

ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE

SPIRIT OF
PROPHECY
COUNSELS
ON SELF-
SUPPORTING
WORK

ARTHUR L. WHITE

Spirit of Prophecy
Counsels on
Self-Supporting Work

Ellen G. White

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Overview

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About the Author

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

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Presented by Arthur L. White for the Association of Seventh-day
Adventist Self-Supporting Institutions

The material presented here was given by Elder Arthur L. White, Secretary of the Ellen G. White Estate, at a Biennial Convention of the Association of Seventh-day Adventist Self-Supporting Institutions in Loma Linda, California, September 16 and 17, 1959.

Arthur L. White, Secretary
The Ellen G. White Estate

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Part I—What Hath God Wrought

Originally published in *Adventist Review*, June 11, 1981

As I have been with you during the past day, I have thought again and again that if Ellen White were here, surely she would declare, “What hath God wrought!”

From my boyhood days I have memories of a subject that was of primary interest in our home. That subject was the self-supporting work in the great Southland. My father was ordained to the ministry at the age of 29. He became a member of the General Conference Committee the next year in 1884. He served on that committee for 53 years until his death at the age of 83. The White family have been very close to every phase of the work of the denomination, operating not alone in the lines of administration of the church and its direct evangelistic program, but in medical, educational and publishing areas. But these interests never obscured the interests in the work which was being done by noble, consecrated families who were directly employed in the promulgating of the message of the soon-coming Saviour.

Just as familiar in our home conversation as the names of Daniells, Loughborough, Evans, Spicer, Westphal and Anderson were the names of Sutherland, Magan, Brallier, DeGraw, and Druilard. Every time my father made a trip east, and he found that he could swing down through the Southland, he did so. And on his return home we would eagerly await for the Friday evening or the Sabbath afternoon hour where, around the open fireplace, we would hear of the latest exploits—the struggles and the successes of the Walens, the Ards, the Mulfords, the Wests, the Wallers, the Jaspersons. We wept as we learned of the hardships and difficulties. We

rejoiced in their successes and their triumphs. One of my first tasks in the “Elmshaven” office as a boy, as I put in a few afterschool hours, was the setting of the type for a letterpress communication which had been built around a letter written by Mrs. Walen in gratitude for some clothing and bedding donated by some families on the West Coast for the use of needy families in the South. My father gave it the title of “The Story of a Blanket”. We followed that blanket through its experiences in the South where it was finally made into fomentation cloths and carried to the homes of the people and eventually worn to shreds in its helpful ministry.

As I speak to you today—a group of men and women who are knit together in the Association of self-supporting Institutions—I feel I am speaking as one who knows something of the self-supporting work. On the completion of my course in business administration at Pacific Union College and my subsequent marriage, Mrs. White and I accepted an invitation to serve in the business office at Madison College. I was assistant to the accountant, George Fuller, and Mrs. White was secretary, first to Miss Bessie DeGraw, and later to Dr. Sutherland. It was after spending a year in Madison College, as employees in this parent self-supporting institution, that I was called to assist my aging father in his work of the custody of the Ellen G. White writings. My interest in self-supporting work has ever been keen. I feel that I am one of you, for I have sat in the councils, and I have participated in the activities of self-supporting workers. It was with rejoicing that we observed the bettering of an understanding on the part of self-supporting workers, of what was being spoken of as the organized work of the church; and observed what was being accomplished by the self-supporting workers in winning the fuller recognition of the Seventh-day Adventist leaders for the contributions which were being made by this group of laborers.

I take pleasure this morning in speaking to you on the topic assigned to me—“The Spirit of Prophecy Counsels on Self-supporting Work”. It is these counsels which have called into being this ever-growing line of useful services. It is these counsels which form the charter of the self-supporting work, and they might be referred to as the license under which, within the framework of the organization of the church, the various branches of self-supporting work operate as an integral part of the work of the church.

The Spirit of Prophecy counsels encourage, justify, support and defend the various lines of soul-winning work conducted by workers who are responsible for their own financial support. These counsels direct to certain specific lines of labor most profitable for such workers. They caution against a restraining hand upon such work when it is properly conducted. Beyond this, I find no special counsels delineating minutely how the self-supporting worker shall labor. There are not two lines of Spirit of Prophecy counsel—one for the worker in regular denominational employ and the other for the worker who is self-supporting. There is not one line of instruction on how the self-supporting sanitarium shall be operated and another line of counsel for those who operate a conference-owned sanitarium. The work is one. The objectives are one. The methods are the same.

The world must be warned, and to accomplish this Ellen White sets forth the picture of the utilization of the total forces of the church—regularly employed workers giving their full time and strength to the work and those who while earning a livelihood do all they are able to hasten the work. For, wrote Ellen White in the [Pacific Union Recorder, March 24, 1904](#):

“It is not alone by men in the high places of responsibility in the ministry, not alone by men holding positions on boards or committees, not alone by the managers of our sanitariums and publishing houses, that the work is to be done which will cause the earth to be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. This work can be accomplished only by the whole church acting their part under the guidance, and the power of God.”

Much might be said of the work of the church. Many quotations might be presented. The work before it is summed up well in words penned in 1895, and appearing in the *Review and Herald*, and now found in the book, [Evangelism, 16](#):

“The weighty obligation of warning a world of its coming doom is upon us. From every direction, far and near, calls are coming to us for help. The church, devotedly consecrated to the work, is to carry the message to

the world.... A world, perishing in sin, is to be enlightened. The lost pearl is to be found. The lost sheep is to be brought back in safety to the fold.... Who will bear the light to those who are wandering in the darkness of error?"

[3] Appeals of this kind ringing in the ears of the Sutherlands, the Mulfords, and the Bralliers, and scores of others, led them to renounce easier tasks and more comfortable situations to enter the much neglected and especially difficult part of the harvest field in self-supporting work. And from the beginnings made there a little over half a century ago, has grown a fruitful soul-winning work—an important part of the work of the church, an auxiliary work with features throughout the far-flung North American Division.

Our Pioneers and the Task They Faced

One-hundred-fifteen years ago this coming October, the third angel's message began to sound. In the providence of God and in the fulfillment of prophecy, in the years closely following 1844, there came into being the Seventh-day Adventist church. In 1848, at the five notable Sabbath conferences, there were brought together and bound together the truths we hold so dearly today. And there began to dawn upon our forefathers their responsibility to proclaim the message—to give to others the truths so dear to their hearts. Their numbers were so few. Their resources so small. Their task so large. “We have the truth,” they declared, “and we know it.” But what could they do with it? They were just a little scattered group of men and women in poverty and widely separated. Communications was their problem. The first efforts were through the spoken word in personal visitation. And when opportunity afforded, in preaching.

And then the message was sent out through the printed page. Of the beginnings of our publishing work we might say much. “I have a message for you,” said Ellen White to her husband, after the important vision at Dorchester, Massachusetts in November 1848, “You must begin to print a little paper and send it out to the people. Let it be small at first; but as the people read, they will send you means with which to print, and it will be a success from the first. From this small beginning it was shown to me to be like streams of light that went clear round the world.” ([Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 125.](#))

The next major step was the health reform and our medical work. First, for the benefit of the members of the church, and then as a means of evangelism, Seventh-day Adventists were led into the health reform and the health work. It was in 1848 that light was given that called our people away from the use of tobacco, tea, and coffee. Then in 1854 our attention was directed to cleanliness and the importance of a simple and natural diet. But it was not until shortly after the organization of the General Conference in 1863, that the

comprehensive health reform vision was given, calling for sweeping reforms in the treatment of the sick and in the dietetic practices and health habits of the people. There was an immediate response to the light given. And gradually most of the 3,500 Seventh-day Adventists changed their ways of life, and benefited greatly thereby.

On Christmas day, 1865, a vision was given to Ellen White calling for the establishment of a health institution. Here are the words:

“I was shown that we should provide a home for the afflicted and those who wish to learn how to take care of their bodies that they may prevent sickness.”—[Testimonies for the Church 1:489](#).

[4] This institution, established essentially to serve Seventh-day Adventists and then the world, soon became an important adjunct to the work of the church. For, stated Ellen White, “The great object of receiving unbelievers into the institution is to lead them to embrace the truth.”—[Testimonies for the Church 1:560](#). As the medical work of the church grew, the objectives were more clearly delineated. And these may be summed up as: first, the relief of the infirmities of mankind (vol. 1, page 494); second, to learn how to care for the body so as to prevent sickness (vol. 1, page 489); third, good public relations—to create an atmosphere favorable for the reception of the truths we hold ([Counsels on Health, 271](#)). And, fourth, to acquaint men and women with the third angel’s message. This Ellen White emphasized again and again in such statements as the following:

“It is to save the souls, as well as to cure the bodies, of men and women, that at much expense our sanitariums are established.... The establishment of sanitariums is a providential arrangement, whereby people from all churches are to be reached and made acquainted with the truth for this time.”—[Counsels on Health, 470](#).

