

CHURCH AUTHORITY **in the Advent Movement Today**

3/2013

Freely circulate, with reservation of all rights under Divine Law, to proclaim liberty.

2 Corinthians 3:17 "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord (YHVH) [is], there [is] liberty."

"Although there are evils existing in the church, and will be until the end of the world, the church in these last days is to be the light of the world that is polluted and demoralized by sin. The church, enfeebled and defective, needing to be reprov'd, warn'd, and counseled, is the only object upon earth upon which Christ bestows His supreme regard." Ellen White, Testimonies to Ministers (TM), p. 49

"Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning. There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world. **God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised** by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness." TM300

Overview

The issue of church authority is an exceedingly broad and challenging topic to address, especially when looking back over the history of the Advent Movement both during and after the Minneapolis Conference of 1888, a landmark event in our movement of destiny. Church authority, in the light of the 1888 Conference, is a difficult and hot topic, both scripturally and historically, to say the least. It became an increasingly important issue upon which Sister White dwelt extensively. Although church authority can be segmented into two general categories, this study attempts to address the topic as a unified theme, emphasizing a future development. A certain urgency to understand the topic of church authority is now come, in a new light and a fuller sense.

The two categories of church authority generally recognized are:

(1) Administrative authority over general church operations, fiscal collections and accounting, and ministerial direction – decisions internal to the ministry. This includes what may or may not be taught from the pulpit to the laity, the membership, as decided by the hierarchical leadership.

(2) Spiritual authority over and discipline of the individual member, the requirements for baptism and the granting of membership – decisions by the local pastor and church counsel regarding infractions that will lead to a member being dis-fellowshipped, whether for moral reasons or for variance from church policies and/or from established and specific doctrinal

teachings as found in the “platform”. [However, increasingly, a member may be “cast out” of the organized church today because of the prevailing attitude of “religious correctness” rather than for moral reasons or variance from the doctrinal platform. Often, this includes the rejection of members for embracing “new light”, new development of truth, and/or when one member is encouraging other members to follow the church counsels of Sister White to honestly investigate all new truth.]

The author makes no attempt to address the topic of church authority in an all-inclusive or comprehensive manner; it is more like the opening few chapters in a much larger framework of Truth, of history and prophecy for our time. Because of the subject matter, this is by no means a short study, and each reader is invited to participate in expanding this discussion into a much broader fruition of understanding.

I am firmly convicted that this subject is a topic that Divine Providence desires each of us to BEGIN to investigate. We will each be accountable to our Great Authority, Christ our King, in regards to which ministry we follow and support with our tithes and offerings, and whether we allow man or God to control our thoughts, our actions and our loyalties in church affairs. Hopefully, this study will prepare the minds and hearts of every “faithful” church member for a great change in church authority. This change IS impending. A candid review of all that has been written on this topic in the Spirit of Prophecy makes this clear. This impending change is a concept well understood by many honest and well-read church members and by many who have been put out of the church.

If we are willing to consider the evidence of such an approaching change in church authority,-- before it takes place--, the blessings will be substantial. To fail to present a decided warning of this change would certainly violate the spirit and intent of this study and the author’s conviction.

The definition of “faithful” is another concept that is inexorably tied to the overall truth of church authority. The true definition of “faithful” certainly transcends how church leaders today would define it and perhaps even transcend an otherwise accurate dictionary definition of “faithful”. The understanding of the word “faithful” that we seek needs to be perused in a much broader and higher sense and in the context of EVER-unfolding Truth, seeking the meaning from a Divine perspective. The Spirit of Prophecy very much supports this concept of EVER-unfolding truth.

The history of the 1888 Message, as per the comments and counsels of the Spirit of Prophecy, is a whole topic in itself which herein cannot but briefly be summarized. The 1888 Minneapolis Conference, in relation to the 1901 and 1903 General Conference Sessions of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church, where Sister White’s presence and counsels were clearly presented to the leading brethren, is the main focus in this treatment of the topic of church authority, particularly in light of the question of accountability of the church membership to church authority.

There are numerous website resources for the reader to study the 1888 Message, such as The1888StudyCommittee.org and [The 1888 Study Group@ Yahoo](http://The1888StudyGroup@Yahoo), as well as many others which are easily found through an internet search and which have been quoted in this study to gain a

sense of a larger context of thought in the SDA church at large. The author of this study is not connected to these information resources for SDAs, rather I am only pointing the reader to these valuable historical sources and their discussions for a better understanding of this topic and our church history.

The appendix section at the end covers various topics and statements more completely, but not exhaustively. This truly critical issue is one of which all church members need to be informed, since church leadership holds the “REINS” of church affairs at all levels, in the practical sense, dictating most pertinently what is taught from the pulpit. However, it is Divine Authority through the OFFICE of the Spirit of Prophecy that holds the TRUE Power and Authority in the Advent Movement; and when it is time for a change, CHANGE WILL COME. Divine Truth always prevails, whether in ancient or modern Israel. If the church member has been prepared for this change through study and a personal relationship with Christ through the Holy Spirit, he or she will be blessed and readied to move onto and into the “Church Triumphant”, *the church that goes through to the end*.

Directing the reader’s mind to a definitive understanding of church authority is challenging due to the repeated rejection of new light in the church, not just in 1888, but at certain other times after that historical landmark in church history. Church members are carefully taught today that with the passing of Sister Ellen White in 1915, the primary gift of church leadership was silenced. The Truth regarding our modern-day relationship to the Spirit of Prophecy is very much in contrast to the official church position as codified in the 28 fundamental beliefs.

The direction in which this study hopes to lead the reader is toward the direct leading of the Holy Spirit on the individual mind of each member so as to encourage the development of an attitude of openness, honesty and determination to search for the Divine Truth regarding this question of church authority. The overall theme of this presentation will be centered on the Scriptural admonition of Proverbs 4:18:

“But the path of the just [is] as the shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day.”

The Right Attitude

The counsel given through the Spirit of Prophecy after 1888 regarding “new light” will be summarized here. The appendix section will give various statements that have been compiled from the 1888 Study Committee and other sources. The key idea to consider here from the Pen of Inspiration is:

“How shall we search the Scriptures in order to understand what they teach? We should come to the investigation of God's word with a contrite heart, a teachable and prayerful spirit. We are not to think, as did the Jews, that our own ideas and opinions are infallible; nor with the papists, **that certain individuals are the sole guardians of truth and knowledge, that men have no right to search the Scriptures for themselves, but must accept the explanations given by the fathers of the church.** We should not study the Bible for the purpose of sustaining our preconceived opinions, but with the single object of learning what God has said.” {TM 105.1}

“Some have feared that if in even a single point they acknowledge themselves in error, other minds would be led to doubt the whole theory of truth. **Therefore they have felt that investigation should not be permitted, that it would tend to dissension and disunion. But if such is to be the result of investigation, the sooner it comes the better.** If there are those whose faith in God's word will not stand the test of an investigation of the Scriptures, the sooner they are revealed the better; for then the way will be opened to show them their error. We cannot hold that a position once taken, an idea once advocated, is not, under any circumstances, to be relinquished. There is but One who is infallible--He who is the way, the truth, and the life.” {TM 105.2}

“Those who allow prejudice to bar the mind against the reception of truth cannot receive the divine enlightenment. Yet, when a view of Scripture is presented, many do not ask, Is it true--in harmony with God's word? but, By whom is it advocated? and unless it comes through the very channel that pleases them, they do not accept it. So thoroughly satisfied are they with their own ideas that they will not examine the Scripture evidence with a desire to learn, but refuse to be interested, merely because of their prejudices.” {TM 105.3}

“The Lord often works where we least expect Him; He surprises us by revealing His power through instruments of His own choice, while He passes by the men to whom we have looked as those through whom light should come. God desires us to receive the truth upon its own merits--because it is truth.” {TM 106.1}

“The Bible must not be interpreted to suit the ideas of men, however long they may have held these ideas to be true. We are not to accept the opinion of commentators as the voice of God; they were erring mortals like ourselves. God has given reasoning powers to us as well as to them. We should make the Bible its own expositor.” {TM 106.2}

Carefulness in Presenting New Views

“All should be careful about presenting new views of Scripture before they have given these points thorough study, and are fully prepared to sustain them from the Bible. Introduce nothing that will cause dissension, without clear evidence that in it God is giving a special message for this time.” {TM 106.3}

“But beware of rejecting that which is truth. The great danger with our people has been that of depending upon men and making flesh their arm. Those who have not been in the habit of searching the Bible for themselves, or weighing evidence, have confidence in the leading men and accept the decisions they make; and thus many will reject the very messages God sends to His people, if these leading brethren do not accept them.” {TM 106.4}

“No one should claim that he has all the light there is for God's people. The Lord will not tolerate this. He has said, "I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." Even if all our leading men should refuse light and truth, that door will still remain open. The Lord will raise up men who will give the people the message for this time.” {TM 107.1}

Every SDA church member needs to be well familiar with church history and the inspired counsels to such an extent as to make a well-informed decision about church authority, most especially in light of the counsels to the Laodicean church (Rev. 3:14-22). The extensive Spirit of Prophecy counsels to the Laodicean church are very much related to the discussion of this topic. A review of Sister White's comments on the "Laodicean Church" in the publications of the Ellen G. White Estate on the SDA church website, or on the EGW Writings CD, will establish a pertinent understanding as to the identification of the modern-day Laodicean church and the nature of the Laodicean condition affecting every church member.

The final thought of note here in this overview relates to the solution to the Laodicean condition-- "revival and reformation":

"God brings against ministers and people the heavy charge of spiritual feebleness, saying, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. **So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.** Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see" (Revelation 3:15-18).

"God calls for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation. **Unless this takes place, those who are lukewarm will continue to grow more abhorrent to the Lord, until He will refuse to acknowledge them as His children.**" {Selected Messages (SM), Volume 1, p. 127.3}

"A revival and a reformation must take place, under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend." --The Review and Herald (RH), Feb. 25, 1902.

Simple Agencies Will Be Used

"Representations have been made to me, showing that the Lord will carry out His plans through a variety of ways and instruments. It is not alone the most talented, not alone those who hold high positions of trust, or are the most highly educated from a worldly point of view, whom the Lord uses to do His grand and holy work of soul saving. **He will use simple means; He will use many who have had few advantages to help in carrying forward His work.** He will, by the use of simple means, bring those who possess property and lands to a belief of the truth, and these will be influenced to become the Lord's helping hand in the advancement of His work."--Letter 62, 1909. {1SM 128.2}

Church Authority – Spiritual Gifts To The church

The gifts of the Spirit are scripturally central to church structure in the Body of Christ and directly related to the overall truth of church authority. The Body of Christ is needful of these gifts, **“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:”** Sadly, the gifts of the Spirit that relate to church authority have been somewhat set aside since E.G. White’s death in 1915, as if they are no longer required; as if they have been completely “fulfilled” somehow, in perpetuity; as if the Body of Christ is already “perfected”; as if the current SDA understanding and practice of church authority is complete and will carry the church through to the end. It will not. Nothing could be further from the truth. This gross theological error is the central misunderstanding that this study is seeking (to begin) to rectify.

The spiritual offices of “apostle” and “prophet” are the two key elements of church authority in both the Old Testament and the New Testament periods. However, the office of prophet was the singular key office of Divine authority in the Old Testament, superior to that of the priesthood. The office of apostle is the key office of authority in the New Testament, presiding over the individual priesthood of the church body.

Rev. 19:10 “And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See [thou do it] not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the TESTIMONY of Jesus is the SPIRIT of PROPHECY.” **Note:** This “TESTIMONY” should be and will be “living” or “revived” in the church body. (Early Writings (EW), p. 279.1).

Ephesians 4:11 “And he gave some, apostles; and some, PROPHETS; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

4:12 “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

4:13 **“Till (Until) we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:**

4:14 “That we [henceforth] be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, [and] cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;...”

Romans 12:4 “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

12:5 “So we, [being] many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

12:6 “Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether PROPHECY, [let us prophesy] according to the proportion of faith;

12:7 “Or ministry, [let us wait] on [our] ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

12:8 “Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, [let him do it] with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.”

1 Corinthians 12:10 “To another the working of miracles; to another PROPHECY;...

12:28 “And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily PROPHETS, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

12:29 “[Are] all apostles? [are] all prophets? [are] all teachers? [are] all workers of miracles?

12:30 “Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

12:31 “But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way. “

The author’s personal testimony, establishing a foundation principle:

From the Scriptures only, quoted above, it appears that we can expect this gift of prophecy in our midst, along with all the other gifts.

...

While at lunch one day (at a literature evangelist meeting), a gentleman lingered at my table, and we began talking about spiritual things. What else? I guess he wanted to mentor me in that hour or so we sat at the table as he was probably a couple of decades older than me. He drew a really nice diagram for me, but he also explained to me that there have always been prophets throughout the ages. He said some wrote the Scriptures. Others published for their period of time only; therefore, it’s not necessary for this age to have those counsels. I was impressed by that. It makes sense, as it speaks to Yah’s (God’s) character. He cares. This man really gave me a tune up that day by the things he taught in that short time. I have used his diagram many times over.

Another subject,

Lately, more than ever, I want to tell the world how correct Sister White has been in her prophetic calling, considering the book she wrote, The Great Controversy (GC). We are now in the closing pages of that book and world events vindicate her OVERWHELMINGLY!! Very recently, I found something on the internet that detailed her “inaccuracies”. It was actually a good article by another Sabbath-observant group. It seems the article was detailing the differences between their group and SDAs. Of course, they feel SDAs are wrong. One of their reasons for belief in SDA error is that they feel EGW made some “false prophecies”, such as the one where she said at Minneapolis “some food for worms” and that some of them wouldn’t die, etc. I think it was the Worldwide Church of God or the Church of God, Seventh Day, a Sabbath observant church. I wanted to study it more, but time didn’t permit it. It still got me thinking.

I have seen those arguments over the years about her prophecies that haven’t come true. I haven’t been troubled by them. As you look at her volume of work, those things that haven’t been understood or seem false cannot be measured against all that is correct. However!! I have just understood those quotes. Before I go there, didn’t Messiah say that some wouldn’t taste death prior to his ascension, that that generation was the last? Matthew 16:28 “Verily I say unto

you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.” Without looking up her statement, it was very similar as I recall.

Sister White knew the Church was being tested back then by the Three Angels’ Messages, and then the Fourth Angel that joined the Third was sent back (EW_277, “this message seemed to be an addition to the Third message, joining it”). She later said that if the Church had accepted the Righteousness by Faith message; **they “would have been in the Kingdom within two years from that date (1888)”!!** (Letter from Melbourne, Australia, May 9, 1892). I believe she was operating under the assumption that her words were true and that was all she was to know at that time. She was not to know that the Church was to fail. (Even Yahshua doesn’t know the day or the hour of His coming, only His Father.) I believe they were true, but the Message wasn’t received by the Church corporately, so those prophecies became unfulfilled. I will have to check the dates of all those statements against the time frame back then. They would have been true if the Kingdom had manifested in her day, back around 1890. There was some probationary time back then, for acceptance or rejection of the sealing Message. Then I believe the door of probation shut irrevocably, and the Church went into the wilderness forty years as prophesied by Sister White and detailed by Taylor Bunch during the latter part of that forty-year time frame (1925). Yah (God) has always had messengers because He is love and He cares, some greater messengers and some lesser, but all important. The modern Reformation had messengers, even worldwide, starting with Martin Luther. Previous to Sister White, we had William Miller. He was an enlightened messenger and sent forth by the Spirit of Prophecy to go and preach what he studied. I believe he was propelled by the Holy Spirit to study what he did and then very reluctantly teach. During that time, there were at least two other corresponding movements going on teaching the same message as William Miller.

So okay, by the Scriptures only we can prove that there is something called the Spirit of Prophecy. Also, we are told to pray for this “gift”. We need it, each of us, if only for ourselves, but also for edifying the Body of Christ.

Joel 2:28 “And it shall come to pass afterward, [that] I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

Joel 2:29 “And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.”

This is promise for the latter days, which was well understood at the foundation of the Advent Movement and beginning with Ellen White.

This foundation principle did not end with the gift of prophecy and leadership of Sister White. She made this rather clear in many statements. But not a word is spoken about this key Truth for our time from the SDA pulpit.

“But the Holy Spirit will, from time to time, reveal truth through its own chosen agencies, and no man, not even a priest or ruler, has a right to say, You should not give publicity to your opinions, because I do not believe them. That wonderful ‘I’ may attempt to put down the Holy Spirit’s teaching. Men may for a time attempt to smother it and kill it, but that

will not make error truth, or truth error. The inventive minds of men have advanced speculative opinions in various lines, and when the Holy Spirit lets light shine into human minds, it does not respect every point of man's application of the word. **God impressed His servants to speak the truth irrespective of what men had taken for granted as truth.**" TM 69, 70

"Even Seventh-day Adventist are in danger of closing their eyes to truth as it is in Jesus, because it contradicts something which they have taken for granted as truth but which the Holy Spirit teaches is not truth." TM 70

"Those who allow prejudice to bar the mind against the reception of truth cannot receive the divine enlightenment. Yet, when a view of scripture is presented, many do not ask, Is it true—in harmony with God's Word. But, by whom is it advocated? And unless it comes through the very channel that pleases them, they do not accept it. So thoroughly satisfied are they with their own ideas that they will not examine the Scripture evidence with a desire to learn, but refuse to be interested, merely because of their prejudices.

"The Lord often works where we least expect Him; He surprises us by revealing His power through instruments of His own choice, while He passes by the men to whom we have looked as those through whom light should come. God desires us to receive the truth upon its own merits—BECAUSE IT IS TRUTH." TM 105,106

"I was pointed to those who claim to be Adventists, but who reject the present truth, and saw that they were crumbling and that the hand of the Lord was in their midst to divide and scatter them now in the gathering time, so that the precious jewels among them, who have formerly been deceived, may have their eyes opened to see their true state. And **now when the truth is presented to them by the Lord's messengers, they are prepared to listen, and see its beauty and harmony, and to leave their former associates and errors, embrace the precious truth and stand where they can define their position." EW 57 [This historical event will take place again in the Advent Movement.]**

"If professed Christians would but carefully and prayerfully compare their views with the Scriptures, laying aside all pride of opinion and desire for the supremacy, a flood of light would be shed upon the churches now wandering in the darkness of error. **As fast as his people can bear it, the Lord reveals to them their errors in doctrine and their defects of character. From age to age He has raised up men and qualified them to do a special work needed in their time. But to none of these did He commit all the light which was to be given to the world. WISDOM DOES NOT DIE WITH THEM.** It was not the will of God that the work of reform should cease with the going out of Luther's life; it was not his will that at the death of the Wesleys the Christian faith should become stereotyped. **The work of reform is progressive. Go forward, is the command of our great leader,-- forward unto victory.**

"We shall not be accepted and honored of God in doing the same work that our fathers did. We do not occupy the position which they occupied in the unfolding of truth. In order to be accepted and honored as they were, we must improve the light which shines upon us, as they improved that which shone upon them; we must do as they would have done, had they lived in our day. Luther and the Wesleys were reformers in their time. **It is our duty to continue the work of reform. If we neglect to heed the light, it will become darkness; and the**

degree of darkness will be proportionate to the light rejected. The prophet of God declares that in the last days knowledge shall be increased. **THERE ARE NEW TRUTHS TO BE REVEALED TO THE HUMBLE SEEKER.**” Spirit of Prophecy (SP), Volume 4, pp. 185-186

A Historical Synopsis: 1888 to 1903

The official church historical rendition of the 1888 Conference is extensive, as presented in the book Movement of Destiny by L. E. Froom. It is nevertheless a rather divergent presentation compared to the extensive counsels and history written by Sister White and SDA historical commentators since her time. In verity, this is perhaps the most important topic with which Seventh-Day Adventists should familiarize themselves. The counsel here should be carefully considered:

“Young men in our ranks are watching to see in what spirit the ministers come to the investigation of the Scriptures; whether they have a teachable spirit, and are humble enough to accept evidence, and receive light from **THE MESSENGERS WHOM GOD CHOOSES TO SEND.**” {TM 109.3}

“We must study the truth for ourselves. **No man should be relied upon to think for us. No matter who he is, or in what position he may be placed, we are not to look upon any man as a criterion for us. We are to counsel together, and to be subject one to another; but at the same time we are to exercise the ability God has given us, in order to learn what is truth.** Each one of us must look to God for divine enlightenment. We must individually develop a character that will stand the test in the day of God. **We must not become set in our ideas, and think that no one should interfere with our opinions.**” {TM 109.4}

“When a point of doctrine that you do not understand comes to your attention, go to God on your knees, that you may understand what is truth and not be found as were the Jews fighting against God. **While warning men to beware of accepting anything unless it is truth, we should also warn them not to imperil their souls BY REJECTING MESSAGES OF LIGHT,** but to press out of the darkness by earnest study of the word of God.” {TM 110.1}

Thirty-eight years ago, I was one of those “young men” to whom Sister White was directing the attention of the ministers as I began to investigate new light topics. She desired that the ministers should set the true and righteous example for the young men.

Revelation 1:20 speaks of seven stars in the Hand of Yahshua (Jesus). It is commonly understood that each star corresponds to one of the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3. **The messages and warnings given to the churches in the Book of Revelation are specifically to the “angel” or TO the ministry of each church.** The message given to “the angel of the church of Laodicea” is the seventh and final message and is given most particularly to the pastors and ministerial leadership of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists as a warning against being “lukewarm” and rejecting new light. Very few SDAs understand this reality.

