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Dec. 31, 1964

(Personal)

Elder R. J. Wieland
P. O. Box 111
College Station
Berrien Springs, Michigan

Dear Brother Wieland:

Your letter of December 9 was apparently delayed in transit. Sometimes it has taken as much as a week for a letter to get from Berrien to Washington. Dr. Murdoch has likewise complained of such an occasional time lapse. Now to the main points of your letter.

I am sorry that you seek to throw the onus back onto me for not sufficiently alerting you as to that "Confidential" statement--plainly so marked in bold at the top of the document--which was and is actually confidential and as yet classified. You say there was "no suggestion" of such upon my part. I cannot understand that. I hardly know what more you would expect. I didn't think I would have to secure a pledge from you. There is nothing in the document that will not be made public in due time. But I want to put more actual quotations into it, as well as accurately epitomising their statements, which was the plan I followed. In other words, it was still in tentative form.

At the Atlantic Union Retreat I only alluded to my possession of these 24 letters, or affidavits, stating a few facts. How you got any contrary impression is beyond me. I am not given to looseness of expression, or ambiguity.

I agree that no apology is needed for deep interest in the 1888 issues. That is surely proper and wholesome--if it be to get the whole truth, and to obtain the full, balanced picture. I could not say that, however, if it were seeking principally for added support for a pre-determined position. I would that you could see the fundamental difference. That is the deciding factor.

It was not so much the later Glad Tidings (1900) as the earlier Christ and His Righteousness (1890)--close to 1888--that presented the heart of Waggoner's Minneapolis studies--put into chapter form by him for book distribution, and edited by Waggoner himself who was still editor at the Pacific Press in 1890. That time differential is important. The later Glad Tidings reiterated part of the Message, as had various articles in the Signs. These were, as stated, adapted from the transcribed stenographic reports. Mrs. White virtually quoted certain Waggoner expressions, which she commended, thus identifying Christ and His Righteousness as the volume conveying the heart of his message. There Christ was set forth as "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." In a personal testimony in 1889 Mrs. White wrote these deeply impressive words:

"When Brother Waggoner brought out these ideas in the Minneapolis Conference it was the first clear teaching of the subject from any human lips I had heard, excepting the communication between myself and my husband. I have said to myself, it is because God has presented it to me in vision that I see it so clearly, and they cannot see it because they have not had it presented to them as I have, and when another presented it, every fiber of my heart said amen." (This is not a released personal testimony for duplication and circulation.--L.E.F.)

However, we must be careful not to make paragons out of Waggoner and Jones, as to their witness in 1888, or to think that their words were virtually inspired and their lives impeccable. Mrs. White had to reprove and admonish each of them upon occasion. But the main thrust of their teaching was clearly from God. We must not assume toward Waggoner, as some have done toward Uriah Smith, that his words were semi-inspired. Waggoner naturally held some inaccurate views on subordinate points. He was not always consistent. An occasional expression appears to be somewhat in conflict with his main presentation. After all, Waggoner was reviving a neglected truth that had been largely lost sight of for a time, and that was opposed by some at the Conference. The wonder of it is that there were not more inconsistencies in his presentation under the pressures and hostilities of this element in the Minneapolis meeting.

Waggoner's clear, true statements on the Eternal Deity of Christ, appearing repeatedly, more than offset an occasional expression that might to some seem to have an Arian tinge. And the same is true as regards the sinlessness of Christ during His Incarnation. I enclose a carbon copy of a couple of pages from my book Manuscript that throws some light on the question.

We should recognize that the 1888 presentations were not yet mature enough to have eliminated every inconsistency and inaccuracy of detail. The marvel is that they were so free from blemishes. They were singularly sound and mightily used of God. The Lord manifestly had a controlling hand in affairs.

It is to be noted, in passing, that the Brinsmeadites have reproduced Waggoner's Christ and His Righteousness both in printed and mimeographed form. But some of them seek to make out that it is virtually faultless--without any weaknesses even in details. They almost canonize it. But that is irrational, as regards Waggoner or any one else. Waggoner was God's messenger in 1888 for reviving and reaffirming a great truth. But his was the presentation of a fallible man enunciating a great heaven-born truth. There is no need for any one to stumble over his limitations, or to expect a perfection he did not have or claim.

As to your statement about an occasional "tinge of pantheism" appearing in Waggoner's Glad Tidings (1900), you doubtless know that around 1900 he was influenced by Dr. Kellogg on that very point, and had to be reproved by Mrs. White. Furthermore, Glad Tidings was printed 12 years after 1888.