With the medical work well established, and with the church about to launch into a world-wide mission program, there was a call for the development of institutions for the training of our youth for

this life and for the life to come. Workers must receive an adequate training for service. This called first of all for a college, then for academies and church schools. The fruit of this line of endeavor is so abundant and so apparent that we need not linger on this point.

Our First Self-supporting Workers

Many are the ways in which men and women are drawn into the work of proclaiming the gospel message. The printed page is acknowledged to be one of the most effective evangelizing agencies. In our early experience our literature was circulated very largely by our ministers in their pastoral and evangelical work. They were well supplied with books and tracts which could be sold and given away. But here was the channel for reaching the people in which many not trained for the ministry might engage. Wrote the messenger of the Lord in 1879, as found in [Testimonies for the Church 4:389](#), and onward:

“Living preachers are few. There is only one where there should be a hundred.... Hundreds of men should be engaged in carrying the light all through our cities, villages, and towns.... In all parts of the field canvassers should be selected.... from among those who have good address, tact, keen foresight, and ability.... If there is one work more important than another, it is that of getting our publications before the public, thus leading them to search the Scriptures. Missionary work—introducing our publications into families, conversing, and praying with and for them—is a good work and one which will educate men and women to do pastoral labor.”

Thus was called into being a very closely related line of denominational endeavor, the participants of which were not on regular salary—our first self-supporting workers. What a blessing our colporteur evangelists are as they have taken the message from land to land and country to country—many times to places where the living preacher could never go.

Treatment Rooms, Food Work and Industries

Beginning with the years 1898 and 1899, Ellen White began to write of the important place of health food factories. You will recall that Dr. Kellogg led out in the development of healthful foods at the Battle Creek Sanitarium, produced at first on a very small scale. But in the mid-nineties, efforts were put forth to establish manufacturing concerns where healthful food might be made. Ellen White pointed out that animal foods were becoming increasingly unsafe ([Counsels on Health, 495](#)). Health reform principles were to be taught wherever an interest in the truth was awakened. Health food manufacture was a good industry for our schools. The products of these factories would supply wholesome foods which would make the vegetarian program more easily adopted. Such foods placed on the market would make Seventh-day Adventists better known. Employment would be furnished to Seventh-day Adventists who were facing a Sabbath problem. [5]

Then came the call for vegetarian restaurants.

“Wherever medical missionary work is carried on in our large cities, cooking schools should be held; and wherever a strong educational missionary work is in progress, a hygienic restaurant of some sort should be established, which shall give a practical illustration of the proper selection and the healthful preparation of foods.” [Testimonies for the Church 7:55](#).

Closely linked with this line of endeavor was that of treatment rooms. Wrote Ellen White in this same article on page 60 of volume 7:

“I have been given light that in many cities it is advisable for a restaurant to be connected with treatment rooms. The two can co-operate in upholding right principles.”

Like other branches of the work, this line of endeavor was not to be confined to North America. Ellen White envisioned as a part of the work in overseas lands, many enterprises for the advancement of the message including treatment rooms and sanitariums.

There was also a place for industrial enterprises. In addition to the lines of work aimed primarily at propagating the message, Seventh-day Adventists of ability and means, and in some cases established institutions, were encouraged to operate industrial enterprises where new Sabbath keepers might find gainful employment. Writing in 1902, Ellen White penned these words:

“Believers who are now living in the cities will have to move to the country, that they may save their children from ruin. Attention must be given to the establishment of industries in which these families can find employment. Those who have charge of the school work at _____ and _____ should see what can be done by these institutions to establish such industries, so that our people desiring to leave the cities, can obtain modest homes without a large outlay of means, and can also find employment. In both _____ and _____ there are favorable and encouraging features for the development of this plan. Study what these features are.

[6]

“All that needs to be done cannot be specified until a beginning is made. Pray over this matter, and remember that God stands at the helm, that He is guiding in the work of the various enterprises. A place in which the work is conducted on right lines is an object lesson to other places. There must be no narrowness, no selfishness, in the work done. The work is to be placed on a simple, sensible basis. All are to be taught not only to claim to believe the truth, as the truth, but to exemplify the truth in the daily life.”—[Country Living, 20](#).

Every line of such work was to be of a character to build and strengthen the participants and to promulgate the message. The highest standards must be held and a sound, solid work was to be done. During the work at Avondale in Australia, Sister White wrote:

“The health-food business should be established here. It should be one of the industries connected with the school. God has instructed me that parents can find work in this industry and send their children to school. But everything that is done should be done with the greatest simplicity. There is to be no extravagance in anything. Solid work is to be done, because unless the work is done solidly, a slipshod experience is the result.”—*Australasian Union Record*, July 28, 1899; [Counsels on Health, 495-6](#).

The Over-all Objective of All Institutional Work

These are the lines of institutional work which have been set before us as an adjunct to the work of our ministers in preaching the gospel to all mankind. In some cases men and women could be more easily reached by some of these means. But we were never to lose sight of the prime objective of all institutional work regardless of what line was involved. Quoting from a manuscript of 1902, found on page 43 in the mimeographed document on medical practice in educational work at Loma Linda:

“God’s purpose in giving the third angel’s message to the world is to prepare a people to stand true to Him during the investigative judgment. This is the purpose for which we establish and maintain our publishing houses, our schools, our sanitariums, hygienic restaurants, treatment rooms and food factories. This is our purpose in carrying forward every line of work in the cause.”—Ms. 154, 1902.

Nor did the multiplication of institutions or the enlargement of the work change the condition of success. Wrote Ellen White in 1900;

“As our work has extended and institutions have multiplied, God’s purpose in their establishment remains the same. The conditions of prosperity are unchanged.”—[Testimonies for the Church 6:224](#).

There has ever been the danger that institutional work should become an end in itself rather than a means to an end. At no time is the church justified in employing its resources, its administrative talents or its skilled personnel in merely rendering a public service. Every line of work must be a means to one end—that of the promulgation of the gospel message. In the eyes of Ellen White the church was

justified in using the resources for such work as long as each line of work made a definite contribution. If not, we were to turn from such work. [7]

An Interesting and Helpful Illustration

Among lines of institutional endeavor, the operation of restaurants is perhaps most marginal in its contribution. Certain basic principles come clearly to the front as we look closely at this line of work. It becomes a useful illustration, one that we can use without being misunderstood. Sister White set before us the following objectives for the conduct of hygienic restaurants:

1. *To save souls*: “I have been instructed that one of the principal reasons why hygienic restaurants and treatment rooms should be established in the centers of large cities is that by this means the attention of leading men will be called to the third angel’s message.”—[Testimonies for the Church 7:122,123](#).

“Our restaurants can be so conducted that they will be the means of saving souls.”—[Testimonies for the Church 7:120](#).

“God has declared that sanitariums and hygienic restaurants should be established for the purpose of making known to the world His law.”—[Medical Ministry, 306](#). (Ms. 115, 1903)

2. *To proclaim the temperance message*: “Hygienic restaurants are to be established in the cities, and by them the message of temperance is to be proclaimed.... Let a room be provided where the patrons can be invited to lectures on the science of health and Christian temperance, where they can receive instruction on the preparation of wholesome food and on other important subjects.”—[Testimonies for the Church 7:115](#).

3. *To recommend Health Reform*: “The smaller restaurants will recommend the principles of health reform just as well as the larger establishment and will be more easily managed. We are not commissioned to feed the world, but we are instructed to educate the people.”—[Testimonies for the Church 7:119](#).

“Let hygienic restaurants be started; that people may learn what health reform really is.”—[Letter 124, 1902](#) (Series B. #6, page 40.)

4. To teach the preparation of Healthful foods: “Wherever medical missionary work is carried on in our large cities, cooking schools should be held; and wherever a strong educational missionary work is in progress, a hygienic restaurant of some sort should be established, which shall give a practical illustration of the proper selection and healthful preparation of foods. Every hygienic restaurant should be a school.”—[Testimonies for the Church 7:112](#).

Thus we have clearly set before us the objectives which made clear the purposes of, and the justification for, the establishment of restaurants. But Ellen White also points out the danger of missing the mark. The danger of running machinery, of operating an institution, but failing in the accomplishment of the true objective which would justify the utilization of skill and financial investment. From Ellen G. White material which has been released, [Manuscript 84, 1903](#), as published in *Medical Ministry*, I read concerning our restaurant work:

[8]

“There is danger, in the establishment of restaurants, of losing sight of the work that most needs to be done. There is danger of the workers losing sight of the work of soul saving as they carry forward the business part of the enterprise. There is danger that the business part of the work will be allowed to crowd out the spiritual part.”

