

Ministry

A Magazine for Clergy/October 1981



How does God speak?

Readers react to LaRondelle's analysis of the currently popular dispensationalist movement, and one reader believes we should definitely fire the pastor—and laymen, too!

Dispensationalism, pro and con

I want to encourage you in your writing against dispensationalism. In my observation, this has been a great drawback to Christendom for years. My section of the country is bogged down in this doctrine. I have longed and prayed for the truth to surface so that the true church can get on with its business. A future salvation for a national Israel and an earthly millennial reign is a string played on too much. Certainly the church is the true inheritor of the Abrahamic covenant. This is taught so plainly by Paul that it is hard to see why so many are led astray. As you say, the *Scofield Reference Bible* has misled many. My prayer is that someday the true church will emerge and cast off this yoke of bondage and claim the Old Testament prophecies as her own.—Burney Manning, Baptist Church, Kentucky.

Covenant theology does not have any more Scripture to stand on than do the cults and bankrupted liberals. I have preached the gospel since 1923 and am amazed at the ignorance of the Bible in most homes and many churches. God has three programs in the Bible: (1) a program for the Gentiles, (2) a program for Israel, and (3) a program for the church in this age. The church is made up of Jew and Gentile. The New Testament has not one verse to support the error that the church is the fulfillment of God's covenants with Israel and that there is no separate program for Israel after the church age. There was no church in the Old Testament. There is no church on earth during the millennium. Dispensational teaching is sound, Biblical, and in harmony with all the Bible. Covenant theology is stark heresy, wresting the Scriptures. I am not amazed to see covenant theology popularized. We will see all kinds of idiotic theology at the end, so that millions will worship the beast.—Merold E. Westphal, Washington.

Fire the pastor?

The article "What! Fire a Pastor?" (February, 1981) attracted my attention as a layman in the church. I remember a union conference president pleading with laymen to give more cooperation and less criticism to their pastors. It was what he *didn't* say that bothered me. The inference clearly was that the responsibility for good

relations between laity and clergy lies with the laity. Many of us in the churches, especially those of us with years of experience and activity, believe that a good working relationship between pastors and their members depends as much on the pastor as on his members. The average Adventist layman wants to respect his pastor and work with him. He wants to look upon the pastor as a shepherd leading his flock. Unfortunately, some pastors seem to consider themselves not shepherds, but cowboys riding herd on the roundup. Others act as if they are the executives of a large, religiously flavored business corporation.

On the layman's side, there are too many of us who are not honest with our pastors. Too often we express love and admiration to his face (especially as we pass out of the church doors congratulating him on a good sermon), but at home we join the telephone committee to review all his faults.

Laymen and pastors need each other. We need to listen to each other. Fire the pastor? Sure. Why not? And fire us laymen too. Fire us all with that holy fire that touched the lips of God's children in the past.—Don Welch, Seventh-day Adventist Church, New Mexico.

Basic viewpoint

For the past few years I have enjoyed reading *MINISTRY*, which has been coming to my church. The articles are of very fine quality and also very practical. Although our denominations differ, the material is written from a basic Christian viewpoint and is helpful to all who serve Jesus Christ.—Richard D. Rodda, Presbyterian Church, Alabama.

Meets specific need

The only periodical I receive that does not eventually go into file 13 is *MINISTRY*. I have a special place for it. I commend you on the quality of the splendid articles it contains. I especially want to thank you for the article "No One Should Die Alone" (March, 1981). I have a cousin who has brain cancer. I was struggling to know how I might minister to him. Your magazine was on my desk, and I thumbed through it. This article was exactly what I needed to read. I believe God spoke to me through the words written there. I grabbed my pen and started writing as fast as I could while

thoughts were whistling in my head. After my cousin received the letter, he called to tell me how deeply he appreciated it and the encouragement it had been. His praise made me feel so humble.—D. W. Green, Baptist Church, Mississippi.

Growth requires continuity

It appears that Roger L. Dudley's article "How Churches Grow" (July, 1981) did not consider one important factor affecting church growth (or nongrowth), and that is the length of time a pastor remains in a given church. I have no figures on which to base an opinion, but my distinct impression is that some pastors are moved with too great frequency to allow them to build a long-range growth program for their church. I realize that in some cases a pastor may not be achieving results at a particular church and a move may be desirable. But it seems that this question of frequent moves is one that needs careful study by conference administrators. The same issue of *MINISTRY* has a pastor's wife saying that she has moved 24 times in 32 years. An extreme case, perhaps, but too true.—Roy F. Williams, Seventh-day Adventist Church, Washington, D.C.

Bible is clear

Thank you for sending *MINISTRY* to me. I have followed with interest the articles dealing with Creation. I too believe in the Biblical report of God's creation. It is not a mere matter of exegesis whether one speaks of literal days or long periods of time. Our Bible tells us, too clearly for me to deny it, that God created the world in six days! To believe otherwise amounts to a denial of inspiration and God's omnipotence.—Henry A. Koch, Wisconsin.

Brother Lawrence

It was refreshing to read Dr. Johnston's evaluation of Brother Lawrence's life and devotion to the presence of God (July, 1981). The author's approach was different from what we have come to think about Brother Lawrence and therefore gives us new insights into his life.

We would very much like to reprint the article in our own magazine, *The Sword*, published by the Carmelite News Service. Please continue the great and good work that you are doing for ministers.—Kevin Shanley, Carmelite Order, Illinois.

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A Magazine for Clergy/October 1981/Volume 54/Number 10



COVER: VERNON TOOLEY III

How Does God Speak?/4. Defining inspiration is like catching a rainbow, says William G. Johnsson. Inspired writings may be known but never fully grasped. We may examine the words, turn them over, and feel them to see what it is that makes them inspired, but there will always remain an elusive element.

Ellen White's Role in Doctrine Formation/7. Ron Graybill. Is the revelation and inspiration of both the Bible and the writings of Mrs. White of equal quality? Can we make a distinction between the "normative" authority of Scripture and the "formative" authority of Mrs. White's writings in our church?

An Early Glimpse of Ellen White/9. Otis Nichols. An 1846 letter from an early believer in the visions of Ellen Harmon continues to have interest today.

Divine Key for a Finished Work/12. Gordon M. Hyde. The Lord gave us the key almost one hundred years ago, but we have succeeded too well and too long in hiding it. Let the glorious message ring out of complete acceptance of penitent sinners through Jesus' merits.

The Year-Day Principle in Prophecy/16. Edward Heppenstall.

If I Were a Pastor/20. Herbert Ford.

What's So Unique About Adventism?/23. J. R. Spangler. Are we guilty of exclusivism for believing that God has entrusted to this movement a comprehensive system of truth found in no other religious organization?

Seven Simple Suggestions/26. Gary D. Strunk. Research into the effects of simple health practices on both quality and quantity of life has some startling implications—eating between meals can be as detrimental as smoking; inadequate sleep can be as harmful as alcohol!

Ministers and Their Wives/28. Charles E. Wittschiebe and Norma Jean Sahlin.

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VERNON TOOLEY III

Inspired writings are a mysterious blend of the human and the divine. We must speak with caution when we describe their nature, not going beyond what is revealed or seeking to reduce the divine to the confines of our logic.

by William G. Johnsson

How does God speak?

Defining inspiration is like catching a rainbow. When we have put forth our best efforts, there will remain an elusive factor, an element of mystery. Inspired writings may be known, but never fully grasped. Instead, they grasp us—for through them God speaks to humanity. It is His—God's—presence, in the initial production and the subsequent reading, that makes them at once inspired and ultimately beyond our complete understanding.

Yet, inspired writings invite our study in order to discover their nature and purpose. They consist of words—common, ordinary words. They do not employ an otherworldly vocabulary, no mumbo jumbo of a secret society. Rather, inspiration comes to us in human speech, clothed with our humanity. We may examine these clothes, turn the words over and feel them to see

what it is that makes them inspired.

As we focus in this study on the writings of the Bible and Ellen G. White and seek to comprehend their inspiration, we may gain information in two ways. First, the writings themselves make certain statements regarding their nature and purpose. Compared with the total sweep of the writings, these statements are rather few; however, they deserve careful attention. Second, apart from what the writings say about themselves, we may study what they reveal. We may look at these words and arrive at conclusions concerning the way in which inspiration has worked to produce them.

Thus, inspired writings inform us both by self-identity and self-disclosure. These two sources lead us to an understanding of the nature and purpose of their inspiration.

This approach to the question of inspiration is an *inductive* one, rather than a deductive, which begins with preconceived ideas about the nature and purpose

of inspiration, coming to the writings with its mind already made up. The deductive method reasons: "If the Bible is inspired, then . . . If Ellen White was inspired, there would (would not) be . . ." The flaw in such an approach is that when the data of the Bible or the Ellen White writings do not harmonize with these expectations, the conclusion is that the writings are not inspired. But what has failed—the inspired writings or a preconceived theory of inspiration? This is why we must let the writings themselves reveal how God has inspired them rather than telling God what inspired writings must be like.

A short article such as this cannot expect to exhaust the wealth of data about inspiration that the Scriptures and Ellen White writings yield. Instead we shall confine ourselves to the principal conclusions to which these data point.

First, it is evident that Seventh-day Adventists have peculiar advantages over other Christians who seek to understand the nature and purpose of inspiration. Those believers have only the Scriptures, and the historical circumstances of their writing are shrouded in the mists of antiquity. While occasional Bible writers mention others who assisted them in their work, for the main part we must conjecture regarding the processes that led to the Biblical books as we have them today.

Seventh-day Adventists, however, have access to much secondary material that sheds light on Ellen White as an inspired writer. We have letters to and from her as she was engaged in her work; we have the observations of other Adventist pioneers and of her literary assistants and close associates. The time gap between the production of Ellen White's writings and our day is not great. Although there are some "missing links" in our knowledge of the production of her major works, the quantity and quality of historical data accessible to us is vast. We can draw back the curtains and look in upon an inspired writer actually at work in a manner that is impossible for us to do in examining the Bible writers.

Second, inspired writings are not subject to scientific "proof." They are too big to be encompassed within the span of finite reason. Although they come to us in everyday garb, they are the word of God. God is not to be proved by human minds!

So neither the Bible nor the Ellen White writings attempt to prove their inspiration. Both *claim* inspiration—and invite the reader to test that claim. They show such evidences of inspiration as unity, fulfilled prophecy, internal harmony, and their ability to change the life of the reader. All these appeal to our rational powers, but they do not constitute proof. If inspired writings could be proved by science or philosophy, the most brilliant minds of our times would all be persuaded.

But God's way confounds the wise and

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the mighty. His is the way of faith: as we open ourselves to Him, He reveals Himself through the reading of His writings. We know in our innermost being that they are inspired, because in them we find God. In a mysterious way, inexplicable to reason but known to everyone who will "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Ps. 34:8), inspired writings have a living, abiding character.

God's written word is like Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word. Looking at Jesus of Nazareth, the people saw One who had "no beauty that we should desire him" (Isa. 53:2), One apparently just like themselves. There were evidences that He was different—birth, miracles, offers of forgiveness. Evidences, but not proof as such. They wanted more: "Show us a sign," they kept saying. But He refused. He was the sign, if only they could see it. By accepting Him, by believing, they might have found that He was in fact the "Wonderful Counselor, . . . Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (chap. 9:6, R.S.V.).

Third, the Scriptures and the works of Ellen White are inspired in a manner different from other creations of the human spirit. We use the word *inspiration* in differing contexts: to describe the feelings produced by a beautiful sunset or Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*; to tell of a preacher's power to move us; to reveal the inner renewal found in a piece of great literature. In all these experiences we are aware of transcending our normal state to a higher level of being.

The inspiration of the Bible and Ellen White's writings is of a higher and different order, however. We do not deny the possibility of the Holy Spirit's working in some of the experiences we have just mentioned, but with inspired writings, in the sense that we are discussing, He is preeminent. The Spirit moves upon the writer so that God's message is communicated; He likewise moves upon the reader so that the divine message is received. "All Scripture is God-breathed," writes the apostle (2 Tim. 3:16, N.I.V.).* "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," echoes Peter (2 Peter 1:21). Paul claims that the counsel he writes to the Corinthians is indited by the Spirit (see 1 Cor. 7:40; 14:37). Over and over the prophets affirmed: "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying . . ."

Ellen White's writings, therefore, are not to be put on a level with those of other great Christian commentators. Although she often deals with subjects common to Luther, Calvin, and Wesley, and although there is often similarity of ideas, Ellen White's work differs in two respects—claim to superintendence by the Holy Spirit and to authority. "I was shown," she often commences; and, unlike the writers mentioned above, she received many of her messages through visions and dreams. She wrote with authority; to disregard or treat lightly her words would be to spurn

the word of the Lord. Thus she could write: "Sister White is not the originator of these books. They contain the instruction that during her lifework God has been giving her. They contain the precious, comforting light that God has graciously given His servant to be given to the world."—*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 50. (See pages 48-61 for similar and related statements.)

"I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision—the precious rays of light shining from the throne."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 67.

Fourth, inspired writings are fully human, but they are more than human. They are products of time and place, conditioned by the circumstances of their production and the personality of the writer. The authors employ the vocabulary and syntax of their culture and avail themselves of the sources of information available to any other writers of their time—records, assistants, other works on related topics, the fund of human knowledge.

Since inspired writings are fully human, in some respects they may be studied in the same way as any other literature. The Scriptures are ancient documents; Ellen White's writings are nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century works. Literary analysis, historical reconstruction, development of themes, setting in life, and so on may be brought to bear on the study as with any other literature.

Yet these writings, fully human, are more than human. They are word of man—but they are also word of God. Through them God speaks to us, calls us out of our lethargy and sin, calls us back to Himself. They live and abide forever (see 1 Peter 1:23), bridging the centuries and confronting us with the prophetic voice in the quietness of our living room.

Because inspired writings are more than human, the methods of literary analysis that we may employ on other historical writings are not fully adequate when applied to inspiration. If we would be open to the transcendent element in these works, we must be guided by the Spirit of God. That Spirit, who called forth the works initially, still brings them to bear upon us personally.

The Spirit moves upon our spirit so that spiritual things "are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). Without the leading of the

Spirit, inspired writings are merely word of man; with Him we hear them as also word of God.

Ellen White has expressed the blending of human and divine by a telling metaphor: "The Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine and the human. Such a union existed in the nature of Christ, who was the Son of God and the Son of man. Thus it is true of the Bible, as it was of Christ, that 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us' (John 1:14)."—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 25.

We must tread carefully when we discuss the nature of Jesus Christ, the God-man. Likewise we must speak with caution when we seek to describe the nature of inspired writings, not going beyond what is revealed or seeking to reduce the mystery of the divine to the confines of our logic.

Some Christians have a "docetic" view of inspired writings. Just as in the early centuries of the Christian era Docetists downplayed the humanity of Jesus, making it only a shell or form to contain the divine, so today some do not accept the full humanity of the Bible and Ellen White's writings. Theirs is a view that sees virtually every word of inspired writings as having been given directly by God.

On the other hand, some people who read the Bible or Ellen White's works see them as no more than religious literature, as works having historical interest and moral value, but nothing more. Such a view is similar to those early Christian heresies that taught that Jesus was a good man, even God's man, the Messiah, but not fully and eternally God.

Fifth, we should speak of inspired *writers* rather than inspired words. When we look at the actual words of the Bible and Ellen White, we see all the marks of humanity. Style and vocabulary differ from writer to writer; some use expressions that at times seem harsh or even coarse; there are minor disagreements regarding facts and numbers; writers quote from sources both within and without Scripture; sometimes they use poor grammar.

This should not surprise us. The Holy Ghost did not dictate each word; if He did, there would be uniformity of style, perfect construction, absence of discrepancies. Instead, the Spirit inspired men and women—fishermen, shepherds, a physician, herdsmen—learned and unlearned. The thoughts were God's, but the words

We may point to individual words to show the humanity, the personality, and even the frailty of the writer; we may even be able to identify discrepancies—but the total work is alive, impregnated with the Spirit.

were theirs. (See *Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 15-23.)

When John, Matthew, Paul, and Luke wrote, they wrote for the common person. They wrote to be understood, and used the ordinary language of the day. But they wrote as the Spirit inspired them. "It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts."—*Ibid.*, p. 21.

Sixth, inspired writers frequently employed assistants in their work. Since we have so few direct references to assistants in the Bible, we cannot be dogmatic as to the extent of their activity. Baruch wrote at Jeremiah's dictation, and Tertius wrote the Epistle to the Romans for Paul. (See Jer. 36; Rom. 16:22.) Very likely Paul used assistants for his other letters, but their names are not mentioned by him.

The scribes may well have been more than copyists. We forget that anciently reading and writing were not widely known. It is probable, I think, that some of the Bible authors were poor writers. The literary assistant possibly would help them in smoothing out expressions. In some cases, such activity of scribes may account for the marked stylistic differences between works by the same writer, as between 1 and 2 Peter.

Ellen White leaned heavily on the work of literary assistants. She could not have accomplished her prodigious output of writing without them. Present research indicates that in general their activity was at a mechanical, rather than creative, level. They copied Ellen White's handwritten notes, corrected spelling and grammatical errors, smoothed the syntax. Ellen White herself, however, gave final approval to the work.

Marian Davis was Ellen White's assistant par excellence. She played a major role in the preparation of *The Desire of Ages*, collecting appropriate material written by Mrs. White from among articles, letters, and manuscripts; making suggestions concerning topics; arranging materials into sequence and chapter progression. Ellen White called her "my bookmaker," acknowledging her contribution to the task (see *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 91).

But Marian Davis herself drew a sharp line between her work and Ellen White's. She made it clear that in no way was she the originator of the material with which she worked.

Inspired writing thus involves a process. At its beginning there is a contact between God and His messenger, as the person chosen by God is imbued with the Spirit to convey the divine instruction. At its end point lies a complete literary production, a letter to the Galatians or *The Desire of Ages*. In between we see a varying number of stages. In some cases the messenger

proclaims the divine message and someone else then commits it to writing. In other instances the written material itself goes through several drafts, with increased reflection, polishing, and revision. Thus, *The Great Controversy* as it finally emerged in the 1911 edition was the end result of a long process.

