

A Chronology of Desolation

The Spiritual Decline of Adventism in Four Generations

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*That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten;
and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten;
and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten.*

Joel 1:4

1st Generation - The Palmerworm - 1844—1888

Joel 1:4 *That which the palmerworm hath left ...*

- 1844, October 22. The 3rd Angels Message. The platform is set

“I saw a company who stood well guarded and firm, giving no countenance to those who would unsettle the established faith of the body. God looked upon them with approbation. I was shown three steps—the first, second, and third angels’ messages. Said my accompanying angel, ‘Woe to him who shall move a block or stir a pin of these messages. The true understanding of these messages is of vital importance. The destiny of souls hangs upon the manner in which they are received.’ I was again brought down through these messages, and saw how dearly the people of God had purchased their experience. It had been obtained through much suffering and severe conflict. God had led them along step by step, until He had placed them upon a solid, immovable platform. I saw individuals approach the platform and examine the foundation. Some with rejoicing immediately stepped upon it. Others commenced to find fault with the foundation. They wished improvements made, and then the platform would be more perfect, and the people much happier. Some stepped off the platform to examine it and declared it to be laid wrong. But I saw that nearly all stood firm upon the platform and exhorted those who had stepped off to cease their complaints; for God was the Master Builder, and they were fighting against Him. They recounted the wonderful work of God, which had led them to the firm platform, and in union raised their eyes to heaven and with a loud voice glorified God. This affected some of those who had complained and left the platform, and they with humble look again stepped upon it.” *EW* 258.3

- 1844 first open vision by Ellen G. Harmon, in Portland (ME)
- 1850 Messenger Party
- 1850 chart
- Slipping into laodicean condition

“Let us just take a general retrospect of the downward progress of the Laodiceans. For six successive years, viz: from the fall of 1844 to the spring and fall of 1850, the most of these leading members have been aiding and assisting each other in changing the chronology, i.e. the world’s history; to prove that they were on the true position. What have they gained? Answer, nothing but disappointment and confusion.” Bates

“Many who profess to be looking for the speedy coming of Christ are becoming conformed to this world and seek more earnestly the applause of those around them than the approbation of God. They are cold and formal, like the nominal churches from which they but a short time since

separated. The words addressed to the Laodicean church describe their present condition perfectly. (*The Review*, 6.10.1852)." *EW* 107

"I was shown the low state of God's people; that God had not departed from them, but they had departed from Him, and had become lukewarm." December 23, 1860. *1T* 210

- 1854-1858 distrust in the Testimonies

"I saw that the reason why visions have not been more frequent of late, is, they have not been appreciated by the church. The church have nearly lost their spirituality and faith, and the re-proofs and warnings have had but little effect upon them. Many of those who have professed faith in them have not heeded them." *1T*, 119

"Often I have inquired in distress: Of what account is all my labor? These brethren took this position: We believe the visions, but Sister White, in writing them, put in her own words, and we will believe the portion which we think is of God, and will not heed the other. ...

The gifts are next questioned; then, of course, they have but little weight, and instruction given through vision is disregarded." *1T* 234, 236

- 1860s Marion Party. Desmond Ford preaches in their churches.

- 1860s Hope-of-Israel Party

- *April 12, 1861 – May 9, 1865 American Civil War*

- 1863 new simplified prophetic chart

- 1863 J. White writes an article against the 2520; released January 1864 in the *RH*

- 1863, May 23, establishing a church organization¹ in Battle Creek (MI); 1Sam 8, 12:17, Os 13:11

"God has a church. It is not the great cathedral, neither is it the national establishment, neither is it the various denominations; it is the people who love God and keep His commandments. 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them' (Matthew 18:20). Where Christ is even among the humble few, this is Christ's church, for the presence of the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity can alone constitute a church.

Where two or three are present who love and obey the commandments of God, Jesus there presides, let it be in the desolate place of the earth, in the wilderness, in the city enclosed in prison walls. The glory of God has penetrated the prison walls, flooding with glorious beams of heavenly light the darkest dungeon. His saints may suffer, but their sufferings will, like the apostles of old, spread their faith and win souls to Christ and glorify His holy name. The bitterest opposition expressed by those who hate God's great moral standard of righteousness should not and will not shake the steadfast soul who trusts fully in God." *UL* 315

1Sam 8, 12:17, Hos 13:11

- 1863 prophetic parallel to 742 BC: Is 7, the king rejects the vision

¹ See Cottrell's analysis on the hierarchical church system in the Appendix

- 1863 first at the governor of Michigan and later in other states the SDA church asks and gets the status of “non-combatant” for its members that were called to serve in the army during the Civil War
- 1871 George Ide Butler GC President
- 1874 James Springer White GC President
- 1880 George Ide Butler GC President
- 1880s Dudley M. Canright “gradually became disillusioned with what he considered autocratic behavior on the parts of Elder and Mrs. White.”² He rises his voice against the Spirit of Prophecy, the sanctuary doctrine, and the sabbath. 1887 he leaves the SDA and becomes a Baptist.
- 1881 James White dies
- 1883 Uriah Smith expresses doubt in the prophetic gift of Ellen G. White

“By 1883, the SDA had for about four decades mainly concerned with the defending the divine inspiration of the Bible from outside infidel challenges. However, some internal crisis regarding the nature and authority of Ellen White's writings pushed Seventh-day Adventists in 1880's into a more thoughtful discussion of the doctrine. During that period two mayor questions were raised: (1) Are there degrees of inspiration? and (2) did the the Holy Spirit dictate the actual words of the inspired writings?

Are there degrees of inspiration? Administrative conflicts and problems of personality at Battle Creek College let Ellen White to send a few testimonies to Uriah Smith, president of the college board, reproving him for some unwise decisions. **Resentment against such reproves was one factor that let Uriah Smith to the assumption that not all Ellen White writings were equally inspired. By the spring of 1883 Smith was convinced that while Mrs. White's "visions" were truly inspired, her testimonies were not. ...**

Assuming that divine inspiration varies according to the original sources of the information to be transmitted, Smith argued in a letter to D. M. Canright that the writings of Ellen White comprise both the truly inspired ‘visions’ and the noninspired ‘testimonies.’ [Uriah Smith to D. M. Canright, March 22, 1883, Advent Source Collection, Adventist Heritage Center, Andrews University.]” Alberto R. Timm, *Understanding Inspiration: The symphonic and wholistic nature of Scripture*.³

- 1884 last open vision by Ellen G. White, in Portland OR

“On one occasion Elders White and Andrews, and myself, were awakened at midnight, and called to come and pray for Sister White. She had fainted, and all efforts to revive her were unavailing. We had a season of prayer, and she seemed to revive and was taken off in vision. Some of our opponents say, ‘Yes, that is always the way, she is always sick and faints away before she has one of her visions.’ But this is not true. The first one I saw her have was at the close of a meeting, when she was well enough to take a long journey. Her last open vision was in

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dudley_Canright#Controversy_within_the_Adventist_Church

³ <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1999/August/understanding-inspiration>

1884, on the camp ground at Portland, Oregon. She has visions at the present time, but they are not open visions in a public assembly. It is a heavenly place to be in, where there is an open vision, as some of those here who have seen her at such times, can testify." J. N. Loughborough, *General Conference Daily Bulletin*, January 29, 1893, 20

- 1884 Butler writes 10 articles in the *RH* about degrees of inspiration

"The following year Butler, in a ten-part series in the *Adventist Review* ⁴, argued that the whole content of the Bible could be classified under **five different "degrees" of inspiration and authority**, ranging from that which was inspired in the highest degree down to that which he "could hardly call inspired." [George I. Butler, "Inspiration," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (hereafter *RH*), January 8, 1884, 24; January 15, 1884, 41; January 22, 1884, 57, 58; January 29, 1884, 73, 74; February 5, 1884, 89, 90; April 15, 1884, 249, 250; April 22, 1884, 265-267; May 6, 1884, 296, 297; May 27, 1884, 344-346; June 3, 1884, 361, 362]. In spite of being accepted by many church members, these notions were strongly rejected by Ellen White (1889) [E. G. White, *Selected Messages*, (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958), 1:23] and by others such as the author of an 1893 senior Sabbath School lesson." Alberto R. Timm, *Understanding Inspiration: The symphonic and wholistic nature of Scripture*.

- 1885 English Revised Version (Revised KJV), after 15 years by 75 scholars
- 1888 Ole Andres Olsen GC president
- 1888 GC in Minneapolis. Light is rejected, the counsel of EGW neglected, no outpouring of the Latter Rain

"I cannot sleep after twelve o'clock; for matters have been laid open before me during the past night that have been presented to me from time to time since the Conference at Minneapolis. Some things which were then shown me, I could not fully comprehend, but I saw that methods were being devised and planned which could bring in corrupted principles. Some matters have been presented to me several times, in order that I might comprehend them.

The light which God has been pleased to give me upon matters relating to his work, I cannot now fail to understand too distinctly; for the things which I have been shown have become realities. I presented no false vision before the men in Battle Creek when I said that some were handling responsibilities which they were not fitted to undertake. ...

When Elder Olsen linked himself with these men, he perverted his spiritual eyesight, and saw things in a strange light. He knew that they were resisting the Spirit of God, but thought that by uniting with them, he could convert them. The result has been contrary to this; for to a large degree, they have converted him: **his clear discernment between right and wrong has been injured.** [Is 28:7]

From the beginning of his work as president of the General Conference, **Eld. Olsen's policy has been a mistake.** Instead of upholding that which he knew to be according to the law of God, instead of standing firmly as a faithful guardian for those holy trusts which would keep the great he-

⁴ <http://docs.adventistarchives.org>

art of the work pure, at any apparent expense or financial loss, he has tried to occupy a position on both sides. He has not been altogether in harmony with the men I have referred to, but so much so that Satan has stolen a march upon him. Unconsciously he has been ensnared, and his principles of integrity and purity have been corrupted. God has been dishonored, and his Spirit has been grieved." 1888 1576-78

2nd Generation - The Locust - 1888—1919

Joel 1:4 ... *hath the locust eaten; ...*

- 1891 Ellen G. White is sent to Australia

“This morning my mind is anxious and troubled in regard to my duty. Can it be the will of God that I go to Australia? This involves a great deal with me. **I have not special light to leave America** for this far-off country. Nevertheless if I knew it was the voice of God I would go. But I cannot understand this matter.

Some who are bearing responsibilities in America seem to be very persistent that my special work should be to go to Europe and to Australia. I finally did go to Europe and worked there in that new field with all the power of influence God had given me. My home and my goods in America became scattered, and I sustained much loss in this line. I offered my home for sale, and Dr. Kellogg purchased it. The price I received I needed, and it was a small price. I did wish it could have been double, for I had, with W. C. White, to open new fields, and I invested this means in school homes, in meeting-houses, and in opening new fields.” 1891, *18MR* 155

“The sacred character of the cause of God is no longer realized at the center of the work. **The voice from Battle Creek, which has been regarded as authority in counseling how the work should be done, is no longer the voice of God; but it is the voice of--whom?** Whence does it come, and where is its vital power? This state of things is maintained by men who should have been disconnected from the work long ago. These men do not scruple to quote the word of God as their authority, but the god who is leading them is a false god.” July 1896, *1888* 1582.2

- 1897 George A. Irwin GC president
- 1897, 1899 Ellen G. White refuses to participate in GC sessions

“In the General Conference the counsels of God have been set aside, and the counsels and wisdom of men have been relied upon. God has seen this, and He is displeased. **The General Conference--what is it?** what does it comprehend? Is it a General Conference, or is it something wrapped up and called by that name? With the exception of a limited number, the people who ought to know are not intelligent in regard to its workings. A few have managed matters according to their own judgment, and the people at large know scarcely anything of what is being done at the heart of the work, only as it is represented by the men who have not set the Lord ever before them.” Manuscript 66, 1898, *17MR* 221

- Late 1890s “Holy Flesh movement”, inspired by Ballenger’s ideas, “combined enthusiastic forms of worship with millenarian ideas about the perfectibility of human nature. Recent research suggests

that the movement shaped Adventist attitudes towards charismatic religious experiences and worship styles for a century after.”⁵

- 1898 Ludwig Richard Conradi: *Die Weissagung Daniels oder die Weltgeschichte im Lichte der Bibel*. First time the “new view” of “the daily” written down in a book
- 1900s Albion F. Ballenger “started teaching a ‘new theology’ on salvation in Christ, and also that legal justification—universal forgiveness—has already been given to all men. He then came out against the Adventist understanding of the investigative judgment ... He later was removed from his post as superintendent of Irish Missions and dismissed from the church over the teaching.”⁶
- 1901 *ASV*
- 1901 Arthur Grosvenor Daniells GC president
- 1900 EGW returns from Australia
- The 1901 GC meeting will be the first conference attended by Ellen G. White after 10 years absence. She calls for big changes:

“Just prior to the commencement of the General Conference meetings at Battle Creek, 1901, Mrs. White had declared that there must be:

‘an entire new organization and to have a Committee that shall take in not merely half a dozen that is to be a ruling and controlling power ... to have this Conference pass on and close up as the Conferences have done, with the same **manipulating**, with the very same tone, and the same order –God forbid! ... This thing has been continued for the last fifteen years or more, and God calls for a change.’ (quoted by **Jones** in a letter to Daniells, January 26, 1906⁷).

This makes it plain that Mrs. White was objecting to an organization that had allowed a few men to ‘manipulate’ our work for a period extending back prior to the 1888 conference. She continued:

“From the light that I have ... there was a narrow compass here; there within that narrow compass is a king-like, a kingly ruling power. God means what He says, "I want a change here!" (Ibid.)

It was this ‘**kingly**’ power which had prevented our leaders from humbling their hearts and had thwarted the Holy Spirit’s attempt to bless our church with the latter rain.” H.H. Meyers, *With Cloak and Dagger*, Kapitel 13⁸

⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_Flesh_movement

⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A._F._Ballenger

⁷ See Appendix 2.e)

⁸ <http://www.temcat.com/003-Advent-H-History/Cloak-DaggerTOC.htm>

⁹ See Appendix, 2.a),b)

- 1901 Bible Conference, Battle Creek (MI). Many important changes in the organization of the church are decided.⁹ 25 members shall constitute the GC board without the necessity of a president.¹⁰

“With one exception, from the time of the first General Conference in 1863 until the present time, the constitution has provided for a General Conference president. The one exception occurred in the years 1901-02, when the constitution provided for a chairman of the Executive Committee, instead of a president of the General Conference.”¹¹

- 1902 February 18, the sanitarium in Battle Creek burned. The publishing house follows in the same year
- 1903 General Conference, Oakland CA, with at the main concern “involved arriving at an interpretation of the measures adopted in 1901”¹²

The church again elects a president:

“There is not a single line of evidence in the minutes to show that he was ever elected president of the General Conference until the Oakland Conference, and then he was elected by the Conference itself in session.” General Conference Committee¹³

“And this is just the difference between the General Conference and its Constitution of 1901, and the General Conference and its Constitution of 1903. **In 1901 the monarchy was swept aside completely, and the Conference itself as such and as a whole made a new Constitution.**

In the General Conference of 1903, the usurpers of monarchical position and authority came with a "Constitution" that fitted and maintained their usurpation, and succeeded in getting it "adopted." And how? -- None of the people had asked for any new Constitution.

The General Conference delegation had not asked for it. Not even the Committee on Constitution asked for it. In behalf of the usurpation it was brought before that committee and advocated there because, in very words, ‘The church must have a visible head.’ ...

Now after all this, it was not long before this whole spirit and principle of General Conference organization and affairs began to be reversed again. This spirit of reaction became so rife and so rank that some time before the General Conference of 1903 at Oakland, Cal., ‘two men, or

¹⁰ See Daniells remarks in Appendix 2.b)

¹¹ Gilbert A. Jorgensen, “An Investigation of the Administrative Reorganization of the General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists as planned and carried to in the General Conferences of 1901 and 1903”, a thesis presented to the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Washington DC, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the MA, 1949, p.6-7

¹² Ibid., p. 11

¹³ GC Committee, *A Statement Refuting Charges Made by A. T. Jones Against the Spirit of Prophecy and the Plan of Organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination*, May 1906, p. 26 (www.andrews.edu/library/car)

three men, or four men, or a few men, I should say,' being together in Battle Creek or somewhere else, and without any kind of authority, but directly against the plain words of the Constitution, took it absolutely upon themselves to elect you president, and Brother Prescott vice-president of the General Conference. And than that there never was in this universe a clearer piece of usurpation of position, power, and authority. **You two were then, of right, just as much president and vice-president of Timbuctoo as you were of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference.**

But this spirit did not stop even there. The thing done was directly against the Constitution. This was too plain to be escaped. And it was just as plain that with that Constitution still perpetuated in the coming General Conference, this usurpation of position, power, and authority could not be perpetuated. What could be done to preserve the usurpation? -- Oh, that was just as easy as the other. **A new 'Constitution' was framed to fit and to uphold the usurpation.**

This 'Constitution' was carried to the General Conference of 1903 at Oakland, Cal., and in every unconstitutional way was there jammed through. I say in every unconstitutional way, because in every truly constitutional government the Constitution comes in some way from the people, not from the monarch.

No president of the General Conference was chosen; nor was any provided for. **The presidency of the General Conference was eliminated to escape a centralized power, a one-man power, a kingship, a monarchy.** The Constitution was framed and adopted to that end in accordance with the whole guiding thought in the Conference from the beginning in that room in the College Building." A.T. Jones¹⁴

"The God Given Personality of Men—The man-ruling power that has been coming into our ranks has no sanction in the word. Satan has stolen in to lead men to depend on men, and to make flesh their arm. I am instructed to say, Break every yoke that human invention has framed, and heed the voice of Christ, "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls: for "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." {*ChL* 28.2}

The man who because he is president of a conference dares to take the responsibility of telling his fellow-workers what their duty is, is working out a wrong experience. The influence will be to destroy the God-given personality of men, and place them under human jurisdiction. Such management is laying a foundation for unbelief. The men who instruct their fellowmen to look to men for guidance, are really teaching them that when they go to the Lord for counsel and the direction of His Spirit regarding their duty, they must not follow that counsel without first going to certain men to know if this is what they must do. Thus a species of slavery is developed that will bring only weakness and inefficiency to the church of God. {*ChL* 28.3}

¹⁴ See Appendix 2.e)

Those who bring in this unhappy chapter into the experiences of our work, and willingly accept the idea that the rulership of other men's conscience has been given to them, need to understand that they have made a grave mistake. Their office was never intended to give to them the responsibility which they have been led to think it bestowed. The danger signal is now lifted against this evil. Never, never let men consent to stand in a position which God alone should occupy.—Letter 344, 1907, p. 3 (October 1, 1907, to A. G. Daniells, G. A. Irwin, and W. W. Prescott).{*ChL* 28.4}

- 1907 after returning from his trip to Europe and Asia, Prescott is confronted by Haskell on “the daily” issue

“To many twenty-first-century Adventists, the term and the convoluted technical arguments that swirled around it seems either quaint in an eccentric way, almost like a bizarre sideshow, or esoteric in the sense that it concerned highly technical details that only those who involved in the discussion could possibly understand. Some have occasionally argued that it was, and is, of no current relevance—quite removed, in fact, from the more important central business of Adventist Christian living. But in truth the dispute for the chief protagonists focused on a vital undergirding theological issue that the church needed to come to grips with—the **relationship of Ellen White to the interpretation of Scripture**. Though largely resolved by the 1940s, when debate over the meaning of ‘the daily’ eventually died out, the methodological issue still has relevance, because today it continues to rise its head in various places in the Adventist community.” G. Valentine, *WW. Prescott*, 214-215
- 1908 Rome decrees that America is no longer a missionary country, but a Roman Catholic Christian nation
- 1909 GC session in Washington. Ellen G. White tells Prescott that he was not where the Lord wanted him to be. A week later she gives the instruction to the GC that he should be removed from the Review and send to work in the cities
- 1911 Revision of the Great Controversy. At first EGW is not informed of the involvement of Prescott
- **1914-1918 First World War**
- The war produces a schism in adventism in regard to the non-combative position
- 1915 Death of Ellen Gould White
- 1916 Court sale of the Estate. Ellen G. White's testament neglected
- 1917 Prescott in China, his manuscript which will serve as the source for the upcoming GC meeting
- 1918 Prescott returns from China and takes the chair of the planning committee for the 1919 BC
- After WW I German Adventism tries to find an independent identity from their American Millerite roots and establishes the idea of the continuation of Luther's protestantism

3rd Generation - The Cankerworm - 1919—1989

Joel 1:4 ... *and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; ...*

- 1919, July 1-21, Washington DC, Bible Conference (also Bible History Teachers' Counsel convention in the evening during the Bible Conference)¹⁵. Dealing with the problem of the nature of inspiration. Prescott main speaker. Christocentric approach of adventist theology. Majority turns against the inspiration of all the Ellen G. White's writings¹⁶
- His views result in the compilation of the book *Doctrine of Christ* - first time the "new view" of "the daily" published in english
- Adventist books, especially those for instruction of ministers, changed

"The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a **great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists**, and that this reformation would consist in giving up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engaging in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place, what would result? The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error. A new organization would be established. **Books of a new order would be written**. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. ... Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure.

Who has authority to begin such a movement? We have our Bibles. We have our experience, attested to by the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit. We have a truth that admits of no compromise. Shall we not repudiate everything that is not in harmony with this truth?" Published 1904, *ISM* 204-205

¹⁵ "There have been four Bible Conferences in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination. The first was held in 1919, the second in 1952, the third in 1974, and the fourth in 1980.

The 1919 Bible Conference convened in Washington, D.C. from July 1 to 21 of that year. It was a closed-door conference and was attended only by denominational Bible and history teachers, editors, and members of the General Conference Committee. Although a wide variety of doctrinal topics were there discussed, in recent years excerpts from just one section of that conference have clandestinely passed from hand to hand. These are the transcribed pages from a discussion held during an hour or so one day. The topic was the Spirit of Prophecy." Pilgrim's Rest Ministry, "Analysis of the 1919 Bible Conference", <http://www.sdadefend.com/MINDEX-B/Bible-Conference.pdf>

¹⁶ "Following Ellen White's death, ministers and teachers continued to discuss the nature and proper use of the 'Spirit of Prophecy.' This ferment has been dramatically revealed by the publication in the May 1979 *SPECTRUM* of selected transcripts from the Bible and History Teachers Conference held in Takoma Park in 1919. An unpublished paper by Bert Haloviak, assistant director of the General Conference Office of Archives and Statistics, describes the passionate and some- times heated controversy that swirled around the Bible Conference and the debate on the meaning of the 'Daily' in Daniel 8:11-13. The interpretation and use of the "'Spirit of Prophecy' was the real issue in this debate which began as early as 1898 and continued into the 1930s." Ronald R. McAdams, "Shifting Views of Inspiration: Ellen G. White Studies in the 1970s", in *Spectrum*, March 4, 1980, 28.

- 1920s debate over "the daily"¹⁷
- 1920—1930s Long struggle between W.C. White and the GC to release material at Elmshaven
- 1922 William Ambrose Spicer GC President
- 1925 non-minuted agreement for some freedom on behalf of Elmshaven to release material (Bedoe letter)
- 1925 The Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement formerly organized at Gotha, Germany
- 1928 W.W. Fletcher is disfellowshipped - he had turned against the writings of Ellen G. White as not being inspired. He also rejected the sanctuary doctrine. 1932 he writes "The Reasons for my Faith"
- **1929 World Economy Crisis**
- 1930 Charles H. Watson GC president
- 1930, March 20, a G. C. Committee recognizes the equal value of the KJV and the ARV
- 1930s New independent ministries emerging — especially in the US south, encouraged by W.C. White (San Francisco training school, Madison school, "Speakers Bureau" of Julius White solicited funds from SDAs - "Magna Carta' for independent work"). Just another big problem in the eyes of the GC.
- W.C. White sends a new compilation from the vault on "Medical Missionary Work" to be printed at Madison
- 1930s W.W. Fletcher (Australian union vice-president): issues with sanctuary doctrine, nature of prophetic interpretation, role of E.G. White
- 1930s The Biblical Fellowship established
- 1930s The struggle for the prophetic heritage; tension between Elmshaven and the GC reach climax

"A mayor theological or hermeneutical challenge ... was how to understand the nature of the authority of the deceased prophet's writings." Valentine, *The Struggle for the Prophetic Heritage*, 36
- 1931 Conradi's book on the Revelation is rejected

"The most important point is that the new interpretation of the Revelation has lost the character of an Adventist interpretation of the Revelation almost entirely ... Almost all symbols close with the age of the Reformation in this new interpretation of the Revelation. This gives the Reformation an importance, that to our unwavering conviction of the Advent message, belongs to the end of times." Letter from H.F. Schuberth to Ludwig Richard Conradi, June 10, 1931, AAE, „Conradi“
- 1931 Conradi withdraw church membership: issues with sanctuary doctrine, role of E.G. White, no re-election as vice-president
- 1931 first Adventist school receives accreditation from the state
- 1932 The GC concluded that it was necessary to upgrade the church's educational system. It is voted to establish a theological seminary

¹⁷ See J.S. Washburn, *The Startling Omega and it's true Genealogy* (www.testimonypress.org)

- 1932 the GC votes to have a church manual - something which formerly was recognized as a step to Babylon
- 1933 January 25&29, "historic meeting" with the trustees, W.C. White, and GC leaders for the Bill of Sale Agreement
- 1933 Elmshaven releases "Counsels often Repeated" which was like a grenade. This leads to a crisis meeting which establishes the issues of control and authority in regard to the Elmshaven material
- Anti-Adventist propaganda by Ballenger, Canright
- 1934-1936 Watson wanted ideas from Elmshaven to be "shredded into the pot"; frustration at Elmshaven, waiting for action from the GC
- 1934 Pacific Union College, at first called the Advanced Bible School

Two Mayor Events

“Prior to about 1935 Adventist expositors of the Bible were at least generally following the proof-text method of Bible study. **Two seemingly unrelated events of that decade led to a gradual transition to the historical method over the next twenty-five years, with the result that by the 1960's most of the Bible scholars of the church had adopted that method.**

In 1932 the General Conference concluded that it was necessary to upgrade the training and qualifications of persons who entered the ministry of the church, and voted to establish a school of theology. This led to the establishment in 1934, at Pacific Union College, of what was at first called the Advanced Bible School, and in 1937 moved to Washington, D.C. where it took the name Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary.