“Some good is being done by the restaurant work. Men and women are being educated to dispense with meat and other injurious articles of diet. But who are being fed with the bread of life? Is the purpose of God being fulfilled if in this work there are no conversions? It is time that we called a halt, lest we spend our energies in the establishment of a work that does little to make ready a people for the coming of the Lord.”

“The only object in the establishment of restaurants was to remove prejudice from the minds of men and

women, and win them to the truth. The same effort put forth in circulating our publications, in doing evangelistic work, would tell far more for the saving of souls.”

“Our restaurant workers are not doing the personal work that they should do to bring the truth before those who come for meals. And in some respects impressions are being made on the minds of the workers that are not favorable to a growth in grace.”

“Our young men and young women are to be put to work where their capabilities will be used to the best account. They are to stand where they can carry on Christ’s work of soul-saving. They should not be kept in a work in which they are continually on losing ground, a work in which no souls are brought to a knowledge of the truth.”

“It is not the large number of meals served that brings glory to God. What does this avail if not one soul has been converted, to gladden the hearts of the workers?”

“The question was asked, What does all the work that has been done amount to? Has it had a sanctifying, hallowing influence upon the minds of the workers, or has it been the means of bringing them into temptations that have destroyed their peace and hope?”

[9]

“Let our ministers and physicians reason from cause to effect. Unless our restaurant work brings favorable spiritual results, let the world do their own serving of tables and let the Lord’s people take up a work in which their talents will be put out to the exchangers.”

“The time has come for the Lord’s people to be sure that they are engaged in a work that produces as well as consumes.”—[Medical Ministry](#), 306, 7.

As consideration was being given in 1902 to the enlargement of the restaurant operated in the city of Los Angeles in which they were serving over 800 meals a day, Sister White raised a question as to what advantage would be gained unless the work was conducted so as to be a means of communicating light, and if those who came

to the restaurant day after day were not becoming interested in the truth, what returns were being found for the effort put forth. And in volume 7, page 120, she wrote:

“If we fulfill the purpose of God in this work, the righteousness of Christ will go before us, and the glory of the Lord will be our reward. But if there is no ingathering of souls, if the helpers themselves are not spiritually benefited, if they are not glorifying God in word and deed, why should we open and maintain such establishments? If we cannot conduct our restaurants to God’s glory, if we cannot exert through them a strong religious influence, it would be better for us to close them up and use the talents of our youth in other lines of work.”—[Testimonies for the Church 7:120](#).

I have used this as an illustration to keep before us today the importance of every line of institutional work making its contribution. Seventh-day Adventists can lose sight of the great objective of winning souls and glory in the operation of institutions, of furnishing services to the community. We are often called upon to do that. It is possible for us to become so involved in the operational processes of the enterprises that we forget that only if we keep uppermost in mind the great objective of the establishment of institutions are we justified in their operation. This is not for the successful operation of institutions themselves, but to lead men and women to the kingdom of God. And this particular case—that of restaurants—is an illustration that can be used without creating high blood pressure. It is made very clear that unless several lines of institutional work yield a harvest which is commensurate with the investment of time and labor and skills and administrative talent, we’d better turn from them to more fruitful lines of endeavor.

Regarding the potentialities of these lines of work, Ellen White wrote:

“God has qualified His people to enlighten the world. He has entrusted them with facilities by which they are to extend His work until it shall encircle the

globe. In all parts of the earth they are to establish sanitariums, schools, publishing houses, and kindred facilities for the accomplishment of His work.”—[Testimonies for the Church 7:51](#).

And of what might have been we were told in 1896:

[10]

“If those who claimed to have a living experience in the things of God had done their appointed work as the Lord ordained, the whole world would have been warned ere this, and the Lord Jesus would have come in power and great glory.”—[The Review and Herald, October 6, 1896](#).

But in 1909, Ellen White wrote:

“But the work is years behind. While men have slept, Satan had stolen a march upon us.”—[Testimonies for the Church 9:29](#).

The Laymen Summoned

As effective as are the various lines of work called into being by the Lord, and as effectually as the message may be proclaimed, we are told that the work can be finished “only by the whole church acting their part under the guidance and in the power of God.”

In 1883, Ellen White sounded a call to summon every Seventh-day Adventist to the work of the church. From the pages of the church paper of that year, I read:

“To accomplish the great work of giving the last warning to the world, there is need of earnest, well-directed effort. As a people, we have not always moved with wisdom and foresight demanded by the importance of our mission. Our leading ministers labor too hard, and, as the result, are almost constantly exhausted. Some of our leading men die prematurely, literally worn out, while there are among us men of ability who are really doing nothing in the cause. Our ministers weary themselves in doing that which should be left to others, while those who might help them, and who, if rightly instructed, would be willing to help them, are rusting from inaction....

“The real workers in this cause are few, yet the work covers much ground; and it is often impossible for the laborers to look after the interest awakened, and they fail to discern that they must enlist the lay members of the church, and teach them to work, that they may hold all that has been gained, and continue to advance. The plan of labor has been such as to lead the people to feel that they could do very little themselves; if anything was to be accomplished, they must have a minister.”—[The Review and Herald, July 24, 1883.](#)

Thus Ellen White pointed out in that year a trend that was not wholesome for the church. She pointed out that we must call upon all the resources of the church and summon them for the advancement of the message. Two years later Ellen White again spoke somewhat along these lines:

[11]

“The churches must arouse, and not sit down at ease, merely enjoying the sermons. Light is beaming all around them; let this light shine forth as a lamp that burneth. Let men enter the work, and let the money God has lent his stewards be invested. Those who can work for God’s cause, should break loose from their home attachments, sell their farms, and give themselves either to home or foreign missions.... Go to work, and that which may now seem obscure, will become clear. There are fields close to your own doors and also in foreign fields, that are ripening for the harvest. The Lord calls for volunteers now. Go forth, workers for God, weeping, bearing precious seed; for doubtless you will return with rejoicing, bringing your sheaves with you.”—[The Review and Herald, December 15, 1885](#).

These words were penned by Ellen White while she was in Europe and saw great European fields with so much to be done and so few to labor. Three years later, in 1888, she wrote again:

“There are many of the members of our large churches doing comparatively nothing, who might accomplish a good work, if, instead of crowding together, they would scatter into places that have not yet been entered by the truth. Trees that are planted too thickly do not flourish. They are often transplanted by the gardener, that they may have room to grow, and not become dwarfed and sickly. The same rule would work well for our large churches....

“The lay members of our churches can accomplish a work which as yet they have scarcely begun. None should move into new places merely for the sake of

worldly advantage, but where there is an opening to obtain a livelihood, let families that are well-grounded in the truth enter, one or two families in a place, to work as missionaries. They should feel the love for souls, a burden of labor for them and should make it a study how to bring them into the truth. They can circulate our publications, hold meetings in their own houses, become acquainted with their neighbors, and invite them to come to the meetings and Bible readings. They can let their light shine in good works.”—[The Review and Herald, May 15, 1888](#).

Again in 1891, three years later, Ellen White was appealing through the columns of the *Review* for the services of lay church members:

“Close around us are cities and towns in which no efforts are made to save souls. Why should not families who know the present truth settle in these cities and villages, to set up there the standard of Christ, working in humility, not in their own way, but in God’s way, to bring the light before those who have no knowledge of it?

“When the church shall truly have the spirit of the message, they will throw all their energies into the work of saving the souls for whom Christ has died. They will enter new fields. Some who are not ordained ministers will be laborers together with God in visiting the churches, and trying to strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die. There will be laymen who will move into towns and cities, and into apparently out-of-the-way places, that they may let the light which God has given them, shine forth to others....”

“In places where the truth is not known, brethren who are adapted to the work, might hire a hall, or some other suitable place to assemble, and gather together all who will come. Then let them instruct the people in the truth. They need not sermonize, but take the Bible, and

let God speak directly out of His Word. If there is only a small number present, they can read a ‘Thus saith the Lord,’ without a great parade or excitement; just read and explain the simple gospel truth, and sing and pray with them.”—[The Review and Herald, September 29, 1891 \(Christian Service, 180-181\)](#)

Again two years later Ellen White was calling upon every soul to take an active part in the work of giving the message to the world.