Seventh, while we should speak of inspired persons rather than inspired words, inspired writings as a whole bear the impress of the Holy Spirit. They are "God-breathed," a production of the Spirit. We may point to individual words to show the humanity, the personality, and even the frailty of the writer; we may even be able to identify discrepancies—but the total work is alive, impregnated with the Spirit. The words are man's, but the ideas are God's—they are His message to us.

There is no mixing of error with truth. Inspired writings set out the way of salvation; they reveal the divine will for us. Through them the Spirit breaks through the barrier of our faulty, fragmented efforts to communicate so that God can touch men and women and declare Himself and His plan to them.

This is why, despite the diversity of style and presentation, despite the many authors and the large time gap from first to last, there is a fundamental unity of inspired writings. One God speaks; one way of salvation is portrayed.

Eighth, inspired writings are given primarily to lead us to God and His salvation. They are not books of secret knowledge, they are not meant to be the last word in historical matters, they are not textbooks of science. Rather, they are "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). They are able to make us "wise unto salvation" (verse 15).

In setting out the way of salvation, inspired writings touch on many areas of life. Especially is history prominent in the Scriptures. Inspired writings deal responsibly with each of the areas they introduce, but they do not claim final authority in them. For instance, while Biblical history is accurate, since Yahweh manifests Himself in time, it is to some degree flawed. For example, the words of Jesus and the accounts of His ministry show variations and discrepancies, even as the chronolo-

gies of the Kings and Chronicles are not in perfect agreement.

But in no way is the central message of the inspired writings diluted by these discrepancies. They are of a minor order; the chief thrust in every case is clear. The Scriptures are inerrant as a guide to salvation. Ellen White's writings show similar data: she did not claim to be an authority in history or the order of events in the ministry of Jesus, even as she wrote that Paradise Valley Sanitarium had 40 rooms when it had only 38 (*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 38). But the overall impact of her work remains untouched: her writings bear the stamp of the divine credentials.

Finally, a study of inspired writings leads us to focus on the writings instead of the writer. This may seem surprising, since we have already seen that we should speak of inspired men and women rather than inspired words. But understanding better the nature of inspiration, discerning something of the process that produced the writings, we become more conscious of the humanity, the frailty, of the person at the center of the circle of inspiration. He or she, imbued with the Spirit, struggles to communicate the divine message to us. At times other individuals assist the efforts. The result is human, fully human. Critics and skeptics may point to its flaws.

But God has spoken! And God still speaks through these writings! The word of man is also the word of God. Though the messenger is weak, the Spirit accomplishes His purposes. Though the messenger is humble, God uses him or her to convey His will. Thus, if the person of Isaiah or Paul or Ellen White recedes, this is as it should be, that God might be all and His message be heard.

Though our humanity is weak and frail, it is still noble, patterned in the image of God. Though our speech falls short of perfect communication, it is still beautiful, capable of extraordinary persuasiveness. Two millennia ago God took humanity, as the Word was made flesh. Thereby He glorified it. In inspired writings the Word became—and remains—flesh again. Thereby our speech is glorified and utters the mysteries of heaven.

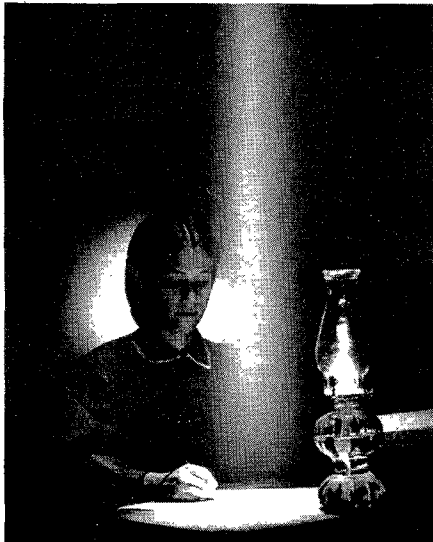
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Understanding better the nature of inspiration, discerning something of the process that produced the writings, we become more conscious of the humanity, the frailty, of the person at the center of the circle of inspiration.

Mrs. White herself clearly placed the Bible in a category by itself as the standard and rule for doctrine. What role, then, do her writings play for Seventh-day Adventists in formulating doctrine? The fact that Mrs. White's own particular calling and vocation were those of a prophet suggests that her role is not merely devotional or pastoral, nor yet exegetical or theological, but prophetic. Her ministry exhibits elements of all these other roles, but is distinct from them. Mrs. White's prophetic role in shaping doctrine is formative, not normative.

by Ron Graybill

Ellen White's role in doctrine formation



For Seventh-day Adventists the one standard, rule, and ultimate authority for doctrine is the Bible. All other doctrinal authorities are subordinate. "God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms," Ellen White wrote (*The Great Controversy*, p. 595). "The Bible, and the Bible alone, is to be our creed, the sole bond of union. . . . Let us lift up the banner

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on which is inscribed, The Bible our rule of faith and discipline."—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 416.

In this article the term *doctrine* is used in the sense of church doctrine. Such doctrine is often found in a church's statement of fundamental beliefs. It constitutes the church's formulation, summary, emphasis, and organization of divine truths. Thus doctrine expresses the church's understanding of God, His will and ways.

The first step in doctrine formation is to seek to understand the Bible through exegesis. The purpose of exegesis is to determine, as nearly as possible, what the author meant and what his first audience understood when they read his words, with minds made receptive by the Holy Spirit. Even in apocalyptic literature, we seek exegetically to establish what the language, form, history, and context will allow. It is in the exegetical process that the Bible must be allowed to be its own interpreter. In doing exegesis, we lay aside, so far as possible, our preconceived notions of what the Bible might mean, in the sense that we silence our personal wishes with regard to the outcome of the interpretation. We attempt to learn the questions that the particular author was trying to answer, the issues and problems that confronted him, and the concepts and methods that he had at his disposal in attempting to solve these problems.

Linguistics, history, the identification of literary forms, and careful attention to context all play crucial roles in the

exegetical process. Those skilled in the use of such exegetical tools are indispensable to the church. The common person can gain a saving knowledge from the Bible, to be sure. Yet that common person is indebted to technical experts who have, by comparing ancient manuscripts in a process known as textual criticism, attempted to establish the most accurate original text of the Bible. The common person is also indebted to the linguists who have translated those ancient manuscripts into modern languages. In this sense the common person's knowledge and understanding of the Bible are indebted to the work of Biblical scholars and can be further enhanced by their continued contributions.

It must be remembered that the Bible, though written in the words of men, remains the word of God. Because of this, the exegete, as he employs his technical expertise, must plead to receive the Spirit's guidance just as do the participants in every other stage of Bible study and doctrine formation.

This exegetical process does not, however, yield church doctrine. It is only the indispensable first step in doctrine formation in that it establishes our fundamental understanding of our ultimate authority for doctrine, the Holy Scriptures. The exegetical process elucidates the teachings of the Bible in all their multiplicity. These teachings vary in clarity and emphasis from Bible writer to Bible writer and even within the work of individual authors.

Furthermore, not all the teachings of the Bible are used by the church in forming doctrine. For instance, although the Bible teaches kindness to animals, we have not made this teaching one of our fundamental beliefs. For the Salvation Army, however, kindness to animals is a part of church doctrine.

In saying that the fruits of exegesis are not doctrine, we assert that doctrine is not merely a restatement of Scripture in contemporary terms. Doctrine is not related to Scripture in the way a translation of a document is related to the original written in a different language. A closer, though imperfect, analogy would be the relationship between the laws of a country and the constitution of its government. The constitution spells out objectives and themes and sets limits on possible laws, but living legislators frame the laws, appealing to contemporary needs and newly understood facts, as well as to the objectives and themes of the constitution. The analogy is imperfect in that there are many doctrines that spring from exegesis with little apparent interpretive influence from the church. What is more, every doctrine must have an exegetical warrant, an exegetical justification in Scripture. This means that, whereas any law not forbidden in the constitution may be enacted, only doctrine expressed or implied in Scripture may be adopted.

The second step in doctrine formation is taken in the theological work of the church. Thus there is both an exegetical phase and a theologizing phase in doctrine formation. Theology involves, at least in part, the comparing of passage with passage, author with author, and teaching with teaching. As this study goes forward, certain clear themes emerge. Christ is seen as the supreme self-revelation of God and the unifying theme of all Biblical revelation. Building upon the exegetical work of the church, theology seeks to harmonize the apparent contradictions of Scripture, to assess the relative significance of various Biblical teachings, to identify unifying themes, and to express the church's resultant understanding in doctrine.

Because we recognize the necessity and inevitability of this theologizing stage it would be naive of us to speak of the Bible as an *exclusive* influence in forming church doctrine. Scripture is certainly the only normative authority, but even in matters of *faith* it is the living church that decides—for example—how it will balance the teachings of the Gospels, the Pauline Epistles, the book of James, and the book of Revelation on such topics as faith, works, and judgment. In matters of *practice* a church that uses the Bible as its “exclusive” authority would not be in a position to ask its members to refrain from the use of tobacco because the Bible nowhere mentions tobacco. The Bible contains principles of healthful living but there are cases in which science, inter-

preted by the living church, has a role to play.

In this theologizing stage of doctrine formation, the church—any church, religious society, or fellowship group—employs various extra-Biblical aids, such as the writings of revered founders and respected theologians, together with previous decisions of the church in doctrinal matters. One of the most helpful aids for Seventh-day Adventists is the writings that the Spirit of prophecy led Ellen White to pen. Her writings have proved instructive and worthwhile in the church's efforts to formulate its doctrines. She offers the church aid, direction, and insight for this process.

This is not to say that Ellen White is a theologian any more than she is an exegete. Except in rare instances, Ellen White does not offer us exegesis in the technical sense, or the tools necessary to carry on exegesis. Raoul Dederen has stated it well: “As interpreter of the Bible, Ellen White's most characteristic role was that of an evangelist—not an exegete, nor a theologian, as such, but a preacher and an evangelist. . . . The prophetic and hortatory mode was more characteristic of her than the exegetical. . . . The people to whom she was preaching—or writing—were more the object of her attention than the specific people to whom the individual Bible writers addressed themselves.”—“Ellen White's Doctrine of Scripture,” in “Are There Prophets in the Modern Church?” Supplement to *MINISTRY*, July, 1977, p. 24H.

It is simply the case that, in doctrine formation, neither exegetes nor theologians are sufficient unto themselves. Not even together can they formulate church doctrine, for church doctrine expresses the whole church's understanding, not just the understandings of the trained experts or gifted leaders in these fields. The fact that Mrs. White's own particular calling and vocation was that of a prophet suggests that her role is not merely devotional or pastoral, nor yet exegetical or theological, but prophetic. Although her ministry exhibits elements of all these other roles, it is apart from them, distinct. Prophetic authority is authority to bring God's message to bear on the root problems of human existence, to search out human perversity, and highlight human potential in Christ. A prophet may argue theologically, may offer devotional reflection, and

may minister pastorally to God's people, but his message is usually more disturbing than a pastor's, more challenging than a devotional writer's, more gripping than a theological formulation, and more relevant than an exegetical exposition.

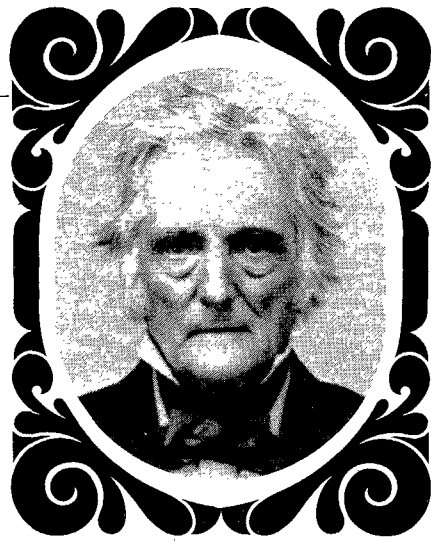
Mrs. White's prophetic role in shaping doctrine is formative, not normative. As the church engages in its theological task of formulating the fruits of exegesis into doctrine, it welcomes the prophetic influence as it chooses to expound and emphasize certain teachings of Scripture and not others. Thus Mrs. White does not prove for us that the seventh day is the Sabbath, nor is she the standard or norm for that belief, but by emphasizing the importance of the Sabbath in our relationship with God, she influences us to give special attention to this particular teaching of Scripture.

We believe the revelation and inspiration of both the Bible and Ellen White's writings to be of equal quality. The superintendence of the Holy Spirit was just as careful and thorough in one case as in the other. There is, however, a definite distinction to be made between the normative authority of Scripture and the formative authority of Mrs. White's writings in our church. Why should a distinction be made? In the first place, Ellen White clearly placed the Bible alone in the category of *standard* and *rule* for doctrine. Then there are practical reasons for making the distinction. Only if we refrain from using Ellen White as a normative authority for doctrine can we hope to meet other Christians on a common ground and expect them to see the validity of our doctrines. It follows then that even within the church Mrs. White must not be made the final court of appeal in matters of doctrine, because to make her so would be to have one standard for doctrine for entering the church and a different standard after one entered.

We can add a further practical reason why we dare not use Ellen White as the final arbiter in matters of doctrine. The vast scope of subjects on which she wrote and the fact that she employs or comments on so large a proportion of the verses in Scripture make it extremely difficult in practical life to avoid giving her a more important role than any Biblical author in the formation of doctrine. She simply had much more to say on all doctrinal topics than any other inspired writer. Thus if her

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An early glimpse of Ellen White



On April 20, 1846, an early Adventist by the name of Otis Nichols wrote a six-and-one-half-page letter to William Miller in which he gave reasons why he considered the visions of 18-year-old Ellen Gould Harmon to be genuine. It is significant that these reasons, which were set down within a year and one-half after Ellen Harmon's first vision, are strikingly similar to those held by Seventh-day Adventists today. The arguments are firmly rooted in Scripture. The following is the portion of the letter pertaining to Ellen Harmon, later to become Ellen White.—Editors.

Within is a part of the vision of E. G. H. [Ellen Gould Harmon] of Portland [Maine]. I fully believe them [the visions] to be from Heaven. The manner and circumstances attending is unlike anything I have seen or read of since the days of the apostles. I would ask you to lay aside prejudice and suspend judgment until you have read and compared them with the Scriptures [and] present truth. And "if they speak not according to this word (and present truth), it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20). "Despise not proph-

(Continued on page 10)

writings are used to end all doctrinal disputes, it is almost impossible to maintain the Bible as the normative authority for doctrine. The writings that the Spirit of prophecy inspired Ellen White to pen certainly should not be ignored in doctrinal debate. They promise us valuable insight into the message of Scripture, they highlight the importance of certain themes and truths. In the final analysis, however, those debates that are ended must be ended by appeals to Scripture alone. It is tempting in Ellen White's case to grant her more practical authority than any single Bible writer, because she wrote more about the Bible than any single Bible writer. This temptation could lead us into a situation in which canonical authority is actually less important to us than confirmatory authority.

Mrs. White's legitimate function in relation to the Bible should be consistent with her self-proclaimed purpose in this regard. The difficulty is that there is an apparent difference in her understanding of her purpose from one group of statements to another. On the one hand, Mrs. White has spoken of the purpose of her testimonies—a generic term referring to all her counsels. With relation to the Bible they are to—

Lead men to the Bible (*Evangelism*, p. 257).

Bring men and women back to the neglected Word of God (*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 455).

Call attention to God's Word (*Life Sketches*, p. 199).

Impress Bible truth upon minds (*ibid.*).

Simplify the great truths already given

in God's Word (*ibid.*).

Exalt God's Word (*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 606).

Give a clearer understanding of God's Word (*ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 246).

Impress upon hearts truths already revealed (*ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 660, 661).

Harmonize with God's Word (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 402).

Mrs. White says that her testimonies are never to be put ahead of the Bible (*Evangelism*, p. 256) and are not to be an addition to God's Word (*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 246). They "are not to give new light" (*Life Sketches*, pp. 198, 199) or "take the place of the Bible" (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 663). All the above statements can fit into a model that would clearly subordinate Ellen White's authority to the authority of Scripture. On the other hand, there are statements in which she appears to claim, by virtue of her inspiration, the right to define and specify the meaning of Scripture. She says that her writings on doctrinal matters are essentially without error: "There is one straight chain of truth, without one heretical sentence, in that which I have written."—*Selected Messages*,

book 3, p. 52. The testimonies, she assures us, "never contradict His [God's] Word" (*ibid.*, p. 32). She often recalled the early days when "the power of God would come" upon her, and she "was enabled clearly to define what is truth and what is error" (*Gospel Workers*, p. 302). When the brethren could go no further in those early Bible conferences, she would be "instructed in regard to the relation of Scripture to Scripture" (*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 38). "Thus," she says, "many truths of the third angel's message were established, point by point."—*Ibid.* Even portions of her diaries should be republished, she said, because they contain "light" and "instruction" that was given "to correct specious errors and to specify what is truth" (*ibid.*, p. 32). "I am thankful," she wrote to the evangelist W. W. Simpson, "that the instruction contained in my books establishes present truth for this time. These books were written under the demonstration of the Holy Spirit."—Letter 50, 1906.

These latter statements especially warn us that Mrs. White's comments on Scripture cannot be lightly regarded if we are to

The writings that the Spirit of prophecy inspired Ellen White to pen certainly should not be ignored in doctrinal debate. In the final analysis, however, debates that are ended must be ended by appeals to Scripture.

An early glimpse

esyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. 5:20, 21).

Visions are either from heaven (Acts 10:4-16) or from Satan (Deut. 13:1-5). Many of them at the present time are undoubtedly Satan's counterfeit, so, of course, there is a true coin. We are to judge of them by their fruits according to the Bible and the truth. If they are from heaven with a command to make it known to others, God will hold all accountable that hear. We are told in Deuteronomy 18:22 how to know whether it is from the Lord: "If the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken." But many now say that every vision has failed. Well, this is fulfilling Ezekiel 12:22-28. That proverb has been used to perfection for a few months past in the land of Israel saying the days are prolonged and every vision faileth. But God says, "I will make this proverb to cease" with "the effect of every vision."

