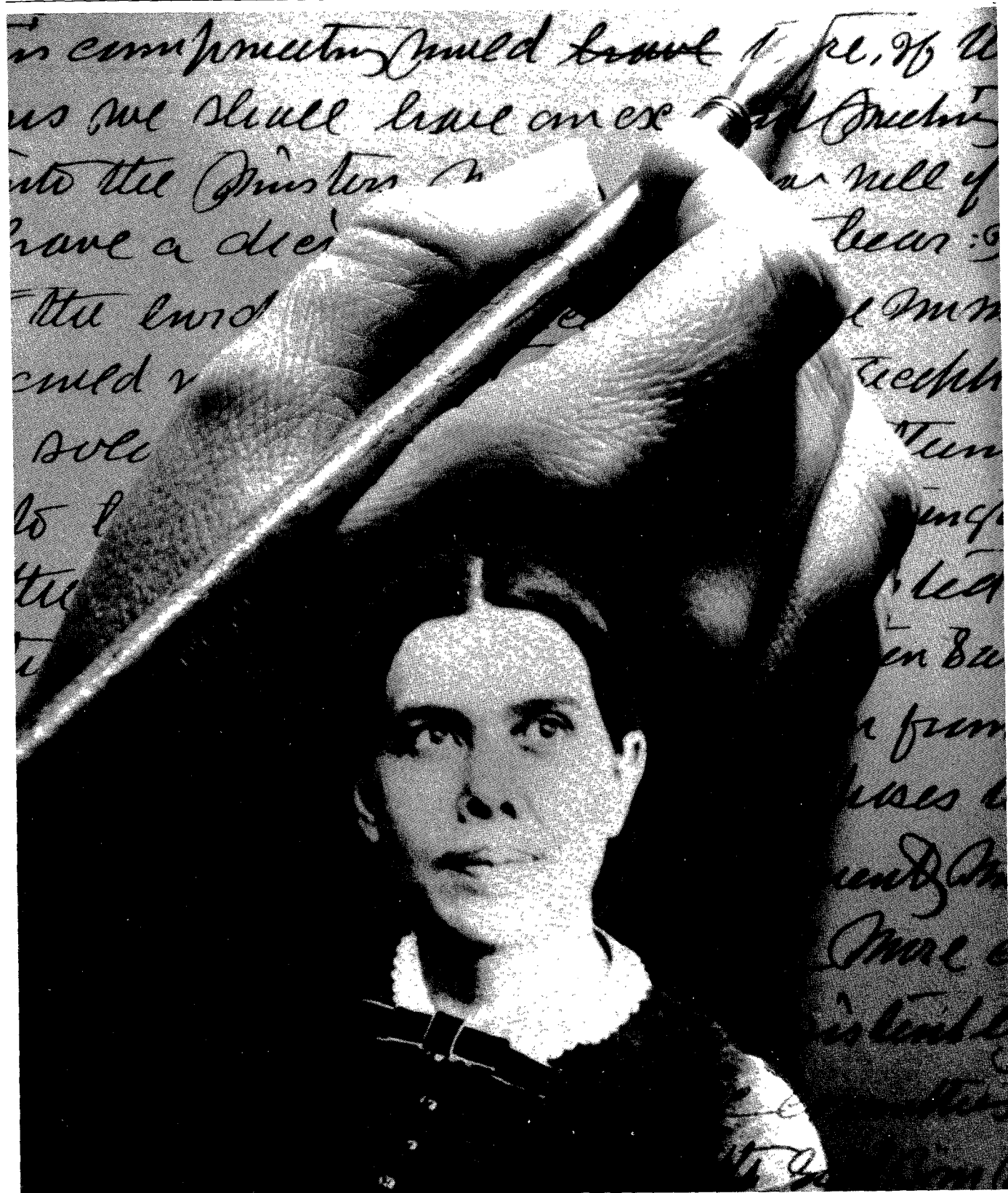


Ministry

A Magazine for Clergy/June 1982



Ellen White: Prophet or Plagiarist?

Letters

A pastor shares information on a complete computer system costing less than \$3,000; another praises God for his new-found freedom from homosexuality; and readers react to the special evangelism issue.

More on computers

I would like to add a few comments to Dr. Moon's article "Computers Come to Church" (March, 1982). The advice regarding careful assessment of need and research of the market are well taken indeed. When we felt the need for extra help in the church office, we started our research into what soon became a fascinating foray into the world of the small computer. This does require, as Dr. Moon warns, a good bit of time. It requires becoming familiar with the market in general. But our careful research paid off. Let me outline how.

Our church membership is around 765. That large membership is spread out over a major metropolitan area. We established as a high priority the need to communicate regularly with our members, and we needed a tool to help us do that. Now, in just a few minutes, our computer can give us all members who are church officers, or we can call for a list of any specific officers (board members, Sabbath school leaders, deacons, et cetera). We can have a listing of all birthdays in a given month or even ask for the names of all those who have not received a pastoral visit in the past three months. Our computer enables us to distinguish between a nonbaptized attendee and a baptized member of an Adventist church other than our own. We can call up the dates of transfer or baptism for all our members. And we can have all this information in various forms—readout via the terminal; a name-and-address printout; a name-and-address printout with telephone numbers for directory purposes; or a mailing list in ZIP code order!

How much did the software cost that we use for all this? Would you believe that \$200 would buy you the same program? This is not a program that must be modified to fit your needs, but one that comes with all the prompts to make it "user friendly." The total expense for our complete system is under \$3,000. This includes a computer with a memory of 48,000 bytes of information; two disc drives, each holding 180,000 bytes of information; and a dot-matrix printer that zips along at 120 characters per second. (For form letters and address labels we don't need a letter-quality printer.) For \$150 we also purchased a word-processing program that prints our newsletter, form letters, and

much personal correspondence. We saved \$1,000 on the complete system by careful shopping.

We have found our computer to be the greatest addition to our effectiveness since the invention of the office secretary! The time spent researching computers, we feel, was well spent, since we are now able to communicate more effectively, in much less time, and with greater accuracy than before. In short, we are able to spend more time being the pastors we were called to be, because we make better use of our time.

We would be happy to share information with any pastor wanting to add such a tool to his office. Just write me: North Park SDA Church, 3090 Polk Ave., San Diego, California 92104. Don't be reluctant to buy a computer if you feel it would enhance your communication with your members.—Mic Thurber, San Diego, California.

Finding deliverance

I am a Seventh-day Adventist minister. For years I have struggled in silence with the guilt and despair of a homosexual orientation. The September, 1981, issue of *MINISTRY* provided a dazzling glimpse of hope and became the catalyst for me to contact the Quest Learning Center for help. Through Quest and the director, Colin Cook, the Lord is opening to me the joy of the everlasting good news about Jesus. In Him I am discovering acceptance, freedom from guilt and fear, and a new personal identity forged in grace by my Creator-Redeemer. In short, in Christ I am experiencing deliverance. I cannot express the chasmic depth of meaning this reality has for me, my family, and my ministry. I praise my Father for His mighty power to save and for His ambassadors of reconciliation such as Quest.—Name Withheld.

Article works!

I thought you would be interested in this letter I received as a follow up to my article ("You Can Do Public Evangelism!") in the April special issue. This young pastor had never conducted an evangelistic campaign. He was afraid to try it, but willing to do so using the multi-image, taped program I described in the article. Here is his letter!

"Dear Elder Digel:

"The evangelistic meetings I have been

holding will end March 27. There is a good possibility of one baptism if this person can work out Sabbath work problems. Remember him in prayer as he makes his decision to follow Jesus completely. I also hope to start a baptismal class with others who have been attending. Seven non-Adventist visitors have come every night to our meetings. Evangelism is fun!

"My wife has helped out tremendously in these meetings. She has cared for the greeting, kept attendance records, and has been treasurer and bookkeeper for the crusade. The good work she has done has given me more time to visit and prepare for the meetings. I feel, too, that working together in evangelism has strengthened our relationship. Our interests in regular church work have been different, and our paths haven't crossed as much as they have since we have been working together in evangelism. I'll be talking to the members of my other church about holding evangelistic meetings there this summer!"

It thrilled my heart to hear this young man tell of his excitement in conducting his own evangelistic meetings. I believe any pastor who tastes the sweets of public evangelism will become addicted to it.—George Digel, Columbia, Maryland.

Soul winning first

Your issue on evangelism (April, 1982) just arrived, and it hits the spot! Far too long we have talked soul winning and planned something else. We have prayed soul winning and budgeted otherwise. We have expected soul winning and trained elsewhere. We have honored soul winning with our lips while our hearts have been far from it. In this special issue we see first things first. Let's keep them there!—James A. Cress, Mount Vernon, Ohio.

Encourage, not disparage

I believe in encouraging pastors to hold their own evangelistic meetings ("You Can Do Public Evangelism!" April, 1982). In Pennsylvania there has been a very successful experience in the past three years with this very plan. But I think it is unfortunate to disparage the work of the professional evangelist in order to encourage pastoral evangelism. I believe in both with equal enthusiasm. Let's keep criticism of one group of workers, as over against others, out of the pages of *MINISTRY*.—Elden Walter, Reading, Pennsylvania.

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Ministry

A Magazine for Clergy/June 1982/Volume 55/Number 6



COVER: LUIS RAMIREZ

The Two Mind-sets/4. It is possible for two persons to observe the same kinds of evidence and reach opposite conclusions. MINISTRY Editor J. R. Spangler analyzes the reasons why and how this can happen.

Ellen White: Prophet or Plagiarist?/5. Warren H. Johns. Although dressed in different garb, the issues facing the church in the 1980s are strikingly similar to those faced in the 1800s. This special report is a fresh analysis of Ellen White's use of literary sources, culminating more than five years of research by one of MINISTRY's associate editors.

1. Closed Windows or Open Doors?/5. For the past one hundred years the church has been aware of Ellen White's literary borrowing. What is new today is not the *fact* of her borrowing, but the *extent* of the borrowing. Some have charged the church with cover-up, but how can she cover up that which she did not know?

2. Literary Thief or God's Messenger?/13. Plagiarism involves much more than the nonuse of quotation marks. The author discusses the five ingredients of literary theft.

3. Human Thoughts or Divine Truths?/16. Granted that Ellen White did use material without quotation marks more extensively than previously thought, does this make her any less inspired, any less a messenger to God's church today, and her counsels any less trustworthy than one hundred years ago?

Ministers Without Pulpits/20. Rex D. Edwards. Ministry is God's gift of service and is not confined to any particular class of Christian.

Is Jesus Jehovah God?/22. J. Reynolds Hoffman.

If Not You—Who?/25. Robert L. Dale. It is time for each of us to take seriously the responsibility that God has placed on us to share the gospel.

What's Wrong With Being a Pastor?/26. J. R. Spangler.

The Holding Pattern/28. Peg Butler.

From the Editor/26.
Shepherdess/28.
Evangelistic Supply Center/30.

Shop Talk/31.
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"I believe Ellen White was an inspired messenger who spoke for God."

"I believe Ellen White was a plagiarist who spoke for herself—and used borrowed words to do that!"

The two mind-sets

Belief is a mind-set. Unbelief is a mind-set. Negative or positive patterns of thinking or belief are produced by choice. Eve chose to believe Satan rather than God. Abel chose to believe God. Cain chose not to. Both had the same evidence, the same environment, the same culture, the same parental counsel, the same God. Yet one believed and the other disbelieved.

God does not force belief on anyone. Lucifer, in the confirming culture of heaven, chose to disbelieve. Noah, product of an iniquitous age, chose to believe—though all natural evidence denied, rather than confirmed, the possibility of a worldwide flood. His contemporaries, on the basis of the same evidence, disbelieved God and "'did not know until the flood came and swept them all away'" (Matt. 24:39, R.S.V.).*

Their spiritual descendants built a tower—this time disbelieving God's promise that no flood would again devastate the earth. Abraham believed God so unreservedly that his belief is to this day cited as an example of righteousness by faith. His leaving of his country and his offering of Isaac stand as monuments of faith for all succeeding ages.

Joseph believes; his eleven brothers do not; Moses believes, and delivers his people from Egypt, leaving as a sample of trust in adversity the expression *The waters opened before me*. But the people he led wandered forty years in the wilderness because unbelief kept them from entering the Promised Land. Caleb and Joshua, with a mind-set of belief, saw the foes to be conquered as grasshoppers; the other ten spies, with a mind-set of unbelief, saw giants blocking the way.

Unbelief often results in unreasonable and irresponsible actions. When the faithless spies gave their report, the people saw their worst fears confirmed. "Revolt and open mutiny quickly followed; for Satan

had full sway, and the people seemed bereft of reason."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 389. Belief, on the contrary, leads to reasonable and responsible actions.

Another memorable example is the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, who led 250 leaders of the congregation in opposition to Moses and Aaron. Unbelief has a way of undermining confidence in God and His leaders. Though the censers of the rebels were hammered into an altar covering to remind the people of the high cost of rebellion, the *very next day* the congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying, "'You have killed the people of the Lord'" (Num. 16:41, R.S.V.).

Because of his unbelief, Samson came to the place where he did not realize that God had departed from him. The Scriptures often emphasize the penalty of unbelief. King Saul's unbelief led to suicide.

The mechanics of unbelief are vividly portrayed in people's attitudes toward the claims of the Messiah. People had a certain perception of how He would come, of how He would look, of how He would act, of how He would speak. Isaiah 53 suggests that many would disbelieve because the reality did not correspond to their perceptions. Before judging them too harshly, put yourself in their place.

Someone rushes up to you and cries, "The Messiah has come!" What would be your response?

"Really? Where is He? How did He come? What does He look like?"

And the answer comes: "He was born in Bethlehem."

"Born? Born! What do you mean, *born*? The Messiah is not a man to be born as we were. This is ridiculous! But while we're indulging your fancy, perhaps you'd like to tell me *where* He was born."

"In a barn."

"This is preposterous! First you tell me He was born, and now you tell me it was in a barn. But let's continue this exercise in creative fiction: Who were His parents?"

"Well, His mother was Mary, and . . . well, He had no earthly father."

And so it goes, the story becoming increasingly fantastic. Reality didn't conform to perception. Not only was He born as any human body, not only was He born in a barn, but He grew up in an infamous place called Nazareth. He worked as a common laborer in His father's carpenter shop for thirty years. Put these ingredients together and you come up with a story that no truly knowledgeable person could be expected to believe.

But that isn't all. We are expected to believe that this "Messiah" ended up ignominiously on a Roman cross. Everything about Jesus—His person, His dress, His background, His home, His possessions (or lack of them), His relatives, His associates (many of them the scum of the earth: whores, tax collectors, uneducated and uncultured fishermen, whom He wanted to save), His attacks on the religious system, His undermining of the customs of the community, and finally His trial and death as a common criminal—add up to the most unbelievable story in history.

Of course, there were also evidences of His deity—multiplying loaves of bread and a few fishes into a banquet for thousands; healings, and even rumors of people raised from the dead. But with these came more of the seemingly nonsensical. Can you imagine His telling the Jews that they must eat His flesh and drink His blood as prerequisites to His abiding in them? When He got to this place in His sermon, probably most of His audience got up and walked out. Only the twelve stayed around. And Judas was there henceforth only in body, his mind now possessed by doubts that were to make his name infamous.

Jesus turned to the twelve and asked, "Do you also wish to go away?" And Peter answered, "'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God'" (John 6:67-69, R.S.V.).

Who was Ellen White? An inspired messenger who spoke for God, as she claimed? A plagiarist? A deceiver, or perhaps herself deceived?

Belief is a mind-set. Unbelief is a mind-set. Each is produced by choice. And while unbelief is often characterized by unreasonableness, belief too may seem incredible—that which cannot be credited.

I believe Ellen White was an inspired messenger who spoke for God.

Certainly, the Bible itself confirms the perpetuity of the spiritual gifts, among them the gift of prophecy.

But beyond that is experience.

If I were to evaluate Ellen White on the basis of her looks and education—or her use of sources, failure to give credit, statements that seem to be out of harmony with present-day historical and/or scientific knowledge—or the way some individ-

J. R. Spangler

uals, including church leaders, have used her writings as a club or a "final word" for certain points they want to prove and to promote to the exclusion of other points to which they pay no attention; if I were to make my evaluation on the basis of the claims some have made for her writings or herself, setting her on a pedestal of perfection, I would cry out, I cannot believe! I will not believe!

But I have had an experience with Ellen White's works. I know what it means to read the *Testimonies* and feel the conviction of the Holy Spirit that this testimony was written for me, causing me to kneel in submission for the reproval and the approval of the Holy Spirit. I know what it means to see Jesus so vibrant, so real, so living in *The Desire of Ages* that tears of joy and thanksgiving stream down my cheeks. I know what it means to read the closing chapters of *The Great Controversy*, fall on my knees, and like Thomas of old grasp the feet of Jesus and cry out, "My Lord and my God!" Because of the pointed testimony of Jesus through her books I am a better husband, a better father, a better minister. Through the gift of prophecy I have received insights and principles that have made me a more successful evangelist and minister than I would otherwise have been.

I'm not exactly the personification of an ad for healthy living, but there's little doubt in my mind that I would be less vital—and in all likelihood, interred in an early grave—if it were not for God's instructions through Ellen White on health principles. And while I do not hold her writings to be equal in authority with the Bible (although inspired in the fullest sense of the word by the same Holy Spirit), I certainly hold them to be of more authority than my family doctor seeks to exercise on me!

I am a Bible preacher. It is my authority. But in presenting the Word, I have been indebted to Ellen White for language far richer than I would otherwise use (and, I confess, I have not always credited her—or others—as my source!). I have found her writings stimulating, leading me to richer and deeper conceptions of the conflict between God and Satan and the place of the cross in reconciling not only man but God's whole creation to His leadership.

