

# **NONE DARE CALL IT APOSTASY**

**Part one: Dr. John J. Grosboll**

## **Introduction**

“Who are standing in the counsel of God at this time? Is it those who virtually excuse wrongs among the professed people of God and who murmur in their hearts, if not openly, against those who would reprove sin? Is it those who take their stand against them and sympathize with those who commit wrong? No, indeed! Unless they repent, and leave the work of Satan in oppressing those who have the burden of the work and in holding up the hands of sinners in Zion, they will never receive the mark of God’s sealing approval. They will fall in the general destruction of the wicked, represented by the work of the five men bearing slaughter weapons.

Mark this point with care: Those who receive the pure mark of truth, wrought in them by the power of the Holy Ghost, represented by a mark by the man in linen, are those “that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done” in the church. Their love for purity and the honor and glory of God is such, and they have so clear a view of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, that they are represented as being in agony, even sighing and crying. Read the ninth chapter of Ezekiel” 3T 267.

## **Part One: LAODICEA**

LAODICEA-the term signifying serious spiritual maladies which is so often applied to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We have heard it numerous times before and will undoubtedly hear *it* again. But is it really true that the church is spiritually ill? Some deny it. Others acknowledge that fact, but ask, “Why does it have to be discussed all the time?”

Friend, the most serious problem of the Laodicean church is not her condition of being lukewarm, spiritually blind, destitute of the righteousness of Christ and unfaithful and unloving as described in Revelation 3:14-22. The more serious problem of Laodicea is that she does not know this is her condition.

The reason Laodicea does not know this is not because the information concerning her condition is not available. This information has been available for decades. The problem is that a large part of Adventists are living in a state of denial of plain facts. They dare not acknowledge and act on these facts because to do so would involve discomfort (maybe pain) and necessitate earthshaking changes in their lives. It is like when a person is told by his physician that he has cancer—that is a terrible fact to hear, and a common way to respond to it, initially, is to live in a state of denial, especially if one feels good at the moment. To acknowledge the facts would involve a total revision of ones life, future objectives and plans because cancer will shorten one’s life if it is not eradicated or conquered.

In the same way, if Laodicea’s problem is not solved she will be vomited out of the mouth of the Lord. Is it being critical for a physician to tell a patient that he or she has cancer? It could be construed that way, but telling the facts is absolutely necessary if the patient is to be motivated to take the steps necessary for recovery. In the same way, the spiritual problems of God’s professed people today must be addressed plainly if they are going to be motivated to make the necessary changes so they are not weighed in the balances during the judgment and found wanting.

Friend, as long as God has a church that is in apostasy, He will send messengers to it. These messengers must warn, rebuke and plead with God's professed people to repent, confess and reform or the curse of God will be upon them. Isaiah, one of His messengers, was told to "Cry aloud, spare not; lift up your voice like a trumpet; tell My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins" Isaiah 58:1. Today we are told, "In this fearful time, just before Christ is to come the second time, God's faithful preachers will have to bear a still more pointed testimony than was borne by John the Baptist. A responsible, important work is before them; and those who speak smooth things, God will not acknowledge as His shepherds. A fearful woe is upon them" IT 321.

Everything concerning our future destiny hangs on our accepting God's diagnosis of our problem. The longer we experience a problem, the more used to it we become until finally it becomes difficult to realize how serious the problem really is. This happened in Christ's day. "Through familiarity with evil, man had become blinded to its [sin's] enormity" DA 752,753.

This is one of the main reasons Laodicea is so complacent and there is such a lack of the spirit of Protestantism—all of us today have grown up in the midst of apostasy so we are used to it.

What is apostasy? Paul describes apostasy as being characterized by 1) sin or breaking God's law (2 Thessalonians 2:3-8), 2) believing a lie (2:11), and 3) not believing the truth (2:12). The Holy Spirit says that in the latter days some shall apostatize from the faith. "Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons" 1 Timothy 4:1.

For over one hundred years this condition has existed in Adventism. We have had a departure from the historic faith God delivered to us and have been breaking His law, believing lies and not believing the truth, as will now be documented from the Spirit of Prophecy and the historical facts.

One hundred and four years ago the General Conference president, the editor of the *Review and Herald* and many others in Adventism, rejected the truth God was trying to bring to His people at the Minneapolis General Conference. Although some later repented, the damage which this 1888 apostasy caused is felt even today. One of the principle areas of apostasy in 1888 was the unwillingness to accept the authority of the Spirit of Prophecy — one of the two identifying marks of God's people in the last days. But we were not willing to face the facts of this apostasy. We covered it up. Adventism published books showing that we had really accepted the message of 1888 and we were going on to victory. (Examples of such books are *Movement of Destiny*, *Perfect in Christ*, *Hot Potatoes* and *Myths of Adventism*.) None dared call it apostasy.