“God has given to every man a work to do in connection with His kingdom. Each one professing the name of Christ is to be an interested worker, ready to defend the principles of righteousness. The work of the gospel is not to depend solely upon the ministers; every soul should take an active part in advancing the cause of God.... In whatever calling the Christian is found, he has his work to do for the Lord in representing Christ to the world. Whatever may be our occupation, we are to be missionaries, having for our chief aim the winning of souls to Christ. If this is not our interest, we rob God of influence, of time, of money and effort.”—[The Review and Herald, February 21, 1893.](#)

Then in 1901 self-supporting missionaries were called for.

“In humble dependence upon God, families are to settle in the waste places of His vineyard. Consecrated men and women are needed to stand as fruit-bearing trees of righteousness in the desert places of the earth. As the reward of their self-sacrificing efforts to sow the seeds of truth, they will reap a rich harvest....

“Self-supporting missionaries are often very successful. Beginning in a small, humble way, their work enlarges as they move forward under the guidance of the Spirit of God. Let two or more start out together in evangelistic work. They may not receive any particular encouragement from those at the head of the work that

they will be given financial support; nevertheless let them go forward, praying, singing, teaching, living the truth.... God calls for workers to enter the whitening harvest field.... Go forth in faith, and God will be with you.”—[Testimonies for the Church 7:23](#).

Families Respond Entering Backward Communities

And it was about this time that families were stirred to enter the great Southland, then a backward and very much neglected part of the United States.

[13] Ellen White, in *Ministry of Healing*, in 1905, wrote encouragingly:

“Christian farmers can do real missionary work in helping the poor to find homes on the land and in teaching them how to use the implements of agriculture, how to cultivate various crops, how to plant and care for orchards....

“Let proper methods be taught to all who are willing to learn. If any do not wish you to speak to them of advanced ideas, let the lessons be given silently. Keep up the culture of your own land. Drop a word to your neighbors when you can, and let the harvest be eloquent in favor of right methods. Demonstrate what can be done with the land when properly worked.”—[The Ministry of Healing](#), 193.

And again from volume 6, of the [Testimonies for the Church 6:176](#), we read:

“Missionaries will be much more influential among the people if they are able to teach the inexperienced how to labor according to the best methods and to produce the best results. They will thus be able to demonstrate that missionaries can become industrial educators, and this kind of instruction will be appreciated especially where means are limited. A much smaller fund will be required to sustain such missionaries, because, combined with their studies, they have put to the very best use their physical powers in practical labor, and

wherever they may go all they have gained in this line will give them vantage ground.”

The establishment of institutions and industries was called for:

“Attention should be given to the establishment of various industries so that poor families can find employment. Carpenters, blacksmiths, and indeed everyone who understands some line of useful labor, should feel a responsibility to teach and help the ignorant and the unemployed.”—[The Ministry of Healing, 194](#).

We were also called upon to develop sanitariums.

“Today the truth is to be proclaimed as Christ proclaimed it when he was on this earth. Our people who are collected together in large centers should be out in the field working for souls. They should go to places where the truth has not yet been heard, and pray and plan and work and gain an experience by practical work. Is not Christ in our world today as verily as He was then? Cannot He heal the sick as well now as then? Let small sanitariums and treatment rooms be established, and let people be given an education in the simple methods of treating disease. Those who take up this work will increase in capability; for unseen heavenly agencies will be present to help them.”—E. G. White, [Letter 43, 1905](#) (Released)

And thus is called into various lines of service every Seventh-day Adventist, to give of his talents and his time as he can devote them to the conduct of a work leading men and women to the kingdom. [14]

But I point out again, we have no separate line of instructions to self-supporting workers. The work is one. The methods are the same. The objectives are one. Whether the work is carried on under the guidance of a conference organization, or whether a work of an auxiliary and supplemental character is carried on by noble men and women who at their own expense move forward to do what they

understand to be their part in proclaiming the gospel message—it is all one work.

I bring this presentation to a close with the following statement from the pen of Ellen White, which appeared in the [Pacific Union Recorder, March 24, 1904](#):

Laymen In The Closing Work

“Let every one study the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah. What is the great work before us?—The proclamation of the Gospel, with its life-saving principles, to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Let no one remain in idleness because he cannot do the same class of work that the most experienced servants of God are doing. Because you can not be in the highest place, will you do nothing? Because you can not trade upon pounds, will you refuse to trade upon one pound? Because you have not five talents, will you put your one talent in a napkin, and hide it in the earth? Because you can not work for the multitude, will you refuse to work for individuals? Do the smaller duties waiting for you. Thus you will help those who are bearing heavy responsibilities. Use your talents, be they ever so few. God has certainly given you a work to do for Him. In all that you do, keep the Lord Jesus before you. Do all to the glory of His name. You belong to God, and you are to do His work. Your life is sustained by the Giver of life. Your every capability, therefore, is to be put to use in His service. By using your talents wisely and faithfully, you are gaining power to do better work, to bear heavier responsibilities.

“Whatever you accomplish, be it little or much, leave it with God, remembering that it is not for man to measure the worth or the reward of his own efforts or the efforts of his fellow men. The Lord Jesus will give you the wages that are your due. Your reward will be proportioned to the spirit in which your work was done. Purity of motive, an earnest desire to glorify God, will bring to the earnest worker the same reward that is given

to the one who accomplishes more. The principles by which the worker is governed determine the reward.

[15]

“It is not alone by men in high places of responsibility in the ministry, not alone by men holding positions on boards or committees, not alone by the managers of our sanitariums and publishing houses, that the work is to be done which will cause the earth to be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. This work can be accomplished only by the whole church acting their part under guidance and in the power of God.”—[Pacific Union Recorder, March 24, 1904](#).

May the Lord bless us as we move forward unitedly in the light of the counsels which God has given us for the heralding of the message—some in one way, some in another—ever keeping in mind the great objectives set before us of a world to be warned and men and women to be brought to a knowledge of their Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

(end first section)

Part II—Laborers Together With God

[16]

As we come to the second part of our study, I think of the words written by the apostle Paul, as recorded in [1 Corinthians 3:9](#). “We are labourers together with God.” The apostle Paul does not set up here the relationship of an employer and an employee, but he brings clearly to view a partnership. “We are labourers together with God.” We are not working for God. In His providence, God takes men and women into partnership with Himself for the accomplishing of a work on earth.

The Lord could send the angels for the doing of that work and how perfectly the work would be done. There would be none of the mistakes that so often enter into the conduct of the work. The human element that so often comes in with personalities would not be there. How quickly the work would be finished. But the Lord did not choose to work in that way. For our own good He has drawn men and women into partnership with Himself as laborers with Him in the accomplishment of the greatest enterprize being carried forward in the world today—the most important work in the world.

Then the Lord goes a step further as we find brought to view in [1 John 3:1](#), that we are “sons of God”. A partnership in which a father and son works together is a very close partnership. Sister White speaks of this in an article in the *Youth’s Instructor*, in 1910:

“God calls them to be sharers with Him in the great work of redemption and uplifting. As a father takes his son into partnership in his business, so the Lord takes His children into partnership with Himself.”—[The Youth’s Instructor, January 25, 1910](#). Reprinted in [Sons and Daughters of God, 324](#).

It is a solemn thought that God would take men and women into partnership with Himself to carry out plans, to do a work here on the earth. We could hardly imagine such a relationship without there being some communication, words of counsel, instruction, some of which would be for the purpose of correction. And we think of the words as recorded in [Psalm 32:8](#),

“I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.”

God’s eye, that sees many things that our eyes do not see, is the eye with which He guides His people. How thankful we can be for that guidance which has been manifested in so many ways.

As noted yesterday, our forefathers of 110 years ago faced a large task. Following the bidding of the Lord, they were led into one line of work after another, all designed to hasten the promulgation of the gospel message. And as these lines of work have been undertaken, it has become clear that there is more than one right way to accomplish a task.

[17] There was one lesson which I learned from my father very early in life which has always been helpful to me and it was that there is more than one right way to do a job. The fact that methods used by one individual or one group are found to be successful is no indication that other methods used by someone else may not be just as successful, just as meritorious, and accomplish just as much in the work of God. There are different types of minds. There are different qualifications, different natural talents, different backgrounds. So there is more than one right way to accomplish a task.

This is evident as we observe the many ways in which this group works as you are laborers together with God. This has become abundantly apparent in the work done in the great Southland where the self-supporting work was pioneered by self-sacrificing men and women—men and women who have built out of their very lifeblood a work for God, while supplying their own temporal needs. I know something of this work, which has been brought into being by blood and sweat and tears. Not until the records of heaven are revealed at last will the noble accomplishments, the fruits of sacrifice, be fully known.