In Volume 3 of the Testimonies to the Church (3T), chapter 23, page 252, Sister White makes it clear that the message to the church of the Laodiceans is “applicable to the people of God at the present time.” The “present time” extends to this very day. The whole chapter in Volume 3 is written to effectively awaken, even “startle”, the Advent Movement of today; to awaken those who are willing to repent. Prayerfully reading the entire chapter should be a priority.

Speaking as to the repercussions of the outcome of the 1888 Conference she penned (in Selected Messages (SM), Volume 1, 234, 235):

“An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren [E.J.] Waggoner and [A.T.] Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. **The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world.**”

Also, in 1896, she wrote from Australia:

“In His instruction to Moses the Lord very plainly set forth the character of those who were to fill important positions as counselors. They are to be ‘able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness.’ The Lord's counsel has been strangely neglected. There are men in places of holy trust who, when reproved, have cared naught for it. Some who for years have stood as counselors have boldly stated that they would not receive the testimonies given.” [SEE “APPENDIX” in Testimonies to Ministers.] (Author's note: Publishers notes are retained in quotations, even though the notes tend to explain away the reality of the counsel, as if it does not apply for today or to a very few leading brethren then, when the counsel was written!)

“In triumph they have declared that many of our most responsible men have lost faith in the message coming from Sister White. Thus the rejecters of light have been strengthened in their unbelief, feeling that they had quite a strong confederacy. Men who have had the light have walked contrary to the light. These words are appropriate: ‘Truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.’ The malaria of unbelief has been diffusing its deathly atmosphere throughout the ranks, nigh and afar off. All this has been stated plainly, yet for years matters have been left unchanged. Can the Lord's favor be expected under such circumstances? . . .”
{TM 341.3}

The crucial warning above was only the beginning of such counsels designed to attempt to bring the church leadership back to the path of ever-unfolding light and the unrolling of the scroll in the Advent Movement. In the very early 1900s, some reforms were initiated in the General Conference organizational structure, but those reforms did not last. Sister White directly warned the leadership not to embark upon the path of electing a pastoral administrative super-leader, comparing such an action to the people of Israel wanting a King. Adding to this expanded mantle of church president an assumed sense of prophetic authority, but not real. After 1888, and particularly after 1901, Ellen White was quite confrontational, often even harsh, with the uncooperative brethren in the General Conference. Many, perhaps a majority, of them

were unreceptive to, if not irritated with, the Divine counsel given. What most church members don't truly understand is that Sister White's role in church leadership, by the design of Heaven, was as a writer, primary teacher and spiritual counselor in the Advent Movement. Her role was to be Divine counselor, most of all, to the General Conference.

Under the title, "What Might Have Been," written January 5, 1903:

"One day at noon I was writing of the work *that might have been done at the last General Conference if the men in positions of trust had followed the will and way of God.* Those who have had great light have not walked in the light. The meeting was closed, and the break was not made. Men did not humble themselves before the Lord as they should have done, and the Holy Spirit was not imparted. ... I thought of where we might have been had thorough work been done at the last General Conference, **and an agony of disappointment came over me as I realized that what I had witnessed was not a reality." 8T 104-106**

Our Present Day Dilemma - Dual Leadership; Working At Cross Purposes

The General Conference role, by Divine intent, was for the administrative, managerial and pastoral affairs of the church, at the local, state and world level. It was Heaven's design that Sister White's role would be, in reality, an unelected and unelectable office, by Divine appointment only. What office? No less than the office of Inspiration, namely the mouthpiece for the Spirit of Prophecy. This position rightfully should be seen as the office of President in the church, serving both as a spiritual adviser and as a guide to the administrative leaders in the church, just as the prophet Nathan advised King David.

As the years progressed up to and after 1888, the position of General Conference (GC) president steadily increased in authority over the spiritual affairs and the administrative affairs of the SDA Church. Accordingly, Sister White warned that it was "unwise to elect one man as president of the General Conference." Eventually, the office of GC president began to conflict with the office of Inspiration. Ever-increasing light and unfolding Truth, "meat in due season", designed to bring the church to the TIME OF HARVEST (of the First fruits/Rev. 7 and Rev. 14:1), was not then, nor is it now, a priority of the leading men in the church. This attitude filters down to the church pastor as well. Since SDA church structure is hierarchical in nature and every pastor works for the General Conference, NOT for the local church, a constant conflict of interest between the pastor's individual spiritual convictions and the desires of the local church he serves versus the administrative requirements of the local conferences and the GC, often occurs. In other words, the GC exerts absolute control over the local pastor by being in control of his salary, his very job. Any divergence from the established GC program threatens the pastor's livelihood and the welfare of his family.

"A strange thing has come into our churches. Men who are placed in positions of responsibility, that they may be wise helpers to their fellow workers, have come to suppose that they were set as kings and rulers in the churches, to say to one brother, Do this, to another, Do that, and to another, Be sure to labor in such and such a way. **There have been places where the workers have been told that if they did not follow the instructions of these men of responsibility, their pay from the conference would be withheld.**" (Read at 1907 Campmeeting. TM 477 or [Series B](#), No. 10)

“Every individual soul has a responsibility before God, and he is not to be arbitrarily instructed by men as to what he shall do, and what he shall say, and where he shall go. **We are not to put confidence in the counsel of men and assent to all they say unless we have evidence that they are under the influence of the Spirit of God.**” RH, July 1, 1909}

There is a prophecy depicted in Zechariah 6:3, 7, in which Sister White wrote a brief but important comment. An image of two sets of horses hitched to the same chariot (church) is described here, a kind of spiritual battle in church affairs. This is an illustration of the consequences of the dual leadership in the Advent Movement. One set of horses is following the spiritual leadership (the Spirit of Prophecy) and pulling in one direction, and the other set of horses is following the administrative leadership (the General Conference) and pulling in the opposite direction. The end result of this Divinely-ordained imagery in Zechariah 6 is that one set of horses is PROVIDENTIALLY “cut loose”, to go SOUTH (spiritual Egypt, 5T 217)). The other set of horses is then free to go “to and fro throughout the earth” to spread the final message of Mercy (regarding SEVEN Angels’ messages, not just Three Angels, as in Rev. 14). The clear meaning of this prophetic illustration will soon come to pass in the Advent Movement, when the 144,000 First Fruits are manifested under an up-and-coming leadership that is following ONLY Divine counsel and that is under ONLY direct Divine administration.

The “reins” of control, or church authority, is the true issue in the Zechariah 6 prophecy. ‘Control’ has been the growing issue in church leadership since before the 1888 Conference. Resistance to NEW LIGHT, new understanding, particularly concerning the Person of Christ Himself, was the central issue. It is the view of the author here that the “old guard” leaders of the church in 1888 were indeed threatened by the much younger Jones and Waggoner and their presentation of new, clearer Truth. They feared a soon change in church authority, if the message was accepted by those at the conference. Some leaders did accept the 1888 message, but there is considerable debate on what the percentage was. Certainly, it was NOT the majority of the leaders, as contended by the church leaders today. The laity, on the other hand, was most receptive to the message, when it was presented to them in the years that followed.

Sister White’s counsel on the topic of the control of the work is quite prophetic for our day, indicating an ultimate or impending change in leadership.

“Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning. There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward **under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel** in the message to be given to the world. **God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness.** Those who are accounted good workers will need to draw nigh to God, they will need the divine touch. They will need to drink more deeply and continuously at the fountain of living water, in order that they may discern God’s work at every point. Workers may make mistakes, but you should give them a chance to correct their errors, give them an opportunity to learn caution, by leaving the work in their hands.” {TM 300}

Church Authority in the Advent Movement as Seen in the Development of Truth Since 1888

Is There a Progression of Church Authority in the Advent Movement?

Progressive light and greater understanding of Truth, such as it was in 1844 and in 1888, is at the heart of the issue of church authority and is very much a theme throughout the writings of Sister White.

"There needs to be an elevating, uplifting power, a CONSTANT GROWTH in the KNOWLEDGE of God and THE TRUTH, on the part of one who is seeking the salvation of souls. If the minister utters words drawn from the living oracles of God; if he believes in and expects the cooperation of Christ, whose servant he is; if he hides self and exalts Jesus, the world's Redeemer; his words will reach the hearts of his hearers, and his work will bear the divine credentials. The Holy Spirit must be the LIVING AGENCY to convince of sin." Series A, #1, page 4, emphasis added.

The following is from the General Conference Bulletin, April 3, 1901, 34th session, Extra #1, Vol. 4, page 25. The context is dealing with leaders who train the youth in SDA institutions, which included the medical institution. Her statement is comprehensive.

"That these men should stand in a sacred place, to be as the voice of God to the people, as we once believed the General Conference to be, -- **that is past**. What we want now **is a reorganization**. We want to begin at the foundation **and to build upon a different principle**." Emphasis added.

"A reorganization" – *What is this?*

"A different principle" – *What is this?*

One thing is for sure, the "different principle" would certainly be pointing to living inspiration, to "the living oracles of God", or the Living Spirit of Prophecy in our midst today. The "reorganization" would certainly be something other than what the General Conference is today and has been since 1888. There will be a **new organization** that will emerge, that will become evident, a coming great change in church authority.

Now, let's contrast the above statement with the popular statement in Volume 9 of the Testimonies to the Church:

"I have often been instructed by the Lord that no man's judgment should be surrendered to the judgment of any other one man. Never should the mind of one man or the minds of a few men be regarded as sufficient in wisdom and power to control the work and to say what plans shall be followed. But when, in a General Conference (four-year session), the judgment of the brethren assembled from all parts of the field is exercised, private independence and private judgment must not be stubbornly maintained, but surrendered. Never should a laborer regard as a virtue the persistent maintenance of his position of independence, contrary to the decision of the general body. {9T 260.1}

"At times, when a small group of men entrusted with the general management of the work have, in the name of the General Conference, sought to carry out unwise plans and to restrict God's

work, I have said that I could no longer regard the voice of the General Conference, represented by these few men, as the voice of God. **But this is not saying that the decisions of a General Conference composed of an assembly of duly appointed, representative men from all parts of the field (every four years) should not be respected. God has ordained that the representatives of His church from all parts of the earth, when assembled in a General Conference, shall have authority. The error that some are in danger of committing is in giving to the mind and judgment of one man, or of a small group of men, the full measure of authority and influence that God has vested in His church** in the judgment and voice of the General Conference assembled to plan for the prosperity and advancement of His work. {9T 260.2}

“When this power, which God has placed in the church, is accredited wholly to one man, and he is invested with the authority to be judgment for other minds, then the true Bible order is changed. Satan's efforts upon such a man's mind would be most subtle and sometimes well-nigh overpowering, for the enemy would hope that through his mind he could affect many others. **Let us give to the highest organized authority in the church that which we are prone to give to one man or to a small group of men.”** {9T261}.

Many in church authority and laity would assume that this **“assembly of duly appointed, representative men from all parts of the field” is what the General Conference is today at the headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland. This is not so!** What she is describing in these statements is a General Conference world session every four years, when representatives from the world field are present to hear and vote on a broad range of church issues. There is here, however, one key issue outstanding as we view this counsel in respect to new light brought before the brethren assembled from all parts of the world. A failure to view this outstanding issue in its proper light and priority would put the counsels of Sister White in diametric opposition to her own counsels, that is, to the very counsels that the Inspiration of Heaven gave her concerning new light. Such a scenario of presenting a purported advancement of new light however has never taken place at any general conference session. And herein is the problem.

Would this broad range of church issues include advancement of new light, ever increasing truth, in the Advent Movement body? Such a concept would be very much in harmony with many statements from the Pen of Inspiration. Yes, new light topics would be most appropriate to present and discuss, honestly and openly, at these world sessions of the General Conference. However, to be direct here, the schedule of church business and administrative decisions in the modern church would not allow time (let alone the desire) for any topic of advancement of new light.

Sister White further elaborates:

“The voice of the General Conference has been represented as an authority to be heeded as the voice of the Holy Spirit. But when the members of the General Conference Committee become entangled in business affairs and financial perplexities, the sacred, elevated character of their work is in a great degree lost. [SEE A. L. WHITE, THE EARLY ELMSHAVEN YEARS, PP. 70-83, 223-235, FOR A DISCUSSION OF CONDITIONS IN THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST

CHURCH ABOUT THE TIME THIS MANUSCRIPT WAS WRITTEN.] The temple of God becomes as a place of merchandise, and the ministers of God's house as common businessmen. Their work is brought down on a level with common things. Business cares and perplexities unfit them for the consideration of matters relating to the spiritual interests of the work, which require the keenest perception, the most careful thought, the most delicate tact, and the deepest spiritual insight." {Manuscript Releases (MR), Volume 14, p. 278.3}

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

"As I was made to understand something of the management of the work in this great center, it was all that I could bear. My spirit was pained within me, for I had lost confidence in that which I had ever presented before the people as the voice of God to His children. It has not been the voice of God. There has been a lording power exercised over God's heritage in decisions which were not dictated by the Spirit of God. Unconsecrated men who were brought in connection with the work have exercised their own wisdom, and have woven into the work their own unconverted peculiarities. Their own principles have been counterworking the principles of truth and righteousness. **We cannot therefore present before the people that the voice of the General Conference in its decisions must move and control them; for its propositions and decisions cannot be accepted. They are not in the right line of progress. God is dropped out of their counsels.**" {17MR 222}

[**Author's note:** To say these same conditions still do not exist today in most conferences and most SDA churches would be inaccurate to say the least. There has been no change in principles or policies of the church leadership, just as EGW stated in the Series A of the Testimonies for 1901 in repeated statements, reproduced near the end of this study.]

The key point here is that the determination and/or acceptance of NEW LIGHT, NEW MESSAGE(s), to the SDA Church is not to be given to the General Conference leadership, or to any local conference leadership, but to the world body of representatives in a General Conference quadrennial session, every four years. It is my observation of church history that NO NEW LIGHT or new truth WOULD EVER BE PERMITTED to be presented before a world session of Seventh-day Adventists because of the controversial nature of ever-advancing truth, and the leaders would not want this topic or a particular development to be carried back with the delegates to their respective nations, thus spreading word of it, and likely carefully examining the new light controversy for themselves, well away from the spirit and influence of the leading brethren.

The attitude of church leadership has always been, “stay the course”, introduce nothing new! Satan hates new light because it advances the membership to reflect the Image of Christ, to perfect the Body of Christ, more and more. He (Satan) will always respond with a confrontation, or even a religious war, to prevent it. The presentation of new light has not been permitted in the past and will not be permitted in the future. All controversial issues of new light are dealt with and disposed of at the local conference level. The General Conference WILL initiate a committee to “investigate” if the controversy is significant. But the committee will not convene for the purpose of honestly investigating the new light claim. Rather, the purpose will be to dismiss the issue, discuss a response and to generate defense literature. ‘Thank you very much, we are fine just the way we are’, a paraphrase of the Laodicean condition. The counsel to the “angel” of the church of Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-20), which Sister White states clearly is the SDA people, says otherwise.

What does this all mean in light of the counsel of Scripture?

“But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day.” Prov. 4:18.

Notice in Revelation 3:20, CHRIST is OUTSIDE of the Laodicean church, knocking politely, seeking to get in! What then is the TRUE CONDITION of the church’s authority in this sad and dire situation? This is the question of the hour. This study will not answer this all important question for the reader. It is left to the leading of the Holy Spirit in each one’s heart and mind to study this issue and decide for one’s self.

For truly:

“[It is] the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honor of kings [is] to search out a matter. “ Prov. 25:2

Next, some important thoughts presented by the 1888 Message Study Group @ Yahoo.com, adapted and formatted for this study.

The reaction of the GC leadership to the 1888 Conference is a mirror for what their actions will be today when the Fourth Angel returns.

1. It will arouse the fears of leaders who will oppose it.

“In the manifestation of that power which lightens the earth with the glory of God, they will see only something which in their blindness they think dangerous, something which will arouse their fears, and they will brace themselves to resist it. Because the Lord does not work according to their ideas and expectations, they will oppose the work. ‘Why,’ they say, ‘should not we know the Spirit of God, when we have been in the work so many years?’” RH, December 23, 1890.

2. It will be called a false light by those who fail to walk in its advancing glory.

“The third angel's message will not be comprehended, the light which will lighten the earth with its glory will be called a false light, by those who refuse to walk in its advancing glory.” RH, May 27, 1890.

3. The message will be proclaimed again when it returns to the church.

“Thus the message of the third angel will be proclaimed. **As the time comes for it to be given with greatest power, the Lord will work through humble instruments, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to His service. The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions.** Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them. “ GC 606.

4. The message will return through “God’s own channels.”

“**The inventions of men-human machinery will be swept away, man's authority will be as broken reeds. Under the showers of the latter rain the inventions of man, the human machinery, will at times be swept away, the boundary of man's authority will be as broken reeds, and the Holy Spirit will speak through the living, human agent, with convincing power.** No one then will watch to see if the sentences are well rounded off, if the grammar is faultless. **The living water will flow in God's own channels.**” 2SM, pp. 58, 59

“**As a starting point, when the angel of Revelation 18 comes back to do his work, as Sister White predicted, then we should expect to see the following characteristics accompanying his work:**

- “A teaching that Christ is the literal Son of God, **begotten and BORN before the ages as an individual Being, separate from the Father. (! This is a key issue, recognized by some independent Adventist groups who research and discuss the 1888 Message.)**

“As E. J. Waggoner stated in his book, Christ and His Righteousness , p. 4:

“The Word was in the beginning. The mind of man cannot grasp the ages that are spanned in this phrase. **It is not given to man to know when or how the Son was BEGOTTEN;** but we know that He was the Divine Word, not simply before He came to this earth to die, but even before the world was created. Just before His crucifixion He prayed, ‘And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine Own Self with the glory which I had with Thee before the World was.’ John 17:5. And more than seven hundred years before His first advent, His coming was thus foretold by the word of inspiration: ‘But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity.’ Micah 5:2, margin. **We know that Christ ‘proceedeth forth and came from God’ (John 8:42), but it was so far back in the ages of eternity as to be far beyond the grasp of man.**” Meaning, the Son of God had origin, Divine origin, “from the Bosom of the Father”.

“As A.T. Jones stated in **The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald**, August 1, 1899, p. 487:

“He was born of the Holy Ghost. In other words, Jesus Christ was born again. He came from Heaven, God’s first-born, to the earth, and was born again. But all in Christ’s work goes by opposites for us: He, the sinless One, was made to be sin, in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He, the Living One, the Prince and Author of life, died that we might live. **He whose goings forth have been from the days of eternity, the first-born of God, was *born again*, in order that we might be *born again*.**

“If Jesus had never been born again, could you and I have ever been born again?—No. But He was born again from the world of righteousness into the world of sin; that we might be born again from the world of sin into the world of righteousness. He was born again, and was made partaker of the human nature, that we might be born again, and so made partakers of the divine nature. He was born again unto earth, unto sin, and unto man, that we might be born again unto Heaven, unto righteousness, and unto God.”

- “The teaching that Christ is fully a Divine Being, Deity by nature, by virtue of inheritance.

“Being so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.” Hebrews 1:4

- “The fullness of the Godhead, the righteousness of God, is available to us as we partake of Christ Himself, because He Himself possesses these things.

“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Colossians 1:27

- “A turning from men and human organizations to Christ.
- “A testimony against those who wish to rule and to dictate to people. It is a message that threatens their systems and their authority.
- “The message will be ridiculed, criticized and spoken against by the majority.
- “Leaders will think it dangerous, it will arouse their fears, and they will brace themselves to resist it.
- “It will be called a false light by those who refuse to walk in its advancing glory.
- “It will be a revelation of God's character of Love. “

These are very positive observations summarized from the Pen of Inspiration, brought out by the 1888 Study Group, which testifies to the nature of the new TRUTH to come IN OUR DAY. Remember that truth may be hidden and not easily uncovered, as we read in the Gospel account

of the Pearl of Great Price hidden in the field (Matthew 13: 45, 46). We are bidden to “purchase” the field. We are told by Christ Himself not to cast our pearls (of truth-- Matthew 7:6) before swine (those of unclean spirit-- the Laodicean condition), those who think they have all the truth/ oil/light they need. Matthew 25:4 indicates there is “extra oil.” **There is more truth to be revealed outright; more truth to be studied out; more truth to be presented to the church in General Conference! But will it happen?**

Church Authority – Stay With The Ship!

Despite the fact that the church is the “[object upon earth upon which Christ bestows His supreme regard](#)” (TM 49), it would appear that the unrepentant in “the church of Laodicea” are “spue(d) out” (Revelation 3:16). SOME members, however, DO receive the Divine counsel to put on the “eye salve” and the “white raiment.” Apparently, the Laodicean call to repent is a CORPORATE one that does not rule out INDIVIDUAL repentance. Do the repentant ones remain on the Laodicean “ship” or is there another “ship” that will go through to the end? An important question to raise here, “is the church of Philadelphia still with us TODAY? It certainly was in 1844.

We are told repeatedly from SDA pulpits to “stay with the ship”. Some ministers seem to quote authoritatively that “the ship goes through to the end”, but they give no source for such a quote. **Whatever constitutes “the church” WILL go through to the end.** All those who are growing in TRUTH and KNOWLEDGE, desiring Christ-like character development, and “sighing and crying for the abominations that are in the land...church” (Ezekiel 9:4; [Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White \(CET\)](#), p. 186, 187; 5T 209-211) DO INDEED **go through to the end.** The definition of just “WHAT is the ship?”, “WHAT is the church?” is crucial to our understanding here. Revelation 3:14-20 counsels the church to repent of their “lukewarm” condition, first and foremost, to the MINISTERS, who are represented by the “stars” of Revelation 1:20. Will those who do repent remain on the same ship with those who do not? **Is there a separation of members?** Do the repentant ones board another ship, or is the same ship purified of sin and sinners? May these questions resonate and resound in the hearts and minds of each reader and every church member.

