

The Church - organization

The Church

God has a church. It is not the great cathedral, neither is it the national establishment, neither is it the various denominations; it is the people who love God and keep His commandments. "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Where Christ is, even among the humble few, this is Christ's church, for the presence of the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity can alone constitute a church. Where two or three are present who love and obey the commandments of God, Jesus there presides, let it be in the desolate place of the earth, in the wilderness, in the city, [or] enclosed in prison walls. The glory of God has penetrated the prison walls, flooding with glorious beams of heavenly light the darkest dungeon. His saints may suffer, but their sufferings will, like the apostles' of old, spread their faith and win souls to Christ and glorify His holy name. The bitterest opposition expressed by those who hate God's great moral standard of righteousness should not and will not shake the steadfast soul who trusts fully in God. {17MR 81.4}

The church is God's fortress. His city of refuge, which He holds in a revolted world. Any betrayal of the church is treachery to Him who has bought mankind with the blood of His only-begotten Son. **From the beginning, faithful souls have constituted the church on earth.** In every age the Lord has had His watchmen, who have borne a faithful testimony to the generation in which they lived. These sentinels gave the message of warning; and when they were called to lay off their armor, others took up the work. God brought these witnesses into covenant relation with Himself, uniting the church on earth with the church in heaven. He has sent forth His angels to minister to His church, and the gates of hell have not been able to prevail against His people. {AA 11.2}

Need for Organization

The spasmodic, fitful movements of some who claim to be Christians are well represented by the work of strong but untrained horses. When one pulls forward, another pulls back; at the voice of their master one plunges ahead, and the other stands immovable. If men will not move in concert in the great and grand work for this time, there will be confusion. It is not a good sign when men refuse to unite with their brethren, and prefer to act alone. Let laborers take into their confidence the brethren who are free to point out every departure from right principles. If men wear the yoke of Christ, they cannot pull apart; they will draw with Christ. {GW 487.3}

Some workers pull with all the power that God has given them, but they have not yet learned that they should not pull alone. Instead of isolating themselves, let them draw in harmony with their fellow-laborers. Unless they do this, their activity will work at the wrong time and in the wrong way. They will often work counter to that which God would have done, and thus their work is worse than wasted. {GW 488.1}

Chap. 9 - The Seven Deacons

"In those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations." {AA 87.1}

The early church was made up of many classes of people, of various nationalities. At the time of the

outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, "there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven." Acts 2:5. Among those of the Hebrew faith who were gathered at Jerusalem were some commonly known as Grecians, between whom and the Jews of Palestine there had long existed distrust and even antagonism. {AA 87.2}

The hearts of those who had been converted under the labors of the apostles, were softened and united by Christian love. Despite former prejudices, all were in harmony with one another. Satan knew that so long as this union continued to exist, he would be powerless to check the progress of gospel truth; and he sought to take advantage of former habits of thought, in the hope that thereby he might be able to introduce into the church elements of disunion. {AA 87.3}

Thus it came to pass that as disciples were multiplied, the enemy succeeded in arousing the suspicions of some who had formerly been in the habit of looking with jealousy on their brethren in the faith and of finding fault with their spiritual leaders, and so "there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews." The cause of complaint was an alleged neglect of the Greek widows in the daily distribution of assistance. Any inequality would have been contrary to the spirit of the gospel, yet Satan had succeeded in arousing suspicion. Prompt measures must now be taken to remove all occasion for dissatisfaction, lest the enemy triumph in his effort to bring about a division among the believers. {AA 88.1}

The disciples of Jesus had reached a crisis in their experience. Under the wise leadership of the apostles, who labored unitedly in the power of the Holy Spirit, the work committed to the gospel messengers was developing rapidly. The church was continually enlarging, and this growth in membership brought increasingly heavy burdens upon those in charge. No one man, or even one set of men, could continue to bear these burdens alone, without imperiling the future prosperity of the church. There was necessity for a further distribution of the responsibilities which had been borne so faithfully by a few during the earlier days of the church. The apostles must now take an important step in the perfecting of gospel **order** in the church by laying upon others some of the burdens thus far borne by themselves. {AA 88.2}

Summoning a meeting of the believers, the apostles were led by the Holy Spirit to outline a plan for the better **organization** of all the working forces of the church. The time had come, the apostles stated, when the spiritual leaders having the oversight of the church should be relieved from the task of distributing to the poor and from similar burdens, so that they might be free to carry forward the work of preaching the gospel. "Wherefore, brethren," they said, "look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." This advice was followed, and by prayer and the laying on of hands, seven chosen men were solemnly set apart for their duties as deacons. {AA 89.1}

The appointment of the seven to take the oversight of special lines of work, proved a great blessing to the church. These officers gave careful consideration to individual needs as well as to the general financial interests of the church, and by their prudent management and their godly example they were an important aid to their fellow officers in binding together the various interests of the church into a united whole. {AA 89.2}

That this step was in the **order** of God, is revealed in the immediate results for good that were seen. "The word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." This ingathering of souls was due both to the greater freedom secured by the apostles and to the zeal and power shown by the seven deacons. The fact that these brethren had been ordained for the special work of looking after the needs of the poor, did not exclude them from teaching the faith. On the contrary, they were fully qualified to instruct

others in the truth, and they engaged in the work with great earnestness and success. {AA 89.3}

To the early church had been entrusted a constantly enlarging work--that of establishing centers of light and blessing wherever there were honest souls willing to give themselves to the service of Christ. The proclamation of the gospel was to be world-wide in its extent, and the messengers of the cross could not hope to fulfill their important mission unless they should remain united in the bonds of Christian unity, and thus reveal to the world that they were one with Christ in God. Had not their divine Leader prayed to the Father, "Keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are"? And had He not declared of His disciples, "The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world"? Had He not pleaded with the Father that they might be "made perfect in one," "that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me"? John 17:11, 14, 23, 21. Their spiritual life and power was dependent on a close connection with the One by whom they had been commissioned to preach the gospel. {AA 90.1}

Only as they were united with Christ could the disciples hope to have the accompanying power of the Holy Spirit and the co-operation of angels of heaven. With the help of these divine agencies they would present before the world a united front and would be victorious in the conflict they were compelled to wage unceasingly against the powers of darkness. As they should continue to labor unitedly, heavenly messengers would go before them, opening the way; hearts would be prepared for the reception of truth, and many would be won to Christ. So long as they remained united, the church would go forth "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Song of Solomon 6:10. Nothing could withstand her onward progress. The church would advance from victory to victory, gloriously fulfilling her divine mission of proclaiming the gospel to the world. {AA 90.2}

