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The Deeper Life Conference: an Adventist Adaptation of the Spiritual Retreat Concept

Norman A. Yeager
Andrews University

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ABSTRACT

THE DEEPER LIFE CONFERENCE: AN ADVENTIST ADAPTATION OF THE SPIRITUAL RETREAT CONCEPT

by

Norman A. Yeager

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Title: The Deeper Life Conference: An Adventist Adaptation of the Spiritual Retreat Concept.

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Date completed: April 1988

One of the most important responsibilities a pastor faces is to teach the parishioners in his charge how to maintain a deep personal relationship with God. The Seventh-day Adventist church has not developed tools that will enable the pastor to demonstrate to the parishioners how they may grow in their relationship to God.
The Deeper Life Conference is designed to help meet this need within the Seventh-day Adventist church through the adaptation of the spiritual retreat concept. This retreat concept is to be found in both the classical church background and was adapted by the Protestants during and after the reformation to enhance the piety of the church.

The Deeper Life Conference was designed as an open retreat running from Friday evening through Sunday noon. During the Conference, the participants not only received instruction in the four selected disciplines of meditation, prayer, healthfulness, and fasting, but also were given time in which to practice the disciplines of meditation and prayer.

Through the use of three similar surveys evidence was gathered which points to the viability of using the Deeper Life Conference as means of teaching the participants how to develop a deeper relationship with God. The surveys were taken before the conference, at the close of the Conference and then six months afterward to determine the growth which occurred in the participants spiritual life. The growth in the relationship with God seems to have taken place across all age groups and lengths of church membership. The Muskegon Deeper Life Conference showed the most dramatic results probably due to the intense desire of the participants to know God better.
Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

THE DEEPER LIFE CONFERENCE: AN ADVENTIST
ADAPTATION OF THE SPIRITUAL
RETREAT CONCEPT

A Project Report
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

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CHAPTER 1

JUSTIFICATION FOR DEVELOPING THE
DEEPER LIFE CONFERENCE

This chapter describes the underlying reasoning for the development of the Deeper Life Conference. To understand the development it is necessary to look at the purpose of the project and the justification for its development. After looking at the justification for the project, it is necessary to define the use of some of the terms used in the project. Finally, the limitations of the project are described.

Purpose of the Project

The first purpose for this project was the development of a means of teaching individual Seventh-day Adventist Church members, in a retreat setting, how to deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ through the use of selected spiritual disciplines. In order to achieve this purpose, the Deeper Life Conference is based on an adaptation of the traditional retreat concept.

The second purpose of this project was to provide a plan which could serve as a catalyst for the
implementation of retreat programs in conferences throughout the North American Division.

The third purpose of the Deeper Life Conference was to provide myself with experience in teaching the selected disciplines to others. It has provided me with some opportunities to learn the dynamics of teaching others how to deepen their experience with God and to observe the results of the participants' experiments with the selected disciplines during the conference.

The fourth purpose for the development of the Deeper Life Conference was that it might contribute to the perceived value of the retreat concept for use in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It also gives validity to the incorporation of the selected spiritual disciplines in Adventist piety and church life.

Justification for the Project

The first justification for developing the Deeper Life Conference grew out of personal frustration, experienced as a young minister, of desiring to know the depths of a relationship with Jesus Christ and to grow in that relationship. Somehow in my educational experience, the keys to the development of this deeper life were overlooked. As a consequence, there were many times when, faced with problems and trials, my experience with God seemed so shallow that there was no chance He would hear and answer my prayers.
Growth did come, but it was not always accompanied by an understanding of how that growth took place. During a time of severe illness, when the clinician in charge of my treatment told me to be prepared for the fact that my days of ministry might be over, God came very close with assurance He would take care of me. Out of that experience developed a relationship with Christ that has deepened ever since. A consequence of that illness was the growing desire to teach my parishioners how to have such a personal relationship with Christ without going through such a traumatic ordeal to learn what I learned. Consequently, I began searching to find ways of sharing the depths of a relationship with Jesus Christ.

The second justification for developing the Deeper Life Conference was related to the first one. Frequently, parishioners came to me seeking a living relationship with Jesus Christ. How could they really know Him as a personal friend? It was very frustrating to tell them something and not know for sure if it would "work." How could I be a real spiritual director for them? How could I tell them how to achieve that which they were looking for? While there was growth in being able to express confidently, to those who asked, the ways of developing a relationship with Christ, there still seemed to be a lot I did not know. So I turned to other
pastors to learn their secrets of teaching the spiritual life to their members.

As the search went on, other pastors shared with me the frustration they felt in trying to educate their people in the deeper life, and their frustrations mirrored the ones I had. Sharing with these men added to the desire to develop means by which I could help church members to truly know the fullness of life with Jesus Christ.

The third justification for the development of the Deeper Life Conference stemmed from the apparent growing awareness outside the Seventh-day Adventist church for this kind of education of the laity. One example of this interest is the inception of a magazine featuring the deeper life.\textsuperscript{1} Another example is the book by Richard Foster, \textit{Celebration of Discipline}.\textsuperscript{2} There are many other books also dealing with the spiritual disciplines and their use in developing a deeper relationship with God. The disciplines which have been written about include: prayer, meditation, fasting, study, simplicity, submission, and service.

The fourth justification for this project was the lack of material in Seventh-day Adventist books and

\begin{footnotes}
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magazines concerning the development of the spiritual life. Thus, it appeared there was a need for a focus within the Adventist church on the development of the spiritual life.

The fifth justification for the project was based on the New Testament imagery which portrays the church as the body of Christ. One of several texts using this imagery as a model for the church is found in 1 Cor. 12:12, 13:

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many, are one body; so is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

What makes this model so interesting is the diversity found in the body which has many parts that are so different in nature and function yet working together in harmony. This model teaches that each member is dependent on every other member. What affects an individual member, whether positively or negatively, affects the whole body. Walter Douglas, in his discussion of this model, asks the following question,

How can we nourish and sustain unity-in-diversity consistent with, and probably healthy for, Christian growth and maturity without allowing it to harden into a divisive ploy?1

A partial answer to this question is the development of a relationship with Christ in the individual member's life which then allows him/her to be accepting of other members' viewpoints and understandings. A further discussion of the relation of the individual member to the entire body may be found in the discussion in chapter 2 on spirituality and healthfulness.

The sixth justification for this project was the recognition by the Seventh-day Adventist Church of the need for finding ways to deepen the spiritual experience of the members of the church. In 1976 a document entitled "Finishing the Work" was presented to the Annual Council. It was approved and sent out to the North American Division as a guide for establishing the expectations of how the paid clergy were to function in relationship to the local church and the employing conference. The section of the document which is germane to this discussion states:

Surveys conducted at selected academies, colleges, churches, and camp meetings would indicate that in North America, at least, there is a great need for special emphasis and continual endeavor to foster personal Bible study and family worship in our Adventist Homes. We believe neglect in these areas has contributed to an inevitable decline in the spiritual strength of the church.¹

Currently in the world-wide Seventh-day Adventist church there is an emphasis on Harvest 90. This is an evangelistic outreach of the church with four major goals. The first goal speaks of the need for personal renewal within the church. "Renewal and personal growth through Bible Study, intercessory prayer, fellowship and worship."\(^1\) In order to develop this renewal and personal growth it is necessary to develop ways in which the members can be taught the depths of the relationship with Jesus Christ and how to build those spiritual disciplines that will aid in deepening that relationship with Jesus Christ in their personal lives.

The seventh justification for this project was the rapid change taking place in our society. Not only have the rapid changes been chronicled by different writers, but there have also been studies dealing with the impact of those changes on social values. It is necessary for society to find new values that will allow it to cope with all the changes taking place.

So we now need a new social ethic. Without one we are disoriented, lacking a firm basis for choice. We need new rules to define the epochal tasks that must be accomplished in our era to bring about that minimal harmony between individuals and society that is the mark of a successful civilization. We need new rules to bolster respectability—the opportunity to seek honor and esteem in the eyes of others. People feel good about themselves when they believe that what they are doing is good for others as well as for themselves—when they believe it is morally

right. Finally, and not least important, life is too complicated to rely wholly on rational calculation. For the fundamental decisions of life, we inevitably fall back on ethical judgments about what is right and wrong. Confidence in the right social ethic is indispensable for doing this.1

Particularly for the Christian there is concern about changing values. The Christian believes that there are eternal values that should not be allowed to change just because there are technological changes in society. However, it seems that Christians are not doing a good job of showing how those values can impact on society. There is a separation of thought and ideas that has brought about a lack of spiritual efficacy in the ideas held in the name of religion.

The complete separation of thought and action effected by technique produces in a new guise a phenomenon which we have already discussed as it appears in other areas; the lack of spiritual efficacy of even the best of ideas. The very assimilation of ideas into the technical framework which renders them materially effective makes them spiritually worthless.2

In his discussion of revolutionary movements which are trying to express the revolt of the people, Jacques Ellul dismisses religion as one of the social movements to bring about change:

If I have not mentioned religions, it is because they no longer express revolt, they have


long since, in their intellectual and sociological forms, undergone integration.¹

Religion has become so integrated into society that it fails to speak prophetically against the evil and negative aspects of the society.

George Gallup in a recent interview expressed the same conclusion in different terms.

There's little difference in ethical behavior between the churched and the unchurched. There's as much pilferage and dishonesty among the churched as the unchurched. And I'm afraid that applies pretty much across the board: Religion, per se, is not really life changing. People cite it as important, for instance, in overcoming depression—but it doesn't have primacy in determining behavior.²

He also found that much of religion today is only "feel goodism."

Prayer becomes mostly petition, and the Bible is not approached in a meaningful way. People want the fruits of faith but not the obligations. They're not willing to take up the cross. As Anglican bishop Michael Marshall puts it, 'People are following their own agenda and not Christ's.'³

If the values in the society of the 1980's are changing so much, and the impact of organized religion has done so little in the lives of those who claim to be members of the church, then it is imperative that the church come up with some means of teaching what the life

¹Ibid., p. 426.
³Ibid.
in Christ is all about and restoring the church's prophetic voice. One of the ways in which it can do this is by providing opportunities for its members to taste the richness of a personal relationship with the risen Lord. From that relationship with Christ, individuals develop the moral stamina to make an indisputably positive difference on and in the society around them.

Definition of Terms

Spirituality

Unfortunately, the word, spirituality, coined to describe the relationship with God is not defined as such in the Bible. However, the Bible does give us enough information about the spiritual life that we can develop a working definition.

The ability of a human being to be spiritual is founded in the work of Christ on the cross.

In the arrangement of God's redemptive design the cross performs the negative work of destroying all which comes from Adam while the Holy Spirit executes the positive work of building all which comes from Christ. The cross makes spirituality possible to believers; but it is the Holy Spirit Who renders them spiritual. The meaning of being spiritual is to belong to the Holy Spirit. He strengthens with might the human spirit so as to govern the entire man. In our pursuit of spirituality, therefore, we must never forget the Holy Spirit. Yet we must not lay aside the cross either, because the cross and the Spirit work hand in hand. The cross guides
men to the Holy Spirit, while the Latter without fail conducts men to the cross.¹

This statement of Watchman Nee's must be seen in the light of New Testament texts like Rom. 8:1-4.²

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin; He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

In these verses we see that those who are followers of Christ are under the direction of the Holy Spirit. It is through the work of the Spirit that they are able to fulfill the will of God. They have entered into the experience which Paul calls "in Christ." Man has a unique relationship with God when he accepts the invitation to be a follower of Jesus Christ. Paul, in Eph. 1:3-14, mentions at least seven special blessings that belong to the Christian because of God's activity in man's behalf through Jesus Christ. Paul's list of blessings includes: (1) He has given the believer every


²All texts are taken from the New King James Version.

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spiritual blessing, (2) He chose the believer in Him, (3) He has made the believer accepted in the Beloved, (4) He gives the believer redemption through His blood, (5) in the fullness of time He will gather in one all things, in heaven and on earth, (6) He promises the believer an inheritance through Him, (7) through Him, He seals the believer with the Holy Spirit.

Rom. 8:1-4 and Eph. 1:3-14 demonstrate that spirituality is found only in relationship with God. It is the acceptance of the working of the Holy Spirit into the life of the believer through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. It is on the basis of this relationship of the natural with the supernatural that Urban Holmes defines spirituality.

I am defining spirituality as (1) a human capacity for relationship (2) with that which transcends sense phenomena; this relationship (3) is perceived by the subject as an expanded or heightened consciousness independent of the subject's efforts, (4) given substance in the historical setting, and (5) exhibits itself in creative action in the world.¹

Holmes' definition covers the basic elements of spirituality. These are (1) the relationship with God, (2) the acknowledgement of the transcendent in the experience, (3) and the resulting creative interaction in the world. Any description of spirituality should reflect these elements. However, a definition was needed

which would be easy for those attending the Deeper Life Conference to comprehend. The definition which is used in this project, and which reflects the elements listed above, is: Spirituality is the visible expression of the individual's relationship with God as he lives under the control of the Holy Spirit after receiving the new birth.

Disciplines

For many Protestants discipline applied to faith is a squirm word. It makes us feel uneasy because we tend to associate it with "works," which presumably are opposed to faith. We are glad that our astronauts have put in exacting years of preliminary training before they would think of walking in space. But for a Christian to take from his schedule crowded with usefulness anything like a comparative amount of time and energy in the hope of developing a more and more satisfying relationship with God and fellow human beings, why, that's just too much.1

However, when the Christian accepts the call of Jesus Christ and His sacrifice in his behalf, it demands the total surrender of the life to God. Dietrich Bonhoeffer describes the relationship of the call and the response of man in these words:

Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. . . .

Costly grace is the sanctuary of God; it has to be protected from the world, and not thrown to the dogs. It is therefore the living word, the

Word of God, which he speaks as it pleases him. Costly grace confronts us as a gracious call to follow Jesus, it comes as a word of forgiveness to the broken spirit and the contrite heart. Grace is costly because it compels a man to submit to the yoke of Christ and follow him; it is grace because Jesus says: "My yoke is easy and my burden is light."\(^1\)

This call to follow Christ and submit to His yoke is the discipline of the spiritual life. Elisabeth Elliot makes an important distinction between obedience and discipline. Drawing on her childhood experience of not knowing the meaning of the word "discipline," she responded to her parents' love by doing those things she was given to do. This is obedience which adds up to discipline. Thus it is in the Christian life. She then goes on to say:

In other words, the totality of the believer's response is discipline. While there are instances where the two words discipline and obedience seem to be interchangeable, I am using the first as comprehending the second and always presupposing both dependence and responsibility. We might say that discipline is the disciple's "career." It defines the very shape of the disciple's life. Obedience, on the other hand, refers to specific action.\(^2\)

This importance of discipline is echoed by V. Raymond Edman when he says,

Without discipline we are not disciples, even though we profess His Name and pass for a follower of the lowly Nazarene. In an undisciplined age when liberty and license have


replaced law and loyalty, there is greater need than ever before that we be disciplined to be His disciples.  

It is this discipline that is seen in the Scriptures as necessary on the part of the Christian experience.

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus; not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. (1 Cor. 9:24-27)

Paul, using the Isthmian games as an example, illustrates the necessity of discipline in the Christian life. Just as the competitors in the games put forth their best efforts to win the prize, so Christians put forth their best efforts to obtain the crown that will not perish. The Adventist Bible Commentary notes,

The crown of life eternal is offered to all, but only those who subject themselves to strict training will obtain the prize. This means that at all times the Christian will be guided in work, thought, and deed by the high standards found in the Bible, and will not be controlled by the desires and inclinations of his own heart. He will ask at every step of the journey: "What would Jesus do? Will this course of action, this plan of work, or this form of recreation increase my spiritual strength or lessen it?" Everything that in any way interferes with spiritual

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progress must be rejected; otherwise the victory is not possible.1

This understanding of discipline encompasses the totality of the Christian's life as it is lived before God. In the setting of the retreat, or in the life, a spiritual discipline is one of the elements used by the believer to maintain the relationship with Jesus Christ. Turning again to the sports arena for an analogy, it is like the Olympic runner who lifts weights in order to develop muscle tone. The lifting of weights is one element of a total lifestyle designed to end in winning the Olympic gold medal. This is the purpose of what are known as the classical spiritual disciplines.

The classical disciplines provide a method by which the believer may order his life so he may hear and understand the voice of God speaking to his heart. As Richard Foster explains, the classical disciplines are not classical,

merely because they are ancient, although they have been practiced by sincere people over the centuries. The Disciplines are classical because they are central to experiential Christianity. In one form or another all of the devotional masters have affirmed the necessity of the Disciplines.2

Today there is widespread ignorance of the most simple and practical aspects of the spiritual

________________________________________


2 Celebration of Discipline, p. 1, n. *.
disciplines. This makes it difficult for the modern believer to explore the relationship with Christ. Thus it is necessary to teach the believer the elementary principles of the use of the disciplines. This instruction was not needed in earlier times because

In the first century and earlier, it was not necessary to give instruction on how to "do" the Disciplines of the spiritual life. The Bible called people to such Disciplines as fasting, meditation, worship and celebration and gave almost no instruction about how to do them. The reason for that is easy to see. Those Disciplines were so frequently practiced and such a part of the general culture that the "how to" was common knowledge.

The disciplines "allow us to place ourselves before God so that He can transform us." The spiritual disciplines are spiritual exercises described in the Scriptures and used over the centuries by believers seeking to open their lives to a deepening personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Retreat

For many Seventh-day Adventists the word "retreat" symbolizes a time in which a church or a group from a given church gather at a park or youth camp to listen to a guest speaker and have fun together. Actually, the use of the word implies a time of searching

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1 Ibid., p. 3.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid., p. 6.
for God while breaking away from the usual routines of life. As Jesus found time in His ministry to be alone with the Father, so modern man needs time to commune with God. As Alcuin Schutkovske says:

A retreat is, then, a time of personal communing with God. And it must be some time—thirty days, five days, three days, but long enough so that there can be true communication. It is a time when the individual realizes the fundamental obligation he has to God—to love Him with his whole soul and to love his neighbor.¹

James Wareham opens his book on conducting retreats with words that concur with Schutkovske's: "A retreat is a time alone with God. That is a simple description which takes us to the very heart and centre of it."²

This understanding of the meaning of retreat is shared also by John Casteel. Casteel, writing from a Protestant background, says of the retreat:

The purpose of retreat is the offering of ourselves to God in such a way that he can draw us into closer communion with himself—and through this communion grant us richer community with other persons in Christ and a truer understanding of our selves. The root of this purpose is to be found in the Great Commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," and the second that is like it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."³

Looking at these definitions it is obvious that a retreat does not focus directly on social interaction or the passive reception of a speaker's sermons or lectures. Rather its primary purpose is for the participant to focus on his relationship with Jesus Christ.

The definition of a retreat as used in this project is a time and place (1) in which the believer may separate himself from the normal routines of life and concentrate on developing a deeper relationship with God, (2) in which an atmosphere is provided the participant enabling him to experience this relationship, and (3) in which the participant is provided with instruction in the use of the disciplines which allow him to draw into an intimate fellowship with God through personal communion with Him.

In defining the word "retreat" two distinctions are made by some sources. They are the closed retreat and the open retreat.

The "closed retreat" is so called because the participants leave home, family, and friends to go spend a few days and nights at a retreat house.¹

The "open retreat" is the opposite of the closed retreat in that it is not confined to a retreat house.²


²Wareham, p. 78.
An open retreat should be, as nearly as possible, the same as a closed retreat, and the only really unavoidable difference is that the retreatants have to go home to sleep.¹

**Limitations**

There are several limitations to this project. The first is the number of retreats which were held. While the retreat concept should be tried in a variety of geographic and cultural settings to insure that the retreat concept is a viable method for helping individual Adventists to increase their spirituality, the time factors in working for the Doctor of Ministry degree did not allow such attempts at validation. Rather, by carefully choosing the three places where retreats were held, it was hoped to get enough of a cross-section of the Adventist population to determine if the retreat concept might be useful in developing Adventist piety.

The second limitation is that it is educational. Retreats described by other authors allow the participants much more time for personal meditation and prayer.² The Deeper Life Conference is designed to acquaint Seventh-day Adventists with the two concepts, which are new to many of them, (1) the concept of a retreat in which they actively seek God, and (2) the whole concept of spiritual disciplines. To reach these

¹Ibid., p. 79.

²Note is taken of these features in chapter 3, "The Design of a Retreat."
objectives it was necessary to have more instructional time than would be needed in a setting where people have as a part of their religious culture the idea of retreats and spiritual disciplines.

The third limitation is the use of the qualitative questionnaires to determine how the participants perceived what happened to them as a consequence of attending the retreat. Therefore, there are no statistics showing that a certain percentage of the participants were having regular devotions, or that a certain percentage felt the need for a closer walk with the Lord. Rather, the qualitative method is another way of looking at the individuals participating in the retreats and their reactions to it. This does not mean that the qualitative methodology is better than the quantitative methodology. It is simply the choice of a method of organizing the information we are seeking from the retreats. John B. Magee's summary of how the intellect analyzes the real world illustrates this point.

Let us summarize the conclusions to this point: First, the number of ways in which the intellect may analyze a segment of the Real world is potentially infinite. Furthermore, no one of these special modes of intellectual analysis, scientific or nonscientific, has any special priority over the others. The particular mode of inquiry we employ depends upon the purposes to which we wish to put our conclusions. In the illustration given above, for example, a bicycle cannot be mended with moral categories, nor can a moral deficiency be amended by following the

1A copy of the surveys is found in the appendix.
rules of mechanics. Lastly, we must insist that no one of these separate ways, nor all of them together, add up to the whole of Reality, for they are all abstract. We commit a major fallacy when we analyze from the whole an abstraction useful for some special purposes and then proclaim it alone to be the whole.¹

The qualitative questionnaire enables the researcher to discover how the participants viewed the retreat and the changes they intend to make in their devotional life as a result of the concepts they have been taught. It does not prevent us from discovering the same information that might have been extrapolated from a quantitative questionnaire, for some participants described their devotional life as being very irregular. Additional insights into the devotional patterns were gained in the small-group discussions and in personal conversations with the leader of the retreats.

