

**Financing  
God's Last  
Army**



**By John J. Grosboll**

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Dr. John J. Grosboll

Do you really want Jesus to come soon? Jesus will not return to earth again until the everlasting gospel is preached in all the world, to every nation, kindred, language and people (Matthew 24:15; Revelation 14:6,7). Jesus would not have given the gospel commission if He did not have a plan to accomplish it. This plan is outlined in the Bible, but because of the feebleness of our comprehension of God's purposes, He has condescended to outline His plan for a finished work in much more detail in the writings of Ellen G. White.

## GOD HAS DEVISED METHODS OF SUPPORT FOR ALL HIS PLANS

For every plan that God has devised for the finishing of His work, He has devised methods and left instructions about how that plan is to work and how it is to be supported. For example, literature evangelists were to earn their living from the profits of the books that were sold. Physicians and nurses were to be paid from the fees paid to the sanitarium by the patients. Missionary farmers and tradesmen were to receive payment from their crops or the services rendered.

But there was one class of missionary worker that was *not* to receive their living from the profits of secular labor. That class of workers was those participating in the work of the gospel ministry. This includes more than just those called "ministers." According to Ellen White the work of the gospel ministry includes the following kinds of workers:

"Institutions that are God's instruments to carry forward His work on the earth must be sustained. Churches must be erected, schools established, and publishing houses furnished with facilities for doing a great work in the publication of the truth to be sent to all parts of the world. *These institutions are ordained of God and should be sustained by tithes and liberal offerings*" (4T, 464).

"Those who *proclaim the message of truth before great congregations, and who do house to house work*, are doing double missionary work, and in no case are their salaries to be cut down. The use of the tithe must be looked upon as a sacred matter by our people" (*Echoes from the Field*, June 21, 1905).

"I have had special instruction from the Lord that the tithe is for a special purpose, consecrated to God to sustain those who minister in the sacred work, as the Lord's chosen to do His work *not only in sermonizing, but in ministering*. They should understand all that this comprehends" (MR. Vol. 1, 187).

"Some, who do not see the advantage of educating the youth to be physicians both of the mind and of the body, say that the tithe should not be used to support medical missionaries, who devote their time to treating the sick. In response to such statements as these, I am instructed .to say that the mind must not become so narrowed down that it cannot take in the truth of the situation" (MM 245).

"Light has been plainly given that *those who minister in our schools, teaching the word of*

God, explaining the Scriptures, educating the students in the things of God, should be supported by the tithe money. This instruction was given long ago, and more recently it has been repeated again and again” (6T, 215).

“It was an offense against God for Elder Haskell’s wages to be cut down. To do this showed great lack of discernment. I am instructed that in such cases the wages should be made up from the tithe. Care should be taken to see that the men who have worn out their lives in God’s cause shall not be neglected. The lack of the past should be supplied. Our colored ministers should not be given so meager a salary that they are not able to support their families. I put these on the list of those who should receive attention. And I put on the list also, the widows whose husbands have died in the service of God, leaving their wives and their children in needy circumstances. For this I have a ‘Thus saith the Lord’ (MR. vol. 15, 230).

“The tithe should go to those who labor in word and doctrine, *be they men or women*” (Ev, 492).

It is true that at times the apostle Paul supported himself by a trade to illustrate “in a practical way what might be done by consecrated laymen” (AA, 355) but this is not actually God’s plan for the support of the ministry for on the next page Ellen White writes, “It is God’s design that such workers shall be freed from unnecessary anxiety, that they may have full opportunity to obey the injunction of Paul to Timothy, ‘Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them’ (1 Tim. 4:15). While they should be careful to exercise sufficiently to keep mind and body vigorous, yet it is *not* God’s plan that they should be compelled to spend a large part of their time at secular employment” (AA, 356).

## WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE USE OF OUR TITHE

The gospel confers individual responsibility upon each of us. In no case can this personal responsibility be avoided or transferred. If God tells us to spend the tithe for the work of the gospel only, He will not condone our using it for something else. What could happen if all the tithe were used only for the gospel ministry and none were diverted for “reversion” into “non-tithe” money?

God will not condone our using tithe for the preaching of apostasy or any use other than specified:

“There are fearful woes for those who preach the truth, but are not sanctified by it, and also for those who consent to *receive and maintain* the unsanctified to minister to them in word and doctrine” (IT, 26 1,262).

“As there are woes for those who preach the truth while they are unsanctified in heart and life, so there are woes for those who receive and maintain the unsanctified in the position which they cannot fill” (2T, 552).

“The churches must arouse. The members must awake out of sleep and begin to inquire, *How is the money which we put into the treasury being used? The Lord desires that a close search be made.* Are all satisfied with the history of the work for the past fifteen years? Where is the evidence of the co-working with God? Where has been heard throughout the churches the prayer for the help of the Holy Spirit? Dissatisfied and disheartened, we turn away from the scene.

“Our churches and institutions must return to where they were before the backsliding commenced, when they began trusting in man and making flesh their arm. Have we not seen enough of human wisdom? Shall we not now seek God in earnestness and simplicity, and serve Him with heart and mind and strength?

“The children of Israel beheld the awful semblance of God’s presence in the mount but before Moses had been forty days away from them, they substituted a golden calf for Jehovah. Things similar to this have been done among us as a people. Let us now return to God in penitence and contrition. Let us trust in Him, not in man” (*Kress Collection*, 120).