The first vision of E.G.H. was in the fall of 1844, which never was published to the

world. It was a view of the travels of the Advent company from the seventh month, 1844, and so far as fulfilled they have had as perfect a fulfillment as could possibly be, especially in most Advent bands and individuals wherever we are acquainted. Her calling was most remarkable—only 17 years of age, sick with dropsical consumption and confined to the house for most of the time for five years and had been given over by physicians to die. In this state God called her and told her to go out and tell the flock what He had revealed to her—that an angel should accompany her all the time and sometimes two in time of need; that no wicked power on earth should have dominion over her if she would obey the Lord.

At the time she first went out to deliver her message (January, 1845) she was scarcely able to walk across the room and could not speak with an audible voice. But she had faith in God and was carried in this state a few miles to deliver her message. When she arose to speak, her voice was nearly gone, but God fulfilled His word [and] gave her strength of body and a clear,

loud, audible voice to talk nearly two hours with tremendous power and effect on the people without fatigue of body. From that time [and] for many weeks she continued to travel day and night talking almost every day until she had visited most of the Advent bands in Maine and the easterly part of New Hampshire.

Her message was always attended with the Holy Ghost, and wherever it was received as from the Lord it broke down and melted their hearts like little children. [It] fed, comforted, strengthened the weak, and encouraged them to hold on to the faith and [to] the seventh-month movement—that our work was done for the nominal church and the world and what remained to be done was for the household of faith.* Those that rejected her message very soon fell into the world and [into] a nominal faith. Those that did receive her testimony as from the Lord and afterward denied it, calling it mesmerism and an unholy thing, are many of those that are given over to strong delusion and working of Satan—a ship without a helm or anchor and driven by every wind, thus

honor her authority as she understood it. But in view of such statements we can also see why some have found it difficult to believe that our doctrines are, in the final analysis, based on the Bible and not on Ellen White. Our early critics had much the same problem. Having read Ellen White's account of how her vision helped settle the differences that arose among the brethren gathered at the conference in Volney, New York, in 1848 (*Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. II, pp. 98, 99), the critics scornfully summarized the incident by saying: "There was a diversity of sentiment; Sister White saw that they must lay aside their diversities and unite, and they did so."—J. N. Loughborough, "Recollections of the Past—No. 12," *Review and Herald*, March 3, 1885. J. N. Loughborough protested this interpretation. "The reason these persons gave up their differences," he tells us, "was not simply because Sister White said they must give them up, but because in the same vision they were pointed to plain statements of Scripture that refuted their false theories, and had presented before them in contrast a straight and harmonious track of Bible truth."—*Ibid*.

Loughborough was not at the meeting in question, but his interpretation of it in 1885 bears serious consideration. Could the Ellen White statements listed above be interpreted in this same light? If not, we suffer from an intolerable tension when Ellen White appears to be saying on the one hand that our beliefs must be established by the Bible and the Bible alone, and on the other hand asserts that her writings provide the ultimate verification

of our doctrines.

Since we believe that Mrs. White received revelations equal in quality to those received by Bible writers, though different in purpose and function, we bring her counsel and witness to bear on all stages of the doctrine-forming process—not as a final authority, but as a source of influence and insight. If we are to do this in the most effective, useful, and unifying way, we must also make Ellen White's writings the subject of careful study. Not every church member is called to engage in the finer points of this study any more than is every church member called to be a Greek scholar. However, this does not render unnecessary the efforts of some to go to greater depths in the study of these writings.

Many of the same techniques employed in Biblical studies are also useful in modified form in the study of Ellen White's writings. A substantial collection of her handwritten manuscripts are extant. These handwritten drafts can help us to understand more clearly what Ellen White had in mind when she was writing. During her own lifetime some of her literary

assistants had considerable latitude in the editing of her handwritten materials. Theirs was a work substantially more significant than that of an ordinary copy editor who might attend to merely mechanical and technical matters. Mrs. White, of course, reserved to herself the right of final approval on what they prepared. Thus both the handwritten original and the finished draft of any Ellen White manuscript constitute equally valid texts. The object of this textual analysis of Ellen White's writings is consequently to discover the range of possible meaning in a given message or to recover lost nuances rather than to establish one true original text.

It has been stated that Mrs. White's understanding of the Bible and God's activities grew over time. Thus it is useful to study all of her writings, published and unpublished, in their chronological sequence to chart the growth and change in various concepts.

Because Mrs. White is known to have used literary sources quite extensively, it will be helpful to identify, as far as possible, all of these sources. Her meaning can often

Before we attempt to force her into analytical categories provided by hostile critics, we need to analyze her relationship to the Bible on her own terms, examining both what she said and what she did.

causing the way of truth to be evil spoken of. This class of persons are her greatest enemies and have done what they could by calumny and lies to destroy her influence and character.

But God has hitherto protected her in a remarkable manner from all harm [and] raised up benefactors for her wherever she goes, notwithstanding the malice of wicked spirits and fallen Adventists through [whose] influence there have been a number of warrants for her arrest. God has signally protected her; at one time a sheriff and a number of men with him had no power over her person for an hour and a half, although they exerted all their bodily strength to move her while [neither] she nor anyone else made any resistance.

What I have written I have a knowledge of and think I can judge correctly. Sister Ellen has been a resident in my family much of the time for about eight months. I have never seen the least impropriety of conduct in her since our first acquaintance. God has blessed our family abundantly with spiritual things as well as temporal since we received her into our

family. The Spirit of God is with her and has been in a remarkable manner in healing the sick through the answer of her prayers; some cases are as remarkable as any that are recorded in the New Testament. But prejudiced or unbelieving persons find it just as convenient to call it mesmerism and ascribe the power to the devil as the unbelieving Pharisees did (see Matt. 10:25; 12:24). Is not this a sin against the Holy Ghost? (see Mark 3:22, 29, 30).

That power which is manifested in her as far exceeds the power of mesmerism as Moses' [power] did the [power of the] magicians of Egypt. The devil has as much power to imitate and counterfeit the work of God as he did in Moses' time, and the people can be deceived if they will. "Try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20). "If the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken"

(Deut. 18:22).

In conclusion, the Bible has always been a lamp to my feet and a light to my path, and is so still. I desire it should be until Jesus comes the second time to redeem the purchased possession of our vile bodies, which I believe will be very soon. I have ever aimed to read the Bible with common sense and simplicity and can truly say we are in those perilous times of the last days of 2 Timothy 3, Jude, 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12, [and] Matthew 24:24. The Scriptures must be fulfilled. . . . [Several additional sentences complete the letter.] Yours waiting for the return of our Lord from the wedding, Otis Nichols, Dorchester, Massachusetts, April 20, 1846.

*Seventh-day Adventists have believed that the parable of the ten virgins has a prophetic application to the experience of God's people in 1844. The "Midnight Cry" was symbolic of the message they gave in the summer of that year. For a time, this belief also entailed the idea that the "door was shut" against the "nominal church and the world," as Otis Nichols wrote. Gradually they came to understand that God's mercy was still open to some whom they had previously felt were rejected.

be clarified by comparing and contrasting what she has written with the source from which she is drawing her expressions and ideas. We need to see what she chose to use in contrast with what she chose not to use from a given author or a given passage, and to ask why she selected particular material.

As the relevant sources become more readily available we can meaningfully begin our study of some specific topics that will be helpful in establishing the proper relationship between Ellen White's prophetic authority, the authority of exegetes and theologians, and the authority of Scripture itself in the formation of doctrine. We need a comprehensive and thorough examination of all of Ellen White's statements about Scripture, published and unpublished. We need to study what she says about the hermeneutics, inspiration, authority, and usefulness of Scripture. This must be done, first of all, in chronological context in order to detect developments in her teachings. Second, it must be done in historical context by comparing and contrasting what she wrote with what others were writing and preaching around her. For instance, she traveled and preached with G. B. Starr in New Zealand during a time when he was vigorously attacking higher criticism. Starr's sermons were published in a local newspaper and thus can be compared with Mrs. White's own comments on higher criticism to see where she agreed, where she disagreed, and where she was silent on the points Starr made.

There is also something to be said about a certain "high" view of Scripture, found in Ellen White's writings, that lies quite

outside the discussion of inspiration as such. This has to do with her statements about the Scripture's usefulness. She ascribes great power to the Bible. It is more than merely a source of correct religious ideas. It is able to increase the power of the intellect and fill every other emotional, spiritual, and even physical need of mankind. This view of Scripture implies something about its inspiration, to be sure, but it is not a direct comment on its inspiration.

Not only must we study Ellen White's concept of the Scripture's usefulness but we must give more attention to her use of the Scriptures. We know that she used Scripture in a variety of ways, only rarely engaging in what we would call exegesis. But there is more than this to Ellen White's use of Scripture. Ellen White had a tendency to incorporate long passages of Scripture into her writings. In many cases these passages were written out in long-hand in her original manuscripts. What does this say about her view of Scripture? In places where we would zero in on a specific verse or phrase in Scripture, or where we would simply place a reference in

our writings, Ellen White would sit at her writing table laboriously copying an extended passage word for word. What does this mean? Does it imply a desire to stand back and let the scripture speak for itself, or is it merely a habit that helped to fill up pages? I suspect the former is more likely. Phenomena like this warn us that we may sometimes be asking the wrong questions about Ellen White's relationship to the Bible. At any rate, before we attempt to force her into analytical categories provided by hostile critics, we need to analyze her relationship to the Bible on her own terms, examining both what she said and what she did.

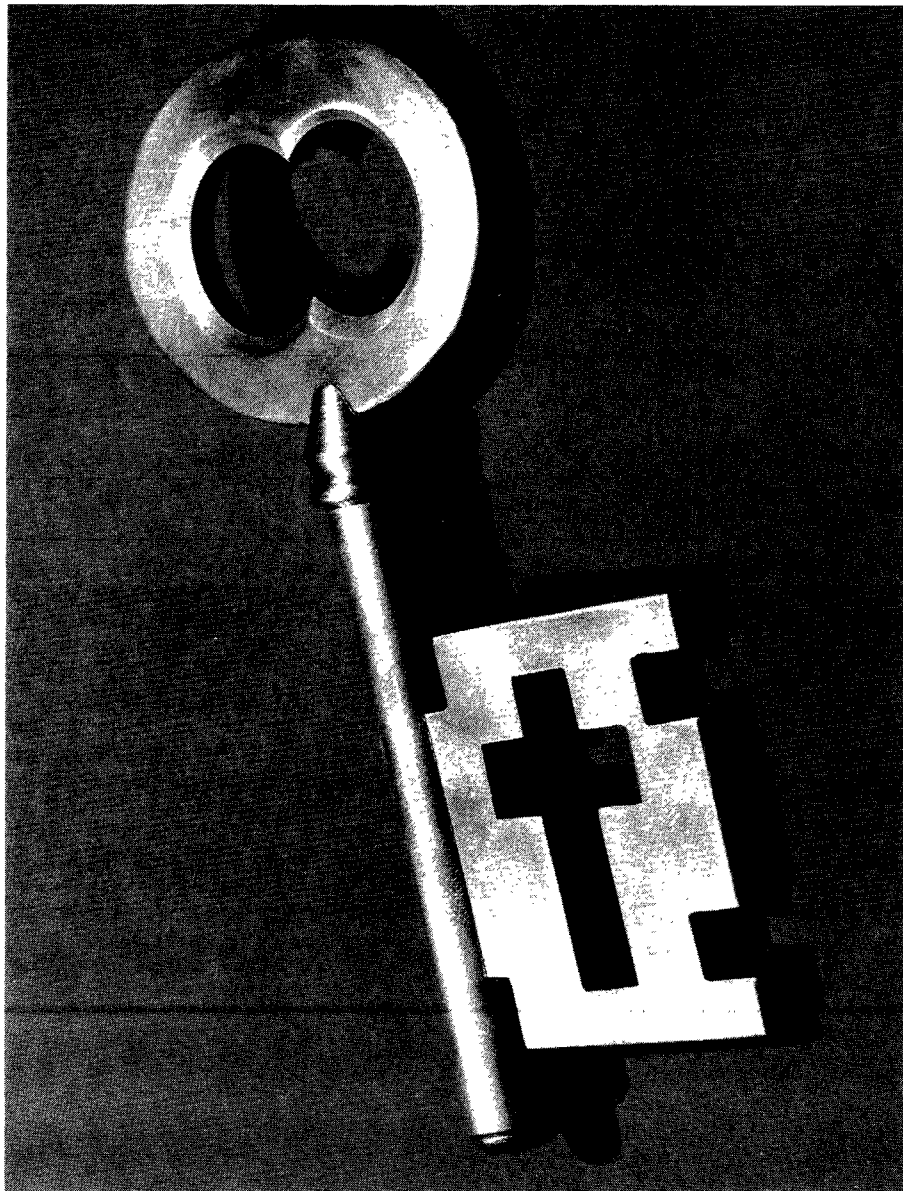
In summary, then, the Bible is our only standard and rule for doctrine. It is our ultimate doctrinal authority. The first step in understanding it is exegesis. The exegetical process is followed by a theologizing process. In this process, Ellen White, by virtue of her prophetic authority, influences us as we form the results of exegesis into doctrine. Her writings may be profitably studied, but she remains a formative authority in Adventist doctrine. The Bible is the only normative authority.

The object of a textual analysis of Ellen White's writings is to discover the range of possible meaning in a given passage or to recover lost nuances rather than to establish one true original text.

We have looked in many places for that which will finish the work, but perhaps we have looked in the wrong places. It seems so much easier for the human heart to look to methods rather than to a message.

by Gordon M. Hyde

Divine key to a finished work



This article is based on a series of devotional messages originally delivered to the General Conference family at its morning worship services. We believe that the ideas presented there deserve careful consideration by every Seventh-day Adventist minister. Therefore, at our request, Dr. Hyde has adapted his spoken messages into written form so that they might have this wider circulation.—Editors.

When we look at the horrendous accumulation of sin's consequences, it may seem futile even to suggest that the proclamation of a message could offer a modicum of hope for a solution to the sin problem.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that when God was confronted with the reality of Adam's and Eve's distrust and consequent disobedience, He proclaimed a message. But even before He offered the first gleam of hope to these saints-turned-sinners, He cried out in love and yearning for them as He still moved through the garden in the cool of the day. And when in the first blush of guilt our original parents wanted to hide themselves from God's presence, there was heartbreak in His voice—not just because they had allowed themselves to be divided and conquered by the deceiver, but more because they were now afraid of their Creator/Benefactor.

"The Lord God called to the man, 'Where are you?'" (Gen. 3:9, N.I.V.).* That's the source, the origin, of the gospel: God in search of sinful man; God, the Initiator of a way to save sinful man. That way was revealed in the first declaration

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and formulation of the gospel, addressed actually to the serpent/deceiver: "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel" (verse 15).

Now we are living in the time of the end. And we have been talking about a finish to the work of the gospel for quite a long time—about 137 years this October. And so we want to take another look for the divine key to a finished work. We may legitimately ask whether the close of the gospel's work might not result from the proclamation of a message, as did its beginning. And so we pose the question:

Is it a new gospel?

Is that what we need? If we need a new one, what was the old one? Was something wrong with it? Does God have a collection of gospels, and does He try out a new one every so often?

Incidentally, you remember Paul's words; they are rather strong, and Paul could produce strong words: "But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!" (Gal. 1:8). The word for an angel in New Testament Greek, as you know, is the same as the word for a messenger. Paul, under inspiration, is ready to condemn eternally a messenger or an angel from heaven for preaching another gospel. So how could we now expect that the divine key to a finished work would be a new or different gospel?

In fact, the Biblical testimony seems clear and consistent that the Lord has never had more than one gospel to offer. God had only one Son to send to this world. And there is only one true gospel to tell about Him. We hear its first proclamation in Genesis 3:15; and in the last book of the Bible the everlasting or eternal gospel of Revelation 14:6 is not a new one, although it is proclaimed as a part of God's last call to sinners and has emphases suited to the end-time issues of the controversy between Christ and Satan. Remember that one of the qualities of eternal persons or things is their unchangeableness. If they can change they are doubtless not eternal, not everlasting. (See Mal. 3:6.)

Around the year 1844 those who became our pioneers began to proclaim worldwide the gospel in the form and application that would meet the end-time conditions of the world. Basically, those conditions have not changed in the intervening years. The protagonists and the latent issues are the same. On the other hand, some voices among us today are privately advocating that we, as Adventists, stop teaching the nearness of our Lord's return. But were we to stop preaching that, then we would surely have to abandon the preaching of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12, because when these angels close their work the call

is for the Lord to make up the harvest of the world—a harvest of grain representing the saints and a harvest of grapes representing sinners. In the climax of their work, those three angels were to be augmented by another angel, who would stress the message of the second. And through his work—his proclamation of the gospel—the whole earth would be "illuminated with his splendor" and hear his "mighty voice," or loud cry. God's last call opened with the announcement of the pre-Advent judgment hour. The "other angel" will join the three to climax that last call.

We have been told by an inspired and authoritative messenger among us that this "mighty voice" message began to be heard in our ranks around 1888. (See A. G. Daniells, *Christ Our Righteousness* [Washington, D.C.: Review & Herald Publishing Association, 1941], p. 56.) The message of righteousness by faith, with its fruitage in holy lives, was to sound throughout the earth. The earth would be enlightened by it. A great host of new believers would be led to unite with the people giving the message. The early and latter rains of the Holy Spirit would precede and attend the message, and a quick work would bring history's long-awaited climax.

I fear that as a people we have yet to embrace that eternal gospel message, and if we do not soon receive it and share it, then someone else—maybe even the rocks—will have to give it. (See *Christ Our Righteousness*, p. 52.) The eternal gospel is God's method for making men and women right with God, and thus of preparing them for a finished work in the proclamation of the eternal gospel.

Made right with God—by faith

When God's chosen messengers began giving in 1888 what Ellen White endorsed as the timely last-day emphasis to the gospel, some leading lights among us feared that the security of the moral law and the Sabbath were being undermined from within—almost treasonously. The same kind of fear leaped up in the apostolic church when Paul began to give more than lip service to the only true gospel. Protectors of the Jewish system of worship and exclusiveness (who had joined the Christian church) were even ready to put Paul to death for what they saw as an undermining of the Jewish tradition by his understanding of the true freedom of the gospel.