The Basic Element of Organization

Today we shall study certain basic matters as they relate to the Spirit of Prophecy counsels which have to do with the self-supporting work. Go back with me to part one of this study when we traced the inceptions of various lines of denominational work. Early in our experience, and closely following the beginnings of the publishing work, the attention of Sabbath-keeping Adventists was directed to the importance of organization. The visions imparted to Ellen White were nearly always given under very practical circumstances, and that was so in the case of the vision on December 25, 1850. The brethren had a great message, but as they faced the responsibility and privilege of carrying this message to those about them, they soon became aware of discordant elements that were beginning to insinuate themselves into the little group of Sabbath-keeping Adventists. The gospel net draws in all types of individuals—all types of minds—and there were some who held views out of harmony with the essentials that had been drawn together in the Sabbath conferences of 1848. Those individuals felt a burden to enter the field of labor and promulgate their views, doing so in the name of the little remnant, or “the scattered flock”, as the Sabbath-keeping brethren designated themselves. Who was there to define what was truth? Who was there to say who should go into the gospel field? Of the vision given to Ellen White, to which I have just referred, she tells us:

“I saw how great and holy God was. Said the angel, ‘Walk carefully before Him, for He is high and lifted up, and the train of His glory fills the temple.’ I saw that everything in heaven was in perfect order. Said the angel, ‘Look, ye, Christ is the head, move in order. Have a meaning to everything.’ Said the angel, ‘Behold ye and know how perfect, how beautiful, the order in

heaven, follow it.”—[Manuscript 11, 1850](#). Quoted in *Messenger to the Remnant*, page 45.

[18] This gave the leaders of the work courage as they met with the loosely knit company of believers—believers who were earnest in their convictions, but fearful that to organize would lead them to complacency and perhaps the disfavor of God. Shortly thereafter we find Elder and Mrs. White at a general meeting in Washington, N. H., where the Adventists first began to keep the Sabbath. James White wrote, in a letter dated Nov. 11, 1851, now published in the *Messenger to the Remnant*, page 45:

“The burden of the meeting was church order, pointing out the errors of _____ and _____, and the importance of church action as to the course of some brethren. Ellen had a vision. Saw that the frown of God was upon us as a people because the accursed thing was in the camp, that is, errors among us, and that the church must act; and the only way to do Brethren _____ and _____ good was to withdraw fellowship from them in their present position. All acted on the light given. All received the vision, and even to an individual all raised the hand to withdraw fellowship from them.”

Thus we find a loosely knit group of Sabbath-keeping Adventists as early as 1851, with the encouragement of James and Ellen White, pulling themselves together with sufficient strength to hold up their hands in an action to cast out of their group those who were teaching discordant views. This is the first record of a practical carrying out of the principles of church organization among us. Do not misunderstand me—it wasn’t until eleven years later that this group of believers were finally unified in a sound, organized church relationship.

The battle of organization was not won in a day, or a week, or a year. Through the 1850’s, James and Ellen White labored to pull the lines together. Other important visions were given to Sister White on this subject and she wrote in 1853, what we now have in [Early Writings, 97](#), in the article entitled “Gospel Order”, opening with the words:

“The Lord has shown me that gospel order has been too much feared and neglected. Formality should be shunned; but, in so doing, order should not be neglected. There is order in heaven. There was order in the church when Christ was upon earth, and after His departure order was strictly observed among His apostles. And now in these last days, while God is bringing His children into the unity of the faith, there is more real need of order than ever before.”

Following this a number of points were touched setting forth the hazard of men going into the field to preach who were not prepared, either by spirituality, judgment, or experience, and the angel gave instruction that “the church should feel their responsibility and should look carefully and attentively at the lives, qualifications, and general course of those who profess to be teachers” (page 100). It was also stated that, “It is the duty of the church to act and let it be known that these persons (traveling without being called of God) are not acknowledged as teachers by the church.... I saw that this door at which the enemy comes in to perplex and trouble the flock can be shut. I inquired of the angel how it could be closed. He said, ‘The church must flee to God’s Word and become established upon gospel order, which has been overlooked and neglected.’” (See page 100.)

Thus the Lord was calling for the development of order and organization in His work. Before there could be proper advancement, before the Lord could lead His church even into an understanding of certain lines of truth and endeavor, the principles of order and organization must be clearly established. And it should be noted [19] that this was years before there was any regular or assured financial provision for the support of the ministry.

The struggle to bring about organization in the church filled the decade of the 1850’s and ran into the 60’s. In 1860 a name for the denomination was chosen, but only after considerable study as to whether this would be appropriate or not. In 1861, as efforts were made to bind the company of believers together in churches, it was found that the battle was still not won. There must be some type of simple statement to which the church members would pledge

themselves, and this led to a discussion of a creed. It was early decided that Seventh-day Adventists should have no creed except the Bible and that to drive credal stakes would make it impossible for God to lead His people through the counsels of the Spirit of Prophecy. James White wrote regarding this in the [The Review and Herald, October 8, 1861](#):

“Making a creed is setting the stakes, and barring up the way to all future advancement.... A creed and the gifts thus stand in direct opposition to each other.”

But the brethren finally came to agreement upon a simple declaration of faith in two sentences, upon which the churches were knit together and the foundations were laid for the full establishment of local conferences, in 1862, and the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in 1863. God was guiding in each step of the development of church organization.

When this was finally brought about, Seventh-day Adventists numbered 3,500. And again and again in prophetic voice the admonition was heard, “Press together, press together... In union there is strength.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 56.

One of the greatest perils of the Advent movement down through the years has been that of divisiveness. With no creed, with men and women eager to learn the truth and to teach the truth, there could easily come about differences of opinion in doctrine; and burdened with the work of spreading the message, there could develop differences of opinion as to the best methods of procedure. But, “We are laborers together with God,” and through the agency of His choice God has given instruction and guidance. He has bound all Seventh-day Adventists together in a very close unity, and anything which would disturb that unity is to be feared.

Speaking of the purposes and place of organization, Ellen White, in that assuring article, appearing in *Testimonies to Ministers*, entitled, “Organization and Development”, stated this:

“As our numbers increased, it was evident that without some form of organization there would be great confusion, and the work would not be carried forward

successfully. To provide for the support of the ministry, for carrying the work in new fields, for protecting both the churches and the ministry from unworthy members, for holding church property, for the publication of the truth through the press, and for many other objects, organization was indispensable.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 26.

With the work now knit together in a solid organizational establishment, the prospects of the denomination reaching its objectives were greatly enhanced. Its objectives were to preach the gospel and to bring to the attention of men and women everywhere the third angel’s message with its testing truths. The Seventh-day Adventist church has no justification for existence except to accomplish this. In addition to the preaching of the word, which is God’s means of warning men and women, there were many adjuncts to the reaching of the hearts of men and women, opening avenues of approach to the heralding of the third angel’s message. [20]

As far as the Spirit of Prophecy is concerned, there is no line drawn between the basic responsibilities of Seventh-day Adventists, whether or not they are drawn into the circle of those regularly employed in some line of denominational work. True, the minister upon whom the hands of ordination have been laid is especially dedicated to his sacred task. But our schools have trained many men and women who devote full energy, talents and time to proclaiming the message—some employed under salary in the Seventh-day Adventist church, and others not employed on denominational salary. In some line of institutional work, whether operated by the conference or by laymen, the worker on salary, or supported in some manner that may be determined upon, is able to make his contribution to the cause at large. And beyond this, the lay member pursuing his chosen line of employment for the support of his family, either in his native community or in some needy field to which he has gone, may let his light shine. It was largely in this setting that Ellen White envisioned initially the contributions of those dependent upon themselves for their support. Each man and woman possessed talents. For the proper use of these he was answerable to God.

The call published in 1902 stirred many to action. Wrote Ellen White:

“In the South there is much that could be done by lay members of the church, persons of limited education...

“Let Sabbathkeeping families move to the South and live out the truth before those who know it not. These families can be a help to one another, but let them be careful to do nothing that will hedge up their way. Let them do Christian help work, feeding the hungry and clothing the naked.”—[Testimonies for the Church 7:227](#).

I might bring you a number of statements of similar character which constituted the call which led many lay families to enter the lines of work which were called for.

When there were clear and definite calls for Seventh-day Adventist laymen to share the burden of entering and evangelizing new fields, these were often accompanied by certain cautions—safeguarding counsels. In 1888, when a call for advance movement along missionary lines by laymen throughout our ranks was sounded through the columns of the *Review and Herald*, it was accompanied by this counsel:

“There are many workers in the cause who are not properly equipped for this great work, and when they are given some measure of success, they are in danger of becoming elated and self-sufficient. They work in their own strength, and do not discern their danger, and therefore do not avoid the perils that are in their pathway....There are those who have independent ideas and will not receive counsel. They choose to follow their own course.