## DIVERSION OF TITHE

One of Satan’s major goals is to divert the money that should be coming into the Lord’s treasury and thereby dry up the financial resources to finish God’s work. “Men of property are dying spiritually because of their neglect to use the means God has placed in their hands to aid in saving their fellow men” (2T, 664).

“A flattering prospect may be presented to invest in patent rights or some other supposed brilliant enterprise around which Satan throws a bewitching enchantment. The prospect of getting more money, fast and easily, allures them. They reason that, although they had resolved to put this money into the treasury of God, they will use it in this instance, and will greatly increase it, and will then give a large sum to the cause. They can see no possibility of a failure. Away goes the means out of their hands, and they soon learn, to their regret, that they have made a mistake. The brilliant prospects have faded. Their expectations are not realized. They were deceived. Satan outgeneraled them. He was more shrewd than they, and he managed to get their means into his ranks and thus deprive the cause of God of that which should have been used to sustain it in extending the truth and saving souls for whom Christ died” (2T, 665).

“Property is often bequeathed to children and grandchildren only to their injury. They have no love for God or for the truth, and therefore this means, all of which is the Lord’s, *passes into Satan’s ranks*, to be controlled by him. Satan is much more vigilant, keen-sighted, and skillful in devising ways to secure means to himself than our brethren are to secure the Lord’s own to His cause” (ChS, 323).

“Rightly directed benevolence draws upon the mental and moral energies of men, and excites them to most healthful action in blessing the needy and in advancing the cause of God. If those who have means should realize that they are accountable to God for every dollar that they expend, their supposed wants would be much less. If conscience were alive, she would testify of needless appropriations to the gratification of appetite, of pride, vanity, and love of amusements, and would report the squandering of the Lord’s money, which should have been devoted to His cause. Those who waste their Lord’s goods will by and by have to give an account of their course to the Master. If professed Christians would use less of their wealth in adorning the body and in beautifying their own houses, and would consume less in extravagant, health-destroying luxuries upon their tables, they could place much larger sums in the treasury of God” (3T, 401).

We have a responsibility to be sure that our tithe and gifts to God’s cause are supporting the preaching of the truth and that the devil does not outgeneral us and secure those assets

that God has placed into our hands into the wrong storehouse.

### WHAT IS THE STOREHOUSE?

In order to ascertain a responsible and appropriate Christian decision about the use of tithe we need to understand what the storehouse is.

Only two storehouses exist in the world, "There are only two places in the world where we can deposit our treasures—in God's storehouse or in Satan's, and all that is not devoted to Christ's service is counted on Satan's side and goes to strengthen his cause" (6T, 447).

All of our tithes *and* offerings are to be brought to God's storehouse: "As did Abraham, they are to pay tithe of all they possess and all they receive. A faithful tithe is the Lord's portion. To withhold it, is to rob God. Everyone should freely, willingly, and gladly bring tithes and offerings into the storehouse of the Lord. In so doing, he will receive a blessing. There is no safety in withholding from God His own portion" (*Kress Collection*, p. 60).

The word "storehouse" is equivalent to the word "treasury:" "If all TITHES were brought into the storehouse, God's treasury would not be empty" (*Pacific Union Recorder*, p. 10).

We receive rich gifts from God's storehouse. Eternal life is a gift which we receive from God's storehouse and every temporal blessing which we receive is from His storehouse. In gratitude to the great giver and to develop the principle of unselfishness in our hearts we are then to return, as the Lord has blessed us, to His storehouse: "The Lord Jesus is a never-failing storehouse from which human beings may draw strength and courage" (*Faith I Live By*, p. 341). "He to whom God has entrusted gifts, should return to the Lord's storehouse that which he has received, by freely giving to others the benefit of his blessings" (*In Heavenly Places*, p. 221).

We lay up treasure in heaven when we give to God's storehouse: "Very many might be laying up for themselves treasures in heaven, by keeping the Lord's storehouse supplied with the portion He claims as His own, and with gifts and offerings" (MYP, 307).

By returning our tithes and offerings to God we may receive a blessing larger than we have room for. "The necessities of the work now demand a far greater outlay than ever before. The Lord calls upon His people to make every effort to curtail their expenses. Again, I plead, that instead of spending money for pictures of yourselves and your friends, you should turn it into another channel. Let the money that has been devoted to the gratification of self flow into the Lord's treasury to sustain those who are working to save perishing souls. Let those who have houses and lands give heed to the message, 'Sell that ye have, and give alms.' 'Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse; that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it'" (1888 *Materials*, 1132). Ellen White equated the treasury with the cause of God which is described as that which extends the truth and saves souls. Refer back to the statement from 2T, 665 on page four.

### WHERE IS THE STOREHOUSE?

If we are going to send tithes and gifts to God's storehouse, we need to know where it is. Some think that it is near the Tiber river in Italy. Others think that it is in Maryland and still

others think that it is their local church. God's storehouse is much bigger than any of these places. The reason for confusion is that many, if not most, do not know who and what the church is. Notice the following divine counsel:

"I have myself appropriated my tithe to the most needy cases brought to my notice. I have been instructed to do this; and *as the money is not withheld from the Lord's treasury, [the storehouse]*, it is not a matter that should be commented upon; for it will necessitate my making known these matters, which I do not desire to do, because it is not best. Some cases have been kept before me for years, and I have supplied their needs from the tithe, as God has instructed me to do. And if any person shall say to me, Sister White, will you appropriate my tithe where you know it is most needed, I shall say, Yes, I will; and I have done so. I commend those sisters who have placed their tithe where it is most needed to help to do a work that is being left undone; and if this matter is given publicity, it will create knowledge which would better be left as it is. I do not care to give publicity to this work *which the Lord has appointed me to do, and others to do*" (*Spaulding Magan*, 215).