The **organization** of the church at Jerusalem was to serve as a model for the **organization** of churches in every other place where messengers of truth should win converts to the gospel. Those to whom was given the responsibility of the general oversight of the church were not to lord it over God's heritage, but, as wise shepherds, were to "feed the flock of God, . . . being ensamples to the flock" (1 Peter 5:2, 3); and the deacons were to be "men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." These men were to take their position unitedly on the side of right and to maintain it with firmness and decision. Thus they would have a uniting influence upon the entire flock. {AA 91.1}

Later in the history of the early church, when in various parts of the world many groups of believers had been formed into churches, the **organization** of the church was further perfected, so that **order** and harmonious action might be maintained. Every member was exhorted to act well his part. Each was to make a wise use of the talents entrusted to him. Some were endowed by the Holy Spirit with special gifts--"first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." 1 Corinthians 12:28. But all these classes of workers were to labor in harmony. {AA 91.2}

"There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." 1 Corinthians 12:4-12. {AA 92.1}

Solemn are the responsibilities resting upon those who are called to act as leaders in the church of God on earth. In the days of the theocracy, when Moses was endeavoring to carry alone burdens so

heavy that he would soon have worn away under them, he was counseled by Jethro to plan for a wise distribution of responsibilities. "Be thou for the people to Godward," Jethro advised, "that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: and thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do." Jethro further advised that men be appointed to act as "rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens." These were to be "able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness." They were to "judge the people at all seasons," thus relieving Moses of the wearing responsibility of giving consideration to many minor matters that could be dealt with wisely by consecrated helpers. {AA 92.2}

The time and strength of those who in the providence of God have been placed in leading positions of responsibility in the church, should be spent in dealing with the weightier matters demanding special wisdom and largeness of heart. It is not in the **order** of God that such men should be appealed to for the adjustment of minor matters that others are well qualified to handle. "Every great matter they shall bring unto thee," Jethro proposed to Moses, "but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace." {AA 93.1}

In harmony with this plan, "Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves." Exodus 18:19-26. {AA 93.2}

Later, when choosing seventy elders to share with him the responsibilities of leadership, Moses was careful to select, as his helpers, men possessing dignity, sound judgment, and experience. In his charge to these elders at the time of their ordination, he outlined some of the qualifications that fit a man to be a wise ruler in the church. "Hear the causes between your brethren," said Moses, "and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him. Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's." Deuteronomy 1:16, 17. {AA 94.1}

King David, toward the close of his reign, delivered a solemn charge to those bearing the burden of the work of God in his day. Summoning to Jerusalem "all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons, with the officers, and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men," the aged king solemnly charged them, "in the sight of all Israel the congregation of the Lord, and in the audience of our God," to "keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God." 1 Chronicles 28:1, 8. {AA 94.2}

To Solomon, as one called to occupy a position of leading responsibility, David gave a special charge: "Thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off forever. Take heed now; for the Lord hath chosen thee: . . . be strong." 1 Chronicles 28:9, 10. {AA 95.1}

The same principles of piety and justice that were to guide the rulers among God's people in the time of Moses and of David, were also to be followed by those given the oversight of the newly **organized** church of God in the gospel dispensation. In the work of setting things in **order** in all the churches, and ordaining suitable men to act as officers, the apostles held to the high standards of leadership outlined in the Old Testament Scriptures. They maintained that he who is called to stand in a

position of leading responsibility in the church "must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Titus 1:7-9. {AA 95.2}

The **order** that was maintained in the early Christian church made it possible for them to move forward solidly as a well-disciplined army clad with the armor of God. The companies of believers, though scattered over a large territory, were all members of one body; all moved in concert and in harmony with one another. When dissension arose in a local church, as later it did arise in Antioch and elsewhere, and the believers were unable to come to an agreement among themselves, such matters were not permitted to create a division in the church, but were referred to a general council of the entire body of believers, made up of appointed delegates from the various local churches, with the apostles and elders in positions of leading responsibility. Thus the efforts of Satan to attack the church in isolated places were met by concerted action on the part of all, and the plans of the enemy to disrupt and destroy were thwarted. {AA 95.3}

"God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." 1 Corinthians 14:33. He requires that **order** and system be observed in the conduct of church affairs today no less than in the days of old. He desires His work to be carried forward with thoroughness and exactness so that He may place upon it the seal of His approval. Christian is to be united with Christian, church with church, the human instrumentality co-operating with the divine, every agency subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all combined in giving to the world the good tidings of the grace of God. {AA 96.1}

Obedient to the direction of the angel, Ananias sought out the man who had but recently breathed out threatenings against all who believed on the name of Jesus; and putting his hands on the head of the penitent sufferer, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. {AA 121.4}

"And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." {AA 122.1}

Thus Jesus gave sanction to the authority of His **organized** church and placed Saul in connection with His appointed agencies on earth. Christ had now a church as His representative on earth, and to it belonged the work of directing the repentant sinner in the way of life. {AA 122.2}

Many have an idea that they are responsible to Christ alone for their light and experience, independent of His recognized followers on earth. Jesus is the friend of sinners, and His heart is touched with their woe. He has all power, both in heaven and on earth; but He respects the means that He has ordained for the enlightenment and salvation of men; He directs sinners to the church, which He has made a channel of light to the world. {AA 122.3}

Chap. 1 - God's Purpose for His Church

The church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was **organized** for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God's plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory. The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be

made manifest, even to "the principalities and powers in heavenly places," the final and full display of the love of God. Ephesians 3:10. {AA 9.1}

Many and wonderful are the promises recorded in the Scriptures regarding the church. "Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people." Isaiah 56:7. "I will make them and the places round about My hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing." "And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more. Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are My people, saith the Lord God. And ye My flock, the flock of My pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God." Ezekiel 34:26, 29-31. {AA 9.2}

"Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, and My servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He: before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside Me there is no Saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are My witnesses." "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." Isaiah 43:10-12; 42:6, 7. {AA 10.1}

"In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them. And I will make all My mountains a way, and My highways shall be exalted. . . . {AA 10.2}

"Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted His people, and will have mercy upon His afflicted. But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands; thy walls are continually before Me." Isaiah 49:8-16. {AA 11.1}