After he had read a number of Ellen White's books while researching the charges of plagiarism made against her, Roman Catholic attorney Ramik said: "I, personally, have been moved, deeply moved, by those writings. I have been changed by them. I think I am a better man today because of them. And I wish that the critics could discover that!"—*Adventist Review*, Sept. 17, 1981.

I too will never be the same man again because of this gift!

Ellen White: prophet or plagiarist?

An associate editor of *MINISTRY* summarizes the results of several years' research. This careful and candid look at the way Ellen White used literary sources explores the implications for her inspiration, the trustworthiness of her writings, and the attitude of the church toward the Spirit of Prophecy in general. The conclusion is perhaps best expressed in her own words: "No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation."

Warren H. Johns

1 Closed windows or open doors?

A boy who appears to be 10 or 12 years of age is sprawled out on the rug in front of the fireplace. His father, after a hard day at the office, is relaxing on the sofa while soaking up the warmth of the fire. His mother is reading to the family from a fascinating account of the Protestant Reformation, D'Aubigné's *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*. Young Willie enjoys hearing her read portions of

the five-volume set for family worship, and we today are intrigued too as we view through the uneven nineteenth-century windowpanes the activities of this Adventist family during the long evenings of a Michigan winter.

Another window opens, this time an office window attached to a brick building in the heart of a frontier town that is later to become the birthplace of the breakfast-cereal industry. Again we see the same mother, who is both housewife and writer, sitting at a table in a second-story room

* From the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1946, 1952, © 1971, 1973.

Warren H. Johns is an associate editor of *MINISTRY*.

designated as the library, books piled beside her. She is doing both reading and writing. Her husband sometimes joins her because he is both a writer and a church leader. On occasion we see the editor of the church's leading journal, the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, who often signs his articles with an unassuming "U. S.," bringing her a stack of journals that he no longer needs. She seems to be very pleased.

Years later a third window opens before us, this time the window of a railroad car. The publishing arm of this fledgling church is extending westward, as far as the Pacific Ocean. This busy mother, now middle-aged, needs to make every moment count amid her heavy writing schedule of books, articles, and correspondence. She is pausing beside a concession stand, where, among many things, are some newspapers and used books for sale. One of the books has a captivating title—*The Abominations of Modern Society*—so she purchases it. It may come in useful at a later date for her writing.

It may be surprising to some, but these are authentic portrayals of the activities of Ellen G. White, whose writings have been, and always will be, highly esteemed by Seventh-day Adventists. The first two windows have been opened to us by her own son, W. C. White, who described how his mother enjoyed reading D'Aubigné to his father and how the two of them were granted a special room in the Review and Herald library by Uriah Smith ("U. S.") for their research and writing (W. C. White letter to L. E. Froom, Dec. 13, 1934, recently printed in *Selected Messages*, book 3, pages 462, 463). The third window has come to view upon a closer examination of Ellen White's own library. DeWitt Talmadge's book *The Abominations of Modern Society* has the following words penned on the flyleaf below the characteristic signature of Ellen G. White: "Purchased on the cars coming from Omaha to Oakland."

The view of Ellen White that is now coming into focus is that she was much more widely read than even her own family realized, and that she utilized material from outside sources for her writings on a much more extensive basis than the church has been aware. In 1934 W. C. White, writing to L. E. Froom, made the statement: "Ellen White was a rapid reader and had a very retentive memory" (*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 462). In a previous letter to L. E. Froom he provides one of the best summaries available on Ellen White's reading habits: "You ask regarding the reading habits of my Mother. Sister White was a very industrious woman, and when not engaged to the full extent of her strength in traveling, or speaking, or in writing testimonies and books, she spent a portion of her time in reading and in study. Of course the Bible came first. After that such books as D'Aubigné's *History of the Reformation*, Martyn's *History of the Refor-*

mation, and later she read a little in Wylie, but not much. She also read various books on the life of Christ—Fleetwood's, Farrar's, Geikie's, Lightfoot's, and Andrew's [no doubt, Samuel Andrews], and later she read from Hanna; but I do not think she ever read Edersheim. She had in her library and occasionally read from Conybeare and Howson's life of Paul, and Farrar's life of Paul. She also read from the best religious papers. How did she get them? She used to ask the editors of the *Review* and [the] *Signs* to pass over to her their exchanges, when they were done with them; and for years when she was in middle age and vigorous she would read an hour or two each day after completing a good day's work in writing. As a result of this reading she found many precious articles, which she recommended for publication in the *Review*; more often she found good things to read to the family. Furthermore she cut out hundreds of articles and pasted them into scrapbooks, thinking they would be useful in days to come."—W. C. White letter to L. E. Froom, Feb. 14, 1926, GC Archives. Today we know that Ellen White did use Edersheim's book *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, as well as the other books mentioned by W. C. White.

How extensively did Ellen White utilize books and articles for her research and writing? The answer is that at the present time we do not know. The following is a progress report of the work being done in the search for literary source materials. My part began in 1975-1976 when I was doing research on possible source materials for Ellen White's statements on the cause of earthquakes and volcanoes, which was published as a two-part series in *MINISTRY* (W. H. Johns, "Ellen G. White and Subterranean Fires," *MINISTRY*, August, October, 1977). The Ellen G. White Estate is currently carrying on research into the questions related to literary borrowing, and some of the material in this report should be duly credited to the findings of the White Estate (lest I be charged with plagiarizing!). In addition, Dr. Fred Veltman is under a special, two-year assignment by the General Conference to study literary sources in *The Desire of Ages*.

What we do know is that Ellen White made use of contemporary sources in her published and unpublished writings, and that sometimes she used material nearly word for word without giving credit.

Just to give the reader a window on my personal convictions, in view of our findings, I believe that Ellen White's writings are fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, and I reject the concept of degrees of inspiration. Some may be tempted to suggest that the portions of her writings that were "borrowed" or derived from prior sources are less inspired than the portions that are original, or underived. However, such a concept is untenable in view of the fact that we also find examples of literary sources used in Scripture. The Gospel of Luke is almost entirely taken from other sources (see Luke 1:1-4); does that mean that Luke is less inspired than Matthew, Mark, or John? Inspiration does not hinge upon originality, nor does the discovery of prior literary sources in an inspired document make it less inspired.

Examples of literary parallels between the writings of Ellen White and other authors can be found in subjects as diverse as the long-suffering of Christ, the importance of little things, and the relationship of preexisting matter to God's work of creating (see Figures 1, 2, and 3). (The parallels I have found are not always as striking as these three. Very often Ellen White paraphrases the words of the other author, or even restates in her own words thoughts and expressions found in other works.) The examples given here of literary parallels are arranged in couplet form, rather than as parallel columns. The upper portion of the couplet is the prior source which Ellen White apparently used; the lower portion is the Ellen G. White parallel. In all cases, the publication date of the prior source predates Ellen White's first statement on the subject; thus we cannot suggest that the other author obtained his information from Ellen White.

It may be tempting to conjecture that all such parallels are coincidental, but one would have to explain how not only the sentence order but also the very word order has sometimes been preserved. The only way to explain such parallels on the basis that Ellen White did absolutely no reading in these prior works is to suggest that God through the Holy Spirit dictated the very words she was to put down on paper. Seventh-day Adventists have consistently rejected the verbal-dictation theory of inspiration. If the very words had been dictated to Ellen White, then she would not have needed the assistance of her

Ellen White was much more widely read than even her own family realized, and she utilized material from outside sources for her writings on a much more extensive basis than the church has been aware.

husband and later her literary assistants to improve the grammar, sentence structure, and clarity of what she was writing.

In my research I have had access to some of the very books once owned and utilized by Ellen White. An examination of her copy of John Harris' *The Great Teacher*, containing her penned signature on the title page, indicates that this book was obviously often used, and now we know of dozens of literary parallels with Harris. Her copy of Henry Melvill's *Sermons* (1844 edition) shows evidence of frequent use—the pages being folded in half, the corner of pages being folded diagonally, and ink marks on several of the pages. A typical parallel from Melvill is exhibited in Figure 4. Ellen White never underlined in any of her books, but on occasion she marked with vertical pen strokes or with "X's" the margins next to some favored quote or gem of thought. It was a set of vertical pen strokes that led us to find parallels between Melvill's statement on the "oracles of God" and similar statements in Ellen White's writings (Figure 5). Interestingly, a copy of the handwritten original for this set of parallels was published just prior to our discovery (Robert W. Olson, *One Hundred and One Questions on the Sanctuary and on Ellen White* [1981], p. 90). The more we examine the library books once held by Ellen White, the more we are finding examples of the ways in which she used them and the extent of their use.

Ellen White did use her library more extensively than has been realized heretofore. Although percentages can be misleading and be misused, they are still a valid means of evaluation. F. D. Nichol, in his book *Ellen G. White and her Critics* (1951), pages 422-425, concludes that 11 percent of *Sketches From the Life of Paul* has been derived from two sources—7 percent from Conybeare and Howson's *Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul*, and 4 percent from F. W. Farrar's *The Life and Work of St. Paul*. Nichol also states that the amount of material paraphrased in *The Great Controversy* (1884 ed.), from J. N. Andrews' *History of the Sabbath*, is equivalent to less than 1 percent of the entire book (*ibid.*, p. 421). Raymond S. Cottrell was commissioned by the White Estate to do a preliminary survey of the relationship between William Hanna's *Life of Our Lord* and certain chapters in *The Desire of Ages*. Of the chapters surveyed, he found that approximately 3 percent was from William Hanna.

More recently, we have found higher percentages of borrowed material. Roughly 20 percent of the chapter "Science and the Bible" in *Education* can be traced to prior sources. Approximately 40 percent of two articles each in the *Review and Herald* (July 18, 1882; July 5, 1887) can be identified as coming from two chapters in Melvill's *Sermons*. It is interesting that one article, "The First Prophecy," has the same title as the Melvill sermon, and both begin with

Figure 1

A comparison of J. R. Miller's *Week-day Religion*, page 187, with E. G. White's *The Desire of Ages*, page 353. In this, and subsequent examples throughout this presentation, the literary parallels are arranged in couplets rather than parallel columns. The upper portion of each couplet is the prior source from which Ellen White drew; the lower portion is the E. G. White parallel. In all cases, the publication date of the source used by Ellen White predates her first statement on the subject. Thus we cannot suggest that the author obtained his information from her.

"He	never suppressed the	truth, but he
"Christ Himself did not suppress one word of truth, but He		
uttered it always in love." *	"Our Lord himself exercised the most	
spoke	it always in love.	He exercised the
beautiful and thoughtful tact		
	greatest tact, and thoughtful, kind attention	
in all his mingling	among the people. He was utterly	
in His intercourse with	the people. He was	
incapable of rudeness. He never needlessly spoke a harsh		
	never rude,	never needlessly spoke a severe
word. He never gave needless pain to a sensitive heart. He		
word,	never gave needless pain to a sensitive	soul. He
was most considerate of human weakness. . . . Every scrap of		
did not censure	human weakness. . . . Every soul	
humanity was sacred and precious in his eyes."—J. R. Miller (1880).		
	was precious in His eyes."—E. G. White (1898).	

* This sentence has been transposed from its original sequence in order to demonstrate the parallel.

Figure 2

A comparison of Daniel March's *Our Father's House*, page 191, with E. G. White's *Testimonies*, volume 4, page 543.

"Depend upon it, my friend, it is minute and conscientious	
	"It is the conscientious
attention to what the world calls little things that makes the	
attention to what the world calls little things that makes the	
great beauty and success of life. Little deeds of charity,	
great beauty and success of life. Little deeds of charity,	
little words of kindness, little acts of self-denial,	
little words of kindness, little acts of self-denial,	
little moments of diligence; a careful watch against little	
	(No Ellen White parallel here.)

the same scriptural text, Genesis 3:15.

Personal testimonies and letters have examples of borrowed material. A testimony dated June 20, 1882, and written to the Battle Creek members (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 62-84) has 31.5 percent of its material in common with portions of two books, Daniel March's *Night Scenes in the Bible* (c. 1868), and F. W. Krummacher's *Elijah the Tishbite* (1838). I have also determined that 42 percent of Manuscript 24, 1886 (*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 19-21), was obtained from Calvin E. Stowe's *Origin and History of the Books of the Bible* (1867), pages 13-20, based upon an actual count of parallel words and synonyms in Stowe. Unpublished letters also have examples of literary parallels. More than half of Letter 19e, 1892, has been adapted from a chapter in J. C. Geikie's *The Precious Promises* (pp. 47-52), which was in her personal library.

The above percentages apply only to small portions of her writings, and thus should not be extrapolated to cover all that she wrote. At this point it would be premature even to surmise how much of the inspired writings can be traced to prior sources. With every new discovery the percentage of parallel material rises. Whether the final figure for the extent of overall borrowing be 5 percent or 50 percent, 8 percent or even 80 percent, we never need back off one iota from our firm position that the writings of Ellen White are fully inspired, for inspiration involves the Holy Spirit's guidance in locating the right literary sources just as much as it does the transmitting of ideas.

Although she lacked the usual formal education, Ellen White read widely, through continued practice and self-discipline. God does not supernaturally endow an individual with qualities or skills that are within his capability of achieving through hard work coupled with divine power. Although she was a skilled reader, she always felt her lack of ability in the matter of writing (see *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 90)—one reason she felt impelled to turn to outside literary sources. The literary beauty of her writings should not be used as evidence of divine inspiration; some of the beautiful gems of thought can be traced to prior sources. Writes Ellen White: "Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 327. Wrote John Harris, in *The Great Commission* (1854 ed.), page 103, "Not more certainly is the throne of every believer prepared in heaven, than his appropriate place is prescribed on earth."

"The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 470; "A life of disinterested love is an argument they cannot gainsay."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 142. T. L. Cuyler wrote in *Heart Life*,

sins, a grateful use of little blessings, a wise improvement

a wise improvement

of little opportunities, a diligent cultivation of little

of little opportunities, a diligent cultivation of little

talents, patient continuance in well-doing under little

talents,

encouragement,—these things make men great in the sight of

make great men in God's sight.

God; if these things be

If those little things be faithfully attended to, if

in you and abound, they will bring the knowl-

these graces be in you, and abound, they will make you perfect

edge and enjoyment of everything else."—Daniel March (1871).

in every good work."—E. G. White (1881).

Figure 3

A comparison of Henry Venn's *The Complete Duty of Man*, pages 31, 32, with E. G. White's Manuscript 127, 1897.

"He was not beholden to pre-existent matter in the formation

"In the formation of our world, God was not beholden to

of the world; for 'the things which are

pre-existent substance or matter 'for the things which are

seen were not made of the things which do appear.' On the

seen were not made of the things which do appear.' On the

contrary, all things, whether of a material or spiritual

contrary, all things, material or spiritual,

nature, stood up before the mighty God at his call, and

stood up before the Lord Jehovah at His voice, and

were created at his pleasure. The heavens, and all the

were created for His own purpose. The heavens and all the

hosts of them; the earth, and all things which are therein, are

host of them, the earth and all things that are therein, are

not only the work of his hands, but 'by the word of the Lord

not only the work of His hand, they came into existence

were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath

by the breath

of his mouth.'"—Henry Venn (1838).

of His mouth."—E. G. White (1897).

page 69, "A living, lovable Christian is the most powerful argument for the Gospel. No infidel ever yet refuted that."

"God knows better than you what is good and essential for His children. He never leads them otherwise than they would wish Him to lead them if they were able to see as clearly as He does their necessities."—Ellen G. White diary, Nov. 21, 1890; cf. *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 224, 225; *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 479; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 578. Wrote F. W. Krummacker, in *Elijah the Tishbite*, page 20, 21: "God . . . knows exactly and much better than we do, what is good and necessary for his children; and, in truth, he never leads them otherwise than they would wish him to lead them, if they were able to see as clearly into their hearts and necessities as he does."

Whereas Bickersteth writes concerning prayer, "It is a key to open the storehouse of all God's Treasury to us; . . . so by prayer we obtain all the blessings which we require," I am much more enamored by Ellen White's rendition of the same thought: "Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence."—Edward Bickersteth, *A Treatise on Prayer* (1834), p. 12; *Steps to Christ*, pp. 94, 95.

The extent of Ellen White's reading can be judged by the size of her library. Actually she had three libraries—an office library to which her literary assistants had access, a personal library, and a library of 572 titles sold to her by C. C. Crisler in 1913. When she died in 1915, an inventory was made of all the items in her possession, including her books. Bibliographic work is being done on the inventory lists, and a preliminary count indicates that Ellen White had more than eleven hundred books by non-Seventh-day Adventist authors in her three libraries, excluding Bibles and hymnals. More than eight hundred are no longer to be found in the White Estate collection. Work has just begun on determining how many of the books may have been read and used by Ellen White. We have a list of approximately seventy-five books, not all of which appear on the inventory lists, that we are fairly confident Ellen White may have used or read. One example is Bickersteth's *A Treatise on Prayer*, which provides much of the wording that appears in *Steps to Christ* in the chapter entitled "The Privilege of Prayer." Scores of books on the inventory lists are obviously ones that Ellen White would not have used in her spiritual writing, for example, Mayhew's *Book-keeping*, a Greek grammar, and a book on trigonometry. Of course, her inventory lists would not include books in the Review and Herald or J. N. Andrews libraries, to which she had access, so it is very likely that we will never know exactly how many books Ellen White may have read during her lifetime. But is it really

Figure 4

A comparison of Henry Melvill's *Sermons*, pages 175, 176, with E. G. White's *Testimonies*, volume 7, page 226. (Similar statements appear in *Counsels on Stewardship*, pages 162, 163 and *Welfare Ministry*, pages 169, 170.)

