



ADVENTIST CARNIVALS !

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**"Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD, Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come."
Joel 1:14,15**

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Who Is on the Lord's Side?

Chapter 1

MUCH of what has been written by concerned believers to expose the fallacies of the so-called "Adventist worship; celebration-style," has focused on the superficiality, and the bizarre methodology and music of the new form of "worship" with its rocklike musical beat, physical gyrations, etcetera.

In this book, while we will certainly discuss these named aberrations, we propose to also point out to those innocently ensnared in these excesses, that even more subtle and dangerous departures from truth lurk within the celebration fanaticism. The very pillars of the everlasting gospel and the third angel's message are being defaced and even lost in the excitement of the creeping Pentecostalism of the celebration phenomenon in Adventism.

What is more, we propose to show that this phenomenon is not something entirely new. It can be traced both into ancient as well as modern church history. Celebration is the fifth distinct episode of its kind to intrude itself into the midst of God's people. This historical repetition of five similar apostasies is an exceedingly important point in understanding and grappling with this apostasy.

In these pages some Adventists will for the first time learn the shocking truth that this whole celebration excitement had its origins in the plans of the Papacy in the Second Vatican Council which convened in 1962. Stay tuned.

Sadly, some beloved brethren, church administrators, seem totally oblivious to the dangers inherent in these current departures from truth and even if some do sense the dangers, thus far they seem loath to take a firm stand for truth in this crisis hour. The prophets of old risked their reputations and their very lives by taking a firm stand against apostasies. Ellen White too, when she met fanaticism, took a firm and clear stand, and in the power of the Holy Spirit saved the church from many disasters.

Where is there now a Phinehas to stem the tide? Where are the Joshuas, the Josiahs, the Nehemiahs, the Ezras, the Elijahs, the John the Baptists of our day who will boldly proclaim, "Thus far and no farther shall this fanaticism go!" As in the days of old, should not the call of the hour be: "Who is on the Lord's side?"

Let us ponder the issues together in the light of sacred history and the counsels from God's Word, and then take a firm and unyielding stand for truth in these trying days just before the close of probation.

In the chapter which follows we begin with the first of the five similar apostasies that have afflicted God's people.

Golden Calves

Chapter 2

ADVENTIST carnivals? Yes, you read it right. How could that be? not God's people supposed to be sedate and fine from worldliness, confusion, noise and frivolity? Yes, you are right, but in one conference 90 years ago (1900) Seventh-day Adventist worship services became so frivolous, so

demonstrative, so noisy and worldly that the Lord's servant likened their services to a carnival for Satan and his angels. See Selected Messages, book 2, 36. More detail on this in a later chapter.

What is a carnival? Certainly it must be related to the word "carnal" or "fleshly." Check any large dictionary and you will find that one of the best illustrations of a carnival would be the rowdy Mardi Gras celebrations practiced in certain cities and nations just before lent. The participants are supposedly looking forward to holy worship to celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus. But during Mardi Gras, they cast all caution to the wind, and engage in the fleshly lusts of revelry, wild music, merrymaking, and even immorality!

At Horeb

Israel had been rescued from Egyptian slavery and had endured the treacherous journey and marvelous deliverance in passing through the Red Sea. They were now encamped at the foot of Mt. Sinai (Horeb), and in response to the admonitions of

God through Moses the people had promised to obey all that Jehovah commanded.

They had also experienced the awesome grandeur- thunderings mid fire and smoke as God audibly proclaimed His ten commandments in their hearing. The theocracy (God's church) was well on its way toward becoming organized and it was now time for the people to meditate upon the signal experiences through which they had passed and to determine to fulfill their pledge of a few days earlier: "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." Exodus 19:8

Moses and Joshua Ascend the Mount

Moses and Joshua ascended Mt. Sinai to receive further counsel from God. While they were gone a very shocking development occurred in the camp. The year 1900, referred to above, was not the first time that God's professed people had engaged in a spirit of carnival merriment and celebration. In the absence of Moses and Joshua, a carnival spirit took possession of the people. Come with us now to the inspired writings as we go back to about the year 1462 B.C. to consider the apostasy of Israel at Horeb as described in Patriarchs and Prophets, 315-317:

While Moses was absent it was a time of waiting and suspense to Israel . . . They waited eagerly for his return.... Day after day, week after week passed, and still he did not return.... During this period of waiting, there was time for them to meditate upon the law of God which they had heard, and to prepare their hearts to receive the further revelations that He might make to them.... But they did not do this, and they soon became careless, inattentive, and lawless.... They were impatient to be on their way to the Land of Promise-the land flowing with milk and honey. It was only on condition of obedience that the goodly land was promised them, but they had lost sight of this. There were some who suggested a return to Egypt, but whether forward to Canaan or backward to Egypt, the masses of the people were determined to wait no longer for Moses.

The Congregation Demanded Gods

The people desired some image to represent God, and to go before them in the place of Moses.... In the absence of Moses,

the judicial authority had been delegated to Aaron, and a vast crowd gathered about his tent, with the demand, "Make us gods, which shall go before us."

Aaron should have been brave enough to face the clamors of the multitude, but when he offered merely feeble resistance,

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The tumult increased. A blind, unreasoning frenzy seemed to take possession of the multitude. There were some who remained true to their covenant with God, but the greater part of the people joined in the apostasy. A few who ventured to denounce the proposed image making as idolatry, were set upon and roughly treated, and in the confusion and excitement they finally lost their lives.

Aaron feared for his own safety; and instead of nobly standing up for the honor of God, he yielded to the demands of the multitude.

Aaron was so frightened when he saw that the rabble even murdered some who resisted, he decided to join with them. He asked for their golden ornaments, and from these "He made a molten calf, in imitation of the gods of Egypt" to which they could look for "religious guidance."

A Day of Celebration

Seeing how pleased they were with his sculpture artistry, he went two steps further and built an altar to their "golden god" and invited the people to have a grand feast of praise to their gods, and to offer sacrifices on the following day.

The announcement was heralded by trumpeters from company to company throughout the camp. "And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play." Under the pretense of holding "a feast to the Lord," they gave themselves up to gluttony and licentious reveling.

At Horeb there was gluttony, music, dancing and licentiousness combined in the carnival-like revelry. And worse yet they did all this in licentious nakedness. See Exodus 32:25

The Lord saw it all from heaven and hurried Moses and Joshua down the mountain to deal with the apostasy. The true God has declared that it is not He who is glorified and praised in "a bedlam of noise and confusion." Another master is being worshiped: "Demons in the form of men are present." See Selected Messages, book 2, 37

The music that accompanied their celebration around the golden calf was so loud and raucous that Joshua, as he descended the mountain with Moses, thought it was "the noise of war." But Moses said, No! "It is the noise of them that sing!" They sang, they danced, they feasted, they celebrated around the golden calf! It was "their leading men" of the nation who led out in shouting "These be thy gods, O Israel!" See Review and Herald, vol. 5, 493. This shameful account is recorded in Exodus 32.

Tables of Stone Broken

When Moses drew near enough to identify the golden calf and the dancing, he threw down the tables of the law that God had given him in the Mount, and broke them. Thus he signified that in that ancient celebration ceremony, God's holy law and the covenant had been broken by the people.

Why?

Why did God allow such extensive apostasy to develop in His church as that of the golden calf episode? Hear the word of the Lord:

God might have checked the movement at the outset; but He suffered it to come to this height that He might teach all a lesson in His punishment of treason and apostasy. Patriarchs and Prophets, 318

Modern Golden Calves

Do we have any "golden calves" in our midst today? This is a question we need to answer, for Inspiration implies that we do:

How often, in our own day, is the love of pleasure disguised by a "form of godliness."! A religion that permits men, while observing the rites of worship, to devote themselves to selfish or sensual gratification, is as pleasing to the multitudes now as in the days of Israel. And there are still pliant Aarons, who, while holding positions of authority in the church, will yield to the desires of the unconsecrated, and thus encourage them in sin. Ibid., 317

Mt. Sinai was the first recorded instance of a carnival-like worship amongst God's organized people, but it was not to be the last such fanaticism. How drastic were the results! In future chapters we shall study four more comparable episodes in the ecclesiastical history of God's true people.

Baal-peor

Chapter 3

ISRAEL had camped at the foot of Sinai for several years while the nation was organized and the sanctuary built, et cetera. Finally, the command went forth, Ye have compassed this mountain long enough; turn ye northward. So they left Horeb (Sinai) and travelled the distance to Kadesh on the borders of Canaan in a mere eleven days (Deuteronomy 1:2). Some of the people thought it wise to send spies (one spy from each tribe) into Canaan to see if they could really conquer the land, and the Lord allowed them to have their way. See

Patriarchs and Prophets, 387. After almost six weeks they returned, and ten of the spies, a great majority, brought evil discouraging reports. Only two, Caleb and Joshua, were of good courage. "We can possess the land! " they insisted.

Essentially all of the people murmured with the ten and did not wish to proceed. God granted them their wish, but He told them that all of the murmuring adults who were above twenty years of age (when they left Egypt) would never enter the Promised Land. They must turn back into the wilderness for forty years to wander and die.

So now, almost forty years after crossing the Red Sea, and after traversing the desert wastes and skirting the border of Edom, they were again encamped near the Promised Land on the east side of the Jordan River. Moses was giving his final instructions to the people (see book of Deuteronomy) before they should cross the Jordan into the Promised Land.

The Vale of Shittim

Having already gained possession of the valued territory of Bashan, as Israel settled into the beautiful valley of Shittim, they felt confident and at ease. We turn again to Patriarchs and Prophets, this time to pages 453-456 to narrate this story:

This sheltered valley had the climate of the tropics; here flourished the shittim, or acacia, tree, giving to the plain the name, "Vale of Shittim." It was here that the Israelites encamped, and in the acacia groves by the riverside they found an agreeable retreat.

In their ease, yet in human restlessness, the congregation in the beautiful plain of Shittim close to Jordan became curious and began to get ecumenical ideas relative to the religions of the heathen peoples in their neighborhood. The Lord's servant describes it so vividly:

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But amid these attractive surroundings they were to encounter an evil more deadly than mighty hosts of armed men or the wild beasts of the wilderness. That country, so rich in natural advantages, had been defiled by the inhabitants. In the public worship of Baal, the leading deity, the most degrading and iniquitous scenes were constantly enacted. On every side were places noted for idolatry and licentiousness, the very names being suggestive of the vileness and corruption of the people.

These surroundings exerted a polluting influence upon the Israelites. Their minds became familiar with the vile thoughts constantly suggested; their life of ease and inaction produced its demoralizing effect; and almost unconsciously to themselves they were departing from God and coming into a condition where they would fall an easy prey to temptation....

At first there was little intercourse between the Israelites and their heathen neighbors, but after a time Midianitish women began to steal into the camp. Their appearance excited no alarm, and so quietly were their plans conducted that the attention of Moses was not called to the matter. It was the object of these women, in their association with the Hebrews, to seduce them into transgression of the law of God, to draw their attention to heathen rites and customs, and lead them into idolatry. These motives were studiously concealed under the garb of friendship, so that they were not suspected, even by the guardians of the people.

A Grand Carnival-like Festival

Finally the apostate prophet Balaam advised the heathen king Balak "to proclaim an idolatrous feast in honor of their idol gods, and he would persuade the Israelites to attend, that they might be delighted with the music." See *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4, 49. Balaam was planning a carnival-like entertainment for the Israelites!

At Balaam's suggestion, a grand festival in honor of their gods was appointed by the king of Moab, and it was secretly arranged that Balaam should induce the Israelites to attend. He was regarded by them as a prophet of God, and hence had little difficulty in accomplishing his purpose. Great numbers of the people joined him in witnessing the festivities. They ventured upon the forbidden ground, and were entangled in the snare of Satan. Beguiled with music and dancing, and allured by the beauty of heathen vestals, they cast off their fealty to Jehovah. As they united in mirth and feasting, indulgence in wine beclouded their senses and broke down the barriers of self-control. Passion had full sway; and having defiled their consciences by lewdness, they were persuaded to bow down to idols. They offered sacrifice upon heathen altars and participated in the most degrading rites.

It was not long before the poison had spread, like a deadly infection, through the camp of Israel. Those who would have conquered their enemies in battle were overcome by the wiles of heathen women. The people seemed to be infatuated. The rulers and the leading men were among the first to transgress, and so many of the people were guilty that the apostasy became national. "Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor."

(The words "Baal-peor" are considered by scholars to represent the worship of Baal in the mountains known in ancient times as Peor. This name is no longer in use geographically but owes its notoriety and place in sacred history to the apostasy of Israel on the east bank of the Jordan.)

The mirth and carnival-like festivities with drinking, and dancing and music soon led not only to physical fornication and adultery but to spiritual adultery as well, for the Israelites joined the heathen in their idol worship and orgies.

Punishment of the Israelites

God showed His displeasure by sending a terrible plague upon Israel. As tens of thousands died in the plague at Baal-peor, the congregation wept sorely and sought repentance. The medical nature of the plague we do not know. But,

The judgments visited upon Israel for their sin at Shittim, destroyed the survivors of that vast company, who, nearly forty years before, had incurred the sentence, "They shall surely die in the wilderness."

What a dreadful carnival sin this was, just before God's people, Israel, were to cross over Jordan into the Land of Promise!

As at the golden calf, again it was the rulers of the people and leading men who were among the first to join in the orgies of the sinful festival. So many of the common people followed their example that it became a national apostasy. Yet, there were faithful men among both the leaders and the people. "The aged leader [Moses] was filled with indignation." Besides Moses, Caleb, Joshua, Eleazar, Phinehas, and undoubtedly many other leaders and laity in Israel stood firm.

Modern Counterparts of Baal peor?

Once again God's people are resting on the borders of Canaan-this time the heavenly Canaan. Can we find evidence of Baal-peor counterparts in God's present-day church? It appears that the answer is "Yes! " As we stand on the banks of spiritual Jordan, while we are in a tarrying time just before the loud cry and the end of all things earthly, does it not seem apparent that many in our midst have become curious and are fraternizing in spirit and in doctrine with the sentiments and gods of the nominal churches about us? Surely, none of us would go so far as to engage ecumenically with the worldly churches in a carnival-like spirit of worship as was done at Baal-peor? Would we? For the answer to these questions please consider later chapters which follow.

How the Plague of Ecumenism Was Stayed

The priest, Phinehas, filled with indignation, followed one of the rulers with his Midianitish woman friend into his tent, and slew both with his spear. The plague was stayed when this brave act was performed. For this act of courage Phinehas was honored by God.

Would that in our day there was a Phinehas who could stem the plague of ecumenism and fraternization with the fallen churches and the illicit worship being imparted to us from them!

Thus we end the account of the second documented carnival-like episode recorded in the sacred history of God's organized church. There are three more to follow. Stay tuned.

Carnival-like Apostasy Post 1844

Chapter 4

FROM the experience at Baal-Peor we now traverse the centuries of history until we arrive at the year 1844 when our modern church was embryonic. Just as the golden calf experience occurred near the beginning of ancient Israel's journey to Canaan, so, shortly after 1844, there was a very shocking development in our early church history. We shall allow Ellen White herself to detail this story for us:

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In the period of disappointment after the passing of the time in 1844, fanaticism in various forms arose.... They made demonstrations similar to those you have made, and confused their own minds and the minds of others by their wonderful suppositions. Yet these persons were our beloved brethren, and we were longing to help them. I went into their meetings. There was much excitement, with noise and confusion. One could not tell what was piped or what was harped. Some appeared to be in vision, and fell to the floor. Others were jumping, dancing, and shouting. They declared that as their flesh was purified, they were ready for translation. This they repeated again and again. I bore my testimony in the name of the Lord, placing His rebuke upon these manifestations.

Some who had engaged in these movements were brought to their right mind, and saw their delusion. Some had been excellent, honest people, but they thought that sanctified flesh could not sin, and thus they had been taken in Satan's trap. They had carried their strong ideas so far that they became a reproach to the precious cause of God. These sorely repented, and some were afterward among our most reliable men and women. But there were others who ever after walked in sadness. We could not at any time make them feel that they were worthy to work for the Master, whose precious cause they had so greatly dishonored.

As the result of fanatical movements such as I have described, persons in no way responsible for them have in some cases lost their reason. They could not harmonize the scenes of excitement and tumult with their own past precious experience; they were pressed beyond measure to receive the message of error; it was represented to them that unless they did this they would be lost; and as the result their mind was unbalanced, and some became insane. These things bring a reproach upon the cause of truth, and hinder the proclamation of the last message of mercy to the world. Selected Messages, book 2, 34-35

"The same kind of influence [that came into the 1900 carnival-like apostasy] came in after the passing of the time in 1844. The same kind of representations were made. Men became excited, and were worked by a power thought to be the power of God." Selected Messages, book 2, 37

Consider how soon after the Advent movement (which became our SDA church) started out on its journey to the heavenly Canaan, some of our number, as it were, danced about a "golden calf!" How strange that church members indulged in the same type of music, dancing and shouting, in both ancient and modern Israel! Each time with a variation of doctrinal errors accompanying them, and a similar yet not identical worship-style.

"Our Beloved Brethren"

So it was that some of "our beloved brethren" were caught up in the post-1844 era in demonstrations similar to those that transpired in Indiana in 1900 which Ellen White clearly labelled as a carnival for Satan. They were beguiled by excitement, noise, confusing music, jumping, dancing and shouting. At that time, some were even having false visions and falling to the floor! One could surely not deny that these deceived brethren were the neopentecostals of their day! Right?

What should be our attitude toward such individuals who are caught up in deception or in neopentecostalism? Are we to slam the door shut upon them, leaving them alone to perish in their deception? No! Ellen White spoke of them, even while they were under their deception, as "our beloved brethren," whom we should be "longing to help!"

We also have before us the worthy example of Moses who, after the transgression of Israel in making the golden calf, pleaded with God on behalf of his "beloved brethren." To save them, he was even willing to have his own name blotted out from the book of life!

Shall We Attend Their Meetings?

Ellen White explains: "I went into their meetings"-why? Not to "celebrate" with them, but for a higher purpose. "I bore my testimony in the name of the Lord, placing His rebuke upon these manifestations." Surely, this is the only reason that we, today, should ever consider attending such demonstrations! Unless we go to rebuke them and warn them of their danger, we would surely not have the protection of the heavenly angels. The only way we can help these deceived brethren is to lovingly present truth, rebuke their errors and point out their dangers. In no case should we join them in their heathenish practices.

As in the golden calf episode at Sinai, the fanatics after 1844 also engaged in nudity nakedness with both sexes. Sensuality was the result. See Exodus 32:25; and Maranatha, 234

Some Consequences

Through Ellen White's testimony of rebuke and warning, shortly after 1844, some souls became undeceived, were brought into their right mind, and were afterward "among our most reliable men and women!" (This should be an encouragement to us in our struggle to help our brethren today who have gone into deception.) Others were sad and remained depressed ever afterward for having so dishonored their Master. They seemed unable to strongly witness for truth.

Still others who had been "pressed beyond measure to receive" this erroneous carnival-like worship, were unable to cope with the tension between the new "excitement and tumult" and their own previous precious experience with the Lord. Their minds became so unbalanced that they became insane. If we once give our minds over to Satan's control, we too, could be taken in his snare and lose eternal life, as well as our sanity in this life!

Our prophetess writes: "The fewer of such [carnival-like] demonstrations there are, the better it will be" not only "for the actors" but "for the people in general" Selected Messages, book 2, 35

Our next chapter will discuss the carnival apostasy that arose in Indiana as well as the fifth such apostasy.

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Chapter 5

IN the Indiana Conference, in about 1900, there occurred another almost unbelievable development in our church! Some of our churches in Indiana were worshiping "God" with "a bedlam of noise," with drums, noisy exercises, et cetera. The servant of the Lord stated that in place of the Holy Spirit being present in such raucous worship, "satanic agencies blend with the din and noise, to have a carnival!" Yes, "a carnival!" In that carnival the conference evangelist, and the president of the Indiana Conference were prominently promoting the fanaticism. And most of the ministers of the conference had joined with them.

It will be more instructive to discuss the 1900 episode in connection with present developments in our church. For in describing the Indiana carnival-like irreverent worship, Ellen White used the occasion to predict and to stress, that this same type of satanic, noisy worship would be brought into out camp meetings and repeated-"just before the close of probation! " In order for a carnival atmosphere to be brought into out camp meetings (plural), must it not first be brought into our churches, into our schools, our ministerial staffs, et cetera?

1900 and the 1990s

Let us now turn to the pages of inspiration. We find that conditions in the world and in the church indicate that we are now living in the time "just before the close of probation." Therefore, the following prophecy should receive our most careful attention. In a letter written to Elder Haskell who had attended the Indiana meetings, and had written a description of them to Ellen White, she wrote:

Worship with a Bedlam of Noise

It is impossible to estimate too largely the work that the Lord will accomplish through His proposed vessels in carrying out His mind and purpose. The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, in such a bedlam of noise. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time. Better never have the worship of God blended with music than to use musical instruments to do the work which last January was represented to me would be brought into our camp meetings. The truth for this time needs nothing of this kind in its work of converting souls. A bedlam of noise shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright might be a blessing. The powers of satanic agencies blend with the din and noise, to have a carnival, and this is termed the Holy Spirit's working. Selected Messages, book 2, 36

History of the Past to Be Repeated

When the camp meeting is ended, the good which ought to have been done and which might have been done by the presentation of sacred truth is not accomplished. Those participating in the supposed revival receive impressions which lead them adrift. They cannot tell what they formerly knew regarding Bible principles. No encouragement should be given to this kind of worship... .

