The Tragic Consequences of the New Theology

By Russell R Standish, John Clifford, and other authors

Editor’s Objective: The historical context of the following article will provide the reader with a template in understanding contemporary developments in theology and practice that have transpired and continue to unfold within the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Editor’s Explanation: The term, “New Theology” is a euphemism referring to the errors of evangelical Protestantism, particularly its teachings on salvation, that have strenuously assailed the church over the past 50 years. It is recognized that there are now two theological streams (two different gospels) flowing side by side within the denomination, of which the second stream (the New Theology) emerged with the publication of the book, Questions on Doctrine, in 1957.

Editor’s Introduction: This year marks the 35th anniversary of the historic meetings that were convened by the (Australian) Biblical Research Institute on February 3 & 4, 1976, between the “Concerned Brethren” (composed of eleven retired pastors/evangelists and five laymen) and twenty church leaders within the Australasian Division (now the South Pacific Division).

From 1974 to 1976, a number of retired pastors and laymen began to voice their growing fears over the increasing popularity of the New Theology within the Australasian Division, particularly with the students from Avondale College who sat in the classes of the Chairman of the Theology Department, Dr. Desmond Ford. It was evident at that time that many of the theological students and ministerial graduates from Avondale were at variance with the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy upon essential truths that gird the entire fabric of Adventism, such as the unqualified infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture, the message of righteousness by faith — “Christ in you, the hope of glory”, the reality and service of a two-apartment sanctuary in heaven, etc. Some concerned brethren and laymen wrote numerous letters to various church leaders in the Australasian Division, calling for an official meeting that would hold Dr. Desmond Ford to account for what he taught in his classes and wrote in the church’s publications (notably The Australasian Record and Australasian Signs of the Times). The letters bespoke of alarm felt by these men as they beheld the rapid erosion of confidence manifested by an escalating number of Seventh-day Adventists across the Australasian Division towards the fundamental pillars of our faith. (Interestingly, at this time the New Theology writings of Robert Brinsmead exerted its potent influence upon the Adventist church in Australia, especially with college students from Avondale, which confirmed their acceptance of Dr. Desmond Ford’s conceptions on the Bible).

[Noteworthy observation: During this time, Desmond Ford and Robert Brinsmead were in correspondence with Dr. Edward Heppenstall, who retired from his teaching profession in 1970, having taught theology over a 30 year period at La Sierra College, the SDA Theological Seminary in Takoma Park, Andrews University, and Loma Linda University. He wrote articles for denominational periodicals and made contributions to the SDA Bible Commentary and Questions on Doctrine. He authored four books in the 1970’s — all with a New Theology premise on salvation. His New Theology views had a profound effect upon many of his students, including his most notable protégé — Dr. Desmond Ford].

After repeated refusals by Division headquarters to consider such a meeting, a decision was made in December 1975 for the Concerned Brethren to present their objections to the Biblical Research Institute (B.R.I.) meetings in February 1976. Upon reading the report of the B.R.I.
which defended Dr. Desmond Ford and his theological views, the Concerned Brethren were filled with utter astonishment and profound disappointment. Deeply burdened over the continuing attacks being made by the New Theology upon the Advent message, Dr. Russell Standish and Dr. John Clifford, who at the time were medical physicians practicing in Melbourne, Australia, wrote a manuscript in six weeks, which was submitted to the Palmdale Conference [held in April 1976] and later to the General Conference Biblical Research Institute. It was the very first time that Dr. Russell Standish wrote a book that addressed the erroneous tenets of the New Theology. It was published under the title, *Conflicting Concepts of Righteousness by Faith in the Seventh-day Adventist Church – Australasian Division*. Its distribution only went to a relatively few people in Australia and in America, yet it provoked fierce opposition from the [Australian] Biblical Research Institute, the Theology Department at Avondale College, and the leadership of the Australasian Division. The book has been out of print for many years, although suggestions have been made to republish it again for the benefit of a new generation of Seventh-day Adventists who are unaware of the theological controversies that existed within the denomination in the 1970’s — controversies that still resonate as the teachings of the New Theology continue to be expounded from many pulpits across the South Pacific Division and around the world.

A number of excerpts from *Conflicting Concepts* will form the basis for this particular article. Statements are selected to briefly highlight the battle over differing views of salvation that were struggling for the mastery within the Australasian Division in the 1970’s. These excerpts will be followed by additional quotations from other authors that will provide the reader with an overall perspective of the tragic consequences of the New Theology. This article is submitted with the hope that the reader shall evaluate from cause to effect as to why there have been so many dramatic changes that have taken place within the denomination over the past several decades. May the Lord help the reader to be re-committed to the precious truths of salvation — Christ Our Righteousness — that will fasten the soul to all the fundamental landmarks of our faith “that are based upon unquestionable authority” (*Special Testimonies, Series B*, no. 2, p. 59).

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**Extracts from Conflicting Concepts (April 1976):**

Dr. Ford’s Theology Department at Avondale College believes that at Calvary all things were accomplished for all men ‘legally’ by Christ.

“Legally, we already have perfection in Christ --- per-fect righteousness, perfect holiness. That is to say, heaven views us as though the experiences of justification, sanctification and glorification were already consummated...Because the whole human race is now legally free, there is nothing more we need to do than gratefully accept the gift.” *The Soteriological Implications of the Human Nature of Christ*, pp. 17a, 5. Gillian Ford [wife of Dr. Desmond Ford]. 1975.

As Seventh-day Adventists, we fully accept the provision made for God’s saints on Calvary. God provided for the forgiveness of sins. He provided for our eventual justification. He provided for my salvation. But all of these acts of grace must be determined individually by the Father and the Son. This is the work of Christ in the two apartment sanctuary in heaven.

Seventh-day Adventists do not believe in the universal salvation of all men at Calvary — a salvation divorced from Christ’s ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. (p. 100)

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....Dr. Ford and Robert Brinsmead, along with a large group of their faithful followers (including many young Seventh-day Adventist pastors trained by Ford) deny that an inner experience is necessary for justification or salvation, and equate this teaching of Scripture with Roman Catholicism. (p. 67)

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The Ford-Brinsmead view of sanctification is that it is not part of righteousness by faith. It is in no way essential for salvation, but is the consequence of having been saved [fruit of salvation]. A person is saved purely by faith in the objective fact that Christ died for his sins on Calvary and that this is the sum total of the conditions for salvation....The Ford-Brinsmead position postulates, without Biblical authority, that it is impossible for man this side of glorification to keep God’s holy law. Thus sanctification, which, in simple terms, is keeping God’s precepts totally through the power of the Holy Spirit in the life, is relegated to a position outside of the gospel. Now if a man has the gospel, or salvation, without any change in the life, they already have the ultimate. Why bother with sanctification? What point is there in a sanctified life if you already have the acme without it?....

