

All Ye Are Brethren

Part One

Two serious problems developed about the turn of the century. The first was that denominational workers on all levels were looking to leaders to tell them what to do. The second was that leaders in high positions in our conferences and in the General Conference were demanding that all other workers obey their every command—or else.

The Spirit of Prophecy fought this trend resolutely. The warning messages were initially compiled in Special Testimonies, Series A and B. But many of the warnings on these two sub-

jects were later reprinted on pages 320 to 502 of Testimonies to Ministers.

In a companion study entitled “The Ominous Utrecht Agenda,” which we have just released, it is clear that the same two problems are rapidly developing again. Indeed, it is planned that these harmful ideas will be graven in our denominational Constitution and Bylaws! Therefore, we are publishing this compilation of the most crucial of the statements on those pages in Testimonies to Ministers.

We urge you to read this material carefully.

— Section One —

Looking to Battle Creek Instead of to the Lord

“There is altogether too much responsibility imparted to a few men in Battle Creek, and these men need the transforming power of the holy Spirit, else they will lead God’s heritage in false paths. The conferences are watching every move made at the center of the work. The different conferences have been led to look to the leading men at Battle Creek, feeling that no important move can be made without their approval. This tendency has been growing stronger, until it is a serious hindrance to the advancement of the work. This arrangement should never have been. The Lord would have His people under His jurisdiction. They should look to God, inquiring of Him in faith, and follow on to know the working of His providence.

“The arrangement that all moneys must go through Battle Creek and under the control of the few men in that place is a wrong way of managing.

There are altogether too many weighty responsibilities given to a few men, and some do not make God their counselor. What do these men know of the necessities of the work in foreign countries? How can they know how to decide the questions which come to them asking for information? It would require three months for those in foreign countries to receive a response to their questions, even if there was no delay in writing.

“In each country a man should be appointed to work in the general interests of the cause. He need not be a preacher, and he must not be a policy man. He should be unselfish, a man who loves, who honors, and fears his God. His whole time should be devoted to the work. He should plan unselfishly, and in the fear of God. Let him be general agent for that country, and let him be connected with a council composed of the very best men, that they may coun-

sel together, and attend to the work within their borders. There should be business men appointed to do the same in the different states in America.

“The men who act as presidents of state conferences should be carefully selected. Then let these men bear the responsibilities of the conference in a most thorough, earnest God-fearing manner. If they are not qualified to do the work thoroughly and successfully, do not keep them in that position.”—*Testimonies to Ministers, 320:3-322:1*.

“Advice is asked of those in Battle Creek regarding matters which could just as well be settled by men on the ground, if they seek the Lord, and which ought to have been done within their own borders. The Lord declares He is nigh to all that call upon Him with a sincere heart. Said Christ, ‘Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.’ This promise is made doubly and trebly sure. There is no failure with God. Today men who are presidents of conferences are less efficient and strong and able than they should be, because they place men where God should be, and they receive only that which men can give them.

“Presidents of conferences, you will be wise if you will decide to come to God. Believe in Him. He will hear your prayers, and come to your assistance, in much less time than the public conveyances could take one, two, three, or four men from a long distance, at a great expense, to decide questions which the God of wisdom can decide far better for you. He has promised, ‘If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.’ If you will sincerely humble your hearts before Him, empty your souls of self-esteem, and put away the natural defects of your character, and overcome your love of supremacy, and come to God as little children, He will bestow on you His Holy Spirit. When two or three shall agree as touching anything, and shall ask the Lord, in the name of Jesus, it shall be done for them.

“When it is deemed expedient to invest means in school buildings, in sanitariums, or in homes for the poor in any country, in order to establish the work there, the Lord would have those who are living in that locality walk humbly before Him, and show that they realize their personal dependence upon Him, and that they believe in His willingness to help them to plan, to devise, to arrange intelligently for His work. He is as willing to give wisdom to those who feel the value of divine grace, as to give wisdom to some other mind, who will then, at great expense, communicate the same to you. Where is your faith? Will men turn from the God of wisdom

to seek wisdom from finite men, sending for men from a long distance to come and help them out of perplexity? How does the Lord look upon this?”—*Testimonies to Ministers, 323:1-324:1*.