The second event was a requirement imposed on the College of Medical Evangelists (now Loma Linda University) that students accepted for the medical course be graduates of accredited colleges.

These two events logically made it necessary for the colleges to upgrade their faculties including, of course, their religion teachers. As the colleges sent members of their religion faculties for advanced training in subjects as biblical languages, ancient history and chronology, archeology, and ancient Bible manuscripts, they gradually came to realize the importance of the principles and procedures of the historical method in forming an accurate understanding of the Bible.” Cottrell, *The Role of Biblical Hermeneutics*¹⁸

- 1935 McElhany and Branson want to reverse accreditation of adventist schools

¹⁸ http://www.little-book.org/?page_id=140

- 1935—60 Historical-Critical Method¹⁹ established in SDA

"But for Bible study with the objective of recovering the exact meaning the inspired writers intended their words to convey, a **reliable hermeneutic is essential**. And what is a "hermeneutic"? The word hermeneutic is derived from the Greek word hermeneuo, "to interpret," which in turn was based on the name Hermes, the legendary messenger, or interpreter, of the gods. A biblical hermeneutic is a method by which to interpret and understand God's messages to us on record in the Bible." 5

"There are two basic ways, or methods, by which people read the Bible and try to understand it. These two methods look at the Bible from opposite directions and often come to opposite conclusions as to what it means. One reads it from the viewpoint of what its words (in translation) mean to us today, from our modern perspective of life, society, culture, salvation history, and the world about us--as if the writers had us in mind as they wrote.

The other method reads the Bible looking for the meaning they intended their words to convey, from their perspective of life, society, culture, salvation history, and the world, and as their contemporaries would understand what they wrote). Then, having found the meaning they intended to convey, this method looks for the divine principles and instruction reflected in a Bible passage and how they applied to that particular situation, in order to know how those principles and instruction apply to us today.

Unless we as Seventh-day Adventists resolve this divisive difference in biblical hermeneutics, **it has the potential of making two Adventist churches inevitable** --one for open-minded people who base their conclusions on Bible principles, and one for closed-minded people who feel more secure with an immature, literalistic, authoritarian reading of the Bible." 3

Hermes

"In Greek mythology Hermes (Ἑρμῆς ancient Greek) is the messenger Olympian god of boundaries and the travelers who cross them, of shepherds, of orators and wit, and trade in general, of the cunning of thieves and liars. In Roman mythology he was known as Mercury. Son of Zeus and the Pleiad Maya. The Homeric Hymn to Hermes invokes him as the "multiforme genius (polytropos) of **cunning thoughts, thief, rustler of cattle, head of dreams, night spy, gatekeeper**, which soon would flaunt glorious deeds before the immortal gods. ... From Hermes comes the word "hermeneutics" for the **art of interpreting hidden meanings [the occult]**.

¹⁹ "Let scripture be its own interpreter our church's long-held to the historical biblical or historical grammatical method of understanding scripture, allowing the Bible to interpret itself line upon line, precept upon precept however one of the most sinister attacks against the Bible, from those who believe in the historical critical method is upon us this on biblical approach of higher criticism is a deadly enemy of our theology and mission this approach puts a scholar or individual above the plane approach of the Scriptures and gives inappropriate license to decide what he or she perceives as truth based on the resources and education up the critic stay away from this type of approach because it leads people to distrust God and his word." Ted Wilson, 2010, in his first public speech as GC president.

As a herald of the gods, presides over **the skill in speaking and eloquence in general**, as the heralds are public speakers at meetings and other occasions. As a skilled orator, was especially employed as messenger, **when eloquence was required to achieve the desired object.** ...

These qualities were combined with similar ones, such as the **cunning**, in both words and actions, and even **fraud**, perjury and theft inclination. The events of this type were done by Hermes always with some skill, dexterity and even elegance. According to prominent folklorist Meletinskii, **Hermes is a deified trickster.**” Translated from <http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermes>

- 1936 James Lamar McElhany GC President
- 1937 PUC moves to Washington, D.C., name changes into Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary
- 1943 Shifting focus on antichrist²⁰
- **1939-1945 Second World War**
- 1948 ACK (“Arbeitsgemeinschaft Christlicher Kirchen”) a union of christian orthodox, evangelical, and catholic churches to promote ecumenical work. It is associated to the World Council of Churches. The german SDA church becomes a guest member and occupies 1 seat with a counselor every 5 years
- 1950 William Henry Branson GC president

²⁰ “In fact, if we take John’s wording seriously, any one of us can be antichrist, if we lead people astray from a genuine belief in Jesus Christ as saviour. ... when the New Testament talks about the antichrist, the bottom line isn’t merely a secret code that we must figure out so that we will know exactly when the antichrist arrives and who he will be. Rather it is a warning to be on continuous guard against the spirit of antichrist, coupled with the assurance that if we keep our focus on Jesus Christ, we have already overcome that spirit of antichrist and need not be afraid.” John C. Brunt, *How to Survive Armageddon*, 1943, 70-71. Republished 2011 by the Review and Herald.

- 1952 *RSV*²¹
- 1952 The BRF converts into the Biblical Research Committee (BRC)
- 1952-1957 SDA Bible Commentary. Writers all members of the BRC
- 1954 Reuben Richard Figuhr GC president
- 1954, the GC publishes *Problems in Translation* which affirms, that the *KJV* and the *ARV* (1901) “Shall serve us without discrimination” (p. 74-75)
- 1955—1956 Martin/Barnhouse meetings²²

“At the very time we were struggling with the eighth and ninth chapters of Daniel for the Commentary the General Conference entered into a protracted series of eighteen doctrinal discussions with Walter F. Martin and Donald Grey Barnhouse, the first of which took place on March 8 and 9, 1955 and the last in August 1956. Participants representing the GC were LeRoy Edwin Froom, Walter E. Reed [member of BRF], and Roy Allen Anderson (influenced by the teachings of Conrad), to whom we editors referred collectively by the acronym Freada.

The three GC participants were administrators and not Bible scholars, and basically proof-text in their orientation. This left them at a disadvantage in the discussions, but as a result of the on-going town-versus-gown tension between the Seminary and the GC there was a minimum of con-

²¹ “On the appearance of the Old Testament, with its handling of such texts as Isaiah 7:14, there burst over the heads of the translators a flood of the most vitriolic criticism since the days of Cochlaeus.

The revisers were accused of being communists, atheists, modernists, agnostics, and even ‘semi- Jesuits.’ Their version was denounced in innumerable pamphlets bearing such titles as ‘That Blasphemous Version,’ and ‘Satan’s Subversive Masterpiece. The Most Dangerous Book of the Twentieth Century.’ ...

True, the *RSV* is not perfect. The revisers themselves would be the first to concede it. No translation ever can be. But the widely publicized charges against it can be shown to be false and based largely on ignorance of the problems of translating from one language into another.

When anyone asks me to recommend a conservative but readable translation of the whole Bible, **I never hesitate to suggest the *Revised Standard Version*.** ...

The public attitude toward versions seems to be growing more friendly every day. There seems to be less suspicion and more awareness of the plain good sense it makes to read the Bible in language just as modern as the original was in its day.

Some of the finest versions have been produced by Roman Catholic scholars, a number of them being translated from the Greek rather than the Latin Vulgate.

There is the *Westminster Version* (1935), the New Testaments translated by Spencer (1937) and by Kleist and Lilly (1956), the whole Bible from the Latin by Knox (1949), and the large new *Jerusalem Bible* (1966).

Just as the Protestant *King James Version* of 1611 has been revised through the years, so has the Catholic *Douay Version* of 1610. Likewise, as the 1769 edition of Dr. Glayney became the standard form of the *King James* from then on, so the 1750 edition of Bishop Challoner became the standard form of the *Douay*. And when the Protestant *Revised Standard Version* appeared in 1946-1952, it was matched by the Catholic *Confraternity* revision begun in 1941 and soon to be completed. ...

Never has the Bible been so readily available in such excellent translations as today. The Bible societies report that now the Word of God has been rendered into 1,232 languages covering more than 97 percent of the world’s population.

How else could the gospel go to every nation under heaven, that God’s truth may triumph in the end?

You can trust these modern versions. Read as many as you can.” A. Graham Maxwell, “Modern Bible Versions”, in *RH*, May 1969, p. 14, 31. This article has it has occasionally reappeared in Adventist publications, e.g. *Adventist Review*, November 1985

²² See M.L. Andreasen, *Letters to the Churches*, 1959

tact between them and the Seminary. Instead, they kept coming to Don Neufeld and me for help in Greek and Hebrew, and exegesis. Elder Nichol required Don and me to be at work by 4:30 every morning every day of the week except Sabbath, and took a dim view of them preempting our time during those hours. But out of hours Freada was in continual touch with us, and we were thus indirectly involved in the discussions.

When a decision was made to publish Freada's dozens of responses to the questions Martin and Barnhouse were asking, we became more directly involved. Nichol, Neufeld, and I were mildly **horrified** at the idea of publishing their more or less inadequate responses as a book which would inevitably be considered at least a quasi-official statement of Adventist doctrine. I proposed setting up an editorial committee. The GC appointed A. V. Olson, a vice president, to chair such a committee, W. E. Read, a participant in the discussions, and M. R. Thurber, Review and Herald book editor, to do the editing.

Neufeld and I were asked to critique the documents in detail in order to bring them into more acceptable form." *Cottrell*

- 1957 *Questions on Doctrine* published
- 1957 Revision of *Bible Readings*, the "Daniel Committee"
- 1959 *The Living Witness* published by "Review and Herald Publishing". James White contradicts the "completed atonement" version of *QOD*. Figuhr orders the destruction of the book²³
- 1966 *RSV* Catholic Edition
- 1966 Robert H. Pierson president of the GC
- 1967 "Association of Adventist Forums" (AAF) founded by graduate students

"The organization originated in the 1960s under the name 'Association of Adventist Forums', when more Adventists began to attend non-Adventist universities and colleges. The decade was known for social change and challenging of traditional ideas. They applied the critical thinking learned at those places of study, and which was prevalent at the time, to the Adventist church's beliefs and practices. Many of these graduate students began meeting together with other like-minded individuals for discussion and fellowship. These groups eventually unified to form the Association of Adventist Forums after meeting with church leaders in 1967." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adventist_Forums²⁴

"A group of intellectuals who seek to tear down the pillars of the faith." Richard C. Osborne²⁵

- 1968 the Northern European Division request the GC to permit the ordination as ministers of woman in Finland

²³ "When Elder Figuhr read the statement in the *Living Witness* that the atonement was not made on the cross, he ordered the books that had already been bound destroyed. Several hundred books that had already been shipped out, were also destroyed, as well as 2000 signatures that had not yet been bound. The financial loss would be worthwhile.... It was necessary that a whole signature of 16 pages be replaced with corrected material." M.L. Andreasen, *Letters to the Churches*

²⁴ Osborne states it's founding date in 1968. "The Establishment of the Adventist Forum", in *Spectrum*, Number 4, Vol 10, March 4, 1980, 42.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

- 1969 *Spectrum* magazine

“*Spectrum* is the official publication of Adventist Forums and a non-official publication of the Adventist church, published four times a year. It was established ‘to encourage Seventh-day Adventist participation in the discussion of contemporary issues from a Christian viewpoint, to look without prejudice at all sides of a subject, to evaluate the merits of diverse views, and to foster intellectual and cultural growth.’” [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spectrum_\(magazine\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spectrum_(magazine)) book editor, to do the editing.

“... The greatest accomplishment of the AAF has been the publication of nine volumes of SPECTRUM, providing an outlet for the most creative thought within Adventism . . . I am sure that future denominational historians will view the appearance of SPECTRUM as a major step toward the intellectual maturation of the church, when for the first time since the nineteenth century thoughtful Adventists could critically examine their church’s ideology and institutions.” Richard C. Osborne²⁶

“SPECTRUM has been essential for the development of Ellen White studies.” Donald R. McAdams²⁷

- 1969—1979 "Decade of Obscurantism" (Cottrell)²⁸

²⁶ Richard C. Osborne, “The Establishment of the Adventist Forum”, in *Spectrum*, Number 4, Vol 10, March 4, 1980, 42.

²⁷ Donald R. McAdams, “Shifting Views of Inspiration: Ellen G. White Studies in the 1970s”, in *Spectrum*, Number 4, Vol 10, March 4, 1980, 27.

²⁸ “The years 1969 to 1979 witnessed a major reorientation of the corporate, official hermeneutical processes of the church, both as to policy and procedure, unique in the history of the church. The changes that took place during those years earned for them the title, Decade of Obscurantism. A re- view of those changes is essential to an accurate understanding of the biblical-theological-doctrinal climate in the church from 1979 to the present.

In conducting such a review it is important to bear in mind a clear distinction between the two basic methods of reading and understanding the Bible: {1} the prooftext method, with what its words mean to the modern reader from his perspective in time, as normative for interpretation, and {2} the historical method, with the meaning the inspired writer, guided by the Holy Spirit, intended his words to convey, as normative.

A review of events during the decade of obscurantism would not be possible or intelligible without mentioning the names of the persons involved. Would it be possible to give a meaningful account of World War II without mentioning such names as Adolph Hitler, Winston Churchill, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Stalin? Would it be possible to present a clear picture of the age-long conflict between good and evil in the universe without ever mentioning Jesus Christ or Lucifer?” Raymond F. Cottrell, “Adventist Biblical Interpretation in the Twentieth Century”, in his paper *The Role of Biblical Hermeneutics in Preserving Unity in the Church*, March 1996, 12.

- 1970 A “new era in the study of Ellen White”²⁹. For the first time Adventist scholars begin to “examine critically her [Ellen G. White’s] writings and to share their conclusions with the community of Adventist intellectuals.”³⁰
- 1971 *Movement of Destiny* by LeRoy Edwin Froom. Explains righteousness by faith on the foundations of *QOD*. Pierson responds 1975 with *We Still Believe*
- 1973 a committee at Camp Mohaven voted to recommend the ordination of women elders on a restricted, experimental basis (*WM* 888³¹)
- 1974 Ron Graybill finds the transcripts of the 1919 GC
- 1975 The BRC metamorphoses into the BRI
- Mid-1970s Homosexual Adventists rise their voice³²
- 1976 Ronald L. Numbers writes his study about Ellen G. White’s use of material for her (health) statements: *Prophetess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White*
- 1977 Dr. B.B. Beach presents a gold medal to the pope
 “Rome never changes. Her principles have not altered in the least. She has not lessened the breach between herself and Protestants; they have done all the advancing. But what does this argue for

²⁹ “A more fundamental reason for the critical work done in the 1970s is that, considering the historical development of Adventism, it was inevitable. A religious or revolutionary movement that becomes a historical force must have a **first generation** of leaders we might call founding fathers. The founding fathers endure opposition, privation, suffering, and, in the face of great odds, create a revolution, establish a new nation or create a religious movement. They are characterized by tremendous energy, unswerving commitment to a goal and the charisma to translate theory into practice.

It is the task of the **second-generation** leaders to, hold the movement together without the charisma and prestige of the founding fathers. Faced with the possibility of disintegration, the second-generation leaders elevate the symbol of the movement onto a lofty pedestal and claim great virtue, wisdom and authority for the now-dead founder. Nothing gives the second-generation leaders more authority than to claim all wisdom for the founder and claim for themselves the exclusive right to interpret his legacy.

But, inevitably, a **third generation** arises - a generation that has been reared in what is no longer a young and struggling movement, but a well-established and apparently indestructible party, nation or church. Secure in the stability and strength of the organization, the third generation will commence the critical examination of the movement’s origin. If this paradigm is even a little accurate, by 1970 the time had come for Adventists to conduct a critical examination of Ellen White’s spiritual gift.

There were, of course, questions about Ellen White before 1970. From the time of her first vision in December 1844 until her death in July 1915, the originality and authority of Ellen White’s writings were debated frequently. Occasionally, the debate became bitter and public as the names D. M. Canright, John Harvey Kellogg and A. T. Jones remind us. **But the examination of Ellen White’s gift that took place before her death came not from believing scholars seeking to understand how God’s Spirit had worked in her life.** The critics were either active participants in the political life of the church, making points in a struggle for power, or bitter apostates.” Donald R. McAdams, “Shifting Views of Inspiration: Ellen G. White Studies in the 1970s”, in *Spectrum*, Number 4, Vol 10, March 4, 1980, 27-28.

³⁰ Donald R. McAdams, “Shifting Views of Inspiration: Ellen G. White Studies in the 1970s”, in *Spectrum*, Number 4, Vol 10, March 4, 1980, 27.

³¹ <http://www.sdadefend.com/MINDEX-U-Z/NAD-women-past.pdf>

³² “In the mid-’70s, a significant number of homosexuals, currently and formerly Seventh-day Adventists, responded to classified ads placed by a few Adventists in widely circulated gay magazines and newspapers. ‘Am I the only gay Seventh-day Adventist?’ asked one. The response was so overwhelming that the one who placed the ad could not find time to answer all the letters.” *Spectrum*, April 1982, p. 32

the Protestantism of this day? It is the rejection of Bible truth which makes men approach to infidelity. **It is a backsliding church that lessens the distance between itself and the Papacy.**" *ST*, February 19, 1894

- 1977 Beginning of "Kinship" with a meeting by gay Adventist in Palm Desert, CA
- 1979 Neil C. Wilson GC President

"Although it is true that there was a period in the life of the Seventh-day Adventist Church when the denomination took a distinctly anti-Roman Catholic viewpoint ... that attitude on the church's part was nothing more than a manifestation of widespread anti-papery among conservative protestant denominations in the early part of this century and the latter part of the last, and which has now been **consigned to the historical trash heap** so far as the Seventh-day Adventist church is concerned." Wilson statement at *Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (US Government) vs Pacific Press Publishing Association (SDA Church)*, Civ #74-2025 CBR, Reply Brief for Defendants, 4

- Results of "the daily" crisis in the previous decades:

"This monstrous absurdity [the 'new view' of the daily] in the very pillar of Adventist theology eventually led to serious hemorrhaging in the 1980s. Theologians could no longer keep their cognitive dissonance secret from their employers. Desmond Ford and Ray Cottrell went public with their discontent but were careful to blunt the impact of the problem by offering solutions such as the "apotelesmatic" principle and context by divine fiat, respectively. Others were more relentless in their logic. Robert Brinsmead rejected 1844 as having any prophetic significance whatsoever.

By the time that 1844 was openly questioned and rejected by many Adventists in the 1980s, however, it appears that they were only carrying the "new view" of 1910 to its logical end. Robert Wieland, one of the few surviving "old view" advocates, sees a clear relationship between the two events:

Many have not pursued Conradi's view to its logical end. But some of our astute scholars have, and it has proved a short circuit that makes Antiochus Epiphanes of 168 B.C. to be the necessary 'primary' fulfillment of the Dan. 8 prophecy. In their scheme, there is no room for an 1844 application except by a contrived 'secondary' or 'apotelesmatic' fulfillment. This is seen as a 'face-saving' accommodation openly ridiculed by non-Adventist theologians and now by some of our own, built on Ellen White. (*Have We Followed 'Cunningly Devised Fables'*, an undated outline of a proposed thought paper).

The history of the 'daily' in the Seventh-day Adventist church seems to Verify Washburn's and Wieland's conviction that the 'taking away' of Adventism's pagan platform seriously compromised, if it did not **destroy, the entire 1844 foundation.** A logical analysis of the implications of Miller's "paganism" would certainly seem to lead one to endorse the verdict of history. It would appear that when the church abandoned 'paganism' in 1910, it also unwittingly abandoned 1844, without which Adventism may have no reason to exist. Have not our Adventists progenitors, by their forced mating of the 'new view' of 'the daily' with 1844, set up the abomination of amalga-

mation in the sanctuary?” Dennis Hokama, “Does 1844 Have a Pagan Foundation?” in *Adventist Currents*, March 1987, 22-29.

- 1980 GC Dallas, the 27 “Statements of Belief” approved. It was drafted by the theological Seminary teachers of Andrews University
- 1980 August, homosexual “Kampmeeting” attended by 35 Adventist scholars and pastors³³
- 1981 March, “Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc.” established in California, USA - “An Organization for Gay Seventh-day Adventists and their Friends”³⁴
- 1982, April, magazines *SDA Kinship* and *Spectrum* (Vol 12, No 3) issue nine requests by “SDA Kinship” to the SDA church
- 1984 the Potomac Conference authorizes women pastors to baptize (*WM 888*)

³³ “What began to be clear, as the theologians got into their presentations, was that a simplistic English reading of the few scriptural references to homosexual acts would not suffice to determine the Lord's will for homosexual persons today. ... All freely conceded that their studies were not yet complete and that some questions might never have absolute answers.

Lawrence Geraty [scholar and professor of archeology and history of antiquity at the seminary] undertook to examine the scriptural references to homosexuality in the area of his expertise — the Old Testament. Pejorative references there to homosexual acts, said Geraty, ‘may not be so hard to understand, but how they apply can be learned only in the human situation.’ According to Geraty, the Sodom story, for example, clearly refers to sexual acts, but the acts seem primarily to stem not from homosexual passion but from intent to degrade Lot's angelic visitors to the lowly level of women, who were then considered little more than chattels. Repeated references in both Old and New Testaments condemn Sodom for its inhospitality, said Geraty, while little or no explicit reference is made to its sexual sins.

References to homosexual acts in the Levitical ‘holiness code’ have been read by religious people to make moral judgment against those acts. However, noted Geraty, other parts of the same code, such as rules against sexual intercourse during menstruation and against mixing dissimilar fabrics in the same garment, are substantially ignored. Geraty observed that theologians, arguing that some of the holiness code rules are moral and some only ceremonial, have justified these divisions of the Levitical admonitions, but that a careful biblical scholar wouldn't divide them in this fashion. If any can be ignored, perhaps none should be considered binding.

Geraty's bottom-line conclusion: that the Old Testament *by itself* (without the counsel of the New Testament and a contemporary theology of sexuality based on the whole testimony of scripture) is not sufficient to settle the question of the morality of homosexual relationships in today's world. ...

James Cox [professor of NT at the SDA seminary, later president of Avondale College in Australia] began his presentation with a remarkably concise statement that there are no terms either in Old Testament Hebrew or New Testament Greek that precisely equal our English words ‘homosexuality’ or ‘heterosexuality.’ In fact, Cox asserted, there is no discussion in scripture of homosexual orientation. ... Cox closed his presentation by noting that neither Jesus nor Ellen White said anything explicitly about the issue of the morality of homosexuality. Perhaps, Cox suggested, a question worth exploring is how to be sexually responsible.

The camp meeting ended with emotional statements by both “clergy” and Kinship members that much distance between them had been closed and that suspicions had been laid to rest.” *Spectrum*, April 1982, 35-36

Ex-homosexual Colin Cook (counselor at the Green Hills Health Center in Reading, Pennsylvania) was asked if “he is never attracted to men now? ‘Sometimes,’ he admitted freely.” *Spectrum*, April 1982, 34

See the official's report in the Appendix 5.a)

³⁴ “A significant number are denominational employees, most of whom, understandably, use pseudonyms in their relationship to Kinship. Almost all are or have been Seventh-day Adventist church members. Several are friends of Adventists and would become church members except for what they perceive to be the church's negative attitude toward their homosexuality.” *Spectrum*, April 1982, p.33

- 1985 New Seventh day Adventist Hymnal. The “Responsive Scripture Readings” for corporate worship are taken from eight Bible versions³⁵
- 1986 The Southeastern California Conference allows woman pastors to baptize - besides a Annual Conference disapproval in 1985 (*WM 888*)
- Commission on the Role of Women at the GC
 - 1988 2nd session of the Commission on the Role of Women, Cohutta Springs (Georgia). Compromise statement by a GC official: “women are not to be ordained to the gospel ministry; but each world division, at its own discretion, can authorize Seminary-trained women who were local elders to ‘perform essentially all the functions’ of the ordained minister in their local churches.” (*WM888*, p.3)

³⁵ The NIV (catholic) is used 68 times, the Jerusalem Bible 38 times, the NKJV 34 times, RSV 28 times, NEB 22 times, TEV 15 times, KJV 14 times, and the NASB 3 times. See H.H. Meyers, *With Cloak and Dagger*, ch.25

4th Generation - The Caterpillar - 1989—Sunday Law

Joel 1:4 ... *and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten.*

- With the fall of communism in 1989 Dan 11:40b is fulfilled and the time of the end for the last generation begins
- 1989 “The Women’s Commission” was appointed by the GC, the Cohutta Springs recommendation on woman’s ordination approved
- 1990 Indianapolis GC, woman’s ordination recommendation voted³⁶
- 1990 Robert S. Folkenberg GC President
- 1993 the SDA is “falling away”
“...if he was taught that the Pope is the anti-christ, I think that would be a misunderstanding. I don't feel that's what we as a church believe. ... [the anti-christ], that's not a person. That's not an individual.” Kenneth Cox, representing the SDA church on WTGL TV interview, February 8
- 1994-1998 bilateral theological meetings in order to achieve a better mutual understanding (approved 1993 by the GC of SDA and the LWF -Lutheran World Federation- Council)³⁷. SDA accepted as free church, not a sect. Lutherans are welcomed to participate in Adventist communion services
- 1995 Utrecht GC, vote against woman’s ordination. Nevertheless within less than a month after that decision, the Sligo Church and La Sierra University Church ordain several women pastors. The NAD appoints a commission to seek ways to broaden the scope of women as pastors
- 1995 *The Time of the End* magazine - explanation of the last hidden verses of the book of Daniel with the proof-text-method
- 1996/97 SDA General Conference’s Working Policy 1996/1997 § O 75 which speaks of “other Christian churches” and recognizes “those agencies that lift up Christ before men as a part of the divine plan for evangelization of the world.”
- 1999 Jan Paulsen GC President
- 2000, February 20, mutual agreement - after many years of dialog - between the SDA church in Poland and the Roman Catholic Church, declaring that “the Seventh-Day Adventist church can neither be seen as a new religious movement, nor a sect.”³⁸
- 2000 Ted Wilson GC vice-president

³⁶ 1) Women can not be ordained as ministers. 2) If they meet certain qualifications (i.e., Seminary training and local elder ordination), they can perform essentially all the functions of an ordained minister, but only within their local churches

³⁷ “We recommend that Lutherans in their national and regional church contexts do not treat the Seventh-day Adventist church as a sect but as a free church and a Christian world communion.” <http://www.adventisten.de/fileadmin/downloads/FINALREP.pdf>

³⁸ http://www.adventisten.de/fileadmin/downloads/Adventisten_keine_Sekte.pdf

- 2001, April 1-7, International Theological Dialog between the SDA church and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Affirming the common beliefs and clarifying “some statements that correspond to earlier publications, which no longer reflect the current state of doctrines.”³⁹
- 2001, 9/11 The Twin-towers fall; the 3rd Woe comes into history as being restrained
- 2001 the Angel of Revelation 18 comes down

"The opposition of the enemies of truth will be restrained that the third angel's message may do its work. When the final warning shall be given, it will arrest the attention of these leading men through whom the Lord is now working, and some of them will accept it, and will stand with the people of God through the time of trouble.

