

Order the Foundation of God's Throne

Order and Organization

Adam was informed that an angel's life could not pay the debt. The **law** of Jehovah, the **foundation** of His government in heaven and upon earth, was as sacred as God Himself; and for this reason the life of an angel could not be accepted of God as a sacrifice for its transgression. His law is of more importance in His sight than the holy angels around His throne. The Father could not abolish or change one precept of His law to meet man in his fallen condition. But the Son of God, who had in unison with the Father created man, could make an atonement for man acceptable to God, by giving His life a sacrifice and bearing the wrath of His Father. Angels informed Adam that, as his transgression had brought death and wretchedness, life and immortality would be brought to light through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. {SR 48.1}

Order is heaven's first law, and the Lord desires His people to give in their homes a representation of the order and harmony that pervade the heavenly courts. Truth never places her delicate feet in a path of uncleanness or impurity. Truth does not make men and women coarse or rough and untidy. It raises all who accept it to a high level. Under Christ's influence, a work of constant refinement goes on. {CH 101.1}

Nehemiah's Day a Symbol

The spiritual restoration of which the work carried forward in Nehemiah's day was a symbol, is outlined in the words of Isaiah: "They shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities." "They that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in." Isaiah 61:4; 58:12. {PK 677.2}

The prophet here describes a people who, in a time of general departure from truth and righteousness, are seeking to restore the principles that are the foundation of the kingdom of God. They are repairers of a breach that has been made in God's law--the wall that He has placed around His chosen ones for their protection, and obedience to whose precepts of justice, truth, and purity is to be their perpetual safeguard. {PK 677.3}

In words of unmistakable meaning the prophet points out the specific work of this remnant people who build the wall. "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding

thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isaiah 58:13, 14. {PK 678.1}

In the time of the end **every divine institution is to be restored**. The breach made in the law at the time the Sabbath was changed by man, is to be repaired. God's remnant people, standing before the world as reformers, are to show that the law of God is the foundation of all enduring reform and that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is to stand as a memorial of creation, a constant reminder of the power of God. In clear, distinct lines they are to present the necessity of obedience to all the precepts of the Decalogue. Constrained by the love of Christ, they are to co-operate with Him in building up the waste places. They are to be repairers of the breach, restorers of paths to dwell in. See verse 12. {PK 678.2}

Organization is a Law of Heaven (A Divine Institution)

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}

Organization Introduced Among Adventists

It is nearly forty years since organization was introduced among us as a people. [THIS STATEMENT WAS MADE IN THE SPRING OF 1902.] I was one of the number who had an experience in establishing it from the first. I know the difficulties that had to be met, the evils which it was designed to correct, and I have watched its influence in connection with the growth of the cause. At an early stage in the work, God gave us special light upon this point, and this light, together with the lessons that experience has taught us, should be carefully considered. {CET 192.1}

My husband, with Elders Joseph Bates, Stephen Pierce, Hiram Edson, and others who were keen, noble, and true, was among those who, after the passing of the time in 1844, searched for the truth as for hidden treasure. {CET 192.3}

We would come together burdened in soul, praying that we might be one in faith and doctrine; for we knew that Christ is not divided. One point at a time was made the subject of investigation. The Scriptures were opened with a sense of awe. Often

we fasted, that we might be better fitted to understand the truth. After earnest prayer, if any point was not understood, it was discussed and each one expressed his opinion freely; then we would again bow in prayer, and earnest supplications went up to heaven that God would help us to see eye to eye, that we might be one, as Christ and the Father are one. Many tears were shed. {CET 192.4}

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}

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}

We Must not Dispense with Organization

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 co-operate 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}

Success can Only Attend Order

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 are to be United in the Faith and Views

God is leading a people out from the world upon the exalted platform of eternal truth, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. He will discipline and fit up His people. They will not be at variance, one believing one thing, and another having faith and views entirely opposite; each moving independently of the body. Through the diversity of the gifts and governments that He has placed in the church, they will all come to the unity of the faith. If one man takes his views of Bible truth without regard to the opinion of his brethren, and justifies his course, alleging that he has a right to his own peculiar views, and then presses them upon others, how can he be fulfilling the prayer of Christ? And if another and still another arises, each asserting his right to believe and talk what he pleases, without reference to the faith of the body, where will be that harmony which existed between Christ and His Father, and which Christ prayed might exist among His brethren? {CET 201.2}