“Daniel sought the Lord three times a day, in earnest prayer for wisdom and strength and courage to carry forward the enterprise of representing the only true God in wicked Babylon. You will often be perplexed to know what to do next; but do not get pen and paper and write your perplexities to Battle Creek. There may be disagreement upon some points, but your Counselor is nigh. Bow before Him, and tell Him of everything you need. Can the men in Battle Creek give you light? They cannot understand your necessity. Because they are not on the ground, they may say “No” to some things, when, had you asked of God, He would have answered, ‘Go forward, and I will be with you, and give you grace.’

“For many years an education has been given to the people which places God second, and man first. The people have been taught that everything must be brought before the council of a few men in Battle Creek. God has given you an opportunity to see the weakness of finite men. Are there not men in different states of America who walk right in the sight of God?

“Are there not registered in the books of heaven the names of those who love and serve God? Cannot they plan? Have those in Battle Creek been given superior reason and wisdom that God will give to those in the churches and state conferences? ‘If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.’

“The churches would realize one hundredfold more of the workings of the Holy Spirit if ministers would educate all to bear in mind that they have a God nigh at hand, and not afar off, and that they can honor God by seeking Him for help and wisdom just where they are. They will then have ability which will strengthen the General Conference.

“There is talent in every place, but it is not always recognized. This talent should be discerned and set to work. Under the operation of the Spirit of God, talent will grow by being used. But God is greatly dishonored when men are placed in the position where God should be. He alone can give unerring counsel.

“Men have been in council in Battle Creek who cannot appreciate the situation of matters in the different localities, as those can who are right on the ground; and it is not wise for men to seek men, and place such dependence in a few men at Battle Creek, some of whom have walked apart from God for

years. To accept the judgment of these men, and to send for them from a long distance to sit in council, has done great dishonor to God. By this you show that you place men, who are unsanctified in heart, where God should be.

“Supposing that some mistakes are made by those in different places, they may be of far less consequence than the errors made by those at the heart of the work. Cannot you go to the great Leader, who is mighty in counsel? and cannot He restore? Cannot He work in your behalf? Will He not do it if you go to Him as little children go to their parents? There is altogether too much lofty sufficiency in the human agent. God cannot work with such an element of pride. If this is not laid down, if self is not humbled, God cannot work. Those who send all their perplexities from the different parts of the word to Battle Creek show the wisdom of men, and not the wisdom of God.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 325:1-327:0.

“Let the presidents of state conferences walk humbly with God, and they will not have occasion to write to the president of the General Conference to leave his work to settle little matters for them. Even many large matters may be carried to God, and God will give counsel in every state conference. The Lord can be approached by all. He is much more accessible than the president of the General Conference. Let the president of the General Conference educate the presidents of state conferences to take care of their portion of the moral vineyard where they are situated wisely, without laying their burdens upon him. Lead these men who have ability and talent to look to God, that they may be taught by Him. Teach them to go to the Fountainhead for instruction in righteousness. Search the Scriptures. ‘All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.’ What, then, is your excuse for turning for counsel from the One who is infinite in wisdom to finite men, who are as weak as yourself?”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 329:2-330:0.

“The president of our General Conference has been left to gather to himself burdens which God has not laid upon him, and the things that he has tried to do could not be done wisely and well.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 341:1.

“Let me entreat out state conferences and our churches to cease putting their dependence upon men and making flesh their arm. Look not to other men to see how they conduct themselves under the

conviction of the truth, or to ask them for aid. Look not to men in high positions of responsibility for strength, for they are the very men who are in danger of considering a position of responsibility as evidence of God’s special power. Our churches are weak because the members are educated to look to and depend upon human resources, and thousands of dollars are needlessly expended in transporting finite men from one place to another, in order that they may settle little difficulties, when Jesus is ever near to help those who are needy and distressed.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 380:2.

“Oh, if those in the various fields, in America and all over the world, were working according to the Bible rule, and were striving to uproot selfishness, what a work would be accomplished for the church! But sins which have from time to time been pointed out are lying at the door of many, sins which the Lord regards as of no light character. If men would only give up their spirit of resistance to the Holy Spirit,—the spirit which has long been leaving their religious experience, God’s spirit would address itself to their hearts. It would convince of sin. What a work! But the Holy Spirit has been insulted, and light has been rejected. Is it possible for those who for years have been so blinded, to see? Is it possible that in this late stage of their resistance their eyes will be anointed? Will the voice of the Spirit of God be distinguished from the deceiving voice of the enemy?