But over one hundred years have gone by and we are still here. A few years after the 1888 Conference, Ellen White said that if we had accepted the message God was trying to send us we would have been in the kingdom ere this. There has been an apostasy.

When it was brought to our attention by brethren Wieland and Short that we had not accepted the message in them and none dared call *it* apostasy. It was not until the *1888 E.G. W. Materials* were published that the average Adventist had available overwhelming proof from many testimonies that the 1888 message had been rejected, that our leaders and many others had gone into apostasy.

But that was only the beginning. Another facet of the apostasy in 1888 was authority. Over and over again Ellen White warned against “kingly power.” There was a power that belonged to God alone and those at the head of the work were not to seek to take some of this power to themselves. In 1888 and onward, testimony after testimony was given in this regard. The words of Jesus in Matthew 20:25-28 were to be followed: “But Jesus called them to Himself and said, ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.’” (See also Matthew 23:8.)

Ellen White continued her admonition after the 1888 conference. In 1896 she wrote the following instruction: “That which makes me feel to the very depths of my being, and makes me know that their works are not the works of God, is that they suppose they have authority to rule their fellowmen. The Lord has given them no more right to rule others than He has given others to rule them. Those who assume the control of their fellow men take into their finite hands a work that devolves upon God alone.

“That men should keep alive the spirit which ran riot at Minneapolis is an offense to God. All heaven is indignant at the spirit that for years has been revealed in our publishing institution at Battle Creek. Unrighteousness is practiced that God will not tolerate. He will visit for these things. A voice has been heard pointing out the errors and, in the name of the Lord, pleading for a decided change. But who have followed the instruction given? Who have humbled their hearts to put from them every vestige of their wicked, oppressive spirit? I have been greatly burdened to set these matters before the people as they are. I know they will see them. I know that those who read this matter will be convicted” TM 76.

At the General Conference Session in 1901, Ellen White delivered a plea for “a reorganization” GCB 1901, page 25. A decentralization of power, a humbling of self, and a looking to the Lord instead of to man was the call of the hour. A reorganization was made, one with the approval of Sister White: “I am thankful that there is to be a time when the mists will be cleared away. I hope that this time has begun here. We want the mists here to be cleared away. I want to say that from the light given to me by God, there should have been years ago organizations such as are now proposed. When we first met in conference, it was thought that the General Conference should extend over the whole world. But this is not in God’s order” GCB 1901, 68.

Unfortunately, the plan of reorganization worked out in the 1901 General Conference was not implemented. This caused great sorrow to the heart of the messenger of God.

“The result of the last General Conference has been the greatest, the most terrible sorrow of my life. No change was made. The spirit that should have been brought into the whole work as the result of that meeting was not brought in because men did not receive the testimonies of the Spirit of God. As they went to their several fields of labor, they did not walk in the light that the Lord had flashed upon their pathway, but carried into their work the wrong principles that had been prevailing in the work at Battle Creek” (*Letter to Judge Jesse Arthur from Ellen White*, Elmshaven, January 15, 1903).

By the 1903 General Conference, the state of affairs was such (because God's plan failed to be implemented) that the centralization of power gave way in the formation of a General Conference with world-wide dominion, despite protest from a minority.

Percy T. Magan who was part of this minority stated that the new plan swept away the organizational principles that had been followed in the 1897 and 1901 conferences and introduced principles that opened the way for a papal form of church government.

In 1901, the Spirit of Prophecy was officially accepted and endorsed, but not carried out in practice. This, my friend, will eventually bring about the same results as an open rejection.

The unwillingness to accept the authority of the Spirit of Prophecy affected not only our ministry, conferences and General Conference, it also affected our educational work.

In 1953, A.W. Spalding pointed out to our educators that we were in transgression of the Word of God in five areas: 1) type of motivation prevalent, 2) type of literature studied. 3) type of recreation, 4) lack of nature study and occupation, and 5) lack of proper parent education. In not a single one of these areas have our denominational schools reformed since 1953, rather we have apostatized even worse than then. In 1953 we were not, for example, engaging in competitive sports with the world as our schools are doing today.

Ellen White herself gave Elder Spalding and Dr. Magan permission to publish the selected testimonies that are now called the *Spalding-Magan's Collection*. It is in these testimonies that explicit instruction is given in regard to tithe and other matters that is entirely contrary to what we have been taught in the professed Seventh-day Adventist Church. In the late 1950's, when after more than thirty years had gone by and these testimonies still had not been published a man attempted to print these testimonies and the General Conference threatened a lawsuit.