[21]

“Those who would labor in word and doctrine, should be firmly established in the truth before they are authorized to go out into the field to teach others. The truth, pure and unadulterated, must be presented to the people.”

“God has a special work for the men of experience to do. They are to guard the cause of God. They are to see that the work of God is not committed to men who feel it their privilege to move out on their own independent judgment, to preach whatever they please, and to be responsible to no one for their instructions or work. Let this spirit of self-sufficiency once rule in our midst, and there will be no harmony of action, no unity of spirit, no safety for the work, and no healthful growth in the cause.... Christ prayed that his followers might be one as he and the Father were one. Those who desire to see this prayer answered, should seek to discourage the slightest tendency to division, and try to keep the spirit of unity and love among brethren.

“God calls for laborers; but he wants those who are willing to submit their wills to his, and who will teach the truth as it is in Jesus.... One who works in harmony with the counsel of God, and in unity with the brethren, will be more efficient to do good than ten will be who do not realize the necessity of depending upon God, and of acting in harmony with the general plan of the work.”

“Let those who contemplate giving themselves to the work, place themselves in connection with those who have had a good experience in the ways of God, and a knowledge of his cause.”—[The Review and Herald, May 29, 1888](#).

As already noted, it was the South, at the turn of the century, that presented the great challenge and Seventh-day Adventists responded. Ellen White spoke of it as a part of the Lord’s vineyard which called for an approach different from other fields. It was a field in which, up to that time, the church had failed to meet its full responsibilities. Direct mention is made of this situation by Elder C. C. Crisler in 1914, as he introduced a statement from Sister White. Elder Crisler explained:

“In a letter addressed to the president of the General Conference in 1901, the principle is set forth that when

appointed agencies in the church fail to do a work which must be done by some means, it is in harmony with the will of God that such work be undertaken by individuals impressed by the Holy Spirit to do this work:

“The South is a field that can not be compared with any other field. The work there can not be conducted in the same way that the work in other places is conducted. It can not be carried forward in the regular lines; for this would be inconsistent....

[22]

“If the work in this field had in the past been recognized by the General Conference, if the help had been given that the importance of the field demands, there would be some reason why the work should be carried in the regular lines. But in many parts of the South the regular lines can not now be followed.... The work has been hindered in such away that God has been greatly dishonored. The strange neglect of the Southern Field is a standing rebuke to those who bear the name of Seventh-day Adventists.”—*The Value of Organization*, page 16 (pamphlet).

And thus Ellen White wrote of the conditions as they existed 58 years ago in the South, conditions which she felt justified the call and presented the opportunity for certain lines of work which could be especially developed there. The call was not at first essentially for institutions, but for families; and then followed the counsels for a school to be started to educate teachers to go among the neglected peoples of the communities. Plans for a training school were developed by Professors Sutherland and Magan, who were joined by Miss DeGraw and others. Sister White’s counsel was earnestly sought.

An Auxiliary Work

As the plans were laid by Brethren Sutherland and Magan at the time they withdrew from Emmanuel Missionary College to conduct a work to which they felt called in the great Southland, it was plain that it was their plan to go into a very isolated area in the South and there conduct an independent institutional work. But this plan of conducting a training school independently of all organized denominational agencies was not carried out. And why was it not? Elder C. C. Crisler answers this question in his statement published in the pamphlet just quoted from:

“When the brethren from Berrien Springs went South early in the summer of 1904, to find a suitable site for their training-school, Sister White was in Nashville; and when she learned of their plans, she counseled the brethren not to arrange matters so as to be independent of all connection with and support from conferences and church members. She urged that they make search for some site not far removed from the Southern Union Conference headquarters, in order that the workers in the school might share the burdens borne by their brethren in responsibility in the Southern Field; and also in order that the officers of the Southern Union might have opportunity to give counsel and help to those who were coming into their field to strengthen the educational and evangelical interests in unentered and needy places.

“I was surprised,” wrote Sister White in her report published in the Review, August 18, 1904, “when in speaking of the work they wished to do in the South, they spoke of establishing a school in some place a long way from Nashville. From the light given me, I knew that this would not be the right thing to do, and I told them so. The work that these brethren can do,

[23]

because of the experience gained at Berrien Springs, is to be carried on within easy access of Nashville; for Nashville has not yet been worked as it should be. And it will be a great blessing to the workers in the school to be near enough to Nashville to be able to counsel with the workers there.”—*The Value of Organization*, pages 29-30.

Professor Sutherland, in a statement quoted in the pamphlet, “Ownership and Control of the Madison School”, page 16, sets forth his understanding of the relationships in these words:

“The founders have endeavored in an unselfish way to provide for the training of workers to labor in cooperation with, and auxiliary to, the work carried on by the conference in which they may be located....

“The teachers and students of the Madison School are loyal members of the Seventh-day Adventist church, supporting the organized work by their tithes and offerings, and endeavoring to raise up churches that will also be loyal members of the denomination.”

These were the understandings, these were the positions, when Ellen White placed her strong approval on the work of that institution.

One of the early problems, in addition to that of securing funds, which was faced at Madison, was that of the ownership of the property and the control of the assets of the institution. This was a matter in which the brethren, in counsel with Sister White, gave considerable study.

Ellen White had led out shortly before in the furnishing of one half of the purchase price of what is now the Paradise Valley Sanitarium. The Southern California conference was loaded with financial obligations and small in membership in those days. There were 1100 members, and a debt of \$40,000. It was felt that that medical institution must be begun without laying further burden upon the conference. And Ellen White was among those who laid the plans for the development of that work. And even here at Loma Linda, as

the opportunity came to purchase this institution, and the conference was still faced with the same large problem, Ellen White sent a telegram from Washington urging Elder Burden to move forward in securing the Loma Linda property, and wrote that she could not ask the conference to invest in the institution, for the conference had all the responsibilities it could carry. She felt that some way could be found, for we must have this institution. And thus she was prepared to see the use of private enterprise in the establishment of institutions for the Lord. Various ways were developed in the years that followed, of drawing these institutions into the church organization.

Ellen White was a member of the Madison board. One of the very few boards to which Ellen White ever belonged; in fact, so far as I know, the only board. The plans were studied carefully as to what should be done, and finally arrangements were entered into which provided for the holding of property for use in the auxiliary work for the Lord—plans which would safeguard the property to that work.

We must keep in mind that the Lord does not always give minute instructions as to each move that we should make. We must keep in mind that the Spirit of Prophecy given to the Seventh-day Adventist Church was never given for the purpose of taking the place of study, of initiative, of faith or of hard work. The Lord points the way and then men and women, under that guidance, using their initiative and their thinking and their work, find a way to conduct the work as God would have it done. Methods have been found. They are not all the same. They have been shaped to meet the needs of the varying institutions and groups, as institutional work developed.

[24]

We might pause here long enough to say that while the call was initially for families to go into the South, schools were soon called for, strong support was given to the establishing of Madison College as a training center for the educating of older young people to prepare themselves for self-supporting labor in the Southland; and they in turn were encouraged to establish schools, and later they were led into sanitarium work. Many of you know the story of the difficulty of thought on the part of Professors Sutherland and Magan as the call came for sanitarium work. In response to Ellen White's urging that they make some kind of a beginning, a beginning

was made. However, now that educational facilities provided by the state have spread through the Southland the call for the rural schools has lessened. We are aware of the fact that an institutional program, bringing financial support has proved a blessing, as small sanitariums and rest homes, and institutions of one kind or another, and some larger institutions, are now operating in the Southland on a self-supporting basis.

The Spirit of Prophecy counsel, as it relates specifically to the self-supporting work, just about ends at this point. A work is called for, general lines are pointed out—a work which is guided by the counsels which guide in every phase of God’s work, for it is one work, not a divided work. And this work, carried on by godly, self-sacrificing men and women, was ever defended by Ellen White. There were counsels forbidding that a restraining hand should be placed on that type of work. In counsel that Ellen White gave at Madison College on April 26, 1909, as published in [Words of Encouragement to Self-supporting Workers, 5](#), Ellen White said:

“If there are those whom the Lord moves upon to give themselves to the neglected portions of the vineyard, let no man seek to turn them away from their appointed work.”

And on page 11 of this same pamphlet:

“As you go out in the highways and the hedges, let no minister of the gospel say to you, ‘Why do ye so?’ We have for our example the ministry of Christ on earth.”