The angel who unites in the proclamation of the third angel's message is to lighten the whole earth with his glory. A work of world-wide extent and unwonted power is here foretold. The advent movement of 1840-44 was a glorious manifestation of the power of God; the first angel's message was carried to every missionary station in the world, and in some countries there was the greatest religious interest which has been witnessed in any land since the Reformation of the sixteenth century; but these are to be exceeded by the mighty movement under the last warning of the third angel." *GC 611*

³⁹ "12. Q: Do Adventists believe in the perfect atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross?"

A: Adventists believe that Christ's death on the cross has taken away the sin once and for all, and is entirely sufficient in its effectiveness. The idea of a high priestly ministry of Christ in the heavenly Sanctuary states that he makes his sacrifice continuously accessible, but doesn't add anything.

14. Q: Do Adventists add anything to the biblical canon?"

A: Adventists believe that the biblical gift of prophecy has been established in the life and ministry of Ellen G. White. Her writings are seen as continuous, authorized guide, for devotion and biblical reading. But Adventists hold persistently to the sola scriptura principle and teach that the Bible is the measure of faith and life is, by which all other writings, including the writings of Ellen G. White, need to be examined.

23. For our theological thinking, it is essential that we leave simplistic dichotomies behind us, which formulates the human experience in terms of opposites - worldly-spiritually, mind-body, black-white, male-female, rich-poor.

40. Reformed representatives emphasize that the ordination of women includes the service of word and sacrament, even if they admit that this does not solve all questions of equality. Although Adventists do not admit no women for the ordained ministry, because of their Bible interpretation, women nevertheless occupy increasingly important leading positions including that of the local pastor. ...

Participating Reformers: Prof. Dr. Cynthia Rigby (Co-Chair), Austin, Texas, USA

Prof. Dr. Nalini Arles, Bangalore, India; Rev. Rupert Hambira, Gaborone, Botswana; Dr. Arturo Piedra, San José, Costa Rica; Prof. Dr. Alöan Sell, Aberystwyth, Wales, United Kingdom; Dr. Setri Nyomi, Geneva, Switzerland

Alliance of reformed Churches: Ms Margaret Owen; Dr. Odair Pedroso Mateus

Participating SDA: Dr. Bert Beach (Co-Chair), Silver Spring, MD, USA; Dr. Roy Adams, Silver Spring, MD, USA; Dr. Niels-Eric Andreasen, Berrien Springs, MI, USA; Prof. John Baldwin, Berrien Springs, MI, USA; Dr. John Graz, Silver Spring, MD, USA; Dr. William Johnsson, Silver Spring, MD, USA; Prof. Hans La Rondelle, Sarasota, FL, USA; Dr. George Reid, Silver Spring, MD, USA; Dr. Angel Rodriguez, Silver Spring, MD, USA"

<http://www.adventisten.de/fileadmin/downloads/Reformiert-AdventDialog.pdf>

- 2001, September. The SDA church introduces “spiritual formation”⁴⁰ as a worldwide requisite for the education of pastors, spiritual leaders etc. T. Wilson vice chair of that committee.⁴¹

- 2001 commencement of the investigative judgment of the living

“There are lessons to be learned from the history of the past; and attention is called to these, that all may understand that God works on the same lines now that He ever has done. His hand is seen in His work and among the nations now, just the same as it has been ever since the gospel was first proclaimed to Adam in Eden.

There are periods which are turning points in the history of nations and of the church. In the providence of God, when these different crises arrive, the light for that time is given. If it is received, there is spiritual progress; if it is rejected, spiritual declension and shipwreck follow. The Lord in His word has opened up the aggressive work of the gospel as it has been carried on in the past, and will be in the future, even to the closing conflict, when Satanic agencies will make their last wonderful movement. From that word we understand that the forces are now at work that will usher in the last great conflict between good and evil--between Satan, the prince of darkness, and Christ, the Prince of life. But the coming triumph for the men who love and fear God is as sure as that His throne is established in the heavens.” *BEcho*, August 26, 1895 par. 10-11

- Some modern adventist positions and statements:

“If your position is that Christ did not take away the law with commands then you are still the old man, do not desire peace, and are working against the purpose of Christ.”

“I believe that sabbath rest is achieved in resting from my own efforts to save myself or conform to the written law.” - Shawn (Quotes from the author of the *Doctrine Discussion* blog, who is conducting Bible studies at Forest Lake SDA Church) <http://oursword.blogspot.com/2010/03/regarding-dr-derek-morris-and-forest.html>

“As I left that initial session, I sensed that the Lord was inviting me to embark on a spiritual pilgrimage that would change my life. When I arrived home, I read the article by Connolly [a Jesuit priest] that Barry had given to me. The opening statement seemed to be a prophetic word about the spiritual journey that lay ahead.”—Derek J. Morris, *Spiritual Formation in*

⁴⁰ “The Adventist world church created the International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education (IBMTE) in September 2001, designed to provide overall guidance and standards to the professional training of pastors, evangelists, theologians, teachers, chaplains and other denominational employees involved in ministerial and religious formation, or spiritual formation, in each of the church’s 13 regions around the world.

Silver Spring, Maryland United States, Wendi Rogers/ANN, 3 Feb 2004,

<http://news.adventist.org/2004/02/a-feature-church-cogregatios-icrease-focus-on-spiritual-formation.html>” (now removed)

Also known as “emerging church”, “emergent teachers”, “growing in Christ”. “Contemplative prayer,” “meditation,” “discipleing,” “discipleship,” “spiritual discipline,” “ancient-future worship,” “vintage worship,” “future church” are terms used in connection with this. See sermon by Hal Meyer, <http://www.ktfministry.org/sermons/1183/the-emerging-church-and-spiritual-formation>

⁴¹ 2010 he says in his first sermon as GC president: “Stay away from non-Biblical spiritual disciplines or methods of spiritual formation that are rooted in mysticism—such as contemplative prayer, centering prayer, and the emerging church movement in which they are promoted.” <http://www.sdadefend.com/Defend-foundation/TED-WILSON.pdf>, p. 11

Ministry, pp. 11-12. (Derek J. Morris, D.Min., is professor of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology at Southern College of Seventh-day Adventists, in Collegedale, Tennessee.; Associate minister and director for the GC, editor of the *Ministry* magazine) <http://www.sdadefend.com/MINDEX-S/Spiritual-form.pdf>

- 2005 June-July, St. Louis GC, new three-sentence baptismal vow⁴² (introduced by the South Pacific Division); approval of the 28th Statement of Belief: “Growing in Christ”⁴³ (now number 11 in the Statements)
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⁴² “1. Do you accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord, and do you desire to live your life in a saving relationship with Him?

2. Do you accept the teachings of the Bible as expressed in the Statement of Fundamental Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and do you pledge by God’s grace to live your life in harmony with these teachings?

3. Do you desire to be baptized as a public expression of your belief in Jesus Christ, to be accepted into the fellowship of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and to support the church and its mission as a faithful steward by your personal influence, tithes and offerings, and a life of service?”

⁴³ “Growing in Christ—By His death on the cross Jesus triumphed over the forces of evil. He who subjugated the demonic spirits during His earthly ministry has broken their power and made certain their ultimate doom. Jesus’ victory gives us victory over the evil forces that still seek to control us, as we walk with Him in peace, joy, and assurance of His love. Now the Holy Spirit dwells within us and empowers us. Continually committed to Jesus as our Savior and Lord, we are set free from the burden of our past deeds. No longer do we live in the darkness, fear of evil powers, ignorance, and meaninglessness of our former ways of life. In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character, communing with Him daily in prayer, feeding on His word, meditating on it and on His providence, singing His praises, gathering together for worship, and participating in the mission of the Church. As we give ourselves in loving service to those around us and in witnessing to His salvation, His constant presence with us through the Spirit transforms every moment and every task into a spiritual experience. (Ps 1:1, 2; 23:4; 77:11-12; Col 1:13-14; 2:6,14-15; Luke 10:17-20; Eph 5:19-20; 6:12-18; 1Thess 5:23; 2 Peter 2:9; 3:18; 2 Cor 3:17, 18; Phil 3:7-14; 1 Thess 5:16-18; Matt 20:25-28; John 20:21; Gal 5:22-25; Rom 8:38-39; 1 John 4:4; Heb 10:25)”

- 2010 Ted N. C. Wilson GC President⁴⁴. He holds a master of divinity degree (Andrews University), a master of science degree in public health (Loma Linda University School of Public Health), and a doctor of philosophy degree in religious education (New York University).

⁴⁴ “Don’t be swayed with every little simmer new theology or **complicated time chart purporting to carefully explain unusual or obscure concepts that have little to do with our overall theology and mission**. The historic biblical beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will not be moved the biblical foundation will stand secure to the end of time.” Ted Wilson, 2010, in his first public speech as GC president (Minute 7:14 of part 4, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IkZ1cuAS-B0&list=PLB72DA3F3193CCC16>)

Lothar Träder, Germany, commenting on the first public speech of the new GC president Ted Wilson:

“I would have expected that our president would have gotten his leading team into these global changes and formulated a clear biblical message here. Returning to the well-established isn’t enough anymore [Ich hätte erwartet, dass unser Präsident seine Führungsmannschaft auf diese globalen Veränderungen einstimmt und hier klare biblische Botschaften formuliert. Der Rückgriff auf das früher Bewährte reicht nicht mehr].” <http://www.kaleidoskop-freikirche.de/kommentare/2grundsatzpredigt-von-ted-wilson/>

Lothar Träder, Germany: “In his first year in office the newly elected president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ted Wilson, has spoken at five major events in Germany.

In some countries, especially in the United States, German Adventism is still perceived under the “Conradi-Syndrome”. L. R. Conradi, this highly gifted evangelist, author and administrator had managed church growth rates to rival and at times outdo those of the Adventist homeland in America. This, however, didn’t cause his schism from the world church. It was rather his independent direction in theology and church organization as well as his critical attitude toward Ellen G. White. ...

How did I understand Ted Wilson’s sermons? Allow me two comments about it. First, I noticed a *dangerous version of endtime theology*. He never ceased to emphasize the imminence of the Second Advent. Taking as a starting point the somewhat peculiar and overemphasized notion of the latter rain (which never played a significant role in Palestine), we are called to pray for the pouring out of the Holy Spirit in order to speed up the final work resulting in the coming of Jesus Christ. Many will ask themselves whether elder Wilson was never informed about the twofold ways to translate the term that Martin Luther rendered with “soon”, since another possibility is to translate it with “suddenly” or “unexpectedly” (KJV: “quickly”), which accords much better with our eschatology. What will happen if next year in all the pastors’ conventions around the globe ministers are called to preach this message, but the longed-for cosmic event will not materialize? Wouldn’t that create something like a second great disappointment among Adventists?

The second observation listening to Ted Wilson’s sermons is that during the five big conventions at which he spoke, there was a discernible shift in emphasis. His first sermon in Mannheim was very much in the tradition of his keynote address in Atlanta (5). His last , in Friedensau, having visited the Wartburg and Wittenbergshows much more grace and theological depth. Deeply convinced in Mannheim that Christ’s return would be imminent, in Friedensau he dared to formulate that it is of little relevance whether Christ will return in five or fifty years (6). That was a new beat of the drum. His thoughts in Friedensau were much more contextually reflective and showed that perhaps his visits to the places of the reformation had deeply impressed him. The main thrust of his argument was still there, but with less *pathos* than in Atlanta.

So I conclude with delight that **Ted Wilson is a learner like all of us and perhaps he should come back to Germany more often to discuss issues with our fine theologians in Friedensau and to get to know not only those churches with a pietistic slant, but also those in the heartland of the reformation.**”

—Lothar E. Träder is a retired pastor, teacher and former rector of Marienhöhe, an Adventist boarding school in Darmstadt. He holds a doctorate in church history and has served the Adventist church in Germany in many committees over the past 50 years.

<http://spectrummagazine.org/blog/2011/09/19/germany-ausgezeichnet-adventures-revival-and-reformation#comment-104740>

Future Events

- Sunday law
- The close of probation for Adventism at the Sunday law

“I saw the company of idolaters consulting together. Failing to make the Christians yield, they agreed to another plan. I saw them lower their banner and then approach that firm Christian company and make propositions to them. At first their propositions were utterly refused. Then I saw the Christian company consulting together. Some said that they would lower the banner, accept the propositions, and save their lives, and at last they could gain strength to raise their banner among the heathen. A few, however, would not yield to this plan, but firmly chose to die holding their banner rather than to lower it. Then I saw many lower the banner and unite with the heathen; but the firm and steadfast would again seize it and bear it on high. I saw that persons were continually leaving the company of those who bore the pure banner, and were uniting with the idolaters under the black banner, to persecute those bearing the white banner. Many were slain, yet the white banner was held high, and believers were raised up to rally around it.” *EW* 212.1

- Beginning of the “Little Time of Trouble”, the last call for the world

“The last rays of merciful light, **the last message of mercy** to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them. The light of the Sun of Righteousness is to shine forth in good works--in words of truth and deeds of holiness.” *COL* 415-416

“The work of the Holy Spirit is to convince the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. **The world can only be warned by seeing those who believe the truth sanctified through the truth, acting upon high and holy principles**, showing in a high, elevated sense, the line of demarcation between those who keep the commandments of God, and those who trample them under their feet. The sanctification of the Spirit signalizes the difference between those who have the seal of God, and those who keep a spurious rest-day. When the test comes, it will be clearly shown what the mark of the beast is. It is the keeping of Sunday. Those who after having heard the truth, continue to regard this day as holy, bear the signature of the man of sin, who thought to change times and laws.” *BTS*, December 1, 1903

Is 28:14-18, Is 2:1-4, Is 11:10-12

Joel 1:2 Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers?

Appendix

1. The General Conference

a) Raymond F. Cottrell about the catholic and adventist church structure

“In a hierarchical form of government there is a supreme authority to which local congregations and their members belong and are subject but in which they have no voice. That supreme authority is “the church” themselves the people are not “the church” but belong to it as subjects to an absolute monarch who rules by divine right. Authority flows down from the supreme authority to the local congregations and individual members, and the leaders rule the church. The Roman Catholic Church is the preeminent example of this form of government. The pope and the Roman curia are the supreme authority. **In the Seventh-day Adventist Church the General Conference is that supreme authority. The hierarchical form of government is incompatible with the servant-leader concept of the gospel and with the priesthood-of-all-believers principle of the Protestant reformation.**

The principal reason that led the Eastern Orthodox churches to separate from Rome in A.D. 1054 was their rejection of centralized authority in the papacy. That is also the major reason why they have rejected overtures to reunite with the church of Rome since Vatican Council II.

By etymology, a hierarchy is a form of government conducted by priests as intermediaries between the members and God, vested with His plenary authority and responsible to Him for the people under their jurisdiction. As commonly used the word implies centralized authority and stratified administrative levels, each of which is responsible to the next higher level and all levels to a supreme authority at the apex of the hierarchical pyramid. Whether these administrative levels consist of priests, bishops, cardinals, a curia, and a pope, or pastors, committees, and presidents, is irrelevant. The essential characteristic of a hierarchy is centralized control from which authority flows—downward.

Only the Roman Catholic and Seventh-day Adventist churches qualify as hierarchies.”

Raymond F. Cottrell, “The Church of Tomorrow: Adventism for the Twenty-First Century”, in his paper The Role of Biblical Hermeneutics in Preserving Unity in the Church, March 1996, 18.

Here you can find the complete PDF: http://www.little-book.org/?page_id=140

b) To the General Conference and our publishing institutions

In the General Conference the counsels of God have been set aside, and the counsels and wisdom of men have been relied upon. God has seen this, and He is displeased. **The General Conference—what is it? what does it comprehend? Is it a General Conference, or is it something wrapped up and called by that name? With the exception of a limited number, the people who ought to know are not intelligent in regard to its workings. A few have managed matters according to their own judgment, and the people at large know scarcely anything of what is being done at the heart of the work, only as it is represented by the men who have not set the Lord ever before them.** {17MR 221.1}

As I was made to understand something of the management of the work in this great center, it was all that I could bear. My spirit was pained within me, for I had lost confidence in that which I had ever presented before the people as the voice of God to His children. It has not been the voice of God. There has been a lording power exercised over God’s heritage in decisions which were not

dictated by the Spirit of God. Unconsecrated men who were brought in connection with the work have exercised their own wisdom, and have woven into the work their own unconverted peculiarities. Their own principles have been counterworking the principles of truth and righteousness. We cannot therefore present before the people that the voice of the General Conference in its decisions must move and control them; for its propositions and decisions cannot be accepted. They are not in the right line of progress. God is dropped out of their counsels. {17MR 221.2}

Those who have questioned the policy of the lines pursued have been in the way of these supposed wise counsellors' accomplishing all that they desired, and some have been instructed that their talents were needed in some other place. They have been recommended to secure a healthful and better climate. {17MR 222.1}

The Lord has need of faithful stewards in connection with His work, and this He has not had. There has been much confusion and evil working in the Committee and Board meetings. Suggestions have been made which, if men had not put out their own eyes, they would have easily discerned as wrong. The men who have devised and planned are not the ones who should have been in trust, for they were no more qualified to grasp and manage the large responsibilities than are children to guide the steamships over the broad ocean. {17MR 222.2}

The men who are guiding and planning, who carry large responsibilities, have separated themselves from God, and the righteousness of true principles is not in them; and if their plans are not counterworked they will cause ruin. They have been very diligent in attending to matters which they had far better have left for God to handle. In the place of diminishing the cares, they were only increasing them. {17MR 222.3}

It was God who gave knowledge to Daniel and his fellows. Those four companions were united in mind and judgment, for they depended on the counsel that was given by Christ as, enshrouded in the pillar of cloud, He led the children of Israel in the wilderness. He gave light in regard to the lessons that must be unwaveringly followed by those who would engage in His service. But at this stage of the work objectionable influences have come in to counterwork the work of God. The work of God has not been done according to His purpose. The Lord's workmen must have their eyes anointed with the heavenly eyesalve, and then they will see light and truth in its importance and sanctifying character. {17MR 222.4}

Many see in the light which God has permitted to shine upon His people nothing but objectionable darkness. Others decide that they will not be untrue to principle, but when temptation comes and the enemy presents methods of working that are entirely contrary to the word of God, they follow his suggestions and counterwork the very work that God would have them do for this time. {17MR 223.1}

Thus it was that Satan presented his temptation to our first parents. He led them to believe that in disobeying the command of God a great good would be secured to them. The temptation was gilded with attractions, and our first parents yielded to it. Thus the seed of evil is cast into the soil, and by reasoning upon it the matter which once he regarded as decidedly opposed to the Scriptures, man begins to view in a more favorable light; and the tempter secures the once steadfast soul with the confederacies of evil. {17MR 223.2}

Thus the work has gone forward till the tares have appeared. The harvest of corrupting influences does its work, and in the place of the fine gold of character being found in men in positions of trust, there are revealed principles which, if cherished, will bring disaster and defeat, spiritual blindness, nakedness, and despair. {17MR 223.3}

Says the True Witness, "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels." A few even in Sardis held fast their integrity. Their only hope was in holding fast to God, and in these the promise will be fulfilled, "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir" [Isaiah 13:12]. {17MR 223.4}

God holds responsible the men whom He has appointed to positions of trust. They are to conduct our institutions upon strictly Bible principles, in every line, in every branch. They are to educate those who are connected with them. They may be surrounded with ever increasing cares, but if they are looking to God in prayer, if they are seeking for the grace of Christ, they will have the help that they so much need. They will not be found unfaithful in their stewardship in large or small responsibilities, in spiritual or business lines. {17MR 224.1}

In the early Christian church there were men who were true disciples of Christ. They met often together where prayer was wont to be made. They could only work to advance those principles that bore the signet of heaven. They first talked with God, ascertained what spirit they themselves were of; then they could closely and critically examine every point, every method, every principle in the light reflected from the Sun of Righteousness. {17MR 224.2}

They did not accept strange fire. They took their fire from the divine altar. To them holy and just principles were sacred, and by cherishing these they kept themselves unspotted from the world. Ever looking to Jesus, they marked the spirit in which He worked, and followed His example. They gave to others the pure principles of the Word of God. This Word was their counsel, their guide, their close companion. To them the Scriptures were supreme authority. For every question agitated they had one standard to consult. It was not, "What saith men?" but, "What saith the Lord?" {17MR 224.3}

Those who are constrained by the love of Christ will be faithful to the work and word of God. They will not be sluggards. They will not be noncommittal. They will not be divided in their decisions and sentiments. They will be of one mind and one judgment, quick to detect errors and not slow to name them. {17MR 224.4}

In order that no cheap, bungling work be brought into the cause of God, the true Christian is ever to feel that he is dependent upon his Maker. And he will not be ashamed to acknowledge his dependence. Like Daniel, he will not take credit to himself. He will give all honor to God, letting worldly men as well as his brethren know that he is depending upon the Lord and weeding out of his life everything that would grieve His Spirit. Like Daniel, he will improve every opportunity of adding to his acquirements. He will trade upon the talents the Lord has given him, after the holy principles laid down in the Word. And this will give him multiplied ability. {17MR 225.1}

The man who magnifies his own office in working in any line to bind about the conscience of another, be he president of the General Conference, president of a smaller conference, or the elder or deacon or lay member of a church, he is out of God's line. The Lord has been dishonored by the misrepresentations that have weakened and discouraged some of His servants, and deprived them of the opportunity to employ their talents because they will not sell their conscience or their powers for other men to use. God desires that men shall stand in their own individual responsibility, and while they are consecrated to Him there will be unity in their diversity, as branches of the true Vine. But in the present condition of things, if one stands fast to his integrity, he is by some scorned, scouted, criticised, and dropped out if it can be brought about. {17MR 225.2}

Brethren, God has given you no power to work in the lines in which you have worked. The Holy Spirit has not appointed you to any such position. Attend to your own soul's salvation. If you have not that wisdom which will lead you to provide for your own future eternal good, how can you provide for others? How can you give right instruction to them? {17MR 225.3}

If God gives a man wisdom, his course of action will be in harmony with the will of God, and those connected with him will have confidence in his wisdom to devise and plan for the progress and advancement of the work of God in saving souls that are ready to die. The apostle Peter says: [2 Peter 1:2-9, quoted]. {17MR 226.1}

Men who have been standing in stubborn resistance of the teachings of the Spirit of God have been honored as chosen men, as men qualified to run the work of God and to decide questions involving the highest responsibilities. They have been sent from place to place to give judgment in regard to matters which affect the future history of the work. But how can God look upon such a presentation as is now given at the great center of the work? {17MR 226.2}

Those in our council meetings who are Christians will be thoughtful, serious, sober-minded, calm, and not easily thrown off their balance by the sweeping assertions and misrepresentations which they will have to meet, though there be one by their side who is led by the spirit of Satan to bring confusion and humiliation and defeat upon those who stand in vindication of the truth. Positive disrespect has been shown to these men as they have advanced their opinions in regard to the work, while those who have stood in opposition have not given an honest answer to prove why the position taken was not right. A sneer goes a long way with some who are very sensitive, but let all remember that loud voiced reiteration of opinion is not evidence. Let all bear in mind that whatever men have said or ever may say is of value only as far as the Word of God can endorse and sustain their opinions. A jingle of words is only as chaff when compared to sound reasoning and sound principles. What is the chaff to the wheat? {17MR 226.3}

The spirit of men has striven for the mastery against God. The man who trusts in man will receive the spirit and sentiments of men as wiser and safer than God's. But those who trust in God, who can, like Moses, come into the mount with God, will be kept by the power of God, calm and composed above the influence of the boisterous accusations and the shocks that ruffle and discompose the minds of men. Nothing can sway from right principles the men who will make the Word of God their guide. Ever before their minds is the question, "What is written in the law?" "How readest thou?" "What hath God said?" No word from men or from ministers in the highest position can make them set their feet in questionable paths. In earnest prayer with God they have shod their feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace. {17MR 227.1}