When Ellen White gave tithe directly to those engaged in gospel work, she said that this money had not been withheld from the Lord's treasury (storehouse) and then she said that the Lord had not only appointed her to do this but also others. Obviously then the storehouse must include more than one organization or group. In fact the Lord has forbidden that all monies go through one organization:

"The different conferences have been led to look to the leading men at Battle Creek, feeling that no important move can be made without their approval. This tendency has been growing stronger, until it is a serious hindrance to the advancement of the work. *This arrangement should never have been.* The Lord would have His people under His jurisdiction. . . . The arrangement that all moneys must go through Battle Creek and under the control of the few men in that place is a wrong way of managing" (I'M, 321).

"In the work being done at the training school for home and foreign missionary teachers in Madison, Tennessee, and in the small schools established by the teachers who have gone forth from Madison, we have an illustration of a way in which the message should be carried. I would say to the workers there, continue to learn of Christ. Do not be daunted. Be free in the Lord; be free. . . .

"Let our church members now arise to their responsibilities and privileges. Let them spend less on self-indulgence and needless adorning. The money thus expended is the Lord's, and is needed to do a sacred work in His cause. Educate the children to do missionary work, and to bring their offerings to God.

"I have said only a little in comparison with what might be said on this subject. It is a sin for any to criticize and find fault with those who in their manner of working do not exactly meet their mind.

"The Lord works through various agencies. If there are those who desire to step into new fields and take up new lines of labor, encourage them to do so. . . .

"Do not worry lest some means shall go direct to those who are trying to do missionary work in a quiet and effective way. *All the means is not to be handled by one agency or organization.* There is much business to be done conscientiously for the cause of God. Help is to be sought from every possible source. There are men who can do the work of securing means for the

cause, and when these are acting conscientiously and in harmony with the counsels of their fellow-laborers in the field which they represent, the hand of restraint is not to be laid upon them. They are surely laborers together with Him who gave His life for the salvation of souls.

Brethren Sutherland and Magan *should be encouraged to solicit means for the support of their work. It is the privilege of these brethren to receive gifts from any of our people whom the Lord impresses to help* (Spaulding Magan ,420-422).

The Lord's counsel for those who were attempting to carry out the gospel commission but were not supported by a conference organization was that they should appeal directly to the people.

"You ask me what you shall do in view of the fact that so little help is given **to** that department of the work in which you are working. I would say, 'Trust it with the Lord.' There is a way opened for you in regard **to** securing help for the Southern field. Appeal to the people. This is the only course you can pursue, under the circumstances. Send no statement of the situation through our religious papers; because it will not be honored. *Send direct to the people.* God's ways are not to be counterworked by man's ways. There are those who have means, and who will give large and small sums. Have this money come direct to your destitute portion of the vineyard. The Lord has not specified any regular channel through which means should pass." (Spaulding Magan, 498).

"There is to be no man that has the right to put his hand out and say, No, you can not go there; we won't support you if you go there. Why, what have you to do with supporting? Did they create the means? The means come from the people, and those who are destitute fields. The voice of God has told me to instruct them to go **to** the people and to tell them their necessities, and to draw all the people to work just where they can find a place to work, to build up the work in every place they can" (Spaulding Magan, 168).

## SURPLUS TITHE

Also, in order **to** understand how to keep our tithe from being diverted, we need to understand what should be done with surplus tithe. Surplus tithe is not to be diverted into other areas of God's work, other than what He has specified. It is to be sent to pay gospel workers in areas of the world where there is little or no tithe income: "There are missions to be sustained in fields where there are no churches and no tithes, and also where the believers are new and the tithe limited. If you have means that is not needed after settling with your ministers in a liberal manner, send the Lord's money to these destitute places" (MR. vol. 1, p. 184).

## REGULAR AND IRREGULAR LINES

In order to understand how to keep our tithe from being diverted we also need to understand what Ellen White said about regular and irregular lines of gospel work.

In Ellen White's day, those that worked for a conference or the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists were called "regular workers" and this work was referred to as the "regular lines." However, there were also some ministers, and gospel workers who were not employed by any church organization who were called of God to carry out the gospel

commission in one or more localities.

One of these was a man by the name of Brother Shireman. It would be very instructive to any Seventh-day Adventist today to read all the communications Ellen White. sent to various workers in regard to what could be called the "Shireman case."

These workers who were not employed by any church organization were called "irregular workers," at least they were called this by those who called themselves the "regular workers" and worked in the "regular lines." Ellen White used their terminology in referring to these situations. "If regular workers" would be equivalent to what the "regular workers" today call "independent ministries." In Ellen White's day, one of the grievous problems among Adventists was the development of kingly power in the "regular lines." The Lord's counsel to His people then is even more applicable today.