“There are men who will soon evidence which banner they are standing under, the banner of the Prince of life, or the banner of the prince of darkness. If they could only see these matters as they are presented to me, if they could see that, as far as their souls are concerned, they are as men standing on the brink of a precipice, ready to slide over to the depths below, I do not think they would stand trembling on the brink another instant, if they had any regard for their salvation.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 393:1-394:0.

“Even in the midst of the great deceptions of the last days, when delusive miracles will be performed in the sight of men in behalf of satanic theories, it is our privilege to hide ourselves in Christ Jesus. It is possible for us to seek and to obtain salvation. And in this time of unusual peril, we must learn to stand alone, our faith fixed, not on the word of man, but on the sure promises of God.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 490:2.

We now come to the second section of this Spirit of Prophecy appeal to our people. The two sections dovetail together.

— Section Two —

The Rule or Ruin Spirit

Lording it over the heritage

“I must speak to my brethren nigh and afar off. I cannot hold my peace. They are not working on correct principles. Those who stand in responsible positions must not feel that their position of importance makes them men of infallible judgement.

“All the works of men are under the Lord’s jurisdiction. It will be altogether safe for men to consider that there is knowledge with the Most High. Those who trust in God and His wisdom, and not in their own, are walking in safe paths. They will never feel that they are authorized to muzzle even the ox that treads out the grain; and how offensive it is for men to control the human agent who is in partnership with God, and whom the Lord Jesus has invited: ‘Come unto Me, all ye that *labor* and are *heavy-laden*, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.’ ‘We are laborers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building.’ ”

“The Lord has not placed any one of His human agencies under the dictation and control of those who are themselves but erring mortals. He has not placed upon men the power to say, You shall do this, and you shall not do that. But there is a power exercised in Battle Creek that God has not given, and He will judge those who assume this authority. They have somewhat of the same spirit that led Uzzah to lay his hand on the ark to steady it, as though God was not able to care for His sacred symbols. Far less of man’s power and authority should be exercised toward God’s human agencies. Brethren, leave God to rule.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 347:1-348:0.

“The great work for this time demands that men shall go everywhere, nigh and afar off, into the highways and hedges, to diffuse light, holding forth the words of life. Has God laid upon one man or a council of men to take this work into their hands, as

though the workers, God’s own property, were to be under their control?

“The business connected with the work of God in any and every branch, requires men who are working in harmony with God; for power and success in the work can be attained only through the co-operation of the human and the divine. Without the best of evidence that one understands heavenly and eternal things, he should not be authorized to minister in matters connected with the work that concerns the salvation of souls for whom Christ has died. Unsanctified hands and brains have had altogether too much power entrusted to them, and very unwise moves have been made, that are not in accordance with the will and ways of God.

“No man is a proper judge of another man’s duty. Man is responsible to God; and as finite, erring men take into their hands the jurisdiction of their fellow men, as if the Lord commissioned them to lift up and cast down, all heaven is filled with indignation. There are strange principles being established in regard to the control of the minds and works of men, by human judges, as though these finite men were gods.

“And how is it with some who are bearing these sacred responsibilities? Men who are not spiritually minded, who are not consecrated to God, have no commission to perform, nor authority to exercise, in regard to the willing or doing of their fellow men. But unless men are daily in communion with God, instead of seeking Him with all their heart for a fitness for the work, they will assume the power of dictation over the consciences of others. A sense of the divine presence would awe and subdue the soul, but this they have not. Without the love of God burning in the soul, love to men grows cold. Their hearts

Continued on the next tract

More *WAYMARKS* - from —
PILGRIMS REST

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Part Two

Continued from the preceding tract in this series

are not touched at the sight of human woe. Selfishness has left its defiling imprint on the life and character, and some will never lose this image and superscription.

“Is the working of the cause of God to be entrusted to such hands? Are souls for whom Christ has died, to be manipulated at the will of men who have refused the light given them of heaven? We should be afraid of man-made laws, and of plans and methods that are not in accordance with the principles of the Word of God concerning man’s relation to his fellow. ‘All ye are brethren.’”—*Testimonies to Ministers, 248:1-349:2.*

“The present order of things must change or the wrath of God will fall upon His instrumentalities that are not working in Christ’s lines. Has God given any one of you a commission to lord it over His heritage? This kind of work has been coming in for years. God sees it all, and He is displeased with it. When men come in between God and His human agents, they dishonor God, and wrong the souls of those who need true encouragement and sympathy and love.”—*Testimonies to Ministers, 349:3.*

“At the center of the work matters are being shaped so that every other institution is following in the same course. And the General Conference is itself becoming corrupted with wrong sentiments and principles. In the working of plans, the same principles are manifest that have controlled matters at Battle Creek for quite a length of time.