Doctrines to be Tested

Though we have an individual work and an individual responsibility before God,

we are not to follow our own independent judgment, regardless of the opinions and feelings of our brethren; for this course would lead to disorder in the church. It is the duty of ministers to respect the judgment of their brethren; but their relations to one another, as well as the doctrines they teach, should be brought to the test of the law and the testimony; then, if hearts are teachable, there will be no divisions among us. Some are inclined to be disorderly, and are drifting away from the great landmarks of the faith; but God is moving upon His ministers to be one in doctrine and in spirit. {CET 203.1}

It is necessary that our unity today be of a character that will bear the test of trial. . . We have many lessons to learn, and many, many to unlearn. God and Heaven alone are infallible. Those who think that they will never have to give up a cherished view, never have occasion to change an opinion, will be disappointed. As long as we hold to our own ideas and opinions with determined persistency, we cannot have the unity for which Christ prayed. {CET 203.2}

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First Step in Organization – Ordination of Elders

It was at the ordination of the Twelve that the first step was taken in the organization of the church that after Christ's departure was to carry on His work on the earth. Of this ordination the record says, "He goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto Him whom He would: and they came unto Him. And He ordained twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach." Mark 3:13, 14. {AA 18.1}

Better Organization – Ordination of Deacons

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}

Necessity of Unity

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}

Jerusalem Organization a Model – Elders Have Responsibility to Feed the Flock, Deacons to Uphold them and the Truth

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}

Further Perfection of Organization – Distribution of Responsibilities

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}

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." I 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}

Organization not to be Everything

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}

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 disorganization. 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 disorganized because of indifference, formality, and pride? Shall we go back to disorder 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}

Nehemiah's Forethought and Attention to Detail

His request to the king had been so favorably received that Nehemiah was encouraged to ask for still further assistance. To give dignity and authority to his mission, as well as to provide protection on the journey, he asked for and secured a military escort. He obtained royal letters to the governors of the provinces beyond the Euphrates, the territory through which he must pass on his way to Judea; and he obtained, also, a letter to the keeper of the king's forest in the mountains of Lebanon, directing him to furnish such timber as would be needed. That there might be no occasion for complaint that he had exceeded his commission, Nehemiah was **careful to have the authority and privileges accorded him, clearly defined.** {PK 633.2}

This example of wise **forethought** and resolute action should be a lesson to all Christians. God's children are not only to pray in faith, but to work with diligent and provident care. They encounter many difficulties and often hinder the working of Providence in their behalf, because they regard prudence and painstaking effort as

having little to do with religion. Nehemiah did not regard his duty done when he had wept and prayed before the Lord. He united his petitions with holy endeavor, putting forth earnest, prayerful efforts for the success of the enterprise in which he was engaged. Careful consideration and well-matured plans are as essential to the carrying forward of sacred enterprises today as in the time of the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls. {PK 633.3}

Nehemiah **did not depend upon uncertainty**. The means that he lacked he solicited from those who were able to bestow. And the Lord is still willing to move upon the hearts of those in possession of His goods, in behalf of the cause of truth. Those who labor for Him are to avail themselves of the help that He prompts men to give. These gifts may open ways by which the light of truth shall go to many benighted lands. The donors may have no faith in Christ, no acquaintance with His word; but their gifts are not on this account to be refused. {PK 634.1}

Proper Authority to be Exercised

This state of things might have been prevented had the **rulers exercised their authority**; but a desire to advance their own interests had led them to favor the ungodly. Nehemiah fearlessly rebuked them for their neglect of duty. "What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day?" he sternly demanded. "Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath." He then gave command that "when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the Sabbath," they should be shut, and not opened again till the Sabbath was past; and having more confidence in his own servants than in those that the magistrates of Jerusalem might appoint, he stationed them at the gates to see that his orders were enforced. {PK 671.2}

The guilty sons of Eli were slain in battle. He could endure to hear that his sons were slain, but he could not bear the news that the ark of God was taken. He knew that his sin of neglect in failing to stand for the right and restrain wrong had at last deprived Israel of her strength and glory. The pallor of death came upon his face, and he fell backward and died. {GW92 83.1}