"Never does this Gospel put on an aspect of greater
 "Never does the gospel put on an aspect of greater
 loveliness, than when it addresses itself to the outcast and
 loveliness than when it is brought to the most needy and
 the destitute . . . But then it is that the Gospel appears
 destitute regions. Then it is that its light shines forth
 under its most radiant form,
 with the clearest radiance and the greatest power. Truth from
 when it enters the hovel of the peasant,
 the word of God enters the hovel of the peasant; rays from the
 and lights up that hovel
 Sun of righteousness light up the rude cottage of the poor,
 with gladness, and fans the cheek of the sick man with
 bringing gladness to the sick and
 angels' wings,
 suffering. Angels of God are there, and the simple faith
 and causes the crust of bread and the cruse of water to be
 shown makes the crust of bread and the cup of water
 received as a banquet of luxury, . . . that he whom his
 a banquet. . . . Those who
 fellow-men have loathed and abandoned,
 have been loathed and abandoned are through faith
 rises into the dignity of a being whom the Almighty
 and pardon raised to the dignity of sons and daughters of God.
 delighted to honor . . . But he is lifted above the world, and
 Lifted above the world,
 sits in heavenly places with Christ: he has none of the
 they sit in heavenly places in Christ. They may have no
 treasures of the earth, but the pearl of great
 earthly treasure, but they have found the pearl of great
 price he hath made his own."—Henry Melvill (1844).
 price."—E. G. White (1902).

One question that must be dealt with is this: Why has not this matter of Ellen White's literary research been better known, especially in view of the fact that we have had available several hundred of her library books for study? In pursuing an answer to this question, I have had the opportunity recently to examine the files in both the White Estate and the General Conference Archives pertaining to the charges of plagiarism (a topic to be discussed later in this presentation). I have quickly discovered that very little has been known about Ellen White's use of sources during the past one hundred years. The first clear-cut examples of literary parallels were published in the *Healdsburg Enterprise*, March 13, 20, 1889, as a result of a debate arranged by Dudley M. Canright with some of the church's spokesmen at Healdsburg, California. Parallel columns were published, showing the use of material without quotation marks from five sources. As of 1915, only eight source books had been identified as used by Ellen White in her research and writing, other than those to which she gave credit, as in *The Great Controversy*. As of 1976, a total of twenty-five sourcebooks had been mentioned in print or in the correspondence involving church leaders over a ninety-

Figure 5.

An illustration of the literary development of a single source. (a) Henry Melvill, *Sermons* (1844), volume 1, page 161 (note Ellen White's ink marks in right margin); (b) Ellen White's handwritten Manuscript 30a, 1896, showing her adaptation of Melvill; (c) a modern transcription of the above manuscript, demonstrating the kind of work done by her literary assistants. The published form appears on page 134 of *In Heavenly Places*. Compare *Christian Service*, pages 162, 163, and *Welfare Ministry*, pages 169, 170.

a

acles of God." I may here refer for a moment to its charitable cause for which I am elected to ask your support. It must be sufficient to remind you, intrusted as you are with the Bible, that there are hundreds of children in this town requiring to be educated in the principles of the Bible, and you will contribute liberally towards upholding the schools which now make their usual appeal to your bounty. There have been times when it was necessary to debate and demonstrate the duty of providing instruction for the children of the poor. Such times are gone. We are now no choice. He were as wise as a man who should think to roll back the Atlantic, as he who would stay the rising tide of intelligence which is passing through the land. You cannot, you would. And I do not believe

We have not only, in conclusion, to express an earnest hope that we may all learn, from the subject discussed, to set a higher value than ever on the Scriptures. Do we receive the Bible as "the oracles of God?" The Bible is as actually a divine communication as though its words came to us in the voice of the Almighty, mysteriously syllabled, and breathed from the firmament. What awe, what reverence, what prostration of soul, would attend the persuasion that such is the Bible; so that opening it is like entering the hallowed haunt of Deity, whence unearthly lips will breathe oracular responses. There needs nothing but an abiding conviction that Scripture remains what it was at the first, the word of the living God—not merely a written thing, but a spoken; as much a message now as when originally delivered—and the volume will be perused, as it ought to be, in humility, yet in hope, with prayer, and when God is

b

has moved his and servants of our, man, there is the great danger of being over and out the road. I asked do we receive the Bible as the Word of God, the Bible is God's Word to us as much as though we could hear every his Word if we only knew the inwardness of the Word, with Faith and we could we open our Bibles with bold earnest consideration would we have the opening of the Scriptures would be regarded as an audience with the most glorious the Word of the Living God and must somehow enter therein. If we do not eat the Word of God and only read the Word we must convert ourselves in the Word is a message to us the alleged a volume to be perused as other deligently in a discretion and spirit not simply to live in the Word with our own learning upon whom the end of the Word is and then is it in your principle do you are your Words true and

excuse for ^{any one} remaining in a cold lifeless state spiritually. Christ has warned ^{us} to be not servants of men, ^{but} ~~men~~ There is ~~the great~~ danger ^{that we will} of serving men ^{instead of} and ~~not~~ the Lord Jesus. I asked ^{Do we} receive the Bible as the ~~Oracles~~ of God? ^{The Bible is God's voice speaking} to us ^{just surely} as though ^{we} we could hear ^{every} ~~his word~~ ^{Nim with our ears.} If we ^{realized} ~~only know~~ the importance ^a of ^{this} the Word, with what awe would we open ^{it} ~~our Bibles~~ and with what earnest ^{ness} ~~consideration~~ ^{search its precepts.} would we ^{reading and contemplating} have the opening ^{of the Scriptures} would be regarded as an audience with the Most High. The Word of the living God is not merely ~~something written~~, but spoken. If we do not ~~eat the~~ ^{eat} ~~word~~ ^{Word} of God and we live by that Word we need converting. ^{God's} For it is ~~for the~~ Word is a message to us to be obeyed, ^{and with} a volume to be perused ~~as if~~ diligently ^{in a disposition} and spirit yet ^{willing} to take in the truths written for ^{the admonition of those} ~~our~~ ^{are} learning upon whom the end of the world ^{is} come. [↑]

year period, but in the few years since 1976 we have tripled the number of known literary sources she used.

The reasons the church heretofore has possessed only minimal knowledge of the literary sources used by Ellen White is the difficulty of locating parallels. I estimate that it will take a minimum of five thousand hours to go through Ellen White's present library just to determine what books she may or may not have read. Who has five thousand hours for this? When charges of plagiarism were being hurled from the pages of Ballenger's *Gathering Call*, in 1932 and 1933, a member of the White Estate, D. E. Robinson, spent a total of four or five hours comparing Conybeare and Howson's work with Ellen White's *Sketches From the Life of Paul* (D. E. Robinson letter to L. E. Froom, March 14, 1933). He left more than 1,100 other books untouched in his research.

The amount of time and effort required for this type of research is best illustrated in the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls. In one of the caves the mice, over the centuries, had shredded the scrolls into thousands of small pieces in their efforts to eat the glue that the ancient scribes had used for the backing sheets of the leather scrolls. A team of scholars has spent more than thirty years attempting to reassemble these mice-decimated scrolls, as well as the many other scrolls, such as the copper scroll, preparatory to publishing their findings, and they still have much work remaining.

I would suggest that in most cases to find one literary parallel is comparable to putting into its proper place one mice-shredded fragment of the Dead Sea scrolls! This explains why our knowledge of what may have taken place in Ellen White's study, or on the train or boat, has been scanty until recent times.

We find, however, that the windows to Ellen White's research have never been closed and the blinds have not been drawn; nor has the door to the room where she did her writing been closed and locked from the inside. The door has always been open, and through this open door we see the silhouette of a woman who must have been a diligent researcher, who investigated her sources meticulously and used them judiciously and effectively, a woman fully imbued by God's Spirit, and a woman who has left from her prolific pen a treasure of inestimable worth to the church, far excelling the hundreds of millions of dollars the church's property is worth today. Have not the continued counsels from the pen of Ellen White made possible the building of churches and institutions, and thus should not the counsels be worth more than the buildings and institutions whose foundations are rooted in those counsels? I feel that the discovery of literary parallels cannot devalue that which has been proved to be of untold value spiritually in the lives of millions.

Figure 6.

A comparison of F. W. Krummacher's *Elijah the Tishbite*, pages 20, 21, with E. G. White's *Diary* 16, Nov. 21, 1890.

“The *why* and the *wherefore* are

“My guide said . . . the whys and the wherefores are often
concealed from us . . . *

concealed from you and yet speak the words I shall give you.

the ways by which God leads us are generally mysterious*

. . . The ways God leads His people are generally mysterious.

. . . God . . . knows exactly, and much better than we do, what

. . . God knows better than you what

is good and necessary for his children; and, in truth, he never

is good and essential for His children. He never

leads them otherwise than they would wish him to lead them, if

leads them otherwise than they would wish Him to lead them if

they were able to see as clearly into their hearts and

they were able to see as clearly

necessities as he does.”—F. W. Krummacher

as He does their necessities.”—E. G. White (1882).

* These phrases from Krummacher's work have been transposed from their original sequence in order to demonstrate the parallels.

Figure 7

A comparison of F. W. Krummacher's *Elijah the Tishbite*, page 221, with E. G. White's *Testimonies*, volume 5, page 76.

“Brethren, who knows what our own churches have still to

“But few know what our churches are to

experience? We are at present evidently under divine

experience. I saw that at present we are under divine

forbearance; can any one of us say how long it will last? It

forbearance, but no one can say how long this will continue.

cannot be expressed how much mercy has already been

No one knows how great the mercy that has been

expended upon us. Yet how many . . . are heartily devoted

exercised toward us. But few are heartily devoted

to his service.”—F. W. Krummacher (1840s).

to God.”—E. G. White (1882).

Has there been a great cover-up?

Attention has been brought periodically through the years to the fact that Ellen White used materials found in other works in her writings. This table gives the history of the first written or published records of borrowing as known at this time.

Date	Literary Source Used	Reference
1887	D'Aubigné, <i>History of the Reformation</i> (GC)	Canright, cited in F. D. Nichol, <i>Ellen G. White and Her Critics</i> , p. 417
1889	Wylie, <i>History of the Waldenses</i> (GC)	Canright, <i>Healdsburg Enterprise</i> , March 20, 1889
1889	Smith, <i>The Sanctuary</i> (GC)	<i>Ibid.</i>
1889	White, <i>Life of William Miller</i> (GC)	<i>Ibid.</i>
1889	Andrews, <i>History of the Sabbath</i> (GC)	<i>Ibid.</i>
1889	Smith, <i>Thoughts on Revelation</i> (GC)	Canright, <i>Seventh-day Adventism Renounced</i> , p. 139
1907	Conybeare and Howson, <i>Life and Epistles of St. Paul</i> (LP)	Charles Stewart, letter to W. C. White, May 8, 1907
1907	Coles, <i>Philosophy of Health</i> (2T and unpub. test.)	Charles Stewart, letter to W. C. White, May 8, 1907
1919	Pollok, <i>Course of Time</i> (GC)	Canright, <i>Life of Mrs. E. G. White</i> , p. 199
1919	Farrar, <i>The Life of Christ</i> (DA)	A. G. Daniells, at 1919 Bible and History Teachers' Meeting, unpublished minutes
1919	Hanna, <i>Life of Our Lord</i> (DA)	<i>Ibid.</i>
1919	Edersheim, <i>Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah</i> (DA)	<i>Ibid.</i>
1921	Martyn, <i>The Great Reformation</i> (GC)	Mrs. E. W. Farnsworth, letter Dec. 1, 1921 (in behalf of W. C. White)
1921	Farrar, <i>The Life and Work of St. Paul</i> (LP)	<i>Ibid.</i>
1926	Fleetwood, <i>Life of Christ</i> (DA)	W. C. White, letter to L. E. Froom, Feb. 14, 1926 cf. 3SM 459)
1926	Geikie, <i>The Life and Words of Christ</i> (DA)	<i>Ibid.</i>
1926	Andrews, <i>The Life of Our Lord Upon the Earth</i> (DA)	<i>Ibid.</i>
1930	Krummacher, <i>Elijah the Tishbite</i> (5T)	W. C. White, letter to L. A. Wilcox, Feb. 28, 1930
1932	Clarke, <i>Commentary</i> (PP)	E. S. Ballenger, <i>The Gathering Call</i> , Sept., 1932
1933	Josephus, <i>The Works of Flavius Josephus</i> (GC)	E. S. Ballenger, <i>The Gathering Call</i> , March-April, 1933
1940s 1950s	March, <i>Night Scenes in the Bible</i> (DA and PP)	W. E. Read, undated document, White Estate drawer file
1965	Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> (Ed.)	A. L. White, N.A. Academy Principals' Council, June 27, 1965
1965	Edersheim, <i>Elisha the Prophet</i> (PK)	Walter Rea, <i>Claremont Dialogue</i> , vol. 2, no. 2, p. 32
1971	Stowe, <i>Origin & History of the Bible</i> (1SM)	W. S. Peterson, <i>Spectrum</i> , vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 79-81
1976	Mann, <i>Life and Works</i> , vol. 5 (How to Live; 3T; 4T; Health Reformer; CTBH)	Ronald Numbers, <i>Propheticess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White</i>
1976	Cole, <i>Philosophy of Health</i> (3T; 4T; 4SG; CTBH)	<i>Ibid.</i>

2

Literary thief or God's messenger?

The year was 1887; the date, October 8. The yellows, oranges, and reds of the hickories, maples, and sumacs were at the height of their fall beauty when an article rolled off the presses of the *Michigan Christian Advocate* that must have tainted nature's glory that day, for it was intended to rob an inspired writer of her inspiration.

Ellen White had returned to the States from a two-year stay in Europe less than two months earlier, and now she was greeted with the first public accusation of an unacknowledged use of other sources. The person behind the questioning, Dudley M. Canright, had turned in his ministerial credentials eight months earlier. In that October 8 article, he wrote: "She often copies, without credit or sign of quotation, whole sentences and even paragraphs, almost word for word, from other authors. (Compare 'Great Controversy,' page 96, with 'History of the Reformation,' by D'Aubigne, page 41.) This she does page after page. Was D'Aubigne also inspired?"—Quoted in F. D. Nichol, *Ellen G. White and Her Critics*, p. 417. This was the first direct attempt, albeit somewhat covert, to deny Ellen White's inspiration on the basis of her literary borrowing.

Two years later, Canright published a series of tracts, "Adventism Refuted in a Nutshell," in which he made full-fledged charges of plagiarism: "A large share of her last book, 'Great Controversy,' she has copied from other authors, without credit in any way, or anything to indicate that she got it from others. She and her people claim that it was revealed to her by the Lord, but facts show that she took it from others. Webster says: 'Plagiarism: a thief in literature; one who purloins another's writings, and offers them to the public as his own.' According to this she is a literary thief."—Tract No. 4, "Mrs. White and Her Visions," 1889, p. 4.

These charges of plagiarism surfaced briefly in 1907 in connection with the Kellogg defection, but it was not until the

1930s that they were revitalized and pressed with renewed vigor in the pages of the *Gathering Call*, published bimonthly by E. S. Ballenger, a former Seventh-day Adventist pastor. In recent times the charges have reappeared (see *Newsweek*, Jan. 19, 1981). It is interesting that approximately fifty years elapsed between the first accusations of plagiarism made by Canright and those of Ballenger, and now another fifty years have gone by since Ballenger's attacks—just enough time for one generation to die and a new one to appear! While it is true that to free an individual of the charge of plagiarism does not automatically make that person a prophet, it is also true that a person's prophetic office would stand in serious jeopardy if he were found to be a plagiarist.

Recently a Roman Catholic attorney, Vincent L. Ramik, who specializes in copyright law, rendered his 27-page opinion on Ellen White's use of sources. Asked to do his research by the office of the General Counsel (General Conference), Ramik and his associates reached the unequivocal conclusion: "Based upon our review of the facts and legal precedents . . . Ellen White was not a plagiarist, and her works did not constitute copyright infringement/piracy."—*Adventist Review*, Sept. 17, 1981, p. 3.

From my own analysis of the 27-page report, I find that the legal definition of plagiarism or literary piracy is composed of five essentials:

1. Motive: Was there any intent to deceive?
2. Extent or scope: Did the author rely heavily upon a single source?
3. Style: Did the author make only "colorable alterations"?
4. Content: Has the theme, framework, or structure of a prior work been taken over?
5. Infringement: Have the profits resulting from the sale of the older book been diminished by the sale of the new?

The charge of plagiarism cannot be

leveled by taking just one of these five essentials in isolation; it must involve a combination of all. Part I of this presentation gave examples of parallelisms between Ellen White and her predecessors, some of which could be labeled as "colorable alterations" (see Figures 1-4). But if the answers to the other four essential questions are all in the negative, it would appear that the presence of isolated cases of "colorable alterations," or mere cosmetic changes, would not constitute plagiarism. Some authorities on plagiarism point out that one author could conceivably copy verbatim excerpts from the work of another without quotation marks and still be protected from lawsuits. The absence of quotation marks for minor excerpts is not *prima facie* evidence of plagiarism.

Did Ellen White rely heavily upon a single source for any of her works? Did she borrow the theme, framework, or structure from a prior work? Have the profits from the sale of any of her books infringed upon the profits of any of the books from which she drew material? Affirmative answers to these questions would pose a serious problem. Regarding the question of her reliance upon a single source, one Seventh-day Adventist theologian has said, "To borrow heavily upon one source without proper acknowledgment—that's plagiarism. To draw upon a wide variety of sources—that's good scholarship! The more sources we find for Ellen White's writings, the better, because that makes a better scholar out of her." We find in this respect that Ellen White comes under the category of being a "good scholar." Not one of her books is based solely upon one previously published work.

I have heard it alleged that Ellen White based *Steps to Christ* almost entirely upon Hannah Whitall Smith's *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, which was advertised for sale on the pages of *Signs of the Times* (Dec. 2, 1889). But a careful examination shows very little close similarity between the two works; the subject matter at times is the same, but each writer handles it differently. Ellen White's chapter "The Privilege of Prayer" has many thoughts, phrases, and even sentences that can be traced to Edward Bickersteth's *A Treatise on Prayer* (1834), rather than to Hannah Smith's work.