The blessing of God can attend only the cleanest, purest work between man and his fellow man. But at the very heart of the work wrongs have been glossed over. Strict integrity has been turned aside, and dishonesty has taken its place. Men have not scrupled to conduct the work after their own defective planning. All this bears only too plainly the impress of human, erring wisdom. These men have no completeness of character in Christ, and nothing could be more unwise than to allow such men to be actively engaged in work that God has not demanded of them. Bible principles are not considered of sufficient consequence to demand forethought, earnest prayer in private. Close investigation of the work and its management is not considered needful. {17MR 227.2}

If men will walk in the path that God has marked out for them, they will have a Counselor whose wisdom is far above any human wisdom. Joshua was a wise general because God was his guide. The first sword that Joshua used was the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Will the men who

are handling large responsibilities read the first chapter of Joshua? [Joshua 1:1, 5, 7, quoted.] {17MR 227.3}

Do you think that all these charges would have been given to Joshua if there had been no danger of his being brought under misleading influences? It was because the strongest influences were to be brought to bear against his principles of righteousness that the Lord in mercy charged him not to turn to the right hand or to the left. He was to follow a course of strictest integrity. [Joshua 1:8, 9, quoted.] If there had been no peril before Joshua, God would not over and over again have charged him to be of good courage. But amid all his cares, Joshua had his God to guide him. {17MR 228.1}

There is no greater deception than for man to suppose that in any difficulty he can find a better guide than God, a wiser counselor in any emergency, a stronger defense under any circumstance. Man cannot act more unwisely than to rely upon human wisdom, to devise and plan when Christ has said, "Without Me ye can do nothing" aright, to venture to unite with men who set aside the wisdom of God as unessential, and enter into plans devised by human agents who are worked by the enemy of righteousness. Human devices that should never have been allowed to come into existence have been adopted to escape from financial embarrassment. These will not help the matter, but make it tenfold worse. We are not to trust to the wisdom of men whose management has helped to bring about the difficulties. {17MR 228.2}

God declares, "Them that honor Me, I will honor." God's revealed will has been superseded by the speculations and opinions of finite men who have refused the Holy Spirit's working and called His work fanaticism. How often have you changed the working of the Sentinel? Will you attend to matters in your own line, and let God manage this organ? The Word of God has not been taken into your council meetings; for had this been followed you would have had your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. You would have walked in straight paths. But men have foolishly trusted to finite wisdom. They have adopted theories and plans that are opposed to the Word of God, and have greatly marred His work. Yet they act like blind men. They work desperately to gather all the responsibilities they can grasp, while they are no more able to manage them than are children. {17MR 228.3}

In your conference meetings there were heard pleasant presentations in regard to the consolidation of the Pacific Publishing House with the publishing interests at Battle Creek. This, it was proposed, should not interfere with their independence and rights, but that the General Conference should be to the interests on the Pacific Coast what fathers and mothers are to their children. These were very pleasant presentations; but I was carried into the future and was shown those who sanctioned these principles laying plans to control the work on the Pacific Coast. I was shown that if this plan were adopted, the publishing interests there would be swallowed up by the methods and plans of those who wanted more power, who were contending as to who should be first, who should carry the greatest honors, who should have the supremacy. {17MR 229.1}

You cannot relieve your present embarrassment by loading down, but by unloading. The word of the Lord was given, "Attend to your own work faithfully, and take your hands off that which the Lord has appointed for the Pacific Coast." And again, "Warn them upon the Pacific Coast not to entangle themselves in anywise, nor bind upon themselves obligations which will place them in bondage to any man or council." {17MR 229.2}

"Come out from among them," God says, "and be ye separate, ... and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" [2 Corinthians 6:17, 18]. We all need a Father with whom to consult. The Holy Spirit has been refused by men who are puffed up with vain conceit and believe

themselves capable of managing wonderful responsibilities. The men who have chosen to be a light unto His people have acted as if their lamps, lighted from the divine altar, had gone out. {17MR 229.3}

For years the Lord has given light which is unheeded. Men may fast and pray and have every appearance of sanctity, but it will disappear as frost before the sun if they continue to dishonor God as Eli dishonored Him in sanctioning wrong influences and accepting wrong principles, and turning from the light that God has given. {17MR 230.1}

To the men who handle God-given responsibilities, the Bible must be more than a collection of syllables and words. The Spirit of God has been grieved from many who have had great light. But is it always to be so? God will not have His word return unto Him void. He will make it a power, a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. {17MR 230.2}

There are men in responsible places who have but a limited knowledge of what the soul demands. Men are placed there who are deficient in many ways. But the most dangerous men in all our ranks are those who do not work righteousness. The Holy Spirit does not work them. They are worked by a power from beneath. And yet these men suppose that they can manufacture laws and rules, build up and tear down, and carry all they can grasp under their own control, without God. They should tremble and be afraid because of their course of action. {17MR 230.3}

If our people were not blinded by deception they would see that these men are walking contrary to God. God has been speaking to them by His Word, through His testimonies, by His Spirit. Why do they not take heed? They have closed their eyes that they should not see, and their ears that they should not hear. They have rushed madly on in their uncontrollable spirit, unsanctified and separated from God; and yet they suppose that they can bring God's people to their terms and under their control. {17MR 230.4}

Cannot our people understand that when men's lips speak proudly and they seek to rule their fellow men, when their resolutions and principles are decidedly contrary to the Word, to turn away from justice and equity, and when they treat their fellow men unjustly, they are walking away from God? Brother----, how could you give your sanction to the methods that have had a place in the work, and which have caused God's workers to be treated as inanimate machines? God abhors your practice. {17MR 231.1}

When the consolidation was first devised, it was represented as altogether another thing. But the enemy saw that this was his chance to work upon human minds. He prepared a confederation that the Battle Creek institutions might be the power to bring under its control all other lines of work. It cannot be done. God will put a voice in the stones to cry out against it. Unconverted men have had altogether too much to do in molding and fashioning the work at Battle Creek—in erecting large buildings to make a display, to “give character to the work.” Piety, true fear and love of God alone, can give stability of character to the cause of truth. {17MR 231.2}

Unless they fall on the Rock and are broken, it is impossible for the men who have been under the leavening influence of those who have separated themselves from God to see and work on correct principles. Unless they obtain an experience in how to control their own spirit, they cannot manage any religious interest; for they are unable to judge righteously and unselfishly. {17MR 231.3}

The refuge of lies will fail. God will strike a blow to deliver His oppressed people. He will raise up humble men to do His will. He who rules among the nations calls upon those at the heart of the work to “be still, and know that I am God.” Men will find ere long that they cannot trample on God's holy precepts without incurring the punishment. The Lord will not be slow to punish those who have had great light and yet have betrayed Him. His eye has been reading the transactions

that have been stealing through the unconsecrated elements in councils and board meetings in our institutions. “Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment,” He says, “in meteyard, in weight, and in measure” [Leviticus 19:35]. “By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honor, and life” [Proverbs 22:4]. “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” [Hebrews 13:5]. {17MR 231.4}

Men have walked contrary to the light. They have extinguished their light, and yet have dictated with their strong spirit how matters should be, as if God had given the special control over all His heritage, to forbid or sanction, to oppress, to speak proudly, to put forth the finger unto vanity, to walk in a false show as mighty men. Shall not God judge for these things? Is prosperity to come to God’s institutions and work by building upon the ruins of truth, of righteousness, of justice, of all that is pure and holy? {17MR 232.1}

Do those who know the truth and have a knowledge of God suppose that men who have turned away from truth and righteousness and are filled with a sense of their own importance, can invent safe methods for carrying on the work? This is what it means, and the sooner this bubble blown by Satan is burst, the better it will be for the healthfulness of all our institutions. When the very heart of the work is diseased, its action must be uncertain, fitful, unreliable. It is time we had an investigation before as many people as possible. All who are helping to sustain the work should get together and understand its inward workings. {17MR 232.2}

I must speak plainly. We are reaching a time when a just standard of right and wrong, of honor and dishonor, of truth and error, is becoming a thing of naught. “Truth is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter.” In the ambitious projects invented, there [is danger] of losing all sense of distinction between right and wrong. Those who listen to misrepresentations are supposed to be acting for the cause. For a long time a course has been pursued which has perverted principle and justice. We need men who will not be drawn into secret, underhand confederacy, but who will shun as a sin the least intriguing and underhand work—men who will call things by their right name, men who are barricaded by principle and braced for duty, be it pleasant or unpleasant, men whom neither flattery, pretense, cunning, nor art could induce to swerve one hair from principle or duty. {17MR 233.1}

It is a great dishonor to prevaricate, to falsify, to come to terms with men because they have spoken that which is not true, for the love of a little money to degrade the soul. The Word of God condemns all such practice. It is a common thing with some to sacrifice conscience in order to obtain an advantage or to be thought greatest. The man who sits at the feet of Jesus and learns His lessons will say as did one of old, “Unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united.” {17MR 233.2}

Those who in heart are not united to the truth pride themselves upon the great show of buildings in the publishing house. Though habituated to handling divine interests, the sacred has no more virtue to them than the common, and they do many things deceitfully. They do not bring the sacred Word of God to their lips to feed upon it as upon heavenly manna. They may talk the most pointed truth, but they do not love or practice its principles. {17MR 233.3}

The Word of God is to be our teacher. It is the voice of God speaking to our hearts. But the principles that God has given us—principles of strictest integrity—have been discarded. The deceitful heart has been consulted, and the Wonderful, the Counsellor, who alone can keep the soul pure, has been rejected. The transactions of the past years should be presented before those who should know the inward workings. Little by little have the barriers been broken away, showing that the foundation of the structure is built upon the sand. The Bible and the Bible alone must now be

laid up in the heart. It must be cherished and regarded as the voice of God, for it alone can make men right and keep them so. {17MR 234.1}

Every earthly influence is weak when compared with the wayward heart of man. Unless the truth is cherished, unless it controls the whole man, conscience will be violated. When the Word of God abides in the soul, the heart is kept as a fountain of living water, refreshing and blessing all within the sphere of its influence. {17MR 234.2}

The lessons we are to learn from the existing state of things in the publishing institution is that any resistance against the Holy Spirit in any of its workings is dangerous. No one should lose his confidence in the validity of the truth, for the showing at the present time is a positive testimony to the power of the truth in its influence upon human hearts, and proves that truth alone is the bread of life. Truth must be enthroned in the heart and maintained in the conscience as the savor of the whole man and the saviour of many souls.—Manuscript 66, 1898. {17MR 234.3}

Ellen G. White Estate

Washington, D. C.,

July 9, 1987.

Entire Manuscript.

Explanatory Note

[The opinions in this document were expressed by Ellen White at a time when only a small group represented the General Conference. After the General Conference was reorganized in 1901 to provide broad representation, Mrs. White took a different view. At the 1909 General Conference she encouraged strong support for the General Conference. At that session she said: “At times, when a small group of men entrusted with the general management of the work have, in the name of the General Conference, sought to carry out unwise plans and to restrict God’s work, I have said that I could no longer regard the voice of the General Conference, represented by these few men, as the voice of God. But this is not saying that the decisions of a General Conference composed of an assembly of duly appointed, representative men from all parts of the field should not be respected. God has ordained that the representatives of his church from all parts of the earth, when assembled in a General Conference, shall have authority.... Let us give to the highest organized authority in the church that which we are prone to give to one man or to a small group of men.”—Testimonies for the Church 9:260, 261. See further *The Early Elmshaven Years*, by A. L. White, pp. 75-94,108-110.] {17MR 235.1}

2. 1901 General Conference

a) General Conference Session Recording Secretary Minutes for 1901

The Committee on organization suggest the following working plans for the General Conference Committee: —

As soon as consistent after its election the Executive Committee of the General Conference shall organize by choosing a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and Auditor, whose duties shall be such as usually pertain to their respective offices. It shall also elect departmental committees, and appoint departmental secretaries and agents for the supervision of the Home and Foreign mission, the Sabbath-school, Tract Society, and Religious Liberty work; and also,

1. A pastoral committee, which shall act as a committee of reference and advice in supplying General Conference help to various parts of the field, and especially at the biennial sessions of the Union Conferences, at the larger camp-meetings, and in the large cities.
2. A finance committee, which shall act as a committee of reference and advice in financial matters.
3. An educational committee, which shall give special attention to the development of the educational work, and the perfection of our educational literature.
4. A committee on literature, to labor for the improvement and wider circulation of our literature in all languages, for the cooperation of our publishing associations on aggressive missionary lines and for the education and training of evangelistic canvassers.

The committee on organization present the following further partial report: —We recommend,

5. That the General Conference committee be composed of representative men connected with the various lines of work in the different parts of the world.
6. That the General Conference Committee as thus constituted take the place of all the present general boards and committees, except in the case of the essential legal corporations.
7. That the General Conference Committee consists of **twenty-five members**, six of whom shall be chosen by the Medical Missionary Association and nineteen by the General Conference; that five of these members be chosen with special reference to their ability to foster and develop the true evangelical spirit in all departments of the work, to build up the ministry of the word, and to act as teachers of the gospel message in all parts of the world, and that they be relieved from any special business cares, that they may be free to devote themselves to this work.
8. That in choosing this General Conference Committee the presidents of the Union Conferences be elected as members.
9. That the Medical Missionary Board be authorized to fill any vacancy which may occur in the representation from the Medical Missionary Association.
10. **That the General Conference Committee be empowered to organize itself, and to appoint all necessary agents and committees for the conduct of its work.**

http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Minutes/GCRS/GCRS1901_ComOrganiz.pdf

b) About the number of 25 members and the General Conference president

From the *General Conference Session Recording Secretary Minutes for April 10, 1901*⁴⁵

“W.W. Prescott: ... This make up of twenty-five members was reached in this way: There are eight General Conference Committees. It is recommended that the Medical Missionary Association choose six of these members. That would make fourteen. It is recommended that five members of this Committee be chosen with special reference to their ability to foster and develop a true evangelical spirit, and that is the very strength of this work; the true evangelical spirit in all departments of the work; to look after the ministry of the work, to act as teachers of the gospel in all parts of the world. That would make nineteen members. It was expected, although it is not here recommended, but the Committee talked it over, that the educational work have a proper representation by having those made members of the committee who have had experience in our educational work, and that In the same way our publishing work should be represented by those have had experience in that work. Now it seems to me that with all this representation on the board, that you would have a well-balanced representative board that could carry on the work to advantage.

C. W. Flaiz: We are glad for all these remarks, but I for one want to study this question for myself. I believe that there is nothing hidden in this, nevertheless, I believe that this matter ought to be studied over by every delegate for himself. I therefore second the motion made by Brother Thompson.” *General Conference Proceedings, Tenth Meeting, April 10, 41-42*

The Chair: We will have the next recommendation read.

"10. That the General Conference Committee be empowered to organize itself, and to appoint all necessary agents and committees for the conduct of its work."

A. G. Daniells: "To organize itself." This, you all understand, means that this Committee will have power to appoint its officers---its chairman, its secretary, its treasurer, and other necessary secretaries and committees to do this departmental work. This General Conference Committee can select its Sabbath-school secretary, religious liberty secretary, the field secretaries, and whatever subcommittees it may think best to give especial attention to lines of work.

C. L. Emmerson: Brother Daniells has just told us that this General Conference Committee will have power to organize itself, and to appoint its chairman. I thought that by virtue of his office the president of the General Conference was chairman of the General Conference Committee.

The Chair: That is the way of getting the president.

C. L. Emmerson: That is just what I wanted to learn---has the Committee power to elect the president of the General Conference?

The Chair: That is it.

W. W. Prescott: If I may be permitted to, I would like to read a sentence from a Testimony that was given to this Conference four years ago in College View: "**It is not wise to choose one man as president of the General Conference.**"

H. C. Basney: Would it not be taking the power to elect the president of the General Conference, out of the hands of these delegates, if this Committee can elect its own chairman? If this is the

⁴⁵ The minutes can be found in the correspondent folder of <http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Minutes/Forms/AllFolders.aspx>

way it is to be done, it appears to me as though more power will be concentrated in this Committee than ever before. I can not see any light in it at all.

J. H. Morrison: There is another feature that presents itself to my mind: There are those who might perhaps be willing to vote for a man to be president of a District Union Conference, or to do evangelistic work in the general field; but these same persons might not be willing to vote for this Union Conference president or evangelist to become president of the General Conference.

A Delegate: I move that we adjourn.

S. B. Whitney: I an rise to a question of privilege.

The Chair: State it.

S. B. Whitney: We have been exhorted with reference to the preciousness of our time; that each of us should be quick to hear, but slow to speak. I appreciate the interest of these brethren in these questions; but brethren, we can save time and labor for ourselves, if we should think a little more before we speak. [Delegates: Amen! Am.en!]

A.G.Daniells: Perhaps it would be proper to say in reply, that the point in that is this: **Instead of selecting one man whom we call president of the General Conference, and electing him to that office to stay there for two or four years, as the case may be, holding him there to that line of work, that that be left to the Board of twenty-five men elected as a Committee; when they get together, they appoint a chairman to act for a year.** It is supposed, I presume, that there will be a general meeting of this Committee at least once a year; that they elect their chairman to act, and he will be the chairman of the board during that time. They can elect another chairman at the end of the year, if they think best. If a man's health or a man's abilities, or anything pertaining to these things seem to require, they can change their chairman during the period.

A Delegate: I would like to ask why yon say "one year"?

A. G. Daniells: It could be one year, or two years. It could be done whenever they have their general meeting.

A Delegate: I would like to have that statement that Professor Prescott read, read again.

W. W. Prescott: The expression I read was part of a Testimony sent to the General Conference of 1897, and read during the College View meeting. It is found in printed form in "Special Testimonies for Ministers and Workers," No. 8. The entire paragraph reads as follows:—

"As a people we should study God's plans for conducting his work. Wherever he has given directions in regard to any point, we should carefully consider how to regard his expressed will. This work should have special attention. It is not wise to choose one man as president of the General Conference. The work of the General Conference has extended, and some things have been made unnecessarily complicated. A want of discernment has been shown. There should be a division of the field, or some other plan should be devised to change the present order of things."—"Special Testimony for Ministers and Workers, No. 8, pp. 28, 29.

Watson Ziegler: I think that in choosing these various presidents of the different organizations, in harmony with that instruction, has been carried out. I think that was the purpose in choosing the presidents of the various organizations at that time, and choosing presidents of the Union Conferences at the present time. I do not understand that that Testimony has reference to choosing a presiding officer for this General Conference Committee.

The Chair: The slips have been printed, and will be distributed immediately after adjournment.

Voted, to adjourn. Benediction by Elder R. M. Kilgore."

c) 1901 changes of structure and organization of the SDA church

“It is not difficult to see that the denomination in its natural development had outgrown the original provisions of 1863. Some change must needs be made. The General Conference Committee consisted of twelve members, four of whom were residents in Battle Creek. How could these few men care for the rapidly growing work, now world-wide in its scope? All the local conferences and missions around the world, outside of the Australasian and European Union Conferences, were instructed to look directly to the General Conference for leadership. It is little wonder that the needs of some fields were neglected, or that in some cases the management lacked efficiency. Perplexities multiplied as certain branches of the work were seemingly getting out of hand as they grew disproportionately and forged ahead within the independent organizational lines of their own creating. 7T 4.1

Such were the circumstances in April, 1901, when Ellen G. White, recently returned from Australia to the United States, spoke at the opening meeting of the General Conference session. She called for a thorough reorganization of the work, especially stressing the need for a distribution of responsibilities. While the need had been apparent, how to grapple with the situation had been a perplexing problem. Now, with the call to action, and with men of vision and faith to lead out, the work of the General Conference was reorganized. First, the Union Conference plan, which had been inaugurated in Australia and followed in Europe, was adopted. This relieved the General Conference administration of many details which could and should be cared for locally. Second, the groundwork was laid to bring the various autonomous organizations of the denomination, such as the publishing, medical, sabbath school, and educational work, into the general conference administration as departments. Third, the General Conference Committee was greatly enlarged and made representative of the whole world field and all branches of the work. 7T 4.2

Some phases of the work of the General Conference were reorganized rather quickly. The Sabbath School, educational, and religious liberty departments were soon brought into being. For other branches it took time, and in some cases it was not until disaster struck that there was seen the necessity for a change. For the medical work it was necessary that the process of reorganization should reach into the thinking of the men and women connected with it and change their philosophy of the great work in which they were engaged. At the time of the General Conference session in 1901 it seemed that the Battle Creek Sanitarium had reached its zenith and, with its satellite institutions, constituted a large part of the work of Seventh-day Adventists. It became evident that its leaders were beginning to envision a great Christian medical missionary work quite undenominational in character, which, as they thought of it, would soon eclipse the work of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination.” The Trustees of the Ellen G. White Publications, 7T 5.1

“Ellen G. White, just back in the United States after a nine-year sojourn in Australia, was invited to attend the General Conference session of 1901, held in Battle Creek. It was the first session she had attended in a ten-year period. The president of the General Conference, G. A. Irwin, made his opening address. Then Ellen White pressed to the front of the assembly, desirous of speaking. Earnestly she addressed the conference, pointing out the manner in which the work of God had been circumscribed as a few men in Battle Creek carried the responsibility of a work far beyond their grasp. She testified that these men and the cause were injured as they encouraged others to look to them for guidance in every phase of the work. She pointed out that there were some men in responsible places who had lost the spirit of consecration so essential to their work. At that meeting she cried out, “What we want now is a reorganization. We want to begin at the foundation and build on a different principle.”—*The General Conference Bulletin*, April 3, 1901.

What took place in the ensuing three weeks is a thrilling story. The message was heeded. Carefully the brethren went to work. Union conferences were formed, binding local conferences together in smaller units, with the responsibilities carried by men in the field. The several associations which represented the branches of general church activity, such as the Sabbath school work and the home-missionary work, took steps to become departments of the general conference. The General Conference Committee, consisting of thirteen men, was enlarged to twenty-five. In 1903 the committee was further enlarged to include those connected with the newly organized departments of the General Conference. Within a few years' time, five hundred men were carrying the responsibilities that prior to the General Conference of 1901 had been carried by a handful of men.

Through this reorganization, provision was made for those who were in local fields to make decisions relating to the work in hand. So sound were the foundations laid, that when continued growth made it advisable, the denomination was able to move without any great problems into the development of divisions of the general conference. In this plan, great areas of the world field were knit together, union conferences becoming units in the division organization." *TM* xxxii.2 - xxxiii.2

d) E.G. White verbatim report about the GC

I would prefer not to speak today, but still not because I have nothing to say, because I have; I have something to say. And the state of things as has existed in our conference and the leading responsibilities are not nearly understood in their influence by themselves or by those that are taking responsibilities in the work. The work has been increasing; it has been growing; and from the light that I have had for some time, and has been expressed, has been expressed over and over again, not to all there are here, but has been expressed to individuals, and the plans that God would have all to work from, that never should one mind or two minds or three minds nor four minds, or a few minds I should say, be considered of sufficient wisdom and power to control and mark out plans and let it rest upon the minds of one or two or three in regard to this broad, broad field that we have; that we are not coming up to reach that high standard with the great and important truths that we are handling, that God expects us to reach. There are minds which must be brought into altogether more lively action than they are at the present time. And in reference to our conference, it is repeated o'er and o'er and o'er again, that it is the voice of God, and therefore everything must be referred to the Conference and have the conference voice in regard to permission or restriction or what shall be and what shall not be done in the various fields.

Now from the light that I have, as it was presented to me in figures: There was a narrow compass here; there within that narrow is a king-like, kingly ruling power. Here the outlets are blocked. And the work all over our field demands an entirely different course of action than we have had. We have heard enough, abundance, about that "everything must go around in the regular way." When we see the regular lines are altered and purified and refined, and the God of the heavens mold is upon the regular lines, then it is our business to establish the regular lines. But when we see message after message that God has given has been accepted, but no change, just the same as it was before, then it is evident that new blood must be brought into the regular lines. The leaders of the regular lines, they must have an entire change, an entire new organization, and to have a committee that shall take in not merely half a dozen, that is to be a ruling and controlling power, but it is to have representatives of those that are placed in responsibility in our educational interests, in our Sanitariums, that are working, and the life in them, constantly at work, constantly adding, constantly giving to the field the talent that has come from it.

And then the comparison that has been presented to me, where the fields are that have been opened; Where are the fields that have been opened here, the new fields in America? Where is it in California? Where is it here at the great heart of the work? And here are the two great centers - where is the wrestling to get new fields, whether it costs or whether it does not cost, whatever way it shall be? God has his treasures that he had given to the work. He has his treasures in the hills; he has his treasures in every place and in every country, and in all these countries, far and near, he wants to be an arousing, broadening, enlarging power. And a management which is getting confused in itself, not that anyone is wrong or means to be wrong, but the principle is wrong, and the principles have become so mixed and so fallen from what God's principles are, and the message has been coming constantly in regard to the principles, sacred, holy elevating, ennobling, in every institution, in the publishing houses, and in all the interests of the denomination, everything that concerns the handling of the work, it requires minds that are worked by the Holy Spirit of God; and unless that evidence is given, unless there is a power that shows that they are accepted by God to impart to the responsibilities that have to be handled, then there should be a renovation without any delay. To have this conference pass on and close up as the conferences have done, with the same manipulating, with the very same tone, and the same order,—God forbid! (Voices, "Amen") God forbid, brethren. (Voices, "Amen".) He wants every living soul that has a knowledge of the truth to come to their senses. He wants every living power to arouse; and we are just about the same thing as dead men. And it is time that we should arise and shine because our light has come, and the glory of the Lord has arisen upon us, and until this shall come we might just as well close up the conference today as any other day.