We are essentially at the end of time, and a ship that is contaminated with sin and sinners cannot go through to the end. If this were possible, the many statements from Inspiration prophesying of the purification of the church would be unnecessary, untrue. Sin does not go on in the church till the end of time. Probation closes for the church before it closes for the world as 1 Peter 4:17 indicates. This is another study topic, but the evidence is there.

What is the Church?

[Upward Look](#), EGW, page 315.

Chap. 301 - Be Singular--for Christ's Sake

“Do not court singularity for the sake of being odd, but for the sake of avoiding sin and dishonor to God.

“God has a church. It is not the great cathedral, neither is it the national establishment, neither is it the various denominations; IT IS THE PEOPLE WHO LOVE GOD AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS. ‘Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them’ (Matthew 18:20). Where Christ is even among the humble few, this is Christ's church, for the presence of the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity can alone constitute a church.”
{The Upward Look (UL), p. 315.5}

“Where two or three are present who love and obey the commandments of God, Jesus there presides, let it be in the desolate place of the earth, in the wilderness, in the city enclosed in prison walls. The glory of God has penetrated the prison walls, flooding with glorious beams of heavenly light the darkest dungeon. His saints may suffer, but their sufferings will, like the apostles of old, spread their faith and win souls to Christ and glorify His holy name. The bitterest opposition expressed by those who hate God's great moral standard of righteousness should not and will not shake the steadfast soul who trusts fully in God. . . .”
{UL 315.6}

The “church” (the ship) is not the “national establishment” by inspired definition. The 501c3 nonprofit organization, a corporation of man with the spirit of a business institution and of its preservation at all costs, constitutes the core condition of Laodicea. **The church goes through to the end;** the 501c3 nonprofit organization DOES NOT! The church of Philadelphia that emerged in 1844 goes through to the end. Not only does the church of Philadelphia possess the spirit of brotherly love, but this church also ever progresses with truth. The church of Laodicea does not. It is assumed and presumed by church leaders, and most of the membership, that the “church” very much includes the “organization” of the General Conference Corporation. Certainly however, IT DOES NOT.

“The state of the church represented by the **foolish virgins** is also spoken of as the **Laodicean state.**” RH, August 19, 1890

“After the passing of the time of expectation, in 1844 ... Now was seen the application of those words of Christ in the Revelation addressed to the church at this very time. ‘And to the **angel of the church in Philadelphia** write; These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.’ Revelation 3:7, 8.” 4SP 268

“I was shown that the testimony to the Laodiceans applies to God’s people at the present time.” 1T 186 (1859)

“The church is like the unproductive tree which, receiving the dew and the rain and the sunshine, should have produced an abundance of fruit, but on which the Divine Searcher discovers nothing but leaves. Solemn thought for our churches! Solemn, indeed, for every individual! Marvelous is the patience and forbearance of God! But ‘except thou repent,’ it will be exhausted; **the churches and the institutions will go from weakness to weakness, and from cold formality to deadness, while they are saying, ‘I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing’!** **The True Witness says, ‘And**

knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. **WILL THEY EVER SEE CLEARLY THEIR TRUE CONDITION?** RH,
November 7, 1918 (a reprint)

*“There is hope neither in Sardis nor Laodicea. Out of this experience must the victors come into that of Philadelphia ... He has no promise for Laodicea as a whole ... But the *individual who opens the heart’s door and lets Christ in, who comes into that wonderful communion with the divine Lord, will by that very process come into the condition of brotherly love. They will constitute the Remnant.*” Signs of the Times (ST), January 17, 1911, M.C. Wilcox.*

This observation by Elder Wilcox bears rereading and much consideration by the people of Laodicea, our dear church worldwide.

The “church” is comprised of the people, the “faithful” members. The “church” constitutes those who are not corrupted in their hearts and minds and controlled by the hierarchical church structure and by the spirit of a respecter of persons. The power and authority structure of the “conference” has resisted not only the new light of 1888 and beyond, but also the primary authority that was laid down from the beginning in 1844. This primary authority is the LIVING Spirit of Prophecy, a living mouthpiece or voice and a living apostolic council, as it was with the first century church!

The New Organization – The New Ship:
CENTER FOR GLOBAL LEADERSHIP Inc.
(A Non-Stock Corporation of the General Conference)
Look up the new organization name for yourself at:
<http://www.melissadata.com/lookups/np.asp?ein=931227761>

A Brief Expose

CENTER FOR GLOBAL LEADERSHIP INC. was legally recorded at the State Dept. of Assessment and Taxation, May 10, 1995, in the State of Maryland (Mary’s land: history of the state name). Under the “Articles of Incorporation” the document number is D4135885. What is it? It is the new name of the General Conference Organization of Seventh-day Adventists. Although the name of the General Conference remains the same on the exterior of the General Conference headquarters in Silver Springs, Maryland, an umbrella organization HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED which is GLOBAL in nature. The purpose here? -- is to exemplify and teach hierarchical ecclesiastical leadership, total centralized control of every religious denomination worldwide, in compliance with Rome. It is the view of this author that this new organization that Inspiration warned about was established as a master blueprint of global leadership for all established denominations world-wide, under the beast system of Revelation 13.

This was reported by SDA Pastor Jan Marcussen in his 1995 newsletter. He received this information from internal GC sources and at least one concerned local conference official that contacted him with the documentation. The author of this study still has the original newsletter from Jan Marcussen reporting this new organization.

"A new order of things has come into the ministry. There is a desire to pattern after other churches, and simplicity and humility are almost unknown. The young ministers seek to be original, and to introduce new ideas and new plans for labor. Some open revival meetings, and by this means call large numbers into the church. But when the excitement is over, where are the converted ones? Repentance and confession of sin are not seen. The sinner is entreated to believe in Christ and accept Him without regard to his past life of sin and rebellion. The heart is not broken. There is no contrition of soul. The supposed converted ones have not fallen upon the Rock, Christ Jesus." Undated MS, 111.

"The Christian world will learn what Romanism really is, when it is too late to escape the snare. She is silently growing into power. Her doctrines are exerting their influence in legislative halls, in the churches, and in the hearts of men. Throughout the land she is piling up her lofty and massive structures, in the secret recesses of which her former persecutions will be repeated. She is stealthily and unsuspectingly strengthening her forces to further her own ends when **the time shall come for her to strike.** All that she desires is vantage ground, and this is soon to be given her. In the near future we shall see and shall feel what the purpose of the Roman element is. Whoever shall believe and obey the word of God will thereby incur reproach and persecution." 4SP 397

"At the center of the work matters are being shaped so that every other institution is following the same course. **And the General Conference is itself becoming corrupted with wrong sentiments and principles.** ... The high-handed power that has been developed, as though position has made men gods, makes me afraid and ought to cause fear. ... **The spirit of domination is extending to the presidents of our conference. ... They are following in the track of Romanism.**" TM 359-362

"... **That night I dreamed that I was in Battle Creek** looking out from the side glass at the door and saw a company marching up to the house, two and two. They looked stern and determined. I knew them well and turned to open the parlor door and to receive them, but thought I would look again. The scene was changed. **The company now presented the appearance of a Catholic procession. One bore in his hand a cross, another a reed. And as they approached, the one carrying a reed made a circle around the house, saying three times: 'This house is proscribed. The goods must be confiscated. They have spoken against our holy order.'** Terror seized me, and I ran through the house, out of the north door, and **found myself in the midst of a company, some of whom I knew,** but I dared not speak a word to them for fear of being betrayed. I tried to seek a retired spot where I might weep and pray without meeting eager, inquisitive eyes wherever I turned. I repeated frequently: 'If I could only understand this! If they will tell me what I have said or what I have done!'

"I wept and prayed much as I saw our goods confiscated. I tried to read sympathy or pity for me in the looks of those around me, and marked the countenances of several whom I thought would speak to me and comfort me if they did not fear they would be observed by others. I made one attempt to escape from the crowd, but seeing that I was watched, I concealed my intentions. I commenced weeping aloud, and saying, 'If they will only tell me what I have done or what I have said!' My husband, who was sleeping in a bed in the same room, heard me

weeping aloud and woke me. My pillow was wet with tears, and a sad depression of spirits was upon me.” 1T 577, 578

“The enemy of souls has sought to bring the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and this reformation would consist in giving up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engaging in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place, what would result? The principles of truth which God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. **Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error. A new organization would be established.** Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath, of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God Who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure.” EGW, Series B, #2, 54-55

In Pastor Marcussen’s expose of the General Conference organization name change, he describes the context of the change at the time leading up to the 1995 General Conference Session in Utrecht, Holland. There was controversy among the Seventh-day Adventist membership who knew about it and some local conference officials. The question over the change, the need to set up a new and more (completely) centralized church authority in the General Conference as promoted by the leading brethren was addressed in the Adventist Review of 6/95. I will quote below Pastor Marcussen’s summary:

“Notice that the new corporation is to be ‘perpetual’ {not temporary} and the purpose of the new corporation is:

1) to ‘develop, support, facilitate and influence excellence in professional leadership among administrators and staff of religious organizations and institutions.’ {it doesn’t mention the SDA name} And, 2) to do anything permitted by the code of {Roman Catholic controlled} Maryland, ‘as amended from time to time.’ ...

“The new corporation gives a few men great power, {5 can be a quorum} making decisions effecting SDA church members, leaders and institutions around the world. Not only that, it says that when any of the directors leave after starting the meeting with a quorum , the directors left can continue with the meeting even if there is less than a quorum {even if there is only one!}. What kind of power is that?

“This Adventist Review reveals that the dissolving of churches, Conferences, etc. {without necessarily following Matt. 18} does not need to be voted on by representatives from the world field in Holland, because the executive committee {a small group of men} already voted to approve that in the spring. Could the

Annual Council in 1994, or a group sitting in a room this spring vote to dissolve SDA churches or Conferences, or a whole giant Union containing tens of thousands of SDA church members in a meeting {without necessarily following what Jesus said to do in Matthew 18?} They can now!

“The lovely Jesus said to His church, ‘Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.’ Matt. 18:18.

“Question: If a group sitting in a room ‘loosed’ a whole church, or Conference, or Union, without following Matt. 18 ... those people in the churches, or Conferences, or Union {who declined to be automatically joined to the higher hierarchy which dissolved them,} would either 1) be lost with their names “loosed” out of the book of heaven, or 2) it would be just hierarchical politics of the godfathers – shifting power structures, or 3) it would be a farce. Which one would it be, Pastor Jan? Can the constituency give some men at the top authority to loose Conferences and a whole Union without following Matt. 18 without it being a hierarchy?

“Though the Adventist Review, 6/95, states that a man has no more authority than the constituency gives him, and thus he cannot have ‘hierarchical power,’ according to the ‘New Policy’ of the 150 page minutes of the Executive committee, {which won’t be voted on in Holland because it’s already policy now} , we find that the ‘new policy’ has ‘restructured’ the structure so that now Conferences, Missions, Unions, etc. can be dissolved with their property confiscated, [without muss or fuss with red tape and law suits as in the past]. On the next page, I’ll show you some of the minutes {on pages 48-51} of the GC spring session, not only bringing to view how the hierarchy will now work, but showing how one SDA organization can be dissolved by ‘the higher organization’. It reveals on page 48 that this can be done for ‘rebellion’. What is that? That is defined there as refusing ‘to operate in harmony with denominational policies.’ No Bible test? No.” All brackets belong to quote.

Did you know this? Shouldn’t every SDA Church member know this?

Pastor Marcussen reproduced a few of the “Articles of Incorporation” in his 1995 newsletter, along with the cover of the June 1995 Adventist Review and sent out the newsletter to many thousands of church members, I would presume. The cover of the Adventist Review of 6/95 read “Restructuring the Church” - “A Report of the Commission on World Church Organization” “Supplement to the Adventist Review”. What does all of this mean? Is this even important? You decide.

Of particular note is the inclusion of the word “Global” in the new name of the church corporation. (A corporation is a creation of man and THE STATE and is NOT of Heavenly Origin). “Global” is synonymous with “ONE WORLD” in light of modern concepts and terminology. The use of this word in the name of the church corporation also presents vast implications to SDA members in light of Bible prophecy as interpreted by the Spirit of Prophecy.

Now you can begin to see why Sister White, in Series A of the Testimonies, warned against choosing one man to be head of the General Conference. The SDA church leadership becomes, in effect, identical to Roman Catholic hierarchical church government.

In a sworn affidavit from then SDA GC President, Neal Wilson states, “**Although it is true that there was a period in the life of the Seventh-day Adventist Church when the denomination took a distinctly anti-Roman Catholic viewpoint, and the term ‘hierarchy’ was used in a pejorative sense to refer to the papal form of church governance, that attitude on the church’s part was nothing more than a manifestation of widespread antipopery among conservative protestant denominations in the early part of this century and the latter part of the last, and which now has been consigned to the historical trash heap so far as the Seventh-day Adventist Church is concerned.**” Reply Brief for the Defendant, p. 4, case #C-74-2025 CBR, March 30, 1975

In today’s world, whether in church government or man’s government, one can make changes to important concepts, policies or documents in principle, and then deny what has been said, or what has been done. It is called “plausible deniability”. George Orwell, in his book 1984, called this “doublespeak”.

What does this all mean for the nominal SDA church member? Eventually, the organizational changes will progress to the point that many SDA members will see what is transpiring and begin to speak out against them. Many will seek to have greater control of their church at the local level, not recognizing the legal implications of doing so. As we read in Pastor Marcussen’s review of the situation, the organizational structure has now been established to put heavy policy leverage and demands on the local church, the local Conference and the Union Conference.

Since it would be far more difficult and time consuming to re-structure the existing General Conference charter, by-laws, constitution, church policies, church manual, etc., it then will become clear that to create a whole new organization is the more efficient and effective route to bring in fully-centralized control of all local churches and local conferences. Establishing this whole new organization will lead to the disenfranchisement and the dis-fellowshipping of all “rebellious” members, and, finally, the confiscation and liquidation of all church properties. NO? Don’t think it can’t happen. Don’t think it has not happened. The author here has personal knowledge of just such an occurrence.

The church policy **has now been streamlined sufficiently** to dis-fellowship whole churches, Conferences and Unions with one Executive Committee meeting in Maryland. When a church, conference, or union has been determined to be “in rebellion”, it will be cut off; the members dis-fellowshipped; the actual church property confiscated; the members without a place for Sabbath meeting, for conducting church work, missions and ministries. But this is not all. Such a move may not totally disband a local SDA church. If the members decide to reconstitute their church body and locate another place to meet, one major and critical issue arises for these disenfranchised and dislocated church members.

This is the heart of the matter. **A dis-fellowshipped church group could NO LONGER USE the name of “Seventh-day Adventist” to meet under or to display outside of**

the meeting place. The General Conference has TRADEMARKED the original church name first authorized by Ellen White, James White and the other Adventist pioneers. To trademark the church name is to place a curse on the name. No one may use a trademarked name in an official manner without permission. This is a legal fact. The General Conference has in the very recent past taken brethren to court over this matter and WON. By the use of civil law the General Conference has stepped outside of Divine purview and Divine blessing and into statecraft.

“The General Conference can recognize only one Seventh-day Adventist organization in any country. This will normally be the one recognized by the authorities.”—Neal C. Wilson, Former General Conference president in **“Liberty Confidential Newsletter, September-October 1986, quoted from “Spectrum,” Volume 11, No. 4, p. 46.**

“Pastor Walter ‘Chick’ McGill, the leader of a small congregation in the town of Guys, Tennessee, is serving time in a San Bernardino County prison for his use of the name ‘Seventh-day Adventist’. ...

“McGill states that the final factor in deciding to break ranks with the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church was a 1989 lawsuit against John Marik. ... The General Conference Corporation successfully sued Marik for trademark and service mark infringement, unfair competition, and false designation of origin. ...

“‘One brother and myself had identical visions,’ he said, in which they were instructed to take the name ‘Creation Seventh Day Adventist Church.’ ...

“In early 2009, the Seventh-day Adventist Church successfully sued McGill, ... for trademark infringement. ...” Spectrum, 18 July 2012

George Washington wrote:

“Government is not reason, it is not eloquence, it is force; like fire, a troublesome servant and a fearful master. Never for a moment should it be left to irresponsible action.”

The statements from the Pen of Inspiration are many concerning taking brethren to court in either religious or civil matters. The line between church and state has become so intertwined with all the many civil protections of church status that there is no longer any difference between a church and a corporation in this country. All 501c3 churches are legal operations of the state, under the protection of the state.

How sad and completely hypocritical that the one church that promotes religious liberty, as a founding principle of its platform, no longer practices that religious liberty towards its own church members. The General Conference is rapidly becoming the foremost proponent of legal action against its own membership.

The bottom line is that the SDA church organization from the very top on down to the local church is a business, a chartered legal corporation, which collects a substantial amount of monetary income. There is no accountability for the investments made with those tithe and

offering funds, and there are higher yield investments that must be hidden due to the nature of the business enterprise.

The GC controls considerably vast wealth and is accountable to no one. Many well-intentioned pastors with business skills have ended up in positions of power in the church and have become corrupted via church business policies and through the power that comes with money, thus setting aside their moral principle. It happens all the time in every large church organization. Then there is the issue of spiritual corruption and infiltration of the Jesuit counter-reformation, unquestionably within the SDA church structure. This theme was repeated many times in the writings of Sister White. Pastor Marcussen may not have realized that this new organization is the one with corrupt principles of which Sister White wrote specifically and the one that must someday be “cut loose” from the “reins” of power and of church authority.

The 1888 Message: A Deeper Examination

The message of the 1888 Conference came to expose deep underlying weaknesses in church authority which have never been reversed or corrected. At its core -- it is spiritual in nature. These uncorrected issues in church leadership were testing the limits of Divine forbearance in Sister White's time. By the time of the 1901 and 1903 General Conference sessions, the words of Inspiration testify of a turning point of consideration in dealing with General Conference leaders. The burning of the Battle Creek Sanitarium and the Battle Creek Tabernacle in 1903 underscored her outright condemnation of leadership principles and policies in practice at that time. In the passing of time since 1915, her voice has been silenced in death, allowing for the free rein of rebelliousness in doctrinal teachings and in church policies for almost one hundred years. Does any discerning church member really believe the GC pays any more heed to the Divine counsels in our day than they did in 1903? Read her writings, particularly Series A, Series B, and Testimonies to Ministers, and decide for yourself.

Here are some excerpts from The 1888 Study Group's Spirit of Prophecy quotations with summary worth considering:

"For nearly two years we have been urging the people to come up and accept the light and the truth concerning the righteousness of Christ, and they do not know whether to come and take hold of this precious truth or not.... They do not let the Saviour in." RH, March 11, 1890.

"O how few know the day of their visitation! . . . How few there are who are truly humble, devoted, God-fearing servants....

'Today there are few who are heartily serving God. The most of those who compose our congregations are spiritually dead in trespasses and sins.... They are less and less sensible of the preciousness and value of truth, because they neglect the practice of those things which are pleasing in the sight of God. The stirring testimonies of reproof and warning do not arouse them. The sweetest melodies that come from God through human lips-justification by faith, and the righteousness of Christ-do not bring forth from them a response of love and gratitude. Though the heavenly merchantman displays before them the richest jewels of faith and love, though his voice invites them to buy of him 'gold tried in the fire,' and 'white raiment that they may be clothed,' and 'eye-salve that they may see,' they steel their hearts against him,

and fail to exchange **their lukewarmness** for love and zeal; but fold their hands in complacency, make a profession, but deny the power of true godliness. If they continue in this state, God will reject them with abhorrence. To praise the world and God at the same time, is in no way acceptable to God. **Awake, awake, before it is everlastingly too late.**" RH, April 4, 1893.

"The message given us by A.T. Jones and E.J. Waggoner is the message of God to the Laodicean church, and woe be unto anyone who professes to believe the truth, and yet does not reflect to others the God-given rays." Manuscript (MS) 24, 1892.

"There is yet a chance to remedy their state [those who are lukewarm], and the Laodicean message is full of encouragement; for the backslidden church may yet buy the gold of faith and love, may yet have the white robe of the righteousness of Christ, that the shame of their nakedness need not appear." RH, Aug. 28, 1894.

"Brethren, your own lamps will surely flicker and grow dim until they go out in darkness unless you make decided efforts to reform. 'Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works.' The opportunity now presented may be short. If this season of grace and repentance passes unimproved, the warning is given: 'I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place.' . . . **But His Spirit will not always strive. His patience will wait but little longer.**" 5T 612 (1889).

"It is not God that puts the blinder before the eyes of men or makes their hearts hard; it is the light which God sends to His people, to correct their errors, to lead them in safe paths, but which they refuse to accept-it is this that blinds their minds and hardens their hearts. They choose to turn from the light, to stubbornly walk in sparks of their own kindling, and the Lord positively declares that they shall lie down in sorrow. When one ray of light which the Lord sends is not acknowledged, there is a partial benumbing of the spiritual perceptions, and the second revealing of light is less clearly discerned, and so the darkness will constantly increase until it is night to the soul. Christ said, 'How great is that darkness!' . . .