"Now I want to say, God has not put any kingly power in our ranks to control this or that branch of the work. The work has been greatly restricted by the efforts to control it in every line. Here is a vineyard presenting its barren places that have received no labor. And if one should start out to till these places in the name of the Lord, unless he should get the permission of the men in a little circle of authority he would receive no help. But God means that His workers shall have help. If a hundred should start out on a mission to these destitute fields, crying unto God, He would open the way before them. *Let me tell you if your heart is in the work; and you have faith in God you need not depend upon the sanction of any minister or any people if you go right to work in the name of the Lord, in a humble way doing what you can to teach the truth, God will vindicate you*" (GCB, 1901, p. 26).

"Pharisaism in the Christian world today is not extinct. The Lord desires to break up the course of precision which has become so firmly established, which has hindered instead of advancing His work. . . . Divine wisdom must have abundant room in which to work. *It is to advance without asking permission or support from those who have taken to themselves a kingly power.* In the past, one set of men have tried to keep in their own hands the control of all the means coming from the churches. . . They have taken upon themselves the grave responsibility of retarding the work where the work should have been advanced- It has been left to a few supposed kindly minds to say what fields should be worked and what fields should be left unworked. A few men have kept the truth in circumscribed channels, because to open new fields would call for money. Only in those places in which they were interested have they been willing to invest means" (*Spaulding Magan*, 174).

"For years the same routine, the same 'regular way' of working has been followed, and God's work has been greatly hindered.

"God calls for a revival and a reformation. The 'regular lines' have not done the work which God desires to see accomplished- Let revival and reformation make constant changes. **Somthing has been done** in this line, but let not the work stop here. No! Let every *yoke be broken*. Let men awaken to the realization that they have an individual responsibility.

"The present showing is sufficient to prove to all who have the true missionary spirit that *the 'regular lines' may prove a failure and a snare.* God helping His people, the circle of kings who dared to take such great responsibilities shall never again exercise their unsanctified power in the so-called 'regular lines.' Too much power has been invested in unrevived, unreformed human agencies" (*Spaulding Magan*, 175).



“Shall the ‘regular lines’, which say that every mind shall be controlled by two or three minds at Battle Creek, continue to bear sway? The Macedonian cry is coming from every quarter. Shall men go to the “regular lines” to see whether they will be permitted to labor, or shall they go out and work as best they can, depending on their own abilities and on the help of the Laid, beginning in a humble way and creating an interest in the truth in places in which nothing has been done to give the warning message?” (*Spaulding Magan*, 176).

“The Lord has blessed the work that J. E. White has tried to do in the South. God grant that the voices which have been so quickly raised to say that all the money invested in the work must go through the appointed channel at Battle Creek, shall not be heard. The people to whom God has given His means are amenable to Him alone. It is their privilege to give direct aid and assistance to missions. It is because of the misappropriation of means that the Southern field has no better showing than it has today.

“I do not consider it the duty of the Southern branch of our work, in the publication and handling of books, to be under the dictation of our established publishing houses. And if means can be devised to reduce the expense of publishing and circulating books, let this be done. I have to say, my brother, that I have no desire to see the work in the South moving forward in the old, regular lines” (*Spaulding Magan*, 176, 177).

#### **“INDEPENDENT” WORKERS ARE ENTITLED TO RECEIVE MONEY**

In the statements concerning the storehouse earlier in this booklet, Ellen White made it clear that “independent” workers should solicit financial help and go directly to the people for financial assistance. She also counseled, however, that they were entitled to receive money from church organizations as well, and not just from what they solicited.

“You have in the past done much to bring means into circulation in the work of God. And you need not now feel troubled about accepting gifts and free-will offerings; for you will need them in the work of preparing young men and women to labor in the Lord’s vineyard. As you carry on this work in harmony with the Lord’s will, you are not to be kept on a constant strain to know how to secure the means you need in order to go forward. The Lord forbids the setting up of walls and bands around workers of experience who are faithfully acting their God-appointed part.

“Much precious time has been lost because manmade rules and restrictions have been sometimes placed above the plans and purposes of God. In the name of the Lord I appeal to our conference workers to strengthen and support and labor in harmony with our brethren at Madison, who are carrying forward a work that God has appointed them” (*Spaulding Magan*, 412).

“It was quite a problem with Brethren Sutherland and Magan and their faithful associates as to how, with limited means, they were to adapt themselves to the work in Madison, Tenn. They had many obstacles and difficulties to meet, some of which need never have come into the work” (*Madison School*, 30).

“Many obstacles have been placed in the way of the pioneers at the Madison school of a nature to discourage them and drive them from the field. These obstacles were not placed there by the Lord. *In some things the finite planning and devisings of men have worked counter to the work of God.* Let us be careful, brethren lest we counterwork and hinder the progress of others,

and so delay the sending forth of the gospel message. This has been done, and this is why I am now compelled to speak so plainly. If proper aid had been given to the school enterprise at Madison, its work might now be in a far more advanced stage of development. The work at Madison has made slow advancement and yet, in spite of the obstacles and hindrances, these workers have not failed nor become discouraged; and they have been enabled to accomplish a good work in the cause of God.

“The Lord does not set limits about His workers in some lines as men are wont to set. In their work, Brethren Magan and Sutherland have been hindered unnecessarily. *Means have been withheld from them because in the organization and management of the Madison school, it was not placed under the control of the conference. But the reasons why this school was not owned and controlled by the conference have not been duly considered.* The lack of interest in this work by some who should have valued it highly is decidedly wrong. Our brethren must guard themselves against the repetition of such experiences.