But what we must have is the taking in of other minds. Where there are minds that have been at work, minds that have been at work in the same tone and in the same channel, they have become discouraged, and they have become confused. Well, now, we can not trust to such as that in such tremendous responsibilities as are going to be handled here. Why, from the light that God has given me, everything about this conference should be the most sacred. Why? Why, because it is to put ideas and plans and work upon its proper basis. And this thing has been continued and renewed for the last fifteen years of more, and God calls for a change. God wants that men of capabilities and of mind should understand there is a ladder for them to climb, round after round, and if they climb this ladder, round after round, why they will step off finally into the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We want our course heavenward. And we want that all the selfishness, every thread of it, that has been woven into the pattern, that every thread of this selfishness is to be got out, and here is a work that, from the light that God has given me, it should stand, yes, a hundred per cent, higher than it stands today.

Here are our enemies. Here are those Satanic agencies that are at work. There is a waking up on the part of every working agency. Let me tell you that the enemy is getting the victory all the time. God wants us to arouse. God wants us to take hold of this work, every human agency, and he wants us to

work for time and for eternity. And treading over and over just the same ground - here are our churches, our large churches, and they ought to be turning out men, educating them and training, and disciplining, and there ought to be those that should connect with them here, bearing responsibilities that should go on into the fields to carry the message into the barren places - that have been, oh, so barren, especially the Southern field that is scarcely touched, notwithstanding the message has come from God for the last - I might say - well, I do not know how many years; it is quite a number of years. But those things have been told, and this standstill has got to come to an end. But yet every conference has woven after the same pattern. It is the very same loom that carries it, and finally, why, it will come to naught.

Now God wants a change, and it is high time, it is high time that here was ability that should connect with the conference, with the General Conference, right here in this city; not wait until it is done, and then find, - not wait till it is all done and over with, and then gather up the forces and see what can be done. We want to know what can be done right here; we want to know what can be done right now, and what power and intellect that there is that shall be brought into this work, and that they shall unite their powers and take hold of it intelligently, and that God can work with them.

Now this is what they want and you want, they every institution that bears a responsibility, bears a voice in the working of this cause. They have a decided interest in it, and God wants that we shall, every one, come into a position where that we shall work: that we will not lay off the burden upon two or three men, and let them carry it all. Brother Irwin will soon be where he can not work at all. He wants supporters, and he has been in this work of wrestling and discouragement until he should have a change. He should have some one come in his place, or he is going to give all out. It can not be. We must have responsible men, and we want men that shall stand just as true as the compass to the pole, and God will test these men, and unless they can show a better idea of what principle is, what sanctified and living and Christ-like principle is, then they will have to be changed and try another.

But God is going to have a change. He wants us to know what it means to work on the principles of heaven. He wants that all of us should know what it means to stand in their lot, and stand in their place, and every soul that has had a responsibility, that they should have been workers, that they should have had these principles, that they should have had patience, just as it is reported "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." Brethren, we all need these letters written and hung in the chambers of the mind, and to him that doeth these things,—if you live on this principle you will never fail; "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Now God is in earnest with us, and he says he calls,—oh, I can not tell how it is. It is contemptible in the sight of God - contemptible. They pause for fear they are not going to get all that they ought to have, and it leaves a man where he can not - if he considers that as the principles of heaven, why, it leaves the man where he will never get to heaven. He can not get in there. The nobility, the generosity, the tenderness, the compassion, the love of Christ - why, they are as destituted of it as the hills of Gilboa, that had not dew nor rain - just as destitute of it, and we can not rouse them from it. Enough has been said, over and over and over again, but it did not make any difference. The light shone upon them, just the same, professedly accepting it, but they did not make any change. That is what frightens me. It frightens me because that I saw unless there was more tenderness, more compassion, more of the love of God - the Lord knew what he was talking about when he was talking to the church at Ephesus, "Ye have lost your first love," and tells them to repent speedily or he will remove the candlestick out of its place. What we want is to study all through John and see what is said about the love of God and the love that we should express, and that love has not been cultivated, and if it is not being cultivated the opposite attribute is being cultivated. Now it has not been cultivated in our institutions of publication, and when by every little sharpness that can be exercised by them, by which they think that they are going to gain a little something, they lose four-fold, yes, ten-fold in that little transaction, until the light will soon be moved out of its place. They don't know when it is for the interests of the institution, but God knoweth. Every one God knoweth, and should come right up to the help of the Lord, and to have a new creation of sentiment. Now God never will acquit us until that is there, until this is

taught in our institutions, every one of them and God means what he says, "I want a change here." Will it be the same thing, going over and over the same ideas, the same committees—and here is the little throne: the king is in there, and these others are all secondary, those minds that are so much sharper because they have not been working on this narrow, conceited plane.

I feel intensely in this matter. I do not want to talk here but I dare not hold my peace. I feel this condition. I think we should hold for the tenderness of God and break your hearts before him, and if you get where you can see these things clearly, you will see that God hates selfishness, and when we bring it into his cause, oh, it makes the crime a hundred fold greater. And when we bring that selfishness in, as though we were going to benefit the cause, we do not benefit it at all: it makes God ashamed of you.

We are to be representatives of Jesus Christ; we are to be representatives of his character. We are so to do that we are carrying out the living principles in every line of action everywhere, in every country, everywhere, and in every place that there is anything to do with God's service. He will not accept common fire. He wants you to take sacred fire that he kindles on the divine altar, and he wants you to work, and that fire to consume all your

commonness, all your intemperance, all your selfishness, all your cheap ideas, all your licentiousness, all this lust. He wants it taken away from a people that are trying to fashion a people to stand in the last great conflict, which is just before us. Self must be hid in God, and when self is hid in God, then will the Lord God appear, and not self. He will appear as the great worker, and when you think to improve upon God's plans by your narrowness, by your conceited ideas, and by your planning and grasping and thinking you are going to gain something,—and if you have not learned better than that now, you will have to learn. God wants that these committees that have been handling things for so long should be relieved of their command and have a chance for their life, and see if they can not get out of this rut that they are in, —which I have no hope of their getting out of, because the Spirit of God has been working, and working, and yet the king is there still.

Now the Lord wants his Spirit to come in. He wants the Holy Ghost king. He wants everything of the sharpness, that it shall not be exercised toward outsiders, it shall not be exercised toward one that is trying to serve God and trying to exercise all his power to serve him, that is bringing his tithes here to sustain the ministry. He has a treasury, and that treasury is to be sustained by the tithe, and that tithe is to be a sacred tithe, and it is to be God's tithe, and that tithe is to be so liberal that it will sustain the work largely; each one to act in their capacity in such a way that the confidence of the whole people will be established in them, and that they will not be afraid, but see everything just as light as day until they are in connection with the work of God and the people. I know my husband used to work in that way. He would sit down with this man that he thought had good judgment, and with that man, and with the other man, and with another man - that was when the cause was young. He did not feel that he was capable of carrying the conference when it was very young. But he had these men, these committees, that were brought in from places all around. It was not just in Battle Creek, but it was in different places, that those that felt a responsibility for the work would go home and feel a larger responsibility for the work. To carry it on in right lines, in heaven's lines, in purity, in holiness, in uplifting, in solidity, to the glory of God, should be that which would make every one of us to be joyful and proud that God has given us the privilege to be co-workers with Jesus Christ.

Now there is all that power that was pledged to us when we pledged ourselves to God. That power that all the provision was made in heaven, all the facilities, all the riches of the grace of God was to be imparted to every worker that was connected with the cause; and every one of these are wholly dependent upon God, and when we leave God out of the question, and leave Jesus Christ

out of the question, and allow hereditary and cultivated traits of character to come, let me tell you, we are on very slippery grounds. We are making, not straight paths for our feet, but crooked paths that the lame shall be turned out of the way - and we can not afford it. It has cost too much to heaven to give us Jesus; it has cost too much to heaven for Christ to lay

aside his royal robe, to lay aside his royal crown, and to step down from his high command, the Prince of Life and Glory, in order that he might make himself in humanity, and in order that he might the better combine the human with the divine, as the stepping-stone for man to step on. It was not humanity, but humanity and divinity combined, and that man could step on that stepping-stone, and that he would be on vantage ground with God, because of the perfume - because of the holy sanctified character of God imbues the life of every soul that eats of the Bread of Life and drinks of the water of salvation. And every one that eats of Christ, that takes his word and practices it, should have eternal life. It is in him, because it is in Christ, and Christ is in him. Now here is the way the matter is presented. But when there is a, "I don't care; I am going right contrary to the law that God has given in his Word, I don't ask him to take my word, I don't ask him to do it,"—

Lay Sister White right to one side: lay her to one side. Don't you never quote my words again as long as you live, until you can obey the Bible. When you take the Bible and make that your food, and your meat, and your drink, and make that the elements of your character, when you can do that you will know better how to receive some counsel from God. But here is the Word, the precious Word, exalted before you today. And don't you give a rap any more what "Sister White said"—"Sister White said this," and "Sister White said that," and "Sister White said the other thing." But say, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel," and then you do just what the Lord God of Israel does, and what he says.

Christ says, "I do the works of my Father. The works that I saw him do, I do." Now the works and the sentiments and the principles that we have seen, that God has manifest in dealing with one another, the purchase of the blood of Christ - only think of it. Here we are, the purchase of the blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. You just think of it. It cost his life. He was crucified for us, and yet here is the very instrumentality that God would have stand next to heaven, that God would have stand where the light of His glory can shine upon them in unmistakable rays, and they know that the light of heaven is with them. It is no emotion, but it is a living faith that is founded on a living Word and a living God, and the Saviour, who proclaimed over the sepulcher of Joseph. "I am the resurrection and the life."

He wants you to eat his principles: to live his principles; - but those that are there now never will appreciate it. They have had their test, they have had their trial, they have had their warnings, and now there must be a change. Give them an opportunity to go out and see what it means to wrestle in the grace of God as some of his workmen have. Let them see what it means to build up. Let them go into the waste places of earth; let them begin to see what it means to establish things out of nothing. When they do this, they will understand that God hath his servants, his church, established in the earth, composed of many members, but of one body; that in every part of the work

one part must work as connected with another part, and that with another part, and with another part, and these are joined together by the golden links of heaven, and there is to be no kings here in their midst at all. There is to be no man that has the right to put his hand out and say, No, you can not go there; we won't support you if you go there. Why, what have you to do with supporting? Did they create the means? The means come from the people, and those who are destitute fields. The voice of God has told me to instruct them to go the people and to tell them their ne-

cessities, and to draw all the people to work just where they can find a place to work, to build up the work in every place they can.

There is a work to be done. And we want to know if you have been doing the work, with your committees. Here are the committees: where are the monuments? As we look over the cities, where are the monuments? Where, I ask you, are the churches that are left to glorify God? There are the workers. I thank God that there is a work going on, and I thank God for the medical missionary work, and every soul that shall obtain that education in connection with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, God will call for you. God has a place for you. And those that are laboring for the youth in any line in our schools, in the sanitariums, and wherever they are at work, don't you put one stone in their way! The Lord has revealed that he will work with those who work.

Ye are laborers together with God. Where are the churches? My heart ached when I was in California. There are young men traveling around and around in the churches, but where is the power, where is the power to open the fields for them, and to say, Here we are, not to stay with the people that know the truth, here is a field that knows nothing about it, and this field is to be converted and educated, as far as they will yield to the truth. But the seeds of the truth must be sown. Lift up your heads, for the fields are all ripe with the harvest. But he wanted them to look at it; and he wanted them to see; and he wants everyone of you to see it and to fill your hands full. But these who travel from place to place, and from place to place, to look after the churches, God help you by giving you the spirit of the message, that your souls shall yearn after other souls, and you will not let go until they are converted. This is the work we want to see done, and until that spirit comes in and takes hold of every mind in every conference that they are conducting, that they are elevating the very light that should be elevated,—health reform - that they are elevating by their self-denial and self-sacrifice.

Oh my soul, how it has hurt me to have the blocks thrown in the way in regard to myself. They will tell you that Sister White did this, or Sister White did that,—for instance, “Sister White ate cheese, and so we are all at liberty to eat cheese.” Who told them that I ate cheese? I never have cheese on my table. There was one time when I was at Minneapolis, one or two times I tasted it, but that is a different thing from making it a diet, entirely a different

thing. I have tasted of very bitter herbs on special occasions, but I would not make a diet of them. But there was a special occasion in Minneapolis where I could get nothing else, and there were some small bits of cheese on the table, and my brethren were there, and one of them had told me that if I would eat a little of that it would change my condition, and I did. I took a bit of that cheese, and I do not think I touched it again the second time.

Another says, “Sister White drinks tea, and we can drink tea.” Who of my brethren has made that statement? Who has ever heard it of me? I never have tea in my home or set it before anyone. Now I have not eaten any meat for years and years.

Now for instance some one may tell you that Sister White don't eat meat. “Now I want you not to eat it, because Sister White doesn't eat it.” Well, I wouldn't care a farthing for anything like that. If you haven't got a better conviction, that you won't eat meat just because Sister White don't eat it, I would not give one farthing for your health reform. But I want that every one of you shall stand on your individual dignity, in your individual consecration to God, that the soul temple shall be dedicated to God. Whosoever defileth the temple of God, him will God destroy. Now I want you to see these things, and not to make any human being your criterion.

What you want is this: You have got a body here, wonderfully made, and you want that that body should be, oh, so carefully dealt with. I have seen, it has been represented to me, the finest machinery was in this body - and a good thing we can carry too far, like inhaling too much and swe-

ling out. God did not make these precious organs to be swelled like a balloon. He never made them for that, and he wants every living soul to deal with this machinery as God's machinery, that they must keep in perfect order to keep the brain power all right. The brain must work, and every burden you put upon your stomach which should not be in your stomach will just becloud the brain. You go into a conference like this - you sit down and eat hearty meals and neglect to exercise, and then come into the conference meeting, and you are all sleepy; your ideas are not good for anything, and you really do not know what you are consenting to,

Now God wants every soul here to sharpen up. He wants every soul here should have his converting power. You need not refer, not once, to Sister White; I don't ask you to do it. God has told me that my testimony must be borne straight to this conference, and I am not to try to make a soul believe; that my work is to leave the truth with human minds, and those having found the truth in the Word of God will appreciate it, and will appreciate every day the ray of light that God has given for poor lame souls, that they should not be turned out of the way, and I want you to make straight the paths for your feet, lest the lame be turned out of the way.

Now we want that in the Conference we shall have the ability that God has given unto Dr. Kellogg - I don't suppose he is here - I don't know that he is, at any rate-

(Voice: "Yes, he is here.")

I can't see without my congregational glasses - but I want to say the Lord wants you to make the most of the capabilities that he is using in every part of the work. He does not mean the medical missionary work separated from the gospel work, nor the gospel work separated from the medical missionary work. He wants them to blend together, and he wants that this educating power of the medical missionary work shall be considered as the pioneer work, the breaking-up plow, for the breaking down of the prejudices that have existed and that nothing will break down like it; and God wants every soul to stand shoulder to shoulder with Dr. Kellogg. He has become all but desperate, and came nearly - almost losing his life because of the positions that have been taken, and everyone throwing a stone right before the car so that it should not advance. Now God wants the health and missionary work to advance. He wants God's work to be carried on.

Really, when I came here I did not know what to do. Courteously Dr. Kellogg had asked me to come to his house and let them give me treatment a week or two before the conference, that I should be able to attend the conference. Then came up the question, Here, what about this? They will say that Dr. Kellogg has manipulated you. Let them say it if they want to; they have said it enough when there was not a particle of ground for it. But I was going to take all the difficulty out of the way: so I sent word, "Find me a place." Dr. Kellogg has kindly opened his place to me, but to remove all occasion for talk I decided that I would not go there. Now find me a place. On Friday night I was knelt in prayer, saying, "O Lord, tell me where to go and what to do." There I had been sick, and was still sick - and, why, I didn't choose to come to Battle Creek to the conference was, that I knew it would be a terrible trial for me. This is the third winter I am passing through. I passed through one in Australia, one in California, and I am passing the third here. And now you can judge that all this tells upon my system. Then the heated houses, where there was no more need for having it heated than there was in California; but they were heated, and so brought me down into a terrible condition of malaria, and I have had it here ever since Christmas, and then the very crisis came when I was at Los Angeles, and there I knew nothing - after I had been speaking on Sunday I didn't know anything more until two o'clock the next morning, when I found them all working over me - and I didn't know anything about it, or about what had been done, or anything about it; and then it was that the fullness that I had had in my head passed through the whole channel of the body. And that brought on the bloody flux, and I have been traveling all this time up to the time I came here, with that terrible disorder, the bloody flux. I

couldn't sit up at all, only lie down all the time - and yet I have not disappointed a single place but one since leaving

Los Angeles. I got up, stood on my feet, and the strength of God helped me up. At Vicksburg I spoke twice, at Nashville I spoke twice, at Memphis I spoke once, and at Chicago I spoke twice and God helped me to speak, and then I came here, and I have been speaking ever since I came here.

Now you see I was afraid of all this, and I didn't want to sacrifice my life, and so I said that I couldn't come here. I couldn't come across the plains. I was afraid. I nearly melted the tendons during the cold weather when I was traveling, because of a heated coil running right under where I was lying on the way across from Australia. So I said I couldn't come. Then they said they would have the conference in Oakland. But in the night season I was talking to you just as I am here today. I was bearing a message night after night and night after night, and then I would get up and write it out, and I would get up at 12 o'clock, and 2 o'clock, and write out the message that I had. And it was then, while I was considering these things, that there came messages from London, that they had hoped they could see me and meet me, but now they couldn't come so far, and it cost so much and I heard it would cost from five to eight thousand dollars more, and then I said, "We have got no such money to spare, and if I sacrifice my life, I will try it, anyway."

Well, Dr. Kellogg never persuaded me at all to come here. When I spoke of the particulars, the cold weather, "Why," he said, "would it make any difference if," - the only words he spoke to me - would it make any difference if the conference could be changed to a few weeks later?" I said, "It would". Then I began to think on that plan, after he had gone. Well, we knelt down to pray, and I was asking the Lord where I should go and what I should do. I was backing out and not going. Sarah says, "You are not fit to go anywhere, you are not fit to go anywhere."

Well, while I was praying and was sending up my petition there was, as at other times - I saw a light circling right around in the room, and a fragrance like the fragrance of flowers, and the beautiful scent of flowers, and then the voice seemed to speak gently, and said that I was to "accept the invitation of my servant, John Kellogg, and make his house my home." Then the word was, "I have appointed him as my physician. You can be an encouragement to him." That is why I am here, and that is why I am at his home.

Now I want in every way possible, If I can, to treat Dr. Kellogg as God appointed me his physician, and I am going to do it. And I want that my brethren, that they should unite. "They say, they say, they say." You just put the "They says" right away from you. Watch, saith the Lord, to hear what He will say. You look to the Lord, and don't you look to any human power and get their mind, for they are nothing but human, they are nothing but evil; but you just look to the Lord God of Israel, and He will give you understanding, and He will give you knowledge. But you are not to lean your helpless soul on any other human being. You have got a character to form for your own individual

self, and that character God has given every encouragement should be after God's order.

Now in addition to this that I tell you, the next night - that night I slept happy, very happy. The whole family was melted and broken down. They knew nothing of what I had in my mind at all, nothing at all that I had seen, but the Spirit of God was there. They were all weeping and broken, and the blessing of God had taken hold upon us, and Sister Druillard was praising God, and we all there had an outpouring of the Spirit of God. Such things are more precious to me than the gold of Ophir.

Now I want to say, for Christ's sake, let's unify. Let us put away - we can not reform our selves by putting our fingers on somebody else's wrongs and think that is going to cover our own. God says

we must love one another. God says, "I hate your false weights and your false measures. But he tells us that he knows us, in every testimony that he has given in other cases. It is the Lord who wants us to come into the closest connection with Him. You know He told Cornelius all about where Peter was. He knew just where to look, and he told him all about these things - how he was with one who was a tanner - and here it was all worked out. The Angel of God could have told Cornelius all about this message, but no, God's church must connect together, and the law that God imparted to Peter was to be imparted to Cornelius and all his family. Now that is what God wants, and he speaks to every one of us to come to him, and while we are as weak as we are, because we are crippling over somebody else. Now let the Lord God of Israel come into our place. Give him room. Give him place, and let us begin to exercise the love of God in our hearts instead of hatred. Just as soon as you begin to build up yourself, you begin to hate others. God help us to come into right positions and I believe he is here today. If I didn't believe he was here, I would not be saying the things I have said. But I believe you can take these things home to your hearts.

And there must be a heart work done here. Not doing nothing, but work right out on Christ's principles, and when you work on the principles of heaven you see the salvation of God revealed, and God wants you to stand ready to strike. He wants you to open the windows heavenward and close them earthward. He wants the salvation of God to be revealed. He wants the medical missionary work and the gospel combined and bound up together just as fast together that they will be inseparable. And he wants that this work shall blend, and that there should be a united whole with this people. He wants the talent that is in Dr. Kellogg; he wants the talent that is in the school; he wants that which is in every institution to be connected with the management of his work and his churches. He does not want two or three minds to set themselves as kings and the rest of them to be managed by these two or three minds. He wants that there shall be committees that are holding a part in every part of his work. And then the medical missionary work you understand will be wrought upon a higher grade than it has ever been

wrought before. God wants it wrought. I have seen people ready to. "Why," some say, "why, they have had more than their proportion, more than others have had in Australia." We have had none too much, only we ought to have had ten times what we had to begin with, that we could establish something that would be an entrance, something that would be a pioneer to the work. That will take everywhere. There is no use to shut it down, it will take everywhere. There is not a place but what medical missionary work will take, and it will open the way for the gospel. Now God has not blessed us as He would have blessed us had there been an appreciation of the work that he is carrying on. I thank God that Dr. Kellogg has not sunk into despondency and infidelity. I have been afraid of it, and I have written some very straight things to him, and it may be, Dr. Kellogg (if he is here), that I have written too strong, for I felt as though I must get hold of you and hold you by the power of all the might I had.

But I have seen the work, I have seen the work that has been carried on, and how can anybody see it and not see that God is at work? That is the mystery to me. I can not understand it. I can not explain it. That those that shall have any knowledge of the work wrought here, should be the men that should represent it, that they should stand to give character to the work, and to the higher classes, that they may be reached. And every soul of you ought to feel honored before God that he has given you instrumentalities that the higher classes may be reached, and that the wealthy classes should be reached. You should feel to thank God for the honor that He has bestowed. And I want to say that I want to take hold to the utmost of my ability. Well, I have done the very best that I could in the medical missionary line. We have helped - But I won't tell you. I won't say anything about it more, but I want to tell you we have found poverty that we have had to relieve clear up to the last moment when we left Australia. It has been poverty, poverty, poverty all the

way through that we have met with everywhere. But I thank God that His blessing has accomplished it.

And now I think that for the present time I have said enough. But God's ministers must come into altogether a different position. They must be evangelists. They must be medical missionaries. They must take hold of the work intelligently. They must press the work into far-off places - and it is of no use to think they are doing it if God has given us a work in connection with the gospel, and they drop that work and take up the gospel, then you need not expect that you are going to be filled with intensity because you have not more than one-half of the facilities that God wants you to have.

But the Lord loves you yet. Now let us praise God for that. Now let us take hold of the work in a new way. Let us take hold of the work with heart and mind and soul. Do not pick flaws any more. If I see a lot of buzzards, and I see a lot of vultures that are watching and waiting for dead bodies,—and we don't want anything of that. We want no picking of flaws in others. Attend to

No. 1, and you got all that you can do. If you attend to No. 1, and if you purify your souls by obeying the truth, you will have something to impart. You will have a power to give to others. God help you; I beseech of him to help you, every one of you, and to help me. I want help; I want strength.

But don't you quote Sister White. I don't want you ever to quote Sister White until you get your vantage ground where you know where you are. Quote the Bible. Talk the Bible. It is full of meat, full of fatness. Carry it right out in your life, and you will know more Bible than you know now. You will have fresh matter - O, you will have precious matter; you won't be going over and over the same ground, and you will see a world saved. You will see souls for whom Christ has died. And I ask you to put on the armor, every piece of it, and be sure that your feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel." (Ellen G. White, Verbatim report of remarks by Mrs. E. G. White at a meeting held in Battle Creek College library, April 1st at the General Conference of 1901). *Spalding and Magan Collection*, 162

e) Jones' Letter

A STATEMENT BY ELDER A. T. JONES

At the Regular Meeting of the Sanitarium Family, in the Sanitarium Chapel, Battle Creek, Michigan, Sunday, March 4, 1906, 8:00 p.m.

Tonight I wish to state the case as it is so far; and why it is that I must speak. The greater part of what I shall say to you tonight has been already said to General Conference brethren; not to all of the General Conference brethren, but to Brother Daniells and some others.

Nowhere in it is there, or will there be, any purpose to attack anybody; nor any attempt to discredit any one; or to put any one in the wrong. I have some facts of history to state, and some facts of experience. I make no objection to any one's doing or having done any of the things to which I do not agree. My sole purpose is to tell why I can not do so. Also I should say that so far as I am concerned and as to anything that shall be said tonight, there is no question at all and no issue at all as to the Testimonies as such.

What I shall further say tonight will be introduced by a short statement that I read last Tuesday morning to such of the General Conference brethren as were then in town. When I learned last Friday that Brother Daniells was to be in town over Sabbath, I sent to him a note asking to meet him and the other General Conference brethren who might be here.

When it came about, on Tuesday morning, there were only three present. If there had been only one, it would have been all the same; or if there had been the whole General Conference Committee, it would have been all the same: as all that I wished to do was to state a few facts, and to tell them what we now find ourselves obliged to do.

LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT

In a letter to me the president stated that my "general attitude had greatly perplexed many of our people," as well as himself. I then wrote to him a letter for the express purpose of taking away all ground for his having any perplexity at all concerning my attitude. And as he said that "many of our people" have also in this connection been "greatly perplexed," I desire to take away from everybody all ground for perplexity concerning me.

