit. The mind will be diverted from self to the beauties of nature. The less the attention is called to the stomach after a meal, the better." Ibid., 130.

"My brother, your brain is benumbed. A man who disposes of the quantity of food that you do should be a laboring man. Exercise is important to digestion and to a healthy condition of body and mind. You need physical exercise. You move and act as if you were wooden, as though you had no elasticity. Healthy, active exercise is what you need. This will invigorate the mind. Neither study nor violent exercise should be engaged in immediately after a full meal; this would be a violation of the laws of the system. Immediately after eating there is a strong draft upon the nervous energy. The brain force is called into active exercise to assist the stomach; therefore, when the mind or body is taxed heavily after eating, the process of digestion is hindered. The vitality of the system, which is needed to carry on the work in one direction, is called away and set to work in another." Testimonies, vol. 2, 413.

"By judicious exercise they may expand the chest and strengthen the muscles... By giving heed to proper instruction, by following health principles in regard to the expansion of the lungs and culture of the voice, our young men and women may become speakers that can be heard, and the exercise necessary to this accomplishment will prolong life." Healthful Living, 139.

"Proper exercise in the open air and genial sunshine, ranks among God's highest and richest blessings to man. It gives form and strength to the physical organism, and, all other habits being equal, is the surest safeguard against disease and premature decay. Being man's natural condition, it also gives buoyancy and strength to thought, and the mind maintains a healthful balance, free from the extremes resulting from artificial life." Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene, 173.

"Physical inaction lessens not only mental but moral power. The brain nerves that connect with the whole system are the medium through which Heaven communicates with man and affects the inmost life. Whatever hinders the circulation of the electric current in the nervous system, thus weakening the vital powers and lessening mental susceptibility, makes it more difficult to arouse the moral nature." Education, 209.

"Children should not be long confined within doors, nor should they be required to apply themselves closely to study until a good foundation has been laid for physical development. For the first eight or ten years of a child's life the field or garden is the best schoolroom, the mother the best teacher, nature the best lesson book. Even when the child is old enough to attend school, his health should be regarded as of greater importance than a knowledge of books. He should be surrounded with the conditions most favorable to both physical and mental growth." Ibid., 208.

"The whole body is designed for action; and unless the physical powers are kept in health by active exercise, the mental powers cannot long be used to their highest capacity. The physical inaction which seems almost inevitable in the schoolroom—together with other unhealthful conditions—makes it a trying place for children, especially for those of feeble constitution." Ibid., 207.

"The child is not alone in the danger from want of air and exercise. In the higher as well as the lower schools these essentials to health are still too often neglected. Many a student sits day after day in a close room bending over his books, his chest so contracted that he cannot take a full, deep breath, his blood moving sluggishly, his feet cold, his head hot. The body not being sufficiently nourished, the muscles are weakened, and the whole system is enervated and diseased. Often such students become lifelong invalids. They might have come from school with increased physical as well as mental strength, had they pursued their studies under proper conditions, with regular exercise in the sunlight and the open air." Ibid., 208.

To be continued.

The (New, Illustrated) Great Controversy

This book is the regular version of The Great Controversy with the standard page numbering familiar to most Adventists, but it has one very attractive addition—192 pages of full-color photos by the late artist and photographer Jim Arrabito. It was Arrabito's desire that he might be able to document to the world that the seventh day was, until recent centuries, recognized in many countries as the true Sabbath.

The photos, arranged under several subjects, include: The Destruction of Jerusalem; Paganism Enters the Church; The Church in the Wilderness; The Jesuit Order; and The Protestant Reformation.

We are offering this book for the special price of $12.95 each, while supplies last. (25% off for 10 or more.) Order yours now; they will move quickly at this low price! See page 3 for shipping and sales tax information.
FOR unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. Luke 2:11-12.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." John 1:1, 3.

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke 2:13-14.

"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground. . . . He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." Isaiah 53:1-3.

"The word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; as it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness. Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Luke 3:2-4.

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. . . . And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and, lo, the heavens were opened. . . . and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matthew 3:13, 16-17.

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way. . . . He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter. . . . He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death." Isaiah 53:4-9.

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep." John 10:14-15.

"If ye love me, keep my commandments." Chapter 14:15.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Verse 6.

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Proverbs 3:5-6.

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3.

The Jews missed Christ Jesus' first coming because they ignored Isaiah 53. Many Christians will miss His soon return because they ignore Hebrews 4. In part, these are testing truths.