“The Lord does not require that the educational work **at** Madison shall be changed all about before it can receive the hearty support of our people. *The work that has been done there is approved of God, and He forbids that this line of work shall be broken up.* The Lord will continue to bless and sustain the workers so long as they follow His counsel.

“Brethren Sutherland and Magan are as verily set to do the work of the Lord at Madison as other workers are appointed to do their part in the cause of present truth. The light given me is that we should help these brethren and their associates, who have worked beyond their strength under great disadvantages. Let us seek to understand the situation, and see that justice and mercy are not forgotten in the distribution of funds.

“The leaders in the work of the Madison school are laborers together with God. More must be done in their behalf by their brethren. The Lord’s money is to sustain them in their labors. They have a right to share the means given to the cause. They should be given a proportionate share of the means that comes in for the furtherance of the cause” (*Madison School*, 31, 32).

## RESTRICTIONS

“When I read the resolutions published in the Review, placing so many restrictions upon those who may be sent out to gather funds for the building up of institutions in needy and destitute fields, I was sorry for the many restrictions. I can but feel sad, for *unless the converting grace of God comes into the conferences, a course will be taken that will bring the displeasure of God upon them.* We have had enough of the spirit of forbidding.

“This morning I could not sleep after midnight. I awoke bearing this message to our leading men, *Break every yoke that would hinder or limit the power of the Third Angel’s message.* The calls that have been made large liberality, which have been responded to so nobly by our people, should lead to feelings of confidence and gratitude, rather than to the placing of yokes upon the necks of God’s servants. Let your requirements ever be dictated by the Holy Spirit of God. When the officers of the General Conference allow such restrictions to be made, they give evidence that they need clearer spiritual eyesight, that the heavenly anointing is not upon them.

“Representations have been made to me of a work that does not bear the divine

credentials. The prohibitions that have been bound about the labors of those who would go forth to warn the people in the cities of the soon coming judgments, *should every one be removed*. None are to be hindered from bearing the message of present truth to the world. Let the workers receive their directions from God. When the Holy Spirit impresses a believer to do a certain work for God, leave the matter to him and the Lord. I am instructed to say to you, *Break every yoke* that would prevent the message from going forth with power to the cities. This work of proclaiming the truth in the cities will take means, but it will also bring in means. A much greater work would have been done if men had not been so zealous to watch and hinder some who were seeking to obtain means from the people to carry forward the work of the Lord” (*Spaulding Magan*, 435).

“I am sorry that you should make any excuse for withholding your sympathy from the workers in Madison. It is true that they have made some mistakes; but they have confessed their errors with brokenness of heart, and have done what they could to rectify their mistakes.

“You have been represented to me as holding yourself aloof from these brethren. Had you gone to them in the spirit of Christ, and studied with them the needs of the field, you would have said, These brethren need some of the means we are handling. Had you inquired into their needs, and advocated the dividing with them of the means given for the work in that field, considering that ‘All ye are brethren,’ you would have done a work well pleasing to the Lord. Those who withdraw their sympathy and help from their fellow laborers, God will deal with in a way to show them His displeasure. God does not require His servants all to work in precisely the same way.

“The power of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is pledged to every believer, to preserve unity and love, and to sustain him in his labor, the recovery of lost souls. When we are with Christ, we will co-operate harmoniously for the salvation of souls” (*Spaulding Magan*, 410).

“The Lord Jesus will one day call to account those who would so tie your hands that it is almost impossible for you to move in harmony with the Lord’s biddings. ‘The silver and the gold is mine, saith the Lord, and the cattle upon a thousand hills’” (*Spaulding Magan*, p.41<sup>1</sup>).

## SPECIAL COUNSEL CONCERNING BIBLE WORKERS

Much discussion has arisen as to whether a person should be eligible to receive tithe if not employed by the conference. This question existed in Ellen White’s day though not to the extent as today since the apostasy had not progressed to the enormous extent it has today. Ellen White did comment on this issue, however: “There are minister’s wives, Sisters Starr, Haskell, Wilson and Robinson, who have been devoted, earnest, whole-souled workers, giving Bible readings and praying with families, helping along by personal efforts just as successfully as their husbands. These women give their whole time, and are told that they receive nothing

for their labors because their husbands receive their wages. *I tell them to go forward and all such decisions shall be reversed*. The Word says, ‘The laborer is worthy of his hire.’ When any such decision as this is made, I will in the name of the Lord, protest. *I will feel it in my duty to create a fund from my tithe money, to pay these women* who are accomplishing just as essential work as the ministers are doing, and this tithe I will reserve for work in the same line as that of the ministers, hunting for souls, fishing for souls. I know that the faithful women should be

paid wages proportionate to the pay received by ministers. They carry the burden of souls, and should not be treated unjustly. These sisters are giving their time to educating those newly come to the faith, and hire their own work done, and pay those who work for them. All these things must be adjusted and set in order, and justice be done to all. Proof-readers in the office receive their wages, two dollars and a half and three dollars a week. This I have had to pay, and others have to pay. But ministers' wives, who carry a tremendous responsibility, devoting their entire time, have nothing for their labor. This will give you an idea of how matters are in this conference. There are seventy-five souls organized into a church, who are paying their tithe into the conference, and as a saving plan it has been deemed essential to let these poor souls labor for nothing! But this does not trouble me, for I will not allow it to go thus" (*Spaulding Magan*, 117).