I will not go into all the painful history; it is too much. But last January the Lord showed me that erroneous theories and methods would be brought into our camp meetings, and that the history of the past would be repeated. I felt greatly distressed. I was instructed to say that at these demonstrations demons in the form of men are present, working with all the ingenuity that Satan can employ to make the truth disgusting to sensible people; that the enemy was trying to arrange matters so that the camp meetings, which have been the means of bringing the truth of the third angel's message before multitudes, should lose their force and influence. Selected Messages, book 2, 37

Shouting No Evidence of Sanctification

The manner in which the meetings in Indiana have been carried on, with noise and confusion, does not commend them to thoughtful, intelligent minds. There is nothing in these demonstrations which will convince the world that we have the truth. Mere noise and shouting are no evidence of sanctification, or of the descent of the Holy Spirit. Your wild demonstrations create only disgust in the minds of unbelievers. The fewer of such demonstrations there are, the better it will be for the actors and for the people in general. Selected Messages, book 2, 35

Please note that this worship-style invented by Satan, with its raucous music, and with "erroneous theories and methods" would be brought into our camp meetings `just before the close of

probation," and that "the history of the past [referring to the post-1844 and Indiana experiences] would be repeated." And once again the promoters of the false Pentecostal-like worship, would call their "uncouth demonstrations" "the moving of the Holy Spirit," but God says it is rather "like the poison sting of the serpent."

The Fifth Carnival-like Apostasy

Are these experiences being repeated today? Do we find any evidences now of this fifth carnival-like fanaticism in the church? Dear readers, yes, we do! The predictions made in this prophecy are even now being fulfilled! Beginning in the 1980s such worship services as Ellen White described in Indiana as being a carnival surfaced in our midst, and in the 1990s they are multiplying rapidly before our very eyes and ears! These churches call themselves Seventh-day Adventist Celebration-style churches!

While we speak of the celebration excesses as a "carnival," readers should note that we did not first apply that word. It was Ellen White herself who attached that name to the similar fanatical movements in her day-even to those very ones she said would be repeated "just before the close of probation" See Selected Messages, book 2, 36

Concerned members have long expressed grave misgivings over the introduction of ecumenism, New Theology and other teachings borrowed from the evangelicals. But the most startling of all, is the recent introduction into some of our worship services of spiritualistic sentiments and pentecostal-like actions!

When a video is viewed by staid Seventh-day Adventists of the goings-on in these church services, it leaves them aghast with disbelief! Can it be possible that an actual rock band with its din and confusion, and with an offbeat that appeals to the physical body in a sensual fashion, would actually be used to accompany so-called gospel songs in Seventh-day Adventist Church services? Under the influence of the music, some in the congregation raise their hands heavenward and sway their torsos back and forth as is done in pentecostal churches. Some congregations act as if they were attending a carnival rather than a service of divine worship.

Concerned members are openly wondering how much support should be given to such local churches with their wild cacophonous music, worldly dramatics et cetera practices which have been spoken against in the Testimonies. In addition to this they teach "erroneous theories!"

We recently learned of an established church, which spent \$40,000 to remodel and widen their platform into a "stage" that would facilitate theatrics and on which modern rock music could be accommodated just as in the "holiness" churches! Should financial support be given to such projects and to their ministers?

Story-time in a Celebration Church

The children's story time which we have viewed on video, is usually a drama, with children acting out parts, and/or running to and fro during the story, playing "hide and seek," et cetera in the sanctuary. Though the following passage speaks of little children running about, playing, talking, and manifesting their tempers during regular church services, the principle could surely apply to celebration confusion and activities:

The place that should be holy, where a holy stillness should reign, and where there should be perfect order, neatness, and humility, is made to be a perfect Babylon and a place where confusion, disorder, and untidiness reign. This is enough to shut out God from our assemblies and cause His wrath

to be kindled, that He will not be pleased to go out with the armies of Israel to battle against our enemies. Selected Messages, book 3, 257

The celebration format (music, drama et cetera) does not contribute to a "holy stillness," but rather resembles "a perfect Babylon" of confusion.

A Taped Message

The following was taken from a taped message given by a celebration pastor to a Seventh-day Adventist congregation as he was promoting celebration-style churches:

We get letters and phone calls from people, who say that you can be a member of Celebration Church and do anything you want! And, you know what? You can.... We have to let people be in sin, and love them, and help them understand it's destructive. I won't put up with the traditionalist! I'm sick and tired of the traditionalist.... I go to other [non-SDA] churches. I don't need to go there to learn doctrine. But I need to go there to learn other things. I went to another church one day, and I worshiped God for the first time in my life! [He has been an SDA pastor for 21 years.] It was just the most wonderful worship experience in my life.... Over a period of time, I studied the other churches and tried this and that....

I use the New English Bible; I have not used King James Version in years. I refuse to read anything in the King James Version. We use drums.... We've had lots of drummers-12 or 15 since April.... I'm out to get people, and whatever it takes is all right with me.... And it's working! ... I went to another [non-SDA] church and went forward and they laid hands on me. So now we do it.... We have music, lots of it, and drama!... We played Moses crossing the Red Sea-the whole church! The water came up, and we told the people to stand and wave their hands: they were the waves of the sea! Oh, it was wild! It was wonderful! It was the waves of the sea! Ph.Ds from Loma Linda! It was wonderful! Physicians! ... And the president [of the Conference] was standing there by the aisle. And so the audience was terrific! They just came down on those soldiers! Whoosh! ... It was just super. He [the president] told me afterward, "I'll never forget that!"

How very frivolous! No wonder the Lord's servant said such services would produce "confusion!"

Into Our Camp Meetings

Perhaps some would inquire, have these carnival-like styles and messages been brought into our camp meetings as predicted by Ellen White? They most assuredly have! In the camp meeting, in the large youth tent this summer (1990) as well as in the "teen" tent, we saw this prophecy fulfilled! On video tape-an avenue of journalism that does not lie-we witnessed this with our very own eyes and ears! We could scarcely believe what we saw and heard!

A large sign that covered the entire front entrance of the youth tent read: "Outrageous Youth Celebration." And indeed this was an accurate description of what was transpiring inside! It was indeed outrageous! As stated in the prediction, "every uncouth thing" was "demonstrated." Ellen White said there would be "shouting, with drums, loud music and dancing." This resulted in a "bedlam of noise," and "a din of confusion!" The saddest part of all was that some of the instrumental musicians on the stage who were leading out, we have been told were conference ministers!

During such a service one can readily understand why the "senses of rational beings [would] become confused" so that they would be unable to "tell what they formerly knew regarding Bible principles!" What? Are not our camp meetings places where Bible principles should be more firmly

imprinted into the minds of our young people? Yes, they should be. But sadly, as stated in the prediction in Selected Messages, book 2, these youth, upon leaving such a camp meeting could surely not be trusted to make right decisions! (We know not in how many other camp meetings this prophecy met its fulfillment this past summer. Nor do we know in how many it may have been fulfilled in previous years.) We do know that many of our schools and colleges, junior camps and youth meetings, feature the carnival-type activities.

At the Teen Tent at Camp Meeting

A large, lengthy, and at times raucous musical theatrical program—a drama—was enacted in the teen tent at camp meeting (1990), in which many teens from the audience took part. A dramatic play such as this would surely be spiritually disturbing and confusing to teen-age youth. As a believer beholds such activities, he can only "sigh and cry" for all the abominations that be done in our church! See Testimonies, vol. 5, 210

A Worldwide Phenomenon

Whereas in 1900 the Adventist carnival activity was mostly limited to one conference (Indiana), in the 1980s and 1990s there are hundreds of Adventist congregations in North America that either feature the whole carnival show, or are practicing various aspects of the celebration format. This is true, not only in the United States and Canada, but overseas as well! According to church reports it is fast becoming a worldwide phenomenon.

Warnings From the Scriptures

Both the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy warn of these apostasies. Speaking of the last days, Jesus said:

And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. Matthew 24:11

And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. Matthew 24:12

And Paul said:

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron. 1 Timothy 4:1-2

Are not these verses descriptive of developments occurring today?

An Explicit Warning

Besides the Scriptures, how thankful we can be for our latter-day prophet! Our warning from God through her is explicit. We have even been given an example so that we can know and recognize a similar apostasy to the 1900 fanaticism, and reject it!

God would not permit anything as dangerous as this celebration fanaticism to come into the midst of His remnant church without first warning His people:

Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets. Amos 3:7

Awaiting the Verdict

All four earlier episodes incurred the distinct displeasure of God. All four were inspired by Satan. We dare not forget that we have been warned that the fifth similar apostasy would also be inspired by Satan. See Selected Messages, book 2, 36. The history of the present Celebration apostasy is still being written. The final verdict is not yet in.

Drama, Theatrics and Music

Chapter 6

CELEBRATION Church programs lean heavily toward the practice and use of theatrics and drama. Their sponsors claim to be glorifying God thereby. But Inspiration tells us that theatrical performances do not glorify God, even under the best of circumstances. We read:

The work in the large cities is to be done after Christ's order, not after the order of a theatrical performance. It is not a theatrical performance that glorifies God, but the presentation of the truth in the love of Christ. Testimonies, vol. 9, 142

Can the Lord Jesus accept the theatrical exhibitions as service done for Him? Can He be glorified thereby? No. All this kind of work is done in the service of another leader. Manuscript Release 909, 3

The world is teeming with errors and fables. Novelties in the form of sensational dramas are continually arising to engross the mind; and absurd theories abound, which are destructive to moral and spiritual advancement. Gospel Workers, 281

God has revealed that:

There an abundance of theatrical performances in our world, but [even] in its highest order it is without God. Manuscript Release 909, 5

Even in their most dignified form, drama and theatrical performances do not have the blessing of God upon them. Rather than being a blessing, "All this kind of work is done in the service of another leader."

Music

How should we worship God with music? It is clearly revealed that "The Holy Spirit has nothing to do with such a confusion of noise and multitude of sounds" (Selected Messages, book 2, 37), as in the Indiana meetings. Regardless how good the words may be, the music which appeals to the physical part of a person always wins out over the words. Its influence predominates.

God has not left His remnant church without counsel concerning music, noise and confusion.

Some think that the louder they sing the more music they make; but noise is not music. Good singing is like the music of the birds-subdued and melodious. Evangelism, 510

Not Boisterous or Untamable

The peace of Christ is not a boisterous, untamable element made manifest in loud voices and bodily exercises. The peace of Christ is an intelligent peace, and it does not make those who possess it bear the marks of fanaticism and extravagance. It is not a rambling impulse but an emanation from God. Faith and Works, 87-88 ':

Adventist Carnivals

When believers speak the truth as it is in Jesus, they reveal a holy, sensible calm, not a storm of confusion. Selected Messages book 2, 36

The Lord desires to have in His service order and discipline, not excitement and confusion.... We need to be thoughtful and still, and to contemplate the truths of revelation. Excitement is a not favorable to growth in grace, to true purity and sanctification of the spirit. Selected Messages, book 2, 35

How can the leaders and laity of Celebration-type churches ignore all of these clear counsels sent to us from our God? How can they continue to exhibit "boisterous and untamable" attitudes with "bodily exercises" in their music, theatrics, and drama? These exhibitions do not resemble the peace and joy that passeth understanding spoken of in the Scriptures. It is a fact that in all five episodes of fanaticism worldly music has played a prominent part.

In the Spirit of Prophecy we are repeatedly urged to ; produce only "pure heavenly music" (Amazing Grace, 251). Music that is rich and majestic (The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vo1. 7, 988), ,enrapturing and melodious" (The Great Controversy, 542). "At one time Lucifer led the heavenly choir in glorious melodious "happy songs of praise to God and His dear Son. Since his fall, instead of sweet music, he sponsors discordant, raucous, cacophonous music. See Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 1, 62

For many years we have been signally blessed by the majestic organ music and solemn vocal words recalling the passion and death of the Son of God on Golgatha, as set forth in the memorable oratorio of the "Crucifixion" composed by Sir John Stainer many decades ago. There is no way his awe-inspiring music can be compared with the shabby "music" of the celebration carnivals. One can only contrast them.

Presently we are enjoying listening to the majestic musical recordings of the Pacific Union College a cappella choir of two generations ago. Their beautiful melodies and perfect harmony lift one's thoughts heavenward in praise and prayer to God. What a contrast this is to the current Celebration music we hear coming from our educational institutions today-with their rock-like bans, rap groups, operatic musicals with actors depicting witchcraft et cetera. The angels must fold their wings and weep, when they hear the hypnotic cacophonous repetitive "noise" that is today called music! Can true Christians lend their influence or material support to these carnival-like activities? God tells us that, "No encouragement should be given to this kind of worship. Selected Messages, book 2, 37

This would, of course, include our attendance at their meetings as well as our giving to them our financial support. Remember: "No encouragement should be given to this kind of worship."

Shall We Heed God's Warning?

The modern Celebration carnival-like format can be traced far into antiquity. Had the believers in Indiana heeded the lessons from the records of ancient Israel and the lessons from the post-1844 experiences they would not have gotten into their own carnival-like fanaticism in 1900. Likewise, had our church of today heeded the warnings concerning all the experiences of the earlier believer, as well as those of 1900, we would not now be into the fanaticism o the Celebration-like churches of the 1990s. Would we?

Brethren and sisters, it is time that we wake up and heed al the lessons and warnings of our history, lest we make ever more ghastly errors and mistakes than did our forefathers Similar fanaticisms are evil whether they occur around the golden calf at Horeb, at Baal-Peor, shortly after 1844, it Indiana in 1900, or in the 1990s!

Adventist Carnivals

Let God's people act so that the world will see that Seventh-day Adventists are an intelligent, thinking people, whose faith is based on a surer foundation than the bedlam of confusion. The people are hungry for the bread of life. Do not offer them a stone. Selected Messages, book 2, 24

We should offer the people of the world the bread of life Offer them illumination and repentance instead of a stone bedlam of confusion and noise!

Further Counsel Regarding Theatrics

In my very first labors, the message was given that all theatrical performances in connection with the preaching of present truth were to be discouraged and forbidden. Men who thought they had a wonderful work to do sought to adopt a strange department and manifested oddities in bodily exercise. The light given me was, "Give this no sanction." These performances, which savored of the theatrical, were to have no place in the proclamation of the solemn messages entrusted to us.

The enemy will watch closely, and will take every advantage of circumstances to degrade the truth by the introduction of undignified demonstrations. None of these demonstrations are to be encouraged. The precious truths given us are to be spoken in all solemnity and with sacred awe. Manuscript Release 1377, 1

Musical Instruments

Chapter 7

SOME have assumed that the passage in Selected Messages, book 2, 36-37 is a condemnation of the use of musical instruments in worship services. We should all realize that this is not true. It is only the manner in which the musical instruments were played, the dance "beat" and the "noise" in the Indiana episode that she condemns.

Perhaps the following letter, written by Sister S. N. Haskell, who attended some of the Indiana meetings with her husband, may help to clarify just what the problem was with their music:

Dance Tunes and Sacred Words

"We have a big drum, two tambourines, a big bass fiddle, two small fiddles, a flute and two comets, and an organ and a few voices. They have "Garden of Spices" as the songbook and play dance tunes to sacred words. They have never used our own hymnbooks, except when Elders Breed or Haskell speak, then they open and close with a hymn from our book, but all the other songs are from the other book. They shout Amens, and "Praise the Lord," "Glory to God," just like a Salvation Army service. It is distressing to one's soul. The doctrines preached correspond to the rest. The poor sheep are truly confused." -Mrs. S. N. Haskell report to Sara McEnterfer, September 12, 1900. (From Music-Its Role, Qualities, & Influence, 13)

These people were playing "dance tunes with sacred Words!" And like the modern rock music of today they played it loudly. So loud it was distressing and confusing, such as is the rock music we have seen and heard on videotape being played in the Celebration churches.

Note that according to Sr. Haskell's letter, in Indiana they preferred a "spicy" non-Adventist songbook unless the General Conference representatives were to speak-then they would open and close with the regular Adventist hymnal.

Adventist Carnivals

This reminds us of a minister, who this very year (1990) was attempting to introduce Celebration format into his church. '. He was using the typical Celebration choruses projected on the screen. However, he explained to a minister's wife that he always uses one hymn from the church hymnal to pacify the conservatives in his congregation. Attitudes have not changed very much since the Indiana episode, have they?- Whether the hymnal is used merely to impress visiting ministers, or to pacify conservative members in our day makes little difference.

The music in the Indiana episode of 1900 compared in its nature to Salvation Army church music. But the rock-like Celebration music of our day does not trace its origins to the Salvation Army. Rather, as we will show elsewhere, it traces its origins to worldly modern rock and country western, which in turn go all the way back to the jazz played in houses of ill fame in New Orleans. Shame on us, for having allowed such musical forms to displace majestic church music.

Just Before the Close of Probation

Let us not allow this important prophecy (Selected Messages, book 2, 36-37) with its warning against adopting worldly dance music into our worship services, to be made of none effect by dwelling merely upon the musical instruments themselves, such as drums et cetera, as if these were the issue. the real punch-line that should arrest our attention is the incorrect use being made in Celebration churches of instrumental music. It is the loudness and confusing dance beat that are the offenders today-'Just before the close of probation! " Not an exact replica of 1900-No! But the same satanic musical principles are being repeated!

After the Lord gave her a view of the Indiana hysteria, Ellen White said it would be far better never to worship God blended with music, than to use instruments to do such a work as that shown to her in vision had been conducted in Indiana, and that would be conducted again in our camp meetings "just before the close of probation."

It has been suggested in an Adventist Review article, November 1, 1990, that because of the opposition to the "drums," that it may be well for Celebration churches to consider leaving out their drums. But the problem is far deeper than that! As long as there are synthesizers, bass guitars, amplified guitars, et cetera even if the drums were eliminated, the beat of the rock music could still ring out loud and clear! There would still be rock-like "dance music with sacred words."

There is a Right Way and a Wrong Way

Musical instruments in themselves are neither "right" nor "wrong." Even drums and cymbals have their proper place in good music-marches, orchestras, et cetera. Cymbals, harps and tambourines were used in Bible times. Many quote a few Bible verses in an attempt to substantiate their musical preferences. There is no way that we can today extract an audio tape recording from the pages of Holy Writ so that we can hear exactly how these Biblical. instruments were then played. But let us remember that all musical instruments can be played in a "right" way as well as a "wrong" way! And it is the "wrong" use of musical instruments that is a part of the prophecy in Selected Messages for our time.

As stated above, we must not allow ourselves, through arguments regarding various musical instruments, to make this warning message of none effect. Our acceptance or rejection of its message will have eternal results!

The next two chapters will answer the question, Is musical preference a safe guide?

Christian Music of the World

Chapter 8

HOW were musical preferences formed in the modern Christian churches of the world? A brief history of popular Christian music might be helpful before we consider the type of music preferred by some Adventists.

For centuries Christian music was for the most part stately, majestic, solemn and awe-inspiring. But shortly after the turn of the century, syncopated music with a jazz-like beat began to gradually intrude into sacred music. It is a well-known fact that jazz music had its beginnings in the bordellos of New Orleans about 1900.

When syncopation became generally accepted in worldly churches, then it was that the country western beat with guitars was introduced into some of the Protestant churches. The devil was so successful with this, he next introduced "gospel rock" into religious services. All these types of music which came to be preferred by church goers, could appropriately be called, "dance music with religious words," as described by Sister Haskell concerning the Indiana crisis.

Professor H. Lloyd Leno

About fifteen years ago, Lloyd Leno, associate professor of music at Walla College, wrote a series of articles on church music in the Review and Herald. One of his articles on "Music and Morality" traced the development of immoral music from

New Orleans jazz, through its various stages of boogie-woogie, swing and finally rock which he stated is a "mixture of negro rhythm, blues and country western" (Review and Herald, February 26, 1976). He cites these words from the book *Rock From the Beginning*, published by Simon & Schuster, in 1970.

Professor Leno pointed out from the same source book that stimulation of sexuality was a prime purpose to be accomplished through the din and noise of rock music, effected largely by the "beat" of the drums, guitars, and the repetition of the musical phrases.

Whichever type of current "gospel music" is used, they all have in common varying degrees of syncopation and a beat that appeals to bodily movement and sensual responses. The words, religious terms though they be, are only a weak accessory to the dance-like melodies which penetrate the minds and captivate the millions.

Danceable Gospel

A couple of years ago we heard a young Washington State composer and singer of western gospel music being interviewed on television news. She seemed conservative. But when the host asked if she ever composed dance music, her reply was, "Oh, my music is danceable!" Clearly, the object is to get a swinging type of music with a beat and attach some semi-religious words, and that qualifies it as modern "gospel."

