



# **1888— We Hoped...**

**Would “Another Coming Out” Be Needed?**

# **Incomprehensible Tug of War**

- ◆ **Spirit of persecution**
- ◆ **Unchristlikeness**
- ◆ **False ideas**
- ◆ **Pharisaic prejudice and criticism**
- ◆ **Out of line**
- ◆ **Cultivating hatred**
- ◆ **Satanic work**
- ◆ **Laodicean Church**
- ◆ **Despite to the Spirit of grace**

## **We hoped...**

**“I was confirmed in all I had stated in Minneapolis, that a reformation must go through the churches. Reforms must be made, for spiritual weakness and blindness were upon the people who had been blessed with great light and precious opportunities and privileges. As reformers they had come out of the denominational churches, but they now act a part similar to that which the churches acted. We hoped that there would not be the necessity for another coming out.”**

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*—The Ellen G White 1888 Materials, 152*





# The Struggle for Organization

**“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.”**

**“We had a hard struggle in establishing organization.”**

**—General Conference Daily Bulletin, January 29, 1893**





# Sanctified Insubordination

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*—Testimonies, vol. 5, 369*

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*—Testimonies, vol. 8, 75*

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*—Manuscript Releases, vol. 11, 218*

# **The True Interpretation**

**“The work that the Great Teacher did in connection with His disciples is the example we are to follow in our medical missionary work....**

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**“Do medical missionary work. Thus you will gain access to the hearts of the people. The way will be prepared for more decided proclamation of the truth. You will find that relieving their physical suffering gives you opportunity to minister to their spiritual needs.**

**“The Lord will give you success in this work; for the gospel is the power of God unto salvation when it is interwoven with the practical life, when it is lived and practiced. The union of Christlike work for the body and Christlike work for the soul is the true interpretation of the gospel.”**

*—Review and Herald, March 4, 1902*



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My book on Adventist History, *Hindsight*, should also be available through that address if you want to plug the book for me. (\$5 +s/h; free s/h on 5 or more copies)

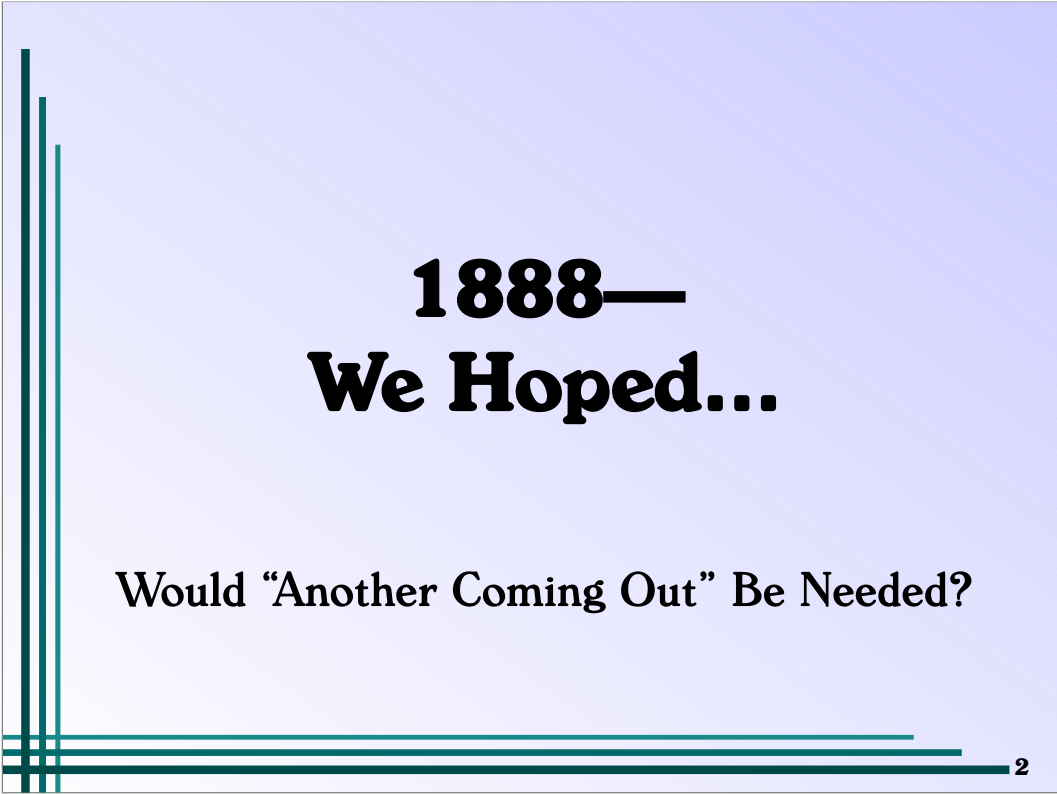
Questions and comments are also welcome, but please don't deprive yourself of sleep or food while waiting for a reply.

