

DID ELLEN WHITE SAY THAT?

The White Estate answers questions you may have had or heard.

BY TIM POIRIER

In the June 9 Adventist Review the White Estate provided answers to several questions frequently asked concerning Ellen White and the White Estate. Here is the second in a series of question-and-answer articles that we will publish on an occasional basis.

Question: What is the correct reference for the following quotation? I can't find it in the E. G. White Review and Herald article reprints. (It was possibly written in either 1890, 1898, or 1912.) "The last mediatorial work of Christ before laying aside His priestly garments is to present the prayers of parents for their children. And I saw a mighty angel sent out, and thousands of children will remember their early training, and be brought back before probation closes."

Answer: This statement, which understandably has brought encouragement to many Seventh-day Adventist parents, has never been found among Ellen White's published or unpublished writings. No specific date ever accompanies the quotation, which should always alert the reader to check on a statement's authenticity.

Ellen White many times refers to the prayers of parents for their children. See particularly those found in *The Adventist Home*, pages 205-208; *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, pages 274, 275; and volume 5, page 323. A statement that comes close to the one quoted above appears in *Testimonies*, volume 6, page 401: "When the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice. Self-denying efforts

will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold will come back to follow the great Shepherd."

Other statements mistakenly attributed to Ellen White may be found in Appendix C of the *Comprehensive Index to the Writings of Ellen G. White*, volume 3, pages 3189-3192.

Question: Must we always kneel for prayer? Doesn't Ellen White say so in *Selected Messages*, book 2, pages 311-316?

Answer: The passage referred to in this question, if read in isolation from Ellen White's other statements, could lead to that conclusion. In the context of "a growing lack of reverence for our Maker, a growing disregard of His greatness and His majesty," Ellen White reminds us that "both in public and private worship it is our duty to bow down upon our knees before God. . . . This act shows our dependence upon God" (pp. 315, 312).

However, that Ellen White did not intend to teach we must kneel on every prayer occasion becomes evident from both her words and her example. In public ministry there were times when she herself stood for prayer. Her family testified that in her home those at the dining table bowed their heads and not their knees. Several examples of her practice, as well as balancing statements concerning the proper attitude in prayer, may be found in *Selected Messages*, book 3, pages 266-270.

Question: Did Ellen White say we could rent SDA churches to other denominations?

Answer: Yes, she did. We do not have her advice firsthand, but in letters written by Ellen White's secretary and nurse, Sara McEnterfer, we learn that when asked this question, Ellen White consistently counseled that "it would be right and proper to allow any denomination professing Christ to have the use of the church for the purpose of worshiping God" (Sara McEnterfer to C. H. Peach, Jan. 31, 1905). She never advised that a church be rented for festivals or activities that we, as a people, would not approve of, and recommended that in questionable situations the local conference be consulted.

On one occasion, in describing a visit to the San Francisco SDA Church, Ellen White mentioned that it was "rented to the Presbyterians for services on Sunday. This makes it a little inconvenient for us at times, but as their meetinghouse was destroyed, they feel very grateful for the privilege of using ours" (*Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 322, 323).

Question: I have heard that Ellen White said every young woman should have a red dress. Is this true?

Answer: This statement comes to us from Mrs. Grace White Jacques, Ellen White's granddaughter. In an article entitled "My 'Special' Grandmother," she relates the following incident:

"I recall a young nurse who had only a few clothes, and so Grandmother gave her three dress lengths of material, one of red, one blue, one a golden color. She told this young lady, as she did several young women, that she should have at least one red dress" (*Youth's Instructor*, Dec. 5, 1961). □



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