Some have charged that Ellen White took her *Great Controversy* from another work by the same title—H. L. Hastings' *The Great Controversy Between God and Man*, first published in January of 1858, a few months prior to Ellen White's *Great Controversy* (*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1). But why would James White advertise Hastings' book for sale on the pages of the *Review and Herald* (April 28, 1859), if his wife had based her work *The Great Controversy Between Christ and His Angels, and Satan and His Angels* (1858) upon it? Again, a careful examination of the two volumes indicates that they differ widely in

scope, purpose, and content.

Another essential ingredient of plagiarism is whether a writer has taken over the theme, framework, or structure of an earlier work. It is possible for the structure of another work to be taken over without incorporating its theme. For example, the sequence of chapters in *The Desire of Ages* parallels that of Edersheim's *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, but the content of the books is quite different. Ellen White did not obtain her narrative from Edersheim. Although her structure seems somewhat parallel to that of Edersheim (and perhaps other nineteenth-century writers on the life of Christ), she has a different theme—the life of Christ in light of the great controversy between the forces of good and evil. Edersheim and others are more interested in giving an historical account of Christ's earthly existence.

The least troublesome of the five aspects of the plagiarism charge is that of infringement. I know of no documented evidence that the sales of any single nineteenth-century work were diminished by the sales of any of Ellen White's books.

Perhaps the most troublesome aspect, however, is the matter of motive, mainly because it is the most subjective, and hence the most controversial, of the five. Was there any intent to deceive? Invariably, an intent to deceive implies an intent to cover up. An intent to deceive can be present only if the writer had an awareness, however vague, that what he was doing was wrong. Ordinarily, judging the intent of another is most difficult, but with Ellen White the task is made easier by the vast abundance of her written material, published and unpublished, that provides the researcher with windows to her thinking. Her literary light has not been hid under a bushel!

After a careful examination of dozens of pertinent documents, published and unpublished, I have found no attempt on the part of Ellen White to deceive or to cover up. Here are the facts I have uncovered:

Fact No. 1: If there was an intent to deceive, why would God give His approval to her use of sources as well as provide specific instruction that she was to gather gems of truth from uninspired writers? Let her own words speak: "I am just as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in relating or writing the vision as in having the vision."—*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 48. "I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them."—*Ibid.*, book 1, p. 37. If the Spirit was such an indispensable part of her writing, and if, as we have seen, her writing involved using other sources, then God's Spirit must have been a directing force in the choice and adaptation of those sources. W. C. White corroborates this conclusion: "It was remarkable that in her reading and scanning of books that her mind was directed to the most helpful

books and to the most helpful passages contained in those books."—Letter to L. E. Froom, Dec. 13, 1934, in *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 463. This thought is further expanded by W. C. White and D. E. Robinson: "She was told that in the reading of religious books and journals, she would find precious gems of truth expressed in acceptable language, and that she would be given help from heaven to recognize these and to separate them from the rubbish of error with which she would sometimes find them associated."—"Brief Statements Regarding the Writings of Ellen G. White," 1933, p. 5, published as an insert in the *Adventist Review*, June 4, 1981. God would not instruct her to violate either His law or ethical literary principles recognized by nineteenth-century writers, as long as those principles harmonize with His law.

Fact No. 2: On occasion, Ellen White did her research into other sources in full view of others. According to W. C. White, her son, she was granted, along with her husband, a writing room on the second floor of the brick Review and Herald building. That room contained the library, from which she "made selection of books which she considered profitable to read" (*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 463). If Ellen White was attempting to hide what she was doing, surely she would never have done her reading and research at a location subject to the peering eyes of fellow Adventists.

Some have suggested that she rose at 1:00 or 2:00 A.M. so that she could do her copying unwatched by others, even her own family members. However, the most likely reason for her early rising is that her mind was clearest then, and her writing could be much more productive, free from distractions or interruptions. If one wants to see in her early morning habits evidence of a cover-up, he may, but there is no proof for the suspicion. According to W. C. White, who worked very closely with his mother, she would often spend an hour or two of reading during daylight hours after having completed a hard day's work of writing. (W. C. White letter to L. E. Froom, Feb. 14, 1926.) Much of her reading was done in the open.

Fact No. 3: Ellen White freely loaned her books—books that presumably she would need, sooner or later, in her research. It would seem inexplicable for her to do so if she were attempting to

conceal the fact of her borrowing from these very sources. Excerpts from a letter written from Greenville, Michigan, on January 19, 1868, to her son in Battle Creek indicate there was no cover-up: "Dear Son Edson: . . . I wish you [would] ask George to inquire in meeting if anyone has a book titled, *The Martyrs of Spain*, and another [by] Sanford and Merton [Sandford and Merton]. Both were presented us by Brother Andrews. The first was mine, the last Willie's. If they have any books belonging to me, have them bring them in. . . . P. S. Send the books mentioned by Brother Loughborough." Letter 1a, 1868. Apparently she intended an announcement to be made in the Battle Creek Tabernacle for those holding any of her missing books to please return them. This sounds more like openness than cover-up!

Fact No. 4: Ellen White made no attempt to conceal from her helpers the fact that she relied upon available books for her research and writing. When working on *The Great Controversy* in Basel, Switzerland, her assistants made good use of J. N. Andrews' extensive library (see *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 439). She even wrote from Basel to her family in Battle Creek: "Tell Mary to find me some histories of the Bible that would give me the order of events. I have nothing and can find nothing in the library here."—Letter 38, 1885; *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 122. On a previous occasion she wrote from Grand Prairie, Texas: "Dear Mary: Will you please get and mail the covered book, *History of Paul*, and put in a red-covered book, *Bible Antiquities*—sort of Bible dictionary."—Letter 52, 1878.

Fact No. 5: Ellen White recommended to the general Seventh-day Adventist church membership the very books from which she was drawing selected material in writing her books and testimonies. One significant example is the following enthusiastic recommendation she made in the *Health Reformer*: "I am delighted to find the following in that invaluable work entitled 'The Young Lady's Counselor,' by Rev. Daniel Wise, A.M.; it can be obtained at any Methodist book rooms [a lengthy quote from Wise follows]."—July, 1873, p. 221.

Ellen White once had this particular book in her personal library according to the inventory lists, but it is not found in the present holdings. More significantly, the very quote that she cited in the *Health*

"She was told that in the reading of religious books and journals, she would find precious gems of truth expressed in acceptable language, and that she would be given help from heaven to recognize these."

Reformer had been used in part a year previously in a published testimony. The evidence suggests that she sometimes took both thoughts and expressions from Wise without indicating the source, whereas in the *Health Reformer* article she used quotation marks and gave credit to Wise. In using such material, however, she did not approach it with a mind devoid of information. I am not suggesting here that Daniel Wise, not God, was the source of her inspiration.

If I had been a Seventh-day Adventist living in 1873, and if God's spokesman had recommended a particular book as an "invaluable work" obtainable at any Methodist bookstore (there were no Adventist Book Centers then!) I would have made an effort to purchase it. Moreover, if I had been the Adventist sister who received a testimony which was printed in 1872 for the church to read, a testimony containing both a rebuke and an encouragement, certainly I would have recognized the similarity between portions of that testimony and the words of Daniel Wise quoted just one year later in the *Health Reformer*.

Not only did Ellen White recommend Daniel Wise's work, she also highly recommended Conybeare and Howson's book on the apostle Paul, from which she took 7 percent of the material for her own *Sketches From the Life of Paul*, according to F. D. Nichol's research. She wrote: "The Life of St. Paul by Conybeare and Howson, I regard as a book of great merit, and one of rare usefulness to the earnest student of the New Testament history."—Quoted in F. D. Nichol, *Ellen G. White and Her Critics*, p. 423. Not many months after she made this recommendation, her own work rolled off the presses. Hardly would she have done so, if she felt there was something to cover up.

When we take all factors into account—the scope, the style, the content, the purpose, the question of infringement, and the possibility of an intent to deceive—we find Attorney Ramik's assessment absolutely correct: "Ellen White was not a plagiarist, and her works did not constitute copyright infringement/piracy."

Again, it should be noted that to clear Ellen White of the charge of plagiarism does not automatically make her a prophet. While an attorney's office that specializes in copyright law can render an opinion on the legal or ethical aspects of literary borrowing, it cannot probe into the spiritual aspects (although Ramik's report does touch upon the spiritual). The law cannot define how God speaks through an inspired messenger. Facing us yet are deeper questions—the questions of inspiration, authority, and prophetic function. Some of these issues will be considered in part three of this presentation, but some will have to wait for others to handle.

Perhaps one of the most difficult questions is that of the relationship between human influence and divine revelation,

the tension between the earthly and the heavenly. How much is of God, and how much is from man? If we find in the final analysis that 50 percent of what Ellen White has written can be traced to prior published works, does that mean that 50 percent of what she wrote is from man, and the other 50 percent from God?

Our understanding of how inspiration operates will determine the answers. The finest scriptural model for understanding the process of inspiration is the Incarnation. Christ is designated as the Word (see John 1:1-3, 14; Heb. 11:3; 1 John 1:1; Rev. 19:13), and the Scriptures likewise are called the Word (see Luke 4:4; 11:28; John 15:25; Titus 1:3; 2 Peter 1:19). This means that the two have a central feature in common; they both demonstrate a delicate balance between the human and the divine. The mystery of the Incarnation is that Christ is fully human and fully divine at the same time, and inspiration presents the same mystery. If we have overwhelming evidence that the writings of Ellen White are inspired, and I believe we do, then we can expect to find the same delicate balance between the human and the divine in her writings as we find in Scripture, for it is the same Spirit at work in each. That is not to say that her writings are on equality with the Sacred Canon. There have been many inspired documents that have never been and will never be included in Scripture. Thus we cannot say that 50 percent of her writings are human and 50 percent are divine, any more than we can say that 50 percent of Scripture is human and 50 percent is divine. Again we are not even intimating that Ellen White's writings are on the level of Scripture as far as doctrine or authority is concerned.

Some have raised the question, in all honesty, whether it is not true that Ellen White consistently denied any human influence in her writings. Did she not avow that what she wrote was not her own opinion nor represented her own ideas? Did she not say that what she had written had not been taken from books or papers?

We must examine carefully what she has said as well as what she has not said. What she does say is this: "I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 67. What she does not say is that none of her own ideas and opinions ever appear in that which she has written. Nor does she claim to be completely free of human influence

and suggestions. (Read the entire context of this statement, especially *Testimonies*, volume 5, pages 65, 66.)

Ellen White does state, "That which I have written in regard to health was not taken from books or papers."—*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 282. But she never makes that a blanket statement to apply to everything she has written. Contextually, this statement applies only to the area of health and to her earliest writings on that topic prior to the fall of 1867. At the same time she made that statement she wrote in the *Review*: "And after I had written my six articles for 'How to Live,' I then searched the various works on hygiene."—*Review and Herald*, Oct. 8, 1867.

Ellen White does say: "I have not been in the habit of reading any doctrinal articles in the paper [a reference to the *Review and Herald*], that my mind should not have any understanding of anyone's ideas and views, and that not a mold of any man's theories should have any connection with that which I write."—*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 63. But she does not say that she never read the views of others. The context of this statement is a letter addressed to E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones in which she states that she did not want to be influenced by any man's opinions on the meaning of the law in Galatians. Thus she is saying that she was consistently avoiding doctrinal articles in the paper on that particular subject.

She once stated, "The words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own."—*Review and Herald*, Oct. 8, 1867. But, again, she does not intend for this statement to apply to everything she has written. The limited context of the statement is the proper length of a lady's dress, something that she had seen in vision and had attempted to describe by employing her own words.

She does assert: "In these letters which I write, in the testimonies I bear, I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 67. But she is not thereby denying that she used other sources in writing out her views. The very testimony in which she makes this statement has nearly one third of its material taken from March's *Night Scenes in the Bible* and Krummacher's *Elijah the Tishbite*. Ellen White consistently gives credit where credit is due—to God the author of all truth. To declare the divine source of her writings is not to deny the

If we have overwhelming evidence that the writings of Ellen White are inspired, and I believe we do, then we can expect to find the same delicate balance between the human and the divine that we find in Scripture.

human; neither is an acknowledgment of the human side of her writings a denial of the divine.

All truth is composed of a unique blend of the human and the divine. If truth were only divine in its utterance, it would be so far beyond the finite minds of men that it would find its sole abode in the mind of the Infinite. If truth were only human in its expression, it would have no power to lift man from himself to his Creator. When God makes a diamond, He takes a lump of ordinary carbon, the same substance that blackens chimney walls, and buries it in the bosom of the earth under pressure a million times greater than at the surface. He extrudes this beautiful gem from the

earth by having it travel sometimes more than sixty miles upward to the surface to be grasped by the eager fingers of humanity. Man does not reject these valuable gems just because they originated as carbon, any more than we should reject the gems of truth found in the writings of an inspired woman who died nearly seventy years ago because they may have found their first lodging in the uninspired writings of others. Man may attempt to use the steel-tipped pen of the critic to inscribe "plagiarized" on the glittering facets of these diamonds of truth, but they cannot be defaced by such writing instruments. The luster is undimmed; the intrinsic worth is unchanged.

certain theological issues inherent in the question of Mrs. White's inspiration—issues that we face as well when we examine the inspiration of Scripture. The same insights gained from a deeper understanding of how the books of Scripture came into existence provide answers to the questions raised concerning Ellen White's use of sources.

From the materials on file in the E. G. White Estate and in the General Conference Archives it appears that by 1919 only twelve source books were known from which Ellen White drew material without giving credit. Today we know of more than six times that number. At that time known borrowing was concentrated in three of Ellen White's books—*The Great Controversy*, *The Desire of Ages*, and *Sketches From the Life of Paul*. Today we find examples of literary borrowing in nearly all of the Ellen G. White books, including posthumous compilations. The earliest sure examples of borrowing are found in *Spiritual Gifts*. All five volumes of the *Conflict of the Ages* series and all nine volumes of the *Testimonies* (except volume one) contain numerous examples of literary parallels. This is not to imply that the more examples of borrowing we find, the less confidence we have in these inspired messages. God forbid! Actually this information provides us just one further glimpse of the way the Lord works. If He can take a lowly rod and use it to open a pathway through the sea; if He can take a prophet's donkey and use it to speak a message of rebuke to a wayward prophet, then what is to prevent Him from taking gems of truth from the writings of others and use them as part of the prophet's message that He has for His people? If we say that God cannot do so, are we not limiting His omniscience and omnipotence?

Today we know that Ellen White used literary sources in her periodical articles, her unpublished manuscripts, her diaries, and her letters, in addition to the published books. We find borrowing not only in all types of her writings but also upon all subjects—health, temperance, history, education, marriage and the family, evangelism and preaching, Biblical narratives, theology, eschatology, and practical Christian living. I cannot think of any major subject where I have not located examples of literary adaptation. Lest I be misquoted, I am not saying that everything she wrote has been borrowed! Some examples consist of an isolated sentence or two, and others involve only a paragraph here or there. But just as her writings touch upon all areas, so her borrowing touches upon all areas.

Our forefathers in 1919 apparently had no knowledge of Ellen White's use of other sources when conveying the words heard in a vision. In fact, most of the examples cited in this study have been discovered only in the past few months. However, the issues are really no different whether we are

3 Human thoughts or divine truths?

The first day of August, 1919, soon became the hot, muggy, greenhouse-style day, typical of Washington, D.C. The city had slipped into a comfortable calm after exploding fireworks had signaled the end of World War I some nine months earlier. In the peaceful suburb of Takoma Park, the church's leaders and scholars wrestled with some difficult issues that were surfacing four years after the death of Ellen G. White, God's messenger to the remnant. Being discussed, sometimes heatedly, were questions of inspiration, infallibility, and authority.

F. M. Wilcox, editor of the *Review*, spoke up: "I think the Testimonies of the Spirit of God are a great asset to this denomination, and I think if we destroy faith in them, we are going to destroy faith in the very foundation of our work."

A Bible teacher, J. N. Anderson, asked: "We say . . . that Sister White never claimed to be final on the historical matters that appear in her writings. Are we safe to tell that to our students? Or shall we hold it in abeyance?"

A. G. Daniells, president of the General Conference, dealt very candidly with the question of historical error: "Now on infallibility. I suppose Sister White used

Paul's text, 'We have this treasure in earthen vessels,' as much as any other scripture. . . . When you take the position that she was not infallible, and that her writings were not verbally inspired, isn't there a chance for the manifestation of the human? If there isn't, then what is infallibility?"

Another Bible teacher, W. H. Wakeham, commented on the views of the average church member: "They have accepted the Testimonies all over the country, and believe that every identical word that Sister White has written was to be received as infallible truth. We have that thing to meet when we get back, and it will be brought up in our classes just as sure as we stand here."—Minutes of the 1919 Bible and History Teachers Meeting, Takoma Park, August 1, 1919; General Conference Archives.

The issues today are the same: inspiration, infallibility, and authority. The key difference is that we now know much more about Ellen White's use of sources and the way in which she incorporated them into her writings than did the scholars and church leaders of 1919. Too, we have the added perspective that time brings. We have had a longer time to wrestle with

concerned with the use of sources in connection with visions or the use of sources for filling in narratives not provided in vision. The key issue is whether a prophetic messenger, claiming that his messages have a heavenly source, is robbed of his inspiration the moment he begins to utilize earthly sources.

Consistently Ellen White emphasizes the divine credentials for her messages. Toward the end of an active literary life she writes: "These messages have been written as God has given them to me."—Letter 39, 1905, in *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 73. She gives proper credit for her Source of inspiration: "These books were written under the demonstration of the Holy Spirit."—Letter 50, 1906, in *MINISTRY*, October, 1981, p. 9. The response of the people has also been indicative of a divine Source: "I have spoken the plain message to our own people and to the multitude, and my words have been accepted as coming from the Lord."—Letter 84, 1909, in *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 72.