"May the Lord forbid that the history of the children of Israel in departing from God, in refusing to walk in the light, in refusing to confess their sins of unbelief and rejection of His messages, should be the experience of the people claiming to believe the truth for this time. **For if they do as did the children of Israel in the face of warnings and admonitions, the same result will follow in these last days as came upon the children of Israel....** God is not in a hurry to carry out His plans; for He is from everlasting to everlasting. He gives light and opens His truth more fully to those whom He would have to receive it, that they in their turn may take up the words of warning and encouragement, and give them to others. If men of repute and intelligence refuse to do this, the Lord will choose other instruments, honoring those who are looked upon as inferior." RH, Oct. 21, 1890.

"The Lord has seen our backslidings, and He has a controversy with His people.... The displeasure of the Lord is against His people. In their present condition it is impossible for them to represent the character of Christ.... They have refused to receive the message; they have refused to come to the light, lest their deeds should be reproved.... The time will come when it must be said of the impenitent, 'Ephraim is joined to his

idols; let him alone.' Will the church see where she has fallen? . . . When the members of the church humble themselves before God by zealous, not half-hearted, lifeless action, the Lord will receive them. **But He declares, 'I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.' How long shall this warning be resisted?**-The church is like the unproductive tree . . . on which the divine search discovers nothing but leaves. Solemn thought for our churches! solemn, indeed, for every individual! Marvelous is the patience and forbearance of God; but 'except thou repent,' it will be exhausted; the churches, our institutions, will go from weakness to weakness, from cold formality to deadness, while they are saying, 'I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.'" RH (EXTRA), Dec. 23, 1890.

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.' What effect have these words had upon the church? Have the professed people of God understood the import of the words, 'I will come unto thee quickly [when you are at ease, careless, filled with spiritual negligence], and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.' When warnings come no more to the people of God, when tender admonitions from the Spirit of God are silent, when the candle of heavenly illumination shines no longer upon their pathway, they will be left to kindle their own fire, and to walk in the sparks of their own kindling." RH April 4, 1893. (The words in brackets appear in the original.)

From the foregoing quotations we see that the presentation of Christ and His righteousness led the church to the place where she was given:

- (1) A short time to decide her destiny,
- (2) The opportunity to decide between:
 - (a) A genuine revival and reformation or (b) Removal of her candlestick – Revelation 3:16.

If the church accepted the special help sent to her, it would not be too late for her to avert the impending denominational disaster. But if she failed to improve the opportunity given her for revival and reformation, the removal of her candlestick would be marked by the cessation of God's warnings and admonitions.

III-THE CHURCH DECIDES HER DESTINY

It is not generally known among Adventists that "the message of the other angel" was rejected.

1. The Message Rejected

Sister White wrote:

"Now our meeting is drawing to a close and not one confession has been made, there has not been a single break so as to let the Spirit of God in. Now I was saying, What was the use of our assembling here together and for our ministering brethren to come in if they are here only to shut out the Spirit of God from the people? . . . **If the ministers will not receive the light, I want to give the people a chance; perhaps they may receive it.**" MS 9, 1888.

"If you wait for light to come in a way that will please everyone, you will wait in vain. If you wait for louder calls or better opportunities, the light will be withdrawn, and you will be left in darkness. Grasp every ray of light that God sends. Men who neglect to heed the calls of the Spirit and word of God, because obedience involves a cross, will lose their souls." RH, Dec. 18, 1888.

"I have tried to present the message to you as I have understood it, but how long will those at the head of the work keep themselves aloof from the message of God?" RH, March 18, 1890.

"If they have not recognized the Spirit of the Lord in the messages I have borne they will recognize it less now, for I have not strength to contend with the spirit, and resistance, doubts and unbelief which have barricaded their souls, that they could not see when good cometh. I have far greater liberty in speaking to unbelievers. They are interested. They feel impressed by the Spirit of God, and say it seems those words are spoken under the inspiration of the Spirit of God.

"O, it is the hardest place in the world, to speak where great light has come to men in responsible positions. They have been enlightened, but have chosen darkness rather than light...." Letter 32, 1890.

"I can never forget the experience which we had in Minneapolis, or the things which were then revealed to me in regard to the spirit that controlled men, the words spoken, the actions done in obedience to the powers of evil.... They were moved at the meeting by another spirit." Letter 24, 1892.

"An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren [E.J.] Waggoner and [A.T.] Jones.... **The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world.**" 1SM 234, 235.

"I wish to plead with our brethren who shall assemble at the General Conference to heed the message given to the Laodiceans. What a condition of blindness is theirs; this subject [the message of 1888] has been brought to your notice again and again; but your dissatisfaction with your spiritual condition has not been deep and painful enough to work a reform. 'Thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.' The guilt of self-deception is upon our churches." Letter to O.A. Olsen, Sept. 1, 1892, O.19, d'92.

"I saw that Jones and Waggoner had their counterpart in Joshua and Caleb. As the children of Israel stoned the spies with literal stones, you have stoned these brethren with stones of sarcasm and ridicule. I saw that you willfully rejected what you knew to be truth, just because it was too humiliating to your dignity. I saw some of you in your tents mimicking and making all manner of fun of these two brethren. **I also saw that if you had accepted their message, we would have been in the kingdom two years from that date, but now we have to go back into the wilderness and there stay forty years.**" General Conference Bulletin (GCB), May 9, 1892 (Melbourne, Australia).

The statement above shows more than any other a great turning point in SDA church history, a time of message probation for the church leaders (2 years from 1888). She referred to this in another statement as the "Kadesh-Barnea" event in church history, pointing back to the

wilderness wanderings of the tribes of Israel under Moses in the type. This statement invokes the application of a 40- year waiting period in the church before any more new light would come! Ellen White died in 1915. Consider this application carefully and prayerfully. The above statement was included in a book by E.G. White that is no longer in print and difficult to find. The title was (In) Taking Up A Reproach. In the years after the 1888 Conference, Ellen White, A.T. Jones and E.J. Wagonner toured the United States and shared the message of Christ's Righteousness with the many SDA churches they visited. They met with great success and many church members accepted the message; however, apparently a majority of the leadership at the 1888 Conference rejected the message. A few leaders came to Ellen White long after the conference and repented. The General Conferences, particularly at that time, were not attended by the general membership, with the exception of local SDA members, since travel was difficult and expensive. The 1888 Conference was attended mostly by Conference leaders, church workers in various fields and pastors.

"Our own people opposed the work of God by refusing the light of truth on the righteousness of Christ by faith. This they should have received and reechoed with heart and voice and pen. But when light has come to those at the center of the work, they have not known how to treat it." TM 401, 402 (1897).

"We should be the last people on earth to indulge in the slightest degree the spirit of persecution against those who are bearing the message of God to the world. This is the most terrible feature of unChristlikeness that has manifested itself among us since the Minneapolis meeting. Some time it will be seen in its true bearing, with all the burden of woe that has resulted from it." GCB 1893, p. 184.

The "some time" is now.

"The sin committed in what took place at Minneapolis remains on the record books of heaven.... And when these persons are tried, and brought over the ground again, the same spirit will be revealed. When the Lord has sufficiently tried them, if they do not yield to Him, He will withdraw His Holy Spirit." Letter to O. A. Olsen, Sept. 1, 1892.

2. The Banner of Christ Destroyed

"On many occasions the Holy Spirit did work; but those who resisted the Spirit of God at Minneapolis were waiting for a chance to travel over the same ground again, because their spirit was the same. Afterward, when they had evidence heaped upon evidence, some were convicted; but those who were not softened and subdued by the Holy Spirit's working, put their own interpretation upon every manifestation of the grace of God, and they have lost much. They declared in their heart and soul and words that this manifestation of the Holy Spirit was fanaticism and delusion. They stood like a rock; the waves of mercy were flowing upon and around them, but were beaten back by their hard and wicked hearts, which resisted the Holy Spirit's working. Had this been received, it would have made them wise unto salvation-holier men, prepared to do the work of God with sanctified ability. **But all the universe of heaven witnessed the disgraceful treatment of Jesus Christ, represented by the Holy Spirit.** Had Christ been before them, they would have treated Him in a manner similar to that in which the Jews treated Christ.... Those who opened the door of their hearts to temptation at Minneapolis, and carried the same spirit home with them, will realize, if not now, in the near future, that they resisted the Holy Spirit of God, and did despite to the Spirit of grace. Will they repent? The Spirit of the Lord has been upon His messengers whom He has sent with light, precious light; but there were so many who had turned their faces away from the Sun of Righteousness that they saw not its bright beams. The Lord says of them, 'They have turned their back unto me, and not their face.' . . . Who will now understand these

things that I write? . . . The Lord is coming; but those who venture to resist the light that God gave in rich measure at Minneapolis, who have not humbled their hearts before God, will follow on in the path of resistance, saying, 'Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice?' The banner all will bear who voice the message of the third angel, is being covered with another color that virtually kills it." Special Testimonies, Series A, No. 6, pp. 19-26 (1896).

"They began this satanic work at Minneapolis.... Yet these men have been holding positions of trust, and have been molding the work after their own similitude." TM 78-80 (1895).

"Already has the power of darkness placed its mold and superscription upon the work.... **The Holy Spirit is wanting in our work.**" TM 277, 278 (1896).

4. Further Developments

"The same work that has been done in the past, will be carried forward under the guise of the General Conference Association. The sacred character of this association is fast disappearing. What will then be respected as pure, holy, and undefiled? Will there be any voice that God's people can regard as a voice they can respect? **There certainly is nothing now that bears the divine credentials....**

"To a large degree the General Conference Association has lost its sacred character, because some connected with it have not changed their sentiments in any particular since the Conference held at Minneapolis. Some in responsible positions go on 'frowardly' in the way of their own hearts....

"Who can now feel sure that they are safe in respecting the voice of the General Conference Association? If the people in our churches understood the management of the men who walk in the light of the sparks of their own kindling, would they respect their decisions? I answer, No, not for a moment. **I have been shown that the people at large do not know that the heart of the work is being diseased and corrupted at Battle Creek.** Many of the people are in a lethargic, listless, apathetic condition, and assent to plans which they do not understand. Where is the voice, from whence will it come, to whom the people may listen, knowing that it comes from the True Shepherd?" Special Testimonies, The Work at Battle Creek, (May 31, 1896).

"At the center of the work matters are being shaped so that every other institution is following in the same course. **And the General Conference is itself becoming corrupted with wrong sentiments and principles.** In the working of plans, the same principles are manifest that have controlled matters at Battle Creek for quite a length of time." TM 359 (1895).

"The church is in the Laodicean state. The presence of God is not in her midst." News Letter, Education No. 6, 11/8/98).

5. Special Efforts Made in Behalf of the Leaders

a) Appeal of 1901 (ignored)

"At the General Conference, held in Battle Creek in 1901, the Lord gave His people evidence that He was calling for reformation.... If stubborn hearts had then broken in penitence before God, there would have been seen one of the greatest manifestations of the

power of God that has ever been seen. **But God was not honored. The testimonies of His Spirit were not heeded.** Men did not separate from the practices that were in decided opposition to the principles of truth and righteousness, which should ever be maintained in the Lord's work." 8T 97, 98 (1903).

b) Appeal of 1903 (ignored)

"When the Battle Creek Sanitarium was destroyed, Christ gave Himself to defend the lives of men and women. In this destruction God was appealing to His people to return to Him. And in the destruction of the Review and Herald Office, and the saving of life, He makes a second appeal to them." 8T 102 (1903).

"After I received word in regard to the excellent meeting of confession and unity that had been held in Battle Creek, I was writing in my diary, and was about to record the thankfulness I felt because a change had come, when my hand was arrested and there came to me the words: **'Write it not. No change for the better has taken place.'**" 8T231 (1903).

c) Appeal of 1909 (ignored)

"During the General Conference of 1909 a work should have been done in the hearts of those in attendance that was not done. . . . But, though opportunities were given for confession of sin, for heartfelt repentance, and for a decided reformation, thorough work was not done." 2SM 400, 401 (1909).

The sad experience of 1888 was repeated during the following General Conference sessions also. The renewed appeals made to the leadership were rejected again and again. No genuine revival and reformation was witnessed among them. And the church suffered the unavoidable consequences.

V-HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

"The Jews pursued their course of rejecting Christ until, in their self-deceived, deluded state, they thought that in crucifying Him they were doing God a service....

"In this our day the sin of the Pharisees is being repeated. Many are turning from light, refusing to listen to the warning of God's Spirit. But by closing the heart to divine impressions, we put away the forgiveness which our Redeemer is so graciously offering to us. By rejecting mercy and truth, we prepare for a course of resistance which, if followed, will continue till we have no power to do otherwise. A point is reached where the most pointed appeals are without effect. The desire to submit to God and to do His will is no longer felt. The spiritual senses become dulled. Darkness is the result, and how great is that darkness!

"The Holy Spirit strives with every man. It is the voice of God speaking to the soul. But let that voice be resisted, and we, like the Pharisees, shall stifle conviction and resist evidence, however plain. God will give us up, and we shall be left to our own inclinations." RH, July 27, 1897.

"Satan is working that the history of the Jewish nation may be repeated in the experience of those who claim to believe present truth." 2SM 111 (1896).

"The Jewish people were destroyed because they rejected the message of salvation sent down from heaven. Shall those in this generation to whom God has given great light and wonderful opportunities follow in the trend of those who rejected light to their ruin?" 6T 146 (1900).

The preceding seven pages from the 1888 Study Group on Yahoo present the most brief and concise overview of the events of 1888 with direct implications for our day in the determination of church authority. The seriousness of the 1888, 1901 and 1903 events in our church history have been glossed over by church leadership for over a hundred years, particularly in the official version, so long after those events, in the book Movement of Destiny, by L.E. Froom, and the book The Story of Our Church, pp. 246, 247, where a different account is presented:

The General Conference version:

"The rank and file of the people attending the conference accepted the message joyously, but not some of the leaders....

"After the 1888 conference, unity gradually came; leaders who had opposed the movement toward a deeper, more personal faith, accepted reproof from Mrs. White and confessed their unhappy condition of mind after the conference....

"Though the Minneapolis Conference seemed depressing and alarming, it turned out to be a great victory for the church.... A new experience came to the leaders, and the church made rapid progress in all branches of the work at home and abroad, as there was a realization of the proper emphasis which must be given to righteousness by faith."

The writer of the above quotation would make us believe only a very few of the ministry leaders at the 1888 Conference rejected that message, that most accepted it "joyously" and finally describing the whole proceedings as "a great victory for the church." Sister White called that Conference and its consequences the "Kadesh-Barnea" episode in SDA church history, with weighty counsels and even condemnation upon the ongoing hardheartedness of the leaders. While some leaders did approach her years later and repent, a reading of the summary of the 1888 Conference from the pen of Inspiration clearly states the 1888 Conference itself was a spiritual disaster for the church in general. Whose version of the events will you believe?

In the appendix of this study, many statements from E.G. White will be presented, chronicling her ongoing struggles with the church leaders of her time. She ultimately pulled away from the church leadership in exasperation by no longer attending their meetings and councils where the Divine directives were unheeded. However, her determination to carry on her individual work of writing and publishing remained undaunted. Sister White was a remarkable church mother and an Inspired counselor. She kept the spiritual acrimony of the leadership and the spiritual controversy to a minimum, telling the truth while speaking and writing in love.

"Because those in positions of responsibility have for years left the Southern field unworked, notwithstanding the most decided testimonies urging them to take up this work; because they continue to neglect this field, and use every manner of device in trying to uproot the confidence of the people in those who have done the hardest and most self-sacrificing work in the South, I have very little confidence that the Lord is giving these men in positions of responsibility spiritual eyesight and heavenly discernment. **I am thrown into perplexity over their course; and I desire now to attend to my special work, to have no part in any of their counsels, and to attend no camp meetings nigh nor afar off. My mind shall not be dragged into confusion by the tendency they manifest to work directly**

contrary to the light that God has given me. I am done. I will preserve my God-given intelligence.

“My voice has been heard in the different Conferences, and at campmeetings. **I must now make a change. I cannot enter the atmosphere of strife, and then have to bear testimonies that cost me much more than those to whom they are sent can imagine. When I attend the different meetings, I am compelled to deal with men standing in responsible places, who I know are not exerting an influence that God can endorse.** And when I bear a testimony in reference to their course of action, advantage is taken of this testimony. These men have not clear understanding. Should I say the things that I know, they would not, with their present experience, use this instruction wisely, and would bring upon me inconceivable burdens.

“I shall therefore leave them to receive word from the Bible, in which the principles upon which they should work are laid down in a straight line...I have pity for them, but I cannot be forever pointing out for them the way of righteousness. They are brought no nearer right actions by what I say than if the word were never spoken. So long as those in responsible positions see things through a false medium, they will put a wrong construction on my work.

“The light I have for our ministers is: Seek God. Stop your whisperings and your evil surmising, instigated by Satan; and see if the love of God will not fill your heart and soul. **And I will go on with my writings.** This is the light given me, and I shall not depart from it. ... When we are in right relation to God, **we shall recognize Christ’s authority to direct us,** and His claim to our unquestioning obedience.” (Letter W-186-1902 to Edson and Willie White, Elmhaven, Sanitarium, Cal., pp. 4-5, Dec. 2, 1902)

At the Crossroads of Church Authority

The “Church Triumphant”, as described in Prophets and Kings, chapters 59 and 60, is yet future. For the purified church to go through to the end and be vested with great power to finish the work, end-time prophecy must be fulfilled in the restitution of all things (Acts 3:21). Only the PURE church has the authority to “loose and bind”. There will be a “great change” in the church body, under new leadership. Unconverted men in the GC leadership, who follow the satanic agenda to “finish off the church” rather than to go on under Divine guidance, will be replaced. A supernatural Divine purification in the Advent Movement must come under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This purification answers to the “stone cut out of the mountain without hands” of Daniel 2:44, 45, not by the hand of man, but by Divine Providence.

As noted earlier, Zechariah 6 shows the church through the ages after the first century, with four sets of horses and the four “chariots” they pull. The chariot is a symbol of the church body, the membership. The “bay horses” in this depiction were the “strong” ones, the ones who were going in the right direction and the ones who desired to “walk to and fro throughout the earth” carrying the final message of mercy to every kindred, nation, tongue, and people. But the bay horses were held back by the “grisled” horses, the weak ones. The command came from the LORD to the bay (strong) horses to “get you hence”, verse 7 (a cutting loose from the “grisled” horses). This final chariot is to be freed from conflicting leadership agendas and totally controlled by the Lord Himself ONLY. This same chapter brings the image of two brass mountains (verse 1) representing the two purified churches in sacred history, the 1st century church and the purified church that finishes the work. The 1st century church, at the beginning of the Gospel message, received the 1st outpouring of the Holy Spirit and took the Gospel message worldwide. The second brass mountain is to be the church at the close of history, the purified “church triumphant”.

The duality of symbols in Zechariah 6 of two sets of horses, indicating a DUAL leadership, shows there are two churches in conflict within the Advent Movement! There will be an emerging CHURCH that becomes the “Church Triumphant”. All that manifests at the present time is the “Church Militant”. To propose that the “Church Triumphant” comes into being at the Second Advent disposes of a myriad of unfulfilled prophecies and undermines the power of Yahshua to transform, pushing off to the end of time a post-probation cleansing of the church.

We are at the end of time, in a general sense, and the church will be purified and fitted to finish the work of proclaiming the Three Angels Messages in probationary time for the world. Probationary time for the world and probation for the church are two entirely different times, for “judgment BEGINS at the house of God” 1 Pet. 4:17.

The Glorious Day of Victory.

“Now the church is militant. Now we are confronted with a world in darkness, almost wholly given over to idolatry. . . . But the day is coming when the battle will have been fought, the victory won. **The will of God is to be done on earth as it is done in heaven.** . . . All will be a happy, united family, clothed with the garments of praise and thanksgiving --the robe of Christ's righteousness. All nature, in its surpassing loveliness, will offer to God a tribute of praise and adoration. The world will be bathed in the light of heaven. The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold greater than it is now. The years will move on in gladness. Over the scene the morning stars will sing together, and the sons of God will shout for joy, while God and Christ will unite in proclaiming, "There shall be no more sin, neither shall there be any more death." {Child Guidance (CG), p. 568.1}

God Will Set Everything in Order.

“There is no need to doubt, to be fearful that the work will not succeed. God is at the head of the work, and He will set everything in order. If matters need adjusting at the head of the work God will attend to that, and work to right every wrong. **Let us have faith that God is going to carry the noble ship which bears the people of God safely into port.**--2SM 390 (1892). {Last Day Events (LDE), p. 52.1}

“Has God no living church? He has a church, but it is the church militant, not the church triumphant. We are sorry that there are defective members, that there are tares amid the wheat. . . . Although there are evils existing in the church, and will be until the end of the world, the church in these last days is to be the light of the world that is polluted and demoralized by sin. The church, enfeebled and defective, needing to be reprovved, warned, and counseled, is the only object upon earth upon which Christ bestows His supreme regard.--TM 45, 49 (1893). {LDE 52.2}

“But we need not be thus disappointed, for the Lord has not warranted us in coming to the conclusion that the church is perfect; and all our zeal will not be successful in making the church militant as pure as the church triumphant. The Lord forbids us to proceed in any violent way against those whom we think erring, and we are not to deal out excommunications and denunciations to those who are faulty.” {RH, September 5, 1893 par. 3}

“Finite man is likely to misjudge character, but God does not leave the work of judgment and pronouncing upon character to those who are not fitted for it. We are not to say what constitutes the wheat, and what the tares. The time of the harvest will fully determine the character of the two classes specified under the figure of the tares and the wheat. The work of separation is given

to the angels of God, and not committed into the hands of any man.” {RH, September 5, 1893 par. 4}

The parable of the wheat and the tares of Matthew 13 is further scriptural evidence of the two divisions in the church. The “Church Militant” must become the “Church Triumphant” by passing through a time of purification, otherwise the church cannot receive the Holy Spirit without measure to finish the work. The Holy Spirit will not be given to an impure church or a church mixed with wheat and tares! This is a repeating theme from the Pen of Inspiration.