The church is God's fortress. His city of refuge, which He holds in a revolted world. Any betrayal of the church is treachery to Him who has bought mankind with the blood of His only-begotten Son. **From the beginning, faithful souls have constituted the church on earth.** In every age the Lord has had His watchmen, who have borne a faithful testimony to the generation in which they lived. These sentinels gave the message of warning; and when they were called to lay off their armor, others took up the work. God brought these witnesses into covenant relation with Himself, uniting the church on earth with the church in heaven. He has sent forth His angels to minister to His church, and the gates of hell have not been able to prevail against His people. {AA 11.2}

Through centuries of persecution, conflict, and darkness, God has sustained His church. Not one cloud has fallen upon it that He has not prepared for; not one opposing force has risen to counterwork His work, that He has not foreseen. All has taken place as He predicted. He has not left His church forsaken, but has traced in prophetic declarations what would occur, and that which His Spirit inspired the prophets to foretell has been brought about. All His purposes will be fulfilled. His law is linked with His throne, and no power of evil can destroy it. Truth is inspired and guarded by God; and it will triumph over all opposition. {AA 11.3}

During ages of spiritual darkness the church of God has been as a city set on a hill. From age to age, through successive generations, the pure doctrines of heaven have been unfolding within its borders. Enfeebled and defective as it may appear, the church is the one object upon which God bestows in a special sense His supreme regard. It is the theater of His grace, in which He delights to reveal His power to transform hearts. {AA 12.1}

"Whereunto," asked Christ, "shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?" Mark 4:30. He could not employ the kingdoms of the world as a similitude. In society He found nothing with which to compare it. Earthly kingdoms rule by the ascendancy of physical power; but from Christ's kingdom every carnal weapon, every instrument of coercion, is banished. This kingdom is to uplift and ennoble humanity. God's church is the court of holy life, filled with varied gifts and endowed with the Holy Spirit. The members are to find their happiness in the happiness of those whom they help and bless. {AA 12.2}

Wonderful is the work which the Lord designs to accomplish through His church, that His name may be glorified. A picture of this work is given in Ezekiel's vision of the river of healing: "These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: . . . and by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine." Ezekiel 47:8-12. {AA 13.1}

From the beginning God has wrought through His people to bring blessing to the world. To the ancient Egyptian nation God made Joseph a fountain of life. Through the integrity of Joseph the life of that whole people was preserved. Through Daniel God saved the life of all the wise men of Babylon. And these deliverances are as object lessons; they illustrate the spiritual blessings offered to the world through connection with the God whom Joseph and Daniel worshiped. Everyone in whose heart Christ abides, everyone who will show forth His love to the world, is a worker together with God for the blessing of humanity. As he receives from the Saviour grace to impart to others, from his whole being flows forth the tide of spiritual life. {AA 13.2}

God chose Israel to reveal His character to men. He desired them to be as wells of salvation in the world. To them were committed the oracles of heaven, the revelation of God's will. In the early days of Israel the nations of the world, through corrupt practices, had lost the knowledge of God. They had once known Him; but because "they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, . . . their foolish heart was darkened." Romans 1:21. Yet in His mercy God did not blot them out of existence. He purposed to give them an opportunity of again becoming acquainted with Him through His chosen people. Through the teachings of the sacrificial service, Christ was to be uplifted before all nations, and all who would look to Him should live. Christ was the foundation of the Jewish economy. The whole system of types and symbols was a compacted prophecy of the gospel, a presentation in which were bound up the promises of redemption. {AA 14.1}

But the people of Israel lost sight of their high privileges as God's representatives. They forgot God and failed to fulfill their holy mission. The blessings they received brought no blessing to the world. All their advantages they appropriated for their own glorification. They shut themselves away from the world in order to escape temptation. The restrictions that God had placed upon their association with idolaters as a means of preventing them from conforming to the practices of the heathen, they used to build up a wall of separation between themselves and all other nations. They robbed God of the service He required of them, and they robbed their fellow men of religious guidance and a holy example. {AA

14.2}

Priests and rulers became fixed in a rut of ceremonialism. They were satisfied with a legal religion, and it was impossible for them to give to others the living truths of heaven. They thought their own righteousness all-sufficient, and did not desire that a new element should be brought into their religion. The good will of God to men they did not accept as something apart from themselves, but connected it with their own merit because of their good works. The faith that works by love and purifies the soul could find no place for union with the religion of the Pharisees, made up of ceremonies and the injunctions of men. {AA 15.1}

Of Israel God declared: "I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto Me?" Jeremiah 2:21. "Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself." Hosea 10:1. "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt Me and My vineyard. What could have been done more to My vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? {AA 15.2}

"And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: and I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant: and He looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry." Isaiah 5:3-7. "The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them." Ezekiel 34:4. {AA 15.3}

The Jewish leaders thought themselves too wise to need instruction, too righteous to need salvation, too highly honored to need the honor that comes from Christ. The Saviour turned from them to entrust to others the privileges they had abused and the work they had slighted. God's glory must be revealed, His word established. Christ's kingdom must be set up in the world. The salvation of God must be made known in the cities of the wilderness; and the disciples were called to do the work that the Jewish leaders had failed to do. {AA 16.1}

"There were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, . . . and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Before being sent forth as missionaries to the heathen world, these apostles were solemnly dedicated to God by fasting and prayer and the laying on of hands. Thus they were authorized by the church, not only to teach the truth, but to perform the rite of baptism and to **organize** churches, being invested with full ecclesiastical authority. {AA 160.2}

The Christian church was at this time entering upon an important era. The work of proclaiming the gospel message among the Gentiles was now to be prosecuted with vigor; and as a result the church was to be strengthened by a great ingathering of souls. The apostles who had been appointed to lead out in this work would be exposed to suspicion, prejudice, and jealousy. Their teachings concerning the breaking down of "the middle wall of partition" (Ephesians 2:14) that had so long separated the Jewish and the Gentile world, would naturally subject them to the charge of heresy, and their authority as ministers of the gospel would be questioned by many zealous, believing Jews. God foresaw the difficulties that His servants would be called to meet, and, in **order** that their work should be above challenge, He instructed the church by revelation to set them apart publicly to the work of the ministry.