"Let us therefore Fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. . . . For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise; And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. . . . Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." Hebrews 4:1-2, 4-9, 11.

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. . . . The seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God. . . . For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, . . . and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hal lowed it." Exodus 20:8, 10-11.

Mary Jane Grafton. "Grandma Jane," has dedicated much of her time to writing scripture-based children's stories. She writes from Oglesby, Illinois.
Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you. ... Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. ... It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever.” Chapter 31:14–15, 17.

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman." John 15:1.

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine." Verse 4.

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." Verse 10.

Oh, dear friends, as the world commemorates the birth of our precious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, let us serenely reflect upon why He had to come in the first place. As Jesus stood before Pilate, He said,

"My kingdom is not of this world. ... Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, ... that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." Chapter 18:36–37.

"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:11.

As Christ Jesus ascended to heaven, to minister for us as our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, He asked,

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." John 17:24.

As Jesus departed, He said it was necessary for Him to go so He could send the Holy Spirit to reprove the world of sin (lawlessness). The Holy Spirit is our Teacher as well as our Comforter. Read the whole chapter of John 16, especially verses 13 and 14:

"When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

Every day can be Christmas, Nevertheless to depart, Whenever Christ Jesus Is born anew in one's heart.□

Joining the Independence Party
Continued from 11

The ordination of women to the gospel ministry, in open independence (rebellion) of the Scriptures and the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in world session, should serve as a wake-up call to Laodicea. It should help us awaken to the end result of picking and choosing which counsels of the Lord we will obey. It should help us awaken to the end result—accepting the false gospels presently being strongly promoted within our ranks. Unless we awaken to our independent-from-God ways of living, and of operating in our institutions, we will eventually sleep the sleep of death. Unless we recognize and put away our rebellious ways, we will awaken with the foolish virgins and discover that it is too late to obtain the oil of the Holy Spirit in our lives, which enables us to have that perfect obedience so necessary for eternal life.

It is the prayer of this author that all of our readers will experience that transformation of character that will qualify them for eternal life, through daily study of God's will as found in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, and through daily surrender, by God's grace, to that revealed will. In seeking to experience God-given right to independence from poverty, ignorance, and social and political ills of all types, let us not fail to obtain that independence from sin, the provision for which all Heaven has been poured out in one vast Gift.

"The Lord God of Heaven collected all the riches of the universe, and laid them down in order to purchase the pearl of lost humanity. The Father gave all His divine resources into the hands of Christ in order that the richest blessings of Heaven might be poured out upon a fallen race. God could not express greater love than He has expressed in giving the Son of His bosom to this world. This Gift was given to man to convince him that God had left nothing undone that He could do, that there is nothing held in reserve, but that all Heaven has been poured out in one vast Gift. The present and eternal happiness of man consists in receiving God's love, and in keeping God's commandments. Christ is our Redeemer. He is the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us. He is the Fountain in which we may be washed and cleansed from all impurity. He is the costly Sacrifice that has been given for the reconciliation of man. The universe of Heaven, the worlds unfallen, the fallen world, and the confederacy of evil cannot say that God could do more for the salvation of man than He has done. Never can His Gift be surpassed, never can He display a richer depth of love. Calvary represents His crowning work. It is man's part to respond to His great love, by appropriating the great salvation the blessing of the Lord has made it possible for man to obtain. We are to show our appreciation of the wonderful Gift of God by becoming partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. We are to show our gratitude to God by becoming a co-worker with Jesus Christ, by representing His character to the world."□

May this gospel be a reality in each of our lives. May we each have one purpose, through the grace of Jesus Christ, not only to join but to "endure unto the end" as active members of the independence-from-sin party for which all Heaven is waiting.

"Christ has given to the church a sacred charge. Every member should be a channel through which God can communicate to the world the treasures of His grace, the unsearchable riches of Christ. There is nothing that the Saviour desires so much as agents who will represent to the world His Spirit and His character. There is nothing that the world needs so much as the manifestation through humanity of the Saviour's love. All Heaven is waiting for men and women through whom God can reveal the power of Christianity."