Church Authority -- To “loose and to bind”

Matthew 18:18 “Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

In the churches today, there is a presumption of authority that extends beyond the Gospel requirements for spiritual authority. The membership has been indoctrinated to believe that if their name is not recorded on the church books on earth, then their name is not recorded in Heaven. They do not have salvation. They will not be saved. The Gospel instruction regarding binding and loosing was given to the EMERGING APOSTOLIC CHURCH, the purified church, which Yahshua left at His ascension and which received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The apostolic church began to be purified beginning with the night of the Last Supper and for the following 50+ days leading up to the Day of Pentecost. Then and only then came the Gospel work after the purification. The importance of the church remaining pure was further emphasized with the deaths of Ananias and Saphira in the Book of Acts for lying to the Holy Spirit.

{“We are inclined to think that unless an organized company of workers is sent to a field, the efforts sent forth will be useless. We feel as if we must belong to some organization if we would accomplish good. But John the Baptist did not work on this plan.” 3RH,555, March 29, 1898. “Just such a work as John [the Baptist] did is to be carried on in these last days.” SDA Bible Commentary (BC), Volume 4, p.1184, EGW commentary on Malachi 4:5, 6}

There is another passage of Scripture that has future application and that has significant context to the question of church authority:

Isaiah 66:5 “Hear the Word of the LORD, yet that tremble at His Word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My Name’s sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but He shall appear to your joy and THEY shall be ashamed.” (Luke 6:22, 23)

The verse is speaking of the “outcasts” of modern Israel, the church today.

Why does the current SDA leadership engage in dis-fellowshipping church members in cases that do not involve any moral issue, merely because of a presentation of a controversial message and particularly if such a message has an organizational nature to it? Remember, the SDA church is foremost in the world in proclaiming “religious liberty” and freedom of conscience! Yet, if a member, who is upholding all the doctrinal tenets of the church, believes in “new light” or even a new messenger, they are often times dis-fellowshipped. **Because of the heavy-handed methods of SDA church authority today and the total lack of teaching on the topic of new light and the**

progression of truth, the members have an automatic prejudice against hearing anything “new”.

Sister White wrote scores of statements regarding new light to come and told the members to be looking for it. In her words, it was all about “attitude”. In fact, the warning to the Laodicean church in Revelation 3 focuses on this very topic. “Because you say you are rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing....”, no more Truth and no more prophets, “and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, ...” “There is no pride so dangerous as spiritual pride.” TM 109. Spiritual pride is the key issue in the counsel to the church of Laodicea.

“Some people seem to think that upon entering the church they will have their expectations fulfilled, and meet only with those who are pure and perfect. They are zealous in their faith, and when they see faults in church members, they say, ‘We left the world in order to have no association with evil characters, but the evil is here also;’ and they ask, as did the servants in the parable, ‘From whence then hath it tares?’ But we need not be thus disappointed, for the Lord has not warranted us in coming to the conclusion that the church is perfect; **and all our zeal will not be successful in making the church militant as pure as the church triumphant. The Lord forbids us to proceed in any violent way against those whom we think erring, and we are not to deal out excommunications and denunciations to those who are faulty.** {TM 47.1}

“Finite man is likely to misjudge character, but God does not leave the work of judgment and pronouncing upon character to those who are not fitted for it. We are not to say what constitutes the wheat, and what the tares. The time of the harvest will fully determine the character of the two classes specified under the figure of the tares and the wheat. The work of separation is given to the angels of God, and not committed into the hands of any man.” {TM 47.2}

“Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven’ (Matthew 18:18). **When every specification which Christ has given has been carried out in the true, Christian spirit, then, and then only, Heaven ratifies the decision of the church, because its members have the mind of Christ, and do as He would do were He upon the earth.**”--Letter 1c, 1890. {3SM 22.1}

According to counsel, ONLY - **“When every specification which Christ has given has been carried out in the true, Christian spirit, then, and then only, Heaven ratifies the decision of the church, because its members have the mind of Christ, and do as He would do were He upon the earth.”** Does the church of today meet this specification? Perhaps some would say, “Yes, the conditions have been met,” but let everyone be prayerfully convicted in their own mind and heart by the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Here is the heart of the matter –

“All should be careful about presenting new views of Scripture before they have given these points thorough study, and are fully prepared to sustain them from the Bible. Introduce nothing that will cause dissension, **without clear evidence that in it God is giving a special message for this time.** {TM 106.3}

“But beware of rejecting that which is truth. The great danger with our people has been that of depending upon men and making flesh their arm. Those who have not

been in the habit of searching the Bible for themselves, or weighing evidence, have confidence in the leading men and accept the decisions they make; and thus many will reject the very messages God sends to His people, if these leading brethren do not accept them.” {TM 106.4}

“No one should claim that he has all the light there is for God's people. The Lord will not tolerate this. He has said, ‘I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.’ **Even if all our leading men should refuse light and truth, that door will still remain open. The Lord will raise up men who will give the people the message for this time.**” {TM 107.1}

The Truth Will Stand

“Truth is eternal, and conflict with error will only make manifest its strength. We should never refuse to examine the Scriptures with those who, we have reason to believe, desire to know what is truth. Suppose a brother held a view that differed from yours, and he should come to you, proposing that you sit down with him and make an investigation of that point in the Scriptures; should you rise up, filled with prejudice, and condemn his ideas, while refusing to give him a candid hearing? **The only right way would be to sit down as Christians and investigate the position presented in the light of God's word, which will reveal truth and unmask error.** To ridicule his ideas would not weaken his position in the least if it were false, or strengthen your position if it were true. If the pillars of our faith will not stand the test of investigation, it is time that we knew it. There must be no spirit of Pharisaism cherished among us.” {TM 107.2}

As pertaining to new light,

“When a message is presented to God’s people, they should not rise up in opposition to it; they should go to the Bible, comparing it with the law and the testimony, and if it does not bear this test, it is not true. God wants our minds to expand.” TM 119.

Question: Has any new message of progressive truth, represented by one of the OTHER angels of Revelation 14, come to the church since the passing of Sister White? What is the possibility is of the SDA leadership seriously studying a new message and actively encouraging the membership to do the same? Remember, new light is almost always controversial simply because it IS new.

Further counsel:

“O Come Let Us Worship the Lord”

“Christ has said: ‘Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.’ Matthew 18:20. Wherever there are as many as two or three believers, let them meet together on the Sabbath to claim the Lord's promise. {Councils for the Church (CCh), p. 265.3}

“The little companies assembled to worship God on His holy day have a right to claim the rich blessing of Jehovah. They should believe that the Lord Jesus is an honored guest in their assemblies. Every true worshiper who keeps holy the Sabbath should claim the promise: ‘That ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.’ Exodus 31:13. {CCh 265.4}

“The Sabbath was made for man, to be a blessing to him by calling his mind from secular labor to contemplate the goodness and glory of God. It is necessary that the people of God assemble to talk of Him, to interchange thoughts and ideas in regard to the truths contained in His word, and to devote a portion of time to appropriate prayer. But these seasons, even upon the Sabbath, should not be made tedious by their length and lack of interest.” {CCh 265.5}

Another View of the current SDA church leadership from an independent ministry:

From -

<http://www.thenarrowwayministries.org/Page/THE-NAME-Seventh-Day-Adventist/171/>

(Emphasis added)

“There is a big discussion amongst those who have left the Seventh Day Adventist Church as to what they should call themselves? Many believe they MUST call themselves Seventh Day Adventists, however, others don't know what to call themselves.

(Note: Legally you cannot use the name “Seventh-day Adventist” openly on signage since the church name is trademarked. No church that is independent of the General Conference “Seventh-day Adventist” Church may use the name “Seventh-day Adventist” even in a variant form with the FULL SDA name incorporated therein. The name “Seventh-day” however, may be used in a variant church title independent of the General Conference SDA name).

I think this verse from Isaiah sheds some much-needed light on the subject:

"I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts...And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name." Isaiah 65:2, 15.

“And...’We are not saved as a sect; **no denominational name has any virtue to bring us into favor with God. We are saved individually** as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.’ – RH, February 10, 1891.

“Friends, sadly, the NAME - Seventh Day Adventists does not mean TODAY what it meant 100 years ago. There are many words that no longer mean what they used to....think about it - the word "GAY" - it used to describe someone who was HAPPY....today, it commonly describes a HOMOSEXUAL. The meaning of man's words change over time. So today, the name "Seventh Day Adventists" no longer means what it used to mean.

“For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written." Romans 2:24. Truly, the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of Seventh Day. WHY?

“Adventists. Abortions are performed in SDA hospitals.

<http://www.thenarrowwayministries.org/DownloadFile.asp?FileName=Abortion.pdf>

“The world is proclaiming the inconsistencies -

http://onfaith.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/undergod/2011/01/adventists_and_abortion.html

“We are called to be loyal to the TRUTH, not to a CHURCH....sadly, history has taught the same story over and over again...that Churches eventually leave the Truth....when that happens, God's people need to stay with the Truth and not with the Church.

“Churches like businesses, change ownership all the time... yet they keep the same name. That is what happened with the SDA Church. It has become a business, and has been sold to ‘new owners’ ... all the while still being called by the same name.

“So friend, are you going to remain loyal to the Truth, or to a church that blasphemes the name of God.?” www.thenarrowwayministries.org

Church Authority – A Great Change **Dual Church Leadership Today; Concurrent or Successive?**

The question of dual leadership in church authority is presently the core issue facing the church, but you will not hear a word of it from the SDA pulpit. Simply stated, one set of leaders is working for the purification of the church and the other set of leaders is working for the corrupting of the church, withholding information, light and truth. This is the significance of the symbolic representation of two sets of horses depicted in Zechariah 6. Which set of leaders will you choose? Your decision will determine in which class of the righteous harvest you will be found: sheep or goats, first fruits or second fruits (Revelation 7, Revelation 14).

"There are many who do not understand the prophecies relating to these days, and they must be enlightened. It is the duty of both watchmen and laymen to give the trumpet a certain sound. Be in earnest, 'cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.' EGW, Letter 1, 1875." Evangelism, pp. 194-195.

“Increased Light on the Prophecies. - Increased light will shine upon all the grand truths of prophecy, and they will be seen in freshness and brilliancy, because the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness will illuminate the whole." Evangelism, p. 198.

"Let no one come to the conclusion that there is no more truth to be revealed. The diligent, prayerful seeker for truth will find precious rays of light yet to shine forth from the word of God. Many gems are yet scattered that are to be gathered together to become the property of the remnant people of God.--Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 34. (1892.)" Counsels to Writers and Editors (CWE), p. 35.

"God's Spirit has illuminated every page of Holy Writ, but there are those upon whom it makes little impression, because it is imperfectly understood." TM 112.

Zechariah 6:

(Color coding the key verses here, applicable to our time)

"And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass. In the first chariot were red horses; and in the second chariot black horses; And in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled and bay horses. Then I answered and said unto the angel that

talked with me, What are these, my lord? And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth. The black horses which are therein go forth into the north country; and the white go forth after them; and the grisled go forth toward the south country. And the bay went forth, and sought to go that they might walk to and fro through the earth: and he said, Get you hence, walk to and fro through the earth. So they walked to and fro through the earth. Then cried he upon me, and spake unto me, saying, Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country." Zech. 6:1-8.

Inspiration comments on Zechariah 6:

"The spasmodic, **fitful movements of some who claim to be Christians is well represented by the work of strong but untrained horses.** When one pulls forward, another pulls back; and at the voice of their master, one plunges ahead, and the other stands immovable. If men will not move in concert in the great and grand work for this time, there will be confusion." Ellen G. White, TM 489, 490.

"...There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made **when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel** in the message to be given to the world. God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that **He is taking the REINS in His own hands....**" TM 300. Emphasis added.

"Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the LORD of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle." Zechariah 10:3.

It is evident from the prophetic imagery that Yahshua (Jesus) will only permit this contest of spiritual conflict and counterforce between the two teams of horses to go on only to a certain point. One team will be cut loose to go "into the south country", freeing the second set of horses (the bay horses) to lead the chariot finally, without conflict, to go "to and fro through the earth" to finish the Loud Cry Message. This is a condensed and highly summarized explanation of this symbolic prophecy in harmony with the Pen of Inspiration.

The Two Mountains – Two Churches At The End of Time

The Mountain of Daniel 2:44 - Mountain #1

This is the host mountain (SDA church) from whence the stone is cut out.

The Mountain of Daniel 2:34, 35 – Mountain #2

*A parenthetical expansion of verse 44. Notice that the "stone" cut out from the first mountain becomes a "great mountain" and thereby BECOMES A SECOND MOUNTAIN "until it fills the whole earth." "THE WHOLE EARTH"! This does not describe the visible second coming of Christ. If the stone represents Christ's second visible coming (as the SDA church teaches), then why is the scene shown ON earth, and the stone cut out of a symbolic mountain and then "grows until it **fills the whole earth**"? There is no TIME for growing if everyone is GONE. Is not HEAVEN to be FILLED with the saints at the Second Advent of Christ? Then why does the verse say the earth is filled? The Truth of the matter is that this "stone" does NOT represent*

*Christ or His second Advent (see appendix A letter), but rather it represents Christ's purified church completely surrendered to and filled with the Holy Spirit. Why? "And this gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; **and THEN shall the end come.**" Matt. 24:14. The description of the mountain of Isaiah 2 is the second mountain of Daniel 2, the one that grows from the stone cut out of the first mountain. This is not a 'conditional' prophecy. It will be fulfilled.*

SAME PROPHECY (Daniel 2:44), TWO PHASES

Isaiah 2:2-4

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, [that] the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains (all churches), and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."

Where does this symbol of a "mountain", or church, fit within official Adventist theology today? Nowhere! It does not. It is not an SDA teaching. The truth of it, however, is plain to see.

Most Seventh-day Adventists do not understand the meaning of the mountain(s) of Daniel 2.

The reality of this symbolic prophecy has tremendous implications to the issue of church authority. When you learn the meaning of the symbols in prophecy, you unlock the storehouse of present truth and thereby you may partake of the blessings of the spiritual harvest to be one of the FIRST-fruits of the harvest (Rev. 14:1).

"But divisions will come in the church. Two parties will be developed. The wheat and tares grow up together for the harvest." Ellen G. White, 2 SM 114.

The wheat and the tares in the church will be ultimately separated, according to the Matthew 13 parable of the harvest, by a Divine act, which will also bring a providential separation of existing church authority.

That Other Ship? ... That Other Movement?

That "Other Angel" As Seen in the Angels of Revelation 14:14 onward

A phrase used by Sister White, "that Other Angel".... And Other "ANGELS" ... of Revelation 14.

A Total of FOUR OTHER Angels require accounting for in our SDA theology with the implication of the development of another sequential movement after the passing of Ellen White in 1915. There is ONLY one True Movement, the Advent Movement; however, there are sub-movements in our history, which should be carefully considered. Many SDAs are searching for the "great reformatory movement" that Sister White wrote about in Testimonies to the Church, Volume 9:126.

James White said it clearly early in the movement:

“All classes of second advent believers agree, that the angel brought to view in the 6th, and 7th verses of this chapter (Revelation 14), represents the advent message, to the church and world. **If this is true, then all five of the angels brought to view in this chapter, represent five distinct messages**, prior to the advent, or we are left without a rule to interpret this chapter.” Words to the Little Flock (WLF), pages 10-11.

Where are these other TWO (or three), messages in the Advent Movement, TOTALLING SEVEN ANGELS? There are clearly SIX Angels in Revelation chapter 14. Seven if you count the One sitting on the cloud judging the earth. The number seven designates completeness, and the number seven represents the work of Divine Truth and Divine Authority.

The Message of the Other Angel

“Thus the substance of the second angel's message is again given to the world by **that other angel** who lightens the earth with his glory. These messages all blend in one, to come before the people in the closing days of this earth's history. All the world will be tested, and all that have been in the darkness of error in regard to the Sabbath of the fourth commandment will understand the last message of mercy that is to be given to men.” {2SM 116.2}

“The third angel's message in its clear, definite terms is to be made the prominent warning; all that it comprehends is to be made intelligible to the reasoning minds of today. While we bind ourselves to the development of the truth in the past angels' messages, we are announcing the message of the third angel **and of the other angels** that follow the third, the second time proclaiming the fall of Babylon.” {1888 1710.2} 1888 Materials, chap 199, to S.N. Haskell and wife.

TRUE CHURCH AUTHORITY – THE REVIVAL OF THE GIFTS DIVINE LEADERSHIP IN THE PURIFIED CHURCH

As quoted earlier in the study, **1 Corinthians 12:28**, “**And God hath set some in the church, first APOSTLES, secondarily PROPHETS, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.**” This is the order of the gifts in the church. There needs to be a revival in our understanding of the Gifts of the Spirit so that the Body of Christ may fulfill her high calling to become the “Church Triumphant”.

The Twelve Apostles made up the church council that constituted the church authority of almost 2000 years ago, as shown throughout the Book of Acts. The concept of an “apostle” with a small “a” is still valid. The office of “prophet” is also still valid for the “perfecting of the saints, the body of Christ”, even after the passing of Ellen White in 1915. It is widely assumed in Adventism that the offices of “prophet” and “apostle” are no longer required because they have been “fulfilled”. Most Adventists believe that the gifts of the Spirit TODAY are limited to the office of “pastor” and “teacher”. This is not true. For we live in the time of the “restitution of all things” Acts 3:21, and in the “time of the end every divine institution will be restored.” E. G. White, PK 678.

Revival and Reformation Needed

“Christians should be preparing for what is soon to break upon the world as an overwhelming surprise, and this preparation they should make by diligently studying the word of God, and striving to conform their lives to its precepts. . . . **God calls for a revival and a reformation.**--Prophets and Kings, p. 626. {Christian Service (ChS), p. 41.3}

“A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. RH, March 22, 1887. {ChS 41.4}

“The time has come for a thorough reformation to take place. When this reformation begins, the spirit of prayer will actuate every believer, and will banish from the church the spirit of discord and strife. 8T 251. {ChS 42.1}

“A revival and a reformation must take place under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from the spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. **Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend.**” RH, Feb. 25, 1902. {ChS 42.2}

“Do not the Scriptures call for a more pure and holy work than we have yet seen? . . . **God calls upon those who are willing to be controlled by the Holy Spirit to lead out in a work of thorough reformation.** I see a crisis before us, and the Lord calls for His laborers to come into line. Every soul should now stand in a position of deeper, truer consecration to God than during the years that have passed. . . . I have been deeply impressed by scenes that have recently passed before me in the night season. **There seemed to be a great movement--a work of revival--going forward in many places. Our people were moving into line, responding to God's call.**” GCB, May 29, 1913, p. 34. {ChS 42.3}

CLOSING CHAPTER

A GREAT REFORMATORY MOVEMENT

“In visions of the night representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God's people. Many were praising God. The sick were healed, and other miracles were wrought. . . . Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families, and opening before them the word of God. Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest. On every side doors were thrown open to the proclamation of the truth. The world seemed to be lightened with the heavenly influence. Great blessings were received by the true and humble people of God.--9T 126. {ChS 42.4}

“There is great necessity for a reformation among the people of God. The present state of the church leads to the inquiry, Is this a correct representation of Him who gave His life for us?”--3T 474. {ChS 43.1}

“When the reproach of indolence and slothfulness shall have been wiped away from the church, the Spirit of the Lord will be graciously manifested. Divine power will be revealed. The church will see the providential working of the Lord of hosts. The light of truth will shine forth in clear, strong rays, and as in the time of the apostles, many souls will turn from error to truth. The earth will be lightened with the glory of the Lord.”-- 9T 46. {ChS 43.2}

As I bring this study to a close, each reader must decide of which group he or she will be a part. Which group will become your place of refuge. In reality, only one group will be a place of refuge; only one CHURCH, only one mountain will “go through to the end”-- the “stone cut out of the mountain without hands”, a supernatural Divine act. This “great reformatory movement” will incur a Providential change in church authority by and through the Holy Spirit.

The resolution of the TWO sets of horses leading the church, a great spiritual dilemma, will be manifest in the final determination of CHURCH AUTHORITY for today in the manifestation of the SECOND MOUNTAIN of Daniel 2. These are symbolic representations that point to actual events, soon. As far as answering the question of Church Authority, concurrent or successive? **It is both.** But not for much longer. As quoted earlier, there are TWO forces at work in the church today:

“There are two opposing influences continually exerted on the members of the church. One influence is working for the purification of the church, and the other for the corrupting of the people of God. . . .” E.G. White, {FLB 305.2}

THOSE IN AUTHORITY TODAY

“...To place men where God should be placed does not honor or glorify God...The Lord has a controversy with His people over this matter.... Just as soon as man is placed where God should be, he loses his purity, his vigor, his confidence in God's power. Moral confusion results, because his powers become unsanctified and perverted. He feels competent to judge his fellow men, and he strives unlawfully to be a god over them.” TM 375-376. July 5, 1896

“...Men have taken unfair advantage of those whom they supposed to be under their jurisdiction. They were determined to bring the individuals to their terms; they would rule or ruin...The high-handed power that has been developed, as though position has made men gods, makes me afraid, and ought to cause fear. It is a curse wherever and by whomsoever it is exercised. This lording it over God's heritage will create such disgust of man's jurisdiction that a state of insubordination will result. The people are learning that men in high positions of responsibility cannot be trusted to mold and fashion other men's minds and characters...