Another reason for choosing the qualitative methodology, however, was to try to understand what was happening to the participants in the seminars. In a quantitative questionnaire one could learn if the participants were having devotions every day, or if they were only occasionally having any form of devotions. However, there are individuals who may be systematically going through the motions of devotions without the devotional life having any effect in their daily lives.

For instance, even while having daily devotions they may not be sure of their relationship with Christ. It is this inner turmoil that is hard to measure with a quantitative instrument. The qualitative instrument, by using open-ended questions, allows the individual to express what is going on in their minds as a result of the experience they are having.

Also in the setting of the retreat, the researcher may serve as a participant observer. This ability to see and react to the events and actions as a participant-observer may provide insights into the actions of the group that are more accurate than other forms of assessment of the interaction of the group. As Severyn Brnyn has observed,

The participant observer technique in some ways has already proven itself to be more reliable than other methods available. . . . As research proceeds, however, the accuracy of the denotative references of the subject's statements adds to the objectivity of the research. A description of the connection between the inner and the outer world of the subject is fundamental to a complete report.¹

The fourth limitation is the inability of the researcher to sit down with each of the participants to interview them individually, to obtain any further clarification of the experience they had, and to elicit any other insights that might have aided in developing

the retreat concept. Perhaps another researcher in the use of the retreat might consider the face-to-face interview in the collection of information.

The fifth limitation of this project was the necessity of choosing only four of the many possible disciplines that could be taught in the retreat. Obviously, time was an important factor in limiting the number of disciplines which could be taught. It was believed that it was important for the participants to have time to practice the disciplines being taught. In order to have that time it was necessary to restrict the number of disciplines taught to four. Providing the time to practice the disciplines would give the participants some sense of the "feel" of the disciplines, which would encourage the use of them on a regular basis.

This project grew out of a felt need for a method of teaching individuals how to deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ, and the necessity of allowing that relationship to impact on the culture which surrounds the believer. The retreat setting provides an atmosphere within practical limitations of teaching those disciplines and giving the participants the opportunity to experience the disciplines. In chapter 2 the theological base for the selected disciplines of meditation, prayer, fasting and healthfulness is discussed.
CHAPTER 2

THE THEOLOGICAL BASE FOR THE SELECTED DISCIPLINES

For the spiritual disciplines being taught in the retreat to be effective they must have a solid base in the Scripture and, for Seventh-day Adventists in the writings of Ellen G. White. Such a base reassures the participants that the disciplines will contribute to their growth in Christ and the deepening of their relationship with Him.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the major biblical support for the disciplines. With a sound biblical base undergirding the practice of the spiritual disciplines, the person is more likely to continue to use them during the dry times which may come in the devotional life. Finding the biblical base for the disciplines involves searching for descriptions and examples of their usage by Biblical writers. The spiritual disciplines under consideration are: meditation, prayer, fasting, and healthfulness.
Meditation

The Biblical Basis for Meditation

Old Testament

When God commissioned Joshua as leader of Israel after the death of Moses, He gave him the following instruction:

This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. (Josh 1:8)

This text gives us some evidence of the importance of meditation in Joshua's life. It was to be a part of his daily life practiced day and night, a constant part of every phase of living.

The text also provides the motivation for Joshua to engage in meditation. He was to meditate on the law of God in order to observe all that was written in it. This meditation would unveil from the written word what God had revealed and desired of His people. That revelation would unfold as Joshua obeyed. Jesus stated the same message when He said,

My doctrine is not mine, but His who sent me; If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. (John 7:17)
Meditation on the law of God

This passage also gives evidence that meditation was not to center in anything internal within Joshua, rather it was to center on the law of God. This law was the law God had given to Moses for the direction of the nation. As Joshua contemplated the law of God it would become a part of his person and would guide his activities.

This meditational practice of contemplating the law of God with a heart set on obedience would bring the blessing of God. God gave the assurance that Joshua's way would be successful, and the same is true for believers today. Arthur Pink asserts:

Meditation upon the Word of God is one of the most important of all the means of grace and growth in spirituality, yes there can be no new progress in elan and practical godliness without it. Meditation on divine things is not optional, but obligatory, for it is something which God has commanded us to attend unto. The order which Joshua received was not restricted to himself, but is addressed to all of God's people.¹

The evidence gained from Josh 1:8 is also supported in Psalm 1:2 where the psalmist, after declaring the man blessed who does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, declares:

But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season,

whose leaf also shall not wither, and whatever he does shall prosper.

Edmund P. Clowney comments on Ps 1:2:

Meditation centers on God's revelation, His Word. When the psalmist speaks of meditating on the law of the Lord (Ps 1:2) he uses a word that means 'to mutter.' The word occurs again in the second psalm to describe the rebellious muttering of the kings who would cast off God's yoke (Ps. 2:1). It is also used to describe the growl of a lion and the cooing or 'chattering' of doves (Isa. 31:4; 59:11). It seems evident that the psalmist's meditation is closely related to the repetition of the words of Scripture.1

The individual who meditates on the Word of God at every available moment is blessed by God. He is blessed because the law has become more than a code of conduct, it is "the food and aliment of his spirit."2

The psalmist used the analogy of a tree planted on the bank of a river to describe such a person. The tree which is green and vibrant, full of life, is a blessing to those who seek its shade. Just so the one who meditates on the law of God is a blessing to those who come into his circle of influence.

In Ps 119:15-24 the author proclaims the beauty of the law of God and the joy he finds in it. It is in this context that he proclaims:

I will meditate on Your precepts; and contemplate Your ways. . . . . Princes also sit and speak against me, But your servant meditates

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on Your statutes. Your testimonies also are my delight and my counselors. (Ps 119:15, 23)

It is evident that the psalmist also found the focus of meditation to be the external law of God.

Meditation on God's works

While the law of God is the primary object upon which to meditate, it is not the only object on which the follower of God may safely do so. Ps 143:5 introduces a second object: "I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Your works; I muse on the works of Your hands."

This passage, found in a Psalm that reflects the author's discouragement and desire for the Lord's deliverance, suggests reflection on the Lord's work in his personal life.

As he remembered the former manifestations of God's power, his heart was encouraged in the hope that the Lord would again answer his prayer. He made bold to continue his request.1

Out of the experiences the Lord has led him through, the author takes hope and courage for the present, believing that God will again deliver from his enemies.

Ps 145:5-7 contributes to this particular object of meditation.

I will meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty, and on Your wondrous works. Men shall speak of the might of Your awesome acts, and I will declare your greatness. They shall utter the memory of Your great goodness, and shall sing of Your righteousness.

1The SDA Bible Commentary, 3:132.
The context of these verses demonstrates the truth that man may meditate on the activity of God in his life. Beginning with vs 10, the Psalm lists the things God's people can praise Him for: (1) His has power that is expressed in His mighty acts, (2) He raises up all who are bowed down, (3) He provides food in due season, (4) He hears the call of the righteous and saves them.

Upon all of these activities of God man may safely meditate and find assurance of God's love for the present and future. The God who created the individual will sustain him in this life based on His faithfulness in the past. Again, the focus of meditation is not on internal feelings but on the external works of God in history and in the believer's life.

Meditation on the person of God

Another object of meditation is the person of God: "I will meditate on the glorious splendor of your majesty." (Ps 145:5). This verse encourages the believer to visualize the person of God. This kind of visualization will help him stretch his imagination as he tries to picture God seated upon His throne. When the believer visualizes God upon His throne, he develops a sense of humility such as Isaiah experienced when he saw the Lord in the temple.

Spurgeon states that as the believer meditates on
the majesty and person of God, his character is molded into the image of God.

"I will muse" is better than "speak," as being the primary and more usual sense of the Hebrew word. It suggests that these glorious qualities of God's character and deeds should be not merely talked about and extolled in song, but be deeply pondered, laid close upon our very heart, so that the legitimate impression may be wrought into our very soul, and may mould our whole spirit and character into God's own moral image.1

Ps 63:6-8 contributes to the discussion of this object of meditation by saying,

When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches. Because You have been my help, therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice. My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me.

Here the psalmist points to the continued meditation that takes place during the hours of the night. It is as if he awakes and begins thinking about God until he returns to sleep.