Their ordination was a public recognition of their divine appointment to bear to the Gentiles the glad tidings of the gospel. {AA 161.1}

Both Paul and Barnabas had already received their commission from God Himself, and the ceremony of the laying on of hands added no new grace or virtual qualification. It was an acknowledged form of designation to an appointed office and a recognition of one's authority in that office. By it the seal of the church was set upon the work of God. {AA 161.2}

To the Jew this form was a significant one. When a Jewish father blessed his children, he laid his hands reverently upon their heads. When an animal was devoted to sacrifice, the hand of the one invested with priestly authority was laid upon the head of the victim. And when the ministers of the church of believers in Antioch laid their hands upon Paul and Barnabas, they, by that action, asked God to bestow His blessing upon the chosen apostles in their devotion to the specific work to which they had been appointed. {AA 162.1}

At a later date the rite of ordination by the laying on of hands was greatly abused; unwarrantable importance was attached to the act, as if a power came at once upon those who received such ordination, which immediately qualified them for any and all ministerial work. But in the setting apart of these two apostles, there is no record indicating that any virtue was imparted by the mere act of laying on of hands. There is only the simple record of their ordination and of the bearing that it had on their future work. {AA 162.2}

The circumstances connected with the separation of Paul and Barnabas by the Holy Spirit to a definite line of service show clearly that the Lord works through appointed agencies in His **organized** church. Years before, when the divine purpose concerning Paul was first revealed to him by the Saviour Himself, Paul was immediately afterward brought into contact with members of the newly **organized** church at Damascus. Furthermore, the church at that place was not long left in darkness as to the personal experience of the converted Pharisee. And now, when the divine commission given at that time was to be more fully carried out, the Holy Spirit, again bearing witness concerning Paul as a chosen vessel to bear the gospel to the Gentiles, laid upon the church the work of ordaining him and his fellow laborer. As the leaders of the church in Antioch "ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." {AA 162.3}

God has made His church on the earth a channel of light, and through it He communicates His purposes and His will. He does not give to one of His servants an experience independent of and contrary to the experience of the church itself. Neither does He give one man a knowledge of His will for the entire church while the church--Christ's body --is left in darkness. In His providence He places His servants in close connection with His church in **order** that they may have less confidence in themselves and greater confidence in others whom He is leading out to advance His work. {AA 163.1}

There have ever been in the church those who are constantly inclined toward individual independence. They seem unable to realize that independence of spirit is liable to lead the human agent to have too much confidence in himself and to trust in his own judgment rather than to respect the counsel and highly esteem the judgment of his brethren, especially of those in the offices that God has appointed for the leadership of His people. God has invested His church with special authority and power which no one can be justified in disregarding and despising, for he who does this despises the voice of God. {AA 163.2}

Those who are inclined to regard their individual judgment as supreme are in grave peril. It is Satan's studied effort to separate such ones from those who are channels of light, through whom God has wrought to build up and extend His work in the earth. To neglect or despise those whom God has appointed to bear the responsibilities of leadership in connection with the advancement of the truth, is to reject the means that He has ordained for the help, encouragement, and strength of His people. For

any worker in the Lord's cause to pass these by, and to think that his light must come through no other channel than directly from God, is to place himself in a position where he is liable to be deceived by the enemy and overthrown. The Lord in His wisdom has arranged that by means of the close relationship that should be maintained by all believers, Christian shall be united to Christian and church to church. Thus the human instrumentality will be enabled to co-operate with the divine. Every agency will be subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all the believers will be united in an **organized** and well-directed effort to give to the world the glad tidings of the grace of God. {AA 164.1}

Paul regarded the occasion of his formal ordination as marking the beginning of a new and important epoch in his lifework. It was from this time that he afterward dated the beginning of his apostleship in the Christian church. {AA 164.2}

While the light of the gospel was shining brightly at Antioch, an important work was continued by the apostles who had remained in Jerusalem. Every year, at the time of the festivals, many Jews from all lands came to Jerusalem to worship at the temple. Some of these pilgrims were men of fervent piety and earnest students of the prophecies. They were looking and longing for the advent of the promised Messiah, the hope of Israel. While Jerusalem was filled with these strangers, the apostles preached Christ with unflinching courage, though they knew that in so doing they were placing their lives in constant jeopardy. The Spirit of God set its seal upon their labors; many converts to the faith were made; and these, returning to their homes in different parts of the world, scattered the seeds of truth through all nations and among all classes of society. {AA 165.1}

Prominent among the apostles who engaged in this work were Peter, James, and John, who felt confident that God had appointed them to preach Christ among their countrymen at home. Faithfully and wisely they labored, testifying of the things they had seen and heard, and appealing to "a more sure word of prophecy" (2 Peter 1:19), in an effort to persuade "the house of Israel . . . that God hath made that same Jesus, whom" the Jews "crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). {AA 165.2}

As an important factor in the spiritual growth of the new converts the apostles were careful to surround them with the safeguards of gospel **order**. Churches were duly **organized** in all places in Lycaonia and Pisidia where there were believers. Officers were appointed in each church, and proper **order** and system were established for the conduct of all the affairs pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the believers. {AA 185.2}

This was in harmony with the gospel plan of uniting in one body all believers in Christ, and this plan Paul was careful to follow throughout his ministry. Those who in any place were by his labor led to accept Christ as the Saviour were at the proper time **organized** into a church. Even when the believers were but few in number, this was done. The Christians were thus taught to help one another, remembering the promise, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Matthew 18:20. {AA 185.3}

And Paul did not forget the churches thus established. The care of these churches rested on his mind as an ever-increasing burden. However small a company might be, it was nevertheless the object of his constant solicitude. He watched over the smaller churches tenderly, realizing that they were in need of special care in **order** that the members might be thoroughly established in the truth and taught to put forth earnest, unselfish efforts for those around them. {AA 186.1}

In all their missionary endeavors Paul and Barnabas sought to follow Christ's example of willing sacrifice and faithful, earnest labor for souls. Wide-awake, zealous, untiring, they did not consult inclination or personal ease, but with prayerful anxiety and unceasing activity they sowed the seed of truth. And with the sowing of the seed, the apostles were careful to give to all who took their stand for the gospel, practical instruction that was of untold value. This spirit of earnestness and godly fear made

upon the minds of the new disciples a lasting impression regarding the importance of the gospel message. {AA 186.2}