The difficulty arises not with inspiration itself, but with our understanding of how inspiration operates. We have sometimes assumed that everything Ellen White has written came directly from vision sources except for a minor reliance upon historical sources in narrating the story of the Protestant Reformation or the history of Paul. Recent evidence disproves such a concept and brings to view an interplay between human sources and divine revelation at almost every juncture. Outgrowing the one concept and adjusting to the other may cause growing pains for some of us. But it is becoming clearer that as in the earthly existence of Christ, so in the process of inspiration/revelation—the human does not exist without the divine, nor the divine without the human. In saying this we are in no way trying to place Ellen White on the same level as Christ; Ellen White is not our Saviour. But we are saying that whenever a message comes from God destined for His people it must be incarnated first in human form to be intelligible. That is the reason for the use of human sources.

The questions of inspiration, infallibility, and authority must be addressed in the light of known literary borrowing. Space permits us to deal with these three areas only as they relate to Ellen White's use of sources. Following are some of the conclusions that are beginning to come into focus:

1. *Inspiration is not be equated with originality.* It is conceivable that continued research could demonstrate that in one given area, such as health, everything said by Ellen White had been said earlier by someone, somewhere. (That would not necessarily prove, however, that she had read all such prior works.) Being called of God to spearhead a work of reform in the end times does not necessitate that Ellen White be original in that work of reform,

whether it be in health, temperance, education, the family, or doctrinal truths. In regard to health reform, J. H. Waggoner in an early *Review* underscores this fact: "We do not profess to be pioneers in the general principles of the health reform. The facts on which this movement is based have been elaborated, in a great measure, by reformers, physicians, and writers on physiology and hygiene, and so may be found scattered through the land. But we do claim that by the method of God's choice it has been more clearly and powerfully unfolded, and is thereby producing an effect which we could not have looked for from any other means."—*Review and Herald*, Aug. 7, 1866.

We have consistently maintained that none of our distinctive doctrines originated with Ellen White. That means that all such truths were spelled out by others prior to her speaking and writing on the subject. Indeed, if we were to find she originated any given doctrine, we would be open to the charge of exalting her writings above Scripture. The Lord made it certain that she not be original in matters of doctrine, an additional reason why she was led to sources in writing out her doctrinal expositions.

2. *Inspiration does not involve the dictation of divinely chosen words.* Seventh-day Adventists are opposed to the verbal dictation theory of inspiration. "The writers of the Bible were God's penmen, not His pen," says Ellen White. "It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself."—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 21. Interestingly, Ellen White has adapted this very passage from Stowe's *Origin and History of the Books of the Bible* (1867), pages 18, 19. If both the words and the writer were inspired, we would have to conclude that Calvin Stowe was inspired along with Ellen White! The discovery of Ellen White's extensive and varied use of prior sources should extinguish any lingering trace of the verbal dictation theory.

3. *Inspiration is not diminished by the use of uninspired sources.* Seventh-day Adventists have consistently stood in opposition to "degrees of inspiration." We are in grave difficulties when it comes to Scripture itself if we say that something is less inspired because it has been based upon a prior source. Is the golden rule less inspired than

the rest of the Sermon on the Mount because Christ adapted it from rabbinic sources? Paul occasionally drew upon some of the inter-testamental books, especially the book of Enoch, an uninspired document. Does this mean that Paul's writings are less inspired in the places he used sources—many of which were drilled in his mind as he sat at the feet of Gamaliel?

4. *Inspiration is affected by outside human influences.* If a message from God must be incarnated in human form before it can become intelligible to man, then that message will inevitably be shaped according to the messenger's thought patterns, culture, environment, background, training, personality, and reading habits. The message cannot be divorced from the personality of the messenger. With the oracles of Amos we detect the smell of straw upon his garments, with David our spirits soar with the emotion-filled rhapsodies of the "sweet singer of Israel," and with Luke we uncover here and there the insights of a physician. Would it not, then, be unreasonable to demand that Ellen White should be free from all the influences of her surroundings? Inspiration never operates in a vacuum.

Influence, when under divine supervision, becomes an asset, not a liability. As the divinely called messenger reads widely from a variety of sources he becomes better attuned to the needs of his age, and he adapts the language of his messages into a form that will greatly increase their impact and effectiveness. In this case the more sources read and used, the more effective will be the inspired writings!

Influence becomes a liability only when prostituted into manipulation. Balaam is a prime example of a prophet who was manipulated. On those occasions when Ellen White reacts against the charge of being under the influence of others, she is actually defending her work from the charge of manipulation. This is indicated by the following: "There are those who say, 'Someone manipulates her writings.' I acknowledge the charge. It is One who is mighty in counsel, One who presents before me the condition of things."—Letter 52, 1906, in *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 64.

5. *Inspiration goes beyond what has been presented in vision, and sometimes stands independent of visions.* Seventh-day Adventists have been given no mandate to find vision sources for everything that

The key issue is whether a prophetic messenger, claiming that his messages have a heavenly source, is robbed of his inspiration the moment he begins to utilize earthly sources.

Ellen White has written while under inspiration. If she had vision sources for every iota of information, she would not have needed to draw on material from prior written sources. In that case, she would only have needed to write out what had been given to her in vision, and then perhaps allow her literary assistants to polish it grammatically. We will never know precisely how much information was given in vision. Nor is it necessary for us to know, because all truth, whether given in vision or out of vision, is ultimately from God. The available clues suggest that the visions were more in outline form rather than comprehensive in nature. In a statement read before the 1911 General Conference session and approved by Ellen White, her son W. C. White describes the visions as follows: "The things which she has written out, are descriptions of flash-light pictures and other representations given her."—*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 437. Ellen White points out that what she writes apart from any specific vision is just as much inspired as that which has a vision for its basis (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 683-691).

6. *Inspiration provides the narrative for those portions of visions that were symbolic or that lacked a narrative.* Ellen White herself often describes her visions as "scenes," "views," or "representations" (*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 659; *Gospel Workers*, p. 94; *The Great Controversy*, pp. x, xi; *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p. 292; *Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 51, 56). The emphasis seems usually to be more on the visual than the auditory, although in some cases the auditory is present. Even in those cases where the auditory portion of the vision is present, Ellen White is given the liberty to write it out in her own words (*Gospel Workers*, p. 94). If that is so, we can rightly suggest that she is also given the privilege of using the writings of others when they coincide with the auditory portion of the vision. In those cases where no audible narrative accompanied the vision, it became all the more imperative that she use the narratives of Biblical scholars and devout historians to amplify and supplement what was presented to her. It is somewhat comparable to a silent motion picture, the narrative for which has been taken in part from the writings of contemporaries.

7. *Inspiration must include divine guidance in the selection of sources.* Carrying further this imagery of a motion picture to depict inspiration, the audience does not write the script. The script is written under the direction of the producer of the film. The scriptwriter himself may resort to a wide variety of sources in order to accurately comment upon that which had been filmed, but he cannot do so independently of the producer's wishes. States Ellen White: "The many books, written by the help of the Spirit of God, bear a living witness to the character of the testi-

monies." Elsewhere she writes: "I am just as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in relating or writing the vision as in having the vision."—*Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 50, 48. If Ellen White did not have divine guidance in the selection of sources for her writings, then she did not have the divine presence at the time of receiving the vision; for it is the same Holy Spirit at work in both.

Much more could be said concerning inspiration than there is room to say here. The reader is referred to William G. Johnsson's recent article, "How Does God Speak?" (*MINISTRY*, October, 1981, pp. 4-6).

The question of infallibility versus fallibility in the inspired writings hinges upon one's concept of inspiration. If one is firmly convinced that the very words of God were dictated to the prophet, then the writings must be infallible because God never makes a mistake in what He says. Ellen White avoids making such claims. "In regard to infallibility, I never claimed it; God alone is infallible. His word is true, and in Him is no variableness, or shadow of turning."—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 37. Unfortunately, some have viewed Ellen White as if she had been provided final answers to all theological questions. While she was yet alive some would come to her, asking her to settle such theological disputes as the meaning of the "daily" in Daniel 8. Her response to those individuals was: "I have words to speak to my brethren east and west, north and south. I request that my writings shall not be used as the leading argument to settle questions over which there is now so much controversy."—*Ibid.*, p. 164. She consistently pointed to Scripture as one's final authority.

Even today it is tempting to use her writings as if they contain an "infallible filter" for separating the wheat from the chaff, truth from error. Ellen White would not wish it to be so. For her, the ultimate standard of truth and the supreme arbiter of doctrinal disputes is Scripture itself. Speaking of her own writings in relation to the Scriptures, she writes: "The Spirit was not given—nor can it be bestowed—to supersede the Bible; for the Scriptures explicitly state that the word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested."—*The Great Controversy*, p. vii. If we make Ellen White's writings the ultimate standard for truth,

then we have placed her writings on an equality with the Bible—in fact they can be made to *supersede* the Bible because their scope is much more all-inclusive than that of the Scriptures.

To admit minor discrepancies in Ellen White's writings is not to deny their inspiration. Inspiration is not to be equated with absolute perfection. When the Holy Spirit inspired and guided Ellen White as she selected material found in other sources, she was not equipped with an "infallible filter" or any internal standard for determining truth. Her own visions were not the test; her only test was God's Word, the Holy Scriptures. Since all her visions were given to illuminate the meaning of Scripture, they cannot be used as an independent standard apart from Scripture.

Some may suggest that since Ellen White's writings have been tested by the ultimate standard, the Bible, therefore they have been freed automatically of any error. The fact is that the Bible is silent upon a myriad of details found within Ellen White's writings. Those details cannot be easily tested by the Bible when the Bible does not deal with that particular subject. For example, the Bible has no account of the history of the Protestant Reformation; Ellen White had to rely on contemporary historians for these events. If we find that minor errors or discrepancies have sometimes been incorporated into Ellen White's writings because of the fact that she relied upon historical accounts, this should not cause us to lose faith in the accuracy and trustworthiness of the message God is bringing to us through an inspired medium. There is nothing in Scripture to correct such errors, so they remain with us today. We should no more reject the inspiration of Ellen White on that account than we should reject Scripture for failing to provide her with a means for testing the accuracy of those historical statements.

The recent discovery of a wide use of contemporary sources by Ellen White actually can be viewed as a positive factor. Some individuals have been deeply troubled over discovery of discrepancies and errors in minor details. If we held to the view that virtually everything Ellen White wrote had been received directly from God in vision without the use of any sources, the discovery of minor errors could be a faith-shattering experience. But now the

If minor errors or discrepancies have been incorporated into Ellen White's writings because she relied upon historical accounts, this should not cause us to lose faith in the accuracy and trustworthiness of the message.

discovery that human sources, which are always errant, have had a part to play in the whole process provides a satisfactory explanation without having to question whether God was speaking through Ellen White. Our own faith is stronger with this knowledge.

The final question is that of authority, and this undoubtedly will be addressed more extensively in the future beyond our preliminary remarks here. Our understanding of authority depends totally upon our understanding of how inspiration operates and how the question of infallibility versus fallibility is settled. If we admit that minor errors in nonessentials can be found in Ellen White's writings, we will not take her statements containing those errors as a final authority. Ellen White recognized this. Her son once wrote a letter three years before her death on her behalf in which he remarked: "Regarding Mother's writings and their use as authority on points of history and chronology, Mother has never wished our brethren to treat them as authority regarding the details of history or historical dates."—W. C. White to W. W. Eastman, Nov. 4, 1912, in *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 446. This is not to depreciate her authority in any sense, but simply recognizes its limits. To say that she has no final authority in details of dates and history must not be extrapolated to say that she has no authority in terms of the counsels provided for individuals and institutions over the years. Her authority does not diminish with time, neither are her counsels diminished with the passing of generations. If they have provided spiritual nurture for individuals, stability for institutions, and prosperity for a church, then we must continue to recognize the rightful authority of those counsels.

Ellen White's authority does not reside within herself; it is not centered in a mere person. It is a derived authority. It is God-given and Bible-centered. Her authority, while less than that of Scripture, is higher than each of us as individuals. God has given her special insights into spiritual things, insights that we do not possess or that we possess only faintly. To reject her authority is to substitute our wisdom for a wisdom higher than ours.

On the other hand, to exalt her writings above Scripture is actually to weaken her authority instead of strengthening it, because this in effect nullifies what she herself has written—that her work is not to supersede the Bible.

Her proper relationship with Scripture has been most aptly described in these words: "Little heed is given to the Bible, and the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light."—*Colporteur Ministry*, p. 125. The more heed that is given to the Bible, the greater recognition given her own authority which is Bible-centered. While being a lesser light than the sum total light of Scripture,

she indeed provides us with a light greater than any of us as individuals. Ellen White is not the light source; Christ alone is "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9). Even though some light may come to us today filtered through human authors, many of whom Ellen White read and utilized in her writings, that light is still light from God. Therefore, when Ellen White tells us that she has a message from God, even light shining from the very throne itself, she is recognizing the fact that God is its ultimate source!

If I am captain of a ship lost in a dense fog, and there appears ahead a light shining from the lighthouse, I will certainly determine my bearings based upon the position of the lighthouse. It would be

foolish of me to reject that light because it is reflected from large mirrors or because the rays have passed through a powerful magnifying window. It might mean the loss of my life if I were to reject that light with the excuse that it is fueled with oil derived from Siberia, China, or Iran, when I feel its oil should be obtained from my own country. Light is still light, no matter its nature or the origin of the fuel that keeps it alive.

Likewise, when I find light shining from the mirrors of a Christlike character and magnified through a lens that serves to enhance the light shining from Scripture, and when I encounter light originating from the Source of all light, I am prepared to accept that light on the basis that it is light—light from God.

For further study

The following documents relating to Ellen White's use of sources are available from the Ellen G. White Estate, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012. Prices include postage; payment must accompany order.

- "Addresses to Faculty and Students at the 1935 Advanced Bible School," by W. C. White. 37 pp. \$1.10
- "Bible Conference and Bible and History Teachers' Council, 1919," by R. W. Olson. 10 pp. \$.30
- "Brief Statements Regarding the Writings of Ellen G. White" (1933), by W. C. White and D. E. Robinson. 16 pp. \$.25
- "Ellen White's Theological and Literary Indebtedness to Calvin Stowe," by David Neff. 22 pp. \$.65
- "How *The Desire of Ages* Was Written." 47 pp. \$1.00
- "Historical Writings of E. G. White and Adventist Conception of Inspiration," by Arthur L. White. 39 pp. \$1.60
- "An Inventory of Ellen White's Private Library," by Ron Graybill and Warren H. Johns. 48 pp. \$1.00
- "A Bibliography of E. G. White's Personal and Office Library," compiled by Warren H. Johns, Tim Poirier, and Ron Graybill. 80 pp. \$2.00
- "Doctrinal Discussions," by R. W. Olson. 16 pp. \$.35
- "An Update on Ellen G. White's Literary Work," by Ron Graybill. 45 pp. \$1.00
- "One Hundred and One Questions on the Sanctuary and on EGW," by R. W. Olson. 112 pp. \$2.00
- "Sources or Aids—Why Did Ellen G. White Borrow?" by Paul Gordon. 14 pp. \$.50
- "Ellen G. White's Use of Uninspired Sources," by R. W. Olson. 19 pp. \$.55
- "Was Ellen G. White a Plagiarist?" *Adventist Review*, Sept. 17, 1981. 8 pp. \$.55
- "Literary Relationship Between *The Desire of Ages*, by Ellen G. White, and *The Life of Christ*, by William Hanna, Parts I and II," by Raymond F. Cottrell and Walter F. Specht. 85 pp. \$2.00
- "Analysis of Ellen G. White's Luther Manuscript," by Ron Graybill. 31 pp. \$5.20
- "Henry Melvill and Ellen G. White: A Study in Literary and Theological Relationships," by Ron Graybill, Warren H. Johns, and Tim Poirier. 110 pp. \$2.00

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If every Christian is called to pattern his or her life after that of the Saviour, then each Christian is called to minister to others.

Rex D. Edwards

Ministers without pulpits

A "revolution" within the church might well be initiated if church members were aware that their profession of faith in Jesus brought with it the responsibility of *ministry*. Elton Trueblood reminds us that if such a concept took root in the church, there would be "a new Reformation." He says, "If in the average church we should suddenly take seriously the notion that every lay member, man or woman, is really a minister of Christ, we could have something like a revolution in a very short time."¹

The seed of such a "revolution" has been awaiting germination in the Adventist Church for more than half a century. In 1909 these words were written under the title "An Appeal to Laymen": "The work of a public speaker may never be laid upon him [the layman], but he is nonetheless a minister for God."—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 128.

The pertinent question is "Is this notion that every church member is a 'minister' Biblical? What is the New Testament concept of ministry?"

Ministry and the church

Ministry in the New Testament always involves serving the purposes of the church. Hence we can never study ministry as an entity in itself but must study ministry in the context of the church.

The church is God's people called out from the world and set apart for God's service through the redeeming work of Jesus Christ. While "church" in the New Testament may refer to God's people in general, more typically it refers to the Christians in a locality (see 1 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:1). The tasks of the church can be described under the headings of edification and witness. The task of edification—the mutual sharing and upbuilding of Chris-

tians—devolves upon each Christian as a member of the body of Christ and is implemented by a variety of processes such as worship, conversation, family life, and business associations.

Witness, the other dimension of the church's task, concerns outreach into the world. The term applies to the Christian's manifestation of the faith and life begun in him through Christ. Hence it applies to the work of edification, but in particular it refers to the winning of men for Christ as the Christian first recommends the gospel by his life and then speaks it for his neighbors' hearing. Speaking the gospel that it may edify the fellow believer and win the nonbeliever is the task of every Christian. The lifework of everyone who professes Christ should be to save souls.