“I have been shown that the Jewish nation were not brought suddenly into their condition of thought and practice. From generation to generation they were working on false theories, carrying out principles opposed to the truth, and combining with their religion thoughts and plans that were the product of human minds. Human inventions were made supreme.

“The holy principles that God has given are represented as the sacred fire, but common fire has been used in place of the sacred. Plans contrary to truth and righteousness are introduced in a subtle manner on the plea that this must be done, and that must be done, ‘because it is for the advancement of the cause of God.’ But it is the devising of men that leads to oppression, injustice, and wickedness. The cause of God is free from every taint of injustice. It can gain no advantage by robbing the members of

the family of God of their individuality or their rights. All such practices are abhorrent to God. He inspires no such practices as have been entered into by your councils in regard to the publication of books.

“The Lord accepts no such transactions; prosperity will not attend these moves. Men connected with His work have been dealing unjustly, and it is time to call a halt. Let men deal with men upon the principles of the Ten Commandments, and not ignore these principles in business transactions. False propositions are assumed as truth and righteousness, and then everything is worked in such a way as to carry out these propositions, which are not in accordance with the will of God, but are a misrepresentation of His character.

“The great and holy and merciful God will never be in league with dishonest practices; not a single touch of injustice will He vindicate. Men have taken unfair advantage of those whom they supposed to be under their jurisdiction. They were determined to bring the individuals to their terms; they would rule or ruin. There will be no material change until a decided movement is made to bring in a different order of things.

“Let no plans or methods be adopted in any of our institutions that will bind mind or talent under the control of human judgment; for this is not in God’s order. God has given to men talents of influence which belong to Him alone, and no greater dishonor can be done to God than for one finite agent to bring other men’s talents under his absolute control, even though the benefits of the same be used to the advantage of the cause. In such arrangements one man’s mind is ruled by another man’s mind, and the human agency is separated from God, and exposed to temptation. Satan’s methods tend to one end—to make men the slaves of men. And when this is done, confusion and distrust, jealousies and evil surmisings are the result. Such a course destroys faith in God, and in the principles which are to control, to purge from guile and every species of selfishness and hypocrisy.”—*Testimonies to Ministers, 359:1-361:0.*

“The highhanded power that has been developed, as though position has made men gods, makes me afraid, and ought to cause fear. It is a curse wherever and by whomsoever it is exercised. This lording it over God’s heritage will create such a disgust of man’s jurisdiction that a state of insubordination will result. The people are learning that men in high

positions of responsibility cannot be trusted to mold and fashion other men's minds and characters. The result will be a loss of confidence even in the management of faithful men. But the Lord will raise up laborers who realize their own nothingness without special help from God.

"Age after age Jesus has been delivering His goods to His church. At the time of the first advent of Christ to our world, the men who composed the Sanhedrin exercised their authority in controlling men according to their will. Thus the souls whom Christ had given His life to free from the bondage of Satan were brought under bondage to him in another form.

"Do we individually realize our true position, that as God's hired servants we are not to bargain away our stewardship?—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 361:1-2.

"The spirit of domination is extending to the presidents of our conferences. If a man is sanguine of his own powers and seeks to exercise dominion over his brethren, feeling that he is invested with authority to make his will the ruling power, the best and only safe course is to remove him, lest great harm be done, and he lose his own soul and imperil the souls of others. 'All ye are brethren.' This disposition to lord it over God's heritage will cause a reaction unless these men change their course. Those in authority should manifest the spirit of Christ. They should deal as He would deal with every case that requires attention. They should go weighted with the Holy Spirit. A man's position does not make him one jot or tittle greater in the sight of God; it is character alone that God values.

"The goodness, mercy, and love of God were proclaimed by Christ to Moses. This was God's character. When men who profess to serve God ignore His parental character, and depart from honor and righteousness in dealing with their fellow men, Satan exults, for he has inspired them with his attributes. They are following in the track of Romanism."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 362:1-2.