What a lesson have we here for parents and guardians of youth, and for those who minister in the service of God. When existing evils are not met and checked, because men have too little courage to reprove wrong, or because they have too little interest or are too indolent to tax their own powers in putting forth earnest efforts to purify the family or the church of God, they are accountable for the evil which may result in consequence of neglect to do their duty. We are just as accountable for evils that we might have checked in others, by reproof, by warning, by **exercise of parental or pastoral authority**, as if we were guilty of the acts ourselves. {GW92 83.2}

Eli should have first attempted to restrain evil by mild measures; but if that would not avail, he should have subdued the wrong by the sternest measures. God's honor must be sacredly preserved, even if it separates us from the nearest relative. One defect in a man otherwise talented may destroy his usefulness in this life, and cause

him to hear in the day of God the unwelcome words, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." [MATT. 7:23.] {GW92 83.3}

Eli was gentle, loving, and kind, and had a true interest in the service of God and the prosperity of his cause. He was a man who had power in prayer. He never rose up in rebellion against the words of God. But he was wanting; he **did not have firmness of character to reprove sin and execute justice against the sinner**, so that God could depend upon him to keep Israel pure. He did not add to his faith the courage and power to say "No" at the right time and in the right place. Sin is sin; righteousness is righteousness. The trumpet note of warning must be sounded. We are living in a fearfully wicked age. The worship of God will become corrupted unless there are wide-awake men at every post of duty. It is no time now for any to be absorbed in selfish ease. Not one of the words which God has spoken must be allowed to fall to the ground.--Vol. 4, p. 513. {GW92 83.4}

Danger of False Sympathizers

I was pointed back, and saw that in every important move, every decision made or point gained by God's people, some have arisen to carry matters to extremes, and to move in an extravagant manner, which has disgusted unbelievers, distressed God's people, and brought the cause of God into disrepute. The people whom God is leading out in these last days will be troubled with just such things. But much evil will be avoided if the ministers of Christ will be of **one mind**, united in their plans of action, and united in effort. If they will stand together, sustain one another, and faithfully reprove and rebuke wrong, they will soon cause it to wither. But Satan has controlled these matters very much. Private members and even preachers have **sympathized** with disaffected ones who have been reproved for their wrongs, and division of feeling has been the result. The one who has ventured out and discharged his disagreeable duty by faithfully meeting error and wrong, is grieved and wounded that he receives not the fullest sympathy of his preaching brethren. He becomes discouraged in discharging these painful duties, lays down the cross, and withholds the pointed testimony. His soul is shut up in darkness, and the church suffers for the lack of the very testimony which God designed should live among his people. Satan's object is gained when the faithful testimony is suppressed. Those who so readily sympathize with the wrong, consider it a virtue; but they realize not that they are exerting a scattering influence, and that they themselves help to carry out Satan's plans. {GW92 84.1}

I saw that many souls have been destroyed because their **brethren unwisely sympathized** with them, when their only hope was to be left to see and realize the full extent of their wrongs. But as they eagerly accept the sympathy of unwise brethren, they receive the idea that they are abused; and if they attempt to retrace their steps, they make half-hearted work. They divide the matter to suit their natural feelings, lay blame upon the reprove, and so patch up the matter. It is not probed to the bottom, and is not healed, and they again fall into the same wrong, because they were not left to feel the extent of their wrong, and humble themselves before God and

let him build them up. False sympathizers have worked in direct opposition to the mind of Christ and ministering angels. {GW92 85.1}

Ministers of Christ should arise and engage in the work of God with all their energies. God's servants are not excused if they shun pointed testimony. They should reprove and rebuke wrong, and not suffer sin upon a brother.-- Vol. 1, p. 212. {GW92 85.2}

Promptness

Sometimes various ways and purposes, different modes of operation in connection with the work of God, are about evenly balanced in the mind; but it is at this very point that the nicest discrimination is necessary. And if anything is accomplished to the purpose, it must be done at the golden moment. The slightest inclination of the weight in the balance should be seen, and should determine the matter at once. Long delays tire the angels. It is even more excusable to make a wrong decision sometimes than to be continually in a wavering position; to be hesitating, sometimes inclined in one direction, then in another. More perplexity and wretchedness result from thus hesitating and doubting than from sometimes moving too hastily. {GW92 97.2}

I have been shown that the most signal victories and the most fearful defeats have been on the turn of minutes. God requires promptness of action. Delays, doubtings, hesitation, and indecision frequently give the enemy every advantage. . . . {GW92 97.3}