Since the church's tasks, as described above, are the work of ministry, it can be said that ministry belongs to the whole church. Every Christian is entrusted with the gospel, which serves the dual purpose of edification and witness. Every Christian is a minister of the gospel to his neighbor. The responsibility of going forth to fulfill Christ's commission rests not upon the ordained minister only. Each one who has received Christ is called to work for the salvation of others.

Ministry originates with Christ

In the New Testament, ministry gets its essential character directly from the person and work of Christ. As the Word already implies, the basic feature of "ministry" is service. Although the New Testament has a variety of terms for the act of serving, the characteristic Greek word is *diakonia*.² Christ is called *diakonos* ("servant") only in Romans 15:8. But in Mark 10:45 and parallel passages Christ Himself speaks of His work as *diakonein*: "For the Son of man also came not to be served [*diakonēthēnai*] but to serve [*diakonēsai*], and to give his life as a ransom for many" (R.S.V.).³ It is significant that Christ applies "serving" to

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the giving of His life on the cross. It is not only the three years of His peripatetic ministry but particularly His redemptive death that He speaks of as "service" on behalf of men.³ Christ came as a servant, gave Himself in life and death, and so set the pattern for ministry.

Christ exhibits Himself as the servant par excellence by fulfilling the role of the "servant of the Lord." Matthew quotes Isaiah 42:1-4 as a prophecy fulfilled in Jesus (see chap. 12:18), and it is almost certainly with reference to this "servant" that Jesus is called the "servant of God" in Acts 3:13, 26; 4:27, 30. Elsewhere both explicitly and implicitly Jesus is identified with the suffering servant of Isaiah.⁴

Also the use of the term "apostle" points to Christ as the source of New Testament ministry. The word *apostolos* designates a man who is sent as ambassador. Christ Himself is called *apostolos* in Hebrews 3:1. Hence when Christ appointed and sent out men as "apostles," He was commissioning them to continue His own mission (cf., "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" [John 20:21, R.S.V.]). The apostles' ministry, then, was merely an extension or continuation of His.

There is hardly any description of ministry in the New Testament that is not applied to Christ. Above we have seen Him called "deacon," "servant," and "apostle." Elsewhere He is referred to as "slave" (Phil. 2:7), "teacher" (Matt. 23:8; John 13:13), "shepherd" (1 Peter 2:25; Heb. 13:20), and "bishop" (1 Peter 2:25). The prototype of all ministry is Jesus Christ.

Ministry is service

When Jesus characterized His own work as that of serving, He also made this the stamp of His followers. Greatness in the community of believers is to be measured in terms of willingness to serve (see Matt. 20:25-28). Yet this is not so much an imperative rule as a *description* of any life that is lived in fellowship with the Suffering Servant. The very life of every member of the church is, as Manson says, "a continuation of the Messianic ministry."⁵

The concept of service, or ministry (*diakonia*), has a wide range of application in the New Testament. As in classical usage, it may refer to waiting on tables and similar service; for example, Martha serving Jesus (Luke 10:40) or the personal attention given Paul by Onesiphorus (2 Tim. 1:18).

When we turn more specifically to the activity of the church, we again find *diakonia* used to describe a variety of "ministries." Christians can render *diakonia* to the church through charismatic gifts bestowed by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 12:6ff.), as well as by sharing this world's goods with the poor (Acts 6:1-4). The great churchwide gathering of relief for the poor saints of Jerusalem was characterized

by Paul simply as a *diakonia* (Rom. 15:25; 2 Cor. 8:9).

Diakonia becomes freighted with particular significance as the "ministry of the Word." Paul describes the proclamation of the gospel as the *diakonia* of the Spirit and of righteousness (2 Cor. 3:8, 9) and refers to his charge to preach it as a *diakonia* given him by God and Christ (chap. 4:1; 1 Tim. 1:12). He has been entrusted with the ministry (*diakonia*) of reconciliation, which is no less than the "word of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18, 19). His apostleship is a *diakonia* (Rom. 11:13), and he himself is a *diakonos* (servant) of the church for the sake of proclaiming the Word (Col. 1:25), a *diakonos* of a new covenant (2 Cor. 3:6).

These typical illustrations are enough to demonstrate that *diakonia* applies to the character and activity of Christians in their concerns for others. It describes every kind of service rendered on behalf of the church. In Kraemer's sharply pointed phrase, "the church does not *have* a ministry, it *is* ministry."⁶

Ministry is God's gift

For the sake of this ministry God gives gifts to the church. These gifts enable Christians to give mutual service in the church. They are gifts of "prophecy," "service," "teaching," "exhortation," "contributing," "giving aid," "acts of mercy" (Rom. 12:6-8), and so forth. These are given to all for the "common good"; they are given in great variety but by "the same Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:4ff.). They serve the worship of the congregation, the gift of speaking the Word being valued most highly (chap. 14).

But such gifts of ministry become so closely identified with the ministering believer that the minister himself is called a gift of God. Most noteworthy is the passage in Ephesians 4:7, 11-14. The focus of attention in this passage is directed to verse 12, which states the purpose of these ministerial gifts: their function is to equip the saints for *their* work of ministry. Paul's primary concern in verses 1-16 is the growth and development of the body of Christ "to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (verse 13). This comes about as each member, "speaking the truth in love," contributes toward the growth of the whole (verses 15, 16). To this end Paul begins by encouraging his readers to maintain the unity of the Spirit and then

moves on to consider the gifts that the ascended Christ has given to each believer (verse 7) and the special gifts entrusted to some of them (verse 11).

The punctuation of verse 12 in both the Revised Standard Version and the King James Version suggests that the three phrases are parallel and that therefore the gifts listed in verse 11 were given for three coordinate purposes: "for the equipment of the saints," "for the work of the ministry," and "for building up the body of Christ." In that case *diakonia* is carried on only or primarily by those with special gifts. We have seen above, however, that *diakonia* is essentially a function of serving that belongs to all Christians as well as to those especially appointed. The change of prepositions (in the Greek from *eis* to *pros*) may point in this direction but is not decisive. More conclusive is the stress in the whole passage on the activity of all the saints for the welfare of the whole body. Most commentators agree that here *diakonia* is the ministry of all the saints and that the gifts of verse 11 are to equip them for their work.

A passage somewhat parallel to Ephesians 4 is 1 Corinthians 12:27, 28: "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues" (R.S.V.). Paul here again reinforces the essential oneness of the "varieties of gifts" given by God and emphasizes that these are for the common good. The image of the body drawn out in detail in this chapter suggests that each member, and especially those with particular gifts appointed by God (verse 28), is to serve for the proper functioning of the whole body, in which even the "weaker" parts have an indispensable role (verse 22).

Thus both these passages make clear that every Christian receives some gift for serving the church and that the particular functions of ministry enumerated are special gifts for serving the whole.

Ministry is a function

Our study of *diakonia* and the passages above point us toward the functional nature of ministry. It would seem that throughout the New Testament the emphasis in regard to ministry is on the function of service within the Christian

The responsibility of going forth to fulfill Christ's commission rests not upon the ordained minister only. Each one who has received Christ is called to work for the salvation of others.

community. In both the Ephesian and the Corinthian passages Paul is not concerned with a certain number of ecclesiastical offices exercised by so many separate officials but with functions of the body for its upbuilding.

To emphasize the functional nature of ministry is not to deny that apostles, prophets, et cetera, did serve in an official capacity. We have noted that Christ appointed apostles to carry on His mission, and throughout his Epistles Paul makes it clear that he acted with authority as one called and sent by Christ. That it is God who gives the authority of these official ministers indicates that they are essential to the life of the church and not something the church can dispense with if it chooses.

By way of summary we recall that the church by its very nature calls for a ministry by each Christian both in behalf of his brethren and also toward the world. As the source and pattern of ministry, Christ sent His followers on the path of *diakonia*, a ministry of service in word and deed. The ascended Christ continues to provide ministers who serve the whole church by helping each Christian carry out his ministry. Thus ministry is not concerned primarily or solely with office holders but with the functioning of God-given gifts for the upbuilding of the church.

Caemmerer has said, "For the service that God is getting done through ministers is precisely the service that God is getting done through all His Christians. The 'work of the ministry' that Paul makes the target of the pastorate in Ephesians 4 is the ministry in which every Christian engages on behalf of the spiritual life and place of every fellow-Christian in the body of Christ. Martin Luther described the distinction of the pastor among the laymen: 'He is a layman who works for the other laymen. He is a minister to ministers.'"⁷

Such is the dignity and majesty of our calling. Each member as a "minister" is assigned to act some part in God's work.

¹ Elton Trueblood, *Your Other Vocation* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1952), chaps. I, II, passim.

² Cf. the opening paragraphs of the article by Hermann Wolfgang Beyer, "diakoneō, diakonia, diakonos," *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittell (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1935), vol. 2, pp. 81-93.

³ Cf. Paul's expressions "the *diakonia* of the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:8) and "the *diakonia* of reconciliation" (chap. 5:18).

⁴ Cf. Matt. 8:17; 12:18ff.; Mark 1:11; Luke 9:33; John 12:38; Rom. 4:25; 1 Peter 2:22, 23; Rev. 5:6.

⁵ T. W. Manson, *The Church's Ministry* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1948), pp. 22f.

⁶ Hendrik Kraemer, *A Theology of the Laity* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1958), p. 137.

⁷ Richard R. Caemmerer, "The Ministry Is Ministry," *The Seminarian* L (May, 1959), p. 33.

* Scripture quotations marked R.S.V. are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1952, 1971 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

Is Jesus Jehovah God?

Is the doctrine of the Trinity merely a relic of Roman Catholicism, as Jehovah's Witnesses maintain, or can it be found in both Old and New Testaments? Is Jesus Christ the Jehovah of the Old Testament?

J. Reynolds Hoffman

The Christian church has historically proclaimed Jesus Christ to be "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father" (The Creed of Nicaea). The following article, establishing from Scripture this view of the divinity of the Son, will be helpful in discussing the issue with Jehovah's Witnesses. We should remember, of course, that although our purpose in such discussions is to convince the other party of Jesus' divine nature, it is even more important for our words to demonstrate that His divine character lives in us.—Editors.

Jehovah's Witnesses place much emphasis upon attacking the Christian doctrine of the Trinity by denying that Jesus is to be identified with Jehovah God. This controversy concerning the relationship between the Father and the Son is nothing new. It has been debated in the Christian church since late in the third century, and the Witnesses bring up no new problems. They feel, however, that the doctrine of the Trinity is a relic of Catholicism's corrupting influence from which the Christian world needs to be set free. They will point out that the Bible does not contain the word *trinity*. Readily agree with them. It is true that the word does not appear in the King James Version of the Bible or in most standard modern translations. The Bible does use the word *theotēs*, "Godhead," however. If we can

show from Scripture that Jesus is indeed entitled to the name Jehovah, we undermine the credibility of one of the Witnesses' main doctrinal positions.

We readily agree with Jehovah's Witnesses that the Father is Jehovah. But we also believe that the Scriptures teach that the Son is likewise entitled to the name Jehovah, since He is one with the Father.

The historic view of Christianity is that one God exists in three equal, eternal Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—who are one in power, purpose, character, unity, and eternity. The Arian viewpoint is that the Father alone is eternal, therefore He alone is Jehovah. The Son, according to that viewpoint, was begotten (or created) and came into being at a later time. Obviously, if this view is correct, then the Son would not be Jehovah (eternal). You must clearly state the problem at the very outset of your discussion, for if your listeners do not believe you have a complete grasp of the question, they will not be convinced by your explanations. You should be informed regarding the background of the Councils of Nicaea (A.D. 325) and Chalcedon (A.D. 451), the two councils that crystallized the church's Christology. Don't be caught without the information that Constantine the Great presided over the Council of Nicaea. Jehovah's Witnesses exploit this fact as proof that paganism entered the church at his direction. No doubt, Constantine saw the religious division in the church as a threat to the political unity of his empire. Check any good church history for the complete story.

What should we understand God's

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name, Jehovah, to mean? Strictly speaking, there is no such name as Jehovah. It occurred as a late medieval hybrid when students of the Hebrew Scriptures failed to understand that the Masoretic text had combined the vowels of *Adonai*, Lord, with the consonants YHWH (the divine name considered too sacred to pronounce). This name, considered today to have been originally pronounced *Yahweh*, is defined in Exodus 3:13, 14 as "I AM." By choosing this name, God identifies Himself as the Eternal, self-existing One—without beginning or end (see Ps. 90:2). Therefore, anyone without beginning or end would be entitled by the very nature of his being to the name of Jehovah.

What evidence can we gather from Scripture that Jesus is Jehovah equally with the Father?

One clue that will help you in your study of the name Jehovah (translated "Lord") is the manner in which it is printed in most English versions of the Old Testament. When the name "Lord" is translated from the Hebrew word *Yahweh*, i.e., Jehovah, it is printed in large and small capital letters like this: LORD. Other names of God that are translated "Lord" begin with a capital followed by lower-case letters. This contrast can be seen clearly in Isaiah 22:14 where the first occurrence (LORD) comes from Jehovah and the second (Lord) is from *Adonai*. Remember that this printer's clue is found only in the Old Testament. It is a good idea to check word derivations as well in a good comparative concordance such as Strong's or Young's.

Jesus is Jehovah

Notice, now, some comparisons of texts from the Old and New Testaments showing beyond a reasonable doubt that Jesus is indeed identified as Jehovah. These will be given in outline form so that the comparison will be more vivid.

1. *The precursor.* "A voice cries: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God' (Isa. 40:3)."

"He [John the Baptist] said, 'I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord," as the prophet Isaiah said' (John 1:23).

Certainly John knew the Hebrew of Isaiah's prophecy. When he claimed to be the "voice" of Isaiah's prediction, he was claiming to be preparing the way for Jehovah, who was in fact, Jesus.

2. *Jehovah the Creator.* "Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary, his understanding is unsearchable" (Isa. 40:28).

"He [the Word, or Jesus] was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not" (John 1:10).

The Creator of the world came into that world but was not accepted. If Jesus is not

Jehovah, He is not the Creator. Furthermore, Isaiah calls the Creator the "everlasting God." Jesus is the Eternal One, Jehovah.

3. *The glory.* "I am the LORD, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to graven images" (Isa. 42:8).

"And now, Father, glorify thou me in thy own presence with the glory which I had with thee before the world was made" (John 17:5).

As an obedient Son, would Jesus ask His Father for glory that Jehovah said He would never share? Or is Jesus entitled to that glory because He, too, is Jehovah—one with the Father?

4. *The Rock.* "For I will proclaim the name of the LORD. Ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are justice" (Deut. 32:3, 4).

"For they [the fathers] drank from the supernatural Rock which followed them, and the Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4).

Jehovah is declared to be the Rock. Paul declares the Rock was Christ. Thus Christ must unquestionably be Jehovah.

5. *The Shepherd.* "The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want" (Ps. 23:1).

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11).

Jehovah is the Shepherd, and Jesus applied this name to Himself in full knowledge of His own deity.

6. *The First and the Last.* "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god'" (Isa. 44:6).

"Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense, to repay every one for what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end'" (Rev. 22:12, 13; cf. 1:17, 18).

Jehovah says that He is the first and the last. The One who is coming quickly to give rewards (see Matt. 16:27) declares Himself to be the first and the last. The One who was dead and is now alive forevermore (see Rev. 1:17, 18) declares that He is the first and the last. There cannot be the slightest doubt that Jesus who died for us—the first and the last—is none other than Jehovah.

7. *Jesus' absolute, eternal deity.* "'I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God'" (Isa. 45:5). "'You are my witnesses! Is there a God besides me?

There is no Rock; I know not any'" (chap. 44:8).

"I and the Father are one.' The Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, 'I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of these do you stone me?' The Jews answered him, 'It is not for a good work that we stone you but for blasphemy; because you, being a man, make yourself God'" (John 10:30-33).

Jehovah categorically declares there is no God but Him. He denies the very teaching of the Jehovah's Witnesses that Jehovah is the God, but that Jesus is a god. When Jesus said that He and His Father are one, He made the greatest claim anyone could make. The Jews understood His claim. To their mind, there was only one God, and His name was Jehovah. Jesus clearly claimed to be that God, and they determined to stone Him.

8. *The Saviour.* "'For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. . . I, I am the LORD, and besides me there is no savior'" (Isa. 43:3-11).

"There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

These texts declare that Jehovah alone is Saviour. If Jesus is not Jehovah, we have no Saviour. Note also that the Son of the virgin is given His name by an angel (see Matt. 1:21). The name Jesus means "Jehovah saves."

Isaiah becomes, therefore, a bulwark of trinitarianism. He is the great Messianic prophet, exalting the coming Messiah as Jehovah, not once or twice, but repeatedly. There is overwhelming evidence for the open mind that Jesus is Jehovah.

For all of His teachings on personal humility, Jesus knew no more sacred work than to point men to Himself. He was constantly declaring what He was and who He was. Continuously, He applied the divine "I AM" to Himself. "I am the Living Bread, the Light, the Door, the Shepherd, the Resurrection, Lord and Master, the Way, the Truth, the Life." He did not say, "I have life" but rather, "I am Life!" If Jesus is not an eternal being, we can never through Him have eternal life. He cannot give what He does not possess. He claimed to be the source of all life—Jehovah. The prophets said, "Listen to us and we will tell you what God is like." But Jesus said, "Look at me and you will see

When Jesus said He and His Father are one, He made the greatest claim anyone could make. The Jews understood His claim. To their mind, there was only one God, and His name was Jehovah, so they determined to stone Jesus.

what God is like, for I am Jehovah God.”