"Those who are enjoined to represent the attributes of the Lord's character, step from the Bible platform, and in their own human judgment devise rules and resolutions to force the will of others. The devisings for forcing men to follow the prescriptions of other men are instituting an order of things that overrides sympathy and tender compassion, that blinds the eyes to mercy, justice, and the love of God. Moral influence and personal responsibility are trodden underfoot.

"The righteousness of Christ by faith has been ignored by some; for it is contrary to their spirit,

and their whole life experience. Rule, rule, has been their course of action. Satan has had an opportunity of representing himself. When one who professes to be a representative of Christ engages in sharp dealing, and in pressing men into hard places, those who are thus oppressed will either break every fetter of restraint, or they will be led to regard God as a hard master. They cherish hard feelings against God, and the soul is alienated from Him, just as Satan planned it should be.

"This hardheartedness on the part of men who claim to believe the truth Satan charges to the influence of the truth itself, and thus men become disgusted and turn from the truth. For this reason no man should have a responsible connection with our institutions who thinks it no important matter whether he has a heart of flesh or a heart of steel.

"Men think they are representing the justice of God, but they do not represent His tenderness and the great love wherewith He has loved us. Their human invention, originating with the specious devices of Satan, appears fair enough to the blinded eyes of men, because it is inherent in their nature. A lie, believed, practiced, becomes a truth to them. Thus the purpose of the satanic agencies is accomplished, that men should reach these conclusions through the working of their own inventive minds.

"But how do men fall into such error? By starting with false premises, and then bringing everything to bear to prove the error true. In some cases the first principles have a measure of truth interwoven with the error, but it does not lead to any just action, and this is why men are misled. In order to reign and become a power, they employ Satan's methods to justify their own principles. They exalt themselves as men of superior judgment, and they have stood as representatives of God. These are false gods."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 363:1-364:1.

"Organizations, institutions, unless kept by the power of God, will work under Satan's dictation to bring men under the control of men; and fraud and guile will bear the semblance of zeal for truth and for the advancement of the kingdom of God. Whatever in our practice is not as open as day, belongs to the methods of the prince of evil. His methods are practiced even among Seventh-day Adventists, who claim to have advanced the truth.

"If men resist the warnings the Lord sends them, they become even leaders in evil practice; such men assume to exercise the prerogatives of God they presume to do that which God Himself will not do in seeking to control the minds of men. They introduce their own methods and plans, and through their misconceptions of God they weaken the faith of others in the truth, and bring in false principles that

will work like leaven to taint and corrupt our institutions and churches. Anything that lowers man's conception of righteousness and equity and impartial judgement, any advice or precept that brings God's human agents under the control of human minds, impairs their faith in God; it separates the soul from God; for it leads away from the path of strict integrity and righteousness."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 366:0-1.

"God will not vindicate any device whereby man shall in the slightest degree rule or oppress his fellow men. The only hope for fallen man is to look to Jesus, and receive Him as the only Saviour. As soon as man begins to make an iron rule for other men, as soon as he begins to harness up and drive men according to his own mind, he dishonors God, and imperils his own soul and the souls of his brethren."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 366:2-367:0.

"The Lord sees all the dealings of brother with brother, which weaken faith, and which destroy their own confidence in themselves as men dealing with justice and equity. In the most positive language He expresses His displeasure at the iniquity practiced in trade. He says, 'Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?' The very wrong here mentioned may not have been committed in our institutions, but acts which these things represent have been, and are still being done.

"Page after page might be written in regard to these things. Whole conferences are becoming leavened with the same perverted principles."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 372:3-373:0.

"I appeal to my brethren to wake up. Unless a change takes place speedily, I must give the facts to the people; for this state of things must change; unconverted men must no longer be managers and directors in so important and sacred work, With David we are forced to say, 'It is time for Thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law.'"—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 373:3.

"Care should be given to teach every man his dependence upon God; for He is the source of all wisdom and power and efficiency. I have been shown that it is a mistake to suppose that the men in positions of special responsibility at Battle Creek have wisdom which is far superior to that of ordinary men. Those who think that they have, supposing them to have divine enlightenment, rely upon the human judgment of these men, taking their counsel as the Voice of God. But this is not safe; for unless men are wholly consecrated to God, Satan will work through them to impart that knowledge which will not be for

the present and eternal good of those who hear.