We have seen that we have been urged by Avondale to change the basis of our belief in salvation --- to deny moral responsibility for that salvation. This is a major shift in the doctrinal foundation of our church towards that believed by most other denominations.
We have been asked to favour a gospel of salvation that denies sanctification as part of that gospel. We have been asked to make justification by faith a pseudonym for righteousness by faith.

In doing so – in being asked to deny that man’s sanctified obedience is required for his salvation --- we are subliminally being asked to deny that Sabbath keeping (sacrifice) is part of our salvation. This will give us an easy choice when the mark of the beast arrives, for whichever day of the week we keep, it does not affect our salvation! All men were saved back on Calvary by the split blood of Christ --- all we need do is accept. All that insist on keeping the seventh-day Sabbath can be scorned as ‘legalists’. Already we see arising within our ranks a tendency to evade true Sabbath keeping. (pp. 87, 102, 103)

Ellen G. White makes a number of statements with regard to the destruction of our carnal nature. In order to understand Romans seven in its correct application, it is important that there is no confusion between the carnal nature (a desire to sin) and the sinful [fallen] nature (the law of heredity)….While the sinful [fallen] nature of man may fall into sin, it hates the sin and under the power of an indwelling Saviour will attempt to avoid that sin again. The carnal nature loves to sin. It does not want to give it up. The carnal nature does not love God, it is enmity against God. While we retain this nature, we remain unconverted:

“Through the grace of Christ, an amazing transformation is taking place in the corrupt hearts of men. The work wrought in the characters of sinners through the grace of Christ, is a greater work than to perform a miracle upon the bodies of men. The old, carnal nature dies and a new creature appears after the likeness of Christ.” Review and Herald, December 19, 1893

….The carnally minded are all through our churches. They are more to be pitied than to be blamed. One of the authors has heard loyal church leaders --- ardent followers of Dr. Ford --- claim, ‘I am carnal and I’ll be carnal until the day I die.’…..It is of great concern to many of us that men in leadership positions in the local churches preach that we retain a carnal nature in Christ and that this is the sign of a converted Christian. These men cannot comprehend sacred truths sent to guide themselves and the church home to heaven.

“Those who possess the carnal mind cannot comprehend the sacred forces of vital truth upon which their salvation depends.” Testimonies for the Church, volume 2, p. 694

A great victory is gained when the carnal life ceases. But the spiritual life cannot begin until that happens.

“What a victory is gained when the carnal life ceases, and the spiritual life begins.” Review and Herald, December 2, 1875.

….Men who claim to remain carnal while professing to be converted sons of God, are agents of the wicked one even though they have assumed another name. Their creed, however, is consistent with Calvinism --- a theology, as we have seen, that denies man’s responsibility for his own salvation. We now find Avondale College desperately trying to support this tenuous theology with the depersonalized objective gospel of Ford and Brinsmead. (pp. 132, 133, 134, 135)

How well these words echo the theme of this paper --- salvation is of Christ alone. Every step of the way, from the initial stirrings in a man’s heart to final glorification, is a gift of our Saviour. It is Christ through the Holy Spirit who woos us to Himself. It is Christ who gives us the impulse that permits us to overcome our natural resistance to His love, that leads us to empty self and allow Christ to dwell within. It is Christ who bestows upon us faith and belief. It is Christ who brings true repentance and confession to the believer. It is Christ, who through the merits of His infinite sacrifice on Calvary, justifies us and gives us our title for heaven. It is Christ through His indwelling Spirit in the heart, who so fills us with His life, that we live a life of sanctification: this gives us our fitness for heaven. Finally it is Christ who gloriifies us at His coming.

The whole theme is Christ, Christ --- ‘Not I, but Christ.’ Salvation is indeed the greatest mystery. It is little wonder that we shall require an eternity of time to fully understand it. The hymn writer has expressed this mystery so perceptively:

“I know not how the Spirit moves, convincing men of sin, revealing Jesus through His word, creating faith in Him.”

However, even though God’s love in saving men is unfathomable, this does not excuse an erroneous view of what He has so clearly revealed by Inspiration. The present Ford-Brinsmead apostasy is the most threatening and most serious ever to confront the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Never before have such views been suggested by Seventh-day Adventists. Evangelists of long experience have never preached these aberrations of truth. Indeed they have spent lifetimes defending the truths presented in this paper against avowed enemies of God’s Church who espoused the type of theology being insinuated into our church by Desmond Ford.

Remnant Herald No. 134, Jan/Feb 2011
and Robert Brinsmead.

It is serious because the Avondale College Theology Department is in a position to influence the whole ministry of our church in the Australasian Division and the members are using their position of highest trust to evangelise our future ministers, teachers and others, with their views. Thus in our schools and in our pulpits, and now in our denominational literature, our church members and the lambs of the flock are being continually fed a view of salvation never taught by Ellen White, and most important of all, foreign to the pages of the Bible. (pp. 155, 156)

One of our Australian Conference Presidents stated to the Biblical Research Committee in February 1976 that the decrying of experience and works at Avondale had got to the stage where young people are frightened to get down on their knees and pray to God for power to overcome sin --- because they believe they will be called legalists.

One of the leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist liberal movement in Victoria talking to young Adventist academy students said recently, ‘If you help an old lady across the road and you feel good about it --- that is sin! To feel good about your good deeds is sin!’ I wonder how many young people would help a little old lady across the road after that and risk displeasing God. Everything is being turned upside down.

It was recently stated by a young lady at Avondale to one of the writers personally, ‘I was born again this week!’ When asked how her Christian experience was now going, she said Christian experience has got nothing to do with it --- that is sin! To feel good about your good deeds is sin!’ I wonder how many young people would help a little old lady across the road after that and risk displeasing God. Everything is being turned upside down.

The fruit of this new liberal doctrine within the Seventh-day Adventist church tends to emphasise ‘faith’ to the utter neglect of repentance. It tends to destroy a keen sense of the awfulness of sin in God’s sight. It creates within its adherents a tendency to make allowance for a little sin in their own lives, and it inevitably tends to lull backsliders to sleep and a false security. The fact that some come to embrace this liberal doctrine after they backslide is evidence that this encouragement exists.