The Primary Purpose

By contrast, a reader writing to the editor of the Adventist Review some years ago stated it thus, "The primary purpose of our worship, including our music, is to glorify God." Surely country western

music, or sexually-oriented "church rock" with its "bawdy-house" beginnings does not glorify God in the least. It merely glorifies the god of this world!

Thus we have traced a brief history of the formation of the preferences that many of the churchgoers of the world have acquired from the introduction of modern "gospel" music into their services.

Apologists for Celebration

It boggles the mind when some of our ministering brethren try to defend the church-rock music of Celebration as being simply "a matter of preference." Do they not realize that they are in effect saying that they prefer music which developed out of an unsavory past? They claim that those who object to this "wild" type music, which they refer to merely as "lively" music, are only expressing a "personal preference." These apologists need to read the Review and Herald articles by Professor H. Lloyd Leno referred to above.

We will turn now to study the history and formation of the musical preferences of Seventh-day Adventists.

Adventist Preference

Chapter 9

IN regard to different types of music, can we always choose the type we think we prefer, and be assured that we have made the "right" choice? Perhaps some other questions might help answer this. Is conscience always a safe guide, or can it sometimes be seared, as it were, with a hot iron (see 1 Timothy 4:2)? How are our preferences formed? Are they based upon God's will as declared in His Word?

Adventist Music

How could it happen, we ask, that rock-like, carnival-type, dance-like music could be accepted and preferred, it seemed almost suddenly, by the many Adventist congregations and ministers who are involved in Celebration-type services? If we assume that it happened suddenly, we are mistaken! Carnival-type worldly music was not introduced into our churches in full bloom all at once! Had it been, the devil would have feared for its very survival!

The truth is that Adventists were not far behind the other churches in making changes in their musical preferences. A number of decades ago Satan tempted Adventists to introduce into their worship services the "gospel western" music that was being used by the worldly churches. After a modest beginning in Adventism, western gospel was popularized through a singing, guitar-playing trio from England who toured our camp meetings in the early 60s.

To some church members, at that time this was a very shocking development. But to the worldly minded, who had been forming their preferences by feeding their minds on television programs et cetera, it was a welcome event.

In the 1950s television became available. While through the years theaters had been shunned by many Seventh-day Adventists, television brought the theater and worldly music into the homes of many of our church members. As did the Israelites in the Vale of Shittim, viewers grew accustomed to beholding idolatry and lewdness. Their minds became familiar with the vile thoughts and vile music one witnesses and hears on the TV screen. Has not this also surely contributed to and accelerated the worldly preferences formed by Adventists? Shame on us!

Adventist Carnivals

Returning to the history of Seventh-day Adventist music, soon after its camp meeting introduction, western-style gospel music was accepted by most of our churches. Thus this worldly music, borrowed from the churches of Babylon-danceable music began to shape Adventist musical preferences. Many singing, guitar-playing groups quickly appeared all through our ranks. Records and tapes galore, sold by the hundreds in Adventist Book Centers, were more and more effectively shaping the preferences of mothers and fathers and the youth in Israel, through music that was clearly condemned by Inspiration. (The new music displaced conservative music so rapidly that soon one could scarcely buy a tape or record of old-fashioned Adventist recordings at our Book Centers.)

Speaking of one of these typical western-style singing groups, some years ago, the following letter to the editor was printed in the Adventist Review.

During a recent evangelistic series, a certain singing group participated, presenting songs, new and old, in its unique style.

One evening my husband and I sat behind a group of people who were obviously not church members. It was very apparent they were responding to the music, with noticeable body swaying and toe tapping, particularly during the livelier numbers. Prior to my conversion as an adult, the beat I was hearing was the sort of thing to which I and others would swing and sway on dance floors, and I too, was responding that night. I and the non-church members weren't alone; there were others, including a woman usher standing close by, who were responding in the same way....

To us, this issue about music is a concern. I'd be hard pressed to explain the difference between the music presented by this group and that of some of the popular contemporary groups. The words may be different, but the beat is certainly there.

If we use and justify this method to draw crowds and appeal to nonmembers, it appears we have come to the place where we are much more concerned with quantity, not quality.

Though there was an outcry (such as this letter) from the faithful, from startled conservative Adventists, the liberal worldly group who were the largest and strongest and very vocal, liked it, embraced it, and won!

A Personal Experience

When western music was still rather new in Adventism, in the church we attended, the youth division, with guitars in hand, were invited to favor the adults with special music. It was danceable music, and the youth were toe-tapping, body-swaying et cetera. Obviously, they were enjoying themselves immensely. Afterward, as the adults separated for their class study, an older lady said to us, "I wonder how long it will take us to get used to that kind of music?" We felt constrained to answer her by asking a question of our own, "Oh, are we supposed to become accustomed to it?"

A Mighty Fortress

About two decades ago, advocates of the modern music wishing to defend their attitude, circulated a story in Adventism that the tune for Martin Luther's majestic hymn, "A Mighty Fortress," was originally composed as a German beer cellar song. We researched this carefully with a number of the highest authorities on church music in the United States, and their personal research showed that this beer cellar claim was absolutely without foundation.

Worldly Music Wins

Still following the example of the worldly churches, some years later, light rock became acceptable in some of our churches and church-sponsored schools. A little later, though it is almost unbelievable, in some Adventist circles harder gospel rock with religious words, of course, was being "enjoyed" by some of our young people. The musical forms of Seventh-day Adventist grew bolder and bolder and more and more tended to lean toward rock-like styles until now it is being brazenly played in Celebration churches, some are even performing the wicked "rap" music in religious services. In some churches, there seemed to be no stopping place. Some have come all the way musically in following the churches of Babylon.

Alas! Had not the way been well prepared for a rather sudden acceptance not unlike the Indiana-type of wild music? Especially among the young people whose preference for western and rock gospel music was being formed as it was played for years in their Sabbath School divisions, in our schools, at junior and teen camps, et cetra.

Drums

Some Adventist churches have for years used electronic bass guitars connected to a system of amplifiers and speakers to get the effect of "drums" in their church, western, gospel music—and it was played loudly! About twenty years ago we worshiped in an Adventist church where devotees of modern music introduced a drum effect into our divine services by installing on the platform in the sanctuary a common round, galvanized iron washtub turned upside down. A string was attached to the bottom of the upturned tub, the other end of which was attached to a long stick. String tension was varied by moving the stick, which was placed against the rim of the washtub. By snapping the string a sound like a veritable drum was produced. Yes, this happened in God's sanctuary during Sabbath services—twenty years ago!

We personally witnessed this demonstration more than once and even then our minds naturally went to the statement in Selected Messages, book 2, relative to "drums" in our worship services "just before the close of probation." Since that time, some of our people have graduated from the washtub to the use of real drums!

Excellent Music

We certainly do not wish to infer by these assertions that all Adventist music has gone by way of the "wrong" trends. There has always been, and still is, much music in Adventism that is of most excellent quality, such music as is recommended through the inspired Word of God for use in our services.

While there are still many in our ranks who detest the modern danceable church music (this is undoubtedly true in some churches of the world also), there is a large segment that have grown up with it and do not even know enough about truly sacred music to recognize it when they hear it. They prefer that type of music which appeals to the lower nature, the physical nature, yes, even the sensual nature. This type of person may also have little relish for the deep study of the Word of God and the Spirit of Prophecy.

They [young men and young women who profess to believe the truth] have a keen ear for music, and Satan knows what organs to excite to animate, engross, and charm the mind so that Christ is not desired [preferred]. Testimonies, vol. 1, 497

How to Lose Our Youth

One of the editors in the Adventist Review of November 1, 1990 calls for livelier church services in order to hold the youth and others in the church who have preferences for lively programs. In the early days of our church, we had a similar problem, when some parents provided for, or allowed livelier music to sacred songs, for the latter were "not congenial to their taste." Ellen White deplored the situation as follows:

Eternal things have little weight with the youth. Angels of God are in tears as they write in the roll the words and acts of professed Christians. Angels are hovering around yonder dwelling. The young are there assembled; there is the sound of vocal and instrumental music. Christians are gathered there, but what is that you hear? It is a song, a frivolous ditty, fit for the dance hall. Behold the pure angels gather their light closer around them, and darkness envelops those in that dwelling. The angels are moving from the scene. Sadness is upon their countenances. Behold, they are weeping. This I saw repeated a number of times all through the ranks of Sabbathkeepers, and especially in _____. Music has occupied the hours which should have been devoted to prayer. Music is the idol which many professed Sabbathkeeping Christians worship. Satan has no objection to music if he can make that a channel through which to gain access to the minds of the youth. Anything will suit his purpose that will divert the mind from God and engage the time which should be devoted to His service. He works through the means which will exert the strongest influence to hold the largest numbers in a pleasing infatuation, while they are paralyzed by his power. When turned to good account, music is a blessing; but it is often made one of Satan's most attractive agencies to ensnare souls. When abused, it leads the unconsecrated to pride, vanity, and folly. When allowed to take the place of devotion and prayer, it is a terrible curse. Young persons assemble to sing, and, although professed Christians, frequently dishonor God and their faith by their frivolous conversation and their choice of music. Sacred music is not congenial to their taste. I was directed to the plain teachings of God's Word, which have been passed by unnoticed. In the judgment all these words of inspiration will condemn those who have not heeded them. Testimonies, vol. 1505-506

In that day also the youth preferred to play and sing "frivolous ditties fit for the dance hall." Thus music was "made to be one of Satan's most attractive agencies to ensnare souls." According to this quotation a danceable type of music should not even be played and sung in a Seventh-day Adventist "dwelling" let alone in church services or religious meetings! Ellen White said that their personal preference notwithstanding, would not prevent them from being condemned in the judgment. They had "let go unnoticed" and had not heeded, the plain teachings of God's Word (including His Testimonies) that were available to them. They will be without excuse! And today, we have church leaders proposing "livelier" music for our youth! What next?

Another Social Gathering

Speaking of another social gathering, Ellen White wrote:

A view of one such company was presented to me, where were assembled those who profess to believe the truth. One was seated at the instrument of music, and such songs were poured forth as made the watching angels weep. There was mirth, there was coarse laughter, there was abundance of enthusiasm, and a kind of inspiration; but the joy was such as Satan only is able to create. This is an enthusiasm and infatuation of which all who love God will be ashamed. It prepares the participants for unholy thought and action. Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students, 339

Adventist Carnivals

Please note that through the use of worldly music, Satan can "create," "mirth," "laughter," "enthusiasm," "inspiration," and "joy! " All the while Satan is creating in these young people a preference, and "infatuation" for a type of music of which they will someday "be ashamed."

We would ask, Will the older folk who approve of, sponsor, and make apologies for, this type of music be less accountable in the judgment than will the youth who participate in it? Will they stand speechless before the Judge of all the earth when He asks, "Where is your beautiful flock of young people?"

Surely, furnishing such worldly amusements for the youth is not the proper way to keep them in the church! This may cause them to retain their membership and their attendance in the church on earth, but will their names be retained in the lamb's book of life when it is time for the judgment to convene in heaven?

Is it a Matter of Preference?

Is our choice between sedate church music or rock music a choice to be made between "right" or "wrong?" Or is it merely a matter of preference as it is suggested in the Adventist Review, November 1, 1990? Once again we will answer this by asking questions: How have the preferences of some of our members in Adventism been formed? Through a study of God's Word and a putting of it into practice? We think not!

There is room for preference only within the boundaries of "right." "Right" is based upon the inspired Word. "Right" becomes our preference only by beholding "right" and its Author Jesus Christ! For it is an everlasting principle that "by beholding we become changed."

Protest is Needed

Should we not raise our voices in loud protest to these invasions of worldliness and fanaticism into our midst? We need to not only "sigh and cry," but to protest! We need to awaken church members to the fact that we are living in a crisis hour- "just before the close of probation! " We need to plead with our "beloved brethren" who have become enmeshed in the Celebration excesses, to halt their rush toward destruction, take inventory, and start on the road back to musical sanity; toward the use of music which honors God and not Satan; music that has nothing in common with the vice dens of New Orleans, or with the western swing of Nashville, Tennessee, or the prevalent rock and rap music that is spreading like wild-fire around the world!

May God's people develop a preference for those things that lead the mind to heavenly themes and away from all that is low and sensual. May our preferences be based upon the following divine counsel:

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.
Philippians 4:8

Culture

Chapter 10

WHEN an American is converted to Adventism today, he gives up a part of his culture, such as Sundaykeeping, attending theaters, eating pork et cetera. When American Indians accept Adventism do

we bring them into the church together with their pagan rain dances which they offer to their rain gods? Some use psychedelic drugs (peyote) in their pagan rituals as they try to appease their gods. How about isolated Pacific places where head-hunting and cannibalism were the natural culture, did our church in years past for reasons of church growth or for any other reason accept their cultural behaviors—their preferences—as a part of Adventism? We never have. Nor should we!

Blacks and Hispanics

Concerning Seventh-day Adventist black and Hispanic cultures, the editor of the *Adventist Review*, November 1, 1990, infers that wherever they live in the world, that their church services resemble Celebration-style worship, and that because of this they are prospering (attendance-wise), and that if "anglo churches" do not "do something dramatic quite soon," they will continue to lose "their members, particularly young people." In the opinion of the editor, this is for the reason that typical anglo (white) churches are not as "lively" as are the named ethnic churches.

While we feel certain that our ethnic brethren and sisters do not deserve to be painted with the Celebration brush, en masse, yet we recently saw an officially sponsored videotape during Sabbath School, showing various Seventh-day Adventist congregations in Africa. In all the various churches shown, their music was so raucous, so danceable, so loud, and the people were acting just as the music dictated dancing in the aisles. The entire video seemed to be one big carnival-like display! When that tape was finished, we felt as if the sanctuary had been desecrated. It was actually shocking! Much like worldly native African dances one might see and hear on a TV newsclip.

A year ago a traveling black singing group invited themselves to our church in Idaho for an evening program. We found to our dismay that they used Celebration-type songs. If these are examples of ethnic groups around the world, the *Adventist Review* editor might be correct.

In Past Years

But this was not true years ago! In past years we have worshiped with our beloved black brethren and sisters in their churches and we found none of the Celebration-type wiggling and wild music. The audience and musicians were somber, sedate, and exceptionally reverent. True, they punctuated the air with many "amens," and "yea brother" et cetera, as one of us preached at their worship hour, but that was honoring to God and the message out of His Word, not a personal display.

We also remember attending General Conference sessions where Central American (Hispanic) groups gave musical numbers. It was all very beautiful, reverent and free from bodily gymnastics and pelvic swinging such as is seen in rock-like performances. If some of them have adopted the unsavory Celebration antics in more recent years, let us pray for them and not encourage them into extending further into Celebrationism! We do not share the editor's views re: his suggested remedy for the "anglo" churches. The true conversion of the members is the true remedy.

When conversions are made to Adventism, should not the different nationalities of the world be taught that they are no longer to retain any ungodly cultural methods and ways? Should we not show them a better way how to worship God with majesty and dignity? Or are we following the example of the Roman church before us in this regard?

Romanism and Paganism

We would ask, Should Adventists follow the practice of the church of Rome which has for centuries absorbed pagan rituals from African and Mayan cultures et cetera into their church liturgy?

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The Roman church found it to be more favorable to church growth if they brought in together with their new converts, some of their pagan culture. Their church growth was greatly facilitated by this method.

In the time of Constantine, it was thus that pagan Sundaykeeping was brought into the Christian church. Pagan converts flocked into the church when they learned that they were not expected to change their preference for their holy day from Sunday to the seventh-day Sabbath.

Has not Adventism in the more distant past taught new converts from pagan cultures to give up their heathen forms of worship? Should we now, in more recent years just before the close of probation"-allow such heathen cultural practices to flourish?

The Culture of Heaven

When young persons join our church, are they supposed to give up rock music and all the dancing and other activities that go with this modern American subculture? If we cannot hold our youth unless we bring contemporary worldly culture into the churches with them, we might ask: Are worldly-minded Seventh-day Adventist young people, who refuse to give up their worldly habits, the type of church members God is seeking? Or does He wish to change the preferences of the youth that they may worship Him in spirit and in truth? And be fitted for the heavenly music and the church worship services in the heavenly land? The culture of heaven is what we wish to learn, to practice, and to prefer.

Dancing

Some of the apologists for the Celebration "dancing" activities justify their physical gyrations by referring to the various mentions in the Old Testament, such as to the dancing of Miriam and David et cetera. Neither we, nor the apologists for religious dancing, lived back there in Bible times, so none of us can accurately evaluate such dancing as was done. We do not propose to enter the quagmire of argument about such things.

Dancing is also spoken of in the Bible in connection with great wickedness. Such as when the Israelites danced about the golden calf; many of them were punished with death. The dancing at Baal-Peor was also punished by the Lord. On Mt. Carmel the priests of Baal danced as they in vain supplicated their gods, but Elijah offered a simple prayer to the God of heaven, and his prayer was answered.

All of us can read of the divine disapproval of the dancing in post-1844 and the 1900 Indiana episode which we have discussed elsewhere. We have been told by the Lord's servant that the fifth carnival episode (yet future while she was alive) would also meet with God's disapproval.

Dancing and the Liturgical Worship Service

We find no scriptural record that dancing was ever prescribed for the liturgical worship service in either the Old or New Testament records. Neither was dancing and loud music in any form a part of the liturgy of our pioneers who founded our church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Nor have we found any counsel indicating that worship dancing will be found in the new earth.

We do find that saints lame and crippled in this life will be able for sheer joy to "leap as an hart" (Isaiah 35:6) when their bodies are made new. It could very well be that some of the "dancing" recorded in the Old Testament was the celebration of sheer joy for a particular blessing received and not at all a regular part of divine worship. But we are perfectly willing to leave the matter of Bible "dancing" until redemption, when we can learn more of the true history of the past.

We do know that the same Spirit that prompted the prophets of the Bible to write the Scriptures, prompted the counsels that have been written by our modern prophet to His remnant

people. The Holy Spirit never contradicts itself. In her writings we learn that boisterous dancing and loud raucous music have no place in our church services! Regardless of what might be the preferences of the congregation, the new modern American subculture of rock or rap music cannot possibly be used in our church services with the blessing of the Lord! We must remember, however, that these same instruments, properly played could be used to glorify and praise God, but instruments, used in fashion as in a rock band, could give glory only to Satan! Let us be willing to permit God's Word to guide us away from worldly culture, and into the culture of heaven.

Guidelines for Change

Chapter 11

APOLOGISTS for the Celebration style of worship claim that Adventist worship services have become drab and dead (especially for the youth), and we need change-which translated means-a change to Celebration style. Some people are eager for a change-but what are their guidelines? Certainly, making a change in our worship services is perfectly proper, provided we are guided by inspired principles that are in agreement with God's plans for Adventist worship.

Conversion: Our Greatest Need

All will agree that church services need not and should not be dead or lifeless and dull. Artificial changes, however, will not actually remedy one's spiritual life. Lively music does not guarantee that lively, vibrant, healthy Christians are singing. In the book *Evangelism* God gives counsel that presents the true change we need:

Music is acceptable to God only when the heart is sanctified and made soft and holy by its facilities. But many who delight in a music know nothing of making melody in their hearts to the Lord. Their heart is gone "after their idols." *Evangelism*, 512

Music That Offends God. -Display is not religion nor sanctification. There is nothing more offensive in God's sight than a display of instrumental music when those taking part are not consecrated, are not making melody in their hearts to the Lord. The offering most sweet and acceptable in God's sight is a heart made humble by self-denial, by lifting the cross and following Jesus.

We have no time now to spend in seeking those things that only please the senses. Close heart searching is needed. With tears and heartbroken confession we need to draw nigh to God that He may draw nigh to us. *Ibid.*, 510

The Lord has revealed to me that when the heart is cleansed and sanctified, and the members of the church are partakers of the divine nature, a power will go forth from the church, who believe the truth, that will cause melody in the heart. Men and women will not then depend upon their instrumental music but on the power and grace of God, which will give fullness of joy. There is a work to be done in clearing away the rubbish which has been brought into the church. *Ibid.*, 521

The real change our people need is conversion; a willingness to take up our cross daily and follow Jesus. Such an experience as this would liven up all our church services!

Changes

Projecting the words of choruses and songs onto a screen as is done in Celebration churches that all may read them is certainly not objectional, per se, as long as the words, as well as the musical accompaniment follow divine guidelines.

Those who make singing a part of divine worship should select hymns with music appropriate to the occasion, not funeral notes, but cheerful, yet solemn melodies. Evangelism, 508

Small classes held midweek (referred to by other churches as "cells") can also be very beneficial. But this depends upon how they are conducted. If Bible studies or books printed by the worldly churches for their "cells" are used by our people, small classes could yield untold harm. But if the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy are used as the basis for these classes, great good could result.