When men of promise and ability were converted, as in the case of Timothy, Paul and Barnabas sought earnestly to show them the necessity of laboring in the vineyard. And when the apostles left for another place, the faith of these men did not fail, but rather increased. They had been faithfully instructed in the way of the Lord, and had been taught how to labor unselfishly, earnestly, perseveringly, for the salvation of their fellow men. This careful training of new converts was an important factor in the remarkable success that attended Paul and Barnabas as they preached the gospel in heathen lands. {AA 186.3}

The first missionary journey was fast drawing to a close. Commending the newly **organized** churches to the Lord, the apostles went to Pamphylia, "and when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia, and thence sailed to Antioch." {AA 187.1}

The Thessalonian believers were greatly annoyed by men coming among them with fanatical ideas and doctrines. Some were "**disorderly**, working not at all, but . . . busy-bodies." The church had been properly **organized**, and officers had been appointed to act as ministers and deacons. But there were some, self-willed and impetuous, who refused to be subordinate to those who held positions of authority in the church. They claimed not only the right of private judgment, but that of publicly urging their views upon the church. In view of this, Paul called the attention of the Thessalonians to the respect and deference due to those who had been chosen to occupy positions of authority in the church. {AA 261.3}

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Holidays Afford Opportunity for Missionary Service.-- We want men in the church who have ability to develop in the line of organizing and giving practical work to young men and women in the line of relieving the wants of humanity and working for the salvation of the souls of men, women, youth, and children. It will not be possible for all to give their whole time to the work because of the labor they must do to earn their daily living. Yet these have their holidays and times that they can devote to Christian work and do good in this way if they cannot give much of their means. {AH 476.2}

During the night of February 27 (1910), a representation was given me in which the unworked cities were presented before me as a living reality, and I was plainly instructed that there should be a decided change from past methods of working. For months the situation has been impressed on my mind, and I urged that companies be **organized** and diligently trained to labor in our important cities. These workers should labor two and two, and from time to time all should meet together to relate their experiences, to pray and to plan how to reach the people quickly, and thus, if possible, redeem the time.--Manuscript 21, 1910. {CME 13.4}

organize for Harmonious Action

To those who have been engaged in this work I would say, Continue to work with tact and ability. Arouse your associates to work under some name whereby they may be **organized** to co-operate in harmonious action. Get the young men and women in the churches to work. {CME 17.2}

Combine medical missionary work with the proclamation of the third angel's message. Make regular, **organized** efforts to lift the church members out of the dead level in which they have been for years. Send out into the churches workers who will live the principles of health reform. Let those be sent who can see the necessity of self-denial in appetite, or they will be a snare to the church. See if the breath of life will not then come into your churches. A new element needs to be brought into the work. God's people must realize their great need and peril and take up the work that lies nearest to them.--Testimonies, Vol. 6, p. 267. {CME 17.3}

The Church a Training School

The church of Christ is **organized** for service. Its watchword is ministry. Its members are soldiers, to be trained for conflict under the Captain of their salvation. Christian ministers, physicians, teachers, have a broader work than many have recognized. They are not only to minister to the people, but to teach them to minister. They should not only give instruction in right principles, but educate their hearers to impart these principles. Truth that is not lived, that is not imparted, loses its life-giving power, its healing virtue. Its blessing can be retained only as it is shared. {CME 17.4}

The monotony of our service for God needs to be broken up. Every church member should be engaged in some line of service for the Master. Some cannot do so much as others, but everyone should do his utmost to roll back the tide of disease and distress that is sweeping over our world. Many would be willing to work if they were taught how to begin. They need to be instructed and encouraged. {CME 17.5}

Every church should be a training school for Christian workers. Its members should be taught how to give Bible readings, how to conduct and teach Sabbath school classes, how best to help the poor and to care for the sick, how to work for the unconverted. There should be schools of health, cooking schools, and classes in various lines of Christian help work. There should not only be teaching, but actual work under experienced instructors. Let the teachers lead the way in working among the people and others, uniting with them, will learn from their example. One example is worth more than many precepts.--Ministry of Healing, pp. 148, 149. {CME 18.1}

There should be companies **organized** and educated most thoroughly to work as nurses, as evangelists, as ministers, as canvassers, as gospel students, to perfect a character after the divine similitude. To prepare to receive the higher education in the school above is now to be our purpose. . . .

{CME 29.3}

There are numbers that ought to become missionaries who never enter the field, because those who are united with them in church capacity or in our colleges, do not feel the burden of labor with them, to open before them the claims that God has upon all the powers, and do not pray with them and for them; and the eventful period which decides the plans and course of life passes, convictions, with them are stifled, other influences and inducements attract them, and temptations to seek worldly positions that will, they think, bring them money, take them into the worldly current. These young men might have been saved to the ministry through well-organized plans. If the churches in the different places do their duty, God will work with their efforts by his Spirit, and will supply faithful men to the ministry. {CE 45.2}

Our schools are to be educating schools and training schools; and if men and women come forth from them fitted in any sense for the missionary field, they must have impressed upon them the greatness of the work, and that practical godliness must be brought into their daily experience, to be fitted for any place of usefulness in our world, or in the church, or in God's great moral vineyard, now calling for laborers in foreign lands. {CE 46.1}

Chap. 17 - Formality, Not organization, An Evil.

Evil does not result because of organization, but because of making organization everything, and vital godliness of little moment. When form and machinery take the pre-eminence, and a laborious task is made of carrying on the work that should be done with simplicity, evil will result, and little will be accomplished in proportion to the effort put forth. The object of organization is just the reverse of this; and should we disorganize, it would be like tearing down that which we have built up. Evil results have been seen, both in the Sabbath-school work and in the missionary society, because of making much of machinery while vital experience was lost sight of. In many of the imagined improvements that have been brought in, the mould of man has been placed upon the work. In the Sabbath-school, men and women have been accepted as officers and teachers, who have not been spiritually minded, and had no live interest in the work committed to their care; but matters can be set in order only through the aid of the Holy Spirit. The same evil has existed for years as now exists in our churches. Formality, pride, and love of display have taken the place of true piety and humble godliness. We might see a different order of things should a number consecrate themselves wholly to God, and then devote their talents to the Sabbath-school work, ever advancing in knowledge, and educating themselves so that they would be able to instruct others as to the best methods to employ in the work; but it is not for the workers to seek for methods by which they can make a show, consuming time in theatrical performances and musical display, for this benefits no one. It does no good to train the children to make speeches for special occasions. They should be won to Christ, and instead of expending time, money, and effort to make a display, let the whole effort be made to gather sheaves for the harvest. {CE 134.1}