And since the letter is a simple recital of facts, many of which concern all our people, I believe that what is said in this letter will be the best means that I could employ to relieve all persons of any perplexity that they may have had, or otherwise might have, concerning me or my attitude.

Therefore, three-fourths of this letter I shall read to you tonight: the other fourth pertains to a matter that is not an issue, and is not necessarily in this issue, so far as I am concerned, or as the issue really is. It may yet be made an issue, or a part of the present issue; for the campaign that is being made is a very wide-sweeping thing.

And if it shall be made an issue, or shall be made necessarily a part of the present issue, then, you shall be just as welcome to that part of the letter as you now are to the three-fourths of it that I shall read tonight.

The letter was begun January 26, but because of regular work it was not finished for about two weeks. It runs as follows: --

Battle Creek, Mich., Jan. 26, 1906, A. G. Daniells, Takoma Park Station, Washington, D.C.

Dear Brother: --

Your letter of the 17th in answer to mine of the 6th goes so far afield from anything expected or, as I think, called for by my letter, that I am disposed to follow you there, and do all that I can to take away all ground for your having any perplexity about me or my course. Indeed, if you had remembered things that at the beginning I said to you, you need not to have been perplexed at all concerning me, if you expected me to be consistent at all.

First, as to General Conference matters, and my relations to the Committee:

Before the General Conference of 1897, at College View, the conditions were such that in that Conference things came to a deadlock. By the Committee and presidents in council, I, in my absence was appointed to read the Testimonies to find the way out. God did lead us out gloriously. A change was made: Brother Irwin being elected president. And I was made a member of the Committee.

It was not very long, however, before the same influences that had produced the situation at College View, were again at work. I saw it plainly enough to satisfy me, and by the time of the General Conference of 1899, at South Lancaster, things were in a bad shape again in some respects -- though not near so far along as at College View. In the South Lancaster Conference one day, all

unexpectedly, and unintentionally on the part of anybody in the Conference, the power of God came in a special manner, bringing the whole Conference to its knees at once, and working a great deliverance again.

Brother Irwin stated openly in the Conference that he had "been a coward." The whole matter can be read in the Bulletin of that Conference for that day. On another day in that Conference, the power of God came in specially and carried the deliverance further.

By action of that Conference, I was continued on the Committee. It was not long before the same old influences were at work; and in about a year they had got such a hold again, that, rather than be compromised, I resigned from the Committee.

Then came the General Conference of 1901, in Battle Creek. According to the arrangements I was to report the proceedings of the Conference: and according to the arrangements, Brother Prescott and Brother Waggoner were not expecting, and evidently were not expected, to have even that much to do. But before the Conference actually assembled in session there occurred that meeting in the Library Room of the College Building, in which Sister White spoke on General Conference matters and organization, declaring that there must be "an entire new organization, and to have a Committee that shall take in not merely half a dozen that is to be a ruling and controlling power, but it is to have representatives of those that are placed in responsibility in our educational interests, in our sanitariums, etc.;" that

"there should be a renovation without any delay. To have this Conference pass on and close up as the Conferences have done with the same manipulating, with the very same tone, and the same order --God forbid! God forbid, brethren. . . . And until this shall come we might just as well close up the Conference today as any other day. . . . This thing has been continued and renewed for the last fifteen years or more, and God calls for a change."

GOD CALLS FOR A CHANGE

"God wants a change, and it is high time -- it is high time that there was ability that should connect with the Conference, with the General Conference right here in this city. Now wait until it is done and over with, and then gather up the forces and see what can be done. We want to know what can be done right now."

"From the light that I have, as it was presented to me in figures: There was a narrow compass here: there within that narrow compass, is a king-like, a kingly ruling power."

"God means what he says and He says, 'I want a change here.' Will it be the same thing? going over and over the same ideas, the same committees --and here is the little throne -- the king is in there, and these others are all secondary."

"God wants that those committees that have been handling things for so long should be relieved of their command have a chance for their life and see if they can not get out of this rut that they are in --which I have no hope of their getting out of, because the Spirit of God has been working and working, and yet the king is in there still. Now the Lord wants His Spirit to come in. He wants the Holy Ghost king."

"From the light that I have had for some time, and has been expressed over and over again, not to all there are here, but has been expressed to individuals --the plans that God would have all to work from, that never should one mind or two minds or three minds, nor four minds, or a few minds I should say, be considered of sufficient wisdom and power to control and mark out plans

and let it rest upon the minds of one or two or three in regard to this broad, broad field that we have."

"And the work all over our field demands an entirely different course of action than we have had; that there needs the laying of a foundation that is different from what we have had. . . . In all these countries, far and near, He wants to be an arousing, broadening, enlarging power. And a management which is getting confused in itself -- not that any one is wrong or means to be wrong, but the principle is wrong; and the principles have become so mixed and so fallen from what God's principles are."

"These things have been told, and this stand-still has got to come to an end. But yet every Conference has woven after the same pattern, it is the very same loom that carries it, and finally, it will come to naught."

YOU HAVE LIGHT FOR THE PEOPLE

She declared that, "God wants us to take hold of this work, every human agency." "Each one is to act in their capacity in such a way that the confidence of the whole people will be established in them and that they will not be afraid, but see everything just as light as day until they are in connection with the work of God and the whole people. . . . All the provision was made in heaven, all the facilities, all the riches of the grace of God was imparted to every worker that was connected with the cause, and every one of these are wholly dependent upon God. And when we leave God out of the question, and allow hereditary and cultivated traits of character to come in, let me tell you, we are on very slippery ground."

"God hath His servants -- His Church, established in the earth, composed of many members, but of one body; that in every part of the work one part must work as connected with another part, and that with another part, and with another part, and these are joined together by the golden links of heaven, and there is to be no kings here in the midst at all. There is to be no man that has the right to put his hand out and say: No, you can not go there. We won't support you if you go there. Why, what have you to do with the supporting? Did you create the means? The means comes from the people. And those who are in destitute fields -- the voice of God has told me to instruct them to go to the people and tell them their necessities; and to draw all the people to work just where they can find a place to work, to build up the work in every place they can."

Upon that instruction and much more to the same effect in that talk, you and Brother Prescott and others took hold of the matters pertaining to the then pending General Conference, set aside entirely the old order of things, and started in new. At the opening of the General Conference, April 2, Sister White spoke briefly to the same effect as in the College Building the day before. Irwin followed with a few words; and then you spoke a few words and introduced a motion "that the usual rules and precedents for arranging and transacting the business of the Conference be suspended, and a General Committee be hereby appointed ... to constitute a general or central committee, which shall do such work a necessarily must be done in providing the work of the Conference, and preparing the business to bring before the delegates." Thus the new order of things was started.

The night of that very first day of the Conference I was appointed to preach the sermon. Since I had been appointed to report the proceedings, I expected to have no preaching or other work to do. Therefore when I was called to preach, I supposed that it was designed to have me preach that one time during the conference, and have me do it at the beginning so that I could go on afterward unmolested with the reporting. I spoke on Church Organization. When that meeting was over, I supposed that my preaching during the Conference was done.

Therefore I was surprised when only two days afterward -- April 4 -- you came to me at the reporters' table and said, "We want you to preach tonight." I said, "I supposed that my preaching was over with, since I have the reporting to do. I can not do this and preach often." You said to me, "You have light for the people: and we want them to have it." I consented and preached again on the subject of Church Organization, developing the subject further, and on the same principles precisely as on the night of April 2.

STARTED THE CALLED-FOR RE-ORGANIZATION

In that Conference the General Conference was started toward the called-for reorganization. All understood that the call was away from a centralized order of things in which "one man or two men or three or four men or a few men" held the ruling and directing power, to an organization in which "all the people" as individuals should have a part, with God, in Christ, by the Holy Spirit as the unifying, guiding, and directing power.

Indeed, the day before my second sermon on organization, Sister White had said, April 3 --

"We want to understand that there are no gods in our Conference. There are to be no kings here, and no kings in any conference that is formed. 'All ye are brethren.' "

"The Lord wants to bind those at this Conference heart to heart. No man is to say, 'I am a god, and you must do as I say.' From the beginning to the end this is wrong. There is to be an individual work. God says, 'Let him take hold of my strength that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me.'

"Remember that God can give wisdom to those who handle his work. It is not necessary to send thousands of miles to Battle Creek for advice, and then have to wait weeks before an answer can be received. Those who are right on the ground are to decide what shall be done. You know what you have to wrestle with, but those who are thousands of miles away do not know." -- Bulletin, 1901, pp. 69, 70.

And on the very day of my second sermon, April 4, she said in a talk at 9:00 a.m.: "**This meeting will determine the character of our work in the future.** How important that every step shall be taken under the supervision of God. This work must be carried in a very different manner to what it has been in the past years." -- Bulletin, p. 83.

In this understanding a new Constitution entire was adopted: and that such was the understanding in adopting this Constitution is plainly shown in the discussions. Under this constitution the General Conference Committee was composed of a large number of men, with "power to organize itself by choosing a chairman," etc.

No president of the General Conference was chosen; nor was any provided for. **The presidency of the General Conference was eliminated to escape a centralized power, a one-man power, a kingship, a monarchy.** The Constitution was framed and adopted to that end in accordance with the whole guiding thought in the Conference from the beginning in that room in the College Building.

Shortly after the Conference ended, you suggested during the meeting at Indianapolis that my sermon on organization ought to be printed in a leaflet so that our people everywhere could have it -- for study in the work of re-organization. Your suggestion was agreed to and I was directed to prepare it for printing. I did so, and it was printed at General Conference direction, in "Words of Truth Series, No. 31, extra, May, 1901."

AFFAIRS BEGAN TO BE REVERSED

Now after all this, it was not long before this whole spirit and principle of General Conference organization and affairs began to be reversed again. This spirit of reaction became so rife and so rank that some time before the General Conference of 1903 at Oakland, Cal., "two men, or three men, or four men, or a few men, I should say," being together in Battle Creek or somewhere else, and without any kind of authority, but directly against the plain words of the Constitution, took it absolutely upon themselves to elect you president, and Brother Prescott vice-president of the General Conference. And than that there never was in this universe a clearer piece of usurpation of position, power, and authority. **You two were then, of right, just as much president and vice-president of Timbuctoo as you were of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference.**

But this spirit did not stop even there. The thing done was directly against the Constitution. This was too plain to be escaped. And it was just as plain that with that Constitution still perpetuated in the coming General Conference, this usurpation of position, power, and authority could not be perpetuated. What could be done to preserve the usurpation? -- Oh, that was just as easy as the other. **A new "Constitution" was framed to fit and to uphold the usurpation.**

This "Constitution" was carried to the General Conference of 1903 at Oakland, Cal., and in every unconstitutional way was there jammed through. I say in every unconstitutional way, because in every truly constitutional government the Constitution comes in some way from the people, not from the monarch.

Thus the people make and establish a Constitution. The monarch "grants" a Constitution. When the people make a Constitution the people govern. When a monarch "grants" a Constitution, he seeks to please the people with a toy and keeps the government himself. This difference is the sole difficulty in Russia today; and the difference is simply the difference between monarchy and government of the people; and between oppression and freedom. The people want to make a Constitution. The czar wants to "grant them a Constitution" and have them endorse anew his autocracy and bureaucracy by "adopting" the "Constitution" that he "grants."

And this is just the difference between the General Conference and its Constitution of 1901, and the General Conference and its Constitution of 1903. **In 1901 the monarchy was swept aside completely, and the Conference itself as such and as a whole made a new Constitution.**

In the General Conference of 1903, the usurpers of monarchical position and authority came with a "Constitution" that fitted and maintained their usurpation, and succeeded in getting it "adopted." And how? -- None of the people had asked for any new Constitution.

The General Conference delegation had not asked for it. Not even the Committee on Constitution asked for it. In behalf of the usurpation it was brought before that committee and advocated there because, in very words, "The church must have a visible head."

It was not, even then, nor was it ever, favored by that committee. It was put through the committee, and reported to the Conference, only by permanently dividing the committee --a minority of the committee opposing it all the time, and --a thing almost unheard of in Seventh-day Adventist Conference --bringing into the Conference a minority report against it. And when at last it was adopted by the final vote, it was by the slim majority of just five. And it was only by the carelessness of some of the delegates that it got through even that way; for there were just then downstairs in the Oakland church enough delegates who were opposed to it, to have defeated it if they had been present.

They told this themselves afterward. But they did not know that the vote was being taken, and by their not being in their places the usurpation was sanctioned; the reactionary spirit that had been so long working for absolute control had got it; the principles and intent of the General Conference of 1901 were reversed; and a czardom was enthroned which has since gone steadily onward in the same way and has with perfect consistency built up a thoroughly bureaucratic government, by which it reaches and meddles with, and manipulates, the affairs of all, not only of union and local conferences, but of local churches, and even of individual persons. So that some of the oldest men in active service today, and who by their life experience are best qualified to know, have freely said that in the whole history of the denomination there has never been such a one-man power, such a centralized despotism, so much of papacy as there has been since the Oakland Conference. And as a part of this bureaucracy there is, of all the incongruous things ever heard of, a "Religious Liberty Bureau," a contradiction in terms.

DISLOYAL TO THE ORGANIZED WORK

Now when I was opposed to this thing before and in the General Conference of 1897, and before and in the General Conference of 1899, and before and in the General Conference of 1901, and before and in the General Conference of 1903, why should you be perplexed that I have not fallen in with it and helped to make it a success since 1903?

Why should I, in 1903, abandon all the principles and teaching by which I was right in opposing it until and including 1903? When I was in the right all these years in opposing it, and in doing all that I could to keep it from succeeding, why and upon what principles should I have swung in and favored it just because at last in a most arbitrary, unconstitutional and usurping way it did at last succeed?

Again, in the General Conference of 1901 you yourself said that in the principles of organization that I preached I had "light for the people." Those principles were the ones that prevailed in that Conference; and at your own suggestion these principles as preached in my first sermon, were published for the help of the denomination in the work or reorganization.

But the principles and the form of organization of 1903 are directly the opposite of those that in 1901 you said were "light for the people." If my second sermon in the General Conference of 1901 had been printed along with the first, the people would have been able to see more plainly how entirely the course of things in 1903 was the reverse of that of 1901. And any one can see it now by reading General Conference Bulletin of 1901, pages 37-42 and 101-105.

Now, brother, were those principles light in 1901? If so, then what did you do when you espoused the opposite of them in 1902-1903? Or, were those principles light in 1901, and darkness in 1903? Or were those principles really darkness in 1901, when you said that they were light? Or are they still light today as they were in 1901? And if in the General Conference of 1901 you were not able to distinguish between light and darkness, what surety has anybody that you were any more able to do so in 1902-3? Or is it possible that in 1902-3 you were not, and now are not, able to see that the principles and the course of action of 1902-3 are not the same as those of the General Conference of 1901? In other words, is it possible that you can think that certain principles with their course of action, and the reverse of them are one and the same?

I know that the principles that in 1901 you said were "light for the people" were then really light, and that they are now light, and forevermore will be light. They are only plain principles of the word of God. I hold these principles today exactly as I did in 1901 and long before, and shall hold them forever. For this cause I was opposed to the usurpation and unconstitutional action of 1902-3 that were the opposite of these principles; and shall always be opposed to them.

In view of all these facts, again I ask, Why should you think that I should abandon all, just because you and some others did? I think that it was enough for me to keep still these three years. It is true that I had had no disposition to do anything but to keep still about it. For when the General Conference of 1903 made their choice that way, I have no objection their having what they have chosen. I have no disposition to oppose it in any other way than by preaching the gospel.

Indeed, the strongest possible opposition that can be made to it is the plain, simple preaching of the plain gospel. There is this about that, however, that now the plain simple preaching of the plain gospel will be considered "disloyal to the General Conference," "disloyal to the organization," etc.

Nevertheless, I am going to continue to preach the plain gospel, as that gospel is in the Word of God. For when the General Conference and the "organized work" put themselves in such a position that the plain preaching of the gospel as in the Word of God is disloyalty to the General Conference and the "organized work," then the thing to do is to preach the gospel as it is in the Word of God.

<http://omega77.tripod.com/joneslettertodaniels.htm>

3. 1919 Bible Conference

a) Quotes from the Conference's transcript⁴⁶

Usefulness for Bible Study

C.L. Taylor: "May we accept the explanations of Scripture that she gives? Are those dependable?"

A.G. Daniells: "Must we go to her explanations to get our meaning of the Bible? Is that the question?"

C.L. Taylor: "Is it right for them in their study of that [Bible] text to bring in the Spirit of Prophecy to aid in their understanding of it or should they leave that out of the question entirely?"

A.G. Daniells: "We are to get our interpretation from this Book [the Bible], primarily. I think that the Book explains itself, and I think we can understand the Book, fundamentally through the Book, without resorting to the Testimonies to prove it up."

A.G. Daniells: "It is not our position, and it is not right that the Spirit of Prophecy is the only safe interpreter of the Bible. That is a false doctrine, a false view. It will not stand. Why, my friends what would all the people have done from John's day down to the present if there were no way to understand the Bible except through the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy! . . . What do those people do over in Romania? We have hundreds of Sabbath-keepers there who have not seen a book on the Spirit of Prophecy! What do those people in China do? . . . He [God] gave this Book, and He gave men brains and thinking power to study the Book."

Use with non-Adventists

A.G. Daniells: "I do not think the best kind of proof for me to give an audience on the Sabbath question or the nature of man or baptism is to go and read Sister White's writings to them. I believe the best proof I can give is the Bible."

Infallible Interpreter?

A.G. Daniells: "I have heard ministers say that the Spirit of Prophecy is the interpreter of the Bible . . .

J.M. Anderson: "And he also said '**infallible interpreter.**' "

C.M. Sorenson: "That expression has been canceled. **That is not our position.**"

A.G. Daniells: "**It is not our position.**"

A.G. Daniells: "Now on infallibility. I suppose Sister White used Paul's text, 'We have this treasure in earthen vessels,' as much as any other scripture. She used to repeat that often, 'We have this treasure in earthen vessels,' with the idea that she was a poor, feeble woman, a messenger of the Lord trying to do her duty and meet the mind of God in this work.

When you take the position that she was not infallible, and that her writings were not verbally inspired, isn't there a chance for the manifestation of the human? If there isn't, then what is infallibility? And should we be surprised when we know that the instrument was fallible, and that the general truths, as she says, were revealed; then aren't we prepared to see mistakes?"

⁴⁶ As gathered by the Pilgrim's Rest Ministry in their article "The 1919 Bible Conference", <http://www.sdadefend.com/MINDEX-B/Bible-Conference.pdf>

The doctrines of the early pioneers

W.W. Prescott: “How should we use the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy as an authority by which to settle historical questions?”

A.G. Daniels: Well, now, as I understand it, **Sister White never claimed to be an authority on history.**”

C.A. Shull: “Just how shall we use the *Testimonies* in the classroom, especially? Before I knew there was any statement in the Spirit of Prophecy regarding the experience of John, I stated to the class that there was a tradition that John had been thrown into a caldron of boiling oil, and a student immediately produced that statement in the *Testimonies* that John was thrown into the boiling oil. Now, I want to know, was she given a divine revelation that John was thrown into the boiling oil?

“Now another question, on the taking of Babylon. Mrs. White in the Spirit of Prophecy mentions that Babylon was taken according to the historian, by the turning aside of the waters. **Modern scholarship says it was not taken that way. What should be our attitude in regard to such things?**”

W.W. Prescott: “I would like to ask if you think that, after his writings had been published a series of years, Jeremiah changed them because he was convinced that there were historical errors in them?”

M.E. Kern: “I can not answer that.”

A.G. Daniells: “I was called up here [to Washington Missionary College] twice to speak on the Spirit of Prophecy to the Bible and pastoral training classes. They brought up this question of history. I simply said, ‘No, boys, **Sister White never claimed to be a historian nor a corrector of history.**’”

Physical evidences of Ellen G. White’s prophetic gift

C.L. Taylor: “In your talk a few evenings ago, I agreed 100 percent in everything you said. Today there is just one question in my mind.”

A.G. Daniells: “Let us have it.”

C.L. Taylor: “That is regarding those outward manifestations, **those things of perhaps a miraculous nature.** I do not know whether you intend to carry the impression that you discredit those or that you simply would not teach them. **If it is that you would not hold them up as proof that the work is inspired, I am heartily in agreement with that.** On the other hand, if you take the position that those things are not to be relied on, that Elder Loughborough and others are mistaken about these things, I should have to disagree with you.”

A.G. Daniells: “No, I do not discount them nor disbelieve them; but they are not the kind of evidence I would use with students or with unbelievers.”

Dietary counsels

W.G. Wirth: “Now as to health reform: Frequently a student will come to me and quote what Sister White says about butter. But we serve butter on our tables right along. And they will bring up about **meat**, how under no consideration is that to be eaten. And **I know that that is unrea-**

sonable ... I would like a little light on some of those details, as to whether we ought to take them at face value.”

A.G. Daniells: “**The instructions set forth in the Testimonies was [sic.] never intended to be one great wholesale blanket regulation for peoples’ eating and drinking**, and it applies to various individuals according to their physical condition and according to the situation in which they find themselves . . . [He then tells story of a man up in Hammerfest, Norway, who was not eating much, because there was not much to eat, other than meat and starch] When I got back to this country, I talked with Sister White about it, and she said, ‘Why don’t the people use common sense?’”

Bible translation

W.G. Wirth: “Suppose we do have a conflict between the authorized and revised versions?”

A.G. Daniells: “That question was up before. You must not count me an authority, for I am just like you in the matter. I have to form my own opinions. I do not think Sister White meant at all to establish the certainty of a translation. I do not think she had that in mind, or had anything to do with putting her seal of approval on the authorized version or on the revised version when she quoted that. She used whichever version helps to bring out the thought she has most clearly.”

4. Spiritual Formation

a) ANN Feature: Church, Congregations Increase Focus on "Spiritual Formation"

3 Feb 2004,

Spiritual formation is a topic being raised by many pastors and church leaders in a growing number of Christian denominations. It's no longer enough to just know doctrine and facts--in today's hectic society people are searching for something deeper and more meaningful, something that makes sense in their whirlwind lives.

For the Seventh-day Adventist Church, a "wake-up call" was sounded after a 2002 survey showed that though doctrinal understanding was high, there were several "areas of concern," including low involvement in daily prayer and Bible study, active Christian witness to the community, and participation in community service (see ANN October 9, 2002).

These concerns can be linked to how the church rates in the area of spiritual formation, which has been defined by one Adventist Church pastor as "the process of becoming a mature Christian disciple of God." Another person describes it as "whatever you do to specifically nourish your relationship with God."

Today this subject is receiving serious emphasis in Adventist institutions, as well as in local congregations. Though the church doesn't have an accredited educational program dealing with spiritual formation at any of its theological schools, it's seeing this subject become more common in today's modern, seeking world.

Spiritual formation is not a new idea or concept, and "a lot of Protestants are in the same boat--we are rediscovering it," says Dr. Jon Dybdahl, president of Walla Walla College, an Adventist institution in Washington State. And, he adds, the Adventist Church has some work to do.

"Traditionally the Adventist Church has emphasized intellectual truth and accepting certain facts and ideas about God," Dybdahl says. "At least in many places it has not talked so much about the importance of directly experiencing God. The difference is between knowing about God and knowing God. Sometimes what we teach people is knowing about God ... That's part of the nature of things. It's much easier to communicate a fact than it is to wield people to experience."

Pastor Martin Feldbush, associate director for Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries whose work brings him in contact with leaders of several other denominations, says that the Adventist Church is not alone in its quest for deeper spiritual formation among members. "A lot of churches out there are struggling with the same issues as we are. We're not in isolation as though there's something wrong with us. I think churches particularly that are conservative in their orientation and take their mission very seriously, and I believe we should do all of that, may have a tendency to stress the 'doing' as opposed to the 'being' and the formation."

But why is there a need for spiritual formation? If people are part of a religious organization, shouldn't they already be at a certain level of spiritual formation?

John Jenson, pastor of the 150-member South Bay Adventist Church in Torrance, California, says, "There's a need for spiritual formation with the [Adventist] Church because we have been so

doctrinally oriented that people might be able to quote some or all of the 27 fundamental beliefs [of the church], and may have neglected having daily devotions that day or week or month." He explains that there's an overload of knowledge and information, but how to translate that into meaningful instruction and "marching orders" for daily living is key.

Jenson says that without spiritual formation, a person would be "spiritually uncivilized." It "is the process by which they can go from being a spiritual infant to spiritual maturity ... developing the potential that God's put within you."

Dybdahl adds that people need to "Begin to recognize that knowledge without life experience can be dead. [They need to] recognize how crucial it is to people's lives [and] how much the younger generation values experience."

...

Nikolaus Satelmajer, from the church's Ministerial Association responsible for continuing education for Adventist clergy, believes there's now a shift from emphasis on doctrine to more emphasis on spiritual formation within the Adventist Church. He also says that, "We're finding a serious lack of knowledge of our people [church founders], our doctrines ... I think we have de-emphasized them." Satelmajer says this is true particularly with the younger generation, and the cause of any spiritual formation growth stunt is not because of a focus on doctrine.

Spiritual formation takes on several forms: "There are disciplines of devotion, meditation, prayer, listening and so on," Feldbush explains. "It's a discipline which can be heeded through the assistance of a person who is trained in helping people grow in these ways." But, he says, it's mostly "growing more and more tuned to God's movement in my life here and now." And, he says, spiritual formation is not something that happens overnight.

"We [as a church] think that spiritual formation comes through socialization. But we need to be intentional about it," says Thayer. "The culture we live in is so pervasive that the models there are more persistent and prevalent than the little models we have just in terms of the time we've spent." Thayer refers to a need for showing others how to live like Christ in the real world.