All solutions to personal problems that may come under discussion, should be based upon the Word of God, and not upon "I think this;" or "I think that"-or even upon the opinions of worldly psychiatrists. Unless we use inspiration as our guide, the wisdom of the world may lead us astray. God has provided in His Word answers to all perplexities that face us. Let us seek His counsel on our knees with our Bibles open before us.

Conclusion

There are no objections to proper changes, based upon God's Word, being made in our worship services to add interest and variety. But when changes, such as those mentioned above, are brought in as a surreptitious plan to use them as stepping stones to introduce Celebration-style worship into a church, this makes for a loss of confidence in the sponsors. And this approach has been used in attempts to foster Celebration.

Guidelines

Should a change in our worship-style, tend to make us more worldly or more Christlike? Only guidelines for changes that will cause us to grow into the image of our dear Saviour should be used.

The North Pacific Union Conference Gleaner on November 5, 1990, published a letter containing guidelines written by Don Reiber, a retired minister. His many years of pastoral experience qualifies him to speak to this topic:

Regarding Change

Don Jacobsen's recent Gleaner article calling for tolerance regarding the changes taking place in our church was most appropriate. Change can be unsettling, even threatening, but it can hardly be avoided. We might appropriately ask, "Should we s seek to avoid it?" I think not. Why? Because stagnation and complacency are spawned by the absence of change. The wise course would seem to be to guide it rather than fight it.

The following principles seem appropriate guidelines:

1. In our worship service we need to make a distinction between the sacred and the profane-or secular, to use a more modern term. Haggai 2:12-13 points out that the secular is not sanctified by coming into contact with that which is holy, but that which is holy is contaminated by contact with the secular.

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One area-and there are others-in which this principle ought to serve as a guide is music. Rock music is secular in its origin and appeal. Adding Christian terminology to it does not render it sacred or acceptable for worship.

2. There is a difference between religious entertainment and worship. Entertainment is not the goal of worship nor necessarily a crucial ingredient of it. That is not to say that worship cannot be entertaining. But it must be more than that. Religious entertainment may leave you "feeling good," but worship ought to leave you feeling like "doing good." There is a significant difference between the two.

3. Hearts conditioned by the continuous entertainment available on TV are not likely to be entertained by a call to take up the personal cross Jesus said each of His followers must daily carry. Calls to come out and be separate, calls to bring forth fruits meet for repentance might well have a low entertainment value to such a heart and be regarded as boring.

Increased attendance is not the prime criterion for evaluating the success of worship services. Transformed lives that stand in bold relief against the background of secular society are. Paul warns in 2 Timothy 4:3-4 that human nature will enthusiastically respond to religious services which assure them of God's love and acceptance, but allows them to do that which is right in their own eyes.

Don Reiber

Elder Reiber has said it all. We need make no further comment.

The Generation Gap

Chapter 12

THERE is much concern in our churches that so many of our young people seem to have little interest in spiritual things and claim to be bored with our traditional worship services. Soon after "taking their baptismal vows, many tend to leave the church. Some adults are attempting to discover the reason for this.

In the Australian Record for March 17, 1990, a church youth leader blames the defections and unrest of the youth on various factors including the sedateness of the sacred music in our worship services:

Consider the combination of the organ, piano and hymn singing in most churches each week. How many of the hymns were written this century? How many young people would choose that type of music regularly?

He infers that, for the sake of the youth, a change should be made to livelier music. One wonders if such youth or older persons who are bored with sacred music and who prefer "lively" or rock music, would be pleased if they should somehow hear the angels sing. Surely they could not expect to hear modern rock music from heaven!

Counsel From the Medical World

Medical science offers some light on the subject of musicrock music in particular. In the September 22, 1989 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), there appeared a "Special Communication" on "Adolescents and Their Music" which discusses in great depth the social effects of music on the youth, and the part music plays in causing their alienation from their elders.

The Role of Rock Music

Music long has been recognized as a powerful communicative force that affects attitude, mood, emotions, and behavior. Anthropologist A. P Merriam in his book *The Anthropology of Music* says, "The importance of music, as judged by the sheer ubiquity of its presence is enormous ... there is probably no other human cultural activity which is so all pervasive and which reaches into, shapes and often controls so much of human behavior."

Behavioral scientists are recognizing the part music has in forming human character and behavior. And they acknowledge in the JAMA article that "Identification with rock music, particularly those styles that are rejected by adults, functions to separate adolescents from adult society."

The Rock-Bottom Cause

Scientists conclude that rock music is the most prominent cause of the generation gap! Please note they do not say the alienation is caused by the requirements of parents and/or churches but that it is rock music itself that has produced the gap. This is very revealing. If we should conclude that sedate church music has caused the alienation of our Seventh-day Adventist youth, we might be putting the cart before the horse!

The Journal of the American Medical Association music article in its synopsis in effect concludes just the opposite, namely, "adolescent alienation" is closely associated with their "total immersion into a rock subculture." Besides raucous music, rock features also the "swiveling of the hips [and] the frankly sexual antics" of the performers. Consider what a harmful and worldly influence all of this can have upon the social and spiritual attitudes of our youth!

The JAMA research article would tend to indicate that the cure that the Australian youth leader would suggest for the alienation of the youth is actually the real cause of their alienation in the first place. Rock music could tend only to aggravate the situation.

Worldliness Attracts Worldliness

Regardless of age, any who partake of a daily diet of television and worldly entertainment, which may include rock music, are not going to find Sabbath School and church worship services featuring sacred music, with the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy as the basis for earnest deep study, to be interesting. Of course it would be boring, for spiritual things are only spiritually discerned. These worldlings will have, through their attachment to worldly music, et cetera, alienated themselves from the enjoyment of the true worship of God, until such time as they will surrender to God and allow Him to change their worldly hearts.

Should we be surprised if such worldly-minded persons "walk out of the back door" of our churches? Then, of course, if we open up our churches to the worldly entertainment which they prefer, might we not anticipate that some of these would readily walk in through the front door again? And even bring with them some of their non-Adventist rock-loving friends? They might all find such "worship" services to be entertaining.

Therefore, to furnish rock-like music in our churches is certainly no solution to the real dilemma. Rock music in any setting, and with any words, could only further alienate the youth from real truth and spirituality.

Easy Conversions

If a church requires no death to self, no cross, we can expect many worldlings to be added to the church roster as long as there is plenty of entertainment. The Spirit of Prophecy indicates that,

The religion of self makes easy conversions. Scripture is perverted, God dethroned, and self deified.... This is the new, broad way substituted as an improvement on the strait gate and the narrow way.... The importance of the truth is lost to view while human opinions rise to vast importance. Thus the experience is cheapened.... Religion is used as a means for carrying out selfish purposes. Manuscript Release 1341, 271

Is it any wonder that Celebration churches claim so many "easy conversions"? A truly converted young person who is dead to self and sin, will be attracted to good sacred music, the Word of God, and the Testimonies of His Spirit. He will love righteousness and hate iniquity.

Is the Generation Gap Narrowing?

The alienation of the youth from their elders may be narrowing somewhat, for the reason that more adults, including parents, are beginning to prefer some forms of rock music, having themselves grown up listening to rock music. It is not merely youth who are attending carnival-like services. Many adults, including older adults, appear to relish the superficial celebration entertainment. Perhaps our Adventist homes should take a larger share of the blame for making it possible for the youth to become so well acquainted with rock-like music on TV, videos, et cetera.

Is it reasonable to expect to cure an infection by inoculating the patient with large doses of the very same virulent germs that produced the infection? We would challenge our church administrators to face these issues squarely in the light of their awesome responsibility toward the spiritual nurture of our youth, and to face the fact that the fostering of rock music in our churches rather than being the cure for alienation of our youth, is verily the cause!

There is a Better Way

Rather than providing less sacred music and less divine instruction Scripture tells us that our youth need more divine counsel. God's Word is the true cure for alienation.

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy Word. Psalms 119:9

Testimonials

Chapter 13

TO support its validity, promoters of the Celebration movement point to its popularity, its increasing numbers, and to the many backsliders who appear to be reclaimed for the church through Celebration-style worship. It is being hailed by administrators as the greatest modern "evangelistic tool" (see Adventist Review, November 1, 1990) in Adventism!

Scores of testimonials are printed in the various church papers such as the Recorder, the Gleaner, the Adventist Review, et cetera, enthusiastically telling of the wonderful experiences individuals are having in the Celebration-type worship services. Some are claiming that the carnival-types of worship have saved their spiritual lives! Others relate glowing reports that Celebration has been the means of bringing them back into Seventy-day Adventist church fellowship. Many claim that along

with their enjoyment of the new type services, their lives have been entirely changed, et cetera. Are all of these testimonials proof that this system of worship is right and good? God-inspired? Not necessarily!

The Influence of Testimonials

Nonetheless, these testimonials exert a great influence upon some people. Some who have investigated the methods being used, have rejected the system as not being God-inspired. Yet, when they encounter such glowing testimonials, they begin to waffle, 'Well, if it is accomplishing such things as these for souls, perhaps it is all right after all!' But is this sound reasoning?

Satan is able to inspire a change in lifestyle, and to generate religious enthusiasm when it best suits his purposes. But the true fruits of the Spirit issue only when the Holy Spirit is in control of the life. Only Christ can enable men to die to self and sin, and experience conversion. And it is only true conversions that will result in true testimonials!

We will yet see the astounding day when "Satan himself is converted, after the modern order of things. He will appear in the character of an angel of light" (see *The Great Controversy*, 588), as Jesus himself! In the end-time, the devil will do so much good that "if it were possible he would deceive the very elect." He will heal the people of their physical maladies, and make it appear that he can, or has, healed them of their spiritual infirmities as well. He will do all this so effectively that the whole world will cry: "Christ has come! Christ has come!" But are their testimonials dependable? No! For the christ they so glowingly testify about is the false christ!

Testimonials: Indiana-1900

Concerning the 1900 episode, just as today, the participants could undoubtedly give glowing reports of the wonderful things they were experiencing in their carnival-like meetings. They may have testified of the boring church worship they had previously attended; and how they now enjoy and prefer lively music! They might have even added, "We do not prefer the songs in Hymns and Tunes; we prefer the new songs from the book, *Garden of Spices!*"

In addition to this, they praised and promoted their (false) doctrines! They now had "holy flesh," they said, and boasted that because of this, they could live without sinning! They would «speak freely of perfection in the flesh." *Selected Messages*, book 2, 32. What glowing and positive testimonials they were giving!

But Ellen White testified that:

Instruction has been given me in regard to the late experiences of brethren in Indiana, and the teaching they have given to the churches. Through this experience and teaching the enemy has been working to lead souls astray. *Selected Messages*, book 2, 31-32

When this same carnival-like experience would be repeated in our camp meetings "just before the close of probation," just so they do not teach the truth, it makes no difference to the devil whether men teach holy flesh, or go to the other extreme, and testify that they need not stop sinning, for Jesus, they say, loves and accepts them just as they are!

Testimonials: Post-1844

In the carnival-like apostasies in various localities, shortly after 1844, there occurred similar false testimonials and teachings. "They declared [or testified] that they were perfected; that body, soul, and spirit were holy" (*Selected Messages*, book 2, 34). Listen to their glorious testimonials: Our "flesh [is]

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purified, [we are] ready for translation" (Ibid.). This testimony "they repeated again and again" (Ibid.), related Ellen White. Also, "They said they were beyond the power of temptation." Maranatha, 234

"I bore my testimony," says Ellen White, "in the name of the Lord, placing His rebuke upon these manifestations" (Selected Messages, book 2, 34). These deceived ones even said that they were so far above the power of temptation that they held meetings with men and women together in a state of nudity! But let us allow Ellen White to present this:

Men and women, supposed to be guided by the Holy Spirit, held meetings in a state of nudity. They talked about holy flesh. They said they were beyond the power of temptation, and they sang, and shouted, and made all manner of noisy demonstrations.... Satan was moulding the work, and sensuality was the result. The cause of God was dishonored. Truth, sacred truth, was leveled in the dust by human agencies. Maranatha, 234

(Let us recall that at Horeb the celebrants also danced in the nude about the golden calf.) In post-1844, "they sang, they shouted, and made all manner of noisy demonstrations;" and "they talked about holy flesh." So again false "experiences" and false "teachings" were combined. And once again Ellen White wrote: "I bore my testimony declaring that these fanatical movements, this din and noise, were inspired by the spirit of Satan." She also said, "The Lord gave me a message for this fanaticism, for the beautiful principles of Bible truth were being eclipsed.... These demonstrations did not change the unerring character of truth, but Satan was working to deceive and delude honest souls." Manuscript Release 1525, 4-5

The testimonials given by these people, whether written or spoken, must have had a very powerful influence for evil as they invited others to receive their supposed certainty of salvation, and join them in their fun and frolic!

But what resulted from this fanaticism? We read that "sensuality was the result. The cause of God was dishonored. Truth, sacred truth, was leveled to the dust." Maranatha, 234.

The Standard

What about testimonials? We would ask, Should we allow the glowing testimonials even of those claiming to have changed lives, to blind our spiritual perceptions?

We freely admit that God has not appointed us as judges to judge the validity of the apparent conversion of any individuals. This is not our work. But the Lord Himself has bidden all of us to judge fruits. "By their fruits ye shall know them," Christ said. Fruits, however, are to be judged, not by man's standard, but by the standards outlined in God's Word.

All claims, all testimonials, all experiences and teachings, must be tested by the unerring Word of God by inspired guidelines-lest we be led astray and lose eternal life!

His Word, the Bible, is the foundation of our faith. Unless we plant our feet upon this foundation, unless we substantiate our faith "By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," we shall be deceived by Satan when he comes in glory, claiming to be Christ. Manuscript Release 1366, 17

A Contrast

Chapter 14

WE All know that Jesus is coming soon. But as we wait, the Celebration movement creates an excitement, and exuberance, a diversion, a carnival spirit! Let us contrast this carnival spirit with that of the faithful who in 1844 waited for Jesus to come. All fanaticism disappeared from among them. They were free from all excitement. They evidenced no spirit of elation or celebration. Rather, theirs was a spirit of solemnity, of heart preparation—a humble searching of their hearts to see if there were any sins they should put away. Filled with hope and courage and holy joy, before retiring each night they made certain that every known sin was confessed.

As we read what is said about the pre-1844 group, we will note that the current spirit of Celebration and the spirit of the expectant saints in 1844 are completely opposite!

Like a tidal wave the movement swept over the land. From city to city, from village to village, and into remote country places it went, until the waiting people of God were fully aroused. Before this proclamation fanaticism disappeared, like early frost before the rising sun. Believers once more found their position, and hope and courage animated their hearts.

The work was free from those extremes which are ever manifested when there is human excitement without the controlling influence of the word and Spirit of God. It was similar in character to those seasons of humiliation and returning unto the Lord which among ancient Israel followed messages of reproof from His servants. It bore the characteristics which mark the work of God in every age. There was little ecstatic joy, but rather deep searching of heart, confession of sin, and forsaking of the world. A preparation to meet the Lord was the burden of agonizing spirits. There was persevering prayer, and unreserved consecration to God. *The Story of Redemption*, 370

The somber, through courageous attitudes of that group should be "the characteristics which mark the work of God in every age." While the true worshipers may have "little ecstatic joy," they will be filled with "hope and courage" as they worship God in the beauty of holiness!

Let us contrast the 1844 experience which is to be a pattern for us who are expecting Jesus to come soon, with the "hi-jinks" Celebration hilarity brought to view in the chapter which follows. Which pattern shall we choose?

So Much in Common

Chapter 15

SIX thousand people greet Palau at Celebration. The night began with the place rocking for the Lord with the beat of loud and joyous music and ended with the people walking down the aisles to make decisions for Jesus Christ."

This "Celebration" in Des Moines, Iowa began on September 26, 1990, and was announced in the Des Moines Register as a "Say, Yes, Des Moines" five-day crusade. The evangelist was Luis Paulau, a Baptist-type minister.

Ecumenical "Hi jinks"

This celebration-type crusade was an ecumenical endeavor with "180 churches listed as participating in the crusade." There was, it was stated, "A new spirit of co-operation among Des Moines

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area churches, both mainline and evangelical... There was a willingness of churches to work together that we didn't have before.... This is not the end; it is the beginning of wider co-operation among churches."

"Two big screens provided larger-than-life video close-ups of the goings-on and words for the spirited choruses that the crowd sang." " `This isn't a church service. It's a celebration of fun and joy,' said the master of ceremonies Dan Owens at the outset.... `Relax, this is a house of joy. Wear anything you want as long as it's legal.' "

On Sunday Dan Owens and song-leader Dave Wacker were inspired "to lead the crowd in a sports-stadium `wave' as a part of the fun and hi finks [noisy revelry; wild behavior"-Webster] that start the programs. It is a part of Palau's theory that to reach people, mass evangelism should not be too `churchy.' "

The above quotations were taken from The Des Moines Register between the dates of September 26 and October 1, 1990. These extracts from the newspaper not only describe the carnival-like behavior and atmosphere of a typical "Celebration," but also reveal that a large number of Sunday churches are sponsoring Celebration type services. The Des Moines Celebration is not singular; the spirit of ecumenical Celebration is widespread.

Surely any knowledgeable Adventist will recognize in the news account from Iowa an almost exact description of some things one can find in an "Adventist" Celebration service. Almost a duplicate!

Borrowed From the Churches of Babylon?

Seventh-day Adventist churches were certainly not the first to sponsor the celebration-type of worship. In very fact the Pentecostals have been "celebrating" in a carnival-style worship for decades. Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, et cetera preceded Seventh-day Adventists. We might ask the logical question: Did we go to the Sunday-observing churches of Babylon-to the fallen churches of the world-to learn their methods of how to partake of their ecumenical worldly spirit, at such a time as this: "Just before the close of probation?" The answer is "Yes!" We surely have! In fact Adventist leaders of this worship format freely admit that they went to the Sunday churches, including Pentecostals, to learn their methods, and they continue to go there to learn.

Fallen Churches

When speaking of the fallen churches of Babylon in this book we refer, not to the individual members of these churches who 'nay be honest but deceived, and who will, during the loud cry respond to the voice of God calling to them: "Come out of her my people! " We refer here to the systems of erroneous doctrines and the satanic spirit of worship conducted or sponsored by these fallen churches which are fast becoming "the habitation of devils, the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Revelation 18:2

Are such churches as these the ones we desire to emulate, to be like, to follow, and to copy? In the name of church growth or for any other reason, do we wish to join with them in their carnival-like, fallen state of celebrating? What kind of members would be added to our church through such worldly methods?

To what lengths are some of us willing to go to be popular? To fit in with the daughters of Babylon who worship on the venerable day of the sun? May we never forget that "in comparison with the millions or the world, God's people will be, as they have ever been `a little flock' " (The Acts of the Apostles, 590); having never been genuinely popular in the eyes of the world or worldly churches.

According to prophecy God's true people will become the offscouring of the earth: "Thou hast made us as the offscouring and refuse in the midst of the people" Lamentations 4:45, see also 1 Corinthians 4:13. God's people will finally be esteemed as worthy only of death!

An Apt Illustration

Many years ago a boy of twelve or thirteen years of age was taken from a small country public school of about six children to a large city church school. As he walked into his room on the first day of school, the kids began to snicker and to look at his feet!

He was wearing flashy red cowboy boots with white inlays and black toes and his usual Levi jeans. These city kids acted as if they had never even seen boots or levis before! As they stared at him, it seemed as if his feet were growing getting bigger and bigger! He couldn't hide them!

At recess, which came all too soon, most of the kids poked fun at him, saying, "Oh, there's ol' 'Tex.' " And they played games. Games that were new to him. Games that he didn't know how to play! Once again he was at a disadvantage. He couldn't fit in. He was different!

One of the teachers who had a nifty 1936 Ford panel hauled the children back and forth to their various homes. As the days went by he and the teacher "talked car" together. At least he had something in common with the teacher—his love of cars.

One day, after telling the children to sit and wait quietly for him, the teacher went into a house for a brief visit. Soon, Tex, having driven an old truck on the farm began to brag: "I can drive," he said. Now they were all interested, "You can?" they asked. Finally there was something he could do that they couldn't do! But soon they challenged: "If you can drive, why don't you drive this car, Tex?"

He observed that the teacher had left the keys in the car, so he slipped into the driver's seat. Finally, he was the center of attraction! Just as he had seen the teacher do to start the car, he did. But this Ford panel didn't react like the sluggish old truck on the ranch. When he released the clutch it took off with a lunge and a squeal! In seconds he was halfway down the block. But alas! Crash! Bang! He had run into the back end of another car! The teacher's beautiful panel car was wrecked, the fog lights broken, fenders bent.

Why ?

Why did Tex do what he did? Simply for the reason that he wanted to be popular. He wanted to be like the other boys, to fit in with the crowd. At that time, he did not realize that it was more important to cling to truth—to cling to what one knows to be right, than it is to be popular by compromising true principles. Tex has told us, as he related his story, that at that time he was willing to do anything—to compromise anything—in order to be regarded as one of the crowd. He would have gone barefoot, naked, or anything else, in order to fit in.

