

Crest Hotel, San Francisco, Cal.
July 11, 1950

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE:

Dear Brethren:

On this day of fasting and prayer, we as a people are to seek not to the god of Ekron, but to the God of truth, the Author and Finisher of our faith, the God who has led the remnant church these 106 years, as He led Israel of old. The President's stirring address last night, calling upon us to guard the faith once delivered to the saints, and to speak forthrightly in defence of it, presents a challenge. With this in mind, it is imperative that we know exactly what it is that should be guarded, for certainly there is great confusion in our ranks to-day.

This confusion was evident in the "Christ-centered preaching" urged upon us repeatedly in the Ministerial Association meeting of the past four days. These meetings were supposed to set the stage for a mighty revival among God's people at this General Conference session. This "Christ-centered preaching" is expected by its proponents, to bring in a great reformation among Seventh-day Adventists workers the world around.

No one for a moment could disparage the preaching of the true Christ as the center and substance of the three angels' messages. However, in the confusion, it has been discerned that much of this so-called "Christ-centered preaching" is in reality merely anti-Christ centered preaching. It vitally affects the outcome of this General Conference session. To make such a statement to the General Conference Committee sounds fantastic. But startling things are not unexpected by the church in the last days.

No Seventh-day Adventist can deny for a moment that Satan will take the religious world captive, appearing as an angel of light, to deceive if possible the very elect. Through a three-fold union of apostate Protestantism, Romanism, and Spiritualism, he will present the most bitter opposition to the three angels' messages ever encountered. Men such as E. Stanley Jones, Leslie Weatherhead, Norman Vincent Peale, and Billy Graham, are allying themselves with Spiritualistic forces, robed in garments of light. They indeed preach a winsome, lovable, always smiling "Christ". But, with the aid of the Bible, this "Christ" can be proven to be identifiable with the father of all lies, the author of Spiritualism and Romanism. Need it be said that we have nothing to do as Seventh-day Adventists with such a false "Christ"? Ought we not to realize that our cruel and bitter enemy knows by now far too well the fallacy of trying to allure us with apparent evil, gross and crude Spiritualism? In these last days, he will assume the form of good, and seek to allure us and charm us with specious reasonings, apparently holy, causing men, as we heard last night, "to give utterance to opinions that will betray sacred, holy trusts." It could be proven, as simply and as clearly as that the Seventh-day Sabbath is the true one, that the "Christ" of these modern men is identifiable with the god of modern Spiritualism!

In the sermons and exhortations of the past four days, no clear distinction whatever has been made between the Christ of Seventh-day Adventism, and this false Christ. While lip service has been paid to the preaching of our distinctive doctrines, they have been openly and repeatedly disparaged as secondary, this "Christ" being considered primary. We are thus left with a vague mysticism permeating Seventh-day Adventism. If followed to its logical ends, it can only bring in a false, spurious type of "Christian" experience, calculated instead to deceive the very elect, but which will not hasten the finishing of the work committed to us. It is a modern

counterpart of an ancient call to Israel in the wilderness to return to Egypt. Should not this matter, dear brethren and elders, be thoroughly investigated by men capable of discerning between the wiles of the devil and the solemn work of the true Holy Spirit?

Is it not true that our fasting, praying, and seeking for the outpouring of the Spirit will be tragically hindered until this matter is clarified? The most earnest, intercessory, pleading prayers offered unwittingly to Baal will not avail Israel one drop of heaven-sent rain, in this time of spiritual drought. Is it not true that the "Christ" of these modern Spiritualistic actors is in reality Israel's ancient enemy, Baal, under a new and more highly refined guise?

The following facts are worthy of consideration:

1. Our history proves, in the incident of Dr. Kellogg's apostasy into what the servant of the Lord repeatedly termed "deadly heresies" and "doctrines of devils" and specious "spiritualistic sentiments", that trusted men amongst us can think themselves in harmony with our faith, have regard to the law and the Sabbath, be men of apparent rectitude, and yet be deceived by a refined species of Spiritualism. Therefore, to say that we are not in any danger of being confused by the false Christ and his spiritualism so long as we hold to the Sabbath and the law, etc., is not entirely true. Seventh-day Adventists can be deceived. Only a tyro in denominational history will deny that.