Objections considered

1. *Jehovah is the only proper name for God.* This is not true. There are many names for God in the Scriptures. It is true that Jehovah is the name most frequently used. (Nathan J. Stone's small paperback book, *The Names of God* [Moody Press], is a jewel.) Each of the other divine names reveals a facet of God's character, that we might see Him in His fullness. *El* or *Elohim* expresses the power of God. We find this name in Genesis 1:1 since Creation demonstrates His power. *El Shaddai*, the Almighty God, is an even stronger emphasis of His power. *Adonai*, the plural form of *Adon*, carries with it the concept of authority. *Adon* is used of man to refer to him as the lord of his own home. *Adonai* is the God who wields authority.

2. *There is a trinity in every pagan religion. Christianity has been paganized by the introduction of the trinity.* It is true that many pagan religions have a trinity of gods. Babylon and Egypt are examples. The devil has always corrupted that which is true. The question is: Did the church accept the pagan concept of a trinity, or has the genuine trinity been distorted by a satanically inspired counterfeit?

3. *Anyone knows that a father is older than his son. Only the Father is eternal Jehovah God. The Son came into being later and cannot be Jehovah.* This objection demonstrates a lack of knowledge about the plan of salvation. The Father-Son relationship in the New Testament must always be understood in the light of the event of Bethlehem. The only child born into this world with a divine, rather than a human, father is Jesus. The title, “Son,” refers to His entry into time and does not deny at all His eternal origin. There are references in the Old Testament to Sonship, but these are always in anticipation of the Incarnation.

4. *Jesus Himself admitted that the Father was greater than He (see John 14:28).* Jesus told the truth; His Father was greater. Everything that Jesus did while living as a human being on this earth was through the power of His Father (see John 14:10). But, again, those who raise this objection do not understand the plan of salvation. When the second person of the Godhead became a man, He laid aside His essential equality and took a subordinate position by His own sovereign choice (see Phil. 2:5-11). At His ascension, Jesus was glorified and resumed His proper place at the Father's right hand.

5. *The Bible clearly teaches that there is one God, not three.* This is true; there are not three Gods. The Bible teaches that there is one God, or Godhead (*theotēs*) composed of three persons. The Old Testament as well as the New sustains the plurality of persons within the one Godhead. In Genesis 1:1, God introduces Himself in the plural form (*‘Elohim*). Plural

forms of pronouns (*us* and *our*) are used even in Jewish publications of the English Old Testament when God speaks of Himself (see Gen. 1:26). “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30).

6. *John 3:16 clearly states that the Son was “begotten” (K.J.V.). This is the same word used to convey the idea of giving birth or existence.* This unfortunate translation of the word *monogenēs* is one that no modern translation of the Bible has perpetuated. *Monogenēs* means “unique, one of a kind.” “To be only begotten” would call for using a different Greek word.

Why did the translators of the King James Version use the phrase, “only begotten”? They relied heavily in their work on the Latin Vulgate of Jerome. Jerome lived at a time when the Christological controversy was raging in the church. Instead of translating *monogenēs* into the Latin word *unicus*, meaning “only or unique,” Jerome thought to aid the cause of truth by choosing the word *unigenitus*, meaning “only begotten.” He wanted to strengthen the doctrine that the Son was of one substance with the Father. However, Jerome's maneuver backfired. The Arians quickly exploited his error. Instead of focusing on the nature of Christ, they used his wording to prove that Christ had an origin. A well-intended action has been used by Satan to perpetuate error.

7. *Colossians 1:15, 18 clearly says that Jesus is the “first-born” (prototokos). This is the same word used in Matthew 1:25 regarding Jesus being Mary's first child.* There are no simple answers to this objection. The passage has always been a perplexity. *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, volume 7, page 191, discusses the passage in some detail, but no final answers are forthcoming. When much evidence in the rest of the Bible points to the eternal nature of Christ, it is difficult to accept that this text proves He had an origin. Sound exegesis of any text requires that it agree with the totality of Scripture.

Perhaps the problem can be resolved partially, if not totally, by recognizing the difficulty of conveying Jewish thought in Greek words. Paul is discussing preeminence, not origins. The firstborn had rights and privileges denied to others. He received a double portion of the inheritance (Deut. 21:17; Col. 1:12) and was in the position of greatest importance. When Christ is called the “first-born” from the dead (Col. 1:18), this is not to say that He

was the first individual to rise from the dead. Moses, the daughter of Jairus, Lazarus, and others died and were raised again to life before Jesus' resurrection. But the meaning of Colossians 1:18 is that these prior resurrections pale into insignificance compared to the resurrection of Jesus; they are meaningless without His glorious triumph over death. Likewise, verse 15 emphasizes preeminence rather than origin. Those who apply it otherwise are missing the apostle's point.

The basic issue raised by Lucifer in heaven revolved around the position of the Son. Without doubt Lucifer was a created being, yet he wanted to sit with God on His throne (see Eze. 28:15; Isa. 14:12-14). Why was he denied? Was it not because he was not God's equal? God could not share His throne with a created being. Only equals share thrones. Prince Philip does not sit with Queen Elizabeth II of England upon her throne. He is her husband, but he is only a prince. He is not her equal in rank. The Lord Jesus Christ sits with His Father on His throne (Heb. 1:3). He is God's equal (Phil. 2:6).

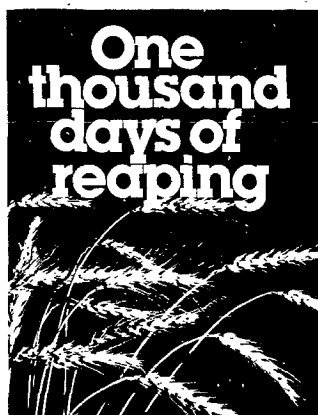
If the Son were a created or begotten creature—even if He were the very first of such creatures, and no matter how far back into eternity that event took place—He would still be a creature. Could one “created being” sit upon God's throne as an equal while Lucifer, another created being, is denied that privilege? In such a case God would be guilty of discrimination; He would be showing respect of persons, which He Himself declares to be sin (see James 2:9). Lucifer would have a valid argument against God.

The truth that Lucifer stumbled over in the beginning was the eternal nature and equality of the Father and the Son. Arianism reflects his thinking.

This, then, we can believe. The eternal, omnipotent Jehovah came down to earth to become one with us. In His humanity He died for us; in His resurrection He conquered death for us and blazed the way for us to His Father's side. Someday soon we shall stand before His throne and be with Him at the Father's hand, where we shall praise the glory of His name forever. His name is Jesus, Jehovah God.

* All Scripture quotations are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright 1952, 1971, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

Continuously, Jesus applied the divine “I AM” to Himself. “I am the living Bread, the Light, the Door, the Shepherd, the Resurrection, the Way, the Truth, the Life.” He did not say, “I have life,” but “I am Life.”



It is time to proclaim to all the world that Jesus is coming soon! If we do not respond to the call of God at this crucial hour, who will? If we do not tell the good news, who will?

Robert L. Dale

If not you—who?

Just before returning to heaven, Jesus met with His disciples on Mount Olivet for the last time and commissioned them with the most important task ever given to human beings. It must have been thrilling to hear with one's own ears Christ speak these words of promise: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Here was a command charged with power that must not be evaded. Here is a command that rings down from the days of the disciples to our own! Every member of the remnant church is called by God to proclaim the good news of salvation.

God could bestow no greater honor on His people than to ask us to share with Him the proclamation of the good news. All heaven is interested in this great endeavor. Every angel desires to be involved in revealing God's love. But this precious responsibility is reserved for man, because he alone can tell the story from a personal perspective. He alone knows the joy of experiencing God's love in a world of sin.

Many people are waiting to hear the good news of God's love, even though they don't realize it. They find life filled with perplexities and problems that they cannot solve. You and I have a message that provides the answers to these questions. Now is the time—indeed it is past time—for God's church to awaken and respond to the open doors around us. Now is the time for Faith Action Advance. The means are available. The workers are prepared. God's gifts are abundantly supplied by His Holy

Spirit. We need to follow the leading of Christ with an open and willing heart. When we are willing to be used completely by God, the work will soon be finished. Within the North American Division territory, every level of the church, as well as every organization, must accept the responsibility to plan for the vigorous advancement of God's cause. If we personally and corporately accept the challenge of His commission, God will give His church success.

During the 1981 Annual Council the leaders of the church voted to respond to God's commission for His church by placing an emphasis on One Thousand Days of Reaping prior to the 1985 General Conference session. All of God's people are called to become involved in evangelism and nurturing as a way of life. We must willingly accept the challenge of using every gift God has given us for the fulfillment of our task. There is no imperative that should occupy the church and its leaders more than evangelism.

God Himself places an eschatological emphasis on our task. John the revelator pictured God's people fulfilling their mission as an angel flying "in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth" (Rev. 14:6). No hesitancy is portrayed in this scene. As we read this passage a vital urgency is transmitted to us; we respond, "Here am I; send me" (Isa. 6:8).

God desires all of His disciples to use their God-given gifts now to aid in completing the assigned task. Each pastor should joyfully accept the privilege of leading his congregation into fulfilling their evangelistic potential. Conference administrators need to take their places as leaders to guide in the full use of resources

within their field, for the purpose of fulfilling the Lord's commission. The Lord clearly points out the duty of each leader who serves Him: "Those who stand as leaders in the church of God are to realize that the Saviour's commission is given to all who believe in His name."—*Christian Service*, p. 68. Therefore, plans need to be developed that will challenge every member to be a positive witness for Christ in this present climactic hour. Jesus is waiting to send any help we need, for He has assured us of success. He said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. . . . And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20).

Won't you take time right now to bow your head and ask your Master to help you to be a productive worker for Jesus as you personally plan ways to become involved in the One Thousand Days of Reaping? The appeal is not from me; it is not merely from your church. The appeal is from God Himself, who said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

If we do not respond to the call of God at this crucial hour, *who will?* If we do not tell the good news, *who will?* If not you—who?

It is time to go home to heaven. It is time for Jesus to come. It is time for all of God's people to be involved in carrying out the commission He has given to His church. It is time for us to accept seriously the responsibility that God has placed upon us individually. It is time to develop plans that will give success to the Thousand Days of Reaping. It is time to proclaim to all people everywhere with a "loud voice" the good news that Jesus loves them and is coming soon to take them home.

If not you—who?

Robert Dale is administrative assistant to the vice-president of the General Conference for North America.

What's wrong with being a pastor?

If Jesus had spent His earthly ministry in our church, we probably wouldn't think He amounted to much. He never became a conference president, and when He "retired" He was still pastor of a small church.

The obvious answer is "Nothing!" There's nothing wrong with being a pastor! In fact, it's great! Unfortunately, our system of church organization has not always assigned the pastor the place of foremost value and recognition. In fact, pastors have not always viewed themselves in the proper light. I don't believe for a moment that we have knowingly done this. But like the second law of thermodynamics that tells us that time causes decay and disorganization, we have allowed time and events to erode the pastoral image from that of the highest calling God can give to something that is less than all-important.

At the same time, the importance of the individual member has eluded us as well. Let me illustrate: On an elevator in the General Conference North Building, I introduced myself to a stranger and asked his name. His immediate response was to remark timidly, "I am only a layman."

I blurted back, "Brother, don't ever say you are *only* a layman! If it weren't for you, and others like you, we wouldn't have this elevator, much less this building or any other building in this complex!"

I have heard similar responses from workers who when asked about their duties reply, "I am only a pastor!" This answer makes me feel sick, and I ask, "What has leadership done to create such an attitude on the part of those who are absolutely indispensable to our church?" Administrators, departmental leaders, teachers, editors, et cetera, may not be absolutely essential, but the pastor and his congregation are!

What has caused this despicable system of false values? Why is it that we unconsciously question a man's success as a minister if after forty years he retires from a pastorate without ever having done anything except be a pastor? Why is our usual attitude, "I wonder why he never succeeded?" Succeeded in what? "Well, I mean he never was a departmental man or an administrator, or whatever. Evidently, he didn't have what it took to rise above a pastorate!"

Why can't we somehow place the proper valuation on the skills and dedication necessary to be a truly good, effective pastor? If we properly understood this

matter, I am convinced our attitude would be something like this: "Yes, some have to settle for being administrators, departmental directors, teachers, editors, et cetera. These positions are necessary, and someone must fill them. Not everyone has the ability and calling to be a pastor; some must serve in less-demanding positions!"

Simple logic dictates that the existence and maintenance of a healthy church depend more upon the individual pastor than upon any other church employee, including the president of a local, union, or division conference or mission. The smallest, but most important, unit in our denominational system (aside from the individual member) is the church—the local congregation with its pastor. A church with its pastor can exist and function without presidents, secretaries, treasurers, departmental personnel, et cetera. But these individuals cannot exist apart from the local congregation!

This is *not* to say that any structure other than the local church is useless and unnecessary. On the contrary! The purpose of our organization is to bring strength to the churches. Furthermore, an organization such as ours can accomplish far more, in terms of a world outreach, than if each church were left on its own.

A strictly congregational form of church government has serious limitations, and had Seventh-day Adventists followed this plan, the scope of our world mission would have been seriously hampered. Small as we are numerically, we have a far-flung empire of churches, schools, hospitals, clinics, and institutions, made possible primarily because of our system. Without our God-given, unique organization, we would have a haphazard sprinkling of independent church units scattered here and there, united by fragile ties of impulse. Those few among us who are lobbying for congregationalism need to consider the consequences in terms of our ability to do anything really significant that demands the cooperation of our whole sisterhood of churches.

Still, the suprastructure of the church cannot exist without the support of the individual churches. What is a local

conference? It is an organized group of churches with pastors within certain geographical boundaries. The union is simply an expansion of the territory, and so with the division—but the basic, irreducible element in our entire structure is the pastor and his congregation. Eliminate him and his church, and our structure topples into oblivion. All, including myself, would be plunged into idleness, except pastors. (I fear some of us already are in a state of busy idleness.)

When I consider the low estimate often placed on the pastorate, I wonder how we would have classified Jesus had He come to earth as a man in our day. No office, no secretary, no position, no title, no budget, no equipment. Someone has said, "He had no credentials but Himself." Could it be that our present-day Adventist system of values would categorize Jesus as a total failure? After all, here was a Man who was always saying or doing something to cause problems. He did not identify Himself with the people who were influential in the church, but of all things associated with thieves, whores, lepers, and the handicapped. He even conversed and ate with those who were detested because of their racial background. When all is said and done, this Jesus can be classified only as an itinerant pastor—a circuit rider without a horse. Palestine was His territory. He worked hard as a shepherd of souls for several years before being killed. The strange thing about it all is that He aspired to no higher position than being a pastor—even unto death. No doubt Peter had in mind the Saviour's example in pastoral work when he wrote: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly . . . neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Peter 5:2-4).

Certainly, Christ's work falls in a pastoral category more than anything else. True, He was the chief administrator of the twelve, but He led these men in a far different way than men are being led today. I do not mean to be critical, and

perhaps it is impossible to perform our function as administrators in any other way. But Christ constantly led men by showing them personally how to seek, save, nurture, and uplift precious souls. He never sat down and wrote letters of instruction to the disciples; He gave them on-the-job training.

Neither did Christ follow the role of a departmental leader. We have no record of His sending out bulletins on various phases of the work. He never projected statistical goals or printed comparison lists to show where each disciple stood in terms of performance. Jesus was a Shepherd. He had a true pastor's heart. He was concerned over the welfare of the sheep, and He conveyed that concern to His associates who learned so well at His feet, His side, in the marketplace, in the homes, on the hillside. Wherever Jesus went was a training center. He was a seminary on legs. He carried the library with Him in trees and sky, bird and animal, and, of course, the Scriptures.

Could it be that specialization has become so attractive to us because we desire to escape the heavy responsibility of being a pastor? Pastoring is not easy, especially today, with so many complex problems to deal with—divorce, adultery, abortion, drugs, rebellion, and a spirit of independence. Pastoring is a hard and hazardous duty. It demands courage, and challenges the very best in the minister. Paul worked tirelessly as a soul-winning pastor. At the same time he was a persuasive orator, a matchless theologian, and met every hazard possible, including his final one—execution. Yet he was ever a pastor, with “the care of all the churches” on his shoulders. He was a true pattern for today's pastors.

It might seem easier to join the ranks of the administrators, but, believe me, the faithful administrator today does not walk a smooth, rose-strewn path of ease! Too often he is the punching bag for the rebellious and insolent.

Then there is departmental work, and in a sense it is easier than being in the pastorate. A departmental leader can skip and bound over the field, leaving church problems behind for the pastor to worry about. But he pays a price for this type of activity. Usually he forms no long-lasting relationships. He lives like a man without a country. I know whereof I speak, for I sense my own need of staying with a group on a long-term basis, where I can form deep relationships. Another problem the departmental leader faces is that it can be much more difficult to maintain mental and even spiritual growth in such a situation than it is in a pastorate where one is forced to feed the sheep a well-balanced diet on a weekly basis over a long period of time. The departmental person can get away with a few sermons a year, since his

congregation changes every Sabbath. So if you are a pastor looking for greener pastures instead of staying with the sheep on a permanent basis, be careful lest you end up in a rather lonely desert of isolation.

Why, then, do we count it such a horrendous calamity if a person in an elected position becomes a church pastor again, either by choice or by not being reelected when the constituency feels that a change is needed? How often I have heard of nominating committees that were loath to replace a particular leader because no other elected position was available, and it was quite unthinkable for him to lose face and become a pastor again! This was regarded as a step down. Interestingly enough, the individual who had to “step down” to the pastorate was probably proclaiming a few days earlier how important and sacred the work of the pastor is! Nothing equaled in meaning and significance the exalted position of the pastor until the speaker “stepped down” to the pastorate. How I wish this situation did not exist! But I would be less than honest if I tried to deny it.