Many have seemed to think that all that was essential in Sabbath-school work was to organize the school, and drill the scholars so that they would act in harmony with a set of ceremonies and forms; and that if persons could be secured as teachers, the Sabbath-school would run itself. Teachers are often secured who cannot lead souls to Christ because they know not what it is to find him precious to their own souls; but all those who do not value the soul so that they will work as Christ would have them, will scatter away from Christ. "He that [mark these words] gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad." [MATT. 12:30.] If teachers have no burden to lead souls to Jesus, they will grow indifferent to the truth; they will become careless, and the atmosphere with which they surround their souls will work to scatter

away from Christ. And with such elements in the Sabbath-school, there will be a perpetual conflict with difficulties; for when the teachers engage in the work and have no interest in it, the pupils will partake of the same spirit. {CE 135.1}

But although these difficulties exist, will it abolish them to put an end to **organization**? I am sure that the Lord has wrought in the **organization** that has been perfected, and the fact that there are discouraging features in the work should not be thought a sufficient reason for dis**organization**. Much light was given to us in reference to the **organization** of churches, and yet we had a hard battle to fight in perfecting **organization**; but the victory was gained at last, and now shall the church be dis**organized** because of indifference, formality, and pride? Shall we go back to dis**order** because unconsecrated members of the church have placed upon the work the mould of man, and sought to fashion the church to meet a popular standard? {CE 135.2}

It is true that the simplicity of true godliness has to a large degree been lost from the church, and many of those who profess to be followers of Christ have become so blinded that they think that gain is godliness, and they devote their powers to the things of time. They do not realize that all their intellectual ability has been purchased by Christ, and that they should devote to him the best results of their thought, that his cause may be advanced. But instead of giving their sharp, clear ideas to advance the cause, to strengthen and bless the church, they devote all their powers to the advancement of their own interests. They do not gather with Christ, but lead away from him by their words and acts. They surround their souls with an atmosphere that is deleterious to spirituality. They profess to be followers of Christ, but they do not know him by an experimental knowledge. They do not practice religion. They do not seek to be Christians in the same way in which they would learn a trade. They profess to believe advanced truth; but it is evident that they keep it in the outer court; for it has no sanctifying power on life and character. They do not realize how much is at stake; for the salvation of their own souls and that of others is imperiled. They do not realize that in **order** to be a savor of life into life they must be under spiritual discipline and training, learning in the school of Christ. Without this spiritual discipline, they become inefficient, ignorant, and undeveloped, and see no necessity for the spiritual training and knowledge which would qualify them to hold positions of influence and usefulness. If they do not consecrate themselves wholly to God, becoming learners in his school, they will do hap-hazard work that will result in injury to the church. {CE 136.1}

But because of these unconsecrated influences, shall we take backward steps, and tear down those methods which it has cost us much to build, and declare that **organization** is all a mistake? We dare not do this. There are many things that need adjusting; for some things of little importance are made much of, while other things of vast importance are neglected, and looked upon as unessential. The minds of men need literary as well as spiritual training that they may be harmoniously developed; for without literary training, men cannot fill acceptably various positions of trust. {CE 136.2}

The great educating book is the Bible, and yet it is little read or practiced. O that every individual would seek to make of himself all that he could, improving his opportunities to the very best of his ability, purposing to use every power which God has given him, not simply to advance his temporal affairs, but to advance his spiritual interests. O that all might search diligently to know what is truth, to study earnestly that they might have correct language and cultivated voices, that they might present the truth in all its elevated and ennobling beauty. Let no one imagine that he will drift into some position of usefulness. If men would be used to work for God, let them put to the stretch their powers, and concentrate their minds in earnest application. It is Satan that would keep men in ignorance and inefficiency, that they may be developed in a one-sided way which they may never be able to correct. He would have men exercise one set of faculties to the exclusion of the exercise of another set, so that the mind will lose its vigor, and when there is a real necessity, be unable to rise to the emergency. God

wants men to do their best, and while Satan is pulling the mind in one direction, Jesus is drawing it in another. {CE 137.1}

When the truth is received into the heart, it begins the work of refining and sanctifying the receiver. He who cherishes the truth, will not feel that he has no more need of enlightenment, but will realize as he carries out the truth in his practical life, that he is in need of continual light that he may increase in knowledge. As he brings the truth into his life, he will feel his real ignorance, and realize the necessity of having a more thorough education, that he may understand how to use his ability to the best account. {CE 137.2}

There is a dearth of educated ability among us, and we have not men who are sufficiently trained to do justice to the work of managing our Sabbath-schools and churches. Many who know the truth, still do not understand it in such a way that they could hold their own in its presentation. They are not prepared to present it in such a way that its sacred, majestic character will be clear to the people. Instead of less discipline, they need more thorough training. It is impossible for any one to foresee to what he may be called. He may be placed in situations where he will need quick discernment and well-balanced arguments, and therefore it is for the honor of Christ that well educated workers should be multiplied among us; they will be better able to communicate the truth in a clear, intelligent way, and the truth should be presented in a way that will be as free as possible from defects. {CE 138.1}

True education, when the mind is under the controlling influence of the Holy Spirit, is of great importance, and each individual should learn to rightly appreciate the capabilities that God has given; and by the practice of the knowledge he gains, he may, by the influence of his own character, impress upon others the value of obtaining a training for the service of Christ, and lead them to follow his example. There is much to be done in the world, and it is not profitable to set novices to work upon those matters that are of the highest importance. The apathy, the indolence, the inattention that has been manifested in regard to education is marvelous; but it is well pleasing to Satan. God would have us arouse from our indifference, and no longer allow the intellectual powers to run to waste, and degenerate into imbecility. Men are to appreciate the talents entrusted to them, and take advantage of the opportunities placed within their reach. Let the mental powers be girded for work, and by vigorous exertion let the mind be enlarged and developed. {CE 138.2}

There is more need now than ever before that our young men and women shall be intellectually qualified for the work. Our Sabbath-schools not only need intellectual, but spiritual workers, and the mind receives its tone and efficiency by thorough discipline. By superficial study, the mind gradually loses its tone, and degenerates into imbecility, and is not capable of any taxing effort. But education prepares men to know and to do the very line of work that must at this time be done. Thorough discipline, under a wise teacher, is of more value than the natural aptitude and endowment, where there is no discipline. {CE 139.1}