Obviously this same counsel would apply to full-time Bible workers today. Very few young people have trained themselves for Bible work. They have been told that there are no job openings (no tithe money) available for this! The entire time that I taught at Southwestern Adventist college, which was over seven years, I only met one person who was training to become a Bible worker! The result is that in this crisis hour when we should have thousands of young people trained and ready to go throughout Europe, Russia and China and other continents, we look about, and alas, there is a dearth of trained Bible workers all over the world. This fact alone, if you had no other information of God's counsels for medical or publishing or ministerial work, is proof of a gigantic apostasy in Adventism today. Apostasy, by definition, means that a person or group has had truth and has wandered away from it—they are not following the truth God has entrusted to them. If a person or a church tolerates apostasy and does not speak out against it, they become part of it and are in a state of apostasy.

The purpose of Adventist schools was not just to keep our young people in the church—when you are training life-guards, it is not enough for them to know how to swim. They must learn how to save the *drowning*.

A truly Christian education is at the very foundation of God's plans to finish His work. Every Christian is to have a part in finishing God's work. God designed for us to educate not only ministers and Bible workers but physicians, literature evangelists, nurses and teachers and many other skilled persons to finish the gospel commission.

### SPECIAL NEED FOR BIBLE WORKERS

It is God's will that we prepare thousands to do Bible work (9T, 126). "In every school that God has established there will be, as never before, demand for Bible instruction" (Ev, 474). What is this Bible instruction to accomplish? The next sentence says, "Our students are to be educated to become Bible workers." "In every city there should be a corps of organized, well-disciplined workers; not merely one or two, but scores should be set to work" (ChS, 72).

This work will require money. "It almost seems as if scarcely anyone dares ask a worker to go into the cities, because of the means that would be required to carry on a strong, sound work. It is true that much means will be required in order to do our duty toward the unwanted in these places; and God desires us to lift our voices and our influence in favor of using means wisely in this special line of effort" (Ev, 42).

## IF WE FAIL GOD'S PLAN WILL SUCCEED THROUGH OTHERS

If none of us feel a responsibility to fill the gap and become trained in Bible work and then help to train others, the Lord will pass us by and finish His work with others. He may use "children" as in the triumphal entry into Jerusalem or the rocks may cry out, but if that happens we will lose the blessing God wanted us to have and in the process we might lose our souls also. If we do not feel a responsibility that all of our tithe support the giving of the three angels' messages, God can at any time find other intelligences and other money or sources of support to finish His work, but we will be the losers. If we support apostasy with our tithe and offerings we are not hastening the Lord's coming by getting the last message to all the world--rather we are delaying His coming and in dire danger of being accounted as an evil servant at the end (Matthew 24:44-51).

Through *Our Firm Foundation* Magazine, the Lord has sent warning after warning specifying the nature of the apostasy among us. These magazines have been sent to Adventist ministers in all parts of the world. It cannot be truthfully said that independent ministries have not tried to correct the evils in the church and entreat and work to bring revival and reformation. If the warnings which God sends to reform the church and purge out apostasy are rejected, the last resort is for God to send judgments.

The time will soon come when God will finish His work in away completely different than we expect. If we oppose what God is doing because it differs from our expectations of how the work should be conducted, we will be found fighting God and will lose our souls just as surely as the unbelieving Jews. Notice the following prophecies:

"Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner *very much out of the common order of things*, and in a way that will be *contrary to any human planning*. There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world. *God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands*. The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness" (TM, 300).

"There will soon be an awakening that will surprise many. Those who do not realize the necessity of what is to be done, will be passed by, and the heavenly messengers will work with those who are called the *common people*, fitting them to carry the truth to many places. Now is the time for us to awake and do what we can" (*Loma Linda Messages*, 83).

"Time is passing, and God calls for every watchman to be in his place. He has been pleased to lead us to a crisis greater than any since our Saviour's first advent. What shall we do? God's Holy Spirit has told us what to do; but, as the Jews in Christ's day rejected light and chose darkness, so will the religious world reject the message for today. Men professing godliness have despised Christ in the person of His messengers. Like the Jews, they reject God's message" (RH, August 17, 1897).

"If there are any of our brethren who think that they have devised plans by which they can secure a monopoly of any line of God's work, *they are released from all such burdens*. Individually we form a part of the great whole, fulfilling our part in the scenes foreseen long

ages ago. In the counsels of God a place was assigned to every person, and each one is to devote his entire ability, his influence, the energy of his whole being, in an earnest endeavor to discharge the responsibility laid upon him" (RH, July 23, 1895).

"If we are to bear apart in this work to its close, we must recognize the fact that there are good things to come to the people of God in a way that we had not discerned; and that there will be resistance from the very ones we expected to engage in such a work. A man that is sincere in the wrong is not justified in the wrong" (1888 *Materials*, p. 1024).

## TITHE AND EDUCATIONAL REFORM

God's plan for the rapid finishing of His work in the world involved educational reform that would refashion people's thinking about who and what the church is, who and what a minister is, who is qualified to receive tithe and what kind of education this person should receive.

"With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world! How soon might the end come--the end of suffering and sorrow and sin! How soon, in place of a possession here, with its blight of sin and pain, our children might receive their inheritance where 'the righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever;' where 'the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick,' and 'the voice of weeping shall be no more heard'" (Ed, 271).

