

December 15, 1960

Pastor A. E. Figuhr
c/o Box 26, MUSOMA

Dear Elder Figuhr:

The burdens that an administrator must bear are heavy; and we hesitate to add in any way to the demands upon your time and attention. Therefore rather than ask you for a personal interview, we presume to write. Perhaps you may be able to give some counsel while you are in East Africa.

We think it is evident after nearly eleven years of correspondence with the General Conference that we are loyal to the organized work of the denomination. We have submitted to the General Conference decision regarding the manuscript, and rather than appeal the matter to the church at large, have left it to the disposition of Providence. We believe it is the Lord's purpose to pour out His Holy Spirit upon His church through, or at least in cooperation with, the agency of the General Conference. This we believe our denominational history supports.

1. In 1950 we expressed our convictions, after quite extensive research, that the principle of the Cross is largely lost sight of in our contemporary presentations of "righteousness by faith", with consequent confusion, weakness, love of the world, and love of self too evident in our midst. There is a lack of an effective presentation of the Atonement in the light of the cleansing of the sanctuary. We requested the General Conference to reconsider the writings of Jones and Waggoner while they were straight, which writings constituted "a most precious legacy," and recommended the publication of an anthology of their writings of a certain period.

2. We submitted to the rejection of the manuscript, and refused to agitate the matter or publish anything. But we did realize that the Committee had not replied to the subject matter of the manuscript. The brethren expressed themselves as expecting we would very possibly go into eventual apostasy, being "on the path that Satan trod," as was stated by them. We re consecrated ourselves to the task of being faithful missionaries in Africa. We prayed earnestly that the Lord in His mercy might save us from ourselves, and preserve us from falling or from apostasy. We praise Him that he has thus far kept us.

3. In 1953 the General Conference committee issued another condemnation of the manuscript, stating that we were not only "critical", but had used Ellen G. White statements wrongly; our literary ethics were called in question. As a result of further research in the summer of 1953, we issued an "Answer" to "Further Appraisal", which we feel clears us of the charge of unethical use of Ellen G. White sources. Elder White privately acknowledged to us that he recognized we had made quite considerable research into this matter, and had unearthed some evidence he had not known existed.

4. To date, we have had no official acknowledgment from the General Conference of this "letter" of 1953, which was our "Answer." A number of our leading scholars assured us that they felt our "Answer" ably substantiated the main points of our manuscript. Elderly ministers have consistently approved of our thesis.

5. We cannot believe that the Lord requires us to surrender conscience which seems bound by clear written evidence that the latter rain can never be poured out in its fulness, albeit long overdue, without the preparation of a sincere and deep denominational repentance. Very grave developments in Africa that seem to be following the tragic pattern of China constrain us to write, when we would much prefer to hold our peace. How can we reconcile the promptings of conscience thus with the rejection of this matter by the General Conference, whilst the thesis itself has never been dealt with as to its subject matter?

6. We do thank the Lord that He has not left us, but has been gracious to bless our humble efforts to build a converted and consecrated church in one of the most difficult areas of the world field. We praise Him for evidences of the constraining power of Christ's love in Africans who have come out of great darkness. Some are beginning to sense the constraint of that love of Jesus, which is consistent with the work of the cleansing of the sanctuary. With humility, may we suggest that the work of these ten years is not "the path that Satan trod"? To the dear Lord be all the thanks that He has kept us from making shipwreck of faith. We not only trust the Lord; but we respect His agency of the General Conference.

7. May we ask, Just where do we stand now with the General Conference? Must we continue another decade or so under what is virtually the ban of shadow of their condemnation? We have been informed, we think quite reliably, that no less than three attempts were made at headquarters to remove us from the mission field because of the manuscript. We are also aware that in Australia workers in the cause are being dismissed because they hold the convictions expressed in our manuscript, viz., that true righteousness by faith is and must be a doctrine parallel^{to} and consistent with the doctrine of the cleansing of the sanctuary. We do not know those people personally at all, and cannot judge of their sincerity or spiritual maturity at this distance; but we certainly do believe that Christ is ministering His blood in the Most Holy Apartment as a final atonement for sin; and that the cleansing of the sanctuary requires a complementary work of cleansing the hearts of God's people from every lingering, buried root of enmity against God, and human pride and self-sufficiency. Must we look forward also to eventual dismissal from the work of God because we hold and express this faith that the Lord requires a far higher experience of His people today than in previous generations?

We do not relish controversy nor disagreement with our brethren and superiors in the work. But truth is truth, which we dare not deny; and it does appear to us that the General Conference, for some unexplained reason, are denying truth. We are sure that they do not intend to do this, and we have every confidence in their sincerity and integrity. But it does seem to us that after eleven years of waiting, there has been ample time for a careful consideration of the matter. We would respectfully request that they arrange for some disposition of this case which has been pending all this time. If we are indeed wrong, and are "on the path that Satan trod, truth requires that we be dealt with frankly and thoroughly—the Lord would bless righteous judgment; and if we should be right, the same true principle requires that full and complete study be given the premise of this manuscript, and we come to a better understanding together.

Thanking you, and with kind regards, we are

Sincerely yours,

D. K. Short

D. K. Short

[Brother Short cannot sign this final typing of this letter, but signed a rough copy sent me]