"Many have educated themselves to write or ask for counsel and advice when brought into difficult places. But it is a mistake for those who are placed in responsible positions in our different institutions to depend upon the men who have all too many burdens and responsibilities to bear. A weak, sickly experience will be the lot of those who are educated to depend wholly upon others. Those upon whom they depend, may have less of the fear of God than they themselves have; and not more mental power and talent than it is their privilege to possess if they will but realize that they are not to be children, but firm, brave men."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 374:1-2.

"The Lord has given to every man his appointed work, and if He places men in positions of responsibility, He will communicate His Holy Spirit to them, giving them efficiency for their work. But the men who are called upon to take long and expensive journeys in order to help others to devise and plan are not themselves in close connection with the God of all wisdom if they put confidence in their own strength and wisdom. If they have not been willing to bear the yoke of Christ, or to learn in His school to be meek and lowly in heart as He was; if they have not learned to lift the burdens God has given them, and to follow wherever He may lead them, what will their expensive trips lead to? What is their wisdom worth? Is it not accounted foolishness with God?"—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 375:1.

"State conferences may depend upon the General conference for light and knowledge and wisdom; but is it safe for them to do this? Battle Creek is not to be the center of God's work. God alone can fill this place. When our people in the different places have their special convocations, teach them, for Christ's sake and for their own soul's sake, not to make flesh their arm. There is no power in men to read the hearts of their fellow men. The Lord is the only one upon whom we can with safety depend, and He is accessible in every place and to every church in the Union. To place men where God should be placed does not honor or glorify God. Is the president of the General Conference to be the god of the people? Are the men at Battle Creek to be regarded as infinite in wisdom? When the Lord shall work upon human hearts and human intellects, principles and practices different from this will be set before the people. "Cease ye from man."

"The Lord has a controversy with His people over this matter."—*Testimonies to ministers*, 375:1-376:1.

“Many who profess to know Him have turned from the one in whom our hope of eternal life is centered, and have educated themselves to depend upon their erring and fallible fellow men. They are crippled spiritually when they do this; for no man is infallible, and his influence may be misleading. He who trusts in man not only leans upon a broken reed, and gives Satan an opportunity to introduce himself, but he hurts the one in whom the trust is placed; he becomes lifted up in his estimation of himself, and loses the sense of his dependence upon God. Just as soon as man is placed where God should be, he loses his purity, his vigor, his confidence in God’s power. Moral confusion results, because his powers become unsanctified and perverted. He feels competent to judge his fellow men, and he strives unlawfully to be a god over them.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 376:2.

“But the heart of the work, the great center, has been enfeeble by the mismanagement of men who have not kept pace with their Leader. Satan has diverted their money and their capabilities into wrong channels. Their precious time has been passing into eternity. The earnest work that is now being done, the aggressive warfare that is being carried on, might long ago have been just as vigorously carried forward in obedience to the light of God. The whole body is sick because of mismanagement and miscalculation. The people to whom God has entrusted eternal interests, the depositaries of truth pregnant with eternal results, the keepers of light that is to illuminate the whole world, have lost their bearings.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 371:1.

“I said to them: ‘You cannot do this. The control of these large interests cannot be vested wholly in those who make it manifest that they have little experience in the things of God, and have not spiritual discernment. The people of God throughout our ranks must not, because of mismanagement on the part of erring men, have their confidence shaken in the important interests at the great heart of the work, which have a decided influence upon our churches in the United States and in foreign lands. If you lay your hand upon the publishing work, this great instrumentality of God, to place your mold and superscription upon it, you will find that it will be dangerous to your own souls, and disastrous to the work of God. It will be as great a sin in the sight of God as was the sin of Uzzah when he put forth his hand to steady the ark. There are those who have entered into other men’s labors, and all that God requires of them is to deal justly, to love mercy, and walk humbly with God, to labor conscientiously as men employed by the people to do the work entrusted to

their hands. Some have failed to do this, as their works testify. Whatever may be their position, whatever their responsibility, if they have as much authority even as had Ahab they will find that God is above them, that His sovereignty is supreme”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 462:1.

We will conclude with three balancing paragraphs. We should work as God individually leads us, but we should also counsel with fellow believers who are mature and have a genuine Christian experience:

“I am free to say to our brethren who with humility of heart are following the counsel of the Lord: If you know that God would have you engage in any work, go forward. Those who have the light and consciousness that God is leading need not depend upon any human agent to define their work. They are to receive the counsel of the highest Authority. Safety and peace and calm assurance are to be found only by following the counsel of the greatest Teacher that ever lived in our world. Let us not turn away from His unerring counsel.