2. Plain, unequivocal statements that cannot possibly be gainsaid, in Special Testimonies, Series B, indicate that the spiritualistic sophistries which deceived Dr. Kellogg and a great proportion of our trusted leaders fifty years ago, will again deceive our people; further, that Dr. Kellogg's apostasy, revealed in "Living Temple", was but the comparatively crude, immature beginning of deadly deceptions and doctrines of devils; and that the most serious development in the history of Adventism, as we near the end, would be an almost overmastering attempt on the part of Satan to lead us in Spiritualism, a revival of the deceptions of fifty years ago. Just a few key statements follow, which should indicate that this is not a fantastic idea:

"'Living Temple' contains the alpha of these theories. I knew that the omega would follow in a little while, and I trembled for our people." No. 2, p. 53.

"Many are in danger of receiving theories and sophistries that undermine the foundation pillars of our faith. . . Satan, with his seductive influence, has stolen away from one and then another the faith once delivered to the saints.

... Nothing but a determined effort will break the spell that is on them."

"Be not deceived: many will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. We have now before us the alpha of this danger. The omega will be of a most startling nature." Pp. 15, 16.

"'Living Temple' . . . contains specious sentiments. There are in it sentiments that are entirely true, but these are mingled with error. . . in the book 'Living Temple' there is presented the alpha of deadly heresies. The omega will follow, and will be received by those who are not willing to heed the warning God has given." Pp. 49, 50.

"The time is near when the deceptive powers of satanic agencies will be fully developed. On one side, is Christ, who has been given all power in heaven and in earth. On the other side, is Satan, continually exercising his power to allure ((appearing as anti-Christ, in the place of Christ)), to deceive with strong, spiritualistic sophistries, to remove God ((the true Christ)) out of the places that He should occupy in the minds of men." No. 7, pp. 16, 17.

"Fanciful representations and interpretations of truth have been stealing in step by step, unperceived by men who ought, through a clear understanding of the Scriptures, to be prepared to see the danger and sound a note of warning. . . Blindness hath happened unto Israel." P. 17.

"Spiritualistic sentiments have been given to our people, and have been received by some who have had long experience as teachers in the word of God. The results of this insidious devising will break out again and again." P. 36.

"That those who we have thought sound in the faith should have failed to discern the specious, deadly influence of this science of evil, should alarm us as nothing else has alarmed us.

"It is something that cannot be treated as a small matter." P. 37.

"The strange part of the matter is that these ideas have been accepted by so many as beautiful truth." P. 49.

3. This deception of refined Spiritualism constitutes a species of virtual Baal worship. The old enemy of ancient Israel has deceived many in modern Israel.

(a) Baal is simply a false "Christ", and is Satan disguising as the god who led Israel out of Egypt. He is an utter imposter, assuming the appearance of Israel's true Lord. The word Baal simply meant "Lord", or "husband", etymologically. Thus when the prophets of Baal prayed at Carmel, they simply prayed, "O Lord, Lord, etc.," while Elijah had a clear distinction in his mind about the true God.

(b) Ancient Israel did not realize that they had apostatized into Baal worship. It was gradual, unconscious apostasy. This is evident from statements in Prophets and Kings, and Jeremiah 2:23, 35; 16:10. Modern Israel's Baal worship has also been gradual and unconscious. Men are sincerely deceived.

(c) An unequivocally plain prophecy occurs in Testimonies to Ministers, pp. 467, 468, that as a consequence of not discerning the light of righteousness by faith revealed in 1888, "many" amongst us would be deceived into virtual Baal worship.

(d) This modern Baal worship and highly refined Spiritualism constitutes a spurious and counterfeit species of righteousness by faith. This revival of "Christ centered preaching", being practically identical with the "gospel" of modern Babylon, is not a true revival such as Jones and Waggoner and Sister White brought to us 62 years ago.

(e) This spurious faith in "Christ" can never prepare the remnant church to stand in the day of God, nor is it a distinctive message which will lighten the earth with the glory of God. Followed to its logical end, it will rob us of the distinctive message God has given us for the world. It is a call back to Egypt.