Blessings,  
Dave

This first page is intentionally blacked out to provide a “blank screen” to be shown before a presentation starts.

The notes for this file are typed out in some length so that readers can more or less re-create the full message of the presentation.

Sometimes there are notes intended to be read **before** the text on the slide, though usually the notes come **after** the text. How can you know? Just look for **CLICK** in the notes. If you see the bright red word, it means that you should read the notes down that far **before** clicking to display the additional content of the slide. In such cases, when you move on from the previous slide you'll see just the heading of the new slide. That's when you read the notes. When you get to the **CLICK**, you hit the button to display the body text of the slide. Any slide with no **CLICK** in it means that you read the slide first, then read the notes, and move on.



# 1888— We Hoped...

Would “Another Coming Out” Be Needed?

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**CLICK** for sub-title

The General Conference session of 1888 is not a simple event to understand. Many have tried, but I think it's safe to say that no one has got it completely figured out.

Perhaps we shouldn't feel too bad. Even Ellen White, who was present for the occasion and who certainly had clearer insight into the thoughts and actions of the participants than anyone else, described the episode as an...

## **Incomprehensible Tug of War**

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Maybe it should come as no surprise that we have a hard time understanding what all happened back then. Without pretending that this is the complete picture, let's note that Ellen White found occasion to employ quite a number of uncomplimentary phrases to describe the session and its aftermath; here is a partial list.

### **Click**

If nothing else, it's certainly safe to say that there is plenty of tension and literary conflict in the story. But right now we want to focus on one particular comment that Ellen White wrote about seven months after the conference at Minneapolis:

## **We hoped...**

**“I was confirmed in all I had stated in Minneapolis, that a reformation must go through the churches. Reforms must be made, for spiritual weakness and blindness were upon the people who had been blessed with great light and precious opportunities and privileges. As reformers they had come out of the denominational churches, but they now act a part similar to that which the churches acted. We hoped that there would not be the necessity for another coming out.”**

—Manuscript 30, 1889

This is talking about her experience and the circumstances in Battle Creek at the time. Obviously, it's the last sentence that grabs the attention.

What does she mean by “another coming out”? Was she really implying that the Seventh-day Adventist church might lose its standing as God's true church? That a purer group of believers might have to separate from it?

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In context, it's pretty hard to interpret it any other way.

In fact, that's the way the White Estate apparently understands this passage. When this manuscript was quoted in the book *Last Day Events*, (page 48), they inserted an explanatory note that says...

## **The only known statement...**

**“This is the only known statement from the pen of Ellen White indicating that she might have lost confidence in the Seventh-day Adventist church organization. The doubt which she expressed here was never repeated during the remaining twenty-six years of her life.”**

By and large, I'd agree with them on this. But there is a little bit more to the story.

In 1888, there were actually two series of meetings held in Minneapolis, one right after the other. First was a ten-day Ministerial Institute, and then there was the General Conference Session.

The controversy over Elder Waggoner's teaching erupted early, during the Ministerial Institute. On the last day of those meetings, Ellen White made a strongly worded public statement in one of her sermons that seems to indicate at least something similar to her later "coming out" comment.