It tends to produce a natural opposition to holiness as a perfect cleansing from all sin. Indeed the liberal habit of thinking tends to decrease the likelihood of a victorious Christian life rather than increase it. It causes the Christian to feel that since the inherited tendency to evil and depravity must remain until death [because of the doctrine of original sin], all hopes and struggles for complete deliverance are idle if not fanatical. (pp. 116, 117)

“If sanctification is not part of righteousness by faith, because that term is given exclusively to justification forensically defined, then what happens in the believer’s heart is substantially irrelevant to his salvation. Concern with sin is replaced by a false sense of security rooted in the confidence of legal standing irrespective of unsatisfactory spiritual state. The believer assures himself of salvation despite his sins, and genuine progress in victory over evil ceases to be a matter of great importance.” The Scriptural Doctrine of Justification, p. 16. Erwin R. Gane, April 1979 [contributing editor to the Senior Sabbath School Quarterly Lessons in the 1990’s]

“Many are not sure which Christ they serve. They are uncertain whether God has power to give them victory over sin or whether He does not. Further, they are not sure what sin is. They are vague on the significance of the sanctuary message and the investigative judgment. Sabbath-keeping has lost much of its purpose; and a general vagueness has settled over many in the church, which blurs the distinctiveness and the uniqueness of the final message for the world.” Deceptions of the New Theology, p. 26. Colin and Russell Standish. 1989 [available from Remnant Ministries].

“The evangelical gospel [the New Theology] has had some dramatic consequences in the Adventist church. Because of its insistence that we are sinners by birth and continue to sin by nature all of our lives, and because it teaches that we are saved by justification while sanctification is only a fruit of salvation, and perfection must wait until Jesus comes, several Adventist beliefs are negatively impacted. The idea of an investigative judgment to examine character development and sanctified obedience becomes at best irrelevant and at worst destructive to faith. Ellen White’s teaching authority is seriously undermined, since she teaches exactly the opposite on all the main beliefs of this gospel. The importance of the law and the Sabbath at the end of time is seriously denigrated....

“Health teachings are reduced to good advice for those who want to live longer and avoid disease, since they are part of sanctification and thus do not in any way contribute to our salvation. The various standards of the church, such as entertainment, reading, media productions, music, dress, and jewelry, are simply products of our past Victorian traditions dictated more by culture than by ‘truth’ and must be modernized if we are to have any impact on our postmodern culture. New methods of planting churches must be implemented, in which new believers must be made to feel comfortable in their own lifestyle and desires. New styles of worship...
Ten years ago, my late brother Russell published an entire edition of *The Remnant Herald* devoted to the meetings that were held twenty-five years previously between those who were called the "Concerned Brethren" and representatives of the Biblical Research Institute of the Australasian Division. The burden of the Concerned Brethren was the changing of many of the doctrinal pillars of the Seventh-day Adventist faith which was rapidly coming into the church largely because of the influence of Dr. Desmond Ford. The meetings were held over two days: at Avondale College on February 3, 1976; and at the headquarters of the Australasian Division in Wahroonga, Sydney, on February 4, 1976. The meetings were of such significance and yet are so little known amongst many Seventh-day Adventists today that it seems appropriate to list the names of the brethren who were present.

The Concerned Brethren were led by Pastor James Winston Kent, long retired, former president of three conferences. Other brethren who composed this group were as follows:

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Those who represented the Australasian Division were:

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It was noted at the time that most of those on the Biblical Research committee had very little experience in soul-winning evangelism, whereas many of the Concerned Brethren who were ordained ministers had been strong in evangelism. Very quickly the students who were graduating and being sent out into the field of service had an entirely different gospel from the one which our students received in the ministerial department of Avondale College. I have ever listened to Pastor J. W. Kent and Pastor George Burnside. These men had stood firmly from earlier days when the present truth of the everlasting gospel was preached with power and certainty. These men had brought many souls to the kingdom of heaven and stood as stalwarts in difficult circumstances.

Dr. Desmond Ford had, in the space of less than one and a half decades, almost totally transformed the ministerial department of Avondale College into a theological college built on the format of evangelical doctrines. Very quickly the students who were graduating and being sent out into the field of service had an entirely different gospel from the one which God had given to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I was on the faculty of Avondale College in the Education Department for five years, 1965 to 1969 inclusive. Of course I was not teaching in the Theology Department, but very quickly I realized that Dr. Ford was leading the young people away from the everlasting gospel and the sanctuary doctrine, which are the centre of the message we are to give that will prepare people for the return of Jesus Christ.

| Conclusion: |
| "Satan will turn people from the law of God. Notwithstanding this, so well will he counterfeit righteousness that, if it were possible, he would deceive the very elect." [Review and Herald, August 17, 1897] |

The Remnant Herald will address current issues about the New Theology in future editions.
I had taken many walks with Dr. Ford while teaching at Avondale College, seeking to explain to him where I perceived he was wrong and how he was leading men and women away from the Adventist faith in the classes he was teaching. However, I believe he thought he was so intellectually superior to the rest of us on the faculty that it was futile, notwithstanding the many attempts I made to preach the authentic message of salvation. I was so frustrated in one of the academic affairs meetings that I made a plea to the principal of Avondale College at the time and to all the members of the academic affairs committee. My appeal was, ‘What is taught in our classes today will be preached in the pulpits of tomorrow, and believed by our members the day after tomorrow.’ However, no one supported me in the committee. They seemed afraid, even though one or two of them realized that Dr. Ford was turning the students away from the precious truths of our message. I also took opportunity to speak individually with some of the theology students, but they seemed to be mesmerized by Dr. Ford and his theology. Especially one of the Theology Department professors was certainly alert to the aberrant teachings of Dr. Ford, however his courage to oppose Dr. Ford’s errors seemed to fail him when in a group setting.

I had left Avondale College to serve at West Indies College in Jamaica seven years before the meetings between the Concerned Brethren and the Biblical Research Institute. There was no doubt that men of the calibre of Pastor J. W. Kent, Pastor George Burnside, and Pastor J. Keith made strong contributions; of the laymen, unquestionably it was Russell who made the biggest impact for God’s precious truth.

Many of the senior men were deeply disturbed as they heard long-held pillars of our faith rejected at the meetings. Pastor Kent at last could stand it no longer. He stood up a few feet from Dr. Ford and clenching the Word of God in his outstretched hand exclaimed, ‘I’d die for the certainties of this Book! But I wouldn’t shed a corpuscle of my blood for all the if’s, but’s and maybe’s I’ve heard here today!’ Later in the first day of the meetings, Pastor Kent stood up and expressed the following sentiments, “I’ve spent a lifetime defending our faith against such ideas as Dr. Ford expressed today. But while I defended our faith on these issues against ministers of various faiths, I never believed that the day would ever arrive when I would have to defend them against an ordained, credentialed Seventh-day Adventist minister!”

Pastor John Keith, normally a man of quiet demeanour and firmly in control of his emotions, was almost brought to tears as he listened. As a former Plymouth Brethren follower, he found the expression of some of the concepts he had rejected for the light of Adventism almost too much for him.

All these sentiments created a high level of tension in the meetings and some of the Australasian Division appointed men at times felt compelled to rise strongly to Dr. Ford’s defence. However, it was refreshing to see two of the men appointed by the Division who expressed their concerns at the meetings. Both Pastor Raymond Stanley and Pastor Athal Tolhurst indicated they had serious reservations about what Dr. Ford was teaching. Pastor Tolhurst related that the students at Avondale College were reticent to pray for victory over sin lest they be accused of legalism.

Four items were brought into consideration at the meetings (although the B.R.I. reported its findings only on three [numbers 2, 3, and 4]):

1): The Nature of Salvation and Righteousness by Faith: Dr. Ford claimed that obedience to the Decalogue under the power of the Holy Spirit was not possible prior to glorification. He further claimed that sanctification was not part of the gospel message. This easily demonstrable false stand was opposed in papers presented by Pastor Frank Ba-sham and Doctor John Clifford.

2): The Sanctuary Message: Dr. Ford claimed that the Atonement was completed at the cross, and that Jesus entered the Most Holy Place in A.D. 31 rather than in 1844. Pastor George Burnside most perceptively demonstrated the non-Scriptural basis of Dr. Ford’s positions. These were the main points for which Dr. Ford was dismissed from the ministry in August 1980 following an investigation into his open rejection of the Investigative Judgment by the Sanctuary Review Committee in Glacier View, Colorado, United States of America.

3): The Age of the Earth: Dr. Ford taught that creation week occurred thousands of years in excess of the approximately six thousand years testified by Inspiration. Dr. Russell Standish presented the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy truth on this matter.

4): The Infallibility of the Scriptures: Dr. Ford taught that there were many errors of fact concerning science, history, genealogies, etc. in Scripture, while stating it was free from error in setting forth the principles of salvation. Pastor Frank Breaden addressed such contentions in his presentation.
In addition to the sanctuary doctrine, let us look at some other doctrines which were at stake and examine the evidence from Holy Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy. Dr. Desmond Ford accepted almost all of these evangelical beliefs which are inconsistent with the Word of God. Let us analyse them, one by one, and provide some of the evidence from Inspiration for the truth on these matters.

a): The Sanctuary Message: Evangelicals do not believe that there is a literal sanctuary in heaven.

“And let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.” *Exodus 25: 8*

“Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” *Hebrews 8: 1, 2*

“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” *Hebrews 9: 24*

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

In 1962, I was startled by Dr. Desmond Ford’s theology when we were walking and dialoguing together at the first national conference of Australian Seventh-day Adventist university students. I had initiated this conference when I was president of the Sydney University Student Society. I had invited Dr. Ford to be one of the presenters. As we were walking together, I raised the issue of the sanctuary message. As I conversed with him, Dr. Ford asked me, “Colin, you don’t believe that there is an actual sanctuary in heaven, do you?” My response was, “Des, I certainly do!” Then Dr. Ford responded with a question, “Do you think the heavenly sanctuary needs a roof? Do you think it rains in heaven?” But I do know that the Bible teaches that the sanctuary and later the temple on earth were patterned after the heavenly model. Indeed, we find that there has to be a structure because the servant of the Lord makes it plain that the 144,000 enter the heavenly temple.

“Therefore are they [the 144,000] before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.” *Revelation 7: 15*

“And as were about to enter the holy temple, Jesus raised His lovely voice and said, ‘Only the 144,000 enter this place,’ and we shouted, ‘Alleluia.”' *Early Writings, p. 19*

b): The Human Nature of Christ: Evangelicals overwhelmingly believe that Christ took upon Himself man’s nature before the fall. The Scriptures teach that Christ took upon Himself our fallen human nature.

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only be-gotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” *John 1: 14*

“Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.” *Romans 1: 3*

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” *Romans 8: 3, 4*

“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” *Galatians 4: 4, 5*

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy Him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage, for verily He took not on Him the nature of angels: but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things, it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.” *Hebrews 2: 14 – 17*

Here are just a few statements which are found in the Spirit of Prophecy:

“It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man’s nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin.” *Desire of Ages, p. 49*

“...that He would take man’s fallen nature, and His strength would not be equal with theirs [the heavenly angels]...” *Early Writings, p. 150*

“He took upon His sinless nature our sinful nature, that He might know how to succour those that are tempted.” *Medical Ministry, p. 181*

c): The Nature of Sin: Evangelicals believe that we are born with original sin. In other words, we are guilty because of our sinful nature. Sin is not original sin: it is the act of breaking God’s law.

“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” *1 John 3: 4*

“The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” *Ezekiel 18: 20*
d) Character Perfection: Evangelicals believe that character perfection in this life is impossible. Yet the quotes of Inspiration are plain:

“And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins.” Matthew 1: 21

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1: 9

“She was sanctified and cleansed by the Spirit of God, and set apart to the ministry of the gospel of the righteousness of Christ: to make Him known among the Gentiles.” Romans 15: 16

“Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.” Romans 6: 13

“Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.” Titus 2: 12

“Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity: they walk in His ways.” Psalm 119: 2, 3

“The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth....” Zephaniah 3: 13

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it.” 1 Thessalonians 5: 23, 24

“Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy....” Jude 1: 24

“Blessed are they which do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Revelation 22: 14

“And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.” Revelation 19: 8

“Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.” Ephesians 4: 13 – 15

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.’ We can overcome. Yes; fully, entirely. Jesus died to make away of escape for us, that we might overcome every evil temper, every sin, every temptation, and sit down at last with Him.” Testimonies for the Church, volume 1, p. 144

These are but a few of the evangelical doctrines which Dr. Desmond Ford insinuated into the Seventh-day Adventist Church, first in Australia during his relatively lengthy tenure as Chairman of the Theology Department of Avondale College and then at Pacific Union College, which had disseminated these doctrines into the United States. That influence has to a greater or lesser extent gone worldwide in our Seventh-day Adventist education.