And so, even today, we feel almost sick at heart when someone as much as mentions 1888, or Jones and Waggoner, or righteousness by faith, because the proclamation of that era seems to be so easily misunderstood and misinterpreted both by those hearing about it and sometimes by those presenting it. But please let your soul be at peace with God and your neighbor on this crucial issue: the gospel, truly presented, will neither damage nor tarnish the beloved moral law of God, or indeed any law or system of laws given by God (unless the era of its application has passed).

In a way, the moral law can take good care of itself; we do not need to fly to its defense. It has known the gospel longer than any of us have known it, and has never felt threatened by it. It is *we* who are threatened by the one or the other. So we come to the key text for this segment of our study: "For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law" (Rom. 3:28).

These words tell us that a man is counted and treated as righteous on the basis of his faith in the all-sufficient merits of Jesus Christ, and that this righteousness has no dependence upon law-observing. It seems significant, too, that there is no time limit placed upon this assurance, no statute of limitations. But just as we are beginning to settle all the weight of our soul on this glorious promise—beginning to know and feel that we may indeed have peace with God—someone hits an alarm and shouts, "But look at verse 31!" And when he gets us to look at verse 31, it seems as though he really wants us to forget that we ever saw verse 28. He seems to want us to feel that verse 31 so overwhelms verse 28 that we might as well forget that we ever saw it. Just when we begin to exult in the glorious truth that God counts us righteous by faith in the righteousness of Jesus, or in other words, that we are justified by faith apart from observing or doing works of law—any law—someone says with force and almost in anger: "That was all right back there when you first came to the Lord, but . . . !"

But what?

Is the message of Romans 3:28 and parallel passages of Scripture just something to be reached for frantically and briefly to get us out of the mire of sin? Is it God's plan that after the brief moment of divine deliverance we are now to climb to heaven—with perhaps a little help from

The Biblical testimony seems clear and consistent that the Lord has never had more than one gospel to offer. God had only one Son to send to this world. And there is only one true gospel to tell about Him.

the Lord, by the Holy Spirit?

Do we really want a finished work? To see a great ingathering of souls? Do we want those who have already found peace with God to listen to the special aspects of the eternal gospel that have been entrusted to us for these last days? Would we ask them to trade their peace of heart and joy in the Lord for the uncertainty and the heavy burden of guilt that too often seem to mark the experience of Seventh-day Adventists?

What is "the theme that attracts the heart of the sinner"? Do we know? It is "Christ, and Him crucified" (E. G. White, in *Review and Herald*, Nov. 22, 1892). Is that what people dominantly hear from us? Or are we so afraid that cheap grace will creep in with the gospel and undermine God's law that we dare not spend time at the cross?

What are the "sweetest melodies that come from God through human lips"? The answer—"justification by faith, and the righteousness of Christ" (*ibid.*, April 4, 1893). Made right with God—by faith! Be assured that there is no other way! Please listen to these challenging words: "The only way in which he [the sinner] can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner's account. Christ's righteousness is accepted in place of man's failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son. This is how faith is accounted righteousness; and the pardoned soul goes on from grace to grace, from light to a greater light. He can say with rejoicing, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.'"—*Ibid.*, Nov. 4, 1890.

At peace with the law

As we continue our attempt to identify the divine key to a finished work, note that Paul's clear teaching that a sinner is counted righteous by faith in Christ's righteousness and not by any works of law that the sinner may perform (and I take that to mean either before or after having been justified) does not in any way diminish the authority, sacredness, or centrality of the moral law in God's government of the universe. Indeed, he says, "Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law" (Rom. 3:31). We did not earlier deny the truth of this verse. We only regretted that so many of us over the past ninety or so years have wanted to brush rapidly past verse 28 to get to verse 31 with a deep sigh of relief that we are back to something that

upholds the law and the Sabbath. Protectionism of the law gave rise to some of the 1888-era controversies—the identity of the law spoken of in Galatians, the nature of the old and new covenants, and the bearing these issues have on the relationship between justification and sanctification.

But when we go back to Romans we note that Paul takes the whole fourth chapter to describe the experience of Abraham as a classic Old Testament example of one who was justified by faith. "To the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness" (verse 5). And yet that faith, credited or counted to Abraham as righteousness, revealed itself in obedience—not always perfect obedience, but certainly sincere intent of obedience. Whether in leaving his home for a strange and unrevealed destination or in accepting circumcision as the covenant sign or in believing the promise of a son or finally in being willing to offer up that son, Isaac, child of promise, as a sacrifice required by God, Abraham revealed his faith in obedience.

But Paul insists that it was not the acts of obedience that were credited to Abraham as righteousness. No, it was Abraham's belief, trust, and dependence upon God. It was his acceptance of the promises of God that were credited as righteousness: "being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why 'it was credited to him as righteousness.' The words 'it was credited to him' were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification" (verses 21-25).

Then comes the peace and joy passage of Romans 5:1, 2: "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."

These blessed words of assurance are followed by some of Paul's "how much more" comparisons climaxing in verse 11 with the claim that believers are entitled to "rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation." This latter expression in the perfect tense indicates a

past completed action that has ongoing effectiveness in the present. It is something that can be counted on. It is beyond doubt.

In his use of the comparison "how much more" (verses 10, 15, 17) Paul is contrasting the ill effects of Adam's sin upon the race with the beneficial and glorious effects of the gift of God's grace in the one Man Jesus Christ. One man's sin spread throughout the race, but one Man's righteousness is fully adequate to reconcile, justify, and bring life to many—indeed, to all who choose to believe (see verses 11-20).

A key question in our search for God's key to a finished work (in the light of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14) is this: What possibility is there that a believer can have peace with God through our Lord and yet be at enmity with the moral law of God? It seems appropriate here to remember Psalm 119:165: "Great peace [*shalôm*] have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them [cause them to stumble]" (K.J.V.). This Old Testament assessment is clearly supported by Paul, as we have seen in Romans 3:31. The gospel holds no threat to the sacredness and perpetuity of the law. Indeed not! The gospel is the upholder, the restorer in believers' hearts, of love for and loyalty to the law.

Well, that sounded so good to some who liked to forget the call of the law, and so threatening to others who feared for the law's safety, that Paul spoke to the issue. Since this grace, he said, is such a wonderful antidote to the breaking of the law, and since it is the supreme provision of God's love, why not urge that we go right on sinning—transgressing the law more and more—so that more and more grace may be called out from the loving heart of God? (See Romans 6:1.)

Wait a minute! Paul says in answering his own rhetorical question: If the grace of Christ brought us into the experience and position of being dead to sin (since we were baptized into Christ's death—verse 3), how can we go on casually, carelessly, glibly sinning? We are not going to have sin for our master now, just because grace has been offered us in Jesus Christ! We were the slaves of sin once, but Christ has released us from that bondage. He has set us free from sin, by His grace. As a result we are now by choice "slaves to God," and the benefit we reap from that is "eternal

Some voices among us today are privately advocating that we stop preaching the nearness of our Lord's return. But were we to stop preaching that, then we would have to abandon the preaching of the three angels' messages.

life" (see verses 15-23).

Since the benefit of this enslavement to God "leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life," we are greatly interested in the thought that Christ Jesus provides everything to make the believing sinner "complete."

Complete in Jesus Christ

Whatever is necessary for the salvation of sinners has already been purchased in full by Jesus Christ! To be thus complete, that provision would have to supply the remedy for every need that Adam's sin, and our own, have created within us and upon us. It would seem that such completeness would have to include: forgiveness of sins; adoption back into God's family; the crucifixion of the old man of sin; deliverance from sin's full wages, i.e., death without hope of resurrection; deliverance from the power of sin in the nature we have inherited and cultivated; acceptance with God through the merits of One equal to the law; growth in grace; being under the new management of the Spirit; and development of an environment conducive to restoring the image of God in man whether by temperance, healthful living, continuing Christian education, ecology, family maintenance, or whatever. And I propose as the all-sufficient provider of all these aspects of the eternal gospel: Jesus of Nazareth, Son of man, Son of God, God with us! "Ye are complete in him" (Col. 2:10, K.J.V.)!

There are many scriptural illustrations of this great truth: (1) God's provision of coats of skins for Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:7, 21); (2) the ark for believers in Noah's day (Genesis 6-9); (3) Joshua and the angel (Zechariah 3); (4) the Vine and the branches (John 15:1-12); (5) the Divine Salesman and His all-sufficient wares (Rev. 3:18-21), and so on.

This all-sufficient provision for our salvation involves many of the divine paradoxes of Scripture. These paired opposites need to be held in the divine tension in which the Bible presents them, or we will lose our salvation moorings and drift into one extreme or another. Not all who heard and accepted Jesus in person understood all of these things, but what He presented to them in embryonic simplicity, they accepted in childlike trust and commitment. And He blessed them with His completeness from the very first day of their acceptance of Him.

And they grew in grace, daily. It remained for the apostles, under the Spirit's tutelage, to give the more complex gospel issues that became "present truth," as the all-Jewish early church opened reluctant doors to the Gentiles and also bade a limited and hesitant farewell to Jewish traditions.

Regarding the completeness that the believer has in Christ, a most moving and appealing article from the pen of Ellen G. White appeared in the *Signs of the Times* of

July 4, 1892. (Note that the year of publication places this presentation in the time of the swelling of the 1888 message—a message designed by God to fulfill the work of the angel of Revelation 18:1-4 for a finished work of the eternal gospel.) The article's major point, achieved by the repetition of the key phrase of Colossians 2:10, is that every requirement for the salvation of sinners has already been completely purchased by Jesus Christ, and that in a childlike acceptance of His "exceeding great and precious promises" (2 Peter 1:4, K.J.V.) the believer is and will be "complete in him."

The whole article inspires, but a choice excerpt must suffice for our purpose here:

"Perfection through our own good works we can never attain. The soul who sees Jesus by faith, repudiates his own righteousness. He sees himself as incomplete, his repentance insufficient, his strongest faith but feebleness, his most costly sacrifice as meager, and he sinks in humility at the foot of the cross. But a voice speaks to him from the oracles of God's word. In amazement he hears the message 'Ye are complete in him.' Now all is at rest in his soul. No longer must he strive to find some worthiness in himself, some meritorious deed by which to gain the favor of God.

"Beholding the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, he finds the peace of Christ; for pardon is written against his name, and he accepts the word of God, 'Ye are complete in him.' How hard is it for humanity, long accustomed to cherish doubt, to grasp this great truth! But what peace it brings to the soul, what vital life! In looking to ourselves for righteousness, by which to find acceptance with God, we look to the wrong place, 'for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' We are to look to Jesus; 'for we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory.' You are to find your completeness by beholding the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." "When the sinner has a view of the matchless charms of Jesus, sin no longer looks attractive to him."

Here again is the security of the moral law, the sure defense against any version of "cheap grace." He who feels that the justifying righteousness of Christ gives him a license to sin with impunity has never really seen the true meaning of the cross, of Gethsemane and Calvary.

The dominant theme

If the Seventh-day Adventist Church was indeed called into existence by God to give the emphasis of Revelation 14 and 18 to the eternal gospel (and who else is doing it, if we are not?), then it still is faced with an awesome responsibility. That responsibility is to put the glorious good news of justification by faith at the forefront, middle, and end of its presentations to the world. That was the inspired call of the 1888 era, centered in the Minneapolis General Conference session.

Of course, we do give justification a kind of lip service, but so often we want to relegate it to a secondary role—to fade it out so that sanctification can take front and center position. That seems to have been our dominant posture ever since key leaders opposed Jones and Waggoner and began to doubt Ellen White's ministry in the years surrounding 1888. We pray for the awaited restoration of God in us, which is one of the conditions of a finished work, but we seem unwilling or unable to accept the role of justification by faith in making that restoration possible.

God gave us the key to a finished work in 1888—the key to the loud cry of the third angel's message. We have succeeded too well, too often, and too long in hiding that key. Let the glorious message of complete acceptance of penitent sinners through Jesus' merits ring out! Sanctification accompanies justification, but the basis of complete acceptance never changes. The obedience even of true believers is always tarnished, if only by these "corrupt channels of humanity" in which we must dwell until the Lord comes. Always we need the incense of Christ's righteousness to make our prayers, praise, and confession "wholly and entirely acceptable." When we offer it to God, we will see answers to our prayers in the mighty movings of the Spirit of God among us and in His reaching out through us for a finished work. (See E. G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 344.)

Let us as the Laodicean people open the heart door and let the Saviour in. He has everything we can possibly need. We can be complete in Him. There is no other way!

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God gave us the key to a finished work in 1888. We have succeeded too well in hiding that key. Let the glorious message of complete acceptance of penitent sinners through Jesus' merits ring out!

After widespread acceptance for many years, the principle that a day in symbolic time prophecies of Scripture represents a year of literal time is being questioned. Is there internal evidence within such time prophecies themselves, apart from the traditional proof texts, to support the validity of such a symbolism? Can a literal interpretation of days fit the prophetic viewpoint?

by Edward Heppenstall

The year-day principle in prophecy

In the Old Testament book of Daniel and the New Testament book of the Apocalypse the fulfillment of certain prophecies is grounded in the time periods of the 1260 and 2300 days. No church can claim to interpret these prophecies correctly that does not allow full weight to these time periods. These prophecies in which the time periods are found are given in symbolic language. Therefore, are the 1260- and 2300-day periods to be understood as literal days or as symbolically representing years?

A comparison of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation shows that the same prophetic time periods stand or fall together. The Apocalypse is intended as a sequel to the prophecies in Daniel, even though they were written more than five hundred years apart.

How do the time periods fit the scope

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and meaning of these prophecies in which they are found? What is the time perspective that is so important to their fulfillment in both Daniel and the Revelation? Whether or not these refer to chronological days or days symbolic of years will determine where these prophecies belong in time.

Time periods in Daniel

The first reference to the 1260-day period is found in Daniel 7:24-27, where the apostate "horn" exercises dominion over the saints "until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High."

Who is this "horn" that is to exercise dominion over God's people for so long a time? It rises to power amid the ten nations into which the Roman Empire had been

broken during the third to the fifth centuries A.D. It was not a foreign power coming in from the outside. It was equal in power to the existing ten nations out of which it came.

This persecuting power is brought to judgment, and his dominion is taken away following the 1260-day or -year period. The text then declares that "the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom" (verse 27). But no such triumph of the people of God followed either Antiochus Epiphanes or pagan Rome.

In Revelation 12:6, 14, the same time period of 1260 days or "a time, and times, and half a time" refers to the wilderness period of the Christian church in the Christian Era when the church is persecuted. The time is clearly indicated as being when Satan stood before the woman (the church) to destroy her child (Jesus Christ) as soon as it was born. Satan lost this crucial battle of the war; Christ was victorious and "was caught up unto God, and to his throne" (verse 5). One would expect that following Christ's victory over Satan the Christian church would continue triumphantly. But such was not the case. The church fled for her life for a period of 1260 years, "where she . . . [was] nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent" (verse 14). Both Daniel 7 and Revelation 12 place the 1260 years within the Christian Era. There is no evidence that following the defeat of Antiochus or the end of the Roman Empire, "the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven" was given to the saints. Obviously, the time period stretches far into the future and the 1260 represent years, not literal days. How could such a short period of three and a half years be that crucial and fulfill the same time prophecies of both Daniel 7 and Revelation 12?

Daniel 12

This chapter concludes the visions given to Daniel beginning with chapter 8. Interestingly enough, the interpretation involves continued communication of angels with Daniel.

"Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half, and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished" (Dan. 12:5-7).

The events pictured in the first two verses of this chapter involve the standing up of Michael, the time of trouble, the resurrection of the dead, the retribution to eternal life. The reference to the resurrection excludes any possible reference to Antiochus or pagan Rome.

The all-important question is asked: "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" That is, the wonders given in the previous chapters and visions. Daniel had already asked the same question in Daniel 8:13. He appears throughout anxious to know the time.

The answer involves three time periods. First, one of the angels answers: "It shall be for a time, times, and an half, and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." In other words, at the close of this period of 1260 days or years, the holy people will cease to be scattered. Obviously, this does not apply either to Antiochus or to pagan Rome.

If this statement applies to the Jews, Antiochus did not scatter the Jews. But the Romans did—in A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem. The Jews were scattered until the 1940s, when they returned to Palestine and established the state of Israel.

If the reference is to the wilderness period of the Christian church, then the 1260 days must be symbolic of years. In Revelation 11:2 John states that the Gentiles "shall . . . tread [the holy city] under foot forty and two months." Christ in His great prophecy in Luke 21:24 said, "And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled"; and in the following verse, "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity."

When Michael stands up for His people there shall be "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation . . . : and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Daniel prophesied that unless this particular period be shortened, there would be no survivors. This certainly was not fulfilled in Antiochus or in pagan Rome.

The time shall be when the scattering and dispersion of the holy people comes to an end. The final tribulation in the world shall be accomplished, never to recur. There will be no others to follow that are comparable.

If the angel intended to refer to events in the time of Antiochus, it is difficult to see why Daniel included the resurrection.

Nothing in this chapter could have occurred under either Antiochus or pagan Rome. The time belongs far in the future; the 1260 years are given by the angel in answer to the question: "How long?" Furthermore, in answering the question "How long?" the angel is commissioned to impart two more important periods: 1290

days (verse 11), thirty days longer than the first period of 1260 days; 1335 days (verse 12), forty-five days longer. And the angel adds: "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."

These three periods begin at the time when "the daily sacrifice shall be taken away" (verse 11). All three periods are placed together in answer to the question "How long?" If we apply all these periods to Antiochus in relation to his war and persecution of the Jews beginning in 164 B.C., must we not insist that these three periods require precise dates?

The book of Maccabees gives an account of Antiochus and his sacrilegious pollution of the Temple in Jerusalem (chaps. 1:54, 59; 4:52). Antiochus set up the idol altar in the Jerusalem Temple for a period of exactly three years, not three and a half. He got possession of the Temple on the twenty-fifth day of the month Chesleu. Exactly three years later, on the same day of the same month, the Jewish sacrifices and services were reestablished, 180 days short of the 1260. To those who wish to dismiss the 180 days for an approximate time, we ask, what is the purpose of the angel giving two more periods with thirty or forty-five days between them? Do such differences in time simply not count?