The unwillingness to accept the authority of the Spirit of Prophecy resulted in a large departing from the counsels of God concerning health reform. This fact has been thoroughly researched and documented by Julius Gilbert White in his books. Are our ministers following this counsel in regard to health reform: "Let not any of our ministers set an evil example in the eating of flesh-meat"? MM 281.

Unwillingness to accept the authority of the Spirit of Prophecy has resulted in theological heresies so subtle that only those led by the Spirit of God and a careful study of the inspired writings detected what was happening.

How bad would it have to get before we would recognize there is an apostasy?

Item: If we started to hypnotize Seventh-day Adventists in churches, would we then recognize that there was an apostasy?

[The tape of Dr. Bill Loveless is available for those who need evidence that hypnotic techniques are being taught to our pastors to be used on their congregations.]

Item: If we took fellow Adventists to court and put people in jail who were keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, would anyone recognize an apostasy?

[In 1989 John Marik was put in prison for using the name Seventh-day Adventist in his [home] church in Hawaii, which was not under conference control]

NOTE: "When troubles arise in the church we should not go for help to lawyers not of our faith. God does not desire us to open church difficulties before those who don't fear Him. He would not have us depend for help on those who do not obey His requirements. Those who trust in such counselors show that they have not faith in God. By their lack of faith the Lord is greatly dishonored and their course works great injury to . . . .

"These men cast aside the counsel God has given, and do the very things He has bidden them not to do. They show that they have chosen the world as their judge, and in heaven their names are registered as one with unbelievers. Christ is crucified afresh, and put to open shame. Let these men know that God does not hear their prayers. They insult His holy name, and He will leave them to the buffetings of Satan until they shall see their folly and seek the Lord by confession of their sin" 3SM 299.

Item: If we started playing intercollegiate and inter-city sports with non-Adventist colleges, would anyone recognize an apostasy?

[Intercollegiate sports are happening in more than one of our colleges and the *Review and Herald* has its own team in an inter-city softball league.]

Item: If fiction became required reading in our denominational colleges, which led to the dramatization of a Greek myth that contained false doctrine of the undying soul, would someone credit it to apostasy?

["The Mask Man will be presented at Southern College during an assembly program October. . . . The Mask Man is a solo performance that demonstrates the power and magic of transformation. It will be presented by its producer, Robert Faust. The cast of characters includes a guru, a nerd, a hippie, a nun, a turtle, an android and many more." From a tabloid shopper that was sent free to every resident of greater Chattanooga, Tennessee.]

Item: If our college young people were encouraged to "do good" on the Sabbath by helping non-SDA neighbors by scraping and painting houses, preparing for the foundations of low-cost homes to be poured. etc., would anyone recognize an apostasy?

[See *Insight* magazine, August 3, 1991, page 6, "Holy Heresy," where author Steve Daily reports these and other activities which were performed by 800 students and 50 staff at La Sierra College.].

Item: If the music that has its origin in spiritualism and which is condemned by the Spirit of Prophecy found its place, not only in the homes but also in the churches of professed Seventh-day Adventist people, would someone begin to comprehend something of an apostasy?

[A few years ago we condemned the activities of the Pentecostals as being of the devil—another spirit. We recognized their music as being of the devil, their speaking in unknown gibberish as being of the devil and especially pointed out the fact that any spirit that does not speak according to the law and to the testimony has no light in it (Isaiah 8:20). Now we are doing the same things, some of our pastors having gone to the Pentecostals and brought the same style of worship into Adventism! Does anyone recognize an apostasy?]

[A church youth group in California was taken to a “Christian” hard-rock concert performed by Petra.]

Item: If movie going and worldly entertainment became the “norm” at our high schools and colleges and reviews of these vile movies were published in some of the college newspapers, would anyone dare credit it to an apostasy?

[At Walla Walla College, reviews of the local showing movies are published in the student papers. (For counsel on theatrical performances from the Spirit of Prophecy on this, see 4T, 652-653 or RH 2-20-66.)

Item: If fornication, pre-marital pregnancies and pornography became almost common occurrence in our schools, would someone begin to question the possibility of an apostasy?

Item: If our leaders maintained fellowship with other leaders who were living in sin and persecuting the true and the faithful, if the sinners were retained in the professed church while the true and faithful were disfellowshipped, ostracized, persecuted and forcibly separated from all connection with the General Conference, would anyone recognize there was an apostasy?

[During the First World War, Seventh-day Adventists who would not serve in armed forces on Sabbath or bear arms were not supported by the Seventh-day Adventist leadership. As a result, many went to prison and some were executed. After the war, an appeal was made to the General Conference to correct this error. The appeal was rejected and to our present knowledge the guilt of this blood has not yet been purged by repentance and confession. Yet, none dare call it apostasy.]