As always, Dr. Ford used the statements of many theologians, but very little biblical support for what he was teaching to the students. On the contrary, the Concerned Brethren were able to more than match Dr. Ford by the power of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.

Sadly however, subsequent to the meetings, the Biblical Research Institute decided to vindicate Dr. Ford in its report. The text of its findings read in part as follows: “Whereas: The Biblical Research Institute has on two occasions, February 3, 1976, at Avondale College, and February 4, 1976, at the office of the Australasian Division, heard a plea of a number of senior ministers who have expressed their concern about the teaching of theology at Avondale College, particularly in the area of the Sanctuary, the Age of the Earth, and Inspiration, it now desires to present its findings to the administration of the Australasian Division as follows:

“1. That the Theology Department at Avondale is committed to generally accepted, moderate Seventh-day Adventist doctrinal positions and that Dr. Desmond Ford ably demonstrated that such stances as he takes which appear to diverge from what some senior men hold as ‘Present Truth’ can be justified by reference to majority positions taken by current Seventh-day Adventist authors and scholars.

“2. The senior ministers (as represented by their speakers) were somewhat unaware of the movements in Adventist thought and the style of doctrinal presentation in recent years, a fact which explains their reaction to some contemporary expositions.

“3. That it expresses its sustained confidence in Avondale College and its Theological Faculty...."

The full text of the B.R.I. report can be read in the book Russell and I co-authored, The Gathering
That the Concerned Brethren were dismayed by these conclusions scarcely requires reporting. As far as has been ascertained, this occasion was the very first time in the whole history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church that it has been found necessary to validate a man’s doctrinal position on the basis of “majority positions taken by the current Seventh-day Adventist authors and scholars.” While it was true that Dr. Ford did not prove his doctrines from the Bible nor from the Spirit of Prophecy, and while it is equally true that in most cases he was able to point to a minority of Seventh-day Adventists who had held his aberrant positions, the Concerned Brethren little imagined that this latter fact would satisfy the B.R.I. When this fact was pointed out to the B.R.I. Committee Chairman, the minutes were amended on March 23, 1976, to add “the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy” as bases of Dr. Ford’s stand. However in truth he had utilized these sources very sparingly and he had been able to support none of his propositions from them.

Thirty-five years have passed since that historic dialogue was held to hear the genuine apprehensions expressed by the Concerned Brethren. Though the B.R.I. report provided a favourable perspective to what was being taught at Avondale, events rapidly unfolded in the succeeding years that were to cast doubt on the correctness of its findings. In the next edition of The Remnant Herald, a summary of incidents since February 1976 will be presented to outline the highlights and the disappointments of those events, whose effects were to resonate well into the twenty-first century.

[Editor: “History forgotten is the future repeated.”]

Fear of scorn:

We wish to speak in deep Christian love to our pastors and church members alike. Today a fear pervades the ranks of our Church. Many earnest pastors and laymen are deeply concerned by the rampant deterioration in sanctified living, doctrinal fidelity, entertainment, dress and health standards, evangelistic outreach, study of Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy, and educational principles.

Yet a form of vocal paralysis has overtaken most of us. It is not a physical paralysis, but an apparent inability to exert our God-ordained responsibility to stand in the breach (Isaiah 58: 12), courageously ignoring the likelihood of ecclesiastical penalties that may follow.

We are in a state akin to the ‘fear of the Jews’ which pervaded God’s Jewish Church during the era of the First Advent. Naturally the enemy of souls, as the Second Advent nears, is once more employing this means which proved so effective in the first century.

Even godly leaders like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea suffered from this fear of church leadership:

“There was a man of the Pharisees, names Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night….” John 3: 1, 2

“And there came also to Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.” John 19: 39

“And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.” John 19: 38

Joseph and Nicodemus were not alone among the chief rulers who feared their peers on the Sandhedrin and silenced their faith in Christ. However, they did distinguish themselves from the other members of their class by standing openly for Christ and His truth at the darkest hour of the Christian church. The remainder lost eternity. What a tragedy this was!

“Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue.” John 12: 42

Scripture reveals the genuine reason for the silence of these men:

“For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.” John 12: 43

The same cowardice was evidenced by many members of the laity. We cite one example, that of the parents of the healed blind man:

“But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age, ask him: for he shall speak for himself. These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that He was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.” John 9: 21, 22

We need to heed the words of Zacharias, John the Baptist’s father:

“That He would grant us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear.” Luke 1: 74
Today there is an urgent need to:

love for God and His beloved people.

The motive for Christ's stern rebuke was clear:

―O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.‖ Matthew 23: 37

Here is our example of a God-ordained ministry of reproof. Undoubtedly some souls, listening to Christ's words, perhaps some of the priests included, found the path to salvation through Christ's strident, but deeply loving and appropriate words of much needed reproof.

Like Christ, Jeremiah had faced imminent martyrdom for presenting God's warning message without diminishing one word:

―But know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof: for of a truth the Lord sent me unto you to speak these words in your ears.‖ Jeremiah 26: 15

Criticism:
The standard response to faithful warnings of the inroads of apostasy into God's Seventh-day Adventist Church is to declare His faithful servants to be heaping criticism upon God's church.

This is quite understandable, for such a charge has proven very successful in inducing many sincere church members to seal their ears against the faithful message of reproof, so urgently required in our church today.

Few contemplate the fact that the generators of such charges are utilising a ploy to cover the sins of Israel, a ploy which is circular in its nature. If we accuse an individual of being critical, we, ourselves, are criticising the one so accused.

The question, which God alone can truly discern, is whether the individual presenting warnings of apostasy in our midst is doing so from a hateful heart towards God's professed people or from a heart of love for God and His beloved people.

Today there is an urgent need to:

―Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.‖ Isaiah 58: 1

―Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in My holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is night at hand.‖ Joel 2: 1

There is also an impelling reason for the implementation of these commands which must not be set aside for 'fear of the Jews,' for God calls:

―Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind Him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the Lord your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly.‖ Joel 1: 14, 15

Christ presented us an example of a loving ministry of reproof. While we have never come close to using language of the strength He employed amid the tragic apostasy of His church two thousand years ago, nevertheless His example is plainly set before us. His words applied to church leaders in His day -- the 'scribes and Pharisees.' In the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, we read that seven times He described them as hypocrites (verses 13, 14, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29); five times He charged them with blindness of a spiritual nature (verses 16, 17, 19, 24, 26). He twice charged them as fools (verses 17, 19), and also referred to these leaders as whitened sepulchres (verse 27) and a generation of vipers (verse 33).