The timing of things may tell much in favor of truth. Victories are frequently lost through delays. There will be crises in this cause. Prompt and decisive action at the right time will gain glorious triumphs, while delay and neglect will result in great failures and positive dishonor to God. Rapid movements at the critical moment often disarm the enemy, and he is disappointed and vanquished, for he had expected time to lay plans and work by artifice. {GW92 97.4}

God wants men connected with his work in Battle Creek whose judgment is at hand, whose minds, when it is necessary, will act like the lightning. The greatest promptness is positively necessary in the hour of peril and danger. Every plan may be well laid to accomplish certain results, and yet a delay of a very short time may leave things to assume an entirely different shape, and the great objects which might have been gained are lost through lack of quick foresight and prompt dispatch. Much may be done in training the mind to overcome indolence. There are times when caution and great deliberation are necessary; rashness would be folly. But even here, much has been lost by too great hesitancy. Caution, up to a certain point, is required; but hesitancy and policy on particular occasions have been more disastrous than would have been a failure through rashness.--Vol. 3, p. 496. {GW92 97.5}

Organization Near the Close of Time

Some have advanced the thought that as we near the close of time, every child of

God will act independently of any religious organization. But I have been instructed by the Lord that in this work there is no such thing as every man's being independent. The stars of heaven are all under law, each influencing the other to do the will of God, yielding their common obedience to the law that controls their action. And, in order that the Lord's work may advance healthfully and solidly, His people must draw together. {GW 487.2}

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}

On the other hand, the leaders among God's people are to guard against the danger of condemning the methods of individual workers who are led by the Lord to do a special work that but few are fitted to do. Let brethren in responsibility be slow to criticize movements that are not in perfect harmony with their methods of labor. Let them never suppose that every plan should reflect their own personality. Let them not fear to trust another's methods; for by withholding their confidence from a brother laborer who, with humility and consecrated zeal, is doing a special work in God's appointed way, they are retarding the advancement of the Lord's cause. {GW 488.2}

God can and will use those who have not had a thorough education in the schools of men. A doubt of His power to do this, is manifest unbelief; it is limiting the omnipotent power of the One with whom nothing is impossible. O for less of this uncalled-for, distrustful caution! It leaves so many forces of the church unused; it closes up the way, so that the Holy Spirit cannot use men; it keeps in idleness those who are willing and anxious to labor in Christ's lines; it discourages from entering the work many who would become efficient laborers together with God, if they were given a fair chance. {GW 488.3}

To the prophet, the wheel within a wheel, the appearance of living creatures connected with them, all seemed intricate and unexplainable. But the hand of Infinite Wisdom is seen among the wheels, and perfect order is the result of its work. Every wheel, directed by the hand of God, works in perfect harmony with every other wheel. I have been shown that human instrumentalities are liable to seek after too

much power, and try to control the work themselves. They leave the Lord God, the mighty Worker, too much out of their methods and plans, and do not trust to Him everything in regard to the advancement of the work. No one should for a moment fancy that he is able to manage those things that belong to the great I AM. God in His providence is preparing a way so that the work may be done by human agents. Then let every man stand at his post of duty, to act his part for this time, and know that God is his instructor. {GW 489.1}

What is 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" (Matt. 18:20). 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. {UL 315.5}

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}

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}

Another obligation, too often lightly regarded,--one that to the youth awakened to the claims of Christ needs to be made plain,--is the **obligation of church relationship**. {Ed 268.4}

Very close and sacred is the relation between Christ and His church--He the bridegroom, and the church the bride; He the head, and the church the body. Connection with Christ, then, involves connection with His church. {Ed 268.5}

The **church is organized for service**; and in a life of service to Christ, connection with the church is one of the first steps. Loyalty to Christ demands the faithful

performance of **church duties**. This is an important part of one's training; and in a church imbued with the Master's life, it will lead directly to effort for the world without. {Ed 268.6}

Care for Those Who Have Pioneered the Work

Consideration for Those Struggling with Difficulties

For years a lack of wisdom has been shown in dealing with men who take up and carry forward the Lord's work in difficult places. Often these men labor far beyond their strength. They have little money to invest for the advancement of the work, and they are obliged to sacrifice in order to carry the work forward. They work for small wages, and practice the strictest economy. They make appeals to the people for means, and they themselves set an example of liberality. They give God the praise for what is done, realizing that He is the author and the finisher of their faith, and that it is by His power that they are enabled to make progress. {GW 491.1}