References:

5. Press release by Barry Casey on behalf of Sligo Church.
10. The Upward Look, 284.
12. Review and Herald, September 21, 1886.
13. Ibid., September 27, 1881.
19. Counsels to Writers and Editors, 40.
21. The Youth's Instructor, October 17, 1895.
The Sin of False Witnessing

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. Exodus 20:16. The Decalogue contains ten commands which are the ten fundamental principles embracing "the whole duty of man." On these Ten Precepts "hang all the law of the prophets." The law is an abridged edition of the Bible, and the Bible is an unabridged edition of the law. The Scriptures are an unfolding of the principles enunciated in the Ten Commandments. Therefore the Decalogue is the standard of right conduct and will be the rule of judgment.

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Ecclesiastes 12:13-14.

"If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." James 2:8-12.

Our words and actions must be in harmony with the law because we will be judged by the law. The ninth commandment is the only one of the ten that deals directly with our words.

The transgression of any of the commands of God's law is divinely designated as "sin" and "the wages of sin is death." "The soul that sinneth it shall die" is heaven's decree. The penalty for sin is not the ordinary death; it is eternal death. The penalty therefore for bearing false witness against another is eternal death. The seriousness of a crime is measured or determined by the severity of the penalty. The death sentence always indicates a terrible thing from Heaven's viewpoint. In human law, false witnessing is a crime known as "perjury" and carries with it a heavy penalty. "Love" is declared to be "the fulfilling of the law," and the measure of love is contained in the statement: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The person who reaches this standard will not bear false witness against another because he would not bear false witness against himself. He treats his neighbor as he treats himself and as he would like to have his neighbor treat him. He obeys the golden rule. This is the standard demanded by the law.

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." Matthew 7:12.

False Report

"Thou shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment." Exodus 23:1-2.

"Receive."—Margin. "Take up."—R.V. "You must never repeat a baseless rumor."—Moffatt. This command is a further explanation of the ninth commandment of the Decalogue. It forbids originating a false report, or repeating one that is brought to us, or even receiving or believing it. This would be "talebearing," which is expressly forbidden in Leviticus 19:16. "You shall not go up and down slandering people."—Moffatt. A "talebearer" is defined as "a meddler in former; mischief-maker; scandalmonger." He is a newscarrier who delights to pass on information of the rumor-variety without any inquiry as to whether or not it is true. Talebearers find but little satisfaction in repeating rumors that reflect another's honor or brings him credit. Their specialty is rumors of the scandalous and slanderous variety.

The Severe Penalty

"One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established. If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him that which is wrong;
then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days; and the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother; then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so shalt thou put the evil away from among you. And those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among you.” Deuteronomy 19:15–20.

This is a divine rule given to guide the Hebrew judges in dealing with false witnessing and false witnesses. It is another application of the golden rule. It will be done unto us as we do unto others. What we mete out to others will be meted out to us; as we judge we will be judged. False witnesses were to be given the same penalty as would have been visited upon the accused if the accusation had been true. If the penalty was death, the false witness must suffer death. The purpose of this severe penalty was to stamp out this terrible evil from among God’s people. It was to cause people to think before they speak. If this penalty against false witnesses could be visited upon transgressors today what a change it would soon bring about!

**Diligent Inquisition**

Before a person has a right to sit in judgment upon another because of a report or rumor, he must make “diligent inquisition” as to whether or not the report is true. Its truthfulness must be established by more than one witness. There must be at least two witnesses to corroborate the report before we have a right to form our own opinion or render a decision if that is our prerogative. No person ever has a right to pass on or repeat a rumor about another until he has run down the matter and found out by diligent inquiry that it is true, and then he must report only to the proper persons who will be able to correct the wrong. In this matter we all stand guilty before God. But genuine Christianity demands that victory be gained over this grievous sin.

But while there is a terrible penalty against bearing false witness, we cannot altogether ignore reports and rumors which reflect on the character of our neighbor or brother and bring reproach upon God’s work. If the report is untrue we have a duty to help stop the circulation of the report. We will do this if we love the neighbor as we love ourselves. If the report is true we have an obligation to help the neighbor or brother correct the wrong, and if it is not done the matter must be reported to the proper persons. It is a sin to overlook and wink at wrongs which should be known and corrected by the proper authorities. The standard must not be lowered. The person who knows that another is a criminal, and does not report it, becomes a partaker in the crime. This is true also regarding sins.

“And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and is a witness, whether he hath seen or known of it; if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity.” Leviticus 5:1.

We must not be guilty of helping a sinner to keep his sins covered.

**Universal Sin**

The sin of false witnessing has not been confined to any specific age or generation. It is the universal sin of all ages.