Now what does this mean? Does this give a license to any individual who may choose to do a work of his selection at any place at any time irrespective of counsel or the judgment of his brethren? Indeed it does not. Ellen White here is dealing with a work in a special part of the vineyard of the Lord, as was made very clear in earlier counsels. This work was being done in a neglected area, and men and women who felt called to that work were not to be restrained. There were special circumstances which led to the giving of that character.

All through the years we have used various terms as we have spoken of the self-supporting work. Some of these terms I think were a bit unfortunate, and some day I wish to see the Association of Self-supporting institutions at one of its regularly constituted meetings, appoint a committee to give study to the choice of terms which can be used which will truly and accurately connote the work and the relationship of that work. We speak of an “independent” work. Now all of these terms have connotations which I think may be drawn to the point that are misleading. [25]

I believe that any worker who may be paid a salary or receive remuneration for his labors in whatever form is supporting himself. We speak of the “organized” work, but surely we would not wish to think of the work which is carried on under private enterprise as being a “disorganized” work. For if there is ever a time when close organization is called for it is in dealing with situations and funds under the circumstances where self-supporting institutions are operated.

There are some who use the term of an “independent” work. But to my mind that term is most misleading. Can we conceive that the Lord who called into being the establishment of a church, and for the reasons of protecting that church and of giving guidance to the work that shall be done, would at the same time lay the foundations and call into being a work which was “independent”, disconnected, unrelated? Ellen White seldom uses the term “independent work”. Where she uses it we do not gain the idea that her counsels were ever given to lead men and women to be independent of the church or its organization. She sometimes uses the term “self-supporting work”.

Is not this work, which has been called into being through the counsels which have come through Ellen White, that of an auxiliary work? An auxiliary work carried on by private enterprise? That is as I view it, and as I have viewed it through the years. I fail to see, nor can I conceive of, the lines of division which are drawn. God calls men and women to work—some in one line and certain places, others in other lines in other places—some supported in one way and others supported in another way.

It has been easy through the years for those who have been closely connected with the work of the church in its mainline en-

deavors to be critical of those who, called of God, have given their time and their strength to carrying certain lines of work. There have been certain Spirit of Prophecy safeguards. It has also been easy for those who have given themselves to lines of work in which they are personally responsible for their support, to be critical of others.

The lines of work which we speak of as “self-supporting work” have broadened through the providence of God. It has reached out far beyond the borders of the Southland with its former peculiar and very special needs, to the point today where we find that throughout the United States, and in other areas of the world, this type of work has greatly increased. Last night Elder Beach made mention of the splendid small institutions throughout the Northern European countries. We thank God for this increased development of the work, and the drawing into this circle of auxiliary ministry carried on through private enterprises, a number of well-established sanitariums, hospitals, nursing homes, manufacturing enterprises, and other lines of work. There are many lines of work in many places. And there is a great blessing in being drawn together in the Association of Self-supporting Institutions. It is in the providence of God that these auxiliary lines of work, conducted by private enterprises, are drawn together as an integral part of the work of the church. The Spirit of Prophecy counsels given down through the years serve as our guide today—our blueprint, as we so often speak of it.

It has not been without some misgivings that I have observed in the natural growth of institutional work for which the Seventh-day Adventist denomination is not financially responsible, on the part of a few, some tendencies towards independence. We must ever keep in mind the basic elements which led to the self-supporting work. There was a need, there was an opportunity, there was a challenge. Families and groups of families were to engage in auxiliary work, letting their light shine, communicating the truth to others and thus expanding the influence of the church. There was strong Spirit of Prophecy support for this type of work, and also encouragement that men and women should engage in this type of work. There were some messages of reproof to ministers and executives who would place a restraining hand upon this self-sacrificing type of work. But there was nothing ever written in the way of counsel or words spoken by Ellen White, which would in any sense justify a spirit of independence in the

larger basic over-all objectives of denominational endeavor or that would justify establishing organizationally that which would parallel the denomination.

As the lines of institutional work, conducted by self-sacrificing men and women, and built out of their toil and blood and sweat, have grown, there have also devolved upon those engaged in this work the responsibility of serving in executive areas in guiding these institutions. And there have grown up certain perils: 1. The utilization of the E. G. White license for the conduct of a work not directly under the control and administration of the church as a justification for the operation of a work, not only independent in its financial structure, but also independent in some of its basic interests and objectives. This is one of the perils.

2. Another one is that in the natural outgrowth of those who, in a self-sacrificing manner are conducting a work which they believe the Lord called them to—and we all believe that the Lord called some to that line of work—there is a danger of consciously or unconsciously assuming the attitude that all those who are not working in this same manner are therefore not engaged in a self-sacrificing ministry, nor are they working in the lines upon which God can place His fullest blessing. In so doing, they have forgotten that there is more than one right way to accomplish a task or of doing the work of God.

3. There are some perils of the satisfaction of accomplishment. There comes a self-satisfaction because of the commendation of the Spirit of Prophecy upon certain lines of work. There can grow up critical attitudes of others because their work may not call for the same degree of sacrifice as was called for to make a success of the difficult work that some were doing in a difficult part of the world field. And because the self-supporting work is acceptable of God, there is a danger of considering it superior to other methods of work, forgetting that it was called into being as an auxiliary work, important, but not in any sense superior to the line of organization to which the Lord called this church.

4. There is a danger of overlooking God's plan for the support of His work, and for the preaching of the Word, and of conjecturing regarding the break up of the work of the church. Ellen White tells us this will not be. It is not to be broken up into independent atoms. She says that it will appear that the church is about to fall, but it

[27] will not fall. But she speaks of those who will be shaken out in the terrible ordeal which is before us.

5. There is a peril of forgetting the over-all pattern, and keeping in mind that the lines of work conducted by the self-supporting workers are auxiliary, established, and justified, and approved as adjuncts to the work already set in operation under the guidance of the Spirit of Prophecy.

From the beginning days of the operation of institutional work by Seventh-day Adventists, these institutions have been managed by their boards. Wrote Ellen White, “None of us are to strike out alone; we are to link up with our brethren, and pull together, and God will give us influence...”—[Medical Ministry, 46](#).

Boards are groups of men and women of experience upon whom have been placed the management and operation of institutions. We have always maintained that there is wisdom in many counselors. There comes a balance in planning, an effectiveness in execution, when men and women of varied minds, temperaments and experience work together in the conduct of institutional endeavor. That the work shall be governed by such boards is determined, of course, by the organization which is engaged in the operation of this institutional work.

When good men and women conduct the work of an institution, but do so without the benefit of governing boards made up of individuals of long experience, their work may be conducted at considerable disadvantage. Weaknesses may come in. There may be a loss of balance in the program which is carried out. Inexperience in financial lines may soon lead to suffering on the part of the personnel, and imperil the very existence of the line of work called into being as the result of such self-sacrificing efforts. Such boards of control, which may be created to provide suitable safeguards, may in themselves be made ineffective by the employees choosing the board, rather than the board choosing the employees. Also, with no responsibility to the organization of the denomination, the degree of allegiance given by the operators of an institution to the actions of guidance enacted by the board, may be minimized by the determination and the convictions of the leading operators of the institution. In a sense, such institutions can come to be a law to themselves.

There is peril also that the individuals of strong conviction who have led out in the establishment of such institutions, shall in their confidence in their interpretations of Spirit of Prophecy counsels, and under the protection of the “Spirit of Prophecy license”, wrongly interpret these counsels. They may do so to justify a work which reaches out beyond that of an auxiliary work to an independent work such as the establishing of standards in medical practice and educational procedures, and even standards for the conduct of church members, which are not in full keeping with those adopted by the denomination. Such procedure has in it the seeds of disunity—of impaired confidence, and of distrust.

Without the balancing control and the guidance of a well-selected board which assumes its responsibilities and exercises its power in control, an institution of strength, being operated under a charter of independence, may exert its influence in a way which is actually detrimental to the best interests of the Lord’s work. And this peril increases as the promoters of such institutional work use as a cover E. G. White quotations to release restraint as applied by administrators in the field. Thus we see the danger of an auxiliary work conducted under the E. G. White license, insinuating itself into the position of an independent work—setting its own standards, and placing its own interpretation upon the Spirit of Prophecy counsels. [28]

It is on this point that we should stop to examine some basic principles. Any work must be judged by the fruit which it yields. The Saviour admonished, “By their fruits ye shall know them.” Regardless of finely developed lines of argument which may be spun, utilizing E. G. White statements in their support, if the resulting fabric is such as to be out of harmony with the overall picture of what has been set before us in the Spirit of Prophecy, then it is faulty and should be approached with caution. It is true that messages of reproof have been written to men who have come short in meeting their responsibilities as executives in the work of God. But we are not justified in taking these messages of reproof as justifying the development of a work which attempts to parallel in certain features or functions the organization of the church, or to set about to establish procedures at variance with those which have been adopted by the boards and committees established to carry on the various institutional lines of work.