The Application

Is there a lesson for our church people in the experience of this farm lad? Are we not equally willing to compromise principle for the sake of popularity? It is certainly true that a people holding to the truth and practicing the pure truth will be ridiculed by the world and by worldly churches. They may be snickered at, or possibly referred to as a cult. They will certainly not fit in; they will be different! And worse yet, they will even stiffer persecution!

On the other hand, by choosing a worldly course, would this not enable a congregation to become so popular that their membership growth would rapidly accelerate, even as the Ford panel

rapidly accelerated and took off with a squeal? But then, just as Tex and his friends were terribly shaken when the Ford was wrecked, so will some congregations be terribly shaken as the churches undergo their final cleansing; when God sends His angels to separate the tares from the wheat. A sudden disaster will strike as the tares are blown away from God's remnant. At that time it will not appear to be so desirable to have had so much in common with the fallen churches of Babylon!

Like the Poison Sting of the Serpent

Some Seventh-day Adventists are today making a conscious choice whether or not to accept the Celebration-type excesses. They should first ask themselves, Should we join with a system of worship that will some day be classed among those churches which Scripture refers to as "the habitation of devils; and the hold of every foul spirit"?

The voice of our prophet must be allowed to speak again as she comments on this carnival-type of worship: "Satanic agencies blend with the din and noise to have a carnival." "Demons in the form of men are present, working with all the ingenuity that Satan can employ." "Satan will make music a snare in the way in which it is conducted." "Satan works amid the din and confusion of such music.... He makes its effect like the poison sting of the serpent" Selected Messages, book 2, 36-38. What type of church growth are we asking for if we introduce the satanic methods of worship described above?

Every Unclean and Hateful Bird

The Lord's servant clearly tells us that the passage in Revelation 18 applies to the fallen churches:

I saw that since Jesus left the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary and entered within the second veil, the churches have been filling up with every unclean and hateful bird. I saw great iniquity and vileness in the churches; yet their members profess to be Christians. Their profession, their prayers, and their exhortations are an abomination in the sight of God. Early Writings, 274

If any of God's professed people or congregations adopt the same satanic methods, sentiments and practices used by the fallen churches, will not the condemnation of Revelation 18 fall upon them also? Read this:

The world must not be introduced into the church, and married to the church, forming a bond of unity. Through this means the church will become indeed corrupt, and as stated in Revelation, "a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Testimonies to Ministers, 265; see also Review and Herald, vol. 3, 233

Speaking to us as "individual church members" Ellen White writes:

It is now the duty of God's commandment-keeping people to watch and pray, to search the Scriptures diligently, to hide the Word of God in the heart, lest they sin against him in idolatrous thoughts and debasing practices, and thus the church of God become demoralized like the fallen churches whom prophecy represents as being filled with every unclean and hateful bird. Ibid., vol. 2, 138

We would ask, Shall we adults be as willing as was Tex to compromise principles in order to receive the approval of the popular churches? Is it not much more desirable to seek the approval of God? Never should we, in the name of church growth or for any other reason, be willing to sell our souls into the hands of Satan!

Erroneous Doctrines

Thus far we have considered "erroneous methods" of worship. We now turn to a discussion of deceptive theories and teachings which Ellen White foretold would be a part of the apostasy to come "just before the close of probation." Prominent among these teachings is a spurious or sentimental love, a most deceptive doctrine.

Sentimental Love

Chapter 16

THE subtle deceptions of the Celebration-type worship are not only in its form or music, but its sponsorship and exercise of a false or sentimental love! Satan's end-time strategy is the invention of an imitation of true love, a sweet-sounding concept of "love, love," which he has chosen to use as the very foundation or basis of his false revival. Thereby he will endeavor to entrap souls, to mislead the very elect, together with the entire world!

What is sentimental love? At the beginning of a study such as this, it is necessary that we first clearly differentiate between true and false love. All need to clearly understand the difference between them.

God's character of love consists of two attributes: mercy and justice. See *The Great Controversy*, 465-466. If in our lives or in our presentation of the gospel, we separate these two qualities one from the other we destroy the true concept of divine love, and thereby fail to teach the gospel in its entirety. In other words when we dwell upon God's mercy to the exclusion of His justice (His law) the result is not true love, but merely a sentimental love that results in the preaching of a spurious gospel!

Sentimental Love

We'll read about this principle of sentimental love from the inspired writings. First from *The Great Controversy*, 558:

But the Bible is interpreted in a manner that is pleasing to the unrenewed heart, while its solemn and vital truths are made of no effect. Love is dwelt upon as the chief attribute of God, but it is degraded to a weak sentimentalism, making little distinction between good and evil. God's justice, His denunciations of sin, the requirements of His holy law, are all kept out of sight. (*The Great Controversy*); 558

Affiliated to the dangers already named is the danger of underestimating the justice of God. The tendency of the modern pulpit is to strain out the divine justice from the divine benevolence, to sink benevolence into a sentiment rather than exalt it into a principle. The new theological prism puts asunder what God has joined together. *Ibid.*, 465-466.

"Inefficient and Powerless "

In very fact, if in our teachings we "put asunder what God has joined together"-His mercy and His justice-the gospel we preach is not only spurious, but it is rendered "inefficient and powerless. " Again we turn to inspiration:

The law and the gospel go hand in hand. The one is the complement of the other. The law without faith in the gospel of Christ cannot save the transgressor of law. The gospel without the law is

inefficient and powerless. The law and the gospel are a perfect whole.... The two blended-the gospel of Christ and the law of God-produce the love and faith unfeigned. Our High Calling, 141

What a responsibility! Should we cause men to believe that they are eternally saved when they are not? All for the reason that in the gospel we offered them we had "strained out the divine justice-the law of God-from His love and mercy? While emphasizing His mercy and His love, we had failed to tell people what they must do, through Christ's love and power, in order to be saved. These "converts" may be happy-go-lucky now, believing that they are saved, but when probation closes, and they finally realize they are lost, they may turn upon the deceiver who taught them the sentimental love and accuse: "It is your fault that I am lost! Too late, I now realize that the gospel you taught me was 'inefficient and powerless' to save me! I needed the two facets of God's character blended-the love of Christ and His justice as revealed in His law."

The Law and the Gospel

Yet despite the plain truths of the inspired Word, some Seventh-day Adventists continue to teach a false gospel of "love, love" borrowed from the churches of Babylon! Years ago even Ellen White was urged by some of her brethren that in her public meetings she should speak less about the law and dwell more on the subject of love. This attitude is so widespread that Ellen White even encountered it overseas in old Scandinavia:

Brother E suggests that it would please the people if I speak less about duty [the law] and more in regard to the love of Jesus. But I wish to speak as the Spirit of the Lord shall impress me. The Lord knows best what this people needs. Selected Messages, book 3, 64.

We are told that the people of these countries will be pleased with our discourses if we dwell on the love of Jesus. Of this they never tire, but we are in danger of losing our congregations if we dwell on the sterner questions of duty and the law of God. There is a spurious experience prevailing everywhere....

The love of Jesus in the heart will lead to obedience to all his commandments. But the love that goes no farther than the lips, is a delusion; it will not save any soul. Many reject the truths of the Bible, while they profess great love for Jesus; but the apostle John declares, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." .. "If ye love me," said our Saviour, "keep my commandments." Historical Sketches, 188-189

How true are her inspired words, "A delusion will not save any soul." Yet, delusions are sometimes served up as salvation even in some professed Seventh-day Adventist churches!

Goody-Goody Religion

We present herewith Ellen White's evaluation of the "love-love" dogma:

This goody-goody religion that makes light of sin and that is forever dwelling upon the love of God to the sinner, encourages the sinner to believe that God will save him while he continues in sin and he knows it to be sin. This is the way that many are doing who profess to believe present truth. The truth is kept apart from their life, and that is the reason it has no more power to convict and convert the soul. There must be a straining of every nerve and spirit and muscle to leave the world, its customs, its practices, and its fashions. Selected Messages, book 3,155

Without doubt all have been exposed to this "goody-goody religion." But we would hope that not one of us has accepted it into our own lives! Many make light of sin, the law of God and obedience, not overtly, but by ignoring the law and the exceeding sinfulness of sin, while constantly dwelling upon

the love of God to the sinner! Through this method, sinners become convinced that they can be saved in their sins which, of course, is impossible.

He [Satan] has claimed that the death of Christ made obedience to the law unnecessary and permitted the sinner to come into favor with a holy God without forsaking his sin. He has declared that the Old Testament standard was lowered in the gospel and that men can come to Christ, not to be saved from their sins but in their sins. Faith and Works, 90

We should indeed exalt Christ and His love, but we must at the same time tell the sinner, that "there must be a straining of every nerve and spirit and muscle to leave the world, its customs, its practices and its fashions" (Selected Messages, book 3, 155) for no provision has been made to save men in their sins. Therefore,

The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus [the gospel] are both important, immensely important, and must be given with equal force and power. Selected Messages, book 3, 184

The law sends men to Christ, and Christ points them back to the law. Our High Calling, 138

The law points to the gospel, while the gospel reflects its glory on the law. Manuscript Release, 1321, 1

A Balanced Message

There is a necessity of dwelling upon the love of Jesus Christ; this is essential. But it is not all that must be spoken. The great standard of character—God's holy law, with all its solemn injunctions should be distinctly set forth. The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, 781

Every discourse given should be of that practical character which will show sinners the sinfulness of sin in the light of the law of God. Ibid., 782

Can the sermons, teachings and the music lyrics in the Celebration churches meet this test? How true it is that so many to day, lay inordinate stress on Christ's work "for" us on the cross, and His love for sinners, while neglecting to lay equal stress on what He proposes to do "in" the hearts of sinners with their consent and co-operation to fit them for a heavenly home.

It has been our observation for many years that any message of love designed for church growth, for revival and reformation, for reclaiming backslidders, that is devoid of a simultaneous message of "death to self" is not a true message of love at all. Can there be any true love in the human heart before self and selfishness is dead? Self-love is not true love. Multitudes are willing to accept Jesus as their Saviour, but they do not wish to die to self or give up their sins!

How sad the day when the preachers, teachers, and promoters of a truncated gospel will knock on the closed door of the wedding feast, crying: "Lord, Lord, we have loved Thee, and taught Thy love in Thy churches and in the streets, open unto us!" But instead, they will hear those saddest words ever to be spoken to man, "I never knew you; depart from Me." For "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me" John 14:21

Love, Love

What is sentimental love? By way of emphasis we repeat once more: false love is the giving of almost exclusive emphasis to the love and mercy of God, while little or no mention or emphasis is devoted to the law and its part in sending men to Christ, in order that they might be saved in God's appointed way: from their sins! With this definition clearly in mind, we are ready to note how the principle of "love, love" applies to the Celebration churches.

Love, Love

Chapter 17

THE term "love, love" as we are using it here is to represent the counterfeit, or sentimental love described by Ellen White in the previous chapter, that exists today in so many Christian churches.

As we begin this chapter, we wish to make it abundantly clear by way of record, that in this book we are not attempting in any way whatsoever, to depreciate true love. Adventism has always regarded Christlike love as a cardinal truth. Love is a fundamental teaching of the Bible, wherein hundreds of references are found. And Ellen White, in her writings, makes about 30,000 references to it and its synonym, charity.

Twisting the Truth

In the days of ancient Israel, Satan used a legalistic application of the law as his greatest deception. He thereby deceived almost an entire nation for hundreds of years. The "silk" he used to spin his web by which to catch unwary souls was an inordinate emphasis upon God's holy law, while neglecting the gospel of salvation as it was revealed in their sanctuary service. He wisely chose as his silken thread, obedience to the law, something that is right and proper in itself, but one which though wrong emphasis, he could twist into a gross error! Twisting of truth is Satan's most successful method of deception! For the reason that this deception has been thoroughly exposed, he has now turned to an opposite emphasis.

In our day Satan is still spinning webs, but now he is using a thread of truth of a different nature. For our age, he has skillfully chosen the silken quality of smooth-tongued "love, love" as he spins a web which will enable him to entangle unwary Christians and hold them fast. Again he has chosen a truth, a beautiful truth, and twisted it into error through a wrong emphasis. Most of the Christian world seem to have already been caught in his net. Everywhere one hears the "love, love" emphasis. And should the law be mentioned in any context whatsoever, the charge comes quickly, "Oh, that is sheer legalism!" Sadly, this seems to be the attitude even in some Seventh-day Adventist churches! The members seem blissfully ignorant of the divine definition of the term legalism. See *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1077

Should one mention to Adventists the dangers in the Celebration-type worship, an attitude of "love, love" often becomes very evident. Even though Celebration errors and dangers are so obvious, so grossly erroneous, yet many Adventists will quickly respond, "Oh, but they do have love one for another!" And by the sound of their voices, the thought is conveyed, that there is really nothing else that makes any real difference at all! Nothing else matters! Let us consider this situation.

Speaking of Celebration audiences, their spirit of friendly fellowship and obvious interest in each other and in visitors, is a very commendable quality indeed. This principle is one that all might observe and go and do likewise. Note the following:

"The celebration begins on the parking lot with greeters who welcome everyone, and even bring out umbrellas if it is raining! And before people get inside the front door someone else welcomes them.... A Colton lay pastor mentioned that... 'We accept everybody as they come, and invite them to become part of our fellowship.'" *Adventist Review*, November 1, 1990.

No one would suggest that they stop bestowing attentions on others. But such demonstrations, though commendable, may or may not be indications of deep spirituality. Later we will observe that these social attentions are not the test whereby Inspiration counsels us to distinguish between the false

and true love. There are men and women of the world—even infidels—who can make just such demonstrations of "loving interest" in others, for the purpose of worldly gain—either social or financial.

Feigned Love

Allow us to illustrate from a secular source: Many years ago a famous industrialist developed an attitude for getting the most work possible out of his employees. He described his method as being, "Hearty in your approbation and lavish in your praise." In other words, pour the sweetness onto the employees and praise them even if the praise is not really merited. Through this social grace, he endeavored to have happier workers and added business successes. For years his industrial empire seemed to flourish, but in the end he died with a business failure on his hands. His theories were built on sand.

However, a certain promoter picked up his slogan and built up a system of psychology on how to win friends and influence people, based on the slogan invented by the industrialist. He wrote books and conducted seminars for which thousands paid big money to attend. Business leaders and salesmen flocked to learn his system in a desire to increase financial income.

It was interesting to learn more about him later through a friend of our family, who had been in his employ. She testified that he was not able to demonstrate his theories in personal practice. He was a very cranky and unloving individual. His "love, love" was not an enduring Christlike love, or it would have prevailed under any and all circumstances. His "love" was a sham!

Years later we knew a professional person who had become a certified instructor to give seminars on "How to Win Friends and Influence People." While she could no doubt occasionally turn on charm when she wanted to do so, in her administrative nursing occupation she was generally a very rough and disagreeable person. Her personal life did not match up with her certification as an expert in the system of feigned love, which was the bottom line of the whole system she represented. It was all a facade.

The sad part is that too often this "feigned love" sponsored by worldlings has found its way into God's church masquerading as true love. We have known of persons who can freely talk "love, love" and yet when it suits their purpose they can swiftly undermine a brother to his detriment.

We have used these illustrations to reveal that loving social qualities can be exhibited even by infidels, from personal-or sometimes even from selfish motives. Therefore, such social qualities are not a "test," proving that the principles of the Celebration churches are necessarily all true and right for the reason that its members display "love" for their brethren! Under certain circumstances worldlings do this also, and with equal proficiency. Really, social qualities can be practiced quite apart from genuine love.

Love, Acceptance and Forgiveness

From the greetings in the parking lot and foyer of the church, we turn to the worship service itself. In Celebration churches, their pastor's sermons, their imposing signs, and the words of their songs all stress the themes (or doctrine of) "love, acceptance, and forgiveness." This is the message that is promised immediately to everyone who steps inside their doors! While these are marvelous themes, such as should never be neglected, a problem arises when the gospel of love, acceptance, and forgiveness is continually dwelt upon while the law, obedience and a genuine lifestyle change is ignored and set aside.

Adventist Carnivals

The consensus in Celebration churches seems to be that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has in the past driven many of its members away, especially the youth, through a policy of telling them "what to do and what not to do." They accuse the church of having a spirit of legalism, devoid of love. This supposed failing they believe they are called to rectify. So they stress an opposite view, namely, that all should be offered "love, acceptance and forgiveness" just as they are—without a heart-change, which is the exact opposite of the teaching of Jesus who taught that we must be born again in order to see the kingdom of heaven. Being born again involves a heart-change!

"God loves you just as you are," they repeat over and over again, which of course, is true. But they fail to also teach their people that though He may love you "just as you are," He cannot take you to live with Him in heaven without your heart undergoing a change; a change that requires both man's consent and his co-operation! May we be reminded that God's servant calls such offers of false love a "goody-goody religion."

This goody-goody religion that makes light of sin and that is forever dwelling upon the love of God to the sinner, encourages the sinner to believe that God will save him while he continues in sin and he knows it to be sin. Selected Messages, book 3, 155

Ellen White wrote to a physician's wife:

My sister, God pities and loves you. But He does not love your sinful course of action, which is leading others astray. Manuscript Release 1341, 4

Another Illustration

In some Celebration churches, visitors are offered immediate membership—"Just as they are." Let us illustrate. We heard one celebration minister describe this incident on tape. An attendee of his church brought his backslidden daughter to a service. She had apparently left the Adventist church years before and gone out into the world. The minister said to her "just sign the blue card," which would have made her an immediate member of his church. But she remonstrated that her personal life was not yet ready. "I have some things to make right before I should apply for membership in a church." The minister urged, "You did not hear me. Just sign the card. That is all you need to do." He was insisting that she join his Seventh-day Adventist Church while she still had some personal problems to rectify.

She seemed more conscientious than he, not wishing to pose as a converted member while she was still living in sin. It appeared that her standards were greater than were his. Ellen White states that it is not true love "that encourages the sinner to believe that God will save him while he continues in sin and knows it to be sin." Selected Messages, book 3, 155

This same minister also said, "We get letters and phone calls from people, who say that you can be a member of the celebration church, and do anything you want! And, you know what? You can.... We have to let people be in sin, and love them, and help them to understand it's destructive."

Yet, as time goes on it seems that the preaching of the law receives little or no mention, if at all! In fact their message extended to backsliders seems to be "Just come as you are and enjoy our fellowship, and we will not tell you what to do or what not to do."

Bible Study

These ministers will tell us that they reserve a discussion of doctrine for their midweek small classes. But, may we ask, what percentage of the members attend these small classes? Certainly, it

Adventist Carnivals

would be far less than 100%. Aside from this, how many small classes meet to study the necessity of obedience to God's law? Are not most of these gatherings designed to discuss social topics? (We have even known Sabbath School classes to degenerate into mere social discussions.)

Our pioneer ministers were deep students of God's Word and inspired their listeners to be the same. But in sermons of the Celebration pastors which we have heard, we find no real depth of Bible truths. One prominent Celebration minister complained on tape, in response to a question asked him about his small classes, that he has had difficulty in getting his members interested in Bible study. They would rather meet to discuss the personal problems of various ones present.

In the world various support groups are currently popular in which members discuss each other's personal social problems Church support groups can easily degenerate into exactly the same kind.

(Many of the above attitudes of the Celebration-style worship evident from articles published recently in the Adventist Review and other official papers, especially the Adventist Review of November 1, 1990.)

Inasmuch as we have established from the pen of Ellen White that the celebration activities can be likened to a "carnival," we would ask, How much interest in real Bible study could be generated among the celebrants on the streets of New Orleans at the height of their Mardi-Gras Carnival celebration? Or, how much interest in Bible study could be generated among the celebrants of the small traveling carnivals that visit the smaller towns of America? Such celebrants are not interested in true Bible study. They are there solely for noise, excitement, fun and frolic; and to have their consciences smothered in the hilarity. "The eyes sparkle, the cheek is flushed, conscience sleeps." Testimony to Ministers, 83

"The Kindest Thing "

We have noted in this chapter that the "love, love" attitude is not true love, though multitudes embrace it, love it, and are deceived thereby. Through His prophet, God tells us that "the kindest thing [the most loving thing] that can be preached to the sinner is the truth of the binding claims of the law of God" Faith and Works, 96-97; Signs of the Times, vol. 2, 398. Could we but realize the truth of this inspired statement!

He [the great deceiver] appeals to the reason by the presentation of elevating themes; he delights the fancy with enrapturing scenes; and he enlists the affections by his eloquent portrayals of love and charity. The Great Controversy, 554

Let us beware! For Satan's purpose in enlisting the affections of unwary souls in his love-web and entangling them tightly, is not to love them, but to hold them fast until he can consume them!

The next two chapters will reveal the contrast between true and false love. And also point out the true test whereby we may test any "love" message to determine whether it is false or true.