Further difficulties begin when an effort is made to specify the end of the 1290- and 1335 days in the life of Antiochus. There is no historical evidence that can apply to either Antiochus or pagan Rome. Since the Apocalypse also uses the identical period of 1260 days to apply to the Christian Era, there is no way these days or years can be pushed back into the Old Testament, especially when these periods are tied to the resurrection of the saints.

In this twelfth chapter, Daniel did not obtain the answer he sought as to time; the angels refused to be more specific. Part of the vision was to remain sealed until the time of the end (verses 4, 9, 11), indicating that these visions were not to be fulfilled in the immediate future. They could be read, but not understood. Daniel is dismissed in peace without having the question answered. "Go thy way till the end be: . . . and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" (verse 13). This standing in the lot suggests taking possession of what is to be allotted to him by divine judgment, probably after the resurrection of the saints.

Daniel 8 and the 2300 days

It is argued by some that the 2300 days of evening and morning require that we divide the 2300 evenings and mornings by two, resulting in 1150 twenty-four-hour days. In this way the period will fit alongside the 1260 days.

The Hebrew words for evening and morning is 'ereb boqer. These words are first used in Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31. "The evening and the morning were the first day," the second day, and so on, referring to an astronomical day of twenty-four hours' duration.

The morning and evening sacrifice was offered in the 'ereb (evening) and the boqer (morning), indicating the time when these sacrifices were offered and not the sacrifices themselves. "One lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even" (Ex. 29:39; Num. 28:4). "And the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening" (Ex. 18:13). These statements refer to days of twenty-four hours.

There is no conclusive evidence that the 2300 evenings and mornings refer to the morning and evening sacrifices. The Biblical evidence clearly indicates that the reference is to 2300 days, twenty-four hours in length.

For those who accept the 2300 days as chronological, referring to Antiochus Epiphanes, there are six years from the murder at Tyre of three Jewish deputies by Antiochus in 170 B.C. to the purification of the Jewish temples in 164 B.C. To meet the 2300 days, another 140 days are needed.

The question again rises as to whether these time periods are intended to be precisely what is stated or simply general terms that can be adjusted to meet whatever is convenient.

Daniel 9 and the 70 weeks

Daniel had prayed for an explanation of the 2300 days, thinking it meant an extension of their seventy-year exile, a delay in Israel's return to Jerusalem. The seventy weeks that are determined upon the people of Israel is part of the vision given in chapter 8. Daniel reported that while he was praying, Gabriel came, "whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning" (verse 21). This vision at the beginning cannot refer to anything mentioned in this ninth chapter, for as yet no vision has been given. The only vision "at

There is no conclusive evidence that the 2300 evenings and mornings refer to the morning and evening sacrifices. The Biblical evidence clearly indicates that the reference is to 2300 days, twenty-four hours in length.

the beginning" that involves both Gabriel and Daniel is the vision of the 2300 days.

Does the "seventy weeks" in this particular period mean seventy weeks of years or seventy weeks of days? The Hebrew phrase does not mention either days or years. The Hebrew text uses a word that signifies "heptade or haptades," meaning division of seven. Literally that is, seventy sevens of days or of years. If it means seventy sevens of years, then the time is literal, 490 years. If it means seventy sevens of days, then the time is symbolic of years. The phrase by itself cannot be made to fit either years or days. This can only be determined by the context and the nature of the case.

Since the seventy sevens of Daniel 9 is part of the 2300 days, this would suggest that we must stay with prophetic time, interpreted according to the year-day principle. Gabriel gives to Daniel the time that is now left to the Jewish people, seventy sevens. It is unlikely that Daniel would adopt one mode of reckoning for the 1260 days (chapter 7), a different one for the seventy sevens (chapter 9), then revert in the twelfth chapter to his original mode, based on the year-day principle. All these prophecies are symbolic; should not the time periods be so also? Cannot the seventy sevens just as well refer to symbolic time?

The 490 years are divided into three parts. The first part, seven sevens, or forty-nine years, involves the restoration of the sanctuary, the city, and the wall of Jerusalem and the return of the exiles. The second part, sixty-two sevens, 434 years, brings us to the advent of the Messiah. The last unit of seven years is "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy" (verse 24).

The seventieth week brought the crucifixion of the Messiah—God's atonement for sin and the provision of saving righteousness—and shortly after the end of the 490 years. "The end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." So the end of the seventy weeks brings the final destruction of the earthly sanctuary.

"To anoint the most Holy" refers to the dedication of the sanctuary during the seventieth week. Anointing, or dedication, is made at the beginning of the sanctuary ministration, not at the end. Does not "most Holy," then, refer to the heavenly sanctuary, since the earthly sanctuary is no more? Christ here announces the commencement of His reign and ministry as man's high priest in the heavenly sanctuary. Regarding the end and climax of the 2300 years, it is declared: "Then the Holy Place shall emerge victorious" (chap. 8:14, N.E.B.).* The only sanctuary in existence at that time would be the heavenly, since the earthly sanctuary no longer existed. It is worthy of

note that the anointing of the heavenly sanctuary following Christ's ascension begins the first phase of Christ's priestly ministry and the end of the 2300 years begins the second phase, the pre-Advent judgment.

Suppose we concede that we are not dealing with prophetic time in this passage. Why cannot it please God in other instances to make use of days as symbolic of years, even though one might not argue this as Ezekiel does (see Eze. 4:4-6)? Quite often the Hebrew word for *day*, *yôm*, denotes a year. "Samuel ministered before the Lord. . . . His mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year" (1 Sam. 2:18, 19). The Hebrew word used in the expression "year to year" is *yôm*.

Let us not rush to rid ourselves of what we have believed about this verse in Daniel in order to reject the year-day principle and seek to make the prophecies fit a preconceived timetable.

Time periods in the Apocalypse

It is reasonable to hold that every reference to a given time period in the Apocalypse should be in agreement with every reference to the same time period in the book of Daniel, since the prophecies in both books are a divine work. What is witnessed to in these time periods constitutes in large part the divine realities from which the Adventists' faith sprang. If our interpretations of these prophecies and time periods are no longer Biblically sound, then any amount of dogmatic rationalization cannot save our cause. Our problems do not thereby disappear; they do but haunt the mind still more.

Revelation 12

"And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days" (verse 6).

"The dragon . . . persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent" (verses 13, 14).

This part of the prophecy involving the time period of the 1260 days follows the coming of Christ, His work on earth, and ascension back to the court of heaven.

Hence the period is located in the Christian Era.

This chapter constitutes a survey of the great controversy between Christ and Satan with emphasis upon the war that takes place in heaven and on earth. Satan is defeated in heaven and cast out. The crucial battle of the war takes place at the crucifixion of Christ (see John 12:31, 32), and Christ is victorious.

Since Satan lost both the war in heaven and then on earth when Christ came, one could assume that this would assure the church of Christ continued triumph through to the time of Christ's return. Yet the worst period of persecution in salvation history follows, the wilderness period of the church for 1260 years.

This experience of God's people is identical with the wearing out "of the saints of the most High" described in Daniel and discussed above. This period of the persecution of the saints and the dominion of the Antichrist covers most of the Christian Era down to the "time of the end." Since the Apocalypse is intended as a sequel to the visions in Daniel, the fulfillment of the apostate horn and power in Daniel and the dragon and the beast in Revelation must be sought in the Christian Era.

The relationship between the two books centers in the work of divine judgment leading to the final triumph of the saints and the defeat of their enemies. The fact that Christ has already come and wrought His redemptive work among men does not mean that His work is finished. Christ still ministers in and from the heavenly sanctuary in terms of redemption and judgment.

The great prophecies in Daniel and Revelation are so framed as to admit of progressive fulfillment over a long course of history, looking forward to the final triumph of the church of God and of God Himself.

Revelation 11

"The holy city shall they [the Gentiles] tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. . . . These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will" (verses 2-6).

Since the Apocalypse is intended as a sequel to the visions in Daniel, the fulfillment of the apostate horn and power in Daniel and the dragon and the beast in Revelation must be sought in the Christian Era.

Following the reception of the little book from the angel's hand in chapter ten, John is directed to measure the sanctuary, the altar, and the worshippers. The reference is to the ministration of Christ, the place of atonement, and the true worshippers.

This same prophecy predicts the Gentiles will tread down the holy city under foot for forty-two months. During this time the two witnesses will witness in sackcloth. Here Scripture reminds us of the power of these two witnesses, shutting up heaven that it rain not in the time of Elijah, smiting the earth with plagues as often as they did. It is inconceivable that a comparatively small king or nation could limit the power of these two witnesses for a long period. When we consider that war is to be waged against them by the beast out of the bottomless pit, it is exceedingly questionable that the reference is to 1260 literal days. Since the time period is the same as those already referred to in both Daniel and the Revelation, then the historical events that occur over a long period of time fulfill the prediction made—to clothe the two witnesses of the Word of God in sackcloth and suppress their testimony during the 1260 years.

Revelation 13

"And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him" (verses 4-8).

Here in this chapter is set forth a titanic struggle between the demonic and the divine. This prophecy, grounded in the 1260 years, tells of the satanic power that made war with the saints and overcame them, exercising dominion over "all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him." The magnitude and scope of this controversy transcends altogether the war against the Jews by Antiochus. The uncurbed persecution of the saints during the 1260 years, the seeming triumph of that power that has commanded the worship and allegiance of the Western world, leaves Antiochus unrecognizable.

Almost all of these prophecies in Daniel and Revelation, plus that of our Lord in Matthew 24, encompass most of salvation history in the Christian Era. To believe that they are deserving of only a preterist interpretation leaves no room for their

fulfillment in the Christian Era.

The development of salvation history in time lies at the basis of these prophecies. Great periods are marked out involving the destiny of mankind. There are recapitulations in the prophecies of both Daniel and Revelation with additional factors in the more complete fulfillment in later periods. Thus it is with the 1260 years. These definite time periods are so framed within these prophecies as to require fulfillment over a long course of history, looking forward to the ultimate triumph of the true church. How else would this final triumph be effected except by a judgment in and from the heavenly sanctuary?

Ultimate victory is bound to these time periods. Here the issue is joined. The sacrifice of Christ in the midst of the seventieth week is unrepeatable and decisive for the redemption and judgment of all men. The decisive battle in the controversy has already been fought and won by our Lord. His death, resurrection, and ascension to the right hand of the Father create a new division of time, because it ushers in the high priestly ministry of the living Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. But final victory is in the future. The final phase of Christ's ministration is also decisive and will result in the vindication of God and His people, and the eradication of sin. Then the dominion of Satan and his agents will give way to the everlasting dominion of our Lord and of His people.

Is it correct to assign specific dates to the beginning and close of these time periods? The traditional interpretation has been quite consistent as to time, long before the Adventists came on the scene. There have been some slight differences, but this has not changed the issue or the scope of these prophecies and events within these time periods. It is one thing to argue for a difference of a few years. It is quite another to insist on literal days rather than time symbolic of years. Let us not, therefore, cut away the historical and prophetic foundation of our church, causing our people to hang their heads in confusion.

Antiochus Epiphanes, pagan Rome, and papal Rome

Antiochus Epiphanes, pagan Rome, and papal Rome have one thing in common—their attack on God's center of worship, both earthly and heavenly sanctuaries, with the intent to destroy the true worship of God. The prophecies involved

are not based on exact similarities between them, but they do set forth that Satan has been at work to destroy and tread down the sanctuaries of God and all that is considered sacred for Israel and His people in both Old and New Testaments.

Sin began in the heavenly sanctuary, when Lucifer rebelled against God. Satan has not changed his attack upon the worship of the true God. The sanctuary ministration both on earth and in heaven requires an unchanging worship of the living God. All this means that in those three powers are three manifestations of Satan's work. This does not mean that Antiochus was supposed to fulfill the prophecies of Daniel and the apostate "horn" in particular.

Christ recognized this when He applied the prophecy of Daniel to pagan Rome. "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains" (Matt. 24:15, 16). But neither Antiochus nor pagan Rome completely fulfill Daniel's prophecies.

An essential part of the sanctuary message in which we believe is a total dependence on Christ as our only mediator between God and man, who sits at the right hand of the Father in the heavenly sanctuary. To look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, means to have that saving righteousness that is by faith alone. Furthermore, both redemption and judgment are ministered from the heavenly sanctuary, down to the return of Christ.

The fact that Antiochus Epiphanes, like pagan Rome in A.D. 70 and papal Rome for 1260 years, sought to destroy all that was sacred in the Jewish sanctuary at Jerusalem, does not mean that he is the "little horn" of Daniel seven and eight. The fulfillment of these prophecies grounded in the time periods is not to be realized in three and one-half literal years in the Old Testament, or in the early centuries of the Christian Era, but covers most of the controversy between God and His people on the one hand, and Satan on the other, even 1260 years and beyond.

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The uncurbed persecution of the saints during the 1260 years, the seeming triumph of that power that has commanded the worship and allegiance of the Western world, leaves Antiochus unrecognizable.



JEFF DEYER

If I were a pastor

As a pastor, you have two congregations—the one you see in the pews each Sabbath and the one that is meeting on the golf course, in the park, and a hundred other locations all over town. This larger congregation needs your ministry too.

by Herbert Ford

If I were a pastor . . . ! The proposition is enough to tempt me to eloquence if for no other reason than I am *not* a pastor, do not have to face a pastor's problems, and have, in fact, never been a pastor despite the fact that I am an ordained minister and have worked closely with hundreds of pastors both in good times and bad.

Of course, I realize that some readers (perhaps many) will say, "If you haven't been a pastor, there is no way you can understand my problems or share my joys or bear my sorrows. And even if you had been a pastor, you probably wouldn't have been a pastor in my size town, with the absolutely horrendous problems found in my congregation, and the miserable conference administration that it is my special cross to bear. Either way, you can't speak to me!"

That's so much fish fuzz. The "deficiency" of not being a pastor may actually provide opportunity for a perspective with a particular value. So while I invite you to

challenge me whenever I stray too far afield, I am certain that I can speak to your concerns in spite of a nonpastoral handicap.

If I were a pastor, assigned to a new pastorate, I'd take an hour or two, sometime between getting the van unloaded and hooking up the utilities at the new house, to realize that my parish must include not just the 391 members listed on the church books, but also every person in my new town—the fire chief; the superintendent of schools; the self-appointed spokesman for the Hispanics who are clustered west of the railroad tracks; the head of the police department's vice detail; and the manager of J. C. Penney's, even though I intend to shop at Sears.

I would resolve, in the interest of learning the special needs of my community, to visit one such person—at least one—every week, regardless of what hand-holding, marrying, or burying I have to do for the saints that occupy the pews in my church each Sabbath morning. And, further, I would add to that commitment the resolve to drop everything and go hold the hand of anyone who is hurting—whether it is the mayor or the mother and

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father of those two children killed by a drink-crazed drunk. It wouldn't matter if they were members of my congregation, because I would view the entire community as my congregation.

Of course, some will criticize the breadth of such a pastoral mission. So was Christ criticized by those miserable Pharisees, as He went about dining with publicans and sinners, comforting outcasts and women of the night. When called to task for such associations, the Master replied, "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Luke 5:31, 32).

It has always been difficult for many of our church members to realize that in order to appeal in love to a sinner we have to draw near to him and win his confidence and affection. We cannot hold a person at arm's length and touch that life as we must if, by God's grace, we are to be an instrument of His love.

Howard Weeks, in his book *Breakthrough*, tells of a Seventh-day Adventist pastor who accepted this kind of a pastoral mission. Because he was interested as well as interesting, he became an active member of Kiwanis and was asked to be chaplain of the club. He decided to go beyond just saying grace for their meals. He ministered to the spiritual needs of those men; he visited them when they were ill, comforted when they were bereaved, counseled when spiritually they were weak.

When he was called to another pastorate, those Kiwanians, for whom he had done so much, held a farewell testimonial dinner in his honor. Each one recited something the pastor had done to help him. When they were finished, the pastor told them once again, as a group, the great spiritual burden he carried on his heart for each of them. He said that the most important thing each could do was to prepare his life to enter the eternal kingdom for which we should all be bound. There was scarcely a dry eye when he finished. He had taken them all into the circle of God's love and appealed to their higher nature.

When he arrived in his new town, even before he had gotten settled, this pastor read in the newspaper that the chief of police was in serious political trouble with differing factions. In an act that had become almost second nature, he was out of his house and down to city hall asking to see the chief of police. He had never been there before, had never met the police chief! He had just arrived in town!

In the chief's office he identified himself as the new Seventh-day Adventist minister. "I just felt that I had to come see you this morning," he explained. "I don't know anything about the politics involved in this squabble; that isn't my business. But I do know that in a situation like this a man is under great temptation to do the

expedient thing rather than the *right* thing. I just came in this morning to encourage you. Do the right thing, chief. No matter what it costs you, do what in your heart you know is right."

Tears came to the policeman's eyes. "Sit down," he said, taking the pastor by the arm. "No one has talked to me like that since I was a little boy at my mother's knee." Then they talked, the pastor and the police chief, for a long time. They knelt together there in the city hall and prayed. When the pastor left, he left behind a stronger man, a man nearer to God, because he had come.

"Our attitude toward the society in whose midst God has placed us will determine our success in communicating perhaps more than will any present unfavorable attitudes of that society toward one church," writes Dr. Weeks. "Let us not merely regard the community as a field of conflict from which we may retreat with a handful of the faithful, burning over the rest as barren ground. Rather, let us regard it as a society of God's children, to all of whom He would have us minister, and all of whom He would, if possible, save."

Of course, many an overworked pastor may well challenge this view of the ministry with "How am I going to go around holding the hands of needy persons in the community, when I don't even have enough time to hold the hands of my own parishioners?"

If I were a pastor, I would reorder my priorities regarding my own congregation. I would determine that they would be put to work doing, in one way or another, the same work I will be doing in seeking out people in the community to whom I can show love and understanding, and in that way, the love of Christ.

You see, we cannot reach our communities for Christ unless we learn to know them. When you preach to your congregation, how do you know *what* to preach? You get close to your members and learn their needs. And your sermons reflect, or should reflect, those needs. The same thing should happen with your community as a whole: If you would draw close to your community, for the gospel's sake, then you must get to know it. And your congregation can help you; indeed, to keep out of mischief, it must help you.

