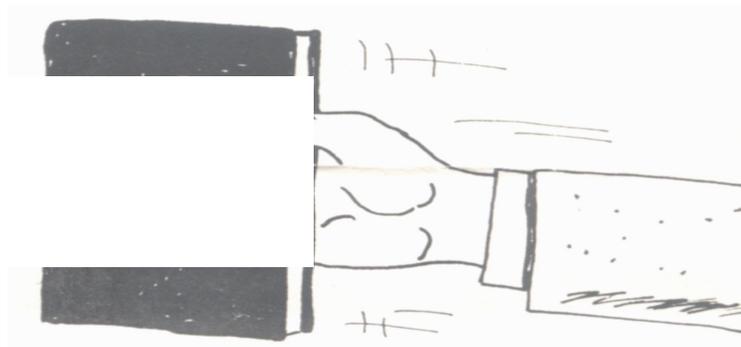


# **THE CHURCH MANUAL...**



**THE  
BIBLE...**



# **WHICH?**

**BY NYRON MEDINA**

**WATCHMEN ON THE WALLS OF ZION  
BE ON THE ALERT.**

**DO YOU KNOW THAT THE ADVENTIST CHURCH NEEDS NO  
CHURCH MANUAL? OUR MANUAL IS THE BIBLE AND *THE BIBLE*  
*ALONE.***

In the early 1880's some of the leading men of the S.D.A. organization felt a need for a church manual. A committee of the General Conference of 1882 sat and prepared a manuscript to the effect. Following this a committee of ten comprising W.C. White, H. Nicola, J.H. Cook, S.H. Lano, O.A. Olsen, M.H. Brown, R.F. Andrews, J.B. Goodrich, A.H. Hutchins and W.H. Decker was appointed.

The committee met and brought back a unanimous opinion, namely that it would not be advisable to have a church manual. What were the reason for their conclusions?

- 1) "It was unnecessary because the church had already surmounted the greatest difficulties connected with the church organization.
- 2) It would seem too many like a step toward the formation of a creed or a discipline other than the Bible, **something that has always been opposed to as a denomination.**
- 3) If we had a church manual we fear that many, especially those commencing to preach would study it to obtain guidance in religious matters rather than seek for it in the Bible, and from the leadings of the Spirit of God; which would lend to their hindrance in genuine religious experience and in a knowledge of the mind of the Spirit.
- 4) Also it was in taking similar steps that other bodies of Christians first began to lose their simplicity and become formal and spiritually lifeless."

Listen to this watchman-

"Why should we imitate them? The committee feels in short that our tendency should be in the direction of the policy and close conformity of the Bible, rather than to elaborately defining

every point in the church management and Church ordinances.” **Review and Herald**, NOV. 20, 1883.

Remember at this particular point in time the General Conference was sanctioned by the Spirit of Prophecy “...as the highest authority that God has upon the earth.”

“But when the judgment of the General Conference, which is the highest authority God has upon the earth, is exercised, private independence and private judgment must not be maintained but be surrendered.” **Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 3**, p. 492.

However, in spite of the Testimony of the Spirit of Prophecy and the 1883 General Conference decision, the General Committee of 1932 published what is today known as the Church Manual. By whom was the subject matter of that manual prepared? By a vice-president of the General Conference and endorsed by the then General Conference.

What has happened since then?

The manual has turned out to be the creed and discipline of which Elder Butler warned.

Adherence to the rules of the manual has and still is enforced by penalty of excommunication.

Now remember that the Spirit of Prophecy sanctioned the voice of the General Conference in 1883 on the rejection of a Church Manual, but by 1901, because of the rejection of the message of righteousness by faith that was brought to the church by God’s messengers Elders Waggoner and Jones, this counter testimony was made.

“You (the leadership) have no right to manage, unless you manage in God’s order. Are you under the control of God? Do you see your responsibility to Him? ... That these men should stand in a sacred place to be as the voice of God to the people, as we once believed the General Conference to be—that is past.”- **General Conference Bulletin**, 34th Session, Vol. 4. Extra No 1, April 3, 1901, p. 25. cols. 1, 2.

Who is in apostasy—the 1883 Conference and the Spirit of Prophecy that rejected the Church Manual, or the 1932 General Conference Committee and the wisdom of man?

The writer of this paper is committed to God and under His direction is joining in pen and voice, sighing and crying for the abomination that is done in the midst.

In **Testimonies to Ministers**, page 407, Sister White writes...

“Truth in its varied phases will be in conflict with error in its ever varying, increasing forms,

Which, if possible will deceive the very elect.”

These manmade laws and rules are definitely unnecessary. The soul is accountable to God alone. The Law and the prophets, together with the record of Christ's own words and deeds are all that we need for ourselves and for a perishing world. Ponder well this statement of Elder Butler's...

“The Bible contains our creed and discipline. It thoroughly furnishes the man of God unto all good works. What it has not revealed relative to church organization and management, the duties of officers and ministers, and kindred subjects, should not be strictly defined, and drawn out into minute specifications for the sake of uniformity, but rather be left to individual judgment under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Has it been best to have a book of directions of this sort, the Spirit would doubtless have gone further and left one on record with the stamp of inspiration upon it. ... Better to make some mistakes and learn profitable lessons thereby than to have our way marked out for us by others.” **Review and Herald**, Nov. 27, 1883.

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