Charity: True and False

Chapter 18

IN a long letter to a leading Seventh-day Adventist physician of that day, the Lord's servant contrasts true and false charity (love). We will consider portions of two paragraphs from this letter, as it is found in Manuscript Release 55, 21

I must not stand allied with evil, or cover it with a mantle of false charity. Bible charity is not sentimentalism, but love in active exercise. To heal the hurt of the daughter of My people, slightly, saying, "Peace, peace; when there is no peace" (Jeremiah 6:14; 8:11), is called charity. To confederate together, to call sin holiness and truth, is called charity; but it is the counterfeit article. The false and the spurious are in the world, and we should closely examine our hearts that we may know whether or not we possess the genuine charity. Genuine charity will not create distrust, and evil work. It will not blunt the sword of the spirit so that it does no execution. Those who would cover evil under false charity, say to the sinner, "It shall be well with thee." Thank God there is a charity that will not be corrupted; there is a wisdom that cometh from above, that is (mark it) first pure, then peaceable, and without hypocrisy, and the fruits of righteousness is sown of them that make peace. This is a description of heaven-born, heaven-bred charity. Charity loves the sinner but hates the sin, and will warn him faithfully of his danger, pointing him to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world. Sin is not to be cloaked, but to be taken away.

The love that is of heavenly birth is a resistless power, and t it can be obtained only by a living connection with God. Would you move the hearts of men, then you must come into actual contact with the God of love. God must first take hold of you if you would take hold of others.

These two paragraphs contain much valuable information contrasting false and true love. Let us consider how the points in the following questions might relate to what is taught and practiced in Celebration churches:

1. Are sinners being informed that if they would be saved they must have their sins "taken away" from their hearts? Or are sins and evils being ignored, or covered over, as it were, with a beautiful mantle or a cloak of false "love, love"-sentimental love?

2. Are men being offered "acceptance and forgiveness" (peace, peace,) when they have not truly made their peace with God? Are they by actions and words being given a false assurance that "It shall be well with thee"?

Korah and his supporters (see Numbers 16) tried to soothe the consciences of sinners when they declared that "all the congregation are holy, every one of them." In actuality Korah was declaring that a very wicked and rebellious congregation was holy. God manifested His displeasure by destroying Korah and company before the eyes of the people.

3. Are sinners being warned of their danger if they should continue in sin? Or is the sword of the Spirit blunted so that God's justice is not being taught? Genuine love would not blunt the sword of the Spirit-either its gospel edge or its law edge-for the purpose of the sharp two-edged sword is to convict sinners of sin and point them to their Saviour, in order that they may repent and find genuine salvation from their sins.

We each need to test ourselves by the principles in this passage. The description of true love found here is very beautiful. Let us not be found guilty of teaching or living any of the errors and attitudes that constitute a sentimental love or a false charity. The love that is heaven-born is

a resistless power that comes directly from God Himself and is to be reflected to others in our characters and teachings.

We must ever remember that Satan's purpose in catching souls in his "love, love" web and entangling them tightly, is not to love them, but to hold them fast until he can consume them! Let us never be found guilty of acting as Satan's agent to help him wind his cords of error about his victims.

The Test of Love

Chapter 19

WE have noted that cordiality, friendship, et cetera are not the test to distinguish between false and true love. Jesus explains that obedience to God's commandments is the test of love:

If ye love Me, keep My commandments. He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him. Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings: and the word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me. John 14:15, 21, 23-24

All other, so-called love is a mere outward show of Pharisaism. Paul writes:

Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Romans 13:10

"Fulfill" means "to carry into effect; to bring to pass." Webster.

Therefore, according to Paul's definition, love is to carry into effect the words of God's law.

Ellen White Defines the Test of Love

While we cannot judge hearts, God has given us a way by which we can test the messages of others:

There will not be heard from any man, "Give me Christ, but away with the commandments of God, I do not want to hear anything about them." [I do not want to hear anything about "do's" and "don'ts"]... We are in the perils of the last days, and Christ has said that false teachers shall arise in the world, and deceive many with their pernicious doctrines. Then how shall we know the true from the false?-"Ye shall know them by their fruits." Do they teach obedience to the law of God, or do they teach men to break His commandments? Review and Herald, vol. 2, 402

Remember, that we can in effect teach others that they need not obey God's commandments by simply inferring that they need not be bothered with the "do's" and "don'ts," or through merely ignoring God's precepts and paying them no heed. The test is: "Do they teach obedience to the law of God?"-"humble obedience"? Or, by their use of words or by their actions, "Do they teach men to break His commandments?" See Ibid.

Needed: A Purified Heart

God has sent us this message:

What we want is purity; what we want is love. None of your love-sick sentimentalism, but we want faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Manuscript Release 900.23, 8

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God wants His love to be presented so that it will not only attract sinners to Himself, but also make known His desire to change rebellious hearts into obedient hearts that will be fitted to dwell with Him in heaven. God wants to give us His love, a divine love that works through faith and obedience and purifies our souls from sin. For this reason, God sends His words to awaken us to our necessity of repentance and conversion; to our need of a heart-change. In no other way can we ever be enabled to pass the test of love!

Repent, and Be Converted

God's messages are directed to all: the grief-stricken, guilt-laden, the lonely, those with marital problems, backsliders, to the common man and woman from the streets or in the church pews. His message is:

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts 2:38

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; Acts 3:19

Celebration churches extend the invitation, "Come one, come all. Enjoy yourself; rejoice with us, and receive God's love, His salvation and His full forgiveness"-all without reference to the law or to repentance! But Jesus says:

I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Luke 13:3

In order to receive the gift of eternal life, we must be enabled to pass the test of love.

We Want Old-Fashioned Sermons

Ellen White agrees with Peter and Jesus. She writes very positive instructions regarding the need of repentance:

There is no salvation without repentance. Review and Herald, vol. 2, 436

The religion of Christ means more than the forgiveness of sin; it means taking away our sins, and filling the vacuum with the graces of the Holy Spirit. Christ Object Lessons, 419-420

The Lord desires His servants today to preach the old gospel doctrine, sorrow for sin, repentance, and confession. We want old-fashioned sermons. Evangelism, 179

Oh, what a glorious truth! God is waiting to forgive all who come unto Him with repentance. Preach it. Notebook Leaflets, 133

The only way we can "preach" the old-fashioned gospel to sinners is to present God's love together with His law, which reveals the sins of which sinners must repent. "I had not known sin" writes Paul, "but by the law" (Romans 7:7). Such sermons would be far more effective to bring salvation to the world than a multitude of sermons teaching the new popular views of the gospel without the law, liberally laced with lively tunes and catchy repetitious lyrics. What we need now is the "old gospel doctrine," and "old-fashioned sermons!" These counsels from the Lord's servant are written for all Seventh-day Adventist churches, not excluding those with the Celebration format. What we need today is a heart-change that, through the power of God's love within our hearts, we may obey His commandments.

Only God Can Forgive the Sinner

Surely we need to love and accept all people just as they are—into our midst as seekers for truth. God does. But while we can forgive others who have transgressed against us personally, only God can actually forgive the sinner! Can man promise sinners on behalf of God that they are forgiven, as if man could justify them? Those are God's prerogatives, and we are asked to teach men that "God will accept nothing less than unreserved surrender" (The Upward Loop 197); and that "A man is made holy and acceptable with God only when his unclean heart is made clean by the grace of Christ" Review and Herald, vol. 5, 379

As we look into the divine mirror, the law of God, we see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and our own lost condition as transgressors. But by repentance and faith we are justified before God, and through divine grace enabled to render obedience to His commandments. The Sanctified Life, 81

A mere participation in religious services and ordinances does not make a sinner a Christian. A wicked man does not become righteous merely by associating with those who fear God. A man is made holy, and acceptable with God, only when his unclean heart is made clean by the grace of Christ, through faith, and by obedience to words of truth and righteousness. A work of reformation and restoration must take place in every heart. Those who have had great light and many privileges may perform some good works, notwithstanding their impenitence and their refusal to be saved in God's appointed way. But these good works do not cleanse the soul from corruption. Only those who accept the light of God's truth, choosing to obey him, will be cleansed from the defilement of sin. Review and Herald vol. 5, 379

Celebration churches may offer unconditional "acceptance and forgiveness," but the foregoing passages tell us that the only true acceptance and forgiveness that God offers comes through a genuine conversion and a heart-change that only God can make in surrendered hearts. There is no acceptance by way of justification until man chooses to obey God's commandments.

The above extract teaches us that though some impenitent souls may perform good or so-called loving works, until they have been saved in God's appointed way, they have not the faith that works by love and purifies their souls from corruption.

Humble obedience is the fruit of having experienced repentance and conversion, and having been cleansed and filled with God's love. Only then can true love be revealed. That love of which Jesus speaks: "If ye love Me, keep My commandments. "

Celebration and the Third Angel's Message

Chapter 20

THERE is yet another doctrinal issue that needs to be set forth. Celebration churches fail to present the testing truths of the third angel's message. Once again we will turn to that passage in Selected Messages, book 2, where in it was predicted that the carnival-like excesses would be brought into our camp meetings just before the close of probation. In the following lines Ellen White expresses grave concern about the misrepresentation of the third angel's message by carnival-like churches.

But last January the Lord showed me that erroneous theories and methods would be brought into our camp meetings, and that the history of the past would be repeated. I felt greatly distressed. I was instructed to say that at these demonstrations demons in the form of men are present, working with all the ingenuity that Satan can employ to make the truth disgusting to sensible people; that the

enemy was trying to arrange matters so that the camp meetings, which have been the means of bringing the truth of the third angel's message before multitudes, should lose their force and influence.

The third angel's message is to be given in straight lines. It is to be kept free from every thread of the cheap, miserable inventions of men's theories, prepared by the father by lies, and disguised as was the brilliant serpent used by Satan as a medium of deceiving our first parents. Thus Satan tries to put his stamp upon the work God would have stand forth in purity. Selected Messages, book 2, 37

"Just before the close of probation," when the "history of the past" is being "repeated," Satan is working with all the deception of his devilish nature, not only to introduce carnival-like "methods" (style) of worship into our churches and camp meetings, but to "put his stamp" of error upon the third angel's message-one of our cardinal doctrines!

It is Satan's object now to get up new theories to divert the mind from the true work and genuine message for this time. Selected Messages, book 3, 410

The Celebration Controversy

Many Adventist members and their leaders are insisting that the controversy over Celebration churches is not doctrinal. As we mentioned earlier, they suggest that the controversy is merely over a worship style. Therefore, they say, members should be given their preference and receive more tolerance. However, in the above quotation (Selected Messages, book 2) this very style of worship is labelled by Ellen White as an "erroneous method." We would ask, Should an erroneous "style" ever be accorded preference?

Aside from the "style" controversy, we know that in the post-1844 and 1900 fanaticism the carnival-like worship did not stand alone. Their false methods were accompanied by erroneous doctrines such as the holy flesh theory, et cetera.

Erroneous Doctrines

Speaking of our time Ellen White predicted that there would also come into our camp meetings "erroneous theories"! An "erroneous theory" on a Bible topic is an erroneous doctrine! She commented further that in this carnival-like atmosphere, the third angel's message (the most important message in Adventism today) could be further encumbered by "cheap, miserable inventions of men's theories, prepared by the father of lies, and disguised as was the brilliant serpent used by Satan" when he deceived Eve in the Garden of Eden.

(Please note once again, that while we speak of the Celebration excesses as "a carnival," it was Ellen White herself who attached that name to a similar fanatical movement in her day-in fact to the very aberration which she said would be repeated in this our day! Furthermore, she also labelled this style of worship as "fanaticism.")

The Third Angel's Message

Let us devote a little study to the third angel's message itself. What are some of the truths contained in the third angel's message which should be given today in purity and "in straight lines" in our churches and camp meetings? Christ and His righteousness are certainly to be uplifted and magnified. The everlasting gospel of God's love is to be declared. Pages and pages could be written on the love, mercy, and righteousness of God. No pen could ever tell it all!

But here we will discuss that portion of the third angel's message that is being neglected, not only by Celebration churches, but also by many other Adventists as well-the law of God is left out of the

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light shining from the cross! Some points which we have brought out in earlier chapters, we now present in the light of the third angel's message.

The glorious truth of God's love, acceptance, and forgiveness, do not constitute the entire everlasting gospel. There is more, much more to the message of the third angel, and the people need to hear it all!

It will be well for the third angel's message to be proclaimed in all its parts, for the people need every jot and tittle of it. The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, 367

If we proclaim the third angel's message "in all its parts," we will not be tempted to present a sentimental love, for Our duty to obey this law is to be the burden of this last message of mercy to the world. The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 1, 1104

We realize that persons who erroneously equate obedience with legalism may wish to pejoratively label us as legalists for the reason that we quote such passages as these. We are merely stressing the same kind of obedience that Jesus and all the prophets accorded the holy law of God, and which Inspiration clearly states is "to be the burden of the last message of God's mercy." It is in mercy that God would have men informed that it is their duty to obey. He wants to save men from the penalty of disobedience. Therefore, The angel that proclaims the everlasting gospel proclaims the law of God; for the gospel of salvation brings men to obedience of the law, whereby their characters are formed after the divine similitude. Selected Messages, book 2, 106

Obedience is not only the test of love, it is a condition of entrance into heaven:

The gospel that is to be preached to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples presents the truth in clear lines, showing that obedience is the condition of gaining eternal life. The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 972

Do we hear the carnival-type churches clearly stressing obedience to the Father's law as a condition of salvation?

If we would have the spirit and power of the third angel's message, we must present the law and gospel together, for they go hand in hand. Review and Herald, vol. 2, 330.

The third angel's message is the proclamation of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, 217

We must present Him [Christ] in His true position coming to die [on the cross] to magnify the law of God and make it honorable.... The soul-saving message, the third angel's message, is the message to be given to the world. The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus are both important, immensely important, and must be given with equal force and power. Ibid., 430

In proclaiming the third angel's message the law and the gospel are not only to be presented together, but are to "be given with equal force and power." Elder Henry Baasch illustrated the balance thus: "If the bass drum [in an orchestra] drowns out the melody, the music is robbed of its beauty."

A Love Message

The gospel and the law as given in the third angel's message are both radiant with the love and mercy of Christ. The warning against the beast and his image of Revelation 14, even though it contains the most "fearful threatening ever addressed to mortals" (see The Great Controversy, 449), is a message of love from God, given in mercy to the nations. If we could but realize this great truth we would not be so reticent to proclaim it to all the world.

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A question arises, Do we love the people of the world enough to deliver to them God's last warning message of mercy just as God has written it in Revelation 14? Or have we convinced ourselves that we "love" people far too much to deliver such a "fearful threatening" message to them?

The most fearful threatening ever addressed to mortals is contained in the third angel's message. That must be a terrible sin, which calls down the wrath of God unmingled with mercy. Men are not to be left in darkness concerning this important matter; the warning against this sin is to be given to the world before the visitation of God's judgments, that all may know why they are to be inflicted, and have opportunity to escape them.... It will command the attention of the world.

In the issue of the contest all Christendom will be divided into two great classes-those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark. The Great Controversy, 449-450

The Glory of the Lord

All who worship the beast and his image must be punished. Many Christians have come to regard our heavenly Father as some kind of indulgent parent who lightly regards sin. "They fail to realize that even in the necessity to punish sinners, and the carrying out of the "fearful threatenings" against sin and sinners, God's glory is manifested. Note:

It is the glory of God to be merciful, full of forbearance, kindness, goodness, and truth. But the justice shown in punishing the sinner [for his iniquity] is as verily the glory of the Lord as is the manifestation of his mercy. Review and Herald vol. 5, 23

An Illustration

We can be thankful that God's love is not as that of an indulgent parent. For the sake of an illustration let us assume that a parent convinces himself that he loves his son so much that he allows him to have his own way at all times, and fails to discipline him. Ignoring the laws of health, he gives him anything and everything to eat that he may desire. Therefore, the child grows up sickly and dissipated and with such an obnoxious personality and character that he goes through life a miserable, egocentric, selfish individual. He makes everyone about him miserable, and finally ends up in prison, where he eventually takes his own life.

Did the parent demonstrate true love? Is it not the parent who was responsible for his son's ugly life and premature death? Did not the indulgent parent mistake his own selfishness for love as he failed to apply the law when needed, or to warn the child of the terrible consequences of his disobedience and self-indulgences? God does not force us to obey. We are free to choose, but He does warn us of the consequences of disobedience.

Do not we, who understand the third angel's message, have a similar responsibility toward the people of the world as does a parent to his child? One who fails to warn people of sin and its consequences, may now be regarded as most loving and patient, like Eli was with his sons. But in the end it will be seen that it is they who faithfully deliver the warning, "the most threatening message ever addressed to mortals," who truly love their neighbors. Those who refuse to sound this warning against sin and disobedience will, at last, be recognized as having been the most unloving-the cruelest of the cruel!

How can we give glory to God if we selfishly hold our peace and fail to give this warning message to others, while we entertain them with catchy tunes, noise, and empty sermons? The offering of cordial friendship, love, acceptance and forgiveness is just not enough!

Those Only

How solemn the thought, in these final hours of earth's history, "those only" will be sealed (see Ezekiel 9) who today, rather than celebrating, are sighing and crying for their own sins and for the abominations and evils committed in the land-and more especially for those sins committed in God's church. See Testimonies, vol. 5, 210.

The day of God's vengeance is just upon us. The seal of God will be placed upon the foreheads of those only who sigh and cry for the abominations done in the land.... Our own course of action will determine whether we shall receive the seal of the living God or be cut down by the destroying weapons. Ibid., 212

The Loud Cry of the Third Angel

God does not want us to forget that the test of the third angel's message will be the Sabbath versus Sunday issue. Sabbathkeeping or Sundaykeeping will be the mark of distinction between the true people of God and the wicked world.

Though various "voices," through their erroneous theories and methods, may rob the third angel's message of its purity and its power, when God places the latter rain upon His sealed, true and faithful servants, though few in number, they will obey His commands and give the loud cry to the world with a powerful loud voice. False love will be exposed in that day for what it really is!

Even though it may result in severe persecution to themselves, the saints will fearlessly yet lovingly and clearly, expose the sins of Babylon, and call the honest in heart to come out of her that they may escape God's plagues, and judgments. Most Adventists would not hesitate to go into a burning building and awaken the sleeping occupants, and warn them of their danger, yet so many hesitate to sound a warning that will have eternal consequences!

God's last message of mercy to a doomed world will finally be given. Through the outpouring of His Spirit in latter rain power, the whole earth will be lightened with His glory His love, His truth, and His justice. This requires the truth of God's law of love and His great mercy to be made so clear that all the nations of the world will be able to make an intelligent decision either for truth or for error.

A Loud Wail

The unfaithful in the churches will also make a "loud cry." But theirs will be a loud wail of protest and anger against those who are giving the true loud cry message. As "former brethren" they will join in the persecution (see The Great Controversy, 608) of the "little company standing in the light" (see Testimonies, vol. 5, 209). But alas, these unfaithful, in their ecumenical zeal, will continue their union and admiration for the fallen churches, until finally, Jesus will sadly say to them, "Depart from Me; ye that work iniquity." Then will be fulfilled the passage John wrote in Revelation 3:9:

Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

Commenting on this verse Ellen White writes:

God showed me that this class were professed Adventists, who had fallen away, and "crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." And in the "hour of temptation," which is yet to come, to show out everyone's true character, they will know that they are forever lost,

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and overwhelmed with anguish of spirit, they will bow at the saints' feet. Ellen G. White: *The Early Years*, 125

Unfaithful Seventh-day Adventists will finally realize that they are lost! And though they may then confess that they have been worshiping in the wrong synagogue—the synagogue of Satan—it will be too late! Too late they will realize that their earlier claim to be Adventists was a lie! In sheer desperation they cast themselves at the feet of the saints.

Let us awaken today while probation lingers and there is yet time to repent. And if we find ourselves worshiping in the synagogue of Satan, step out now and return to the full light of the third angel's message.

Soon will come the time spoken of by the Lord's servant when men in humble positions in society will proclaim the third angel's message in all its parts with a loud cry and with power and great glory! See *Review and Herald*, vol. 3, 275

Many such will be seen hurrying hither and thither, constrained by the Spirit of God to bring the light to others. The truth, the Word of God, is as a fire in their bones, filling them with a burning desire to enlighten those who sit in darkness. Many, even among the uneducated, now proclaim the words of the Lord. Children are impelled by the Spirit to go forth and declare the message from heaven. The Spirit is poured out upon all who will yield to its promptings, and, casting off all man's machinery, his binding rules and cautious methods, they will declare the truth with the might of the Spirit's power. Multitudes will receive the faith and join the armies of the Lord. *Evangelism*, 700

The Great Divide

Chapter 21

FOR the reason that it has been foretold, we can anticipate that in the end-time, just before Jesus comes, two parties will have developed and will grow into maturity within the Seventh-day Adventist church:

A new life is coming from heaven and taking possession of all God's people. But divisions will come in the church. Two parties will be developed. The wheat and tares grow up together for the harvest.

The work will grow deeper and become more earnest to the very close of time. And all who are laborers together with God will contend most earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. They will not be turned from the present message, which is already lightening the earth with its glory. Nothing is worth contending for but the glory of God. The only rock that will stand is the Rock of Ages. The truth as it is in Jesus is the refuge in these days of error. *Selected Messages*, book 2, 114

Other passages from the Spirit of Prophecy indicate that the two Parties will become more and more distinct as they mature. Church members will either positively develop Christlike characters, or just as positively retrograde into identifiable tares.