(f) The alarming and heartbreaking examples of treachery, immorality, cupidity, fraud, and embezzlement, arising within our ministerial ranks, and sadly familiar to us here and there, indicate that the fruit of this apostasy is increasingly bitter. Faith in the true Christ, dear brethren, bears not fruit such as we see today amongst us.

4. Modern Spiritualism is not clearly discerned by our people. It constitutes not merely crude peeping and muttering of the dead, but also a counterfeit Holy Spirit. Thus Baal worship includes a false god, a false "Christ", and a false "Holy Spirit". Other religious bodies are earnestly seeking a "latter rain" as are we, but their Holy

Spirit will prove to be an Unholy Spiritism. The church appeals to the ministry to make this distinction clear to our workers and people. Already spurious manifestations of miracle working power have been evident amongst us, and have been received by many. Clear unequivocal statements from the Spirit of Prophecy indicate that near the end false miracles will appear amongst Seventh-day Adventists to deceive them, and that such miracles will be accompanied by a spurious righteousness by faith such as the world will receive. Our people are tragically confused, as sheep without a shepherd, and await a clarification of this matter.

5. It is certain that there are keen minds in the world who will someday be able to prove conclusively from history and theology, that the "Christ" of modern Babylon, of Billy Graham, E. Stanley Jones, etc., is the ancient Adonis, or Tammuz, of old pagan religions, and the false Messiah of Mithraism, and the anti-Christ of Romanism.

(a) It can be proven logically and clearly, as much as so as we prove the Sabbath or Sanctuary truths, that the "Christ" of popular "Christian" experience is identifiable with the old pagan Christs.

(b) It can be proven conclusively that the type of Christian experience preached amongst us to-day is practically the same as that advocated by E. Stanley Jones and others; and that this species of experience is a manifest departure from the truths taught in the Bible and Steps to Christ.

(c) It can be proven that this modern "Christ-centered preaching" is a subtle reappearance of the "other gospel" which Paul so sharply warned the Galatians against receiving. Gal. 1:8, 9. If we make any mistakes in this field of Christian experience, it is damnable confusion. You will recall that that "other gospel" "bewitched" the Galatians. (The word "proven", brethren, does not mean making of bald, unsupported statements. There are authorities as J. Garnier, who wrote The True Christ and the False Christ—London, 1900, a monumental work which may be found in the R&H library, and authorities cited by Waigal in The Paganism in Our Christianity, and Frazer's Golden Bough.)

6. Lest this appeal be thought fantastic, and the conditions referred to impossible amongst Seventh-day Adventists, the following incidents are with embarrassment and hesitation referred to:

(a) In 1899 a certain imposter, "Captain" Norman, deceived practically the entire group of Seventh-day Adventist leaders. Older workers will recall that this smooth imposter was described by Sister White as an agent or emissary of the devil, and that the whole embarrassing incident was a parable, to show our people how much they were falling down. Immediately afterwards occurred the sad episode of Dr. Kellogg's spiritualistic apostasy, when brethren who had believed an agent of the devil, also received what Sister White plainly termed "doctrines of devils". The warning was not received. Thus there developed the "alpha".

(b) In 1949 a certain imposter, "Doctor" Legg, deceived some Seventh-day Adventist leaders tragically. This wicked man was uncouth, poorly disguised deceiver. He appeared to be a very strange sort of a new "convert". He couldn't look one in the eye, and scarcely did he even act the part of a refined, converted, Christian gentleman. The sad story is well known. Can any one successfully maintain that sincere brethren, who will be so deceived by a very agent of the devil, will not also be as readily deceived by "doctrines of devils"? The analogy of the 1899 incident with Dr. Kellogg's Spiritualism, makes a disturbing consideration.

Our dear people, could they voice their unconscious desires, would thus appeal to this highest Committee of authority, gathered at this world session in 1950, to clarify this highly important matter of the difference between the true God and the false, the true Christ and the anti-Christ, the true Holy Spirit and Spiritualism, and true Christian experience and false supposition. No matter before this gathering can possibly be as weighty with serious import as this.

TO THE CENTRAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Very sincerely yours,

Dear brethren:

(Signed)

R. J. Wieland

(Signed)

D. K. Short

Retyped verbatim March 1993, from the original indistinct carbon copy.