Then again there has been somewhat of a growing tendency, as certain self-supporting institutions developed, to endeavor to reach out to other lands and establish centers of a similar character in other countries. Such work is done without a knowledge of the true conditions as they exist in these countries—without a consideration of what it may mean to the newly established constituencies of native peoples, to have injected into their thinking that there are two Seventh-day Adventist groups—each with a mission—one under the management of the organization of the church, and the other under the general direction of a self-supporting organization and operating independently of the administrative functions of the church and perhaps at times criticizing the work of the church and the local leaders of the church. Only those who have had an opportunity to study at close range some of the devastating results of such a work can begin to grasp the distress which arises from the attempt to carry out what seems to be a beautiful dream of self-supporting institutions, establishing child institutions in other divisions of the world field. Here it would seem that institutions established by private enterprise go far beyond their prerogatives as defended by the messenger of the Lord.

I would not take the position that consecrated families could not conduct a commendable work, laboring in simple and humble ways in lands other than the United States. Some are doing so. The temperament of the people, the basic objectives and understanding of, and confidence in, the church organization, and in close relationship to the leaders of the work in a given area—are all factors which would determine whether such a work was helpful or unhelpful. But the ties must be to the leadership of the field rather than to the parent institution in North America.

Another point is important. In the work of God we have been called to high standards. When the Seventh-day Adventist church entered the field of medical practice in the 1860's, James and Ellen White held the concept that if we as a church were to enter the field of the practice of medicine, the work must be of the highest character and quality. When the call was made for the developing of the Loma Linda College of Medical Evangelists into a full-fledged medical school, the following two paragraphs penned by the messenger of the Lord constituted part of the true charter for that institution:

“The light given me is, We must provide that which is essential to qualify our youth who desire to be physicians, so that they may intelligently fit themselves to be able to stand the examinations required to prove their efficiency as physicians. They should be taught to treat understandingly the cases of those who are diseased.... The medical school at Loma Linda is to be of the highest order, because those who are in that school have the privilege of maintaining a living connection with the wisest of all physicians, from whom there is communicated knowledge of a superior order.... We are to supply whatever may be required, so that these youth need not be compelled to go to medical schools conducted by men not of our faith.”—[The Story of Our Health Message, 386](#).

As this institution was called into being under the providence of God, Ellen White set before us the very highest standards, which must be held up here at the College of Medical Evangelists.

Unfortunately, either because of a lack of facilities or financial backing in some institutions, or because of faulty concepts of what is called the Spirit of Prophecy blueprint, a substandard work may be conducted with endeavors to justify it on the basis of following that blueprint. It is inconceivable that the God of order, who called into being the organization of the Seventh-day Adventist church; and who indicted the messages which came to us through the messenger of the Lord, giving detailed instruction, guiding us here and guarding us there; should at the same time be one who would make provision for a line of work which is substandard, to be carried on quite independently of the church and of His organization, using for the support of such work the Spirit of Prophecy counsels.

We thank God for the accomplishments of loyal and true Seventh-day Adventists, who, with a clear concept of relationships, with a clear concept of the self-supporting work as an auxiliary work and not an independent work, have made large contributions to the promulgation of the message. It is our conviction that the larger part of what we speak of as the self-supporting work—bound to the church through the Association of Self-supporting Institutions—

is conducted in a manner motivated by sound objectives, and that these have not lost sight of the principles of relationship. It is with deep concern that we have observed some who, having lost sight of certain basic principles, and using the Spirit of Prophecy counsels as a license, are tempted to forge ahead in such a way as to produce a fruit of misunderstanding, impaired confidence, substandard work in the lines of endeavor carried forward. Such a fruit is distressing when we are called upon to meet it, as occasionally we do.

Let us keep our eyes fixed upon the tremendous possibilities before us, so that in the years to come these various auxiliary institutions operated by consecrated men and women and financed by private enterprise, following carefully the true blueprint, may each one make its contribution to the work of God in the earth. Let us keep in mind that in all of this work—good as it may be—it is possible for us to lose sight of the true objectives and engage ourselves to the point of utter exhaustion in the doing of work which may do little in the way of a lasting contribution to the over-all mission of God's church.

[30] Let us keep in mind the perils of a critical attitude. As we review the experiences of Ellen White and her relationship to these problems, we may gain some valuable lessons. She had confidence in the leadership of the church. She was the messenger of the Lord, but she recognized the place of apostles in the church. And at times, even contrary to her best judgment, when the General Conference asked her to move in certain directions, she moved forward because of her confidence in the leadership of the church. She was asked to go to Europe and saw no light in it and everything seemed to point to an impossibility of moving in that direction. But by faith she moved forward, and when she sat down in the train in Oakland to start her journey east to take the boat to Europe, the peace of God came upon her and she was given the assurance that she was moving in God's direction. The same was true when the General Conference asked her to go to Australia. She went because she was asked by the leaders of the church to go. She had confidence in God's guidance in the work of the church. And while it was necessary for her to bear messages of reproof and rebuke to individuals and the church, she never intended that these should be used to impair confidence in the work which God has called into being. She recognized that

men might come short, that they might fail of reaching God's fullest ideals. But that did not mean that God would turn His back upon His people, although He could bless them so much more abundantly if they walked fully in every phase of light that was given.

While in Australia Ellen White was asked some embarrassing questions regarding some things being done at our college in Battle Creek. Certain leaders at the college had launched upon a sports program similar to that of the world, and even boxing matches were being conducted. At this very time, Ellen White was pleading for the establishment of a school in Australia different from the schools of the world—in a land where the folks were quite satisfied with their schools and hardly saw the need—at a time when financial situations were against them. So, with the questions of the brethren in Australia in her mind, she wrote to the president of Battle Creek College, W. W. Prescott:

“The question is asked me if I would please explain to them the advantages of the schools in America above the schools in Australia and New Zealand. I tell you it is not, with the light I am receiving, altogether a pleasant task. I could only go back to the establishment of the school, and explain why the Lord directed that a school should be established under the control of those who believe the truth revealed in the word of God. I then related your connection with the school was in God's order. Then the results in the converting power of God; and I have gathered up the items which I knew were signs of the approval of God.”—*Prophetic Guidance Syllabus*, [Letter 46, 1893](#). (Letter to W. W. Prescott at Battle Creek College, September 5, 1893.)

I have gained quite a helpful lesson from this little statement. Ellen White knew, because of the insight God gave to her, of the problems which existed in our parent educational institution. But when the brethren talked with her about the conditions that had crept in, was that what she brought out? Oh, no. She presented to them the evidences of God's providences in the establishment of the educational work. She set before them the evidences which

indicated God's favor upon the work, even though there were some shortcomings.

[31] Ellen White gave earnest support to the auxiliary work, which had great fields of potential usefulness in the utilizing of the talents; the abilities, and resources of men and women who were not employed directly in the work of the church and placed upon the payrolls of the denomination.

Let us guard carefully against an attitude which so naturally develops on the part of those who are working in a self-supporting line—the looking at those who are supported from the tithe as being selfish in their personal interests, and thinking that because they are supported from the tithe they are—in the eyes of God—not quite as consecrated workers as are those who are working in self-supporting lines.

Brethren, it is time that we all re-examine certain basic principles. The principle of the support of the gospel ministry from the tithe is God's planning. Let us never lose sight of the fact that this is God's basic plan for the ministry and workers employed by the denomination. We believe that the individual who devotes himself wholeheartedly, using his strength and ability and skills in the conduct of the phase of work to which he may be called, and receives his support from the tithe, or whether he works wholeheartedly in some institutional line of work for which the conference does not become financially responsible, but serves the Lord to the best of his ability in that way, or whether he is a self-employed person who divides his time between the earning of a living and the promulgation of the message—perhaps in a more humble and quiet way—each one, in the providence of God, is filling his place and making his contribution towards the finishing of the work, and his reward will be in accord to his consecration to the work.

We are entering upon the closing work of the church. The greatest days are before us. One of the greatest perils which threaten is that of impaired confidence and disunity. The message set forth in earlier years, "Press together, press together, in unity there is strength," is the message which must be uppermost in our hearts as we consider every element of the work, which, in auxiliary lines, draws in so many men and women of talent and ability. As we press together as a people, each one doing his part in heralding the

message and the hastening of the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Lord will richly bless us. May God hasten that day and may the grace of God be upon each and every one of you in the lines of work to which the Lord has called you.