One of the catalysts that may accelerate the delineation of the two parties is the Celebration agitation. In support of this concept the following written by Brother Bob Trefz seems to us to be very pertinent.

The Crucial Divide:

A crucial dividing point within Seventh-day Adventism exists between those who are eagerly accepting the Celebration movement and those who are stoutly resisting it. That point of division is a fundamental teaching of Jesus Christ: Self-denial.

Those who have rejected the principle of the denial and crucifixion of self in the Christian life, and have accustomed themselves, however subtly, to self-indulgence, find their souls responding to the worldly dimension of the Celebration movement with eager approval.

Those who have accepted Christ's principle of self-denial and crucifixion of self, are aghast at the developments taking place around them in the Celebration movement.

The world is awash in self-indulgence. The culture that surrounds us is completely saturated by it. Those who have imbibed or accepted this principle of self-indulgence find themselves excited with the prospect of a Celebration religion and service that no longer rebukes worldliness and self-indulgence, but which endorses it and incorporates it as a foundational element in the service of God. Freedom's Ring, vo1.1, No. 3.

To which party will we belong? Would to God that we will all be found in that party that "will contend most earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints" Selected Messages, book 2, 114

Rebuke

Chapter 22

WHEN erroneous doctrines are taught or sins are openly practiced in the church, it becomes necessary to rebuke sin and sinners. Isaiah commands every member of God's church to, Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Isaiah 58:1

Paul outlined for young Timothy his duty:

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 2 Timothy 4:2

Constructive exhortation sometimes takes the form of rebuke. Rebuke given in love is not self-centered, but is Bible based. Jesus said to Laodiceans, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." By contrast, criticism tends to spring from a love of self, as if to say, "You are wrong, Look at me, I am right; I know better than you do." Destructive criticism is never commendable. But constructive rebuke is not only proper, but at times it is a necessity!

"Humble devoted followers of Christ" will suffer "soul anguish ... expressed in lamentations, and weepings, reproofs and warnings" (see Testimonies, vol. 5, 210) to their beloved brethren but they will often be rebuffed and/or persecuted as they object to the intrusions of fanaticism such as, Celebration style and other errors into the church.

Earnest members who follow the above scriptural counsels in pleading with the church are sometimes sharply reprovved by those who believe that high position in God's church is the principal qualification for giving rebuke. They label those who denounce error as divisive, "schismatics" or critics, and rebuke them for their protests. What is written in the inspired counsels?

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Now as in former ages, the presentation of a truth that reproveth, the sins and errors of the times will excite opposition. "Everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd." John 3:20. As men see that they cannot maintain their position by the Scriptures, many determine to maintain it at all hazards, and with a malicious spirit they assail the character and motives of those who stand in defense of unpopular truth. It is the same policy which has been pursued in all ages. Elijah was declared to be a troubler in Israel, Jeremiah a traitor, Paul a polluter of the temple. From that day to this, those who would be loyal to truth have been denounced as seditious, heretical, or schismatic. Multitudes who are too unbelieving to accept the sure word of prophecy will receive with unquestioning credulity an accusation against those who dare to reprove fashionable sins. This spirit will increase more and more. The Great Controversy, 458-459

Objectors to error and apostasy can expect to receive opposition. Those who thus accuse and criticize those who rebuke error should take to their own hearts the old proverb: There is no one quite so critical as he that is critical of he that is accused of being critical.

Counsel for All of Us

The counsels of Ezekiel 33, usually included in the charge given to young ministers at their ordination ceremonies, are not for the ministers alone. Those divine counsels from the mouth of the Lord are for all believers. Note:

So far as his opportunities extend, everyone who has received the light of truth is under the same solemn and fearful responsibility as was the prophet of Israel, to whom the word of the Lord came, saying: "Son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at My mouth, and warn them from Me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thin hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." Ezekiel 33:7-9

The great obstacle both to the acceptance and to the promulgation of truth is the fact that it involves inconvenience and reproach. This is the only argument against the truth which its advocates have never been able to refute. But this does not deter the true followers of Christ. These do not wait for truth to become popular. Being convinced of their duty, they deliberately accept the cross, with the apostle Paul counting that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"; with one of old, "esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." 2 Corinthians 4:17; Hebrews 11:26; The Great Controversy, 459-460

Are we not living in the time spoken of by the Lord's servant in Testimonies, vol. 5, 210-211, just before probation closes? Read these sobering lines:

The command is: "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof." These sighing, crying ones had been holding forth the words of life; they had reprov'd, counseled, and entreated. Some who had been dishonoring God repented and humbled their hearts before Him. But the glory of the Lord had departed from Israel; although many still continued the forms of religion, His power and presence were lacking.

In the time when His wrath shall go forth in judgments, these humble, devoted followers of Christ will be distinguished from the rest of the world by their soul anguish, which is expressed in lamentation and weeping, reproofs and warnings. While others try to throw a cloak over the existing evil, and excuse the great wickedness everywhere prevalent, those who have a zeal for God's honor and

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a love for souls will not hold their peace to obtain favor of any. Their righteous souls are vexed day by day with the unholy works and conversation of the unrighteous. They are powerless to stop the rushing torrent of iniquity, and hence they are filled with grief and alarm. They mourn before God to see religion despised in the very homes of those who have had great light. They lament and afflict their souls because pride, avarice, selfishness, and deception of almost every kind are in the church. The Spirit of God, which prompts to reproof, is trampled underfoot, while the servants of Satan triumph. God is dishonored, the truth made of none effect.

The class who do not feel grieved over their own spiritual declension, nor mourn over the sins of others, will be left without the seal of God. Testimonies, vol. 5, 210-211

Please note that those who are God's true servants will be "distinguished from the rest of the world by their"-carnival-like celebrating? No! No! But rather "by their soul anguish, which is expressed in lamentation and weeping, reproofs and warnings."

Beating the Donkey

There is a trait, well established in carnal human nature, wherein if men do not like a message from God, and since they are unable to attack God in person, they attack or defame His messengers. Secular and sacred history is full of such examples. The wrath of man sawed Isaiah asunder for bearing God's messages of rebuke. John was beheaded. Jesus was crucified for bearing witness to truth.

Balaam's donkey heeded an obstruction placed by an angel and Balaam in his wrath beat the donkey. King Jehoiakim did not like the message sent from the Lord through the prophet Jeremiah and so he proceeded to cut up the message bit by bit with his penknife and cast it into the flames. See Jeremiah. 36:23

In modern times irate men in high places have continued their attacks upon men who are bearing God's messages, and sometimes even on the very instruments, such as mimeograph machines used to print the messages! In more recent years, audio tapes, tape recorders, videos and copy machines have been added to the list of "enemies." Men have come a long way from beating Balaam's donkey to verbally "beating" the electronic machines of our modern day. (On the other hand, maybe the donkey beaters have not made much progress after all!) If one cannot kill the message; kill or degrade the messenger!

The lesson is clear to us all. Let us accept the words inspired by the Holy Spirit to reprove and rebuke sin. Let us not allow evil roots of bitterness to spring up and defile ourselves and others just because God's messages do not please us. Let us remember that all our appeals to "our beloved brethren" who have been deceived by fanaticism should be based on loving-kindness and truth. "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one for another." So taught Jesus. May all of our exhortations and rebukes be veritably saturated with the love of Jesus, and delivered with tears in our voices, as were the rebukes given by Jesus, such as, on the brow of Olivet when He wept over Jerusalem.

We must rebuke sin, because we love God, and love the souls for whom Christ died. Signs of the Times, vol. 1, 407

The Faithful Few

Praise the Lord, there are Adventist members and churches that have not as yet accepted the Celebration fanaticism, even though some men would desire that all Adventist churches follow the

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Celebration format. We have learned of one prominent sponsor of Celebration who has proposed that opposers of Celebration styles should be "persecuted" if need be.

It is well to note once again that in the golden calf episode there were some who remained faithful. A few even dared remonstrate against the proposed idolatry, but they paid for their faithfulness, with persecution, and finally martyrdom. History could be repeated!

There were some who remained true to their covenant with God, but the greater part of the people joined in the apostasy. A few who ventured to denounce the proposed image making as idolatry, were set upon and roughly treated, and in the confusion and excitement they finally lost their lives. Patriarchs and Prophets, 316-317

As in the past, so in the current apostasy, a faithful few will remain true to their God. Some will even dare to "cry aloud, spare not, ... and show the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1. God will have a last-day army of faithful whose hearts will be so filled with love for souls, that they will be fearless in denouncing error!

Meet Evil Decisively

Chapter 23

IN the closing days of our message, when carnival apostasies I are being repeated, they are to be met just as they were met by the Lord's prophet in our earlier history-decisively!

I was instructed that fanaticism similar to that which we were called to meet after the passing of the time in 1844 would come in among us again in the closing days of the message, and that we must meet this evil just as decidedly now as we met it in our early experiences. Selected Messages, book 1, 221

In the post-1844 and 1900 crises, the Lord used His modern prophet as an instrument to rebuke these fanatics, and to open the eyes of His faithful people. See Selected Messages, book 2, 27

Past Experiences to Prepare for the Future

Ellen White was anxious to keep the history of our past carnival-like episodes before the church members, for the past experiences would prepare God's people to decidedly meet this fanaticism when it should recur.

Fanaticism to Be Seen Again

I have been studying how to get some of these early experiences into print again, so that more of our people may be informed, for I have long known that fanaticism will be manifest again, in different ways. We are to strengthen our position by dwelling on the Word, and by avoiding all oddities and strange exercisings that some would be very quick to catch up and practice. If we were to allow confusion to come into our ranks, we could not bind off our work as we should....

We cannot allow excitable elements among us to display themselves in a way that would destroy our influence with those whom we wish to reach with the truth. It took us years to outlive the unfavorable impression that unbelievers gained of Adventists through their knowledge of the strange and wicked workings of fanatical elements among us during the early years of our existence as a separate people. Selected Messages, book 2, 44

She Being Dead Yet Speaketh

Today, Ellen White rests in the grave. But the Lord's servants, can still meet the current fanaticisms through their use of her Spirit-filled counsels which still live her Testimonies will never die!

The question is sometimes raised, What if Sister White should die? I answer, the books that she has written will not die. They are a living witness to what saith the Scriptures.-Letter 55, 1905, p. 2. (To Elder O. A. Olsen, January 30, 1905.) Manuscript Release 250, 3

As Long as Time Shall Last My Writings Will Constantly Speak

Abundant light has been given to our people in these last days. Whether or not my life is spared, my writings will constantly speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last. My writings are kept on file in the office, and even though I should not live, these words that have been given to me by the Lord will still have life and will speak to the people. Selected Messages, book 1, 55

Even More Vital Today

The Lord is evidencing what He can do through weak vessels. The life that He spares I will use to His glory. And, when He may see fit to let me rest, His messages shall be of even more vital force than when the frail instrumentality through whom they were delivered, was living.- Manuscript 122, 1903. ("The Time of the End," October 9, 1903) Manuscript Release 652

The Lord had instructed us to, Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper. 2 Chronicles 20:20

How sad that so many of the decisive messages from our prophet rebuking our modern errors and sins are refused and unappreciated today by a large number of our members. Let us never forget the danger in disbelieving inspiration, for, Giving Up Faith in the Testimonies. One thing is certain:

Those Seventh-day Adventists who take their stand under Satan's banner will first give up their faith in the warnings and reproofs contained in the Testimonies of God's Spirit. Selected Messages, book 3, 84

God's Men

Chapter 24

GOD wants to use men as His instruments to rebuke error and sin. Despite the prevailing opposition to truth, "The Lord will raise up men who will give the people the message for this time." Testimonies to Ministers, 107.

"Most startling messages will be borne by men of God's appointment." Testimonies, vol. 9, 137.

But God can use only men who will take a firm and unflinching stand for truth:

God cannot use men who, in time of peril, when the strength, courage, and influence of all are needed, are afraid to take a firm stand for the right. He calls for men who will do faithful battle against wrong, warring against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. It is to such as these that He will speak the words: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

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God calls for men like Elijah, Nathan, and John the Baptist-men who will bear His message with faithfulness, regardless of the consequences; men who will speak the truth bravely, though it call for the sacrifice of all they have. Prophets and Kings, 142

Apostasies and sins must not go unrebuked:

When men endanger the work and cause of God by their own wrong course of action, shall they hear no voice of reproof? If the wrongdoer only were concerned, and the work reached no farther than him, he alone should have the words of warning; but when his course of action is doing positive harm to the cause of truth, and souls are imperiled, God requires that the warning be as broad as the injury done. The testimonies will not be hindered. The words of rebuke and warning, the plain "Thus saith the Lord," will come from God's appointed agencies; for the words do not originate with the human instrument; they are from God, who appointed them their work. Selected Messages, book 2, 153

Today, faced with such widespread apostasies,

in the existing state of religious declension, there is crying need of earnest, faithful Nehemiahs and Ezras-men who will not shun to call sin by its right name, and who will not shrink from vindicating the honor of God. Those upon whom God has laid the burden of his work are not to hold their peace, and cover prevailing evils with a cloak of false charity. Men of courage and energy are needed to expose fashionable sins. Iniquity must not be palliated and excused. Those who lead the church of God to follow the customs and practices of the world, are not to be lauded and exalted....

Severity to a few will often prove mercy to many. Yet we must be careful to manifest the Spirit of Christ, and not our own hasty, impetuous disposition. We must rebuke sin, because we love God, and love the souls for whom Christ died. Signs of the Times, vol. 1, 407

Surely, all of the foregoing quotations describe the type of men God calls to bear the "startling messages" needed to counteract the Celebration apostasy in our midst.

God calls for men of decided fidelity. He has no use in an emergency for two-sided men. He wants men who will lay their hand upon a wrong work and say, "This is not according to the will of God." Selected Messages, book 2, 153

May we, one and all, be among those faithful men of God's appointment, who will maintain a decided fidelity, and who will, with true love for souls, in the name of the Lord, reprove and rebuke the burning fires of fanaticism!

As Hard to Quench As Fire

Chapter 25

SPECIFICALLY speaking of the carnival-like fanaticism in Indiana in 1900, concerning the difficulty in extinguishing such apostasies, Ellen White declared:

Fanaticism, once started and left unchecked, is as hard to quench as a fire which has obtained hold of a building.... Many such movements will arise at this time, when the Lord's work should stand elevated, pure, unadulterated with superstition and fables. We need to be on our guard, to maintain a close connection with Christ, that we be not deceived by Satan's devices. Selected Messages, book 2, 35

Are not those who have entered into a carnival-type of worship and /or sustained it by their influence, responsible for its having spread so rapidly-as wildly as a firestorm in a tinder-dry forest? The

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Lord has revealed that carnival-like fanaticism when allowed to grow and spread could have much the same effect upon our churches, as would a fire left unchecked. Once a fire is started in a building and has had time to spread throughout it, the fire cannot then be easily extinguished. "Many such movements will arise at this time."

It may be that some men in administrative positions of the church are beginning to realize that there are dangers in this type of worship. Some may even attempt to put out the fires. But can these Celebration fires be easily extinguished? Are our impressionable youth who are to be our leaders of tomorrow so indoctrinated with this type of worship that there can be no checking of its progress? Are there no brave fire-fighters in Israel?

Error is Difficult to Correct

How solemn the thought that,

The mind of which error has once taken possession can never expand freely to after investigation. The old theories will claim recognition.... Superstitious ideas will enter the mind, to mingle with the true, and these ideas are always debasing in their influence. Review and Herald, vol. 5, 88

God's servants need to use the fire extinguisher of reproof from God's Word as soon as possible before fanaticism has had time to take possession of minds, or spread from mind to mind, and claim recognition.

As shown in the chapter which follows unusual dangers need to be promptly addressed by unusual means.

A Tiger by the Tail

Chapter 26

AT the present time at least some of our beloved administrative church brethren, by their own admission seem somewhat at a loss as to what course is best to pursue concerning the Celebration churches, It appears as though they may be like a man who has hold of a proverbial "tiger by the tail." If he lets the beast go, it may turn and devour him. Likewise, if he tries to hold on and wrestle with the tiger he would also be devoured.

Do our church leaders really have a veritable Celebration "tiger" by the tail? Let us allow them to tell their problem in their own words as stated by one of the editors of the Adventist review:

The appropriateness of the Celebration church concept is an important issue for the church right now. If the church were to condemn the Celebration movement while the effort was still in its infancy, Adventism would stand to lose thousands of people, particularly young people and former members, who have found the Celebration churches to be a bit of fresh air in a church of normally formal worship services. And it stands to lose what appears to be its best evangelistic tool for boosting the church's lagging attendance and involvement by Anglos across North America.

But if the church were to adopt all aspects of the Celebration churches immediately and wholeheartedly, Adventism would stand to alienate many traditional members who believe the Celebration churches are creeping Pentecostalism and the devil's playground. Adventist Review, November 1, 1990

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In other words, should the administrators squash the Celebration tiger; they fear they would lose a host (thousands) of celebrants who are in love with the pentecostal-like (carnival) activities. On the other hand, if they embrace the Celebration format "immediately and wholeheartedly," they realize that for a certainty they would lose the dependable support (including their most reliable financial support) of the "traditional" or historic believers who accept all of the faith once delivered unto the pioneers. Truly, they will lose the support of historic Adventists whether the church decides to accept the Celebration "tiger" little by little, or en masse.

Old time Adventist accept at full face value the counsels of the Lord through Ellen White concerning what our attitude should be toward carnival-like activities of "creeping Pentecostalism" formats. Furthermore, these faithful members also accept at face value her counsels that we can expect and look for a final carnival-like fanaticism to come among God's people "just before the close of probation." And they would tend to regard the current Celebration excitement as fulfilling that role.

A Modern Samson?

We do not know if any man ever actually wrestled with a tiger by the tail and survived, but we did know a man who had a cougar by the tail and prevailed. Many years ago we lived in the high country of the Rocky Mountains. Two "mountain men" (brothers) lived nearby. They had the reputation of having great strength and resourcefulness. They were sort of modern Samsons. Their exploits had been legendary. We knew one of the brothers, whom we shall call Archie. His wife and daughter were Adventists who attended our church. We well recall his husky physical frame and wide shoulders.

While yet a young man, Archie was alone in the woods one day when a male mountain lion (cougar) charged him. Cougars were prevalent in the area, and the fight was on! In the altercation, Archie was able to grasp the lion's tail. Having hold of his tail, Archie quickly gave a hard kick with his heavy logging boot to the exposed sensitive organs of the male cat. Being exceedingly painful to the animal, this momentarily stunned and weakened the cat.

Having no human help and no firearms, Archie began to drag the beast toward the logging camp where someone could help him. If he should let go, the hungry beast might kill him. So, whenever the cat seemed to recover enough strength to begin to squirm about, another hard blow from Archie's boot would again traumatize and weaken the animal. Thus it was that he dragged the heavy animal into the logging camp where an associate killed the cougar with a shot from his rifle.

If readers should feel that the repeated painful blows to the cougar constituted cruelty toward the animal, one needs to remember that the hungry cat intended to kill and eat his human prey and Archie was in a fight for his very life! He had no alternative! (We recall the biblical David and Samson who each barehanded prevailed against wild beasts.)

The Celebration Tiger

In no way do we wish to infer that there should be any exact resemblance between the treatment of the mountain lion and what ought to be done about the Celebration fanaticism. But the cougar episode does illustrate that there are times when unusually severe methods must be used in dealing with unusually dangerous situations! The celebration "tiger" should not be dragged into camp as Archie did his "tiger"; it needs to be put out of the camp and "immediately and wholeheartedly" disavowed!

Wait and See

As of now, however, some church administrators seem to have decided to do nothing about the "tiger." They have taken a position of "wait and see!" From the illustrative lesson of Archie and the mountain lion, we can readily understand that a "wait and see" policy could have been a fatal error on his part. Faced with the Celebration "tiger" do we dare `wait and see? "-Would we stand back and "wait and see" if a fire had taken hold of a building? Or would we instantly call the fire-fighters?

The Obvious Course

The most obvious course that our beloved brethren should take is to leave "the devil's playground," to the devil and immediately accept the divine counsels of the Lord's messenger to the remnant. Cease to partake of, or to support in any way the Celebration apostasy. Rather, join with Ellen White in clearly rebuking those who sponsor carnival-type Celebration services and then, let the Lord take care of the consequences of any membership fallout.

Time after time the leaders in ancient Israel found it needful to ask the people, "Who is on the Lord's side?" and each time there were, of course, some defections and loss of membership. Today, do we not need a modern Samson in our midst? Someone who is spiritually strong and can do exploits? Someone who will stand up and take a firm stand for truth and for truth only? Why should administrators continue to vacillate between two opinions, or to "wait and see," fearing to follow the Lord's messenger and to allow the Lord to take care of the consequences?