“These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.” Proverbs 6:16–19. Five of the seven sins that God especially abominates are different forms of false witnessing.

“A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape.” Proverbs 19:5. Because this sentence is not executed as soon as the sin is committed, talebearers have become bold in their character-assassinating work.  “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.” Ecclesiastes 8:11.

The sentence for talebearing is again stated in Proverbs 21:28:

“A false witness shall perish: but the man that heareth speaketh constantly.”

Complete victory over this sin is one of the qualifications for entrance into the heavenly Canaan, “LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.” Psalm 15:1–3. It was necessary in the apostolic church to warn against this terrible evil.

“For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, work-

**No person ever has a right to pass on or repeat a rumor about another until he has run down the matter and found out by diligent inquiry that it is true, and then he must report only to the proper persons who will be able to correct the wrong.**

(Adapted from Our Firm Foundation, December 1995 issue, page 25)
The victory of the remnant will be so complete that they will not “do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth.”

have a pure language and a clean speech. Their language will be free from slang and the “foolish talking” and unclean and filthy jesting mentioned in Ephesians 5:3-5, as being unbecoming to saints:

“But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, or unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God.”

The victory of the remnant will be so complete that they will not “do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth.” There will be no false witnesses among them; no talebearers or gossipers. The perfect control of speech will be evidence of their perfection of character.

“For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.” James 3:2.

“And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.” Revelation 14:5.

Guile means the same as “deceit.” The remnant will be like Jesus in this respect. “Neither was any deceit in his mouth.” Isaiah 53:9. Guile also has the meaning of “ferment” or “fermentation,” because that which produces fermentation is called “guile.” A tongue filled with guile or deceit causes fermentation in the church. It spoils the sweet spirit that prevailed and produces bitterness. It causes fermentation. Here too, complete victory over lying and false witnessing is the

Unruly Tongues

“It pains me to say that there are unruly tongues among church members. There are false tongues that feed on mischief. There are sly, whispering tongues. There is tattling, impertinent meddling, adroit quizzing. Among the lovers of gossip some are actuated by curiosity, others by jealousy, many by hatred against those through whom God has spoken to reprove them. All these discordant elements are at work. Some conceal their real sentiments, which others are eager to publish all they know, or even suspect, of evil against another.” Testimonies, vol. 5, 94.

We are told that these gossipers make trifling and unpremeditated remarks that are “unworthy of notice” and view the faults of others “through Satan’s magnifying glass” and ponder and repeat them “until molehills become mountains.” Ibid., 95.

“Wrong prevails, man is made an offender for a word, and suspicion, distrust, jealousy, evil-suspecting, evilspeaking, and injustice reproduce themselves even in connection with the cause of God. . . . The persecution that is carried on among church members is a most terrible thing. It is true that some have committed errors and made mistakes, but it is equally true that these errors and mistakes are not nearly as grievous in the sight of God as is the harsh and unforgiving spirit of those who are criticizers and censors. Many of those who are free to pass judgment on others are committing errors which, although not made manifest, are tainted with deadly evil that is corrupting their spiritual life. . . . Many are making manifest that they are not controlled by the Spirit of Christ but by another spirit. The attributes they display are as unlike the attributes of Christ as are the characteristics of Satan.” Testimonies to Ministers, 186.

“If Satan can employ professors believers to act as accusers of the brethren, he is justly pleased; for those who do this are just as truly serving him as was Judas when he betrayed Christ, although they may be doing it ignorantly. Satan is no less active now than in Christ’s day, and those who lend themselves to do his work will be manifest in spirit.

“Floating rumors are often the destroyers of unity among brethren. There are some who watch with open mind and ears to catch flying scandal. They gather up little incidents which may be trifling in themselves, but which are repeated and exaggerated until a man is made an offender for a word.” Ibid., 504-505.

“We think with horror of the cannibal who feasts on the still warm and trembling flesh of his victim; but are the results of even this practice more terrible than are the agony and ruin caused by misrepresenting motive, blackening reputation, dissecting character?” Education, 235. “How many families season their daily meals with doubt and questions. They dissect the characters of their friends, and serve them up as a dainty dessert. A precious bit of slander is passed around the board to be commented upon, not only by adults, but by children. . . . The names of God’s chosen servants have been handled with disrespect, and in some cases with absolute contempt, by certain persons whose duty it is to uphold them.” Testimonies, vol. 4, 195.

No wonder it is impossible for ministers and other church workers to help the children in some homes. Their confidence in church leaders has been destroyed by gossip.

Refuse to Hear

“Speak evil of no man. Hear evil of no man. If there be no hearers, there will be no speakers of evil. If anyone speaks evil in your presence, check him. Refuse to hear him, though his manner be ever so soft and his accents mild. He may profess attachment, and yet throw out covert hints and stab the character in the dark.

“Resolutely refuse to hear, though the whisperer complains of being burdened till he speak. Burdened indeed! with a cursed secret which separateth very
friends. Go, burdened ones, and free yourselves from your burden in God’s appointed way. First go tell your brother his fault between you and him alone.” Testimonies, vol. 2, 54.

"Gossips and news carriers are a terrible curse to neighborhoods and churches.” Ibid., 466. How quickly this method would close the mouths of gossips and talebearers! Another good plan is to ask them to write it down and sign their name to it. Still another is to insist that the person involved be called in to hear the story.

Complete Victory

Those who receive the latter rain and are translated will be complete victors over this terrible evil. Dan was a backbiter and no Danites will enter the kingdom of heaven. He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him eschew evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers. See Psalm 34:12-15. □

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**Ellen G. White**

**Review and Herald Articles**

If God’s people ever needed the reproofs, exhortations, encouragement, and doctrinal clarifications of the Ellen G. White articles in the *Review and Herald*, it is in these closing days of earth’s history. The nearly nineteen hundred *Review and Herald* articles written especially for the remnant people are now available in a convenient, economical, and easily read format.

This “Devotional Volume Set” comes in three volumes and contains all of the E. G. White materials found in the well-known, six-volume set. This new printing also contains several communications left out of the larger set, as well as several reports and commemorative sermons by the pioneers relating to the final illness, death, and funeral service of Sister White which were not included in the CD-ROM version.

The special paperback binding, which is laminated and is intended for frequent use, lies open for easy reading without cracking or separating the pages. Each 8.5 by 11-inch volume is 856 pages—a total of over 2500 pages.

It is the intent of the publishers to encourage God’s people to recapture and retain the inspired messages and vision originally directed to our forebears through the pages of the official Seventh-day Adventist Church paper—the *Review and Herald*. Plan ahead now; this set would make excellent holiday gifts.

*Purchase the entire three-volume set for only $120*. See page 3 for shipping and sales tax information.
The Way, the Truth, and the Life

In answer to Christ’s words, “I am the way, the truth, and the life,” Philip said, “Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.” “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?” Christ said, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?” John 14:6, 8–9.

Christ came to our world to reveal the Father. Whatever attractions He possessed, He manifested only those that dwell in the character of God. His words revealed the goodness, mercy, and love of the Father. His excellence was the perfection of the Father. In His every word and work may be seen the manifestation of the attributes of His Father.

In Christ dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead. But the only way in which He could reach men was to veil His glory by a garb of humanity. The angels beheld the hiding of His glory, that divinity might touch humanity. Christ ever retained the utmost hatred for sin, but He loved the purchase of His blood. He suffered in the place of sinful men, taking them into union with Himself. This is the mystery into which angels desire to look. They desire to know how Christ could live and work in a fallen world, how He could mingle with sinful humanity. It was a mystery to them that He who hated sin with intense hatred felt the most tender, compassionate sympathy for the beings that committed sin.

Satan had worked long to efface the true impression of God, and to represent Him as a God having no love. This is Satan’s character. He is destitute of mercy and compassion. Overbearing and revengeful, he delights in the misery that he brings on the human family. With these attributes he attempted to clothe the God of heaven.

Christ came to remove these unjust impressions. He came to assure men that they need not fear to approach God because of His greatness and majesty. He constantly sought to carry the attention of His hearers to God. He presented the greatness of the Father’s love, declaring that He had so great a care for His children that even the hairs of their head are numbered. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without the notice of the heavenly Father. He sympathizes with all the creatures He has made, and if the heart is given into His hands, and attuned by His power, it will respond by strains of melody and thanksgiving.

In His wisdom the Saviour teaches us to approach God with the confidence of a child. He instructs us to call Jehovah by the endearing name of “Father,” that we may not separate from Him in awe and coldness. Constantly He points us to the emblems of fatherly love, seeking to encourage faith and confidence in God. He pleads with us to have a correct idea of the Father. He throws back the accusation of the enemy, declaring, “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.” Psalm 103:13. He would have the memorials of redeeming grace arrest our attention, that we may know that all the goodness, mercy, patience, forbearance, seen in Him, belong to God.