It is amazing how much help you can ask of your congregation in learning about your community. Break the members into

small fact-finding units. One unit can study the population of the community, its age structure, the number of young families with children, education and income levels, what kind of houses people live in, distribution of income, ethnic and racial divisions, et cetera. Another unit may study development plans of the community, another the town history, yet another the community's religious structure, and another the news media.

And all the while these units are doing their work, they will have opportunity to let the community know that the church is interested in it, and they will be able to speak a word of courage and help here and there.

When ten or fifteen of these units are operating with forty-five to seventy-five of your members directly involved, word is going to spread rather quickly that the church is trying to find out about the community and reach out in friendship to it.

And all the while these various units are at work, if I were pastor, I would be continuing to visit at least one leadership-type person in the community each week. These visits would not be to establish Bible studies; they would be to establish common ground, to make friendships and to learn all I could about these persons' views of the community's needs and how my church could fit in. I would be talking in friendly terms and listening very closely for attitudes about my church. Believe me, if you consistently visit in this way, Bible studies will follow!

In personal visits with those in the community, I and members of the study units in the church have our antennae up to catch the direct and indirect signals that people are telling us about our church. This is important strategy information that we need to use prayerfully.

If I were a pastor, I would dedicate myself to follow up the valuable information my units were gathering in the community. I'd turn every church member into a public-relations evangelist to make sure our church moved into the community as a friend, looking for friendship, ready to help in a Christian way that just naturally brings reciprocity.

As a pastor, I would know (and let my people know) that the strategy for friendship will fail if every member of the congregation is not fully aware that he or she creates the reality behind the church's

It has always been difficult for many of our church members to realize that in order to appeal in love to a sinner we have to draw near to him and win his confidence and affection.

image in the public mind. By whatever method necessary, I would educate my church that we are not merely seeking to gain public attention; we want *friendship* with our community. We want to speak as one friend to another. When we talk to our neighbors, we do not want to talk as religious salesmen. We want to talk as friends, and there is a decided difference.

My church members would come to know that, yes, a friend *talks*, but a friend also *listens*, and that means the church listens to the community as well as asking the community to listen to the church. And my church members would learn that a friend doesn't walk out on his community when a job has to be done—United Way participation, or fund raising for a new library.

Indeed, where are the majority of Seventh-day Adventist Christians when there is work to be done in the community? Far too often they are busy organizing a duplicate of the organization already established in the community so we can do it "within the church." What an exercise in keeping ourselves separated at arm's length and more from those we have been commissioned by our Lord to reach! If I were a pastor, I'd spend much of my energy educating my congregation that not only must it reach out, but it must also touch the community. I would point out as many times as necessary that a church cannot extend an invitation to its spiritual home if it has made no friends. Sure, some curiosity seekers will come, some malcontents perhaps. But friends? How can they come if they do not exist?

As a pastor I would tell my congregation that we cannot expect those in our community to be interested in our church's goals and plans unless they believe that our goals and plans are of some value to them and the community—in short, that we are their friends.

And we would go to work on a public-relations organization made up of at least five committees. An alert and very active hospitality committee would handle reception at the church and follow-up. This committee would also invite dignitaries to our church, and make contact with all new residents in the community, welcoming them and inviting them to visit our church.

A publications committee would get out a newsy church letter, prepare the church bulletin, and maintain a fresh and interesting bulletin board.

A public information committee would tell our community what their friends in the church are doing from week to week, with stories and pictures in the newspapers, and news pieces for radio and television. This committee would also write pieces for our union paper and for the *Adventist Review* and other denominational publications.

Yet another committee would make direct contacts in the community, finding

how our church can participate in already-existing community programs, visiting influential people in the community in an atmosphere of friendship, and informing our congregation of programs we should initiate that would help the community directly. This would be a friendship development committee, if you please.

The fifth committee would be a research committee, charged with conducting surveys in the community, with drawing together special information on various events and groups in the community, and with providing all of the other committees the community intelligence demanded for success in their work.

Now this organization might involve fifty to one hundred members, but you probably have that many people who are not doing anything of tremendous significance in living their faith right now anyway. It will not be easy, of course, to organize and maintain these committees, but to do so will, by God's grace, bring our church and the community into the kind of relationship that I believe Heaven can and will bless. Remember that every single soul out there on the streets of my community is just as precious to God as are the saints who come from Sabbath to Sabbath into my sanctuary.

In fact, that community is part of my congregation—my second congregation. The first congregation is composed of my members, but my second congregation is meeting along with my first congregation each Sabbath morning. The only difference is that some of the members of my second congregation are meeting out on the golf course, others are fixing their cars or mowing their lawns, or washing clothes, or just relaxing after five days of work.

The work of God will not be finished until my second congregation comes to know clearly the great plan of salvation Heaven offers to every human being. And the truth is that far, far fewer than we know have had that opportunity yet. Most will never hear the story if they see us as religious salespersons coming to sell them "religion." But if we come to them as friends, friends who have been among them working shoulder to shoulder in community programs, then they may well hear us gladly.

As a pastor, I would gladly eat up all the juicy morsels of community information brought in by our community contact committee. And, of course, I would

already be getting to know my way around town, and the townspeople by my at least one visit per week with a town figure. I would assume that my constant appearance in the community would generate requests to speak before clubs and other groups and to participate in community fairs, banquets, rallies, and the like. That would be something I would cultivate in a simple and unassuming way, for in this I would become a familiar and friendly figure to many townspeople. Of course, like everything else, this can be overdone. I must have time for ministry to my first congregation, but, really, it is not an either/or question. Kept in balance, this plan will bring me closer to the community, and it will also make my own church members more interested in the community, certainly one of the objectives of my ministry.

Of course, the local ministerial association will be part of my concern. Membership will give me opportunity to take part in services conducted by other groups and to acquaint them perhaps, in a friendly way, with the truths that I hold dear. But my basic objective will be "What can I contribute to the ministerial association?" That, it seems to me, will make me the kind of member that will find a friendly part in the association's activities.

This, then, is something of the program I would embark on in my new pastorate. It sounds like a lot of work, and it is. But I would expect to have many helpers. Oh, I know how hard it is to get people to do things. But in this program I would be counting on two factors: (1) the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence—that is to say, in the community; (2) the help I would be asking for would be, for the most part, somewhat different than asking a person to be Sabbath school superintendent or lay activities secretary.

I'd keep Ellen White's words ever before me as I went about my labor for my first and second congregations: "By personal labor reach those around you. Become acquainted with them. Preaching will not do the work that needs to be done. Angels of God attend you to the dwellings of those you visit. This work cannot be done by proxy. Money lent or given will not accomplish it. Sermons will not do it. By visiting the people, talking, praying, sympathizing with them, you will win hearts."—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 41.

That's what I'd do if I were a pastor.

We cannot expect those in our community to be interested in our church's goals and plans unless they believe that our goals and plans are of some value to them and the community—in short, that we are their friends.

What's so unique about Adventism?

Seventh-day Adventists have always seen themselves as a divinely called movement charged with restoring a comprehensive system of truth to the world prior to the return of Christ as Lord. Is this exclusivism?

Is the Seventh-day Adventist Church the "Noah's ark" of the twentieth century, the only "fold of safety" in modern times? Are we being exclusivists or narrow-minded for thinking so? Are our doctrines true and free from error in the broad themes they set forth? Do we have additional truths, or a perspective of truth, not found in other religious organizations? If not, what right do we have to invite those of a different religious persuasion to unite with us?

There are some who want to separate "beliefs" from Christ and our experience with Him. But Christ, His deity and Lordship, His atoning sacrifice and all that goes with it, must be believed before He can become a spiritual experience in our hearts. If we believe in the reality of a "great controversy" in which "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers" (Eph. 6:12), a system of beliefs, doctrines if you please, must be at the center. All that Scripture teaches can be summed up in a set of doctrines or beliefs, and it is this that gives focus and content to our spiritual experience.

Therefore the prince of darkness, well acquainted with Scripture, works perseveringly and malignantly to deceive the very elect, not only by twisting Scripture but by destroying confidence in its authority. Thus he has magnificently confused the human race and spawned a multiplicity of concepts not in harmony with a plain "Thus saith the Lord."

On the other hand, God heroically attempts, through individuals and groups, to bring the world back into the pathway of truth. It is important to note in this great controversy view that whenever reformations have occurred and God's truth has beamed brightly upon the world, that which comes to light is not so much the newness or uniqueness of the truth but rather a rediscovery of truths that have been given to the world from the very beginning. In reference to our own movement we should understand that our uniqueness must not depend upon or be equated with the originality of a particular truth. Rather it is based on a restoration of truth. Through this movement, truth long buried under tradition and philosophy has

been brought back into focus. If the eyeglasses through which we discern truth become opaque through error and superstition, the cleaning of the glasses does not make the truth unique or new; it simply restores it to its original clarity. God's truth, as revealed in His Word, has been made of none effect through centuries of both neglect and opposition, but now it is being brought back to a condition of clarity, brilliance, and effectiveness in the life.

Isaiah speaks of those who "shall build the old waste places" and calls them "The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in" (Isa. 58:12). The Jews' moral edifice lay in ruins, and a great work of rebuilding through revival, reformation, and restoration was needed. A breach in the wall, resulting from failure to practice true religion, needed repairing. Verse 13 refers to the restoration of true Sabbath-keeping. This is a very significant passage for our church today when the three angels' messages of Revelation 14 include the restoration of the Sabbath to its rightful place in the lives of men.

In our role as "repairers of the breach, restorers of paths to dwell in," we simply stand at the end of a long line of those who have done a similar work from the beginning of truth's perversion by sin. Biblical history indicates numerous victories, and failures, for God's truth. When Adam and Eve sinned, they lost not only their perfect spiritual nature but their face-to-face fellowship with God. Their concepts of Him and His truth inevitably began to deteriorate rapidly, influenced by a "fig-leaf theology." God did everything possible to help them understand that there was only one way, one plan, one truth to follow. Satan so despised this singleness of God's

way, its exclusiveness and uniqueness, that he inspired the first murder over it. Cain felt there must be at least two ways, but God said only one. This initial experience is but a microcosm of all human history since.

Noah and his family are another outstanding example of the unique and exclusive nature of restored truth. Noah's preaching was totally out of harmony with the theological and scientific thinking of his day. His core message of salvation by faith alone in the Lord is identical in its essentials to the core message of our church today—the everlasting gospel. He preached in the setting of a world to be destroyed by water; we preach in the setting of a coming world destruction by fire.

Likewise, in God's call to Abraham we see a most intriguing aspect of exclusiveness. Because Abraham and his family clung to a knowledge of the true God in the midst of superstition and heathenism, God chose him and his descendants to serve as His handpicked representatives in preserving and restoring His truth. A man who was willing to sacrifice his only son surely had special insight into God's love shown through the sacrifice of His only begotten Son, but did Abraham's teaching and example to the heathen tribes about him produce any new truth? Never! What he believed and practiced was as old as Adam and Eve! Because of his faithfulness the promise was given: "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3).

Moses, too, son of slave parents, had the finger of God placed upon him. A slave leading slaves! Truly God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. Again there was a restoration of the

It is not just one particular doctrine or concept of belief that is involved in the uniqueness of this movement. It is an entire pattern of thinking and believing based on God's Word.

truth. Through this small group, so ignorant of God's will and ways, the intricacies of a sanctuary system were given so that the world might better comprehend the mighty plan of salvation. Did Moses teach something new and different, something that had never been understood by anyone prior to his time? Never! His work was a restoration of truth.

Hebrews, chapter 11, after speaking of these examples and others, reaches a pinnacle in verse 13: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." These were the unique ones, the different ones, the untouchables, and the rejected. These were the square pegs in round holes. Why? Because by faith they believed in God's salvation and truth.

But the most "unique" and "exclusive" figure in all history was none other than Jesus Christ. Here was the One, the only One, through whom men could be saved (see Acts 4:12). Tragically, even this basic claim is being surrendered by many Christian thought leaders today. Years ago, the ecumenical movement embraced non-Christian religions, and now many Christians feel it is too narrow to believe that only through Jesus Christ can men be saved and that no other religion outside of Christianity is valid in itself. Thus the claims of Christ Himself are set aside as too exclusive.

Did Jesus teach anything new and original when He came to our world? According to the statement by Ellen White appearing on page 25, He did not. His work was to "readjust and establish . . . in the framework of truth" precious gems of spiritual knowledge that He Himself had originated and given in the beginning. Notice that these gems of truth had been "cast . . . into the minds and thoughts of each generation." Every religion has some truth in it, but all truth originates with Christ. (Please study this entire statement carefully. It gives us a broader understanding of inspiration and revelation. It gives us clearer insights into the work of Ellen White herself and her borrowing from other sources. It has helped answer many questions in my own mind and has been a tremendous source of understanding.)

As we know, the visible church became saturated with error shortly after the death of the early apostles. But God had a faithful remnant who were nurtured in the wilderness. The sixteenth-century Reformation attempted to revive the specialness and uniqueness of God's message, and succeeded remarkably well considering the circumstances under which it labored. But as the Reformation continued, it fragmented, and to a great degree remained buried under the rubbish of men's philosophies. Even recovered truths lost their

former gleam. Finally, at the turn of the nineteenth century, God's prophetic clock struck the hour for the birth of the Advent movement. It was never His intention for the Advent movement to disintegrate, but following the great Disappointment and its aftermath, little remained of the Millerite cause apart from Seventh-day Adventists.

It is not just one particular doctrine or concept of belief that is involved in the uniqueness of this movement. It is an entire pattern of thinking and believing based on God's Word. In the last days of earth, when God's restoration and reformation movement is destined to spread around the world, a most important element is the comprehensiveness factor. When all the doctrines of this church are considered as a whole, one can see that God has led us into the most comprehensive, all-inclusive, perfect system of doctrines on earth. It's a golden chain of truth, at the center of which stands Jesus Christ and Him crucified. When properly understood and practiced, this message brings meaning to life and a sense of direction, commitment, destiny. It is not a piece of truth here and there, but an entire system that in its fullness is incomparable.

We must ever be aware that the idea that "we have the truth" can be so easily perverted. On this razor-thin line we can easily lose our balance and fall off on the side of selfish exclusivism, which generates feelings of pride and superiority, or we can fall on the other side and blur the uniqueness of our message and mission by attempting to dilute and ameliorate our doctrines. Above all, we need to understand clearly that our mission and message are unique not because of who we are, but because of who God is and what His Word says. We become unique as a visible church only as we submit to Him, His truth, His Word. Only then will God be pleased to use us in reaching the world with more abundant life.

In this and future editorials we will be examining truths that comprise this system of restoration and uniqueness. Probably the most prominent of these is the seventh-day Sabbath. Although God's restored truth involves more than the knowledge of the Sabbath, this aspect has always been a major part of Seventh-day Adventism's message. History reveals seventh-day Sabbathkeeping by individuals and groups in different parts of the world, but it is the Lord's plan to restore

this magnificent truth on a worldwide basis. This church constitutes the major Sabbathkeeping group. We stand virtually alone among worldwide religious groups in believing that God created the world in seven literal days and that the earth was buried by a Genesis flood. Note that I said "worldwide," for other groups here and there agree with us, but among entire church bodies represented in nearly every country of the world who believe in a literal interpretation of Genesis unfortunately we virtually have the field alone. We wish it were otherwise.

Peter, through inspiration, knew that belief in the Biblical record of Creation and the Flood would be given up in the last days (see 2 Peter 3:3-6). Most Christian churches have attempted to accommodate so-called scientific opinion of earth's origins by accepting variations of the interpretations of the geologic column and attempting to harmonize Scripture with these theories. If accepted, these accommodations discredit the seven-day Creation formula and ultimately destroy the necessity for a seventh-day Sabbath memorial of Creation. There are even some among us who favor interpreting Scripture in light of scientific research. Yet actually, neither the evolutionary model with its various interpretations nor the Creation model can be demonstrably proved. Regardless of what one believes relative to the origin of our world, it must rest largely on faith. I am convinced that in the near future our faith will be more severely tested in this area. Genetic engineering and the shaping of life in the laboratory will challenge the scriptural account of man's divine creation.

Sad to say, not all such attacks against our belief in the seventh-day Sabbath will come from without. Nor should we be amazed when other pillars of our faith, not now under attack, are weakened by those we would expect to defend them. The internal attack on the Sabbath and the Biblical record of Creation, although not openly manifest at present, is one I predict will become increasingly evident. We will have to face it squarely. Satan is violently angry and will stop at nothing to abort this movement that has been called to preach the three angels' messages, including the first angel's call to worship God as Creator.

This first angel also commands the preaching of the everlasting gospel, but the gospel must be preached within the frame-

We need to understand clearly that our mission and message are unique not because of who we are, but because of who God is and what His Word says. We become unique as a visible church only as we submit to Him.

work of Biblical creationism and the seventh-day Sabbath, or our message will lose the brilliant power and glory that God designs for it.

When God raised up this movement at the end of the prophetic 2300-year period, Satan already had his plans well formulated to subvert it. As an ardent student of the Scriptures (and, I might add, a believer in the year-day principle), he had the time prophecies mastered long before nineteenth-century Adventists existed. When the Sabbath and its links to Creation week began to be preached, Satan diverted people's minds in a very clever manner. Charles Darwin wrote his first draft of *Origin of Species* in 1844 and published it several years later. This work changed the thinking of the scientific world almost overnight. The very basis of the present socialistic system in Eastern Europe can be traced to a meeting of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in Paris in 1844. Thus science and politics combined have swept the world with an atheistic, evolutionary theory. The very element God used in making the Sabbath His memorial of Creation—time—is the same element Satan used in creating the evolutionary theory. The underlying basis of evolutionary thinking is that given enough time, anything can happen!

Many in our own ranks do not fully understand the power and beauty of the Sabbath truth. The following quotation by Ellen White says something unusual about the importance of the Sabbath: "Elder K knows not of what spirit he is. He is uniting his influence with the dragon host to oppose those who keep the commandments of God, and who have the testimony of Jesus. He has a hard warfare before him. As far as the Sabbath is concerned, he occupies the same position as the Seventh Day Baptists."—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 337.