Does Christ stand charged with the sin of heaping hateful criticism upon the leaders of God's church in His day? Of course not! On a further occasion Christ addressed the Pharisees in terms of great severity:

―But now ye seek to kill Me, a Man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they unto Him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but He sent me. Why do ye not understand My speech? even because ye cannot hear My word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.‖ John 8: 40 – 44

Earlier our Saviour declared of the Pharisees:

―Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.‖ Matthew 10: 34

Christ declared of John the Baptist:

―For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.‖ Luke 7: 28

Yet John the Baptist, before Christ, had also used the same appellation as Christ when speaking of the Pharisees and the Sadducees:

―But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O gen-


* He was ever seeking perfection of character
* He was sanctified but he made no boast of this

This wonderful paragraph reveals several features of the loving ministry of the apostle John:

* He was sanctified but he made no boast of this
* He was ever seeking perfection of character

No compromise with sin:

John, the ‘disciple whom Jesus loved’ (John 13: 23) and whose inspired writings exuded love as evidenced in each of his epistles was the disciple with the closest affinity to his Saviour. Notice his loving words to Christ’s flock in each of his epistles:

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.”  
1. John 3: 1, 2

“The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth.”  
2. John 1: 1

“The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.”  
3. John 1: 1

Yet, in the grace and love of Christ he called sin by its right name. Measure every word in the following paragraph from the pen of Inspiration:

“John enjoyed the blessing of true sanctification. But mark, the apostle does not claim to be sinless; he is seeking perfection by walking in the light of God’s countenance. He testifies that the man who professes to know God, and yet breaks the divine law, gives the lie to his profession. ‘He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him’ 1. John 2: 4. In this age of boasted liberality, these words would be branded as bigotry. But the apostle teaches that while we should manifest Christian courtesy, we are authorized to call sin and sinners by their right names — that this is consistent with true charity. While we are to love the souls for whom Christ died, and labour for their salvation, we should not make a compromise with sin. We are not to unite with the rebellious, and call this charity. God requires His people in this age of the world to stand, as did John in his time, unflinchingly for the right, in opposition to soul-destroying errors.”  
The Sanctified Life, p. 65  [Review and Herald, February 22, 1881]

This entire work of Pastor Russell Standish’s ministry, and were nearly completed at the time of his death. Both Russell and Colin Standish carried a heavy burden for God’s people, seeing many of them assailed by numerous false theories gaining wide circulation concerning the ministry and nature of the Godhead. This work was an answer to the call of duty to meet the errors and set forth the truth as revealed in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.

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On Friday, June 25, 2010, Elder Ted N. C. Wilson was elected to be the new General Conference President of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is not unusual for the choice of a new president to create quite distinct reactions to his election and certainly this was no exception. Unquestionably however, the majority of those who heard the news were delighted and thankful to the Lord for this selection. Elder Wilson becomes the seventeenth man to occupy that position since John Byington was elected the first president in 1863. However, Elder Wilson will be listed as the twentieth president because Elder James White served three terms and Elder George Butler served two.

Very few Seventh-day Adventists remember Elder Byington’s name. He was not one of the most prominent pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist movement, but nevertheless, from all reports he was a very faithful believer in the Seventh-day Adventist message. He was often lovingly called Father Byington.

The information I will present through this article comes from very reliable sources, including a vice president of the General Conference, and a member of the nominating committee. There were those who had great suspicion about the fact that Elder Wilson was not elected president at the 2005 General Conference Session held in St. Louis, Missouri. An unusual situation occurred at that Session when, on the first agenda for that Friday morning, it was voted to add six more members to the nominating committee. These were all prominent leaders, most of them retired, including a former secretary of the General Conference, a former North American Division president, and a former women’s ministries director. This raised significant suspicion in the minds of many of the attendees because word had rapidly spread around the exhibit halls that a straw vote on Thursday evening indicated that the re-election of the then-president of the General Conference, Elder Jan Paulsen, was in jeopardy. Many concluded that these prominent persons were added in an effort to not only vote in favour of Elder Jan Paulsen’s re-election, but also to try to influence other members of the nominating committee. It was voiced around that Elder Paulsen had been re-elected by 98 votes to 91 for Elder Wilson. However, I had heard no official confirmation of this wide-spread rumour at that General Conference Session.

About six weeks before the 2010 General Conference Session, at our instigation my assistant, Elder J.C. Perozo, and I had a visit with Elder Ted Wilson. Elder Perozo has known Elder Wilson from the time they were young men attending the seminary together. Later, when they graduated, they were both interned in the Greater New York Conference, both had served as ministers in the Greater New York Conference, and both were ordained in the Greater New York Conference. I have known Elder Wilson casually since he was in his twenties. From the first time I met him, I have had a great respect for him as a man who gives evidence of a deep love for his Lord and Saviour, a loyalty to the great pillars of the Seventh-day Adventist faith, and also a man who exemplifies in his life a true commitment to the precious truths which will bring God’s people into the full fellowship with Jesus Christ. Our dialogue was a very fine conversation concerning the great hopes we all have for the triumph of our beloved church, and for the hastening of the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. This was not a major talk about the upcoming General Conference session but certainly we assured Elder Wilson of our deep commitment to the work of the Church and our loyalty to the very plain testimony of the servant of the Lord, that through fearful shaking and sifting, the Seventh-day Adventist church will go through to glory. Those who may want to see the evidence for that, you can order from Remnant Ministries the book, The Embattled Church, which Russell and I wrote some years ago.

In anticipation of the General Conference session, I had no doubt that Elder Wilson’s name would come into consideration. Maybe it was because my faith was not what it should be that I thought it was unlikely that he would be elected. I felt that there were strong political elements in the Church who would find a way for someone more in the liberal camp to be chosen as the new General Conference president. I cannot deny that I was praying, according to God’s will of course, that Elder Wilson would be the chosen one. My wife and I were still traveling to the General Conference, not too far from Atlanta, when in a cell phone conversation early Friday afternoon we learned the news that Elder Wilson had been chosen as the new General Conference president. My heart was joyous and I uttered a silent prayer that the Lord would give the wisdom and strength which will be needed to bring true unity to God’s remnant Church.