Therefore, "Now, as never before, we need to understand the true science of education. If we fail to understand this we shall never have a place in the kingdom of God" (Spaulding Magan, 56).

If we fail in our educational reform, we will be confused on such issues as what the church is, who a minister is and who is to receive tithe.

The reformed system of education that God designed included reforms in manual labor as a part of education, dress reform, diet reform, and recreation reform. God designed that farmers, financiers, and builders as well as physicians, nurses, canvassers, & Bible workers be trained for missionary service. (See MM, 194&331).

To prepare such workers Seventh-day Adventists were counseled, "Let us determine that we shall not be tied by so much as a thread to the educational policies of those who do not discern the voice of God and who will not hearken to His commandments" (MM, 61,62).

## THE BIBLE THE CENTER

The education that Seventh-day Adventist schools were to provide was to be based on the Bible. The Bible was to be the center of education, first, last and best. "The Bible should not be brought into our schools to be sandwiched between infidelity" (CT, 16). It was not to include ancient or modern classics containing worldly, pagan and infidel sentiments. It was not to include any reading of fiction or study of worldly philosophy (CT, 25-28; MH, 439-450).

## A MISSIONARY TRAINING

Missionary Training was to prepare young people, as quickly as possible, for a useful life

as a Christian self-supporting worker or mission board supported missionary. Adventist young people were to be taught the great reforms that God had given to His people--reforms *in* dress, diet, education, recreation, healthful lifestyle, methods of healing, and reforms in church organization and administration.

## MANUAL TRAINING IN THE COUNTRY

Adventists schools were to be located in a rural setting and all students were to learn a manual trade, "Every man, woman, and child should be educated to do practical, useful work. All should learn some trade. It may be tentmaking, or it may be business in other lines; but all should be educated to use the members of their body to some purpose, and God is ready and willing to increase the adaptability of all who will educate themselves to industrious habits" (7BC, 912 also Ed. 218). Manual training helps young people to learn to *do* as well as to think and without this training young people become disqualified to be able to give the final warning to the world (the loud cry).

## GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS

Adventist education was not to include training in athletics, sports and games as these disqualify one for giving the last message of mercy to the world: "A view of things was presented before me in which the students were playing games of tennis and cricket. Then I was given instruction regarding the character of these amusements. They were presented to me as a *species of idolatry*, like the idols of the nations.

"There were more than visible spectators on the **ground. Satan and his angels were** there, making impressions on human minds. Angels of God, who minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, were also present, not to approve, but to disapprove. They were ashamed that such an exhibition should be given by the professed children of God. The forces of the enemy gained a decided victory, and God was dishonored. *He who gave His life to refine, ennoble, and sanctify human beings was grieved at the performance*"(CT,350).

## SIMPLE BUILDINGS

The buildings at Adventist schools were to be simple and not at all patterned after worldly universities. This has been one of our greatest failures in Adventist education. "Our ideas of building and furnishing our institutions are to be molded and fashioned by a true, practical knowledge of what it means to walk humbly with God. Never should it be thought necessary to give an appearance of wealth. Never should appearance be depended on as a means of success. This is a delusion. The desire to make an appearance that is not in every way appropriate to the work that God has given us to do, an appearance that could be kept up only by expending a large sum of money, is a merciless tyrant. It is like a canker that is ever eating into the vitals" (7T, 93).

When a student has graduated from a school with simple economical buildings and goes to a foreign field as a missionary, he understands that he can also start a school without a large outlay of means and God's plan for many small schools around the world can be fulfilled. But when a graduate of a school thinks that only large expensive buildings and a large faculty with

advanced worldly degrees can provide an education, then only a few schools can be started and operated and even in their operation a false education is often the result because school buildings are a constant educational force at any institution.

## TRAINING THINKERS

Adventist education was to train young people to be thinkers and to be able to govern themselves instead of being merely reflectors of other men's thoughts and having to be governed by others. A Christian trained to be self-governing will bring his conduct into harmony with the principles of the Bible and will not be bound in slavery to customs, traditions, organizations, and leaders when the Spirit of God is calling him to obey and to declare the truth. An understanding of this principle is vital if one is to understand what caused the protestant churches to reject the midnight cry in the 1840's. Their experience has ominous overtones for those expecting the loud cry today.

"The work did not stand in the wisdom and learning of men, but in the power of God. It was not the most talented, but the most humble and devoted, who were the first to hear and obey the call. Farmers left their crops standing in the fields, mechanics laid down their tools, and with tears and rejoicing went out to give the warning. Those who had formerly led in the cause were *among the last to join* in this movement. The *churches in general closed their doors against this message*, and a large company of those who received it withdrew from their connection" (GC, 402).

## REJECTION OF THE LOUD CRY

Just as the midnight cry was rejected by churches in the 1840's who were the victims of a false education which trains people to be conservative and afraid of leaving "well-trodden paths of action," in the same way those who have become the victims of an education which does not teach self-government will reject the loud cry. (See *Studies in Christian Education*, by E.D. Sutherland, M.D.)