One of the results of our failure as a church to build the pastor and to help him sense the importance of his work is the lack of strong men in pastoral positions. This is not to say that we do not have strong pastors, but frankly there is a shortage of them. Too many times I have been called to recommend someone to fill the pulpit of a large church. Sometimes these larger churches are open for months at a time before a strong, organized, powerfully preaching, soul-winning pastor can be found. Could it be that we have allowed some of our strongest men to go into other types of work? Important as these may be, nothing is as important as shepherding the sheep. We cannot deny the fact that we do need qualified leadership for administrative posts, but can't we do something that will create a better image of the pastor? I think we can. I am going to list only a few items, but I invite our readers, especially pastors, to send me additional points that you feel will help enhance your position and ministry as a faithful pastor in the eyes of the church and your sheep. I do not list these necessarily in the order of importance:

1. Wage scale imbalances. Some years ago our present General Conference leader, Elder N. C. Wilson, who at the

time was the North American Division president, attempted to introduce wage parity. Our wage-scale system has a rather subtle, insidious status symbolism in it. Sometimes committees labor long and loud to increase the remuneration package of a particular job by one or two points to show its importance. The small amounts involved in these additional points indicate that it surely cannot be the money that is the major factor, but rather it is the status that is involved. A quick look at the wage scale indicates that there are literally dozens of positions in this church that exceed in pay what the top ordained pastor can reach. I believe that a qualified pastor should be able to reach the highest wage level this church offers ordained ministers. If this means wage parity, so let it be.

2. Greater representation on committees and boards. Let the pastor's voice be heard. Let him know that he has a brain to think and a mind to conceive ideas that may bring solutions to the problems we face. After all, the man in the field should have a grasp of the reality of life, and should be the best judge of any program conceived by those in the office.

3. Pastoral budgets to be cut last. When financial reverses come to a conference, do not swing the ax of budget reductions at pastoral budgets first, but eliminate office jobs before eliminating a pastor's job. Let the pastorate budgets be the last to be cut.

4. Give priority to the pastor's work. Put into practice the various elements that relate to the pastor and his work as listed in “The Finishing of the Work” document voted at the 1976 Annual Council. These include: clarifying the pastor's role and freeing him from peripheral matters so that he can concentrate on his major duties of spiritual nurture and evangelism.

Finally, a word to pastors. The church does not always demonstrate practically the high regard she professes for the pastor and his sacred work. Yet, you know, as no others can, that the delights and rewards of the parish pastor are truly unequalled. May God help you to look upon your work as the work that is most similar to that performed by Jesus Himself. Carry out your work in such a way that if you could borrow another life to spend again, you would spend it ministering in the pastorate.—J.R.S.

*What has caused this system of false values?
Why is it that we unconsciously question
a man's success as a minister if after forty years
he retires from a pastorate without ever
having done anything except be a pastor?*

The holding pattern

Like a circling jet waiting to land, sometimes our lives seem to be in a holding pattern. But we can gain courage as we examine God's holding pattern displayed in the lives of Elisabeth and Esther.



The many people who travel the airways of the world these days have become familiar with that peculiar, frightening situation just before landing when the plane levels, begins to circle, and seems almost to stop. One feels it cannot possibly stay in the air a moment longer. An atmosphere builds up as one by one books and magazines are put away, talking and chatter dies down, and armrests are tightly gripped. Then the voice of the captain is heard saying, "Ladies and gentlemen, we are in a holding pattern. We will just have to stay up here and circle around a bit until we get word from the control tower to land." Everyone sits back and relaxes; perhaps some begin to chat knowingly about the "holding pattern." That's an interesting phrase, and a significant one. As we think about it, we can see in our lives and in the lives of other Christians these "holding patterns"—God's holding patterns.

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The Scriptures give illustrations of those long ago who found themselves in these situations—wonderful stories preserved and recorded to help us understand God's ways of dealing with people, and with us personally. God is always the same. He has promised us that He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Those whom He placed in "holding patterns" for a time came at last to see the wisdom of His leading. We can gain courage from their experiences.

There is, for instance, the story found in the first chapter of Luke. High in the hill country of Judea was the home of Zacharias the priest and his wife, Elisabeth. They were no longer young, but apparently they had enjoyed a happy life together. Only one shadow fell across their saintly lives, and that was that they were childless. They had no son to carry on the family name or the priestly office of the father. But that disappointment belonged to the long-ago past and was, perhaps, almost forgotten as they consoled themselves with the many promises of God's love. Then came the great day when God had predestined the New Testament era to open. Zacharias had left home and gone to Jerusalem to perform his service as a minister in the holy place of the Temple. It was there that the angel Gabriel appeared to the startled and frightened priest, and when he spoke, he

said strange things. "Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John" (Luke 1:13). "God has chosen you and Elisabeth," said the angel, "to be the parents of this precious child, the greatest of all the prophets, the forerunner of the Messiah."

But Zacharias couldn't believe it. If it had come thirty years before, that would have been wonderful, but not now. It was too late now, and besides the whole idea was quite impossible. Fear turned to doubt, and doubt to disbelief. As the story unfolds, we see dumbness, Zacharias' baby's birth, the loosening of Zacharias' tongue, and the joy and happiness of Elisabeth and her friends.

All those long years filled with prayers and waiting. Yes, even when they had ceased at last from that prayer and turned to other things, *all* that time the answer had been ready. God had something special, a special answer, for these two dear people. But He was waiting for just the right time for it to be made known to them. He had them in His holding pattern, and He knew He could trust them there.

That holding pattern was necessary because although Zacharias and Elisabeth had been ready for a long time, two other people in God's wonderful plan were not. Zacharias, Elisabeth, and John the Baptist

had to wait until a young couple up in Nazareth—Joseph and Mary—were ready to be the parents of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you see the beauty of God's holding pattern? Zacharias' prayer was for a son; God's plan was for a forerunner for His Son. As soon as His plan and Zacharias' prayer synchronized, the prayer was answered.

We, too, are held at times in a holding pattern of prayer. We pray long and earnestly, often with pleading and tears, but there is no answer. Does God forget or fail to hear? Of course not. He has heard each prayer, and He will patiently lead us (if we let Him) to the place where His purpose and our prayers come together. Then the joyful, wonderful word will come from the control tower of heaven.

What if the pilot in a plane decided not to wait for word from the control tower? What if he didn't wait in that holding pattern? The result could be disaster. Why? Because the pilot knows only about his plane; the control tower has the whole picture.

We find another illustration in the Old Testament in the book of Esther.

It has been said that the book of Esther is the perfect historical novel. It has all the ingredients—love, hatred, revenge, intrigue, anti-Semitism, ghettos—the lot! But the book of Esther is *not* a novel; it is God's Holy Word, and it reveals Him behind the scenes patiently planning and caring for His children and bringing to naught the work of evil men.

The story is well known, so we will pick it up where Queen Vashti has disobeyed and displeased King Ahasuerus. That despotic man was now looking for a new wife. His counselors very quickly began to advise the king. They were afraid women's liberation would spread throughout the land!

We tend to think that beauty con-

tests—Miss U.S.A., Miss World, et cetera—are something peculiar to our modern era. But just read of the one described in the book of Esther. It's all there—the wardrobes, the grooming, the cosmetics, and chaperones, right down to the last detail.

Then Esther, the very beautiful young cousin of Mordecai the Jew, is brought to the palace. We are not sure (and it is useless to conjecture) why she entered this competition. Apparently she was a most reluctant entrant. We know, however, that in spite of her reluctance and because of her overall loveliness, Esther was chosen queen.

Thus lovely young Esther was put in a most undesired position that was alien to her nature. She must often have said to herself, "What am I doing here?" But beyond the lust and tyranny of the king, behind the scheming of the courtiers, was the hand of God, controlling and weaving the pattern of events.

Esther was a Jewess, though she had not revealed this, and had been brought up to worship the God of heaven. Now, through no desire or action of her own, she found herself in a heathen palace, in the midst of unnameable wickedness, at the mercy of an unpredictable tyrant. She must often have wondered why she was brought to such a position.

Then at last, God's holding pattern for her life suddenly becomes clear. There is to be a massacre of her people, the Jews, with all its accompanying horrors. Mordecai sends a message to Esther, "You must intervene with the king on our behalf." Her reaction is understandable: "I can't; I'm out of favor, and the king will kill me if I go in uninvited."

Then come the key words of the whole story "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14).

There is Esther's holding pattern. God had placed her in that baffling, unwanted

position because He needed her there at a particular time, for a particular purpose, and no one else would do.

Let's leave the story of Esther and come back to today.

Often we find ourselves in places and circumstances quite outside our own control. We didn't plan it, we don't want it, but there we are. For some, this can be extremely frustrating and even lead to a breakdown of faith. But suppose these trying situations are God's holding patterns? May He not, in His wisdom, have put us precisely where we are for a particular time, for a particular reason? Can we not trust that word will come from the control tower at exactly the right moment for us?

In these days it is inevitable that many undesirable things will break into our lives. Sorrow no doubt will come, or has come, to all of us. Some will experience loneliness, sickness, perhaps delays in answer to prayers; maybe some will be plagued with doubt and questionings. These are like heavy mists that close in about us and seem to separate us from God. But could they, too, be God's holding patterns in our lives? At such times, think of the One in the heavenly control tower; remember that our God is an omnipotent God, One with whom nothing is impossible. He is also an omnipresent God and an omniscient One. But above and beyond this, remember that He is also a heavenly *Father* of infinite tenderness and love. Never, not even for a moment, does He forget us or forsake us.

"Like the stars in the vast circuit of their appointed path, God's purposes know no haste and no delay."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 32.

One day, in His perfect timing, He will bring us out of our holding patterns and the answer to all our questionings will come—answers that will be far more abundant and above all that we can ask or even think. The mists will rise, and we will see as God sees.

Prayers from the parsonage

Rob and Diane sat close, fingers entwined. When one spoke joyously about their upcoming marriage, the other listened intently, eyes adoring. Now and then, they'd squeeze hands and smile lovingly at each other.

For the first time I noticed that Dick and I were at opposite ends of the room. Instead of focusing on ourselves, we listened to *them*, our children interrupting everyone's thoughts from time to time.

What a difference, I thought with some envy, between these two radiant young people and us "old marrieds!" But inwardly I knew that I wouldn't exchange the

romantic time of courtship or even the exciting discoveries of newlywed days for the warmth and happiness I know now.

Thank You, Lord, for our marriage. Dick and I have created our own home with personal traditions, our own friendships with people we both like, and have had a part in creating our own children with unique personalities.

Life together is not without conflicts, but over the years we've worked out compromises for differing viewpoints, interests, and habits. I'd hate to think of starting over with someone who didn't really know me!

We've shared success and failure, joy and sorrow, health and illness. Tragedies have come, but we have survived.

Advancements have come, but we haven't forgotten the days when we worked our way through graduate school.

And thank You for my husband, Lord. Who else knows all my faults but keeps them private? Who else sings my praises with such devotion? Who else can set me laughing with just a knowing look? Would anyone else listen so well to my daring dreams and brooding questions?

A confidant, a companion, a lover—what more could I ask? "I will let my womanhood be a blessing, and I will rejoice in the husband of my youth." "For surely, to live happily with the man you love through the fleeting days of life is the best reward on earth" (Prov. 5:18; Eccl. 9:9, paraphrased).

Cherry B. Habenicht

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

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- Evangelistic lessons, sample set of 30
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- Camera-ready copy for: reserved-seat invitation, prayer-covenant card, interest-information card, twelve separate decision cards, offering envelope, Prophecy Lectures letterhead, newspaper ads.
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- Ticket books, used for taking attendance and organizing for visitation, \$35.00 per hundred (56698-4).
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The Andrews University Seminar on Conflict Management will help you develop skills in intrapersonal and intergroup conflict relations and increase your awareness of human-relation issues within the church.

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- Speed Leas, director of consultation for the Alban Institute, Inc., and author of *Church Fights Time Management*.
- Warren S. Banfield, director, Office of Human Relations, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
- Des Cummings, director, Institute of Church Ministry, Andrews University.
- Roger Dudley, associate director, Institute of Church Ministry, Andrews University.
- Arnold Kurtz, professor of

church leadership and administration, Andrews University.

- Eloy Martinez, associate director, Office of Human Relations, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
- Reger Smith, vice-president for student affairs, Andrews University.

For registration or further details, write: Institute of Church Ministry, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan 49104. Phone: (616) 471-3575.

E. G. White laser index

A new, unabridged word index for all published and released Ellen G. White writings is now available on laser disc. The system is compatible with your own TV screen, and includes a quality video-disc recorder, as well as five unbreakable discs. (Each disc has the equivalent of 100,000 pages of printed matter.) Order from: Select Video Products, 2436 Oak Street, Bakersfield, California 93301. Phone: (805) 322-5053 or your local ABC.

Update on Ellen White

A typed transcript of the

March Aspire Tape of the Month selection "E. G. White's Literary Work: An Update" is available for \$1 from the Ellen G. White Estate, 6840 Eastern Ave., NW., Washington, D.C. 20012. The transcript consists of a series of four morning worship talks given at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists by Ron Graybill, associate secretary of the White Estate. Also included are copies of overhead transparencies used during the talks.

Quest seminars

Quest Learning Center is dedicated to the healing of homosexual people and is com-

mitted to the idea that deliverance from homosexuality is a real possibility through the grace of God. Quest is conducting a program of continuing seminars designed for Christian professionals and laity who have an interest in ministering redemptively to people involved in homosexuality, either through personal contact or through developing a church ministry. The seminars offer twenty hours of training during five days; the cost is \$100. For seminar schedules and further information, write or call: Quest Learning Center, P.O. Box 7881, Reading, Pennsylvania 19603. Phone: (215) 376-1146.

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Recommended reading

The landmark book "Understanding Church Growth and Decline" analyzes the major research on trends in growth and participation among the mainline U.S. Protestant churches during a quarter century.

Practical Hermeneutics: A Revised Agenda for the Ministry

Charles E. Winquist, Scholars Press, 101 Salem Street, Chico, California 95926, 1980, 94 pages. Reviewed by Reginald N. Shires, pastor, Takoma Park, Maryland.

Winquist, like most Christian workers, sees the church involved in caring for people. "The theology of glory is internally related to the theology of the cross," he says. "We can attend to what is invisible only by starting with what is visible." This means that the church, while attempting a preaching ministry, must also be concerned with the symbols of liturgy, Biblical teachings, and psychological counseling to give meaning to life by rightly interpreting what is experienced. The church then becomes a place where there is an atmosphere in which change for the better takes place in the life of people. Winquist often refers to the conversion experience, where this change takes place. "Conversion," he says, "is the turning event that transforms the meaning of ministry from a secular to a religious concept."

Understanding Church Growth and Decline, 1950-1978

Dean R. Hoge and David A. Roozen, editors, The Pilgrim Press, New York, New York, 1979, 398 pages, \$8.95, paper. Reviewed by Roger L. Dudley, assistant professor of church ministry, Andrews University.

"Do not open your mouth about trends and patterns in church membership and participation unless you have read this book," writes Martin E. Marty. I would concur. This is a landmark book, analyzing all the major research on the trends in growth and participation and the causal factors among the mainline Protestant churches in the United States during the past quarter century. The contributors to its sixteen chapters include some of the most prestigious names in the field: Sociologists Jackson Carroll, David Roozen, Dean Hoge, Dean Kelley, and Wade Clark Roof; Church Historians Martin Marty and James Smylie; Theologian Robert Evans; and Church Consultants Peter Wagner, Douglas Walrath, and Lyle Schaller.

Most mainline churches have experienced a decline since the 1960s, after nearly a century of steady growth. In seeking explanations, the editors have

identified two main categories: contextual (outside the church) and institutional (inside the church). Each of these is divided into national factors (affecting the whole denomination) and local factors (affecting individual congregations), giving a fourfold framework to the book.

The chief national contextual factors involved center in a larger value shift in our society in the direction of individualism, personal freedom, and tolerance of diversity. This shift most profoundly affects young adults and the college-educated. There is a lack of commitment to all institutions, including the church.

In the study of national institutional factors, the growth rate of the sixteen largest denominations in the United States were compared with a number of their beliefs and practices. Readers will be interested in how the Seventh-day Adventist Church contributed to this analysis, and all members of conservative churches will have much to ponder. Chapter 8 is worth the price of the book. The authors concluded that those denominations "which strongly emphasized local evangelism, maintained a distinctive lifestyle and morality apart from the mainstream culture, maintained a unitary set of beliefs, and de-emphasized social action and ecumenism were the ones that grew" (p. 323).

The most important local contextual factors concern the socioeconomic status of the neighborhoods, while the chief local institutional factors have to do with lay satisfaction with the worship and program and the congregational harmony and cooperation.

Throughout the book a scholarly battle rages over the relative importance of contextual versus institutional factors in church growth and decline. The editors and most of their colleagues support contextual factors, claiming that they contribute 50 to 70 percent, while institutional factors contribute only 30 to 50 percent. Kelley and Wagner disagree. The majority claim, and much of the thrust of the book led me to feel, that the emphasis on contextual factors is, to some extent, an attempt to get the mainline churches off the hook. Evans' plea that there must be a creative balance between faithfulness and effectiveness is well reasoned but may be viewed in some aspects as a rationalization

for the failure of churches to proclaim the gospel persuasively.

More serious are the statistical techniques employed to establish the superiority of contextual factors. The knowledgeable reader will recognize that the results require the assumption that contextual factors are causally prior, and that a different assumption would result in different findings. This criticism, however, with other valid critiques, has already been made by Dean Kelley in his concluding commentary. This excellent chapter (worth the book) deals with the most serious criticism—the book is more a study of decline than growth because of its focus on mainline churches and its virtual ignoring of vital newer movements.

Nevertheless there is much thought-provoking material here—far more than a brief review can even touch upon. The second chapter, which looks at factors influencing church commitment, will be especially valuable. This book is a must for students of the institutional church.

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