[In 1982, theologians met in Lima, Peru, to discuss unity of doctrine regarding baptism, the Eucharist and ministry. They unanimously recommended a statement on these three doctrines for the official response of the churches. On the “Faith and Order Paper #11,” they state Adventists as one of the churches who agreed to this recommendation.]

Item: If people who are living in open sin are retained in churches and true and faithful Seventh-day Adventists are stripped of their offices and sometimes disfellowshipped, would anyone recognize an apostasy?

[After approximately 1,400 Hungarians were disfellowshipped for protesting the Church’s membership in the Council of Free Churches, there was an attempt to bring them under the control of the very organization that had been persecuting them—or else ruin them. They were told to stop all gatherings, not hold religious meetings, not receive offerings or early on their religious duties.

When the true and faithful Seventh-day Adventists are disfellowshipped, if none dare call it apostasy the curse of God will be on us all (See Pilgrims Rest Tract WM-140, July 1986; also *Our Firm Foundation* article by Marshall Grosboll, 11/88)]

Item: If Seventh-day Adventist college alumni associations began sponsoring Easter sunrise services at one of our denominational college chapels, would you think someone would acknowledge an apostasy?

[In 1992, Atlantic Union College's Alumni Association invited the alumni to an Easter sunrise service.]

Item: When administrators attempt to cover up sin in the ministry or the sins of the wealthy and prominent, instead of calling for repentance, confession and reformation of life, would anyone recognize apostasy?

Item: If ministers who teach the people they can live on in sin until Jesus comes and still be saved are retained, but true and faithful ministers who preach the three angels' messages are fired or dismissed, does anyone recognize an apostasy? [List: Ken Knutson, Marshall Grosboll, David Bauer]

Item: If a hierarchical church government were developed among those who professed to be the remnant church, would someone recognize an apostasy?

[The apostasy was made evident in the 1970's in the Merikay Silver case (The U.S. vs the SDA Church in EEOC vs PPPA). It was clearly proclaimed in this case that the SDA Church is hierarchical. It was also claimed in this case that the General Conference of the church is the only body having authority to alter the structure of the church, either in doctrine or organization! (No church has the authority to modify doctrine— that is a prerogative of Deity alone and to make such a claim is blasphemous.)]

Item: If leaders began to say that Jesus did not come in fallen, human nature, and therefore, was different from you and me in that we cannot hope to overcome sin as He did, would anyone admit to apostasy?

[The *Questions on Doctrine* apostasy was first pointed out by Elder M.L. Andreasen. He wrote, "We have reached a crisis in this denomination when leaders are attempting to enforce false doctrine and threaten those who object" (Letters to the Churches, #3, by M.L. Andreasen, page 8). "A Saviour who has never been tempted, never has had to battle with passions, who has never 'offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him who was able to save Him from death', who 'though he were a son' never learned obedience by the things he suffered, but was 'exempt' from the very things that a true Saviour must experience: such a Saviour is what this NEW THEOLOGY as given in *Questions on Doctrine* offers us. It is not the kind of Saviour I need, nor the World" Ibid. 7.]

Item: If a majority of Seventh-day Adventist pastors and teachers began to teach that we can be saved in sin, which is to teach a different gospel than has been historically taught in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, would anyone begin to realize an apostasy?

[A main tactic for thousands of years by a church that is in apostasy is to attempt to keep the truth from being examined by the people. The leaders in Adventism have repeatedly done this: "Included in such discussions have been related theological concepts such as the nature of Christ, the nature of man, the nature of sin, perfection and the question as to whether it is possible for a Christian to live a sinless life.... We are requesting that we refrain from involving ourselves in public presentations [about these matters]. *Adventist Review*, May 24, 1979, "Open Letter to the Church," by Neal C. Wilson.]

Item: If an SDA minister who has preached the historic Adventist message for approximately fifty years, has pastored some of our largest churches and taught theology in Adventist colleges

and seminaries and never been shown to be preaching heresies denied credentials without due process and is not even allowed a hearing, would anyone recognize an apostasy?

This, friend, is a very basic transgression of God's law. But, none dare call it apostasy!

Laodicea does not want to hear about this apostasy. Either it is denied or others say, "Yes we know there is apostasy in the church, but why do you want to talk about it all the time?" Friend, as long as God has a church that is in apostasy, He will send messengers to it (Isaiah 58:1). These messengers must warn, rebuke and plead with God's professed people to repent, confess and reform or the curse of God will be upon them. "The curse causeless shall not come" Proverbs 26:2.

Continue: Part Two: