

From the G.C. President

July 7, 1997

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O SPECIAL NOTICE for those who are “Online” but who are receiving *From the G.C. President (FTP)* by fax:

From the G.C. President will soon be distributed by E-mail to those using this technology. We will still fax it to church organizations and institutions around the world for distribution to their pastors, teachers and office staff. But, if you are now receiving *FTP* by fax, efficiency, immediacy, cost-containment and the option of high-quality camera-ready copy, makes E-mail the preferred delivery system for those having this option.

If you are currently receiving *FTP* by fax, but would prefer to receive it by E-mail please send us the following information: (1) your name, position and/or organization/institution with which you are involved, (2) your telephone number, (3) your E-mail address, (4) the fax number at which you are currently receiving *FTP* (so we can discontinue fax delivery to that number), and (5) indicate your preferred format—a Adobe Acrobat (camera-ready copy), or b) as an ASCII [text] file. Those receiving *FTP* via fax or the Acrobat E-mail version will receive pictures when they are used. Please send this information to the GC Communication Department. (A form is attached for your convenience.)

O ADVENTIST EDUCATION, A GLOBAL MISSION VENTURE:

A successful, if unusual, Global Mission outreach method takes place in Myanmar (formerly Burma). The educational expenses of carefully selected students from non-Christian homes in unentered areas are sponsored by Global Mission. Nearly 100 percent of these students become Seventh-day Adventists, go back to their homes to share their faith, and lead souls to Christ in extremely difficult areas.

Than Zaw Oo comes from the Akha tribe of Shen state, perhaps the most “undeveloped” tribe in Myanmar, with no Christians among them. Their livelihood depends on growing opium. Than Zaw Oo’s aunt and mother became Seventh-day Adventists, and Pastor Andrew arranged for him to go to the Central Myanmar Adventist Seminary. His teachers say he was “very rough” when he arrived. Today this young man is a baptized Seventh-day Adventist. He plays the guitar, sings and participates in worship and outreach services and now plans to return to his people to start a school and share his faith.

O ADVENTIST REVIEW TELEMARKETING MINISTRY: A team of college and academy students are involved in an *Adventist Review* Telemarketing Ministry at the General Conference headquarters. The goal of these young people is to call every Adventist home in the United States and Canada inviting members to provide a subscription to the *Adventist Review* to new, former or inactive members, as well as renew their own subscriptions (at a slightly reduced cost). A new book, *God Answers Prayer*, written by well-known Adventist authors, is a gift to all who respond by subscribing.

Twelve college and academy age young people began their work on June 16 and have received significant responses. The students recognize that their work is a ministry. As one student put it, “It’s about sharing our lives.” Last week, I had a wonderful experience as I spent a few minutes with the young people, encouraging them of the importance of their

ministry, hearing their experiences, and praying with them. This initiative will not only bless those who subscribe but also the young people who are participating.

Off the Back Burner

Segment #71: Our study and reliance on inspired writings, whether the Bible or the writings of Ellen G. White, leads many to wonder—How do we know for sure that what we are reading is truth? We observe discrepancies in both. Some say they accept these writings but effectively denigrate them to the level of devotional aids, or to the literature penned throughout the ages by the world’s other “inspired” writers and gifted poets. So, what is the basis of our confidence in their authority and relevance?

Obviously, we have no way of measuring either the Bible or the writings of Ellen G. White with absolute, incontrovertible proof that removes all possibility for doubt. Even Jesus Himself, with an impeccable character and whose ministry was validated by many miracles, could persuade few of those who heard Him that He was the Messiah. Think of those who even saw Him after His resurrection (Matt. 28:16) and still doubted! How then can anyone be held responsible for truth if God Himself does not provide us with “foolproof” evidence?

I join those today and through the ages who rest(ed) their confidence on the “weight of evidence.” Further, there is a golden thread of consistency between the faith in Christ, the Word made flesh, and our decision to trust His written Word. The apostle put it succinctly: “But without faith it is impossible to please him ...” (Heb. 11:6). Ellen White affirmed this principle when she wrote: “God never asks us to believe, without giving sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith. His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His Word, are all established by testimony that appeals to our reason; and this testimony is abundant. Yet God has never removed the possibility of doubt. Our faith must rest upon evidence, not demonstration. Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the truth, will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith” (SC:105).

We will discuss in future weeks what is meant by those “appeals to our reason” because clearly these words can be misunderstood. After all, on the basis of reason (they thought) one-third of the angels believed Lucifer that God couldn’t be trusted—and yet they were face-to-face with God Himself! Considering the evidence, how could Lucifer even insinuate that God could not be trusted? There is something about truth and the use of reason that cannot be measured as we would the height of a building or the weight of a child— “those who wish to doubt will have opportunity.” In the next few weeks we will focus on how Ellen White measures up to her claims that she was God’s messenger. What is the weight of evidence?