Our great danger today is that we will repeat the experience of other protestant churches at the time of the great second advent awakening. The result to them of failing to reform in the matter of education was that their leaders and laity were unprepared for the midnight cry. In their time, because of their failure to adopt protestant educational reform, it was thought that only those educated in the system of the church could be preachers and receive tithes. They set up a system that eventually forced all of God's true children (his true church on earth) out of their "churches." When a true child of God, who is one of His ministers, who is faithful to the truth, is disfellowshipped, this in no way disqualifies him from receiving support from the Lord's true children because he is still part of the real church. (In this world the real church and the professed church is not the same. The real church are those who love God and keep His commandments. See *Up ward Look* 315)

When our leaders rejected educational reform in the late 19th and early 20th century and started down a road that would lead to where we are today, Ellen White stated that, "it is not the Lord's will that the work in the South shall be confined to the set, regular lines. It has been found impossible to confine the work to these lines and gain success. Workers daily filled



with zeal and wisdom from on high must work as they are guided by the Lord, waiting not to receive their commission from men" (*Selection from the Testimonies*, 62). What was found impossible then has been proved over and over again in the decades since to be just as impossible.

## THE CONNECTION BETWEEN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND TITHE

The entire scenario showing the close connection between Christian education and the tithe question is summarized by Dr. Sutherland as follows: "The Primitive Christians carried the gospel rapidly and effectively to the world. In their school they taught only those subjects that would prepare the student to do the Lord's work. By the world their educators were regarded as 'odd, singular, straight-laced extremists.' Everything was done by these Christian educators to prepare the student quickly to act the part of a good soldier in the battle. Students were not detained in the school to finish a course or take a degree, a custom in vogue in the worldly schools. Later, half-converted pagan-Christian teachers introduced the course-and-degree idea, which *developed an education trust controlled by the church leaders*, and no one was allowed to teach or preach until he had finished a course and received a degree. (Notice how this limits all tithe monies to those who have been through a certain course of education.)

"One of the most serious objections brought against this plan is that it closes the mind of the student to truth. Practically every religious reform has come through humble laymen, because the church leaders, as a rule, in obtaining their education, have become conservative. Conservatism is the result of passing through a rigid, mechanical course of study for a degree. The student is held in a rut, on a treadmill; he is described as ever going and never getting anywhere. Consequently, when the truth is presented to these school men, especially if it is brought by a layman, it is not looked upon with favor, as they have come to regard themselves as the regular channel through which light must come to the people [and the only ones through whom tithe should come].

"The truth of this statement is borne out by historical facts. Motley, giving the experience of reformers in Holland, writes thus of the restriction placed on laymen by the papal system of education: 'We forbid all lay persons to converse or dispute concerning the Holy Scriptures, openly or secretly, especially on any doubtful or difficult matters, or to read, teach or expound the Scriptures, unless they have duly studied theology and have been approved by some renowned university.' He adds, however, that 'to the ineffable disgust of the conservatives in church and state here were men with little education, utterly devoid of Hebrew, of lowly station—hatters, couriers, tanners, dyers and the like—who began to preach, remembering unreasonably, perhaps, that the early disciples selected by the Founder of Christianity had not all been doctors of theology with diplomas from renowned universities.' . . . .

"Most of the school men about 1844 rejected the first angel's message because it did not come to them in the regular way. 'The fact that the message was, to a great extent, preached by laymen, was urged as an argument against it. . . . Multitudes, trusting implicitly in their pastors, refused to listen to the warning' "GC, 380 (*Special Studies in Education*, 96, 97).

Just as they rejected the midnight cry, a worldly education will prepare a person to reject the loud cry. One day soon God is going to finish His work in a most unexpected way. Will you reject it if it does not happen in the way you expect? Will you reject it if the last message of truth

comes through somebody who is not authorized? Who has not received “permission?” Would you fail to support the truth with your time, talents and money if it came from an unexpected source? Are you so unable to endure seeing the invisible that all you can see is outward organizations based on profession? Can you not distinguish between profession and the reality? Is the side of the great controversy that you take going to be determined by what you can see with your eyes? Do you have the capacity to judge righteous judgement not based on appearance? (John 7:24)

In the last great work of God for the world, “the Lord will work through humble instruments, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to His service. The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of the Spirit than by the training of literary institutions “ (GC, 606).

Now notice the following astute observation by Dr. Sutherland in the next paragraph about how Satan would attempt to cause the loud cry to be rejected by Seventh-day Adventists. Notice how educational policy and the tithe issue always become intertwined. If your education has made it impossible for you to see and understand spiritual things, then you will naturally conclude that the church (which is certainly something spiritual) is made up of what you can see. You will tend to conclude that it is simply an earthly organization with constitutions, bylaws, charters, **incorporation** papers, and buildings and human records etc. This will first of all, determine your understanding of who is recognized as a preacher or minister and then who is entitled to be supported with tithes and offerings.

“Satan will work with all his power of deception to have a company of men at the head of the Seventh-day Adventist church at the time of the loud cry, who will reward the work of humble **instruments** led by the Spirit of God, who have not graduated, from a literary institution, with the same disfavor as the leaders of the Protestant churches before 1844 regarded such irregularities. God wants thousands of men trained in our schools; but He does not want them to receive such a training that their attitude toward truth will be the same as that of the school men of other denominations prior to 1844” (*Special Testimonies on Education*, 97,98).

The tithe and offering issue has to do with more than what organization you send it to. It has to do with more than just money and who is going to handle God’s money in this world. It has much to do with the finishing of God’s work. As long as your money goes to support apostasy there will not be revival and reformation for you because “where your treasure is there will your heart be also” (Matt. 6:21). □

All emphasis is supplied.