<http://www.adventistonline.com/forum/topics/spiritual-formation-in-our>

(original link on <http://www.adventist.org> not working)

b) iFollow

“Finally: a discipleship training resource that pastors can really trust”

The new discipleship training resource, called iFollow, has been developed specifically for Adventist congregations, and it responds to both a serious and growing demand for practical, reliable discipleship training.

As one pastor said to us, recently, “I’ve been baptizing people every year, but as we did an assessment of our membership, we found that many of those we baptized are no longer attending, and far too many of those we still have—including many who have been with us for years—are ‘baby Christians.’ We need help for keeping our new members *and* for helping our established members grow in Christ.”

<http://www.ifollowdiscipleship.org>

Meditation Course

<http://www.ifollowdiscipleship.org/index.php?id=83&lessonID=57>

c) The heart of the Spiritual Formation experience

A personal report by Adventist pastor Rick Howard, author of *The Omega Rebellion*

[35:55] He [J.H. Kellogg] went so far down, theologically, that he actually whelmed up believing, that the Holy Spirit was gravity in the universe, that unseen week force, that holds the universe together; that was the Holy Spirit. That's where he whelmed up. And of course he became very pantheistic in his view, that God is in everything, in everything - which is what happens with Spiritual Formation, by the way. The people who have been to the silence and had the supernatural experience of coming into God's presence - which is really the hidden power in spiritual formation; don't be fooled, that's the heart of it - and anybody who has ever had that experience, if you took that experience away out of spiritual formation, they had no interest in it at all [anymore]. That's the thing they go for, because it changes them. Going into the silence, having that altered state of consciousness occur - and Satan is in control of it -, and while you are there (and I have been there, numerous times) you have such a feeling of unity with the world, when you stop, such a joy that you have never had before, such a oneness with people, such a feeling, that you just ... you are merged with God in everything in your life. I was a hindu, when I did it, ok, when I would go there. But that doesn't matter: the experience is the same; when you are christian, you just see Jesus, that's all. The devil creates the Lord there, so that you think: oh, that is wonderful, you know. If you are a hindu, you see some hindu icon or guru or something. Or you have an experience with *that* theology. But it's the same mystical trance that mystics have used since time began. It is a science that Satan has taught humanity. And I get that from the Spirit of Prophecy. He has chosen people and taught them about this. And it is a phenomenal experience. And if I didn't want to be holy and stop sinning, more than I wanted to experience the joy and the unity that I felt, I'd still be there. [38:33] ...

[38:52] And the danger in our church is that the people that get into this know better, they have access to inspired writings warning them not be involved. But they have denied it, they don't wanna see it, they don't look at it. And it's like I said: they make God a God of their own devising, they make God the way they want him to be. That's the danger, and that is the symptom, not the symptom, that's what the people who get involved in Spiritual Formation all seem to have: they want God to be that way, they want to be able to commune with him, face to face, somehow. And then, once you have that experience, which is that hidden experience within the process of spiritual formation, when you go to learn it somewhere, and you have to go to learn it in a retreat, or institute that has been set up usually by the Roman Catholic Church, the Episcopal Church, some of the emerging leaders, emerging church leaders.

[40:03] I think I mentioned the other night that - 3 years ago, when I wrote - there were 4000 institutes in the United States last year teaching spiritual formation. And the one that I called in Ohio and asked how many people were trained in your instate last year, their answer was 7000. ... This is spreading like wild fire. Many Adventists don't know about it, except at the administrative level; teacher, academics, administrators. It's there, it's prevalent." Forward to Zion: Ohio Hometown Camp Meeting 2011, Ohio, 6-11-2011

<https://www.audioverse.org/english/sermons/recordings/3105/spiritual-formation-ellen-g-white-and-daniel-113036.html>

https://www.audioverse.org/english/download/dl/8624/2011/06/3105/20110611-1800-Rick_Howard-Spiritual_Formati...len_G._White,_and_Daniel_11_30-36-16k.mp3

d) Spectrum Article

“Spiritual formation” is a controversial topic in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. *Adventist Review* editor Bill Knott recently interviewed three seminary faculty members about criticism the seminary has received for programs on spiritual formation. **The seminary chose to drop the term, opting instead for “Biblical spirituality.”**

“Spiritual formation” and “spiritual disciplines” are terms that are new to some, and there can be a tendency to reject something simply because the label is unfamiliar. Others, excited by novelty, have embraced the terms, and sometimes a complete package, uncritically. By whatever name we call it, the subject is important because, as the seminary statement rightly says, it concerns how we live out our relationship with Christ. It is about spiritual growth.

We need to place the Adventist discussion in context, however, so let’s begin with some definitions and a brief history.

First, “formation.” This is **a term that is used in Catholic religious education to emphasize that such education involves more than simply imparting information, but includes forming the whole person.**

The expression “spiritual formation” originated in Catholic seminaries and religious communities. For religious communities (including monasteries) it is the period of introduction to that community’s life, traditions, and ways of prayer. The person is immersed in a new way of living, taught what it means, and guided by experienced brothers or sisters through the time of transition. It is a period of probation, in which both the community and the individual discern whether this is the right place for him or her to be. In Catholic seminaries, formation covers all that is involved in developing priestly spirituality—developing the whole person, nurturing the spiritual life, honing the intellect, and inculcating a pastoral heart.

But as John Paul II noted when writing about priestly formation (*Pastores Dabo Vobis* 45), the Catholic tradition understands that **“spiritual formation ... is applicable to all the faithful.”**

Human formation, when it is carried out in the context of an anthropology which is open to the full truth regarding the human person, leads to and finds its completion in spiritual formation. Every human being, as God’s creature who has been redeemed by Christ’s blood, is called to be reborn ‘of water and the Spirit’ (Jn. 3:5) and to become a “son in the Son.” In this wonderful plan of God is to be found the basis of the essentially religious dimension of the human person, which moreover can be grasped and recognized by reason itself: The human individual is open to transcendence, to the absolute; he has a heart which is restless until it rests in the Lord.

The educational process of a spiritual life, seen as a relationship and communion with God, derives and develops from this fundamental and irrepressible religious need. In the light of revelation and Christian experience, spiritual formation possesses the unmistakable originality which derives from evangelical “newness.” Indeed, it ‘is the work of the Holy Spirit and engages a person in his totality. It introduces him to a deep communion with Jesus Christ, the good shepherd, and leads to the total submission of one’s life to the Spirit, in a filial attitude toward the Father and a trust-

ful attachment to the Church. Spiritual formation has its roots in the experience of the cross, which in deep communion leads to the totality of the paschal mystery.

John Paul II goes on to outline some specific components of spiritual formation: it is communion with the Triune God; it is the search for Jesus Christ in the Word of God, in participation in the sacraments and prayer of the church, and in a life of service to those in need. It includes “the prayerful and meditated reading of the word of God, a humble and loving listening of him who speaks.” Such reading of the Bible leads in turn to prayer, and finding silence for it in the midst of the world’s noise. But spiritual formation does not happen in isolation—it involves the community. So individual prayer must lead to a thirst for public worship, especially the Eucharist. It must develop a love for the church and its mission. It must lead one to seek Christ in others.

Clearly, the practices John Paul II describes are not unique to Roman Catholicism. They are basic Christianity. All Christians acknowledge the need to abide in Christ, to pray, to worship, to study the Bible. There have been times in the history of the Christian Church when aberrations (whether overemphasis on doctrine, legalistic behavior, minimalism, or libertinism) have led to a reemphasis on heartfelt Christianity and the devotional life. In the early days of the Reformation, Luther translated the Bible into the common language and wrote hymns and catechisms as essential tools of spiritual revival; when Lutheranism grew stale, the Pietist movement sought to breathe new life into dry bones, encouraging not only individual devotion, but small group fellowship and sharing and prayer. Pietists like Spener and Zinzendorf had an influence in turn on the evangelical revival in the Anglican Church, and the “method” taught by John Wesley. The devotional spirit and practices of Seventh-day Adventism grew out of this strain of pietistic/evangelical Christianity. Adventism continued to be informed and nurtured and inspired by evangelicalism—a case in point being the adoption of the “morning watch” and the idea of volunteer missionaries from John Mott.

In our day, the terms “spiritual formation” and “spiritual disciplines” have largely been brought to evangelicalism (and thence to Adventism) by Richard Foster, the Quaker founder of Renovaré, and his Southern Baptist colleague Dallas Willard. Foster’s writings combine Quaker spirituality (emphasis on the divine “inner light”) with historic Christian (Catholic and evangelical) practices. This is something that should give us pause. Foster is starting with a specific theology of the human “spirit,” and because he believes this divine “spirit” is shared by all, he has no qualms about seeking out whatever he finds nurturing—without regard for the specific historical context or theological underpinnings of the different practices.

Foster’s eclecticism stands in contrast to historic Catholic and Protestant spiritualities, which have been rooted in particular communities and movements. In Catholicism, individuals such as Benedict of Nursia, Francis of Assisi, Dominic of Guzman, Teresa of Avila, etc., had powerful experiences of God and unique insights into how to live the Christian life, and taught these insights to others—thus giving us Benedictine, Franciscan, Dominican, and Carmelite spirituality. The spirituality of Lutheranism is rooted in Luther’s own struggles and the insights he developed from them; the same is true of Methodism. It’s as the Peruvian theologian Gustavo Gutierrez writes in his book, *We Drink from Our Own Wells*—spirituality starts as a personal experience, but it becomes “the subject of later reflection and is proposed to the entire ecclesial community as a way of being disciples of Christ.” In other words, someone says, “This is what’s worked for me—why don’t you try it?”

As Seventh-day Adventists, we share a common heritage and spirituality. We share devotional texts (like *Steps to Christ*), hymns, practices (especially the Sabbath), values, hopes, and dreams that are distinct. These are the components of Seventh-day Adventist spirituality

(which is indebted, as I've already noted, to Methodism). But we can take these things for granted. We can grow complacent; the practices we grew up with can grow stale, and this can lead us to seek for new insights, greener pastures, and fresher wells. I would not discourage this; I would simply suggest that any exploration we do remain rooted in our own tradition, and that we retain a critical eye, carefully evaluating both the presuppositions and the practices of others through our understanding of God's Word.

What I would hope is that Adventists who read Foster (or other popular spiritual writers) would be inspired to go on and learn what our own sources have said about these things—to go back, for example, and reread Ellen White's books, *Steps to Christ*, *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, *Christ's Object Lessons*, *Desire of Ages*, and *Ministry of Healing* (and *Life Sketches*, which relates her spiritual journey). This will keep our spiritual sustenance rooted, not merely in our own personal preferences and curiosities, but in the life of our specific community. We will thus learn, as St. Bernard of Clairvaux said, to "drink from our own wells."

But a more important lesson we can learn from Catholicism about spiritual formation is that we cannot take it for granted. We cannot just turn it over so that individuals can pursue, pick and choose whatever they happen to like. Spiritual formation is a responsibility of the Christian community—and especially the pastors and teachers—to form believers, to guide them on the path of discipleship, to immerse them in the common tradition, to build a community of prayer and service. And if we do not do this— if we do not give people water from our communal well— then they will search on their own for anything that offers to quench their thirst.

—Bill Cork is pastor of the North Houston and Spring Creek Seventh-day Adventist churches in Texas, and is a chaplain in the Texas Army National Guard.

August 16, 2011. <http://spectrummagazine.org/article/bill-cork/2011/08/16/whos-afraid-spiritual-formation>

e) Andrews University Statement

Teaching Biblical Spirituality

The teaching of courses in spiritual formation in Adventist universities and colleges has become a matter of much debate in the last few years. Recently, the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary and Andrews University have been under scrutiny for offering courses in spiritual formation to their students.

With the dissemination of New Age and Eastern spirituality in popular books, the media, and websites, Christians of all denominations have become aware of the dangers of these "new" approaches to communion with the divine. Seventh-day Adventists are naturally concerned about this new trend because authentic Christian spirituality has been one of our core values since our beginning as a denomination 160 years ago. During her lifetime, Ellen White frequently spoke about the need for reading and meditating on the Word of God, prayer, and fasting. She admonished that we should "cultivate a love for spirituality and true godliness" (2T 315). She also stated, "The revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs" (1SM 121). For over a century we have advocated and promoted through conferences and publications the subjects of personal Bible study, prayer, devotional life, Sabbath keeping, fasting, faith nurture, and many other approaches to spiritual growth and sanctification. And, today, our church is again placing an emphasis on revival and reformation, spirituality and discipleship. The genuine and authentic lives we live will impact the world for Christ.

In 2005, the General Conference session voted to add a new fundamental belief titled “Growing in Christ.” This fundamental belief highlights the needs for spiritual growth. The last part of this statement reads, “In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character, communing with Him daily in prayer, feeding on His Word, meditating on it and on His providence, singing His praises, gathering together for worship, and participating in the mission of the Church. As we give ourselves in loving service to those around us and in witnessing to His salvation, His constant presence with us through the Spirit transforms every moment and every task into a spiritual experience.”

Given the world in which we live, the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary believes that **the responsible thing to do is to teach its students and pastors about Christian spirituality. Our courses enunciate clear biblical, theological and Adventist principles. We are diligent to select good academic books on this subject and the choice of books we adopt for our classes does not mean we accept all of these authors’ points of view.** Yet we believe one goal of graduate education is to impart the skill of discernment and we desire to teach our students to be deep thinkers and not mere reflectors of other people’s thoughts. By God’s grace, we intend to be faithful to our mission as we equip our students to become good mentors and ministers of our faith and heritage and as they assist church members to deepen their journey with God.

There are some who accuse the Seminary of teaching contemplative and emergent types of spirituality because we have called our courses by the name of “Spiritual Formation”. We do not teach such approaches to spiritual development. **In academic circles the expression spiritual formation is a synonym for spiritual growth toward godly maturity, or the process of Christian discipleship and sanctification. It is unfair and false to state that spiritual formation is evil because it is associated with the writings of Church Fathers, some strands of more recent Roman Catholic thoughts, and some devotional practices of other religions. The intent of spiritual formation is to teach students what Scripture says about living a genuine life of commitment to God, to be open to the convictions of the Holy Spirit, to be regenerated in Christ. Spiritual formation is an academic term used to describe courses or subjects that deal with spiritual development and faith nurture.** By using this term we are saying that we offer biblically-based classes that focus on the spiritual lives of our students. And shouldn’t we do more, not less, of this kind of faith nurture? **Yet, to avoid any further confusion, we have decided to change the name of our courses to refer instead to biblical spirituality.** We hope this will help alleviate some genuine concerns people have had.

Please join us to pray for the spiritual growth of our students in our Adventist institutions.

Denis Fortin
Dean

<http://www.andrews.edu/sem/response.html>, as found in April 2014

f) Adventist Review Interview

Few topics in Adventism have aroused more interest—and passion—during the past 12 months than that of “spiritual formation.” Books, seminars, and sermons have warned that the concept and practice of teaching contemplative spirituality can open minds to Eastern religions and non-Christian philosophies; others have urged that learning how to deepen a relationship with Christ

is a foundational premise of the Word of God. One point of the discussion has been the courses in personal spirituality that are part of the curriculum of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University, the primary institution for training pastors for the North American church and scholars for the worldwide denomination.

Adventist Review editor Bill Knott recently met with the three teaching professors at the seminary—Allan Walshe, Kathy Beagles, and Joseph Kidder—whose courses focus on teaching students to experience and communicate the practices of personal faith and discipleship.

Knott: One phrase above all others has become the lightning rod of this discussion. Do you use the term spiritual formation, and if so, what do you think it means?

Walshe: To answer the first part of your question—“Do you use the term *spiritual formation*?”—the answer is no longer. The seminary, along with other Adventist colleges and universities, has used that term, with the clear understanding that these were classes about spiritual growth as taught in Scripture. But when it became clear that it had become a contentious issue because proponents of New Age philosophies, Eastern religions, and others had co-opted the terminology to teach practices that are clearly dangerous, the seminary decided to change the terminology for the class. It is now called Foundations of Biblical Spirituality, which clearly indicates what the class is about.

So when you were using the term *spiritual formation*, what did you perceive it to mean?

Beagles: When I first encountered the term more than 20 years ago, it had a single, straightforward meaning—the process of building a life with God. My education has all been in Adventist schools, and I hadn’t been exposed to what those words could mean to persons from other religious systems. For me, “spiritual formation” has always been largely synonymous with what we are now calling “revival and reformation.” When you consciously form a Christian life spiritually, you are seeking to reform what isn’t faithful, to be transformed from worldly ways, and to conform your mind to the mind of Christ.

Kidder: I’m much the same. I accepted the term—and inherited a class for which the name was Spiritual Formation. I’ve always understood that it’s really about spiritual growth. One of the key verses that I’ve used in the class is Mark 3:13-15, in which Jesus chooses 12 men to be with Him. It says He called them, He wanted them to be with Him, and after they were with Him, He sent them out to preach and to make a difference in the world. He sent them out in the power of the Holy Spirit. Like those 12, I want to be with Jesus. I want to know Him, enjoy Him, and love Him, and, as the result of that, I want to share it with the world. That’s really the essence of what the phrase means to me.

Walshe: I first became acquainted with the term about 14 years ago at an Adventist camp meeting, and I have always understood it as being about spiritual growth in the way Paul describes in Romans 12. It’s about no longer wanting to be “conformed to this world, but being transformed by the renewing of our minds.”

So it’s about spiritual growth; it’s about sanctification; it’s about being transformed into the image of Jesus. One of the things I love about Enoch is that the Bible says that he walked with God. That’s what I want in my life and in the lives of my students—to *walk humbly with our God*. I re-

member in *Patriarchs and Prophets*, Ellen White says that through communing with God, “Enoch came more and more to reflect the divine image” (p. 87). So the way we’ve understood and taught it is like this: coming more and more to reflect the divine image through an intentional, daily communion and walk with God that is yielded to the Holy Spirit and anchored in the Word of God.

You all understand those terms as meaning the same thing?

Kidder: Absolutely. Spiritual growth, spiritual sanctification, discipleship—that’s what we’re meaning by it when we teach these classes.

Is the core of this controversy, then, an argument about semantics?

Beagles: The use of language is clearly an important part at the moment, but there’s more to it than that. Some well-meaning people simply assume that when we use the term *formation*, we mean the same thing that some other philosophies or faith traditions mean—which have some distinctly nonbiblical ideas. These individuals arrive at that conclusion to preserve a bigger argument they’re making—that the church today is being influenced by unbiblical ideas and practices. They assume that if we’re using that term, we mean just what others mean—without checking to see if that’s true.

Kidder: We’re Adventist to the core, and proud to be. Dr. Beagles worked at the General Conference for 10 years before coming to the seminary. Dr. Walshe was a conference president and union conference president before coming to the seminary; I have been a pastor and professor for 30 years. So our teaching comes from a solidly Adventist perspective; it is very biblical and also strongly supported by the writings of Ellen G. White. We all use her classic, *Steps to Christ*, in our classes. We also use *The Desire of Ages*, *The Ministry of Healing*, *The Sanctified Life*, and *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing* because we believe these books powerfully contribute to spiritual life.

Walshe: We can all say definitely and categorically that we do not teach or practice “contemplative spirituality,” “contemplative prayer,” “apophatic contemplation or meditation,” which seeks a total emptying of the mind, New Age philosophies, Eastern religious practices, or any other non-biblical practices that others borrow from Hinduism or Buddhism. We believe everyone should be vigilant not to allow these kinds of philosophies and practices to infiltrate the Adventist Church.

Kidder: Like the apostle Paul, we can say, “This thing was not done in a corner” [Acts 26:26, KJV]. Our work, our teaching, our students, are all in full view.

If what you’re teaching has always been part of the core message of Adventism, how did we get to the place where many Adventists think of learning how to have a deeper life with Jesus as a new direction?

Beagles: A deeper life with Jesus has always been one of the “givens” of Adventism—we kind of just jumped over it. We assumed in our writing and preaching that people knew how to enrich their prayer life, how to find greater meaning in their Bible study, how to “grow in grace” and enjoy sharing their faith. Maybe there was a time in the early years of this movement when that

could safely be assumed, but it's not a "given" anymore. Surveys show that barely 50 percent of Adventists practice the basics of a spiritual life—prayer and Bible study—and even fewer engage in things such as family worship. The worldly culture around us certainly tries to draw us away from God, and if we don't intentionally plan to build up our lives in Christ, we shouldn't be surprised that so many Adventists don't know much about "abiding in Christ."

You've referred to your extensive use of Ellen White's books in your classes. Are there other Adventist authors you have been drawing on?

Walshe: Until more recently there haven't been a lot of Adventist authors writing on this topic. Some have, however, and their contributions have been important—even crucial—to meeting the need for spiritual nurture in the church.

Beagles: But there aren't many, and while some of them share the *importance* of a relationship very well, they lack the practical aspect that we need for our classes.

Kidder: Well, I've written a book—*Majesty: Experiencing Authentic Worship*—so I use my book in my classes. It's an Adventist book!

Why do you think Adventist authors after Ellen White haven't done more writing about how to grow in a relationship with Jesus?

Kidder: They have been focusing on other topics. Ellen White emphasized the need for renewal and Bible study, especially in the last days, and I'm so happy our world church president is emphasizing that. That's what we teach. We want a revival of knowing Jesus, enjoying Him, loving Him, that will result in changing the world around us.

I'm one of those people who teach evangelism because I believe it is part of Jesus' Great Commission. The first church I pastored grew from nine people to 139 people; the last one from 40 to 600. So I used to travel a lot and speak about what is often called "church growth." But I would actually be speaking to them about personal spirituality; later, I would go on to talk about how churches grow. Often the local pastor where I was presenting would come and say, "Well, tell us the strategy you use." And I would say, "I just told you!" "No, no, tell us point by point the strategy," he would urge.

Today I travel even more and say the same thing. Pastors say, "That's exactly what we need to hear." Trying to do evangelism without spirituality is a danger. Encouraging spirituality that doesn't result in ministering and evangelism is another danger. A deeper relationship with Jesus will *definitely* lead to personal evangelism, and that in turn will lead to effective corporate witness.

Beagles: Jesus said, "He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit" [John 15:5, NKJV].*

What do you say to those who complain that a focus on nurture detracts from the work of evangelism?

Walshe: Evangelism must be an important focus for the church. It is absolutely part of what Jesus commissioned His disciples to do in Matthew 28. However, we tend to think that discipleship is evangelism. More accurately, evangelism is the *fruit* of discipleship (nurture). So nurture (disci-

pleship) should come first. That was Jesus' model. Evangelism is what happens when your life with God flows over into the lives of those around you.

As Kathy said, we almost jumped over that one. Too often we forget that fruit comes at the end of a process of growing. We want the fruit now, without growing the tree; we want to skip the cycle of growth that precedes it. When our books, sermons, and seminars focus only on the fruit and not on spiritual growth, we find ourselves lamenting shallow spirituality, or meager results, or conflicts in the church, or the difficulties in reaching our communities.

I'm really pleased that church leaders are urging all of us to a time of deeper prayer, of fasting, of revival. Evangelism that is fostered by the nurturing of a deeper spiritual life is a beautiful and sustainable thing.

So evangelism and nurture are actually companions to build new disciples.

Walshe: It usually works like this: people who only have *knowledge about God* will usually, in turn, only bring other people to have knowledge about God, but people who are nurtured into *knowing God*, will, in turn, nurture others into knowing God, not just knowing *about* Him.

You've mentioned the significant use of Ellen White in what you do here; and when you create or find other Adventist resources, you're using those. But you clearly use resources that come from authors in other faiths. How does the biblical imperative "come out of her, my people" [Rev. 18:4] relate to studying the insights and experiences of those from other religious traditions?

Beagles: Adventists believe that there are systems of belief appropriately designated as Babylon. But we also believe—and we're told by inspiration—that *many* of God's people are still in those churches and serving Him to the best of their ability. And many of them are searching. When we study the works of Luther, Wesley, Mueller, or the nineteenth-century missionary Hudson Taylor, we're learning from persons who deeply loved Jesus but belonged to faiths different from ours.

Kidder: Kathy made an excellent point. Of course we screen these books. We point out what we agree with and what we don't agree with. And we believe that even the things we don't agree with challenge us to articulate a distinctly Adventist perspective on the matter.

How do you help some people understand that citing an author isn't offering a blanket endorsement of everything the author has ever produced?

Beagles: The majority of church members appreciate what we do and understand the vital importance of it. But those who are intent on being critical will always find something on which to fasten. But we can appeal to fair-minded people to look at what we're doing, see the integrity of our classes, and trust that we are as committed to Seventh-day Adventism as they are.

Kidder: I'm very happy to talk with anybody who has a problem with something I teach. Don't go to secondary sources to know what I teach. What we teach is very transparent. It simply isn't reasonable to say that because I use a phrase that another evangelical scholar uses, I believe everything he or she believes. The fact that I may quote a phrase or a line from a fifth-century Christian doesn't mean I'm secretly sympathetic to Roman Catholicism. My credibility as an Adventist isn't undermined because Christians from other denominations may believe some of the same things I do.

Many Adventists have grown wary of what is commonly called *contemplative spirituality*. Do you use that term, and if you do, what do you mean by it?

Walshe: We don't use that term, and for good reason. Nor do we in any way teach those practices. But we dare not miss the life of thoughtful, Bible-based meditation that every Christian is encouraged to practice.

Beagles: I agree: if we don't do what both Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy repeatedly urge us to do, we will absolutely miss the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We will miss the revival and reformation we're praying for if we don't spend quiet time thinking about Jesus, pondering His Word, and allowing His Spirit to change us into His likeness.

You sound as though you have a lot in common with some of the seminary's critics.