But notwithstanding the fact that the disciples were privileged to be with Christ, and were greatly blessed by His instruction, they were slow to appropriate His words to themselves, and many times they remained in ignorance of the true meaning of the...
precious utterances that fell from His lips. He pleaded with them to have faith in Him. “Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works’ sake.” John 14:11. “By their fruits ye shall know them.” Matthew 7:20. Is not the fruit I bear sufficient evidence?

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me [not with a fluctuating faith, but as the only-begotten Son of God, and a personal Saviour], the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” John 14:12—13. This promise the disciples held fast by faith, and on the day of Pentecost it was graciously fulfilled by the Lord. They were bidden not to leave Jerusalem till they had been endued with power from on high. They therefore remained in Jerusalem, fasting and praying. They emptied from their hearts all bitterness, all estrangement, all differences; for this would have prevented their prayers being as one. And when they were emptied of self, Christ filled the vacancy. The Holy Spirit came upon them, and filled all the house where they were sitting. Then was the promise fulfilled: “If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever.” Verses 15—16.

The Holy Spirit leads men to cooperate with God. This is the design in divine help. And in our turn we are to lead others to Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. As we engage in this work with heart and soul, we are blessed and strengthened. God stands ready to cooperate with us, but this He can not do till we do our duty. If ministers and teachers would learn the lessons given here so clearly and explicitly, a great change would take place in the ministry of the Word. They would realize their entire dependence upon God, and would work for Him with wholehearted earnestness. The Holy Spirit would work in and through them, and the unconverted would be rescued from their insensibility.

The great reason why the church has not more efficiency and power is that its members love the world. They reject the Spirit of God, and fill their hearts with idols. They love the world, and the things of the world, and of all such the words of Inspiration declare, “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” 1 John 2:15. They are not, as was Christ, in the world but not of the world.

The Lord cannot manifest Himself to professeds Christians who love the world; for spiritual things are spiritually discerned. Our great peril is in regarding the Lord’s plans with cool indifference. All Heaven is actively engaged in working out the plans of God. . . . How then do finite men dare to put aside God’s plans for their own?

is constantly employed to bring spiritual things to their remembrance, that subjects of vital importance may find a lodgment in their hearts. The Spirit takes of the things of God, and presents them to mind. Constantly the mind is given glimpses of God. If men listen for the voice of God, these spiritual impressions become more and more frequent, and extend from one to another till the leaven seems to go through the whole church. A divine presence hovers over the people, and a revival is the result. Souls are converted.

The sympathies and energies of the people are enlisted on the side of the truth. God works in them, to will and to do of His good pleasure, breaking the spell of the world, and engrossing the thoughts with subjects of eternal interest.

The most powerful motives and attractions that can be imagined are offered to reclaim man, and win him from the path of transgression to the path of humble obedience. “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” Romans 8:32. No stronger inducement could be offered. Nothing is withheld. In Christ God gave Himself. He has enriched the world with a Gift beyond all parallel. This Gift is the Source of all patience, forbearance, and mercy. In it is love sufficient to fill the whole world. It is of infinite value; for with it was given all that Heaven could bestow.

amazement; for they are unable to measure the greatness of God’s love. The chosen instruments of righteousness join in the testimony, saying, “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” 1 John 4:10. As the followers of Christ see Him, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, they exclaim, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Galatians 6:14. Charged with a special message, they proclaim Christ, and Him crucified.

Our great peril is in regarding the Lord’s plans with cool indifference. All Heaven is actively engaged in working out the plans of God for the salvation of an unbelieving world. How then do finite men dare to put aside God’s plans for their own? By doing this, they place their souls in great peril. Shall we not respond to God’s love by giving ourselves to Him without reservation, by walking in His way, by determining to do His will? Angels are enlisted in this work. They do the bidding of God by cooperating with human endeavor. They are filled with evidence.

The Signs of the Times, January 20, 1898.

“Even sinners whose hearts are not utterly closed to God’s Spirit, will respond to kindness; while they may give hate for hate, they will also give love for love. But it is only the Spirit of God that gives love for hatred. To be kind to the unthankful and to the evil, to do good hoping for nothing again, is the insignia of the royalty of heaven, the sure token by which the children of the Highest reveal their high estate.” Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 75.
Thank you for *Our Firm Foundation*. I have been a Seventh-day Adventist for a good many years. I didn't know all the truths until I started reading *Our Firm Foundation*.  