Sometimes, after these workers have borne the burden and the heat of the day, and by patient, persevering effort have established a school or a sanitarium, or some other interest for the advancement of the work, the decision is made by their brethren that some other man might do better, and therefore that he is to take charge of the work they have been doing. In some cases the decision is made without giving due consideration and due credit to those who have borne the disagreeable part of the work, who have labored, and prayed, and striven, putting into their efforts all their strength and energy. {GW 491.2}

God is not pleased with this way of dealing with His workers. He calls upon His people to hold up the hands of those who build up the work in new and difficult places, speaking to them words of cheer and encouragement. {GW 491.3}

In their ardor, their zeal for the advancement of the cause, these workers may make mistakes. They may, in their desire to get means for the support of needy enterprises, enter into projects that are not for the best good of the work. The Lord, seeing that these projects would divert them from what He desires them to do, permits disappointment to come upon them, crushing their hopes. Money is sacrificed, and this is a great grief to those who had fondly hoped to gain means for the support of the cause. {GW 492.1}

While the workers were straining every nerve to raise means to help them over an emergency, some of their brethren were standing by, criticizing and surmising evil, putting a prejudicial construction on the motives of the heavily burdened laborers, and making their work more difficult. Blinded by selfishness, these faultfinders did not discern that their brethren were sufficiently afflicted without the censure of men who had not borne heavy burdens and responsibilities. Disappointment is a great trial, but Christian love can turn the defeat into victory. Reverses will teach caution. We

learn by the things we suffer. Thus we gain experience. {GW 492.2}

Let care and wisdom be shown in dealing with workers who, though they have made mistakes, have manifested an earnest, self-sacrificing interest in the work. Let their brethren say, "We will not make matters worse by putting another in your place, without giving you opportunity to retrieve your mistake, and to stand on vantage-ground, free from the burden of unjust criticism." Let them be given time to adjust themselves, to overcome the difficulties surrounding them, and to stand before angels and men as worthy workers. They have made mistakes, but would those who have questioned and criticized have done better? To the accusing Pharisees Christ said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone." [JOHN 8:7.] {GW 492.3}

There are those who are premature in their desire to reform things that to them appear faulty. They think that they should be chosen to take the place of those who have made mistakes. They undervalue what these workers have done while others were looking on and criticizing. By their actions they say: "I can do great things. I can carry the work forward successfully." To those who think they know so well how to avoid mistakes, I am instructed to say, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." [MATT. 7:1.] You might avoid mistakes on some points, but on other things you are liable to make grave blunders, which would be very difficult to remedy, and which would bring confusion into the work. These mistakes might do more harm than those your brethren have made. {GW 493.1}

The instruction given me is that the men who lay the foundation of a work, and who, in the face of prejudice, fight their way forward, are not to be placed in an unfavorable light, in order that others may take their places. There are earnest workers who, in spite of the criticisms of some of their brethren, have moved forward in the work that God said should be done. Should they now be removed from their position of responsibility, an impression would be made that would be unjust to them, and unfavorable to the work, because the changes made would be looked upon as a justification of the unjust criticisms made and the prejudice existing. The Lord desires that no move shall be made which would do injustice to those who have labored long and earnestly to build up the work given them. {GW 493.2}

Many changes are made that might better never be made. Often, when workers become discontented, instead of being encouraged to stay where they are and make a success of their work, they are sent to another place. But they take with them the same traits of character that in the past have marred their work. They will manifest the same unchristlike spirit; for they have not learned the lesson of patient, humble service. {GW 494.1}

I plead for a different order of things. Changes must be made in the groups of workers in our conferences and institutions. Men of efficiency and consecration must be sought for and encouraged to connect with the burden-bearers as helpers and co-laborers. Let there be a harmonious union of the new and the old, in the spirit of

brotherly love. But let not changes of management be made abruptly, in such a way as to bring discouragement to those who have labored earnestly and successfully to bring the work to a degree of progress. God will not sanction anything done to discourage His faithful servants. Let the principles of justice be followed by those whose duty it is to secure the most efficient management for our publishing houses, our sanitariums, and our schools. {GW 494.2}