“The spirit of domination is extending to the presidents of our conferences...Satan exults, for he has inspired them with his attributes. They are following in the track of Romanism.... Rule, rule, has been their course of action. Satan has had opportunity of representing himself....They exalt themselves as men of superior judgment, and they have stood as representatives of God. These are false gods....Humanity is hailed as God.” TM 359-365. September, 1895.

“Our people have had great light, and yet much of our ministerial force is exhausted on the churches, in teaching those who should be teachers; enlightening those who should be ‘the light of the world;’ watering those from whom should flow springs of living water; enriching those who might be veritable mines of precious truth; repeating the gospel invitation to such as should be scattered to the uttermost parts of the earth communicating the message of Heaven to many who have not yet had the privileges which they have enjoyed; feeding those who should be in the byways and highways heralding the invitation, ‘Come; for all things are now ready.’ Come to the gospel feast; come to the supper of the Lamb; ‘for all things are now ready.’ Now is the time for earnest wrestling with God. Our voices should join with the Savior’s in that wonderful prayer:

“Thy kingdom come. They will be done in earth as it is in heaven.’ Let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Many may ask, ‘Who is sufficient for these things?’ The responsibility rests upon every individual. ‘Not that we are sufficient of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.’ The scheme of salvation is not to be worked out under the laws and rules specified by men.

“The spirit of domination is extending to the presidents of our conferences. If a man is sanguine of his own powers and seeks to exercise dominion over his brethren, feeling that he is invested with authority to make his will the ruling power, the best and only safe course is to remove him, lest great harm be done, and he lose his own soul, and imperil the souls of others. "All ye are brethren." {ChL 31.3}

“This disposition to lord it over God's heritage will cause a reaction unless these men change their course. Those in authority should manifest the spirit of Christ. They should deal as he would deal with every case that requires attention. They should go weighted with the Holy Spirit. A man's position does not make him one jot or tittle greater in the sight of God; it is character alone that God values.--Letter 55, 1895 (Sept. 19, 1895 to O. A. Olsen). {ChL 31.4}

The High-Handed Power

“The high-handed power that has been developed, as though position has made men gods, makes me afraid, and ought to cause fear. It is a curse wherever and by whomsoever it is exercised. This lording it over God's heritage will create such a disgust of man's jurisdiction that a state of insubordination will result. The people are learning that men in high positions of responsibility cannot be trusted to mold and fashion other men's mind and characters. The result will be a loss of confidence even in the management of faithful men. But the Lord will raise up laborers who realize their own nothingness without special help from God. Age after age Jesus has been delivering His goods to His church. At the time of the first advent of Christ to our world, the men who composed the Sanhedrin exercised their authority in controlling men according to their will. Thus the souls whom Christ had given His life to free from the bondage of Satan were brought under bondage to him in another form.” {TM 361.1}

“There must be no fixed rules; our work is a progressive work, and there must be room left for methods to be improved upon. **But under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, unity must and will be preserved.** All the revelations of the past are linked together. We must learn lessons from the experiences of other ages. **If there are any of our brethren who think that they have devised plans by which they can secure a monopoly of any line of**

God's work, they are released from all such burdens. Individually we form a part of the great whole, fulfilling our part in the scenes foreseen long ages ago. In the counsels of God a place was assigned to every person, and each one is to devote his entire ability, his influence, the energy of his whole being, in an earnest endeavor to discharge the responsibility laid upon him." Ellen White, RH, July 23, 1895, "The Great Need of the Holy Spirit".

My prayer is that you will be found in the group represented by the "bay horses", that "go to and fro through the earth" to proclaim the Loud Cry message (Revelation 18:1) to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

The verities of Church Authority today may seem simple to most church members, but looking back at the time that Yahshua (Jesus) walked this earth with His disciples, separate from the spiritual ruling class of His day, a whole larger picture begins to unfold for us. Would Yahshua (Jesus) be welcome in the church today? Revelation 3:20 gives us the answer. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock" Not just the door of the heart of every church member, but truly at the door of the church itself, the church of Laodicea.

This is the aspiration, the objective of true church authority --

"From the light that I have, that is shown me in figure: There is a narrow circle here; inside of this narrow circle is even a king – a royal, reigning power. God means what He says: 'I desire a change here.' The Lord wants His Spirit to enter. HE WANTS THE HOLY SPIRIT TO BE KING." E.G. White, GCB, April 1, 1901.

Do you desire the Kingship of the Holy Spirit in the church? If you do, every church member will need to make a cutting determination concerning church authority, the status quo presently, and be not fearful of consequences of men, from men in positions of trust, the consequences of standing for Truth and standing for the One in authority Who alone we answer to. Many church members have the idea they are strictly accountable to church leadership in all things, as described in the opening page of this study, and that their very eternal destiny hangs on their names being written on the church membership books on earth. To answer the question of "whatsoever things are bound on earth are bound in heaven", such condition and prerequisite power is not yet qualified and manifest on the earth in church authority, as clearly stated from the Pen of Inspiration (EGW) earlier in this study. Soon it will be manifest. There are many true, good hearted, dedicated well meaning pastors and church leaders, yet if the test came on a point of truth not supported by higher church officials, what path would these otherwise good ministers choose? Here, the counsel we are given individually and for the corporate body of Christ:

"Do we individually realize our true position, that as God's hired servants we are not to bargain away our stewardship? **We have an individual accountability** before the heavenly universe, to administer the trust committed us of God. Our own hearts are to be stirred. Our hands are to have something to impart of the income that God entrusts to us. The humblest of us may be agents for God, using our gifts for His name's glory. He who improves his talents to the best of his ability may present to God his offering as a consecrated gift that shall be as fragrant incense before Him. It is the duty of everyone to see that his talents are turned to advantage as a gift that he must return, having done his best to improve it." {TM 361.2}

“Individual accountability”

So may it be our prayer.

“The Truth will set you free.”

Fear Not – a great change is coming!

Through the Power and Providence of the Holy Spirit.

REMEMBER:

“Has God no living church? He has a church, but it is the church militant, **not** the church triumphant. We are sorry that there are defective members. . . .While the Lord brings into the church those who are truly converted, Satan at the same time brings persons who are not converted into its fellowship. While Christ is sowing the good seed, Satan is sowing the tares.”

E. G. White, FLB 305:2

CLOSING THOUGHTS:
WHAT IS BEFORE US

“To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this is our test.” 5T 136.

“Through all ages and in every nation those who believe that Jesus can and will save them personally from sin, are the elect and chosen of God; they are his peculiar treasure. **They obey his call, and come out of the world and separate themselves from every unclean thought and unholy practice.**” RH, August 1, 1893.

“I am so sorry that sensible men do not discern the trail of the serpent. **Wherein are those who are designated as departing from the faith and giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, departing from the faith which they have held for the past fifty years...Christ calls, Come out from among them, and be ye separate.**

“I write this because any moment my life may be ended. **Unless there is a breaking away from the influence that Satan has prepared, and a reviving of the testimonies that God has given, souls will perish in their delusion.** They will accept fallacy after fallacy, and will thus keep up a disunion that will always exist until those who have been deceived take their stand on the right platform.

“I am now giving the message God has given me, to give to all who claim to believe the truth: ‘Come out from among them, and be ye separate,’ else their sin in justifying wrongs and framing deceits will continue to be the ruin of souls. We cannot afford to be on the wrong side.” **Series B**, #7, 61-64

“We have a testing message to give, and I am instructed to say to our people, ‘Unify, unify.’ **But we are not to unify with those who are departing from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.**” 3SM 412

“It is impossible for you to unite with those who are corrupt, and still remain pure...God and Christ and the heavenly host would have man know that if he unites with the corrupt, he will become corrupt.” 4RH 137

“I was shown the necessity of those who believe that we are having the last message of mercy, being separate from those who are daily imbibing new errors. I saw that neither young nor old should attend their meetings; for it is wrong to thus encourage them while they teach error that is a deadly poison to the soul. If God has delivered us from such darkness and error, we should stand fast in the liberty wherewith He has set us free and rejoice in the truth. God is displeased with us when we go to listen to error, without being obliged to go; for unless He sends us to those meetings where error is forced home to the people by the power of will, He will not keep us. The angels cease their watchful care over us, and we are left to the buffetings of the enemy, to be darkened and weakened by him and the power of his evil angels; and the light around us becomes contaminated with the darkness.” EW 124-125

"In the night season I was listening to one who spoke with authority. Words of counsel in regard to the responsibilities that are to be borne in the sacred work of God were spoken. The Teacher said, There should be no haphazard work. Much of this has been done. **Men have assumed authority, but the people should not depend upon poor, finite, erring men. They should put their entire trust in the wisdom that finds its strength in the wisdom of God.** The inconsistency of centering so many responsibilities in Battle Creek has been presented many times, but the counsels have not been acted upon. The reproofs and warnings from the Lord have been evaded and interpreted and made void by the devices of men. There has been counterworking against God, and the judgment of men has been received." {TM 319.1}

"The Lord's counsel has been strangely neglected. There are men in places of holy trust who, when reproved, have cared nought for it. Some who for years have stood as counselors have boldly stated that they would not receive the testimonies given. In triumph they have declared that many of our most responsible men have lost faith in the message coming from Sister White. Thus the rejecters of light have been strengthened in their unbelief, feeling that they had quite a strong confederacy. Men who have had the light have walked contrary to the light. These words are appropriate: "Truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter." The malaria of unbelief has been diffusing its deathly atmosphere throughout the ranks, nigh and afar off. All this has been stated plainly, yet for years matters have been left unchanged. Can the Lord's favor be expected under such circumstances? . . . " {TM 341.3}

"Whole conferences are becoming leavened with the same perverted principles. "For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth." The Lord will work to purify His church. I tell you in truth, the Lord is about to turn and overturn in the institutions called by His name. {TM 372.4}

"Just how soon this refining process will begin I cannot say, but it will not be long deferred. He whose fan is in His hand will cleanse His temple of its moral defilement. He will thoroughly purge His floor. God has a controversy with all who practice the least injustice; for in so doing they reject the authority of God and imperil their interest in the atonement," {TM 373.1}

"Prediction Regarding a Purging of Institutions.--**The Lord will work to purify His church. I tell you in truth, the Lord is about to turn and overturn in the institutions called by His name. Just how soon this refining process will begin I cannot say, but it will not be long deferred.** He whose fan is in His hand will cleanse His temple of its moral defilement. He will thoroughly purge His floor."--Lt 4, 1895. {PM 170.2}

"All Ye are Brethren" March 8, 1895.

"I must speak to my brethren nigh and afar off. I cannot hold my peace. They are not working on correct principles. Those who stand in responsible positions must not feel that their position of importance makes them men of infallible judgment. {TM 347.1}

"All the works of men are under the Lord's jurisdiction. It will be altogether safe for men to consider that there is knowledge with the Most High. Those who trust in God and His wisdom, and not in their own, are walking in safe paths. They will never feel that they are authorized to muzzle even the ox that

treads out the grain; and how offensive it is for men to control the human agent who is in partnership with God, and whom the Lord Jesus has invited: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden," {TM 347.2}

"The Lord has not placed any one of His human agencies under the dictation and control of those who are themselves but erring mortals. He has not placed upon men the power to say, You shall do this, and you shall not do that. But there is a power exercised in Battle Creek that God has not given, and He will judge those who assume this authority. They have somewhat of the same spirit that led Uzzah to lay his hand on the ark to steady it, as though God was not able to care for His sacred symbols. Far less of man's power and authority should be exercised toward God's human agencies. **Brethren, leave God to rule.** {TM 347.3}

The Work for this Time

"The great work for this time demands that men shall go everywhere, nigh and afar off, into the highways and hedges, to diffuse light, holding forth the words of life. **Has God laid upon one man or a council of men to take this work into their hands, as though the workers, God's own property, were to be under their control?** {TM 348.1}

"The business connected with the work of God in any and every branch requires men who are working in harmony with God, for power and success in the work can be attained only through the cooperation of the human and the divine. Without the best of evidence that one understands heavenly and eternal things, he should not be authorized to minister in matters connected with the work that concerns the salvation of souls for whom Christ has died. Unsanctified hands and brains have had altogether too much power entrusted to them, and very unwise moves have been made, that are not in accordance with the will and ways of God. {TM 348.2}

"No man is a proper judge of another man's duty. Man is responsible to God; and as finite, erring men take into their hands the jurisdiction of their fellowmen, as if the Lord commissioned them to lift up and cast down, all heaven is filled with indignation. There are strange principles being established in regard to the control of the minds and works of men, by human judges, as though these finite men were gods. {TM 348.3}

"And how is it with some who are bearing these sacred responsibilities? Men who are not spiritually minded, who are not consecrated to God, have no commission to perform, nor authority to exercise, in regard to the willing or doing of their fellowmen. But unless men are daily in communion with God, instead of seeking Him with all their heart for a fitness for the work, they will assume the power of dictation over the conscience of others. A sense of the divine presence would awe and subdue the soul, but this they have not. Without the love of God burning in the soul, love to men grows cold. Their hearts are not touched at the sight of human woe. Selfishness has left its defiling imprint on life and character, and some will never lose this image and superscription. {TM 349.1}

"Is the working of the cause of God to be entrusted to such hands? Are souls for whom Christ has died, to be manipulated at the will of men who have refused the light given them of heaven? We

should be afraid of man-made laws, and of plans and methods that are not in accordance with the principles of the word of God concerning man's relation to his fellow. "All ye are brethren." {TM 349.2}

The Present Order Must Change

"The present order of things must change, or the wrath of God will fall upon His instrumentalities that are not working in Christ's lines. Has God given any one of you a commission to lord it over His heritage? This kind of work has been coming in for years. God sees it all, and He is displeased with it. When men come in between God and His human agents, they dishonor God and wrong the souls of those who need true encouragement and sympathy and love. I am constrained to appeal to our workers: Whatever your position, do not depend on men, or make flesh your arm." {TM 349.3}

Individual Responsibility

"Men have assumed authority but the people should not depend upon poor, finite erring men. ... The inconsistency of centering so many responsibilities in Battle Creek has been presented many times, but the counsels have not been acted upon. The reproofs and warning from the Lord have been evaded and interpreted and made void by the devices of men. There has been counter-working against God, and the judgment of men has been received. ... There has been altogether too much trusting in men. ... There is altogether too much responsibility imparted to a few men in Battle Creek. ... The arrangement that all monies must go through Battle Creek and under the control of a few men in that place is a wrong way of managing. There are altogether too many weighty responsibilities given to a few men, and some do not make God their counselor." Series A, No. 8 p. 273,274. Mar. 13, 1896

"Could none of those who have made themselves detectives, see the tendency of the position they have taken in endeavoring to become a controlling power? Where was their clear spiritual eyesight? Why could they discern a mote in the eye of a brother, while a beam was in their own eye? **O if ever a temple upon earth needed purifying, the institutions in Battle Creek need it now! Will you not seek God most humbly, that you may give the Laodicean message, with clear, distinct utterance? Where are God's watchmen who will see the peril, and give the warning? Be assured that there are messages to come from human lips, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. "Cry aloud, spare not, . . . show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.** Yet they seek me daily, . . . as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God." {SpTA06 45.2}

"We are soldiers of Christ. He is the Captain of our salvation, and we are under his orders and rules. We are to wear his armor, we are to be marshaled only under his banner. We are to subdue, not our brother soldiers, but our enemies, that we may build up Christ's kingdom. We are laborers together with God. We are to keep on the whole armor of God, and work as in view of the universe of heaven. **Let every man do his duty, as given him of God.**" Mrs. E. G. White.

These counsels are just as applicable TODAY to the leading men in Silver Springs, Maryland and at the local conferences as they were applicable to Battle Creek 115 years ago..

NOTE: All bold-face type and underlining found in the Spirit of Prophecy quotes are inserted for the purpose of this study and not found in the original quotes.

APPENDIX A – Letter from the White Estate

Ellen G. White Estate, Inc.

PROPRIETOR OF

ELLEN G. WHITE Publications

Office Address:

GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20012

December 2, 1971

Mr. Craig Mueller
5300 Lorna Street
Torrance, California 90503

Dear Brother Mueller:

In October you wrote to us asking if we could direct you to a statement from Mrs. White's pen indicating that Jesus Christ was the "stone" of Daniel 2:45.

This has been the holding of the denomination down through the years. Ellen White touches the matter of this vision of Nebuchadnezzar rather lightly. She does not go into great detail. So we are unable to direct you to any statement from her pen on this point. This does not in any sense mean that the views that we have held are not correct.

With the best of wishes, I am

Sincerely your brother,

Arthur L. White

Arthur L. White, Secretary

ALW/nc

The stone comes from a mountain on earth; Jesus comes from heaven. Jesus is to be KING OF KINGS (Rev. 19:16), not a kinglet. A kingdom is made up of people; a king (a) people (b) land

(a) King (b) people (c) land
The stone comes from a mountain on earth; Jesus comes from heaven. Jesus is to be KING OF KINGS (Rev. 19:16), not a kinglet. A kingdom is made up of people; a king (a) people (b) land

President Vice-President Secretary Associate Secretary Assistant Secretary

THIS IS THE CHURCH

By Alonzo T. Jones

ECUMENISM AND BIBLICAL ECCLESIOLOGY VOLUME III

CHRISTIAN UNITY

Christian Unity is always among the Christian things that are of the greatest importance. Yet while Christian Unity is in itself of great importance, to know what it is, is of greater importance. This is because to desire, and to strive for, and to promote, as Christian Unity what is not Christian Unity at all is a most dangerous mistake and an immense loss. Much of just this has been done, and much of it is being done just now as a part of the several great “movements” in and by the churches that are now being urged. In studying Christian Unity for what it really is, it will be helpful first of all plainly to state what it is not. One of the clearest expressions of what it is not is the following prodigiously false statement of what it is:

1. “Unity of doctrine and faith, which consists in the common accord of all the Faithful in admitting and believing all that the teaching church proposes to them as revealed or confirmed by Jesus Christ.
2. “Unity of government, which produces unity of communion, and which consists in the submission of all the Faithful to their respective bishops and in particular to the Roman Pontiff, supreme Head of the church.” Yet utterly false and Romish as all of that is, take away from it only the part that pertains to “the Roman Pontiff,” and it fairly expresses the view of every denomination in the world as to what is Christian Unity.

But Christian Unity is altogether another thing than is any of that; and is as far higher than all of that as Heaven is higher than the earth. Uniting of Christians upon doctrine, is not Christian Unity. Agreement of Christians in belief, is not Christian Unity. Uniting or agreeing of Christians upon a platform or statement of belief, or of doctrine, or of principles, is not Christian Unity. Uniting of Christians in an agreed assent and submission to an order of church organization or church-government, is not Christian Unity. Union of purpose or of effort of Christians or among Christians in promoting a cause, is not Christian Unity. Free and pleasant fraternal association of Christians, is not Christian Unity. Christians might have all of these things in one combination, indeed many of them do, and yet not have Christian Unity at all. Christian Unity is far more and far higher than is any association or denomination or federation or council even of all the Christians in the world for any purpose or upon any platform or in any cause or in submission to any church-government. And it is so well worth having that it is worth more than all other things put together. Come then, let us know what it is in its pure truth and splendid worth, and then let us have it for all that it is worth.

THE CHURCH OF GOD.

In entering upon the study of The Church of the Living God, there is an essential that should first be considered: and not only first, but first and last and all the time. That essential is, The Place of the Holy Spirit. In the preceding study booklet, The Greater Purpose, it was related how that at the beginning of the building of The Church according to the new order of the eleven apostles, all of whom had been personally chosen, and called, and taught for three years, and ordained, and commissioned, by the Lord Himself, to go and preach the Gospel in all the world, were not allowed to go anywhere not to preach at all till they were endued with power from on high in the baptism with the Holy Spirit. And they must tarry in Jerusalem and wait for that baptism. At Pentecost that Baptism came. The Holy Spirit took His place, which was the first place of all. Then they preached the Gospel and the work went on. And that work went on with always the Holy Spirit in His own place, and that the first place of all and overall and through all and in all. This is God's way with His Church and in His Church, and it must be our way. Let us trace for a little distance, this way of the Lord in and with His own Church: before man usurped the place of the Lord, and machinery the place of the Holy Spirit.

The second chapter of Acts is the story of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, Peter's sermon telling that this was the fulfillment of the prophecy by Joel that God would pour out His Spirit "upon all flesh," and the call to all to repent and be baptized, "and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

The third and fourth chapters tell of the healing of the lame man at the gate of the temple, of Peter's sermon to the crowd that gathered and of Peter and John being arrested and imprisoned by the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees of the Sanhedrin, of the trial next day by the great council where "Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost," made answer; and being let go, the two apostles went to their own company where they all together prayed "and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

The fifth chapter tells of the trick of Ananias and Sapphira in the matter of their agreeing to deceive as to the sale and gift of their property. And this was "to lie to the Holy Ghost," and "to tempt the Spirit of the Lord." The consequences were immediate and dreadful. Then the apostles were all arrested by the high priest and council and were imprisoned for trial again. "But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors and brought them forth, and said Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this Life." Again they were arrested and brought before the council "and all the senate of the children of Israel," where again Peter "and the other apostles" preached the Gospel and declared. "We are witnesses of these things, and so also is the Holy Ghost whom God hath given to them that obey Him."

The sixth and seventh chapters tell of the choosing of men "full of the Holy Ghost and Wisdom" to have charge of the "business" in "the daily ministrations;" and of Stephen "a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost" speaking before the council with his face shining "as it had been the face of an angel," and of his "being full of the Holy Ghost" and looking up into heaven and seeing "the glory of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God."