Here's what she said:



## **Give the people a chance**

**“Now, this is the last ministers’ meeting we will have unless you wish to meet together yourselves. If the ministers will not receive the light, I want to give the people a chance; perhaps they may receive it.”**

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This is not quite the same as the “another coming out” statement she made several months later, but it’s unusual enough in its own right.

It seems to me that she was almost “threatening,” if you wish, to by-pass the organizational structure of the church. To go around the unreceptive ministers in an effort to reach the rank-and-file church members.

Well, in fact, that’s pretty much what she did. For about a year and a half after the Minneapolis General Conference, Ellen White traveled from place to place with Jones and Waggoner and held meetings for the people, all the while dealing with the opposition of some of the leading lights of Battle Creek.

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Now, in order to appreciate the magnitude of this, you have to remember all the effort Ellen White put into getting God's people into some sort of working order.

From the "passing of the time" in 1844, to the organizing of the Seventh-day Adventist church in 1863 was nineteen years! And Ellen White had lived through every disorganized episode of that whole period.

Looking back to those early days, she summed it up like this:

## The Struggle for Organization

**“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.”**

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Ellen White valued organization, no question about it.

Despite the softening effect of more than thirty years, she still remembered that—

**Click**

So, to be seen as pulling away from the ministry as a class had to have been a “big deal” for her. But the issues she saw coming out of Jones and Waggoner’s teaching were evidently significant enough that she unhesitatingly took that route.

That’s important to note. It provides a sense of scale and perspective to the discussion that sometimes gets lost in the theology.

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So let's do a quick review:

Ellen White wrote, "We hoped that there would not be the necessity for another coming out."

The White Estate says that "this is the only known statement from the pen of Ellen White indicating that she might have lost confidence in the Seventh-day Adventist church organization." And I tend to agree.

But she also spoke of by-passing the ministers and taking a populist approach to spreading Jones and Waggoner's teaching, and in fact she spent a year and a half doing just that.

Now here's where it gets interesting!



It turns out that, though she never again spoke of “another coming out,” there was another situation in which she spoke of by-passing—not only ministers—but even conference presidents!

## **Sanctified Insubordination**

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*—Testimonies, vol. 5, 369*

The topic is the failure of some leaders to take up and encourage “medical missionary work” in the large cities within their conferences.

And here’s another statement, in which Ellen White first addresses the leaders, and then the rank-and-file church members—

## Sanctified Insubordination

**“If you feel no interest in the work that is going forward, if you will not encourage medical missionary work in the churches, it will be done without your consent; for it is the work of God, and it must be done. My brethren and sisters, take your position on the Lord’s side and be earnest, active, courageous co-workers with Christ, laboring with Him to seek and save the lost.”**

—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, 75

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A subtle indication of the gravity of this issue can be seen in the command to “take your position on the Lord’s side.”

Do you recognize the phrase? It comes from Exodus 32:26. That’s what Moses said when he came into the camp and interrupted the celebration around the Golden Calf. It was the tribe of Levi which responded to his call, and—at Moses direction—they then proceeded to kill about 3,000 of the idolaters

Now, I’m not suggesting that Ellen White was promoting homicide. But she clearly placed Medical Missionary Work as a high priority.

As a matter of interest, I note that this comment in volume 8 is an adaptation of a letter to specific individuals. Here’s how the original went:

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—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11, 218

In this version, the contrast between supporting medical missionary work and opposing it, is explicit. It’s the difference between being on the Lord’s side, and fighting against God.

So we’ve found two different issues—the message of Righteousness by Faith, and the support of Medical Missionary work—both of which are sufficiently important that God’s people are justified in pushing forward even if Church officials oppose them.

So what’s the point? The point is, these *aren’t* two different issues; they’re the same thing.



## **The True Interpretation**

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*—Review and Herald, March 4, 1902*

It's never a good idea to build up a whole concept on just one passage. But we don't have time for all that right now. Come back next time, OK?

But for right now, please notice this one word:

**Click**

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