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## GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

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Dear Brethren:

I have received yours of July 27 and also the resume of your previous rather extended dissertation. We greatly appreciate your condensing this material into 20 pages. Copies of this are being sent to a number of different individuals who are being requested to give their separate and personal evaluation of what you have written. They are individuals, as far as I have been able to ascertain, who have had nothing to do with the two former studies, and they are individuals of recognized scholarship and ability.

You have considerable to suggest, I note, regarding administrators, their lack of time, of scholarship, their prejudices, and also their inclination to vindicate previous committee decisions. Is not such an evaluation placing a rather low estimate upon our administrators and practically charging them with narrowness and intellectual dishonesty, as well as lamentable incapability? Yet these men have been chosen as leaders of the church and we cannot but believe that God has somehow had a hand in placing them where they are. When it comes to searching for truth and evaluating truth, I unhesitatingly would say that our leaders, as I know them, are as honest, sincere, conscientious and unprejudiced as any group that could be brought together.

May I suggest with reference to denominational leaders that you read Acts of the Apostles, p. 163, beginning about the middle of the page, and also continuing on through page 164. It speaks here of God communicating light to His people through his divinely appointed channel, the church, and not through independently minded people. Then it goes on to say that the counsel and judgment of the brethren should be highly esteemed, "especially of those in the offices that God has appointed for the leadership of His people."

Pastors Wieland & Short--2  
8-2-61

Further down on page 164: "... To neglect or despise those whom God has appointed to bear responsibility of leadership in connection with the advancement of truth, is to reject the means that He has ordained for the help, encouragement and strength of His people. For any worker of the Lord's cause to pass these by and to think that his light must come through no other channel than directly from God is to place himself in a position where he is liable to be deceived by the enemy and overthrown."

These statements seem to indicate that the brethren of experience to whom matters of this kind should primarily be submitted are men who bear the responsibility of leadership and not just anyone who has had experience in the work. It is only reasonable to recognize that our administrators of years of experience, who have been meeting problems and people in various fields, are the best qualified in judgment in dealing with matters such as those under consideration here. If our denominational leaders cannot be trusted with truth, we are indeed in a very sorry plight.

It has always been the enemy's purpose to destroy confidence in leadership. In this he has often been too successful down through the centuries. You have indicated in your letter that leaders at times err and are on the wrong side. This is exactly what the enemy points out as he leads to criticism of the brethren. He makes much of the human element of leadership, but if errors are committed in judgment, our faith in God, His overruling providence, and His church, should be such as to lead us to believe that God in His own good time and way will cause truth to emerge and to triumph.

What you brethren mean when you say that under certain conditions you would be lead to "cry aloud," I do not understand. Certainly I would hope that your voices would not be raised outside of the church. There is plenty of truth on which we are all united and on which we can legitimately and profitably cry aloud. There are too many voices coming from unknown quarters bringing confusion to the unwary, to have others added to them.

A true attitude of faith and loyalty on the part of you brethren, now that you have clearly stated what you wish to set before the brethren, is to leave the matter in the hands of "brethren of experience," believing that God will watch over what is right and true and that man cannot keep God's truth permanently from His people.

We wish you brethren to know that we are going out of our way, and even beyond the ordinary call of duty, to assure you that you and your manuscript shall have proper treatment and full consideration. Perhaps I should further say, referring again to administrators, that administrators may not always be the actual ones doing the evaluating personally of manuscripts, and this I think was true in the previous evaluation of your material. But they do, and properly should, carefully study the evaluation of those requested to consider the matter. This is our usual procedure. The wisdom of the suggestion that laymen be added to an evaluating group we seriously question. This is a matter that clearly should be dealt with by "brethren of experience. We are therefore not bringing this to any lay member.

Pastors Wieland & Short--3  
8-2-61

I have written frankly because I think you appreciate frankness, but again let me say that we are happy over your previous statement to the effect that you have left your material in the hands of the General Conference brethren and authorize no one else to use it. This is a commendable and proper attitude on your part. Believe me when I say that we propose to deal with this particular item fairly and in the fear of God.

We are having good campmeetings in America, our people are loyal to the cause and earnest in their Christian living.

With kind regards, I remain

Very sincerely your brother,

RRF w  
air

R. R. Figuhr