The eighth chapter tells of the preaching by Philip in Samaria, and of their receiving "the Holy Ghost;" and of "the angel of the Lord" telling Philip to go from Samaria away down to the road that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza, where, when he arrived a man in a chariot was just then passing and reading in the book of Isaiah what is now the fifty-third chapter, and "the Spirit said unto Philip Go near, join thyself to this chariot." Philip did so, and preached to him Jesus in that same Scripture; the man believed and was

baptized and went on his way rejoicing; and the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more.”

The ninth chapter tells of the apprehension and conversion of the raging Saul, by the appearing of the Lord Jesus Himself, of his being “filled with the Holy Ghost” by the laying on of the hands of Ananias who was sent to him for this purpose by the Lord Jesus “in a vision;” of “the churches walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Ghost;” and of the raising of Dorcas from the dead.

The tenth chapter tells of “an angel of God” speaking to Cornelius in a vision and telling him to send men to Joppa to call Peter to him; of a vision given to Peter to prepare for the coming of the man; of the Spirit’s telling Peter that the men were seeking him and that he was to go with them; of his going and preaching in the house of Cornelius and “the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.”

The eleventh chapter tells of the rehearsal of the foregoing experience to the Pharisaic believer at Jerusalem who contended with him for what had been done; of the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles in Antioch, and of the sending of Barnabas over there “For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.”

The twelfth chapter is the story of the deliverance of Peter from prison by the angel of the Lord; and Herod’s death from being smitten by the angel of the Lord. The thirteenth and fourteenth chapters tell of “the Holy Ghost” saying to the church at Antioch, “Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work where-unto I have called them,” and of their “being sent forth by the Holy Ghost;” of Saul, “full of the Holy Ghost” rebuking the opposing sorcerer; of the preaching of the Gospel at Antioch in Pisidia and of the disciples being “filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost.”

The fifteenth chapter tells of the settlement by the Holy Spirit of the controversy as to circumcision and keeping the law for Salvation, and the sending forth of the letter saying, “It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us.”

The sixteenth chapter tells us that Paul an apostle, and Silas a prophet “were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia.” and assaying to go into Bithynia “the Spirit suffered them not;” and thus traveling on, they were brought down to Troas where in a “vision to Paul in the night a man of Macedonia called them over there. And chapters seventeen and eighteen tell of their experiences there and in Greece. Chapter nineteen tells that Paul found at Ephesus “certain disciples” to whom he said, “Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?” They replied, “We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.” “Unto what then were ye baptized?” “Unto John’s baptism.” Then Paul preached Christ to them, and “they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul laid his hands upon them the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied.”

In the twentieth chapter Paul is on his way to Jerusalem, and he called the elders of the church at Ephesus to meet him at Miletus; and in his words to them he said, “the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me;” and “Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers to feed the flock of God.”

In the twenty-first chapter, when Paul came to Tyre the disciples “said unto Paul through the Spirit that he should not go up to Jerusalem;” and when he came to Caesarea, the prophet Agabus met him and “took Paul’s girdle and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.” He went on to Jerusalem, and beginning in the twenty-first chapter and reaching to the end

of the book there is one of the most remarkable chains of the direct providence and working of God that ever occurred in the world. And the last words of Paul in the book, begin with the great characteristic of the man and of the book, "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the Prophet," etc.

From only this mere sketch of the book of Acts it is perfectly plain that the one thing that stands out plain and clear and prominent above all other things in the whole book and throughout the whole book, is that the Holy Spirit was then the grand sovereign, reigning, and guiding power in the Church and of the Church. And next to that one great thing there stands clear and plain and prominent throughout, the splendid corresponding truth that the Christians of the time constantly recognized and gladly yielded that sovereignty and reign and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Everywhere God's Spirit is recognized as first. In all things He is considered first, and the first. If they had not done this, the record could not have been what it is; for then the experience would not have been what it was. Let Christians again so recognize and yield the sovereignty and reign and guidance of the Holy Spirit over and in themselves and over all things in and to the Church, then again will experience of individuals of the Church prove to be what it was at the first; for Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Such only is the rightful place of the Holy Spirit in individuals and in the Church; and Christ needs only that Christians yield to Him that place and recognize Him in that place, to prove Himself to be all that He ever was in the place that is supremely His. Thus in all things of The Church and to The Church and in The Church, the place of the Holy Spirit is the first place. No step can be taken and nothing can be done in the right way until the Holy Spirit is given His place. And this must be so now with us in the study of this greatest of all things —The Church of the Living God. For it is the truth that, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which in The Church God hath prepared for them that love Him; but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

CHURCH ORGANIZATION

The editor of a church paper presents what is intended to be a strong incentive to "Organization" of the people of the "Church of God." This presentation is worth studying: especially by the people to whom it is particularly addressed. It begins as follows: "Organization is one of the great and fundamental laws of the Universe of God. The all-wise Creator has demonstrated this, on every hand, and it stands out visibly in all His creation, as a living witness of strength, and the accomplishment of a definite purpose in the earth. The trees of the forest, and the beasts of the field, are each one a definite and wonderful organism: a separate being made of many organs, all of which work together in harmony and system, perpetuating the life, growth, and increase, of those of its kind. The human body is a wonderful organized organism, each member of which works together as one, all having the same and supreme purpose, of perpetuating its own existence," etc. . . .But, Who is the Organizer of each and all of these wonderful organisms? Who organizes each tree of the forest, each beast of the field, and each human body? Is not this Organizer, in each and every case, just God and only God by His Spirit? Who ever knew or thought of the branches of a tree, organizing a tree? or the members of a beast, organizing that beast? Or the members of any human body organizing that body? There never was anything of the kind, and there never could be anything of the kind. So it is not a question of Organization, but of whose Organization. The sole question always and in every case is, Whose shall be the Organization? Who is properly and originally the Organizer, and who shall continue the organizing, and whose shall be the Organization?

The human body is indeed a wonderful organism: "fearfully and wonder-fully made; "and made only by God through Christ by His Spirit. Genesis1:26-27; Job 33:4. Not all the collective individual Christians and

all the delegates and all the preachers and all the bishops and all the conferences and all the Councils that ever were in the world, all put together at once, could organize the human body. They would not know, and could not know, how to make the first movement, or even to think the first thought, toward it. It is all infinitely beyond all their reach or realm; and stands only within the realm and comprehension of God. And anybody ever to undertake it, would have to be equal with God, and God of God. So, in this it is not any question of Organization. The sole question is, Who is the Organizer? and whose is the Organization? Now the Divine Body — “the Body of Christ which is The Church” — is a much more wonderful organism than is the human body: as much more as the supremely Spiritual is more than the human and natural.

And just as none but God, through Christ by His Spirit could possibly organize the Divine and Spiritual Body which is The Church. And just so much the more would anybody who would undertake to organize this Body have to be equal with God, and God of God. And that is just where the Scripture places the one who first “thought” of it and undertook to do it: “he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” That is not safe ground, for Christians. And still it is not any question of Organization. The sole and only ground for question, is, Who is and who shall be, the Organizer? and who is, and whose shall be, the Organization? For the members of the body to under-take to organize the body, in order to have a fully organized body they must necessarily “organize” a head as well as any other part of the body.

Therefore in their “organizing” the “Body of Christ, which is The Church” they must “organize” a head of and for that body. But Christ is the Head of that true body which is The Church: and will any of these “organizers” say that they will “organize” Christ as the Head of the body that they are organizing? Oh! no, of course not that. He is already organized, in God’s Organization. Christ is the Invisible Head. We “organize” with “a visible head” and “organize” only “a visible head.” And that is all that the church of Rome ever claimed. And all that the church of Rome is or ever was, is in that theory. Yes, “the trees of the forest are, each one a definite and wonderful organism.” And by the Lord, His true children are called “trees” — “trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.” Isaiah 61:3. And while it is true, as before stated, that no such thing was ever known as the branches of any tree undertaking to organize the tree: yet, sad to say, it is also true that once upon a time the trees themselves did actually do the unreasonable thing of organizing themselves into proposed “harmony and system” in which “to work together.”

The account of it is as follows: “The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them and they said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us. But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness where with by me they honor God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? And the trees said to the fig tree, Come thou and reign over us. But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou and reign over us. And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?” Since they could not get any tree that was good for anything, to be the head of their “organization” — because those were all busy honoring God and blessing men — they then appealed to the one that was good for nothing but to be burned — “the bramble,” the thorn-bush.” Then said all the trees to the bramble, Come thou and reign over us. And the bramble said unto the trees, if in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust under my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.” Judges 9: 8-15.

Did anybody ever with either safety or comfort sit down in the shade of a thorn-bush? Yet that they do this very thing, or else be burnt, were the only terms of the bargain. That is, they were to put

themselves in an arrangement where they were certain to be pricked; and if they refused that, then they were certain to be burnt. And they were so taken with the idea of their own “organization” instead of God’s that they deliberately entered into that unreasonable arrangement. They did make that bramble king over them, when by every right and every sober consideration God was king over them. They rejected God and chose the bramble; and in that they rejected God’s Organization, and set up a structure of their own choice, “like all the na-tions,” and called it “organization.” They asked Gideon with his son and his son’s son to rule over them. But Gideon promptly replied, “I will not rule over you. Neither shall my son srule over you. The Lord shall rule over you. Judges 8:23. But Gideon had a wild son, named Abimelech: and after the death of Gideon this one killed sixty-nine of the sons of Gideon — all of his sons but one — and was made king by the people of Shechem and of the house of Millo, And at the end of three years dissatisfaction entered and contentions arose, with the result that Abimelech and his men slew all the people of Shechem and of the house of Millo, and beat down to a total ruin the city of Shechem, and next was himself slain.

But in spite of this frightful outcome, to both sides of the attempt at “organization,” there still lingered the wish to have a king. And in the days of Samuel, again the demand was openly made. “Make us a king to judge us, like all the nations.” 1 Samuel 8:5. The Lord by Samuel protested solemnly against it all: and outlined before them what would be the evil and the oppressions of their king and their kingdom and their “organization.” But they would not listen, and still insisted, “Nay, but we will have a king over us.” Verse 19. The Lord let them have their persistent way. Yet He declared, “They have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.” Verse 7. They rejected God, to be “like all the nations.” And speedily they became “Like all the nations” that rejected God: and finally sealed it all, and their doom, with the wild and desperate exclamation, “We have no king but Caesar!” What is the Meaning of all this? Is there in it any warning, or any lesson, for God’s people in this time or in any time? Or is it true that that part of the word of God is empty, void, and dead? Where is any difference in principle between then their call for a king, that they might be “like all the nations,” and now the like call for a king, that they might be like all the denominations?

CHURCH ORGANIZATION

There has never been a system of what is called “church organization” that has not demonstrated itself to be as cruel as the devil. The theory is that such “church,” having the true church organization, is “the true church,” which to be in is the surety of eternal salvation, and which to be separated from is the guarantee of forfeiture of eternal life. Now it is certain that in the true Christian Church, only the true Christian Spirit must be found and only this Spirit the prevailing one. Without this it is impossible that any church can be true, and much less be the true. What then is the true and genuine Christian Spirit? First of all it is only the Holy Spirit of God: for the Lord would not allow His own chosen and ordained and commissioned apostles to make a single move toward anything of The Church until they had been “baptized with the Holy Ghost.” Luke 24:49; Acts 1: 4-5. And of this the inevitable “fruit” is “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance;” and “Liberty;” for “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty” — liberty of thought, liberty of speech, and liberty of action. Galatians 3:22; 2 Corinthians 3:17. This is the Christian Spirit. And this is the Spirit that rules and is manifested in every church that is Christian. And the manifestation of this Spirit is definitely defined as — “The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.” James 3:17.

Now in what is called “church organization,” one man, or two men, or three men, or a few men invent and form a “plan of organization,” and persuade people to accept it and to submit to it: which is in fact to submit to the rule of the men who hold the “offices,” and thereby hold “the keys” to open or shut

heaven. And when the "organization" is completed and in working order, then any member who is not conforming to the will and workings of the officialdom is required to do so. And if in obedience to Christ in His Spirit and in His truth, or is in his Christian liberty to think and speak and act, he does not do so, he is separated from the "organization" and ostracized from all recognition of the "church" and "the brethren" and thus is completely excluded from "the church." And if any of the brethren disregard the exclusion of the Christian brother and fellowship him and receive him into their houses, then they immediately become subject to suspicion and to being "eyed:" and if this does not prove corrective then they must also be separated. And the theory is that exclusion from that "church" means the loss of eternal life. That is, for a man's disagreement with a man or a few men who "represent the church," by these men in their "representing the church," and in that their "representing God," that man is deliberately deprived of eternal life! Now could the devil himself be more cruel than that — to put such a penalty as that upon such an "offence" as that, which in truth is no offence either to God or man? Eternal death, for disagreement with a man! Yet, in brief, that is exactly the process in and of the first such "church organization" — the false Catholic church — and of every other structure that is called "church organization." The Roman "organization" is proud of it and boasts of it as proof of her divinity. Others repudiate that "church" with her "organization" as "the man of sin," "the mystery of iniquity," "the son of perdition," and "the beast;" and yet build one of their own on the same principle and after the same pattern; and with it do the same thing. Some of these others, indeed, have enough discernment to see the enormity of it, and compunction enough to try to evade it with the claim that in their case it does not affect the loss of eternal life to the one cast out; but is only his separation from the "organization" and its "fellowship:" because "we believe in religious liberty!" But that is only a dodge and camouflage. For, if that be true, it is a plain confession that their "organization" and "fellowship" is not the true Church, but is no more than is any other mere club. But they do not mean anything of the kind. They do not mean to abate an iota of the claim that theirs is the true Church indeed with all that this involves or implies: that to be in it means eternal life, and that separation from it means eternal death. And by this claim it is that they hold their power over the people. Does anybody think for a moment that for a moment any of the people would endure what they do endure there, or would stand in awe of that "church" authority or power, if they understood that all that the "organization" and association amounts to is only that of a mere human society or club? Yet in truth and in fact and in effect, just that is all that it is. It is only the superstition that in some mysteriously ineffable way the officialdom and hierarchy of the "organization" are possessed of a spiritual power that can affect the standing of the souls of men before God — it is only this superstition that causes the people against their own conviction and their own common sense of the right, to endure or sanction the "church" procedure in many and various ways. What else than superstition could it be that could cause people to think that some men in the "church" through election by other men or by themselves are partakers or possessors of spiritual authority or power to which all the other people of the "church" must unquestioningly defer, or else jeopardize their soul with God? That is precisely the principle, and the superstition, of the infallibility of the pope. The pope is elected by the cardinals, from among themselves, or by himself. No cardinal possesses or even claims any scintilla of infallibility. Yet when these cardinals who have none of it, elect one of themselves, who have none of it, and thus occupies the office and seat of pope, immediately he has all of it. How does he get it? Where does it come from? Oh, from the office, from the seat, of course: for it is only when he speaks ex cathedra, that is "from the chair," that he is infallible. And every other officialdom of "church organization" is of the same stripe and the same superstition.

WHICH ONE IS THE TRUE?

One of the liveliest questions of the day is, What is the Church? And this is the most important question that there ever could be in any day. All know that there are so many things each one of which is claimed to be not only a church but The Church, that everybody all the time is forced to the question of not only

which is the true Church, but what is the true Church? Each one of them claims and asserts that it is the true Church: and yet in so many things and ways each one is conducted and managed so unlike what is Christian, that its own members as well as other people are kept perpetually under the question, Is that the true Church? All of them but the first one of them, are perfectly sure that the first one of them is not the true Church: while that first one of them is just as perfectly sure that it is the only true Church. And if the first one of them, the oldest one of them, the one that has the advantage of far the longest time and the most and fullest experience, the one that has had the benefit of “the ingenuity and patient care of forty generations of statesmen” that have made it “the very masterpiece of human wisdom” — if that one of them is not the true one of them, then how can any other one of them be the true? Or in behalf of all the others must it be the acknowledged principle of this subject, that the first one of them, the one with the most experience of them all, is, and is certain to be the worst of them all. If this be the principle of the thing, then is it not inevitable that as certainly as each or all of the others shall be given time and experience, they will go the same way? And in the like length of time will be each one just as bad as the first one? And if that be not the principle of the thing, if age and experience have not made the first one of them to be the worst one of them, then what ground or reason of existence have all or any of the others, apart from that first one?

This inevitable dilemma is sought to be avoided by the plea, invariably adopted, that, The difficulty is not in or with the principle: the principle is correct: the difficulty is in the application of the principle: not the principle but the men. But that is not any way of escape. For the application of the principle was, and must be always by men. And these men were always just men — plain human beings — like all other men. Always that principle will, and will have to be, applied by men — just plain human beings— like all other men. Yet more that this: that is exactly the plea of that first one of these claimed churches. All the devilry of the church of Rome, all the way, has been protested by members of that church within that church. The enormities of iniquity practiced by and in that church have been recorded and condemned and denounced by even the high ones of that church — bishops, archbishops, even cardinals — and who still remained orthodox members of that church because they held that the evils were not of the church nor from the church, but of the men, and only from the men who conducted the affairs of the church. Long before The Reformation, men in that church had said harder things of the Pope and of the conduct of that church than the reformers ever said: yet these still held that it was still and ever the true church.

The standard annalist of that church itself, Cardinal Baronius, says of the papacy in the tenth century: “In this century the abomination of desolation was seen in the temple of the Lord: and in the See of St. Peter, revered by angels, were placed the most wicked of men: not pontiffs but monsters.” And Bishop Robert of Lincoln, in England, in the very presence of Pope Innocent IV and his cardinals, A. D. 1250, spoke out plainly to them: “The clergy are a source of pollution in the whole earth: they are anti-christs and devils masquerading as angels of light, who make the house of prayer a den of robbers: and the Roman curia is the source of all the vileness which renders the priesthood a hissing and a reproach to Christianity.” They denounced the men and the activities of the men, even of the popes and the papal court, and still apologized and pleaded for “the church” — for the machine — that alone gave to the men their power and their opportunity. They condemned the evil practices but justified the system by which alone it was possible that these practices could not only be perpetuated, but could even exist. Churchmen were bad; but “the church,” whose members and the expression of whose life those churchmen essentially were, was “the good!” Customs were pernicious; but “the church,” whose the customs essentially were, was “the abode of sanctity!” Practices were abominable: but “the church,” which invented many and profited by all and corrected none of the practices, was “holy!” Popes were demonic; but “the church,” of which the popes were “the head” — the acting will, the guiding mind — was “divine!” See the grand churches and magnificent cathedrals! Hear the “heavenly” music of the “divine” chants! Catch the impressive odor of the “holy” incense! Feel the awe of the “solemn” service, as the

richly-robed ecclesiastics minister at the “altar,” kneel before the “host,” and move in “holy” procession! Think of the wide extent of her “missions!” Behold her “perfect organization,” by which she executes as by one man the wonders of her will, holds empires in awe, and rules the world! Is not that the true and only “holy church?” The church was “the ark of God,” the “ship of Salvation.” The pilot, the captain, and the crew, might all be pirates, and use every motion of the ship only for piratical purposes, and load her to the sinking point with piratical plunder, and keep her headed ever straight toward perdition, yet “the grand old ship” herself was all right and would come safely to the heavenly port. Therefore, “cling to the ark,” “stand by the old ship,” and you will be safe and will land at last on the heavenly shore.

For instance, in direct connection with the very passage already quoted from Cardinal Beronius, in which he describes the fearful conditions of that church in the ninth century, there stand the Cardinal’s words as follows: “Christ was then assuredly sleeping a profound sleep in the bottom of His vessel whilst the winds buffeted it on all sides and covered it with the waves of the sea. And what was more unfortunate still, the disciples of the Lord slept more profoundly than He, and could not awaken Him either by their cries or clamors.” And in the General Council of Blaise, 1432, the pope’s legate exhorted the Bohemian Christians: “In the time of Noah’s flood, as many as were without the ark perished.” All of this evil in that church and of that church was so chronic, and so well known that time and again when a pope died, all Europe was searched as with candles to find “a good man” to be pope. And when one was at last found who was well known and universally accepted as of model character, when he had been installed and was actually pope he was indeed the pope: and all were caused to lament that “he always would have been universally considered to be the best man for pope, if he had never become pope.” Thus the plea utterly falls in every way that would hold that the badness of the church of Rome is because of the men and not because of the principle. It is essentially in the principle: and the principle only manifests itself in and through the men who become identified with it. And what of the Scriptures? What say they of it? This: “the man of sin,” “the mystery of iniquity,” “the synagogue of Satan,” “the son of perdition,” “the great harlot,” “Mystery, Babylon the Great,” “the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth,” “the mistress of witchcrafts and mother of abominations,” “the abomination of desolation.”

Does God say all of that of a thing in which there is any possible trace of good, of purity, or of truth? Do the Scriptures deal with men, or with principles? With principles only. The whole Bible is a Book of principles only. And as certainly as the Scriptures deal with principles and not with men, so certainly the Scriptures deal with and define and denounce the church of Rome in its principle, and not merely in its men. The sin, the perdition, the mystery of the iniquity, the harlotry, the witch-craft, the sorcery, the abomination, of the church of Rome is in the principle of the thing: is in the essence of the thing, and not in the management of the thing: is in the essence of that thing as the church, and not in the management of it as the church. And what is the principle of the church of Rome as the “church?” According to that principle and idea, what is the “church?” It is this: “The society of the validly baptized faithful united together in one body by the profession of the same faith, by the participation of the same sacraments, and by obedience to the same authority, Christ, its invisible head in Heaven, and the Roman Pontiff, the successor of St. Peter, Christ’s visible representative and vicegerent on earth.” — Christian Apologetics, Sec. 200. Take out of that definition the words “Roman Pontiff, the successor of St. Peter,” and “vicegerent,” and in their place insert the name of the man, or of the Board, or of the Committee, or of the Conference or Diocese, in the case, and in principle and largely in expression, it equally defines “the church” as held and manifested in every other “church organization” in the world. And what is the principle in it and of it? It is the visible crowded into the place of the invisible: the human into the place of the divine: the spiritual attention and obedience of souls centered in, and held under, the dominion of men instead of that of God Himself in Christ under the Holy Spirit.