BB, California

We would like to thank you for your part in taking God's message of pure truth to all the world. You are always in our prayers.  

CK, North Carolina

I would like to thank God at first for giving you that wonderful task of preaching the three angels' messages to all mankind.  

I did not know that the Spirit of Prophecy carries such precious, everlasting truth. Thanks be unto God to see the truth in *Our Firm Foundation*.  

Here in Zimbabwe, Ellen G. White's books are only talked about, but are nowhere to be found.  

I am kindly asking you, my brothers, if you can, by God's mercy, assist me with the following books: *Messages to Young People*, *Spiritual Gifts*, *Gospel Workers*, *Testimonies to Ministers*, *Evangelism*, and *Mind, Character, and Personality*. And I don't know how I could get *Our Firm Foundation* every month.  

TP, Zimbabwe

We read of the great work being done, and we praise God His work is going forward. Your *Firm Foundation* is a blessing to us. I am loathing it out and requesting it back for references. I wish I could send more out, but I think it best to send donations. Our prayers are with you as ever.  

TK, Texas

I am sending you a money order for $100 to be used for literature evangelism. Thank you for your ministry. I surely enjoy *Our Firm Foundation*. May God continue to bless your every effort to warn the world of its pending doom.  

FC

Your September issue of *Our Firm Foundation* arrived, and, as usual, I enjoyed reading it. However, as I read it, questions kept coming back to me about the difficult times that we anticipate just before Christ's return.  

In the student Bible, New International Version, there is a statement that is part of the commentary at the beginning of 1 Peter which reads: “More people have died for their religious faith in this century than in all the rest of history combined. . . . Persecutions, yes, much tragedy to all peoples.” Aren't we in “shaking times”? I think it is dangerous always to think of the “time of trouble” as a future event when trouble abounds all around us.  

It seems that Christ's second coming could be even nearer than considered.  

GD, Minnesota

This is God's money! Use it wisely. I have confidence in you folks.  

We are living in the last days, a different world and a different church than I was born into seventy-three years ago.  

Remain faithful to Him.  

ER, Tennessee

**Responses From Earth's Final Warning**

Please send me several copies of your newspaper captioned the "New World Order Coming." A sister in Christ called and told me someone left your paper on her door and she is keeping it for her family. It's a great idea to distribute in that manner. I'm looking forward to reading it and passing it on to my family.  

EB, Oregon

I read your *Earth's Final Warning*, and as a Bible-believing Christian, you got my attention.  

DT, Hawaii

I am an avid student of the Bible and preach the truth concerning the Bible Sabbath as you do. I was delighted to find your paper *Earth's Final Warning* through a friend who knew I preached and studied concerning end-times, God's Law, the Roman Catholic godless institution, etc. I was amazed that there were other people out there, much like in Elisha's time, who have not "bowed their knee to Baal." However, in trying to show people, especially those in professing Christian churches who believe they are sincere, the way the Law applies to us and that not everything was "nailed to the cross" as they quote (they don't understand—only the physical and ceremonial laws are done away with), I find that different Bible versions change things around and people haven't studied to find out which are correct versions, like the King James. So, please send me *Rome's Challenge*, *Heralds of Peace*, and any information on Bible versions. Also, any other literature that you have available, as I would like to learn more on your beliefs in the hopes of financially supporting true brothers and sisters in the Lord. Thank you.  

ES

I came to read your newspaper entitled *Earth's Final Warning* in the home of a friend. I became so much interested that I would like to have a copy or two of the same issue for my personal file and reference. Please bill me the cost of the materials and enroll me in your free Bible course.  

If it is possible, please send a copy to the following people as listed below. They are also interested to know something about the issue.  

AH, California

I am the intern pastor at St. Andrews Lutheran Church and have recently received a copy of your paper. Can you tell me what church group or denomination you are affiliated with? I don't want to be put on a mailing list, but I am curious about your affiliation and general beliefs. Thank you.  

CP, California

Sending $111 to support your ministry. Would like to be on your mailing list and would like to get more copies of *Earth's Final Warning*. Please also send *Rome's Challenge*.  

MR, California
# Our Firm Foundation

## Annual Index of Articles

**For the Year 1995**

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