Walshe: Absolutely. We also strongly believe that people should be warned about the subtle and not-so-subtle dangers in New Age philosophies and Eastern religion practices. We don't want these things infiltrating our church. That's why I have (in the course outline), as one of the clearly stated outcomes of my class, that students will be able to "*discern truth from counterfeit as a means of both personal and corporate protection in the light of the growing number of nonbiblical 'spiritualities.'*" I spend a whole class pointing out to my students where, from an Adventist perspective, the dangers lie, and showing them how to enjoy the path of a more satisfying walk with Jesus without falling into the ditches on either side.

Kidder: I agree. We actually believe that many of these individuals have good motives. I wish they knew that we are careful about the same things they are careful about. In so many cases we teach the opposite of what they think we do! It's important to note that our classes aren't only about teaching. We have five or six components to help build well-rounded spiritual lives. All our students are required to commit themselves to a devotional experience every day—reading the Bible, or praying, or reflecting on God and His goodness. We frequently assign large portions of the Scriptures for reading, to encourage our students to understand and reflect on less-familiar material in God's Word. Our aim is to help students come to know God in very personal terms through Scripture, through prayer, through reading the Spirit of Prophecy, through small-group experiences.

Beagles: Basically I would say that we're trying to teach people to abide in Jesus. I know I'm just too simple, but my class is about taking the time to fall in love with Jesus. Everything we do is designed to get us to be quiet, sit down as little children at His feet, even though we have 100 papers to write and our kids are sick. It's time to be Mary, even though we have to go be Martha in a little while. But let's be Mary for a while.

Walshe: I have a student who's been a conference departmental director for some years. He's one of the most committed Adventists I know. Yet he said to me a week ago, "When I came into your class, I thought, *I don't need this*. But your class reestablished my walk with God. You pushed me to form a devotional habit, and I'm still doing it now consistently, six months later." And that's what we do, each of us. We help our students re-form their journey with Jesus.

When church members tell you that they are wary of contemplation and meditation and similar spiritual practices, what do you understand they're afraid of?

Beagles: They're afraid that people will open themselves up to spirits other than the Holy Spirit—that we're opening ourselves without realizing it to a connection with the wrong spirit. They're concerned that the devil will try to deceive “even the very elect,” and there's no denying that some Christians have been led away from truth because of the unbiblical practices they adopted.

How would you answer those concerns—those fears?

Beagles: We don't teach unbiblical practices. We're teaching people to grow in Christ, and hopefully that growth will spark a revival in their connection with the Holy Spirit. They will find Christ being formed in them; their joy and effectiveness will increase, and the latter rain will fall. We're trying to help the church do what the church is really all about.

What makes your classes distinctively Adventist? How do your classes differ from what I might find at Wheaton College or at Hope College or some other Protestant seminary?

Walshe: In my class we covered the foundational Adventist passage, ‘Fear God and give glory to Him’ (Rev 14:7), taught by my colleague Dr. Jiri Moskala the last time around. Dr. JoAnn Davidson presented a unit on the ‘Attributes of God’, and Dr. Richard Davidson lectured on ‘Spirituality in the Sanctuary Message’. In another section of the class, I show how a deep understanding and practice of the Sabbath enhances Biblical spirituality.

Beagles: Let me give just one example: the Biblical truth that Adventists believe is that a human being is a single, unified personality—body, soul and mind are not separate and divisible realities. We usually talk about this in the context of what we call the “state of the dead.” But there's a powerful message here for the state of Christian living as well. I don't have a spirit that can connect with God apart from the mind and body He has given me. Spiritual transformation has to do with all of me—not just some invisible part of me I call my spirit. When Jesus tells us that He sends the Holy Spirit to live in us, the condition of our minds and of our bodies suddenly becomes important to our ability to be a temple for the Holy Spirit. What I feed my body, like what I feed my mind, has a great impact on my relationship with God. This understanding isn't shared by almost other Protestants. The very premise of our Biblical spirituality classes is different because of our understanding of who we are, how God created us to be, and how we can commune with Him.

Kidder: We're teaching whole life spirituality. It encompasses all of life. I live in the context of eternity because I have accepted Jesus as my Savior. The Bible teaching about the sanctuary inspires me to live a holy life and to enjoy the presence of God. I have a whole section in my class about Adventist contribution to the area of spirituality. We talk about the Second Coming, the Sabbath, the state of the dead—all the distinctive Adventist truths.

Some people don't seem to know that you're doing those things. Have any of those who have been critical of the seminary's classes about spirituality asked to sit down with you or have conversations about these issues?

Kidder: Unfortunately, they haven't. I think discussion and the sharing of ideas is very, very healthy. I would love for those who have concerns, before they print anything, in fairness to come

to those of us involved and ask, "What do you teach? I want to be fair to you." Better yet, pray with us. As I said before, just like the apostle Paul, we can say, "This thing was not done in a corner." Our work, our teaching, our students are all in full view. Let them discover the common bond we share as believers committed to following Jesus.

Walshe: I wish those who are concerned could hear what we hear, and interact with the persons whose spiritual lives are changed by what they discover here at the Seminary. Often our students tell us, "I've had a lot of knowledge about Jesus; I've preached about Jesus; I've told other people about Jesus, but I've not known Him myself."

Kidder: Every year we have several people who come to us and say, "I have been an Adventist all my life. I have been a pastor for years, but for the first time in my life I have come to know Jesus." Several years ago I taught a D.Min. seminar about Biblical spirituality, and one of the participants was a teacher at one of our colleges. We had a retreat near the end of the course, and at the end he stood up and started to cry. He said, "I have been teaching theology, but I did not get Jesus." The knowledge that there are others—perhaps many others like him—in ministry motivates us to do this work.

Beagles: That's one of the hallmarks of genuine revival and reformation: men and women discover the real Jesus. They fall in love with Him; and their joy is simply contagious."

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g) Catholic Church

Spiritual Formation: In Communion with God and in Search of Christ

45. Human formation, when it is carried out in the context of an anthropology which is open to the full truth regarding the human person, leads to and finds its completion in spiritual formation. Every human being, as God's creature who has been redeemed by Christ's blood, is called to be reborn "of water and the Spirit" (Jn. 3:S) and to become a "son in the Son." In this wonderful plan of God is to be found the basis of the essentially religious dimension of the human person, which moreover can be grasped and recognized by reason itself: The human individual is open to transcendence, to the absolute; he has a heart which is restless until it rests in the Lord.(133)

The educational process of a spiritual life, seen as a relationship and communion with God, derives and develops from this fundamental and irrepressible religious need. In the light of revelation and Christian experience, spiritual formation possesses the unmistakable originality which derives from evangelical "newness." Indeed, it "is the work of the Holy Spirit and engages a person in his totality. It introduces him to a deep communion with Jesus Christ, the good shepherd, and leads to the total submission of one's life to the Spirit, in a filial attitude toward the Father and a trustful attachment to the Church. Spiritual formation has its roots in the experience of the cross, which in deep communion leads to the totality of the paschal mystery."(134)

Spiritual formation, as we have just seen, is applicable to all the faithful. Nevertheless, it should be structured according to the meanings and connotations which derive from the identity of the priest and his ministry. And just as for all the faithful spiritual formation is central and unifies their being and living as Christians, that is, as new creatures in Christ who walk in the Spirit, so too **for every priest his spiritual formation is the core which unifies and gives life to his being a priest and his acting as a priest. In this context, the synod fathers state that "without spiri-**

tual formation pastoral formation would be left without foundation"(135) and that spiritual formation is "an extremely important element of a priest's education."(136)

The essential content of spiritual formation specifically leading toward the priesthood is well expressed in the Council's decree *Optatum Totius*: "Spiritual formation...should be conducted in such a way that the students may learn to live in intimate and unceasing union with God the Father through his Son Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit. **Those who are to take on the likeness of Christ the priest by sacred ordination should form the habit of drawing close to him as friends in every detail of their lives.** They should live his paschal mystery in such a way that they will know how to initiate into it the people committed to their charge. They should be taught to seek Christ in faithful meditation on the word of God and in active participation in the sacred mysteries of the Church, especially the Eucharist and the Divine Office, to seek him in the bishop by whom they are sent and in the people to whom they are sent, especially the poor, little children, the weak, sinners and unbelievers. With the confidence of sons they should love and reverence the most blessed Virgin Mary, who was given as a mother to the disciple by Jesus Christ as he was dying on the cross."(137)

46. This text from the Council deserves our careful and loving meditation, out of which we will easily be able to outline some fundamental values and demands of the spiritual path trodden by the candidate for the priesthood.

First there is the value and demand of "living intimately united" to Jesus Christ. Our union with the Lord Jesus, which has its roots in baptism and is nourished with the Eucharist, has to express itself and be radically renewed each day. Intimate communion with the Blessed Trinity, that is, the new life of grace which makes us children of God, constitutes the "novelty" of the believer, a novelty which involves both his being and his acting. It constitutes the "mystery" of Christian existence which is under the influence of the Spirit: it should, as a result, constitute the ethos of Christian living. Jesus has taught us this marvelous reality of Christian living, which is also the heart of spiritual life, with his allegory of the vine and the branches: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser... Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing" (Jn. 15:1, 4-5).

There are spiritual and religious values present in today's culture, and man, notwithstanding appearances to the contrary, cannot help but hunger and thirst for God. However, the Christian religion is often regarded as just one religion among many or reduced to nothing more than a social ethic at the service of man. As a result, its amazing novelty in human history is quite often not apparent. It is a "mystery," the event of the coming of the Son of God who becomes man and gives to those who welcome him the "power to become children of God" (Jn. 1:12). It is the proclamation, nay the gift, of a personal covenant of love and life between God and human beings. **Only if future priests, through a suitable spiritual formation, have become deeply aware and have increasingly experienced this "mystery" will they be able to communicate this amazing and blessed message to others** (cf. 1 Jn. 1:1-4).

The Council text, while taking account of the absolute transcendence of the Christian mystery, describes the communion of future priests with Jesus in terms of friendship. And indeed it is not an absurdity for a person to aim at this, for it is the priceless gift of Christ, who said to his apostles, "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you" (Jn. 15:15).

The Council text then points out a second great spiritual value: the search for Jesus. "They should be taught to seek Christ." This, along with the *quaerere Deum* (the search for God), is a classical theme of Christian spirituality. It has a specific application in the context of the calling of the apostles. When John tells the story of the way the first two disciples followed Christ, he highlights this "search." It is Jesus himself who asks the question: "What do you seek?" And the two reply: "Rabbi, where are you staying?" The evangelist continues: "He said to them, 'Come and see.' They came and saw where he was staying; and they stayed with him that day" (Jn. 1:37-39). In a certain sense, the spiritual life of the person who is preparing for the priesthood is dominated by this search: by it and by the "finding" of the Master, to follow him, to be in communion with him. So inexhaustible is the mystery of the imitation of Christ and the sharing in his life that this "seeking" will also have to continue throughout the priest's life and ministry. Likewise this "finding" the Master will have to continue in order to bring him to others, or rather in order to excite in others the desire to seek out the Master. But all this becomes possible if it is proposed to others as a living "experience," an experience that is worthwhile sharing. This was the path followed by Andrew to lead his brother Simon to Jesus. The evangelist John writes that Andrew "first found his brother Simon, and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which means Christ)" and brought him to Jesus (Jn. 1:41-42). And so Simon too will be called, as an apostle, to follow the Messiah: "Jesus looked at him and said, 'So you are Simon the son of John? You shall be called Cephas' (which means Peter)" (Jn. 1:42).

But what does to seek Christ signify in the spiritual life? And where is he to be found? "Rabbi, where are you staying?" The decree *Optatum Totius* would seem to indicate a **triple path** to be covered: **a faithful meditation on the word of God, active participation in the Church's holy mysteries and the service of charity to the "little ones."** **These are three great values and demands which further define the content of the spiritual formation of the candidate to the priesthood.**

47. An essential element of spiritual formation is the prayerful and meditated reading of the word of God (*lectio divina*), a humble and loving listening of him who speaks. It is in fact by the light and with the strength of the word of God that one's own vocation can be discovered and understood, loved and followed, and one's own mission carried out. So true is this that the person's entire existence finds its unifying and radical meaning in being the terminus of God's word which calls man and the beginning of man's word which answers God. Familiarity with the word of God will make conversion easy, not only in the sense of detaching us from evil so as to adhere to the good, but also in the sense of nourishing our heart with the thoughts of God, so that the faith (as a response to the word) becomes our new basis for judging and evaluating persons and things, events and problems.

Provided that we approach the word of God and listen to it as it really is, it brings us into contact with God himself, God speaking to us. It brings us into contact with Christ, the Word of God, the truth, who is at the same time both the way and the life (cf. Jn. 14:6). It is a matter of reading the "scriptures" by listening to the "words," "the word" of God, as the Council reminds us: "The sacred Scriptures contain the word of God, and because they are inspired, are truly the word of God." (138) The Council also states: "By this revelation, then, the invisible God (cf. Col. 1:15; 1 Tm. 1:7), from the fullness of his love, addresses people as his friends (cf. Ex. 33:11; Jn. 15:14-15), and moves among them (cf. Bar. 3:38), in order to invite and receive them into his own company." (139)

A loving knowledge of the word of God and a prayerful familiarity with it are specifically important for the prophetic ministry of the priest. They are a fundamental condition for such a ministry to be carried out suitably, especially if we bear in mind the "new evangelization" which the

Church today is called to undertake. The Council tells us: "All clerics, particularly priests of Christ and others who, as deacons or catechists, are officially engaged in the ministry of the word, should immerse themselves in the Scriptures by constant sacred reading and diligent study. For it must not happen that anyone becomes 'an empty preacher of the word of God to others, not being a hearer of the word of God in his own heart' (St. Augustine, Sermon 179, 1: PL 8:966)." (140)

The first and fundamental manner of responding to the word is prayer, which is without any doubt a primary value and demand of spiritual formation. Prayer should lead candidates for the priesthood to get to know and have experience of the genuine meaning of Christian prayer, as a living and personal meeting with the Father through the only - begotten Son under the action of the Spirit, a dialogue that becomes a sharing in the filial conversation between Jesus and the Father. One aspect of the priest's mission, and certainly by no means a secondary aspect, is that he is to be a "teacher of prayer." However, the priest will only be able to train others in this school of Jesus at prayer if he himself has been trained in it and continues to receive its formation. This is what people ask of the priest: "The priest is 'The man of God, the one who belongs to God and makes people think about God. When the letter to the Hebrews speaks of Christ it presents him as 'merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God' (Heb. 2:17).... Christians expect to find in the priest not only a man who welcomes them, who listens to them gladly and shows a real interest in them, but also and above all a man who will help them to turn to God, to rise up to him. And so the priest needs to be trained to have a deep intimacy with God. Those who are preparing for the priesthood should realize that their whole priestly life will have value inasmuch as they are able to give themselves to Christ and through Christ to the Father.'" (141)

A necessary training in prayer in a context of noise and agitation like that of our society is an education in the deep human meaning and religious value of silence as the spiritual atmosphere vital for perceiving God's presence and for allowing oneself to be won over by it (cf. 1 Kgs. 19:11ff.).

48. The high point of Christian prayer is the Eucharist, which in its turn is to be seen as the "summit and source" of the sacraments and the Liturgy of the Hours. A totally necessary aspect of the formation of every Christian, and in particular of every priest, is liturgical formation, in the full sense of becoming inserted in a living way in the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ, who died and rose again, and is present and active in the Church's sacraments. Communion with God, which is the hinge on which the whole of the spiritual life turns, is the gift and fruit of the sacraments. At the same time it is a task and responsibility which the sacraments entrust to the freedom of the believer, so that one may live this same communion in the decisions, choices, attitudes and actions of daily existence. In this sense, the "grace" which "renews" Christian living is the grace of Jesus Christ, who died and rose again, and continues to pour out his holy and sanctifying Spirit in the sacraments. In the same way, the "new law" which should guide and govern the life of the Christian is written by the sacraments in the "new heart." And it is a law of charity toward God and humanity, as a response and prolonging of the charity of God toward humanity signified and communicated by the sacraments. It is thus possible to understand at once the value of a "full, conscious and active participation" (142) in sacramental celebrations for the gift and task of that "pastoral charity" which is the soul of the priestly ministry.

This applies above all to sharing in the Eucharist, the memorial of the sacrificial death of Christ and of his glorious resurrection, the "sacrament of piety, sign of unity, bond of charity, (143) the paschal banquet "in which Christ is received, the soul is filled with grace and we are given a pledge of the glory that is to be ours." (144) **For priests, as ministers of sacred things, are first and foremost ministers of the sacrifice of the Mass: (145) The role is utterly irreplaceable, because without the priest there can be no eucharistic offering.**

This explains the essential importance of the Eucharist for the priest's life and ministry and, as a result, in the spiritual formation of candidates for the priesthood. To be utterly frank and clear, I would like to say once again: "It is fitting that seminarians take part every day in the eucharistic celebration, in such a way that afterward they will take up as a rule of their priestly life this daily celebration. They should, moreover, be trained to consider the eucharistic celebration as the essential moment of their day, in which they will take an active part and at which they will never be satisfied with a merely habitual attendance. Finally, candidates to the priesthood will be trained to share in the intimate dispositions which the Eucharist fosters: gratitude for heavenly benefits received, because the Eucharist is thanksgiving; an attitude of self-offering, which will impel them to unite the offering of themselves to the eucharistic offering of Christ; charity nourished by a sacrament which is a sign of unity and sharing; the yearning to contemplate and bow in adoration before Christ, who is really present under the eucharistic species."(146)

It is necessary and very urgent to rediscover within spiritual formation the beauty and joy of the sacrament of penance. In a culture which - through renewed and more subtle forms of self-justification - runs the fatal risk of losing the "sense of sin" and, as a result, the consoling joy of the plea for forgiveness (cf. Ps. 51:14) and of meeting God who is "rich in mercy" (Eph. 2:4), it is vital to educate future priests to have the virtue of penance, which the Church wisely nourishes in her celebrations and in the seasons of the liturgical year, and which finds its fullness in the sacrament of reconciliation. From it flow the sense of asceticism and interior discipline, a spirit of sacrifice and self-denial, the acceptance of hard work and of the cross. These are elements of the spiritual life which often prove to be particularly arduous for many candidates for the priesthood who have grown up in relatively comfortable and affluent circumstances and have been made less inclined and open to these very elements by the models of behavior and ideals transmitted by the mass media; but this also happens in countries where the conditions of life are poorer and young people live in more austere situations. For this reason, but above all in order to put into practice the "radical self-giving" proper to the priest following the example of Christ the good shepherd, the synod fathers wrote: "It is necessary to inculcate the meaning of the cross, which is at the heart of the paschal mystery. Through this identification with Christ crucified, as a slave, the world can rediscover the value of austerity, of suffering and also of martyrdom within the present culture, which is imbued with secularism, greed and hedonism."(147)

49. Spiritual formation also involves seeking Christ in people.

The spiritual life is, indeed, an interior life, a life of intimacy with God, a life of prayer and contemplation. But this very meeting with God and with his fatherly love for everyone brings us face to face with the need to meet our neighbor, to give ourselves to others, to serve in a humble and disinterested fashion, following the example which Jesus has proposed to everyone as a program of life when he washed the feet of the apostles: "I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you" (Jn. 13:15).

Formation which aims at giving oneself generously and freely, which is something helped also by the communal structure which preparation to the priesthood normally takes, is a necessary condition for one who is called to be a manifestation and image of the good shepherd, who gives life (cf. Jn. 10:11, 15). From this point of view, spiritual formation has and should develop its own inherent pastoral and charitable dimension, and can profitably make use of a proper devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, one that is both strong and tender. This is a point made by the synod fathers: "When we speak of forming future priests in the spirituality of the heart of the Lord, we mean they should lead lives that are a response to the love and affection of Christ the priest and good shepherd: to his love for the Father in the Holy Spirit, and to his love toward men that was so great as to lead him to give his life in sacrifice for them."(148)

The priest is, therefore, a man of charity and is called to educate others according to Christ's example and the new commandment of brotherly love (cf. Jn. 15 :12). But this demands that he allow himself to be constantly trained by the Spirit in the charity of Christ. In this sense preparation for the priesthood must necessarily involve a proper training in charity and particularly in the preferential love for the "poor" in whom our faith discovers Jesus (cf. Mt. 25:40) and a merciful love for sinners.

In the general context of charity - which consists in the loving gift of oneself - is to be found, in the program of spiritual formation of the future priest, education in obedience, celibacy and poverty.(149) The Council offers this invitation: "Students must clearly understand that it is not their lot in life to lord it over others and enjoy honors, but to devote themselves completely to the service of God and the pastoral ministry. With special care they should be trained in priestly obedience, poverty and a spirit of self - denial, that they may accustom themselves to living in conformity with the crucified Christ and to, give up willingly even those things which are lawful, but not expedient."(150)

50. The spiritual formation of one who is called to live celibacy should pay particular attention to preparing the future priest so that he may know, appreciate, love and live celibacy according to its true nature and according to its real purposes, that is, for evangelical, spiritual and pastoral motives. The virtue of chastity is a premise for this preparation and is its content. It colors all human relations and leads "to experiencing and showing...a sincere, human, fraternal and personal love, one that is capable of sacrifice, following Christ's example, a love for all and for each person."(151)

The celibacy of priests brings with it certain characteristics thanks to which they "renounce marriage for the sake of the kingdom of heaven (cf. Mt. 19:12) and hold fast to their Lord with that undivided love which is profoundly in harmony with the new covenant; they bear witness to the resurrection in a future life (cf. Lk. 20:36) and obtain the most useful assistance toward the constant exercise of that perfect charity by which they can become all things to all men in their priestly ministry."(152) And so priestly celibacy should not be considered just as a legal norm or as a totally external condition for admission to ordination, but rather as a value that is profoundly connected with ordination, whereby a man takes on the likeness of Jesus Christ, the good shepherd and spouse of the Church, and therefore as a choice of a greater and undivided love for Christ and his Church, as a full and joyful availability in his heart for the pastoral ministry. Celibacy is to be considered as a special grace, as a gift, for "not all men can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given" (Mt. 19:11). Certainly it is a grace which does not dispense with, but counts most definitely on, a conscious and free response on the part of the receiver. This charism of the Spirit also brings with it the grace for the receiver to remain faithful to it for all his life and be able to carry out generously and joyfully its concomitant commitments. Formation in priestly celibacy should also include helping people to be aware of the "precious gift of God,"(153) which will lead to prayer and to vigilance in guarding the gift from anything which could put it under threat.

Through his celibate life, the priest will be able to fulfill better his ministry on behalf of the People of God. In particular, as he witnesses to the evangelical value of virginity, he will be able to aid Christian spouses to live fully the "great sacrament" of the love of Christ the bridegroom for his spouse the Church, just as his own faithfulness to celibacy will help them to be faithful to each other as husband and wife.(154)

The importance of a careful preparation for priestly celibacy, especially in the social and cultural situations that we see today, led the synod fathers to make a series of requests which have a permanent value, as the wisdom of our mother the Church confirms. I authoritatively set them down

again as criteria to be followed in formation for chastity in celibacy: "Let the bishops together with the rectors and spiritual directors of the seminaries establish principles, offer criteria and give assistance for discernment in this matter. Of the greatest importance for formation for chastity in celibacy are the bishop's concern and fraternal life among priests. In the seminary, that is, in the program of formation, celibacy should be presented clearly, without any ambiguities and in a positive fashion. The seminarian should have a sufficient degree of psychological and sexual maturity as well as an assiduous and authentic life of prayer, and he should put himself under the direction of a spiritual father. The spiritual director should help the seminarian so that he himself reaches a mature and free decision, which is built on esteem for priestly friendship and self - discipline, as well as on the acceptance of solitude and on a physically and psychologically sound personal state. Therefore, seminarians should have a good knowledge of the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, of the encyclical *Sacerdotalis Coelibatus* and the Instruction for Formation in Priestly Celibacy published by the Congregation for Catholic Education in 1974. In order that the seminarian may be able to embrace priestly celibacy for the kingdom of heaven with a free decision, he needs to know the Christian and truly human nature and purpose of sexuality in marriage and in celibacy. It is necessary also to instruct and educate the lay faithful regarding the evangelical, spiritual and pastoral reasons proper to priestly celibacy so that they will help priests with their friendship, understanding and cooperation."(155)

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_25031992_pastores-dabo-vobis_en.html

5. Miscellaneous

a) Report after “Kinship” Meeting, 1982

1. That the officers of BRI (the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference) be asked to set up a special subcommittee to study thoroughly the whole question of homosexuality and the church.
2. That balanced and responsible articles dealing with the biblical, theological and pastoral aspects of said topic be prepared for publication in the Adventist Review and Ministry.
3. That programs on sex education taught at our academies and colleges, seminaries and extension schools, church seminars and continuing education courses, and the like, include a unit on homosexuality.
4. That balanced and responsible reading lists be prepared for all the levels of education indicated under item 3.
5. That guidelines (similar to those voted by the Fall Councils of 1976 and 1977 with respect to divorce and remarriage) be drawn up for the benefit of pastors, teachers and administrators as they try to handle wisely, graciously and redemptively the particular cases of homosexuality that come under their care.
6. That we identify a number of informed and understanding pastors, teachers, counselors and other professionals, to whom our youth, on discovering that they might have a homosexual orientation, may turn with confidence.
7. That vehicles (such as hotlines) be set up so that youth in our academies, colleges and universities may contact such persons, assured of full confidentiality.
8. That the church recognize Kinship as a vehicle by which other young Seventh-day Adventists, discovering that they have a homosexual orientation, may find the help they seek. (Both the officers and general members of Kinship with whom we have been in contact have assured us that they are (a) opposed to proselytizing and (b) committed to referring those who call on them for help to those professionals who can give them the help they seek.)
9. That Josephine Benton and Lawrence Geraty be asked to serve as chaplains to the Kinship group. (The officers of Kinship have so requested.)