“But our impressions are not always a safe guide to duty. Human impulse will try to make us believe that it is God who is guiding us when we are following our own way. But if we watch carefully, and counsel with our brethren, we shall understand; for the promise is, ‘The meek will He guide in judgment: and the meek will He teach His way.’ We must not allow human ideas and natural inclinations to gain the supremacy.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 502:1-2.

“Our ministers and leaders need to realize the necessity of counseling with their brethren who have been long in the work, and who have gained a deep experience in the ways of the Lord. The disposition of some to shut themselves up to themselves, and to feel competent to plan and execute according to their own judgment and preferences, brings them into strait places. Such an independent way of working is not right, and should not be followed. The ministers and teachers in our conferences are to work unitedly with their brethren of experience, asking them for their counsel, and paying heed to their advise.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 501:4-502:0.

Due to a lack of space, we did not include the following paragraphs. You may wish to read them. They are also significant:

***Testimonies to Ministers*, 462:2-463:1; 477:2; 491:4; 492:1-2; 493:4-494:2; 501:4-502:2.**

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“A strange thing has come into our churches. Men who are placed in positions of responsibility that they may be wise helpers to their fellow workers have come to suppose that they were set as kings and rulers in the churches, to say to one brother, Do this; to another, Do that; and to another, Be sure to labor in such and such a way. There have been places where the workers have been told that if they did not follow the instruction of these men of responsibility, their pay from the conference would be withheld.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 477:2.

“Sometimes a man who has been placed in responsibility as a leader gains the idea that he is in a position of supreme authority, and that all his brethren, before making advance moves, must first come to him for permission to do that which they feel should be done. Such a man is in a dangerous position. He has lost sight of the work of a true leader among God’s people. Instead of acting as a wise counselor, he assumes the prerogatives of an exacting ruler. God is dishonored by every such display of authority and self-exaltation. No man standing in his own strength is ever to be mind and judgment for another man whom the Lord is using in His work. No one is to lay down man-made rules and regulations to govern arbitrarily his fellow laborers who have a living experience in the truth.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 491:4.

“God calls upon those who have exercised undue authority to take off from His workers every dominating hand. Let everyone to whom has been entrusted sacred responsibilities seek to understand his individual duty before God, and do that duty humbly and faithfully. Let no one regard himself as a master, with controlling power to exercise over his brethren. The principles of the Word of God are to be taught and practiced.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 492:1.

“God is Commander and Ruler over all. We have a personal Saviour, and we are not to exchange His Word for the word of any man. In the Scriptures the Lord has given instruction for every worker. The words of the Master Worker should be diligently studied; for they are spirit and life. Laborers who are striving to work in harmony with this instruction are under the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit, and need not always, before they make any move, first ask permission of someone else. No precise lines are to be laid down. Let the Holy Spirit direct the workers. As they keep looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of their faith, the gifts of grace will increase by wise use.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 492:2.

“The Lord has not placed any one of His human agencies under the dictation and control of those who are themselves but erring mortals. He has not placed upon men the power to say, you shall do this, and you shall not do that . . .

“No man is a proper judge of another man’s duty. Man is responsible to God; and as finite, erring men take into their hands the jurisdiction of their fellow men, as if the Lord commissioned them to lift up and cast down, all heaven is filled with indignation. There are strange principles being established in regard to the control of the minds and works of men, by human judges, as though these finite men were gods . . .”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 493:4-494:0.

“God will not vindicate any device whereby man shall in the slightest degree rule or oppress his fellow men. The only hope for fallen man is to look to Jesus, and receive Him as the only Saviour. As soon as a man begins to make an iron rule for other men, as soon as he begins to harness up and drive men according to his own mind, he dishonors God, and imperils his own soul and the souls of his brethren. Sinful man can find hope and righteousness only in God; and no human being is righteous any longer than he has faith in God and maintains a vital connection with Him. A flower of the field must have its root in the soil; it must have air, dew, showers, and sunshine. It will flourish only as it receives these advantages, and all are from God. So with men. We receive from God that which ministers to the life of the soul. We are warned not to trust in man, nor to make flesh our arm.”—*Testimonies to Ministers* 494:1-2.