The Lord has made manifest his appreciation of man, in that he gave his only begotten Son to redeem him. Satan has also manifested his appreciation of well trained and sanctified ability, by the ingenious methods by which he seeks to divert the mind and heart of such an one from the service of God, that he may lead him to join in the ranks of apostasy. Like an angel of light, he comes with his insinuations to draw men into his service; for he knows that an educated man or woman, when not under the control of the Spirit of God, can be of great advantage to him. He will pursue the student with specious temptations, seeking to induce him to take pride in his attainments, and to imagine that he is some great one, that he may trust in himself, and walk in the sparks of his own kindling. Thus he is led to separate his soul from God, the source of all light and knowledge, and, in **order** that he may exalt himself, unite with Satan, the originator of all sin. {CE 139.2}

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of all wisdom; and when God is not depended upon, the result

of education is only to elevate ungodliness. The reason that the church is weak and inefficient is that there is a want of the grace of Christ among those who profess the truth for these last days. If the Lord has ever spoken by me, there is sin of almost every character cherished by many who claim to be children of God; and unless they separate themselves from Satan and cling to Jesus our righteousness, the woe of God will be upon those who have had great light, and yet have chosen to walk in darkness. "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin; Woe unto thee, Bethsaida; for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee." [MATT. 11:20-25.] {CE 140.1}

It is a fearful thing to have great light and blessing, to have many opportunities and privileges, and yet make no saving use of them. Those who do not make a saving use of their opportunities, will be condemned by the privileges God has granted to them; but those who walk in the light will have increased light. Those who have had the light of truth, and yet have failed to walk in the light, are under the same sentence of condemnation as were Chorazin and Bethsaida. Shall not these warnings be heeded? Shall not these admonitions have weight with us? In the near future it will be seen just who have been walking humbly with God, and who have been obeying his orders. Those who have been walking in the sparks of their own kindling will lie down in sorrow. It will be seen that they have made a terrible mistake. O let us awake! light is now shining; let the windows of the mind and heart be open to welcome the heaven-sent rays. Shall Jesus say of those who profess to obey the truth, and yet who fail to walk in its light, "In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them"? [MATT. 13:14, 15.] --MS.

As our numbers increased, it was evident that without some form of **organization** there would be great confusion, and the work would not be carried forward successfully. To provide for the support of the ministry, for carrying the work in new fields, for protecting both the churches and the ministry from unworthy members, for holding church property, for the publication of the truth through the press, and for many other objects, **organization** was indispensable. {CET 195.2}

Yet there was strong feeling against it among our people. The First-day Adventists were opposed to **organization**, and most of the Seventh-day Adventists entertained the same ideas. We sought the Lord with earnest prayer that we might understand His will, and light was given by His Spirit, that there must be **order** and thorough discipline in the church,--that **organization** was essential. System and **order** are manifest in all the works of God throughout the universe. **order** is the law of heaven, and it should be the law of God's people on the earth. {CET 195.3}

ENTERING UPON NEW ENTERPRISES

We had a hard struggle in establishing **organization**. Notwithstanding that the Lord gave testimony after testimony upon this point, the opposition was strong, and it had to be met again and again. But we

knew that the Lord God of Israel was leading us, and guiding by His providence. We engaged in the work of **organization**, and marked prosperity attended this advance movement. {CET 195.4}

As the development of the work called upon us to engage in new enterprises, we were prepared to enter upon them. The Lord directed our minds to the importance of the educational work. We saw the need of schools, that our children might receive instruction free from the errors of false philosophy, that their training might be in harmony with the principles of the word of God. The need of a health institution had been urged upon us, both for the help and instruction of our own people and as a means of blessing and enlightenment to others. This enterprise also was carried forward. All this was missionary work of the highest **order**. {CET 197.1}

THE RESULTS OF UNITED EFFORT

Our work was not sustained by large gifts or legacies; for we have few wealthy men among us. What is the secret of our prosperity? We have moved under the orders of the Captain of our salvation. God has blessed our united efforts. The truth has spread and flourished. Institutions have multiplied. The mustard seed has grown to a great tree. The system of **organization** has proved a grand success. Systematic benevolence was entered into according to the Bible plan. The body "has been compacted by that which every joint supplieth." As we have advanced, our system of **organization** has still proved effectual. {CET 197.2}

Let none entertain the thought that we can dispense with **organization**. It has cost us much study and many prayers for wisdom that we know God has answered, to erect this structure. It has been built up by His direction, through much sacrifice and conflict. Let none of our brethren be so deceived as to attempt to tear it down, for you will thus bring in a condition of things that you do not dream of. In the name of the Lord I declare to you that it is to stand, strengthened, established, and settled. At God's command, "Go forward," we advanced when the difficulties to be surmounted made the advance seem impossible. We know how much it has cost to work out God's plans in the past, which have made us as a people what we are. Then let everyone be exceedingly careful not to unsettle minds in regard to those things that God has ordained for our prosperity and success in advancing His cause. {CET 197.3}

Angels work harmoniously. Perfect **order** characterizes all their movements. The more closely we imitate the harmony and **order** of the angelic host, the more successful will be the efforts of these heavenly agents in our behalf. If we see no necessity for harmonious action, and are **disorderly**, undisciplined, and **disorganized** in our course of action, angels, who are thoroughly **organized** and move in perfect **order**, cannot work for us successfully. They turn away in grief, for they are not authorized to bless confusion, distraction, and **disorganization**. All who desire the co-operation of the heavenly messengers, must work in unison with them. Those who have the unction from on high, will in all their efforts encourage **order**, discipline, and union of action, and then the angels of God can cooperate with them. But never, never will these heavenly messengers place their endorsement upon irregularity, **disorganization**, and **disorder**. All these evils are the result of Satan's efforts to weaken our forces, to destroy our courage, and prevent successful action. {CET 199.1}

Satan well knows that success can only attend **order** and harmonious action. He well knows that everything connected with Heaven is in perfect **order**, that subjection and perfect discipline mark the movements of the angelic host. It is his studied effort to lead professed Christians just as far from Heaven's arrangement as he can; therefore he deceives even the professed people of God, and makes them believe that **order** and discipline are enemies to spirituality; that the only safety for them is to let

each pursue his own course, and to remain especially distinct from bodies of Christians who are united, and are laboring to establish discipline and harmony of action. All the efforts made to establish **order** are considered dangerous, a restriction of rightful liberty, and hence are feared as popery. These devoted souls consider it a virtue to boast of their freedom to think and act independently. They will not take any man's say-so. They are amenable to no man. I was shown that it is Satan's special work to lead men to feel that it is God's order for them to strike out for themselves, and choose their own course, independent of their brethren. {CET 201.1}