Is there a difference between the Sabbath as understood and taught by Seventh-day Adventists and as given by Seventh Day Baptists? I believe there is. Ellen White continues: "Separate the Sabbath from the messages, and it loses its power; but when connected with the message of the third angel, a power attends it which convicts unbelievers and infidels, and brings them out with strength to stand, to live, grow, and flourish in the Lord."—*Ibid.* The key point is the relationship of the seventh-day Sabbath to the three angels' messages. The focal point of the three angels' messages is the everlasting gospel. And the focal point of the everlasting gospel is the cross. The cross, then, is central to all three messages.

The emphasis of the three angels' messages, and especially the third, is righteousness by faith alone in Jesus Christ. Nothing reaches so deep into the inner recesses of a person's soul as a sense of the pardoning love of Jesus. When this is understood and experienced, obedience to

all of God's will, including the seventh-day Sabbath, is the natural response. This is why we are admonished repeatedly to lift up Jesus and Him crucified before the world. Seventh-day Adventists must preach the seventh-day Sabbath in the context of the three angels' messages. People must understand the relationship between a call to worship God as Creator, memorialized by the seventh-day Sabbath, and the everlasting gospel, which has the cross as its center. Otherwise the Sabbath doctrine loses its power. When Christ and His cross occupy their rightful position, the heart is filled with an intense desire not merely to submit to but to joyfully seek God's will. Love for a person—not a doctrine, an institution, a policy book, a method, a theological or philosophical

concept, or a budget—exists in the heart. Commandment keeping becomes a happy experience. The law is no longer odious or burdensome.

Thus, the true everlasting gospel, the Sabbath, and the other nine commandments of God are inseparable. The Reformers, as remarkable as they were, did not quite capture this holistic plan of salvation. One of the unique, special privileges (and responsibilities) God has given to this people is the restoration of the Sabbath truth in the context of the everlasting gospel and the three angels' messages. There is no other religious movement on earth that has this concept in the way that we have. In that sense we have a special and unique message.—J.R.S. (To be continued.)



RUSSELL HARLAN

Christ the originator of all truth

In His discourses Christ did not bring many things before them at once, lest He might confuse their minds. He made every point clear and distinct. He did not disdain the repetition of old and familiar truths in prophecies if they would serve His purpose to inculcate ideas.

Christ was the originator of all the ancient gems of truth. Through the work of the enemy these truths had been displaced. They had been disconnected from their true position, and placed in the framework of error. Christ's work was to readjust and establish the precious gems in the framework of truth. The principles of truth which had been given by Himself to bless the world had, through Satan's agency, been buried and had apparently become extinct. Christ rescued them from the rubbish of error, gave them a new, vital force, and commanded them to shine as precious jewels, and stand fast forever.

Christ Himself could use any of these old

truths without borrowing the smallest particle, for He had originated them all. He had cast them into the minds and thoughts of each generation, and when He came to our world, He rearranged and vitalized the truths which had become dead, making them more forcible for the benefit of future generations. It was Jesus Christ who had the power of rescuing the truths from the rubbish, and again giving them to the world with more than their original freshness and power.

As Christ presented these truths to minds, He broke up their accustomed train of thought as little as possible. Nevertheless a new and transforming economy of truth must be woven into their experience. He, therefore, aroused their minds by presenting truth through the agency of their most familiar associations.—Ellen G. White manuscript 25, 1890, pp. 5, 6 (written at Battle Creek, Michigan, Jan. 7, 1890).

Seven simple suggestions

Can eating between meals be as harmful as smoking? Can insufficient sleep or being overweight shorten life as much as a lack of vigorous exercise? A nine-year study of more than 6,000 adults says Yes!

One of the most significant research projects of this century in the field of health was reported by Belloc and Breslow in *Preventive Medicine*, volume 1, August, 1972, pages 409-421. Using 6,928 adults from Alameda County, California, they determined from their study that the level of health an individual enjoys is especially dependent upon simple health practices followed from day to day.

The same study group has since been followed for nine and a half years, revealing that the very same simple health practices followed day by day, when taken collectively, are more significant contributors to longer life than almost any other factors yet discovered. Of course, other single-item contributors to early mortality or longevity are recognized in other studies; for example, smoking is one of the most significant contributors to early death, while vegetarianism, organization of behavior, and an active social life are among the better predictors of long life.

Let's take a look at the results of Belloc and Breslow's studies, because they represent good research. They are quotable. They vindicate God's simple suggestions for good health.

The first study was an effort to determine the relationship of certain physical health practices to physical health status. A spectrum was developed describing five carefully defined levels of health: (1) disability; (2) chronic conditions; (3) impairments; (4) symptoms; and (5) energy level. Each of the 6,928 adults was classified according to this health spectrum, and a relationship was plotted for each one according to his or her observance of the following seven simple conditions or health-affecting practices: alcohol consumption; hours of sleep; eating between meals; physical activity; weight; eating breakfast; and smoking.

As a result of this study, the recommended health practices are:

1. Get not less than seven and not more than nine hours of sleep each night.
2. Eat breakfast almost every day.
3. Eat between meals rarely or never.

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4. For men, weigh no less than 5 percent under and no more than 19.99 percent over ideal weight; for women, weigh no less than 5 percent under and no more than 9.99 percent over ideal weight.

5. Engage often in active sports, swim or take long walks, garden or do physical exercises.

6. Drink none or not more than two drinks of alcohol at one time. [MINISTRY strongly recommends total abstinence.]

7. Never smoke cigarettes.

Now we come to the exciting part, the part that makes this study so significant. The graph illustrates the researchers' conclusion that each one of these good health practices is significant *by itself*. No one practice alone is more significant than any of the others in making its adherents better or worse. In the words of the researchers themselves: "Regular meals, adequate sleep, near-average weight, physical activity, and avoidance of smoking and excessive drinking were all positively related to health. There was no common factor substantially underlying the association between physical health status and the habits of daily life that were studied. Each individual one is significant."

This means that eating breakfast regularly is as important as not drinking excessive alcohol! Getting the right amount of sleep is as important as being the correct weight! Eating between meals is just as injurious as smoking! Each one of these habits is significant *by itself*, and the effects are cumulative. As each one is added, the health improves *measurably*.

But are these simple natural resources the things researchers actually study in a scientific experiment? These items aren't sensational. They don't grab headlines like a vaccine to prevent polio or a penicillin to counteract infection. They wouldn't make much difference in one's length of life or level of health, would they? Are they really very important?

In the graph, the lower the line is on the scale, the fewer poor-health indices are present, and the better is one's health. To what degree? A person following all seven of the health practices described in the California study is physiologically the same age as (he feels, acts, and lives like) a person thirty years younger who practices

only 0 to 2 of them! That's *quality* physical life with its concomitant emotional and spiritual benefits. These simple health practices hold greater potential for a longer, better life for the average adult than does almost any other medical discovery to date! Yet it's not at all unusual to find a person who follows none of these recommendations, a person who doesn't sleep adequately or who sleeps far too much, who skips breakfast and eats any time, who is either extremely thin or very much overweight, who never seeks exercise, and who drinks and smokes.

Now comes the second exciting observation, one that could not have been made even ten years ago. These health practices are related not only to morbidity but also to mortality to a striking degree. This second study was done on adults. From 1900 to 1970 the average length of life for an adult white male has increased only four years. Yet look at what following these simple health practices can do! Those following 0 to 3 of the seven health practices identified in the study had an average age at death of 67 years. Of those following 4 to 5 practices, the average age at death was 73 (a gain of six years), and for those following 6 to 7 practices the average age at death was 78, a gain of eleven years of life over those following 0 to 3 of the health habits. (See Breslow and Enstrom, *Preventive Medicine*, vol. 9, June/July, 1980, pp. 469-483.)

This is highly significant! Many health experts have not credited some of the simple practices such as amount of sleep, eating between meals, et cetera, with having any significant effect upon length of life. This research shows these simple procedures to be more important than almost anything else in determining both quality and quantity of life. Just imagine how much better off a Seventh-day Adventist Christian can be by putting into practice all the simple health procedures available to him in the wise counsels of God.

I use these two studies in the first night of my Christian Health Seminar in order to illustrate the significance of the natural remedies that God has given us as found in *The Ministry of Healing*, page 127. I draw a parallel between the seven practices

described in the study above and the eight natural remedies outlined by God. The similarity between these two lists is not so much in their direct parallels as in their simplicity, their common-sense approach, their ready availability to everyone, their lack of mystery. These are what everyday physical life is made up of.

God has given the world, through Seventh-day Adventists, even more than Belloc and Breslow have studied. He has given us a vegetarian diet, probably the greatest prevention of cardiovascular disease and cancer. He has given us the serenity of an informed trust in God. He has preserved us from the injurious effects of animal fat, diseased products, spices, coffee, tea, and more. Experts estimate that 80 percent of all cancer is preventable by a prudent life style that in essence is an application of the eight natural remedies.

O how we fail to grasp the full dimensions of inspired writings! These available, simple remedies so clearly stated are not simply "the best efforts of the author's day" or the product of "contemporary thought." They apply not to one local culture. They span the centuries and are found to be common to mankind in every age, from Adam to the 144,000.

A further observation that needs to be made from this research is its emphasis on life management, especially in the area of diet. We are delighted, of course, for what can truly be called the wonders of modern medicine. But much of medicine has been

the taking of a pill, or a syrup, or a shot, or something. To this concept add the effect of nutritional studies that have given us vitamins A, B, C, D, E, et cetera, all of which can be taken in a pill. The effect of these approaches has been to lure us into an antidotal mentality that emphasizes too much the *what* to the neglect of the *how*, especially in diet. This thinking has spurred millions to search for formulas of some magic substance "to take" to give them energy or disease resistance or renewed vitality.

There is value in the *what*. But it's not just *what* we eat; it's also *when* we eat. It's whether we eat breakfast or skip it. It's whether we eat too much or just the right amount. It's *how* and *when* we eat. We can take the very best of food and make ourselves sick with it by eating it at improper times and amounts. On the other hand we can take a lesser quality food and, by eating regularly and properly, can be healthier than a person blessed with an abundance. This is why the poor can be every bit as healthy as the rich if they have a knowledge of God's simple laws of management.

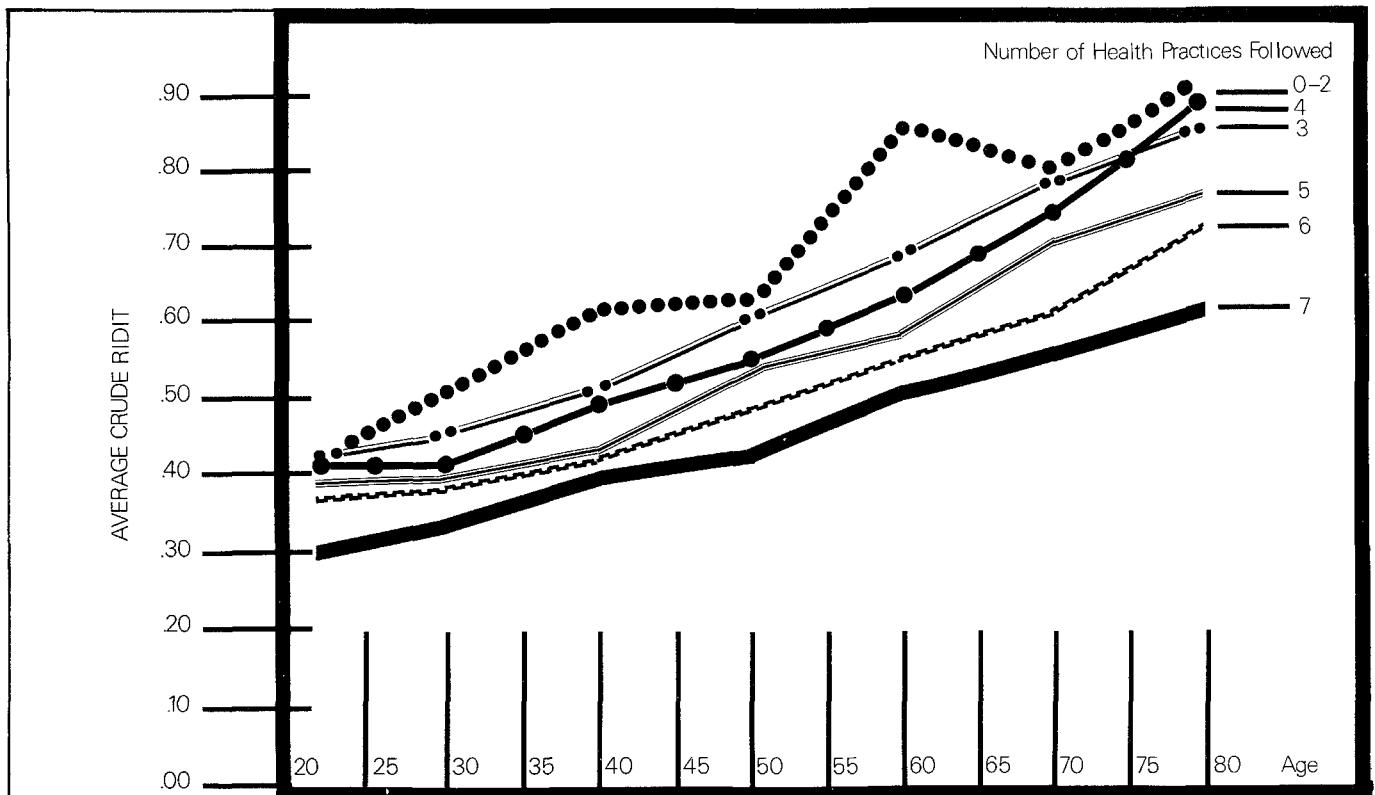
These laws are simple, available, inexpensive, and important! Public health nutrition as practiced in the world has not yet fully recognized the value of these food management practices. Its emphasis is almost entirely on the *what* of eating. It has advised films illustrating "healthy snacking." It suggests eating pizzas, apples, and

tomatoes between meals rather than candy, cheese puffs, and potato chips. But as Seventh-day Adventist Christians possessing the abundance of health counsels God has given us, shouldn't we avoid eating between meals completely? Children will fall into line with what parents consistently do. Children won't if parents don't.

We teach that smoking is a sin. But this research indicates that eating between meals can have as dire a consequence to the quality of health and the length of life as smoking. That's why God in His mercy, His kindness, and His efforts to heal us before we get sick has told us that "never should a morsel of food pass the lips between meals," "not even an apple, a nut, or any kind of fruit" (*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 181, 182). These practices depress the spirits, demoralize the attitude, and contribute to early death.

The world is yet waiting for that magnificent demonstration of the wisdom of God's commandments, the simple wisdom revealed by inspiration, which becomes common sense when finally understood and its significance appreciated. Magnanimous mercy! Magnificent opportunity!

If we really love our heavenly Father and have a deep concern for the welfare of suffering humanity, let's stop degrading ourselves. Let's groom ourselves royally as princes and princesses of the King of heaven.



In this graph the vertical scale at the left indicates the physical health status of individuals in the Belloc and Breslow study. (Since it actually measures the presence of *poor* health habits, the lower the rating, the better the health.) Notice that a person 60 years of age who follows all seven health practices has the same health status as a person of 30 who follows 0-2 of them!

Ministers and their wives

Even some ministers continue to assume that the pastor and his family are above the problems that beset "lesser" mortals. A noted counselor says we should forget such nonsense and deal with life as others must.



At a mental health institute sponsored by Harding Hospital and Andrews University, Norma Jean Sahlin, a pastor's wife from Allentown, Pennsylvania, spent a few minutes talking with Dr. Charles E. Wittschiebe about ministers, their wives, and children. For many years Dr. Wittschiebe taught at the Andrews University Theological Seminary. Now retired, he maintains a small counseling practice. He is the author of God Invented Sex.

Sahlin: You have stated that ministers' wives should be women first and ministers' wives second. What do you mean?

Wittschiebe: A young woman often gets a picture in her mind of what a minister's wife is to be, a kind of stereotype, an almost plastic image. If she works hard to become that kind of woman, she may lose some of her humanity, her naturalness, her spontaneity. She should first be herself, in love with God and her husband, expressing this warmly and with depth of feeling. Then it will be easy for her to acquire the loving qualities of a minister's wife in relation to people.

Sahlin: Could you explain a little more?

Wittschiebe: If a minister goes up to his wife at the kitchen sink and fondles her, he doesn't say to her, "Oh, I am so happy to be with my favorite church worker!" or "Oh, I am so happy to be with my shepherdess!" He teases her as a woman, making her feel that she is desirable. She may say, "Oh, stop that," but she doesn't mean it.

One of the most outstanding ministers in the denomination told me, "You know

what I do sometimes, Charlie? I call my wife from the office and ask, 'Is your husband home?' She says, 'No.' So I say, 'I'll be right over!'" I like the teasing element of that. The same conversation could be very objectionable in a different context, but he is using it in a very delightful way. This is what I mean about keeping this quality of aliveness in a relationship between a man and a woman.

Sahlin: For pastors' families, there is a stereotype of the "starchy" minister and his wife. One has to play the role of being "proper," and it seeps into one's love life.

Wittschiebe: "Starchy" is an appropriate word. But what you are talking about is also an almost prudish, sweet, "yucky" image—no warmth, no depth, no passion, no aliveness.

Sahlin: So it's OK to flirt with one's spouse?

Wittschiebe: I think it is necessary. I get the feeling from the Song of Solomon that these two weren't greeting each other with "Oh, you're here now." She goes to the door, her hands dripping with myrrh, and she's all set to have a very warm time with him.

Sahlin: Let's get back to the minister's wife being herself. Does that include her having her own career, apart from her husband's ministry?

Wittschiebe: This is an area that we, as a denomination, haven't explored enough or defined very well. We used to have a tradition that a minister's wife stayed home, brought up the children, was a model in the community, and always had extra time to help people because she wasn't working. Today, many ministers' wives do work outside the home. They are secretaries, dietitians, and nurses. If we believe that a minister's wife may work without hindering her husband's work, then certainly a woman has every right to find fulfillment in a career.