On the Thursday of the General Conference session, I met briefly with Elder Wilson at the Faith and Science Conference which had been developed by my nephew, Russell’s second son, Dr. Timothy Standish, who is a member of the General Conference GeoScience Committee. He organized about twenty meetings where faithful scientists and lead-
ers gave presentations supporting the Creation account. My wife and I attended a number of these discourses and of course we were very desirous to hear the one on Thursday afternoon which would be addressed by Elder Wilson. Before he spoke, we had a few minutes to talk together. I was absolutely thrilled by his straightforward, emphatic support for the true principles of the Creation record in Genesis. There was no equivocation nor ambiguity in what he testified. This man believes in the Bible record. He is a man who believes earnestly in the Holy Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy. I therefore looked with great eagerness to the presentation he would make on Sabbath morning with an estimated seventy thousand people in the large dome. As he preached so clearly on his goals to see revival and reformation in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and also to see the great remnant which God has promised will be faithful to Him at the end of earth’s history, tears welled up in my eyes on a couple of occasions. I had waited for such a presentation at a General Conference Session since Elder Robert H. Pierson preached a sermon* in 1975 that was similar in some respects, although uniquely different. Both of them focused on the need for God’s people to surrender the totality of their lives and service to the kingdom of heaven and for the hastening of the coming of Jesus our Saviour. [* = “It’s Time” — Review and Herald, July 31, 1975, available from www.adventistarchives.org.]

I pray that everyone reading The Remnant Herald will be praying daily for Elder Wilson. He will need all the grace of Jesus and all the power of His saving might. It is very easy to criticize a General Conference president but we should be praying for whoever is in that role because so much depends upon what he stands for, both by voice and the written word, and now today through the media. He needs the daily prayers of God’s faithful saints. I know many of you have either read or heard the presentation through the media which was delivered on that Sabbath morning of the last General Conference session. If you have not already done so, give him the encouragement of your e-mails, letters, or any other form of support for his leadership.

I have heard from reliable sources that he is giving great attention to the Weeks of Prayers which will come up in the future so that they will be strong in their call for the surrender of the human life under the power of Christ to be ready for the kingdom of heaven. It may not show up in the very next week of prayer because it often takes time to make these changes. Already there is evidence that some very special messages are being printed in the Adventist Review for which he is writing. I also had a preview of his interview with the editor of the Liberty magazine, Lincoln Steed. This man believes in the true principles of religious liberty.

I am also expecting to see some special emphasis in the upcoming Sabbath School lesson quarterly, although I do not have any direct information along this line. I believe, too, that he will not neglect the materials which are sent out to the children and the youth of this Church. They are the future and I believe that it is so critical that this generation of children and youth be trained to be that final generation in the vanguard of the completion of the gospel commission and that they be part of the remnant people to be immersed in the everlasting gospel which will be the only central message which will be taken to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

Contact Elder Wilson with any of the godly hopes that you have under his administration. Remember, a General Conference president’s term of office is five years. Of course he can be re-elected, but we cannot foretell the future. Yes, he was voted with a high level of confidence at Atlanta but we do not know the future, only God does.

It might be of interest to know from reliable sources that Elder Wilson received 147 votes from the nominating committee on the first ballot. Perhaps I should say that my memory may be slightly off, but these are the approximations. Nine leaders had been nominated for president and I believe there were about 260 nominating committee members. Therefore, Elder Wilson had an absolute majority on the first ballot. Another vice president was runner-up with 44 votes. The other seven nominations shared the remainder of the votes. I also learned from the members on the nominating committee that his great support came from Africa, South America, and Asia. There was much less support from Western Europe, North America, and the South Pacific.

I pray that God’s people in what we call the Western World will recognize in Elder Wilson as a man of God. Although a godly man, it is always going to be possible that Elder Wilson may make some mistakes. Being General Conference president does not give infinite knowledge or wisdom. However, if ever something takes place or is written that may not have been solidly riveted in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, I know it will not be because he does not have a full belief in it. If that happens, contact him with loving kindness and present to him what he may have overlooked or did not know, for I believe that if he is presented with a plain “thus saith the Lord,” he will not reject it. I have full confidence in that. Let us not only pray for Elder Wilson, but all the men who surround him in leadership responsibilities, for those who bring him information and share counsel with him, that these will be wise and faithful leaders. Also let us pray for the leaders in the Divisions, and in the Unions, and in the Conferences, and in our institutions all around the 
world, that there will be leadership whom God can use to develop the greatest impact under the Holy Spirit, and bring the Word to our people.

This surely is the time for God's people to arise and shine that the glory of the Lord might rest upon each member of His people. When the latter rain is beginning to fall, there is going to be a great sifting and shaking in God's church. Many will leave the faith, many will be lost from the people of God, and they will ultimately join Babylon but that unity which will come through truth and righteousness and the love of the brethren and sisters will be seen amongst those who would rather die than commit one wrong action or speak one wrong word.

“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.” Revelation 12:11

I have never lost hope in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, even though at times I have been sorely grieved by some of the situations which have developed. Unfortunately, there are many today who are perishing for lack of knowledge of the saving truth of the gospel of Jesus. Our work as faithful servants of God is to take the everlasting gospel to the world but it is also to take that same gospel to the precious members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

May each one of us be faithful to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God and not allow ourselves to be swayed by the skillful oratory of clever writers who are leading us away from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. May God keep all of us faithful unto Jesus and be with each of us until the day of eternity arrives.

The New Theology and Health Deform: Part 1
By Robert Pannekoek

With the introduction of the new theology came an insidious attack on our unchangeable health message. While we are not to be conscience for another human being in the area of diet and health reform, yet it is our duty as Seventh-day Adventists to uphold the clear counsel on this subject, and to promote it at every available opportunity. After all, is not the health message a definite inclusion in the three and fourth angels’ messages?

Some say that our health is not a salvation issue. While our choices and habits of life do not merit our salvation, we must not forget how intricately our health habits and choices are connected with our salvation! Look at what the servant of the Lord, Ellen White, says about this:

“The health should be as sacredly guarded as the character.” Medical Ministry, p. 77

“A continual transgression of nature’s laws is a continual transgression of the law of God. The present weight of suffering and anguish which we see everywhere, the present deformity, decrepitude, disease, and imbecility now flooding the world, make it, in comparison to what it might be and what God designed it should be, a lazar house; and the present generation are feeble in mental, moral, and physical power. All this misery has accumulated from generation to generation because fallen man will break the law of God. Sins of the greatest magnitude are committed through the indulgence of perverted appetite.” Counsels on Diet and Foods, p. 43

“The transgression of physical law is the transgression of God’s law. Our Creator is Jesus Christ. He is the author of our being. He has created the human structure. He is the author of physical laws, as He is the author of the moral law. And the human being who is careless and reckless of the habits and practices that concern his physical life and health, sins against God. Many who profess to love Jesus Christ do not show proper reverence and respect for Him who gave His life to save them from eternal death. He is not revered, or respected, or recognized. This is shown by the injury done to their own bodies in violation of the laws of their being.” Ibid.