And as to Waggoner stating that Christ was "begotten"--the "Only-Begotten Son"--both the Bible and Mrs. White use the same expressions. The charge against the one would also involve the other. In fact, certain former Arians (now deceased) in the Columbia Union appealed to these very expressions in Mrs. White's writings in support of their Arian views. That seems almost

inconceivable in the light of her express and repeated declarations as the eternal pre-existence and complete Deity of Christ. Nevertheless, they invoked them. Men apparently see what they look for. And their eyes seem "holden" as to explanatory or modifying statements. That is why we have had a succession of offshoots and trouble makers. That is why there are so many denominations --from variant interpretations of the same Scriptures.

Perhaps I should notice that you cite J. S. Washburn on Waggoner back in WMC days. Brother Wieland, if you had heard the terrible tirade by Washburn against E. J. Waggoner and against A. G. Daniells, made in my office some years back, in 1948 or '49--M. K. Eckenroth was present and confirms this --you would have been as shocked as I was. He asserted that Daniells had betrayed the Cause and that for five years Mrs. White would not answer his letters or communicate with him--and specified the years. He made ungodly accusations. When I checked with Arthur White as to relationship between them during the period specified, we found that there was constant communication by Mrs. White with Daniells at that time. Here is one of her ringing messages concerning him in 1904 (within the period alleged):

"God has chosen Elder Daniells to bear responsibility, and has promised to make him capable by his grace of doing the work entrusted to him. The responsibilities of the position he occupies are great, and the tax upon his strength and courage is severe: and the Lord calls upon us to hold up his hands, as he strives with all the powers of mind and body to advance the work."

"I know that Elder Daniells is the right man in the right place. He has stood nobly for truth and has striven to lead in a right way with the controversies arising regarding the relation of the medical work to the evangelical work." (Series B, No. 2, P. 41.)

On the same occasion Washburn strongly condemned Dr. Waggoner. So I am afraid Washburn's opinion on such matters is not very reliable. He later made similarly immoderate attacks on me as well--because of teaching that any of the prophecies of Daniel were understood prior to 1798. However, just before his death he sent word to me, through his daughter, that he deeply regretted his unjustified charges.

In closing, I must repeat the point concerning that special, plainly marked "Confidential" document, "Highlights and Afterglow." As stated, its content was not presented last summer at the Atlantic Union Retreat. I covered the ground of the Notebook. The "Highlights" had not been even organized and put into the tentative form that you saw until a few weeks prior to leaving one of the carbon copies to you over that final week-end at the Council. Only nine copies were made, and only a few close associates had seen it. Even yet it has not been put into final form. I simply have not had time to do so, as I am preparing special features for the Columbia Union Leaders Council in Philadelphia in early January, where I will present important added materials in a new Notebook.


I brought the one remaining copy of this confidential material to our meeting that Friday afternoon, with no thought of placing it with you. But on the spur of the moment, I thought it might perhaps help you to read some eye-witness evidence. But I evidently presumed too much. I don't think

you caught the real intent of it at all. In our session you seemed wholly non-committal as to what I did present. In this you were so totally different from others equally consecrated, trained, and loyal with whom I have talked.

Further, the materials loaned to you were returned by Brother Short without a word of comment, and you had gone. In this I was deeply disappointed, for I had expected to talk things over. That was the purpose of placing them with you. In fact, you haven't yet given any clear reaction. About all that I recall was your statement that you thought there was not much difference between our positions. In that you are gravely mistaken. In addition to similarities there are fundamental differences. Therein lies the issue.

I was simply trying to help you to see that your conclusions were but partial and faulty, because you did not have all the facts. I felt that if you only had the whole picture, without seeking to maintain your preconceived positions, you would doubtless modify your conclusions. In that I gather that I was mistaken in my judgment. I wish you had a burden other than to again present your views to some group to see if they could show you wherein you are wrong. May I offer this unsolicited advice?: You will be wise not to ask for that again. You would only hurt your cause by seeking such a confrontation.

Sincerely but disappointedly yours,


L. E. Froom

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P.S. When your attitude changes I stand ready to help you in any way possible. You could be a real influence for constructive helpfulness--if you changed. You could counteract the harm your actually divisive document has done in Brinsmeadite hands--if you would re-evaluate. (It was in circulation in 1957 when I was in Australia. I first saw it there.) And you would be a lot happier, and would save yourself much grief and misunderstanding--if you did.

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cc: D. K. Short