The Reformers cut to the root of that whole thing at the one stroke of declaring that in truth it is not in any sense The Church. That is what made them “heretics.” They said that it is “the abomination of self-deification in the holy place:” “the Pope is Anti-Christ and his See is that of Satan him-self:” “the papacy is a general chase, by command of the Roman Pontiff, for the purpose of running down and destroying souls.” Were they wrong? Was The Reformation a mistake in its fundamental principle and contention? Rome claims that it was: and that as she now has eliminated the bad elements from the church, there is no longer any grounds for Protestant contention: but that all should and can now work in harmony as one. And the professed Protestant churches, holding as tenaciously as does Rome herself the Romish principle of “the church,” and refusing the Christian principle of The Church, are ready for co-operation with Rome. And every “church” that holds that principle of “the church” is cooperating with Rome.

Now what is the principle of The Church of the Living God? According to this principle and idea, What is The Church? It is this: “The Church is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.” Ephesians 1: 22-23. It is “the House of God” “built upon . . . Jesus Christ Himself . . . in Whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord . . . for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” Ephesians 2: 19-22. And what is the principle in this and of this? It is more than a principle, it is a Person — the Personal God, all in all, in Christ, building His own House, for His own habitation through His own Spirit. And the difference between these two ideas and these two realms as to The Church, is as wide as is the difference between man and God. It is just the difference that there is between man and God: between sly and designing and ambitious and deceitful men, and the open and frank and honest and meek and lowly Jesus in Whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

It is the truth that the long experience of that first one of these “churches,” and the ingenuity and patient care of the more than “forty generations of statesmen” have made it “the very masterpiece of human wisdom:” and have so made it that, that “among the contrivances that have been devised for deceiving and oppressing mankind it occupies the highest place.” It was devised for the sole purpose of deceiving and oppressing mankind; for it was devised by the arch-deceiver of mankind. The men had little to do with it beyond being the instruments of the arch-deceiver to extend his purpose and to fulfill his will. His has been always the purpose, and his the moving will, to put his church — “the synagogue of Satan” — in the place of The Church of God. That is why the Wisdom of God in the Scriptures sets it forth as He does in the terms “the mystery of iniquity,” “the son of perdition,” etc., with never a single intimation of anything respectable or even decent: much less any-thing good. That Wisdom penetrates to the seat of the life of the thing, and reveals the inherent principle of it. And what that Wisdom says that it is, that is what it is. And no ingenuity of argument, no trick to remove from the thing to the men of the thing, from the principle to the application of it, can escape or elude the inherent and essential devilry of the thing. The thing is simply and only Satanic. It is Satanic in its principle, it was Satanic in the beginning of its working — “the mystery of iniquity doth already work;” it has always been Satanic in its working; and it cannot be anything else, whatever may be said or done to have it be something else. The principle, being Satanic, makes more corrupt the men who espouse it and identify themselves with it. It makes the best men bad and makes bad men worse. That is the secret of the papacy. Error — error in the inward parts — corrupts the passions. Truth — truth in the inward parts — sanctifies the soul.

THE CHURCH

What is The Church? What does the Word of God say that The Church is. 'It is by the Word of God only, and by the study of the Word of God only, that anybody can ever know what The Church is. It is The Church of God, not the church of men. And it being The Church of God, only He can possibly know or tell what it is. And the church, being only of the thought and conception of God, when He expresses that thought in telling what The Church is, then that thought in telling what The Church is, then that thought

as expressed in His Word, will be as far above any conception or thought of man's, as God is above man, and as the mind of God is greater than any mind of man. Therefore, in the study of this subject, as well as any other subject of the thought and Word of God, the first thing for every person to do is to accept and follow implicitly the following instruction: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; . . . for My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55: 7-9. This being so, and "the things of God no man knowing but the Spirit of God," plainly it is only by the revelation of the Spirit of God that these things can be known by any man: by the Spirit of God taking these high and deep things of God and making them plain to us and putting them upon our minds and thus giving them to us as really our own. John 14:26; 16:19, 20; 13-15; 1 Corinthians 2: 9-12.

In this way, then, let us study the word and thought of God on what is The Church. What, then, does He say that The Church is? "The Church is His body, the fullness of Him Who filleth all in all." Ephesians 1: 22-23. The Church is the fullness of Him. Who is He, the fullness of Whom The Church is? Plainly only God, for it is "The Church of the Living God." What is the fullness of Him, whose fullness The Church is? What is the fullness of God, for The Church is the fullness of Him? I might with profit to everyone, stop right here in this study, and let each reader spend a whole month in thinking and meditating and studying on this one question only, What is the fullness of the Living God? For whoever gets the fullest and best view of what is the fullness of the Living God, will have the fullest and best view of what is The Church of the Living God: for The Church is the fullness of Him. What then is fullness of Him? First of all, it is the fullness "of all in all;" for The Church is "the fullness of Him who filleth all in all." The fullness of all in all is simply the fullness of infinity. And the fullness of Him Who filleth all in all, is only the fullness of the Infinite One — "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." And again: "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance . . . All nations before Him are as nothing: and are counted to Him as less than nothing and vanity." Isaiah 40: 15-17. How near to the fullness of all the oceans and seas is "a drop of a bucket?" And yet that is the measure of "all the nations" to the fullness of God — to the fullness of Him who filleth the all in all, whose fullness is The Church.

Please read Genesis 13:16 and get the suggestion there of what is the fullness that is the Church. Now please think on that "fullness of God" which The Church is, and then ask yourself When The Church is all the fullness of God, then what kind of an idea of either God or The Church can any men have who think that they can "organize The Church" or "organize a church?" or who think that a structure of the pinhead conception of finite-minded, blunder-thinking, man can be The Church of the Living God, "the fullness of Him Who filleth all in all!!"

Is it not perfectly evident that any man who ever proposed, or thought of, "organizing a church" or of "organizing The Church," by that very thing shows absolutely that he has no possible correct or true thought of what The Church is or What God is? The Church is the fulness of God: and the fulness of God manifest is The Church: so that the idea of The Church is the idea of God. A person's comprehension of The Church is his comprehension of God. In the nature of the case, whoever thinks that he can "organize The Church," in that implies that he thinks that he can organize the fulness of God: and so that he is above God. And that is exactly where the word of God places the one who first attempted it — "the man of sin, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God." Such ones as that can organize the fullness of their god: and this very easily, for it so small. And thus every man-organized church in the world, is the manifestation of the god of that man, just like any other heathen idol. But when The Church is the fulness of The Living God, it is perfectly plain and conclusive that nobody but God Himself can possibly organize it. And when He organizes and builds His own Church in and unto the

fullness of Himself — “the fullness of Him Who filleth all in all” — then it is equally plain and conclusive that the Church will be truly The Church that is the manifestation only of the true and Living God. The question of The Church and of the organization of The Church is just the same old world-old question of whether God shall be Himself in His own way and in His own place, or whether man-made idols shall be the respective gods of little cliques and coteries in men’s ways and in the place of God. Before you start the next chapter please think and mediate and pray on the question, What is the fullness of God — “the fullness of Him who filleth all in all?” For thus you will be studying what The Church is.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

What is the Church? “The House of God is the Church of the Living God.” 1 Timothy 3:15.

The Apostle and High Priest of our profession was faithful to Him that appointed Him, as also Moses was faithful in all His House. “And Moses verily was faithful in all His House as a servant, for a testimony of those things that were to be spoken after. But Christ was faithful over His own House: whose House are we if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. Hebrews 3: 1-6. “Ye, as lively stones are built up a spiritual House.” 1 Peter 2:5. “Ye are no more strangers and foreigners but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God: and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone. “In whom, all the Building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an Holy Temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an Habitation of God through the Spirit.” Ephesians 2: 19-22. “Ye are God’s Building.” 1 Corinthians 3:9. “I will build My Church.” Matthew 16:18. The Church of God, then, is the House of God, of His own building, through Christ His own named Builder. It is built “an holy Temple, in the Lord,” “for an Habitation of God, through the Spirit.” Now what are the dimensions of this House of God? How extensive must be its capacity, to be such a Temple and such a Habitation of God that it shall reflect and express “all the fullness of God?” And who could be the Builder? What man or men could possibly build “The House of God which is The Church of the Living God,” that shall contain so as to express “all the fullness of God?” Were not men long ago challenged up on this very point? Please read: “Who is able to build Him an house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Him?” 2 Chronicles 2:6. “Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee, how much less this house that I have builded?” 2 Chronicles 6:18. “The Heaven is My Throne and the earth is My footstool. Where is the house that ye will build unto Me? Isaiah 66:1.

And this challenge is carried over into the field of Christian thought and things; and is repeated to hold up all who would be “builders” of The Church or in The Church which is “The House of God” — “You builders:” “The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands, as saith the prophet: Heaven is My Throne, and earth My footstool, what house will ye build Me? saith the Lord?” Acts 7: 48-49; 4:11. Accordingly men, who undertake to build or to “organize” The Church or a church, in that very thing show their own utter ignorance of all that is The Church in truth. And they never do build Him an house. Always they build to themselves an house where in the place of God, themselves shall sit and reign and rule utterly unlike God. No. The Church is the House of God, It is built only for the habitation of God, the place which He has made for Him who is equal with God, and therefore able and capable to compass and understand and truly express the thought of God in His “Eternal Purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” When this Eternal Purpose was purposed only in Christ Jesus, then it is utterly impossible for any other than Christ in person to be The Builder or the Organizer of The Church. And so only it is: “He shall build The Temple of the Lord; even He shall build The Temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory,” Zechariah 6: 12-13. And “He” came and earned the position, and, by divine merit as well as by divine right, took the position of that Builder: “I will build My Church.” But “the man of sin,” “the son of perdition,” “the mystery of iniquity,” soon came in, and with its working supplanted Him as

the builder, and became himself the builder of what is proposed as “the church,” but which these builders built only for themselves and for their own glory, in which always there has sat this “man of sin” above God, and “showing himself that he is God.” 2 Thessalonians 2:4. And the wicked course of that mystery of iniquity has been followed in the building of more others than there are days in the year: each one of them presented as the true Temple and the true House of God, but which in truth is only the habitation of men, who sit and rule there in place of God. But the time has come, and now is, when the Mystery of God is once more to have its place above the mystery of iniquity: and this unto its glorious finishing.

And this mystery is God manifest, “God manifest in the flesh,” “Christ in men the hope of glory.” And in this, again it will be, as at the first, that God only, in Christ only, by the Holy Spirit only, will be the Builder of His own House unto its finishing in its own native glory and beauty. Revelation 10:7; Ephesians 5:27. And so it is written: “Speaking the truth in love may grow up into Him in all things who is the Head even Christ, from whom” and “in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy Temple in the Lord . . . for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” Ephesians 4: 15-6; 2: 21- 22. There is the Builder of The Church, the Organizer of The Church, and He is only Christ the Head. There is the Building of The Church, the organizing of The Church, and it is all only from Him who is the Head, by the Holy Spirit. And that is the House of God: a fit and becoming “House of habitation” for Him Who first “built all things,” and “Whom the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain.”

Where is the house that ye will build unto Me — “you builders” — saith the Lord? The Word of God Abideth Forever.

APPENDIX C BELOW

Appendix C -- Various Spirit of Prophecy Statements Concerning Church Authority and Historical Controversy

1875: "I have been shown that no man's judgment should be surrendered to the judgment of any one man. But when the judgment of the General Conference, which is the highest authority that God has upon the earth, is exercised, private independence and private judgment must not be maintained, but be surrendered." 3T p. 492.

1889: "The question of the great need of the soul deserves in these meetings of the [General] Conference far more attention, and many questions that are tossed into the Conference should never appear, be worked out in your State Conferences. It has become habit to pass laws that do not always bear the signature of heaven." November 4, 1889, Ms. 6-1889.

1890: At the 1888 GC session; "the opinion of men was looked to as the voice of God. The enemy took possession of minds and their judgment was worthless, their decisions were evil, for they did not have the mind of Christ. They were doing continual injustice to the persons they talked about, and they had a demoralizing effect upon the conference." February 1890, Ms. 37-1890.

That same year of 1890 Ellen wrote to the GC president: "I do not expect to be at your General Conference. I would rather run the other way." EGW to O. A. Olsen, May 8, 1890, O46-1890.

1898: "It has been some years since I have considered the General Conference as the voice of God." August 26, 1898, in 1899 GCB, p. 74.

1901: "It is working upon wrong principles that has brought the cause of God into its present embarrassment. The people have lost confidence in those who have the management of the work. Yet we hear that the voice of the Conference is the voice of God. Every time I have heard this, I thought it was almost blasphemy. The voice of the Conference ought to be the voice of God, but it is not, because some in connection with it are not men of faith and prayer, they are not men of elevated principle." April 1, 1901, Ms. 37-1901.

1909: "When in a General Conference, the judgment of the brethren assembled from all parts of the field is exercised, private independence and private judgment must not be stubbornly maintained, but surrendered. Never should a laborer regard as a virtue the persistent maintenance of his position of independence, contrary to the decision of the general body." 9T, p. 260.

"And when men in the highest responsible positions make no difference between those who serve God and those who serve Him not, they evidence that their eyes are not single to the glory of God; therefore their whole body is full of darkness....

"Let us not form unholy bonds of union with the friends of the world; for God has pronounced His curse upon all such unions....Already has the power of darkness placed its mold and superscription upon the work that should stand forth untainted, unpolluted, from Satan's cunning devices....Woe be unto him whose wisdom is not from above but from beneath!" TM, p 265, 273, 277.

At the 1901 General Conference Session, God tried to remove the kingly controlling power that the SDA church had, since the 1890's, been implementing and using to bind and control the will and consciences of our people. The church was repeating the same history as did the Jewish church in keeping their

people under slavery to men. Under this type of bondage no one can obtain salvation (see Desire of Ages (DA), p 141).

Just two days before Sister White was to arrive at the 1901 GC session, she sent this message to the GC leaders:

"God desires that these committees, which have handled these matters so long, shall be discharged from their rulers and have a chance for their lives...the Lord wants His spirit to enter. He wants His Holy Spirit to be King....This present standing must come to an end...finally it will come to nothing."
Message to General Conference, April 1, 1901.

Then she arrived at the session two days later and declared:

"I feel a special interest in the movements and decisions that shall be made at this conference regarding the things that should have been done years ago..."

"God gave them (GC leadership) clear light as to what they should do and what they should not do, but they departed from the light..."

"That these men should stand in a sacred place to be as the voice of God to the people, as we once believed the General Conference to be, that is past....God wants them to be removed...."

"God has not put any kingly power in our ranks to control..." GCB, April 3, 1901, p 23-26.

The kingly power of the SDA church did assent to step down, and Sister White was elated. But did the SDA church give up their authority and control over our people? Did they really allow God's Holy Spirit to be King and to recreate our people in the Image of God? Or did the church leadership continue to exercise their papal supremacy over our people, keeping them under slavery, never to fully reflect the Image of God and be saved while under such influence? Was Sister White's excitement short-lived?

"What a wonderful work could have been done for the vast company gathered in Battle Creek at the general conference of 1901, if the leaders of our work had taken themselves in hand. But the work that all heaven was waiting to do as soon as men prepared the way was not done; for **the leaders closed and bolted the door against the Spirit's entrance**....The doors were barred against the Heavenly Current that would have swept away all evil...They built themselves up in wrong doing, and said to the Spirit of God, 'Go thy way for this time; when I have a more convenient season, I will call for thee.'" Letter 123, August 23, 1902 (Battle Creek Letters, p 55-56).

"The results of the last general conference (1901) has been the greatest, the most terrible sorrow of my life, no change was made....Men did not receive the testimonies of the Spirit of God..."

"It is a perilous thing to reject the light that God sends. To Chorazin and Bethsaida heaven's richest blessings had been freely offered. Day after day the Prince of Life had gone in and out among them....but they refused the heavenly gift, and of them the Saviour said; 'Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida, for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.'

"So today upon those who have had light and evidence, but who have refused to heed the Lord's warnings and entreaties, **heaven's woe is pronounced.**

"The Lord bore long with the perversity of Israel, but the time came when the people passed the boundaries..." 13MR 122-23 (Letter 17, January 14, 1903).

"Why is there so dim a perception of the true spiritual condition of the church? Has not blindness fallen upon the watchmen standing on the walls of Zion?...Who can truthfully say, 'Our gold is tried in the fire; our garments are unspotted by the world'? I saw our Instructor pointing to the garments of so-called righteousness. Stripping them off, He laid bare the defilement beneath. Then He (Christ) said to me: 'Can you not see how they have pretentiously covered up their defilement and rottenness of character? **'How is the faithful city become an harlot!** My Father's house is made a house of merchandise, a place whence **the divine presence and glory have departed!**'" 8T 248-50 (April 21, 1903).

"I am filled with sadness when I think of our condition as a people... our own course of continual backsliding has separated us from God? And yet the general opinion is that the church is flourishing, and that peace and spiritual prosperity are in all her borders. The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader, and is steadily retreating toward Egypt." (5T 217) "The whole body is sick because of mismanagement and miscalculation." (TM 397) "Some power has cut the cable.. and (we) are drifting away to sea without chart or compass." (RH July 24, 1888) "You are following the same path as did ancient Israel. Your neglect to follow the light will place you in a more unfavorable position than the Jews upon whom Christ pronounced a woe." (5T 75-76)

"Unless the church, which is now being leavened with her own backsliding, shall repent and be converted, she will eat of the fruit of her own doing, until she shall abhor herself." (8T 250) "It pains me to say, my brethren, that your sinful neglect to walk in the light, has enshrouded you in darkness. You may now be honest in not recognizing and obeying the light; the doubt you have entertained, your neglect to heed the requirements of God, have blinded your perceptions so that darkness -is now to you light, and light is darkness." (5T 71)

"Oh, what privileges are granted to us as a people! And if God spared not His people that He loved because they refused to walk in the light, how can He spare the people whom He has blessed with the light of heaven in having opened to them the most exalted truth ever intrusted to mortal man to give to the world? Internal corruption will bring the denunciations of God upon this people as it did upon Jerusalem... My brethren, we know not what is before us... God will work with us and for us if the sins which brought His wrath upon the old world, upon Sodom and Gomorrah and upon ancient Jerusalem, do not become our crime." (Letter to Butler and Haskell, Dec. 8, 1886)

"What would the Saviour do if He should come to us now as He did to the Jews? He would have to do a similar work." (RH, vol. 2, p. 308) "Jerusalem is a representation of what the church will be if it refuses to receive and walk in the light that God has given... These are no idle tales, but truth." (8T 67, 68) "If we imitate their (Israel's) example of transgression, and depart from God, we shall fall as surely as did they." (1T 608, 609) "Let a church become proud and boastful, not depending on God, not exalting His power, and that church will surely be left by the Lord, to be brought down to the ground. Let a people glory in

wealth, intellect, knowledge, or in anything but Christ, and they will soon be brought to confusion." (8T 127)

"By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them... The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world." (1SM 234, 235) (In other words, by quibbling and jealousy and open opposition, men succeeded in delaying the second coming of Christ for one hundred years.)

"God has given Brother Jones and Brother Waggoner a message for the people... When you reject the message borne by these men, you reject Christ, the giver of the message." (Letter 51-A. 1895)

During the presentations at Minneapolis in 1888 Ellen White sat on the front row and was heard to say over and over, "Amen, there is much light here."

In 1926 Elder A. G. Daniells, former General Conference President, wrote, "The message has never been received, nor proclaimed, nor given free course as it should have been in order to convey to the church the measureless blessings that were wrapped within it." (Christ Our Righteousness, p. 47) In 1898 Ellen White was still speaking of stubborn defiance, disunion, and rejection of light. In 1902 she said, "I have been instructed that the terrible experience at the Minneapolis Conference is one of the saddest chapters in the history of the believers in present truth." (Letter 179, 1902) W. C. White, her son, wrote, "But the most serious feature of the disaffection was the fact that, because Sister White urged the importance of the message of righteousness by faith, and because thereby she seemed to be upholding these brethren (Waggoner and Jones), contrary to their judgment, it grew into a spirit of rejection of the testimonies of Sister White." (A. V. Olson, Thirteen Crisis Years, p. 332) Could our present plague of attacking or ignoring her writings have its roots in the years following 1888?

Perhaps the heart of the whole problem is found in these comments by Ellen White in 1901. "Enough has been said over and over and over again, but it does not make any difference; they go right on just the same, professedly accepting it; but they do not make any change." (Talk in Battle Creek College library, April 1, 1901) Professedly accepting but making no changes will never finish God's work, even in a thousand years. Could this be what has confused certain historians into assuming that lip service meant heart acceptance? Could the same thing be our problem today?

Inspiration tells us that the leaders of the 1901 General Conference "closed and bolted the door' against the Spirit's entrance..." The doors were barred against the heavenly current that would have swept away all evil." (Letter from Elmshaven, Aug. 5, 1902) "The result of the last General Conference has been the greatest, the most terrible sorrow of my life. No change was made." (Letter from Elmshaven, Jan. 15, 1903).