“A large proportion of all the infirmities that afflict the human family, are the results of their own wrong habits, because of their willing ignorance, or of their disregard of the light which God has given in relation to the laws of their being. It is not possible for us to glorify God while living in violation of the laws of life. The heart cannot possibly maintain...
consecration to God while lustful appetite is indulged. A diseased body and disordered intellect, because of continual indulgence in hurtful lust, make sanctification of the body and spirit impossible. The apostle understood the importance of the healthful conditions of the body for the successful perfection of Christian character. He says, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." He mentions the fruit of the Spirit, among which is temperance. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." *Ibid*, p. 44

"It is a duty to know how to preserve the body in the very best condition of health, and it is a sacred duty to live up to the light which God has graciously given. If we close our eyes to the light for fear we shall see our wrongs, which we are unwilling to forsake, our sins are not lessened, but increased. If light is turned from in one case, it will be disregarded in another. It is just as much sin to violate the laws of our being as to break one of the ten commandments, for we cannot do either without breaking God's law. We cannot love the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength while we are loving our appetites, our tastes, a great deal better than we love the Lord. We are daily lessening our strength to glorify God, when He requires all our strength, all our mind. By our wrong habits we are lessening our hold on life, and yet professing to be Christ's followers, preparing for the finishing touch of immortality." *Ibid.*

Clearly and undoubtedly our salvation is directly impacted by our health, specifically by our lifestyle choices, based on what we believe to be right.

Acceptance of the new theology’s premise on sanctification as having no bearing upon a person's salvation, taking it outside the focus of righteousness by faith, inevitably led to a dangerous neglect and rejection of the Bible's and the Spirit of Prophecy’s explicit position on the necessity of obedience to every precept of Jehovah. This negligence and rejection extended even to the light given by God upon health reform, reducing the inspired counsels furnished by the pen of Inspiration to merely good advice. Many of our people are lamentably ignorant of the instructions provided by the Lord as to whom we should receive medical help from: to avoid the common practice of mixed gender medical consultations (men treating women, women examining men), and seeking for help in new age/eastern religion practices. It is high time that our church members were warned very clearly to seek help only from a Christian physician where possible [of their own gender or sex], and to steer clear of all new age/eastern medicine-type treatments:

"There are many who shrink with horror from the thought of consulting spirit mediums, but who are attracted by more pleasing forms of spiritism, such as the Emmanuel movement. Still others are led astray by the teachings of Christian Science, and by the mysticism of theosophy and other Oriental religions." *Review and Herald*, January 15, 1914

"The apostles of nearly all forms of spiritism claim to have power to cure the diseased. They attribute their power to electricity, magnetism, the so-called 'sympathetic remedies,' or to latent forces within the mind of man. And there are not a few, even in this Christian age, who go to these healers, instead of trusting in the power of the living God and the skill of well-qualified Christian physicians. The mother, watching by the sick bed of her child, exclaims, 'I can do no more! Is there no physician who has power to restore my child?' She is told of the wonderful cures performed by some clairvoyant or magnetic healer, and she trusts her dear one to his charge, placing it as verily in the hand of Satan as if he were standing by her side. In many instances the future life of the child is controlled by a satanic power, which it seems impossible to break." *Ibid.*

"Delicate treatments should not be given by male physicians to women in our institutions. Never should a lady patient be alone with a gentleman physician, either for special examination or for treatment. Let the physicians be faithful in preserving delicacy and modesty under all circumstances." *Counsels on Health*, p. 364

"In our medical institutions there ought always to be women of mature age and good experience who have been trained to give treatments to the lady patients. Women should be educated and qualified just as thoroughly as possible to become practitioners in the delicate diseases which afflict women, that their secret parts should not be exposed to the notice of men. There should be a much larger number of lady physicians, educated not only to act as trained nurses, but also as physicians. It is a most horrible practice, this revealing the secret parts of women to men, or men being treated by women." *Ibid.*

"Women physicians should utterly refuse to look upon the secret parts of men. Women should be thoroughly educated to work for women, and men to work for men. Let men know that they must go to their own sex and not apply to lady physicians. It is an insult to women, and God looks upon these things of commonness with abhorrence." *Ibid.*

"While physicians are called upon to teach social purity, let them practice that delicacy which is a constant lesson in practical purity. Women may do a noble work as practicing physicians; but when men ask a lady physician to give them examinations and treatments which demand the exposure of private parts, let her refuse decidedly to do this work." *Ibid.*
“In the medical work there are dangers which the physician should understand and constantly guard against. Truly converted men are the ones who should be employed as physicians in our sanitari-ums. Some physicians are self-sufficient and con-consider themselves able to guard their own ways; whereas if they but knew themselves, they would feel their great need of help from above, a higher intelligence.” Ibid.

“Some medical men are unfit to act as physicians to women because of the attitude they assume to-ward them. They take liberties until it becomes a common thing with them to transgress the laws of chastity. Our physicians should have the highest regard for the direction given by God to His church when they were delivered from Egypt. This will keep them from becoming loose in manners and careless in regard to the laws of chastity. All who live by the laws given by God from Sinai may be safely trusted.” Ibid, p. 365

“It is not in harmony with the instructions given at Sinai that gentlemen physicians should do the work of midwives. The Bible speaks of women at child-birth being attended by women, and thus it ought always to be. Women should be educated and trained to act skilfully as midwives and physicians to their sex. It is just as important that a line of study be given to educate women to deal with women’s diseases, as it is that there should be gentlemen thoroughly trained to act as physicians and surgeons. And the wages of the woman should be proportionate to her services. She should be as much appreciated in her work as the gentleman physician is appreciated in his work...We ought to have a school where women can be educated by women physicians, to do the best possible work in treating the diseases of women.” Ibid, p. 366

“Among us as a people, the medical work should stand at its highest. Physicians should bear in mind that it is their work to fit souls as well as bodies for heavenly lives. Their service for God is to be un-corrupted by evil practices.” Ibid.

In the next issue, we will finish this two-part seg-ment on who to consult for medical help, and dis-play a book that will give you great help in deciding which methods of treatment are safe.

**VACANCY:** Highwood Health Centre is seeking a book-keeper who is experienced in MYOB accounting systems.

Please direct your enquiries to the Health Centre Man-ager by using any of the contact details provided below.

**HIGHWOOD**

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