In the case of Archie, he wrestled the cougar in his own human strength. But our church faces a far stronger foe in wrestling the carnival "tiger." Only God's way and God's strength are powerful enough to overcome Satan and his agents in the Celebration fanaticism.

After reading the chapter which follows, no doubt all Seventh-day Adventists will be deeply shaken, and will decide that the Celebration "tiger" must be promptly disavowed!

Celebration: The Vatican Connection

Chapter 27

WHEN Pope John XXIII convened the Second Vatican council in 1962, little did the Protestant world (including Seventh-day Adventists) dream that that council, which lasted about four years, would change the structure of their churches-even of some Adventist churches! "What?" you exclaim, "What has the Vatican Council had to do with Adventists?" We reply, "Very much. "

About ten years after that council was ended, a Roman clergyman compiled a book of over 1000 pages containing many of the various official documents and decisions which were produced during that monumental council, but for whatever reasons, most of us did not know about that book until quite recently.* A perusal of that collection reveals some very startling things, such as, the fact that in those early 1960s Rome planned in detail the birth, promotion and growth of the "Celebration-style" worship! And it has developed and progressed just the way she planned it -nearly three decades ago!

This book containing the documents of Vatican Council II can be purchased from Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 255 Jefferson Avenue S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49503-4570. Their phone number is 1-800-253-7521. Ask for the 1975 edition. The cost is \$9.95 postpaid. Be sure to designate that you want Volume 1.

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An Adventist lay publishing ministry Biblical Studies Institute, of which Bob Trefz is editor,* has conveniently summarized some of the uses of the word "celebration" as taken from the documents in Volume 1, of the Vatican Council II. Brother Trefz recently counted how many times the word, "Celebration" and related words, such as, "celebrant," et cetera were used in the liturgical section alone of the Vatican II document, Volume one. Guess what? He counted over 500 such uses!

With Brother Trefz's permission we will quote a few paragraphs from his interpretive analysis. But first let us make this comment, namely, that in retrospect it becomes clear that the principal purpose of Vatican II was to facilitate the merging of all Christendom, which would include Seventh-day Adventists with the Roman church. We begin our study by listing the following eight points from Trefz's summary analysis:

Liturgical Reform and Promotion the Chief Instrument for Reclamation of The Churches

1) Get the churches accustomed to Celebration terminology and the Celebration concept. Every function of the church becomes a Celebration, from communion to funerals.

2) Get the churches accustomed to a revitalized style of Celebration service. This involves reduction of inhibition, vastly increased congregational participation verbally, and, considered a must, lots of physical gestures, bodily attitudes and movement.

3) Promote, in the Celebration service, dialogue between the celebrant (pastor or priest) and people as "external signs of Celebration in common" and to "engender and foster union between celebrant and people. "

4) Use as much variation as possible in the Celebration services to encourage active, willing participation.

5) Set forth Song or musical Celebration services as the most effective Celebrations, utilizing popular religious songs [quite revolutionary 25 years ago] and relating the music to the various cultures and temperaments of the people.

6) Narrow the gap between the Eucharistic Celebration and the Lord's Supper [soon to be called Communion Celebration in the other churches]; educating the people that this service forms the basis of all Christian unity and fellowship.

7) Demonstrate the inextricable tie-in between the Eucharistic Celebration as the foundation of all unity and the Lord's Day [Sunday] Celebration.

8) Perform any endeavor necessary to promote Sunday observance, involving rest from work.

Regarding numbers 2) and 5) above, we find that even the hand waving and body swaying in unison with the music, as is done in Celebration churches, was planned in Vatican II. On page 84 of the Vatican II documents, the Vatican stressed that Celebration, besides being an "internal participation" should also be "external"; that is, it should include bodily activities as well as vocal exercises in song.

The concept of catering to, and incorporating in church liturgy the cultures and traditions of ethnic groups, such as is mentioned in Adventist Review, November 1, 1990, also comes out of Vatican II. We find that the Vatican documents, volume 1, page 13, advises adapting liturgies that include the "temperaments and the traditions of peoples" of various ethnic cultures. Is this similarity between the Adventist concept and the Vatican concept only accidental?

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It frightens one to realize that these eight points as initiated by Rome in Vatican II are now almost all implemented. Rome has succeeded in planting celebration formats in the Protestant churches of the world, and in some Seventh-day Adventist churches as well! All this in just a few short decades!

By promoting a more or less universal liturgy, Rome's strategy is to so strengthen her ecumenism among Protestants (whom she refers to as "separated brethren") that in due time she can take over all the churches, tucking them under her wing, so that finally the pope will have become the one "shepherd" of all Christendom!

One Roman Shepherd

According to the Documents it is evident that it is the intent of Rome that all churches should be gathered together ecumenically under one leader, namely, the pope of Rome. As described on page 515 of the Documents, it is specifically stated that it is their purpose that their concepts should be introduced into all institutions of higher education. The word all would have to include by conscious intent-Adventist colleges and universities.

If all Christian denominations were to accept the same liturgical format, how easy it might be to suggest that "since we are all one in practice, why not join together as one?" And so it will be that "all the world shall wonder after the beast" See Revelation 13.

But, of course, there will be that "little company standing in the light" (see Testimonies, vol. 5, 209), that "despised remnant," which will not accommodate such ideas and we know that their resistance will bring severe persecution upon them.

Evangelicals and Pentecostals were the first to embrace Rome's Celebration ideas. Adventists, in turn, patterned their celebration formats after these Protestant churches. It is openly admitted by our leaders that they have sought to the Pentecostals, "holiness," or other Protestant churches to learn this new science of Celebration worship-all in the name of "church growth!" Seventh-day Adventism was to be included in the overall plan of "reclaiming" all Christendom back into the Roman church.

Descendants of the Apostolic Heritage

We digress from our discussion of the Vatican Documents long enough to point out that Adventism did not emerge from Catholicism. We are not an offshoot there-from. Adventists have been called out by God from all peoples. The remnant church is simply God's gathering in of all the faithful from all over the world. We are not errant Catholics. We are God's people, and true Adventists will never be "reclaimed" by Rome. We are the spiritual descendants of the apostolic church that "fled into the wilderness" for 1260 years while the great offshoot from the apostolic church, the papal power, bore sway over mankind.

We have great sympathy for devout Roman Catholics who have been taught that their church is the lineal descendant of the pure apostolic church founded by Christ. They do not realize that their church is really an "offshoot" of the apostolic church and has departed far a field from the doctrines of that pure church. Rather than accepting their errors, we need to gently help our Catholic friends to find their way into the truths of the third angel's message.

Garden of Prayer

Most Adventists are probably unaware of the fact that the "Garden of Prayer" ceremony as used in some of our Adventist Celebration churches comes straight out of charismatic Roman Catholicism. Trefz cites a book by a Roman official, The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church, written by

Edward D. O'Connor, C.S.C., which describes on page 117, the "Garden of Prayer" ceremony with all the details including the walking from person to person during prayer and laying on of hands. This ceremony seems nearly identical with that used by some Seventh-day Adventist Celebration congregations. Has this, too, come out of Catholicism?

Charismatic Excitement

Celebration services serve to excite the participants into an emotional state of mind. Then when charismatic influences are superimposed, enhanced by the repetitive, hypnotic musical forms, together with flashing lights which are used at times, it raises the excitement even higher. This makes it easier to effect theological and experiential changes. Persons in a hypnotic state of excitement will do or believe almost anything the group leader might suggest.

Hear this: Satan planned it this way millenniums ago. We read from Alexander Hislop's classic *Two Babylon*, page 67, as follows concerning the ancient Babylonian and Egyptian mysteries:

Everything was so contrived as to wind up the minds of the novices to the highest pitch of excitement, that, after having surrendered themselves implicitly to the priest, they might be prepared to receive anything. After the candidates for initiation had passed through the confessional, and sworn the required oaths, "strange and amazing objects," says Wilkinson, presented themselves. Sometimes the place they were in seemed to shake around them; sometimes it appeared bright and resplendent with light and radiant fire, and then again covered with black darkness, sometimes thunder and lightning, sometimes frightful noises and bellowings, sometimes terrible apparitions astonished the trembling spectators.

Surely the celebration excesses seen in the Adventist churches, while they do not duplicate these ancient pagan demonstrations, they do employ similar hypnotic principles, that can be equally captivating to susceptible minds, "preparing [them] to receive anything."

The Three Angels' Messages

In earlier chapters we have considered how Celebration-style worship obscures and distorts the third angel's message. Here we will note some problems that concern all three of the angels' messages. The first angel's message proclaims the investigative judgment to be at hand. The Celebration churches teach nothing about that judgment at all!

The second angel's message is a call to come out of Babylon and to be separate from Babylonish churches and errors. In the Celebration movement, their leaders, instead of separating from Babylon, have gone unto the churches of Babylon to learn from them their methods of Celebration and church growth (to say nothing of numerous other errors they have adopted). The Celebration movement, coming from such an origin is being used by Adventists as an ecumenical "evangelistic tool!"

Our leading men praise Celebrationism as being "our best evangelistic tool." See *Adventist Review* November 1, 1990. They seem to have forgotten that the best evangelistic tool of all is truth under the guidance and convicting power of the Holy Spirit. In the Celebration format, it is clear that the second angel's message is far afield from its purpose.

Celebrationism is, of course, being used by Rome (modern Babylon)* for the purpose for which they created it –ecumenism! The Papacy may regard Celebrationism as their best evangelistic tool to enhance their growth-but, should we? Catholicism is using Celebrationism as a vehicle to gather all the churches together as one-under her leadership!

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Readers may have noticed that Peter in his first Epistle (see chapter 5:13) refers to "the church that is at Babylon." Scholars believe that he was clearly referring to the church in the city of Rome, for it is doubted that there was an actual Christian church in the ruins of the ancient city of Babylon. Herewith, we offer modern Roman Catholic support for the idea that in early Christian times Babylon was considered as synonymous with Rome.

While serving in the U.S. Army in World War II, some of us were issued an official Roman Catholic military New Testament, with footnotes. Referring to Revelation 14:8 the footnote comments "Babylon: In Jewish and Christian circles Babylon was a synonym for Rome." This Army New Testament carries the imprimatur of the Bishop of Brooklyn and also carried a signed greeting from the United States President, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The third angel's message includes an implied call to worship God on His Bible Sabbath—the seventh-day Sabbath. By contrast, according to the Vatican II documents, the Celebration concept is established to eventually induce everyone to celebrate on Rome's day—on her Sunday! Throughout the documents of Vatican Council II, it is made clear that the various liturgical functions and celebrations are to focus attention on Sunday as the Lord's day. This seems to be the "bottom line" of the whole plan. (See Vatican II, Volume 1, pages 28-30.)

Modern Sun Worship?

For many years some Adventists have, perhaps unconsciously, conditioned themselves for ecumenical Sunday worship, as they have joined ecumenically with the Sunday churches in worshipping on Easter Sunday. Worship (usually out of doors) commences as the sun emerges over the eastern horizon, even as pagans have done for centuries! Concerned Adventists have for many years questioned this practice.

What is more, when we observe communion services, our new Adventist Hymnal makes available a hymn (No. 403) where those celebrating communion intone, "When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun, O Lord, have mercy on me." Some may sing this ignorantly, not realizing they are in reality singing about Sundaykeeping—sun worship; Baal worship. This is true despite the explanation by apologists that it is "supposedly" based on black culture. What would our pioneers think if they should arise out of their dusty beds next communion Sabbath morning and hear congregations who dare to sing such hymns in a professedly Adventist church?

The Eucharist

While wondering what the pioneers would think about the foregoing hymn, we wonder what they would think of Hymn No. 402. The second stanza states specifically, speaking of Christ, that "His broken body in our stead **IS** here, in this memorial bread." Adventists believe that the broken bread merely "symbolizes" the broken body of Christ. In the Roman Catholic celebration of the Eucharist, when the priest raises the host in the mass, they believe that he actually transforms the wafer (bread) into the literal body of Christ. The objectives of the Vatican are that someday soon all churches shall celebrate their Roman eucharistic mystery.

When the obstacles hindering perfect ecclesiastical communion have been surmounted, the unity of all Christians may at last be restored and shine forth, for all peoples are called to be a single new people, confessing one Jesus, Saviour and Lord, professing one faith, celebrating one eucharistic mystery. Vatican Council II, Volume 1, 515.

Pope Paul VI in his famous encyclical, "Credo of the People of God," promulgated on June 30, 1968, declared that the "transubstantiation" belief (which we have described in the foregoing section on

the Eucharist) is "in accord with Catholic faith." Thus the second stanza of Hymn No. 402 is peculiarly Catholic in its dogma and not at all in accord with Seventh-day Adventist faith as once delivered to the pioneers and certified to the church through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. We cannot but wonder, what would our Adventist pioneers think of that hymn? More importantly, what do we think of it? Should we use it in our worship?

In the Track of Romanism

It was almost a century ago that the Lord's servant warned that some men in the General Conference were even then "following in the track of Romanism" See Testimonies to Ministers, 362. Earlier she had warned against papal errors:

It is a backsliding church that lessens the distance between itself and the Papacy. Signs of the Times, vol. 3, 99

We conclude from the evidences found in the Vatican II documents and in the Ellen White warnings, that our present-day Celebration churches have surely drastically lessened the distance between themselves and the papal power.

Our Appeal

Adventist owe a great debt of gratitude to Brother Trefz in his role of being the first to alert us to the dangers inherent in the Vatican II connection with Celebrationism. The warning has been given. The watchmen on the walls of Zion have blown the trumpet loud and clear! It now remains to be seen whether Adventist leaders and laity alike who have been deceived by Roman Celebration principles, will heed the clear warnings, or whether they will continue on in the Celebration path which they have heretofore chosen.

The bottom line in the entire program that issued from Vatican Council II is to get all the world to wonder after the beast-the man who resides on the banks of the Tiber River desiring to rule the coming new world order. He would then influence all the world to honor his papal sabbath-Sunday! This would prepare the way for Revelation 13 to be fulfilled. May God help His people!

We close this chapter with these descriptive words:

ROME SAID "CELEBRATE!" AND ALL THE CHURCHES SAID "AMEN!" Freedom's Ring, Vol.1, No. 3

Ringleaders in Apostasy

Chapter 28

ONCE again, as in the earlier fanaticisms, we find that in the present Celebration and related apostasies, some talented administrators are taking a prominent part in their leadership and promotion. All this has been predicted:

Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. The Great Controversy, 608

No superiority of rank, dignity, or worldly wisdom, no position in sacred office, will preserve men from sacrificing principle when left to their own deceitful hearts. Those who have been regarded as worthy and righteous prove to be ringleaders in apostasy and examples in indifference and in the abuse

of God's mercies.... They were once His faithful servants, favored with His presence and guidance; but they departed from Him and led others into error. Testimonies, vol. 5, 212

The Testimonies have foretold that just before the sealing time, some men who had been "regarded as worthy and righteous" in the church, who had held "positions in sacred office," would "prove to be ringleaders in apostasy." We take no pleasure in quoting such passages, but what else can we do? God inspired His servant to record these words as a warning for us! This warning must be sounded. We must all be knowledgeable as to what has been written for our admonition so that we can be alert to recognize subtle dangers regardless of their source.

From Golden Calf to Celebration

Sometimes the people are at fault when church officers lead out in apostasies. Ellen White points out that men today have the same weaknesses as they did when the golden calf was worshiped at Horeb, and that "there are still pliant Aarons" who will not take a firm stand against apostasy. Let us read the inspired testimony:

How often, in our own day, is the love of pleasure disguised by a "form of godliness"! A religion that permits men, while observing the rites of worship, to devote themselves to selfish or sensual gratification, is as pleasing to the multitudes now as in the days of Israel. And there are still pliant Aarons, who, while holding positions of authority in the church, will yield to the desires of the unconsecrated, and thus encourage them in sin. Patriarchs and Prophets, 317

On the basis of sacred history and the warnings from the Spirit of Prophecy we should not be surprised if we find that some prominent church leaders should "prove to be ringleaders in apostasy," and that the majority (multitudes) will be as pleased today as they were in ancient times to "indulge in selfish or sensual gratification" in the name of religious services.

Indiana

How shall the stranglehold of the Celebration apostasy be broken in the church? There is an important lesson for us in this regard in the Indiana episode. In Indiana it was the Conference officers themselves who were the "ringleaders in apostasy." It was they who led their ministers and people into fanaticism. And it was not until the President of the Conference, a year later, heard Sister White openly rebuke the Celebration-type carnival that he responded to the pleadings of the Holy Spirit. At that General Conference session, he repented and made a public confession:

I am very, very sorry that I have done that which would mar the cause of God, and lead anyone in the wrong way. I have asked God to forgive me, and I know that He has done it. As delegates and representatives of the cause of God in the earth, I now ask you to forgive me my sins, and I ask your prayers for strength and wisdom to walk aright in the future. It is my determination, by the help of God, to join glad hands with you in the kingdom of God. Ellen G. White: The Early Elmshaven Years, 107

Through this historical episode, we note that it was not until the ringleader of the Indiana apostasy freely acknowledged his gross sin that the strength of the fanaticism was broken. This should be a great lesson for us today! As we have noted earlier some repented in the post-1844 apostasy; some repented in 1900; and surely some can and will repent in the 1990s. Would not confessions from our leaders today have the same great effect?

What About Our Day?

The Indiana (1900) Celebration apostasy was not stopped until the highest officer in the Conference—the president—confessed and repudiated the whole scheme. We would pray that something similar could happen today. But today the Celebration carnival fanaticism is worldwide! Would it not require public repudiation from the highest officers in the church, whether they have been personally promoting the apostasy or not, to publicly put the brakes on the Celebration fanaticism?

If ringleaders in the present apostasy will not heed appeals for reform, should not the "faithful few" exert their witness at the "grass-roots" level?

A Sad Day

How sad will be the day of God's retribution for all who refuse to repent and confess their apostasy. In *The Great Controversy* we read:

Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them. *The Great Controversy*, 608

Their wicked course He will tolerate no longer, and in His wrath He deals with them without mercy. It is with reluctance that the Lord withdraws His presence from those who have been blessed with great light and who have felt the power of the Word in ministering to others. They were once His faithful servants, favored with His presence and guidance; but they departed from Him and led others into error. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 212

Now this passage:

The people turned upon their ministers with bitter hate and reproached them, saying, "You have not warned us. You told us that all the world was to be converted, and cried, Peace, peace, to quiet every fear that was aroused. You have not told us of this hour; and those who warned us of it you declared to be fanatics and evil men, who would ruin us." But I saw that the ministers did not escape the wrath of God. Their suffering was tenfold greater than that of their people. *Maranatha*, 271

May all the officers, the ministers, and the people, heed the call of God today to repent and confess, before these terrible tragedies fall upon them. We do hope and pray that the present leaders in apostasy will become converted and repudiate their fanatical idol while the day of probation still lingers.

Our Beloved Brethren

Chapter 29

WHY have we written so plainly and quoted such powerful passages of appeal from the pen of Ellen White concerning the current apostasy in our midst? It is for the reason that we still regard those that have been deceived by the Celebration excesses to be "our beloved brethren." Ellen White regarded those deceived ones after 1844 with their fanatical extremes as her "beloved brethren." See *Selected Messages*, book 2, 35

She remarks:

Adventist Carnivals

These men and women were not bad, but they were deceived and deluded. In the past they had been blessed with a consciousness that they had a knowledge of the truth, and they had accomplished much good. Manuscript Release 1525, 4

Sacred history indicates that not all of the participants of the earlier four episodes were basically utterly corrupt, evil people. Many were fundamentally good, well-meaning persons who were misguided by Satan's agents in human form. Later they repented. Even Aaron was swept into the fanaticism at Horeb, but later repented.

So let us have compassion on these souls, who today are deceived by Celebration enthusiasm. Even though they may be terribly "deceived and deluded," they are yet "our beloved brethren," some of whom may have accomplished much good for God in times past. Jesus still loves them and yearns for their repentance!

An Appeal

The Celebration churches in our midst are verily a sign of the times, showing that the end of all things is upon us. We appeal to all who have become ensnared by the Celebration excitement, or those who are in the valley of decision-wondering whether or not to accept the format of Celebration, to restudy the historical developments of the five episodes of Celebration-type apostasies (Sinai, Baal Peor, post 1844, Indiana 1900, and now-the 1990s) and then heed the warnings of Inspiration to flee from having an active part in the final apostasy that we have been told would occur "just before the close of probation." Friends, that time is now!

In Closing

We close our book with an earnest message of love borrowed from the pen of God's servant and adapted by us as follows:

Think [us] not your enemy because [we] tell you the truth; let not the words [we] have written discourage you, but let them restore, strengthen, and uphold you. [We] respect and love you [all], and for this reason [we] entreat you to heed the message God has given [through His Testimonies] for you. Do not lightly esteem the voice of the Holy Spirit. God wants you to have liberty in Him, and by placing yourself in His hands you may abound in every good work, and represent Him to the world. In much love, E. G. White. Letter 67, 1896; Manuscript Release 1306, 12

Oh, blessed thought: Together with Christ the saved can celebrate their redemption throughout all eternity! That will be a REAL CELEBRATION.