Sahlin: In your counseling, have you come across "church widows," women whose husbands feel it is more important to spread the gospel than to stay at home and tend a marriage?

Wittschiebe: The minister's wife often tends to be a "church widow" and the children "orphans." Sometimes men are active in church work because they would

rather do that than be at home. This gives them a pious excuse to be away. I mean, if a fellow helps every night with an evangelistic effort, he's a big man. Everyone says, "My, isn't Brother Jones wonderful!" But he may be doing what he does because he doesn't want to be at home. He may not have much fun with his wife. So he gets a pretext to stay away.

Sahlin: It is rather hard to carry on a family argument about time spent with the family when the husband/father is always saying, "I am saving souls."

Wittschiebe: It's hard to fight God, so the man is pious. Another example of this is the woman who says she cannot have sex any more than once every two months because her husband is irreligious and doesn't enter into the marriage relationship with pure and holy motives. He gets very angry. Those aren't fair odds at all, you know. It's tough enough to fight a person or an idea, but to put yourself in opposition to God? That's blasphemous and sacrilegious, and who wants to do that?

Sahlin: That looks insurmountable. How do you help a couple deal with such an issue?

Wittschiebe: I point out that religion is being used in such cases as a screen, an evasion, as a tactic to put the other person down. I get at the emotions that lead to this kind of attack, open them up, and get the pus out, so to speak. You have to get down to why a person is acting this way.

Sahlin: What about marriage counseling for ministers and their wives? When a couple recognize that there is a problem in their marriage they cannot handle, what should they do?

Wittschiebe: We have gone too long on the assumption that a minister is above other men, that he is above these human weaknesses, that he is a model and example. Actually, he is a man with weaknesses and foibles and brings into his marriage all the problems of his youth. Suppose a minister had a poor relationship with his mother or his father and is mixed up emotionally. He brings this all into his marriage and is not able to express love and/or anger as he should. Or suppose the wife has had a horrible idea of what sex is supposed to be, and she brings that into her

marriage. They certainly need some counsel. He will become a better healer of souls as he himself becomes healed. I counsel a number of ministers and their wives—confidentially, of course. It helps these couples because it gives them strength. It doesn't mean that I am wonderful. It means that they get to share with me, an older minister, to get some counsel. They get it out of their systems, feel better, and then go out to minister to others. We can't assume that all ministers or their wives are in perfect emotional health, because they're not. The marriage suffers to that degree. A man may have, as we said earlier, a compulsive need to do everything for the Lord and never stay at home. This is a good thing in one way, but too much of a good thing. His wife becomes resentful of him because it takes all his time. She resents the women that call him up. His children resent the fact that they don't have a father. And the first thing you know, after fifteen years we have a messed-up home; maybe the wife even gets involved with another man. This does happen. It could have been taken care of by counseling a long time back.

Sahlin: How does one find a counselor?

Wittschiebe: Unfortunately, in our church we don't have enough qualified counselors that our ministers can turn to, because until recently we have made *psychology* a bad word. What we forget is that psychology, the study of the mind and emotions, is good in its place. The Scriptures are loaded with psychological principles.

Sahlin: You have spent a great deal of time teaching ministers to be counselors. If a wife were interested and received the training, do you think it would be beneficial to have a husband-wife counseling team?

Wittschiebe: I don't particularly care about a counseling team myself. I think it

is better to have both equipped to do it; then the wife can counsel with women and, occasionally, a man. Sometimes they might work together as a team, but I don't think it is necessary.

I know there are a number of women who love people and would make wonderful counselors if they were given training on basic ideas, techniques, and so forth. The minister could often refer women counselees to them. A little bit of knowledge of the mind and the personality would be a great help. We're wasting women terribly! They make great counselors. Many do a fine job *without* any training. They know how to listen and care.

Sahlin: What do you think the role of the minister is in the rearing of his children?

Wittschiebe: You know the answer to that! I'll answer it, though. He has full responsibility to be a father to his children. I think that a man should protect time each week to be with his family. He should write it down in his appointment book. It isn't so much the quantity of time as the quality of time. If the minister is home reading a book while his boy is playing on the floor, they're together but not really together. However, if they are both downstairs working on a model railroad, that's *big* togetherness! Some men do cop out on this, leaving the mother to be both father and mother. That's not fair to the woman or the child.

Sahlin: Since our ministers and their families are regarded as examples, how can a family cope with the burden of being more perfect than any other family?

Wittschiebe: I think that we ought not to strive for that. When a goal like that is created, one becomes tense and artificial. I think ministers' families should be themselves, recognize that they're going to make mistakes and pull some boners, and

the people will love them anyway. The children are not perfect. Don't let the church spoil the kids, and then blame them. Don't drag a child to two churches in one day. We need to give our children the same growing climate that other children have and not be too self-conscious. We're going to make a lot of mistakes as parents, but if we love our children, they will overlook them. The Chinese have a proverb: "If you spank your child by mistake, don't worry; he knows a reason." I find that children are quite fair.

A minister must first be a parent, then a minister. It's the same idea as what I said about being a minister's wife. If one starts with being a minister first and a parent second, that's the wrong end of the stick!

Sahlin: A minister's wife will say, "My husband finds it easy to listen to all kinds of other people. Well, maybe he doesn't find it easy, but he does it. But when he gets home, he's too tired to listen to me. He wants to relax, to do something else besides listen to me." How can we cope with that?

Wittschiebe: To begin with, we have to make some allowance for that, because a man really can get drained. He's just like a doctor who's been operating all day; he isn't ready to do another operation. The woman ought to understand that he's tired. Suppose she says, "Honey, you're drained, but could you take five minutes to discuss something with me? I don't want to wear you out." I think that with an approach like that, he'd say, "Yeah, I think I can." Whereas if she starts hammering at him, and he sees a half-hour or an hour ahead of him (because that's the way she usually does it), then he may say, "Shut up and leave me alone." She should remember him when making her request. After all, she is his medicine. A minister's wife is marvelous medicine. She fills in all the sore spots and covers them.

Prayers from the parsonage

"Will there be any stars, any stars in my crown,

When at evening the sun goeth down?"

I wonder who gets credit for each person accepting You, Lord? Are stars for people who have been totally responsible for another's conversion? Do they go to evangelists who keep statistics of who responds to their appeals? Can only the members out in the malls distributing pamphlets or out in the homes giving studies receive stars?

Your reward system doesn't seem right, because most people decide to follow You after the witness and work of many

individuals. A mother's prayers, a colleague's integrity, a neighbor's friendliness, may all prepare *one* person to accept someone else's invitation or message. Who gets the star for a child raised in a Christian home but nurtured by loving teachers in school and church? When someone surrenders to You after a powerful sermon, do others who've participated in the program—hostess and usher, soloist and pianist—claim a little of the prize too?

And how do You account for continuing influence, generation to generation? Do the Bible worker's parents receive credit for their daughter's converts? When new believers reach out to others, do You keep track down the line? If a person backslides, do You subtract his star from everyone's crown and make us start over again?

"And everyone they have been the means of saving, adds stars to their crown in glory."—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 198.

You are so fair that no witness, however small, is overlooked. I think our stars will be made up of countless tiny jewels, each representing our part in sharing a loving God with the world.

You are so gracious that You allow us credit when it is *divine* planning, power, and persuasion that make salvation possible. Our minute gems will shine only because they have been perfectly cut so that each facet reflects Your glory.

You are so good that even our faulty motivations and deficient methods can be effective. No wonder we will cast our crowns at Your feet and give all honor to You!

By Cherry B. Habenicht

This all-new series of life-changing evangelistic sermons and materials, developed by one of the church's successful evangelists, Mark Finley, is now available for your use. This series includes sermons in magazine format especially featuring the book of Revelation, along with 30 accompanying inspirational lessons and up-to-date advertising materials.

As a special feature, the pastor's kit contains the *Pastor's Evangelistic Planning Guide*. This detailed outline of successful organizational principles for public evangelism includes sections on preparing the church, advertising, sequence of subjects, organizational committees, and decision-getting techniques. It is a must for a successful evangelistic program.

Pastor's Kit

The entire kit, including all the items listed below, is available as a unit. (Various parts are also available individually.) Price for the entire pastor's kit is only \$36.95 (56600-0) and includes:

- *Pastor's Evangelistic Planning Guide*
- Evangelistic sermon magazines, sample set of 26
- Evangelistic lessons, sample set of 30
- Tape, "Our Day in the Light of Prophecy" (opening-night presentation)
- Tape, "Movement of Destiny" (decision sermon)
- Camera-ready copy for: reserved-seat invitation, prayer-covenant card, interest-information card, twelve separate decision cards, offering envelope, Prophecy Lectures letterhead, newspaper ads.
- Samples of: ticket book, Prophecy Lectures handbill, Prophecy Lectures flyers.

Evangelistic Sermon Magazines

This uniquely Adventist series of 26 sermons in magazine format focuses particularly on Revelation 14:6-12. Each message is a link in a connected chain of prophetic truth gripping the audience with conviction, certainty, and urgency. The magazine not only provides the speaker



Mark Finley's Prophecy Lectures Now Available



with the sermon text but also gives each listener a complete text of the evening lecture for further study.

- Sample set of 26 magazines, \$4.95 (56610-9).
- Individual magazines, \$17.95 per hundred (write for order blank listing each title and order number).

Evangelistic Lessons

Designed as a supplement to the lectures, each of the 30 lessons provides a comprehensive review of the material covered, thus solidifying the information presented in the public lectures. Additional subjects are also covered.

- Sample set of 30 lessons, \$1.95 (56650-5).
- Individual lessons, \$5.95 per hundred (write for order blank listing each title and order number).

Advertising/Organizational Materials

- Attractive four-color handbill proved to be successful in attracting audiences (may be individually imprinted with one press run), \$39.50 per thousand (56695-0).
- Ticket books, used for taking attendance and organizing for visitation, \$35.00 per hundred (56698-4).
- Four-color flyer printed on one side, with other side blank to be imprinted with your advertising, \$12.00 per thousand (56696-8).



P.O. Box 4353,
Washington, D.C. 20012.
(202) 291-2035.

Add 10 percent to the total for mailing cost (minimum, \$1.00). Purchase order number, VISA, or MasterCard acceptable with telephone orders. Please order by identification number.

Students of Spirit of Prophecy writings have two new tools—a volume of previously unpublished manuscript releases, as well as a computerized concordance to each word in the published works.

Ellen White Manuscript Releases

The first volume of *Ellen G. White Manuscript Releases* is now available. The book is made up of selections from Ellen White's letters, diaries, and sermons that were released to various researchers but have not been published in any readily available form.

This first 400-page volume consists of nearly 100 selections originally released between 1941 and 1957. To date, nearly 900 such releases have been made, and if there is sufficient demand for the first volume, subsequent volumes will be issued until the publication project catches up with the current releases. The volume will be of interest mainly to researchers who have made the Spirit of Prophecy writings a topic of special study. The choicest materials already have been gleaned from these releases and published in *Selected Messages*, book 3.

The books can be ordered for \$5 each from the Ellen G. White Estate, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012.

E. G. White concordance

Have you ever spent fruitless hours searching for a particular quotation from the writings of Ellen White? You knew some of the wording and the idea expressed, but you just couldn't pin it down in the thousands of her printed words? The solution to such problems is in the making—a complete concordance on LaserDisc to every word in her published works! With this new study tool you can find any reference and verify quotations electronically in seconds. For more information on this 100-million-word concordance and

the VP-1000 LaserDisc player, write: Select Video Products, 2436 Oak St., Bakersfield, California 93301. Or phone (805) 322-5053.

Preaching and worship

Andrews University will sponsor its second annual Consultation on Preaching and Worship November 2 to 6 in Berrien Springs, Michigan. Well-known authors and preachers, such as Lloyd M. Perry, James Earl Massey, Frank Segler, and Norval Pease, will give presentations on preaching or worship.

The cost is \$10 per day, \$35 for all five days. For further information or housing arrangements, call Lifelong Learning Center (616) 471-3286, or write Lifelong Learning, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan 49103.

Counseling for homosexuals

The September *MINISTRY* dealt at some length with the issue of homosexuality. One of the major needs in this area is for concerned, competent counselors to whom pastors can refer individuals when the necessity arises.

The following persons have agreed to serve the church in this capacity:

Earla G. Aagaard, M.D.
207 S. Pine Street
Ukiah, California 95482
(707) 462-4707

Jack Anders
8020 New Hampshire Avenue
Langley Park, Maryland
20783
(301) 434-0545

Bruce N. Anderson, M.D.
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Deer Park, California 94576
(707) 963-3611

Charles L. Anderson, M.D.

120 N. Oak Street
Hinsdale, Illinois 60521
(312) 887-2690

Herman Bauman
13400 S.E. 97th Avenue
Clackamas, Oregon 97015
(503) 652-2225, ext. 202

Darold F. Bigger, Ph.D.
P.O. Box 5 (4th & Bade)
College Place, Washington
99324
(509) 529-0300

A. E. Brendel, Jr.
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William Loveless
Columbia Union College
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Mr. and Mrs. Douglas McIntyre
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Reading, Pennsylvania 19602
(215) 373-2641

W. Rob Sheppard
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(817) 645-3921, ext. 273
(office)

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Lloyd R. Summers
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Portland, Oregon 97215
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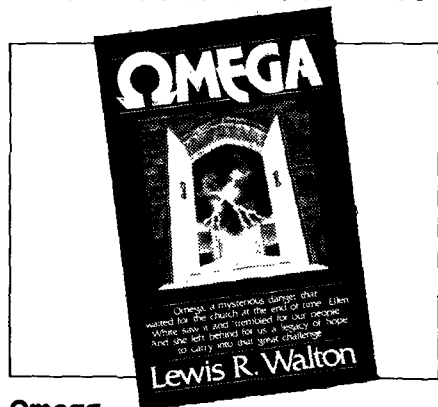
Claude Thomas
5034 Oakwood Road NW.
Huntsville, Alabama 35806
(205) 837-9737 (office)
(205) 852-7201 (home)

Ivan L. Warden
1535 East Chevy Chase Drive
P.O. Box 969
Glendale, California 91209
(213) 240-6250
(213) 245-1876

L. H. Wilson
Loma Linda, California 92354
(714) 785-2283

Recommended reading

The writings of Donald McGavran, prominent church growth leader, hold significance for every evangelistic pastor. *MINISTRY* notes a recent volume and also various titles by denominational publishers.



Omega

Lewis R. Walton, *Review and Herald*, Washington, D.C., 1981, 96 pages, \$4.95.

Those familiar with denominational history can identify the beginning of the twentieth century as a time of fearful discouragement for the Seventh-day Adventist Church as some brilliant and respected leaders succumbed to influences resulting in their separation from the movement. Ellen White called the apostasy the alpha, warning that it would be followed by an even greater falling away—the omega. The author of *Omega* suggests we look at some of the things happening within the church in light of those early events.

Understanding Church Growth

Donald A. McGavran, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1980, 488 pages, \$10.95.

McGavran's thesis is that the main burden of the church is evangelism. He analyzes a number of situations around the world in order to find the factors that cause some churches to grow and others to stagnate. Three of the points made in his book are especially significant to a pastor concerned about evangelism. 1. The greatest obstacle to conversion is social, not theological, because people usually turn to Christianity in large numbers only when doing so does not mean leaving their loved ones. This results in a homogeneous-unit church. 2. Humanitarian activity will not result in church growth unless the primary emphasis is on evangelism. 3. Revival is the key to evangelism.

McGavran believes that revival in churches follows a distinct pattern: (1) prolonged exposure to the Bible and knowledge of its teachings; (2) persistent

prayer for revival on the part of a group or congregation whose members are in kin-contact with a generally Christian population; (3) descent of the Holy Spirit on that group or congregation; (4) confession of sin and restitution in open meeting under circumstances that make these actions seen and known by many nominal Christians and unbelieving relatives and friends; (5) vital, convincing witness and consequent inflooding of converts from among the homogeneous unit of which the Christians are an integral part.—Rollin Shoemaker

Abortion—Mercy or Murder?

James Londis, Southern Publishing Association, Nashville, Tennessee, 1980, 32 pages, \$0.95.

Ambiguity may be the only absolute in the issue of abortion. This seems to be the underlying assertion of Londis' compelling booklet. This is not a polemic that seeks to defend the rightness or wrongness of abortion. Rather, it is educative in nature. Londis' purpose is to inform the reader of the issues raised in dealing with this complex topic.—Dennis Radford

Jesus the Leader

Reinhold R. Bietz, Pacific Press, Mountain View, California, 1980, 125 pages, \$3.95.

Jesus the Leader will be useful to church leaders at all levels of responsibility. It emphasizes and describes the leadership qualities that made Christ a great leader, a worthy example to be followed by those who aspire to become successful in their work. The content of this book was the basis for the author's presentations in the well-known leadership seminars.

Jesus is presented as a leader of His church, courageous and full of enthusiasm. When His example is set aside and secular methods are followed, when criticism becomes a tool, those working for the church fail. On the other hand, when Christ's example is followed, the church will be successful.

Jesus delegates His authority and power first to the church itself and then to selected followers. These are individuals who have strong characters and firm convictions, who are not willing to compromise with sin, who will be loyal to their supreme Leader, and who will not succumb to the pressures of their peers. These men and women will be willing to work for

Christ with a loving spirit, and will be fair and impartial in their dealings. They will be self-forgetful and have forgiving natures even as Jesus did. Those who follow Him as leader will place God's work in the highest priority and dedicate all their efforts in giving emphasis to Christ's plan.—Walton J. Brown

Delivered from Demon Possession

Vaughn Allen, Pacific Press, Mountain View, California, 1981, 96 pages, \$3.95.

The true story of a young woman possessed by several demons and of the courageous pastor who struggled to exorcise the demons from her. The three appendices include quotations from the Spirit of Prophecy on demon possession and a compilation of Bible texts dealing with the subject.

The Testimony of Jesus

F. M. Wilcox, *Review and Herald*, Washington, D.C., 1981, 160 pages, \$6.50.

This review of the work and teachings of Ellen G. White aims to establish confidence in the Advent message and answer questions that have been asked regarding the nature and sources of Ellen White's revelations. Reprint.

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