We have an army of youth today who can do much if they are properly directed and encouraged. We want our children to believe the truth. We want them to be blessed of God. We want them to act a part in **well-organized plans for helping other youth**. Let all be so trained that they may rightly represent the truth, giving the reason of the hope that is within them, and honoring God in any branch of the work where they are qualified to labor. . . . {CET 205.1}

The vineyard includes the whole world, and every part of it is to be worked. There are places which are now a moral wilderness, and these are to become as the garden of the Lord. The waste places of the earth are to be cultivated, that they may bud and blossom as the rose. New territories are to be worked by men inspired by the Holy Spirit. New churches must be established, new congregations **organized**. At this time there should be representatives of present truth in every city, and in the remote parts of the earth. The whole earth is to be illuminated with the glory of God's truth. The light is to shine to all lands and all peoples. And it is from those who have received the light that it is to shine forth. The day-star has risen upon us, and we are to flash its light upon the pathway of those in darkness. {CET 220.1}

Lord's Business Demands **order**--The Lord is not pleased with the present lack of **order** and accuracy among those who do business in connection with His work. Even in the business meetings of the conference, much time could be saved and many mistakes avoided, by a little more study and punctuality. Everything that bears any relation to the work of God should be as nearly perfect as human brains and hands can make it.--Gospel Workers, p. 460. {ChL 1.4}

A Council of Men--Not Just One Man--It has been a necessity to **organize** union conferences, that the General Conference shall not exercise dictation over all the separate conferences. The power vested in the Conference is not to be centered in one man, or two men, or six men; there is to be a council of men over the separate divisions. The showing by the past leadership of the conference is not after God's **order**. There has been a work done of a character that has not been approved of God. The result we have before us in the ruins where once stood that large printing plant, [The Review and Herald Office in Battle Creek] with its expensive facilities {ChL 26.1}

In the work of God no kingly authority is to be exercised by any human being, or by two or three. The representatives of the Conference, as it has been carried with authority for the last twenty years, shall be no longer justified in saying, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we." The men in positions of trust have not been carrying the work wisely. {ChL 26.2}

The Lord calls for wise men to preside over His work and to be faithful shepherds of His flock.--Manuscript 26, 1903 (April 3, 1903 Re: The Work of the General Conference). {ChL 26.3}

Chap. 1 - God's Call to Service

Depending on Human Agents

As His representatives among men, God does not choose angels who have never fallen, but human beings, men of like passions with those they seek to save. Christ took humanity that He might reach humanity. A divine-human Saviour was needed to bring salvation to the world. And to men and women has been committed the sacred trust of making known "the unsearchable riches of Christ."-- The Acts of the Apostles, p. 134. {ChS 7.1}

Look upon the touching scene. Behold the Majesty of heaven surrounded by the twelve whom He has chosen. He is about to set them apart for their work. By these feeble agencies, through His Word and Spirit, He designs to place salvation within the reach of all.--The Acts of the Apostles, p. 18. {ChS 7.2}

"Send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon." Thus God gave evidence of His regard for the gospel ministry and for His **organized** church. The angel was not commissioned to tell Cornelius the story of the cross. A man subject, even as the centurion himself, to human frailties and temptations, was to be the one to tell him of the crucified and risen Saviour.--The Acts of the Apostles, p. 134. {ChS 7.3}

The angel sent to Philip could himself have done the work for the Ethiopian, but this is not God's way of working. It is His plan that men are to work for their fellow men.--The Acts of the Apostles, p. 109. {ChS 7.4}

"We have this treasure," the apostle continued, "in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." God could have proclaimed His truth through sinless angels, but this is not His plan. He chooses human beings, men compassed with infirmity, as instruments in the working out of His designs. The priceless treasure is placed in earthen vessels. Through men His blessings are to be conveyed to the world. Through them His glory is to shine forth into the darkness of sin. In loving ministry they are to meet the sinful and the needy, and lead them to the cross. And in all their work, they are to ascribe glory, honor, and praise to Him who is above all and over all.--The Acts of the Apostles, p. 330. {ChS 7.5}

It was the Saviour's purpose that after He ascended to heaven to become man's intercessor, His followers should carry on the work that He had begun. Shall the human agent show no special interest in giving the light of the gospel message to those who sit in darkness? There are some who are willing to go to the ends of the earth in order to carry the light of truth to men, but God demands that every soul who knows the truth shall seek to win others to the love of the truth. If we are not willing to make special sacrifices in order to save souls that are ready to perish, how can we be counted worthy to enter into the city of God?--Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 103. {ChS 8.1}

In His wisdom the Lord brings those who are seeking for truth into touch with fellow beings who know the truth. It is the plan of Heaven that those who have received light shall impart it to those in darkness. Humanity, drawing its efficiency from the great Source of wisdom, is made the instrumentality, the working agency, through which the gospel exercises its transforming power on mind and heart.--The Acts of the Apostles, p. 134. {ChS 8.2}

God could have reached His object in saving sinners without our aid; but in order for us to develop a character like Christ's, we must share in His work. In order to enter into His joy,--the joy of seeing souls redeemed by His sacrifice,--we must participate in His labors for their redemption.--The Desire of Ages, p. 142. {ChS 8.3}

As His representatives among men, Christ does not choose angels who have never fallen, but human beings, men of like passions with those they seek to save. Christ took upon Himself humanity, that He might reach humanity. Divinity needed humanity; for it required both the divine and the human to bring salvation to the world. Divinity needed humanity, that humanity might afford a channel of communication between God and man.--The Desire of Ages, p. 296. {ChS 8.4}

With almost impatient eagerness the angels wait for our co-operation; for man must be the channel to communicate with man. And when we give ourselves to Christ in whole-hearted devotion, angels rejoice that they may speak through our voices to reveal God's love.--The Desire of Ages, p. 297. {ChS 9.1}

We must be laborers together with God; for God will not complete His work without human agencies.--Review and Herald, March 1, 1887. {ChS 9.2}