Meditation on the sanctuary

The final object upon which the believer may meditate is the sanctuary where God dwells, for this is His abode. It is in the sanctuary the psalmist looked for God in times of distress. "So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, to see your power and glory" (Ps 63:2). The first verse of this chapter describes the psalmist as desiring the presence of God as a person

longs for water in a dry and thirsty land. It is with this thirst that the psalmist enters into the sanctuary.1

Ps 68:24 adds to this object of meditation by picturing God in a great procession entering into the sanctuary. "They have seen Your procession O God, The procession of my God, my King, into the sanctuary." Because God has been victorious over His enemies, His followers can be assured that He will receive the praises of all men.

The believer may also trust that God, who has entered into the sanctuary, will eventually triumph over all His enemies. It was in the sanctuary that this reality was impressed on the psalmist. "Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end" (Ps 73:17). From the vantage point of the sanctuary the psalmist could see that God has control of all the affairs of the universe. Of the meditating psalmist Spurgeon says:

His mind entered the eternity where God dwells as in a holy place, he left the things of sense for the things invisible, his heart gazed from within the veil, he stood where the thrice holy God stands. Thus he shifted his point of view, and apparent disorder resolved itself into harmony.2

It is by beholding God in the sanctuary that the believer understands that God will triumph. For it is in the


sanctuary that the follower of God sees the majesty and beauty of God, and the triumph of His justice. "Honor and majesty are before Him; Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary" (Ps 96:6).

However, the Christian's attention is not on an earthly sanctuary, it is focused on the heavenly sanctuary. The New Testament directs our attention there as well, pointing us to the high priestly ministry of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary.

Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected and not man. (Hebrews 8:1, 2)

In the heavenly sanctuary Jesus Christ presents His blood before the Father in behalf of the believer. Thus He assures the believer of the forgiveness of sins, acceptance before God, and the assurance that the sin problem will come to an end.

The most expressive picture of the heavenly sanctuary is found in Rev 4 and 5 where John portrays the Father, the angels, and the twenty-four elders, the living creatures, and Jesus Christ, all interacting in worship, praise, and salvation.

From the study of these texts from the Old Testament we have learned that the Christian is to focus his meditation in God's person, word, or activity.
While the New Testament does not speak of meditation in the same way as does the Old Testament, there is evidence that it is in agreement with the Old Testament. Perhaps the most familiar reference to the subject is to be found in the words of Jesus as He addressed a crowd which came to him after the feeding of the 5,000 with five loaves and two little fish.

Then Jesus said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever. (John 6:53-58)

These verses describe the believers partaking of the flesh of Jesus Christ so the believer may have eternal life. However, modern men, like the followers of Jesus that day, need to understand the meaning of these words. Fortunately, the Lord himself gives us their meaning. "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit and they are life." (John 6:63). It is His words which are to be taken into the life and which, under the influence of the Holy Spirit will transform the life. Arthur Gossip has captured the meaning of John 6:63 with these words:
It is the life-giving quality of his message as the Word of God which Jesus has symbolized as food and drink. But it is not only his words that give life, it is himself in the life laid down for the world, his body and blood freely given for all. His spirit liberated from the conditions of this earthly life will be a quickening power in all who believe in him.¹

These words imply that through partaking of the word of Jesus the believer may have an intimate relationship with Him that carries on through this life and into the eternal world. Wilbert F. Howard states:

*Eternal life* is the possession only of those who have passed beyond reliance upon the physical senses into the experience of spiritual perception, i.e., faith. Life in that higher sphere is sustained by spiritual food, unlike the manna which lasted but for a day and was food merely for perishable bodies. The **living bread** . . . *from heaven* is no other than the very life of Jesus given up that **life** may be given to the world.²

The believer who desires to have such a relationship with Jesus Christ will find it through meditation on His teachings and activity in behalf of man.

Really to receive from Christ what he has to give us, really to have experience of his saving power, we must feed on him—there is no other word that expresses it with a like accuracy—must absorb his teaching, his character, his mind, his ways; must appropriate the virtue there is in him, till his mind becomes our mind and his ways our ways; till we think somewhat as he would do if he were in our place; and can be and do what without him we could not be or do: and this


²Ibid., 8:572.
because his power has passed into us and become our power.¹

Thus to meditate on the words of Christ is to take Jesus into the life and allow the transforming power of His life to change the believer's life.

Jesus dwells in believers by his Spirit and doctrine. When his Spirit is given them to sanctify them; when his temper, his meekness, his humility, and his love pervade their hearts; when his doctrine is received by them and influences their life, and when they are supported by the consolations of the gospel, it may be said that he abides or dwells in them.²

The individual takes Jesus into his/her life when his/her attention is focused on the word of God. By meditation the individual partakes of spiritual food and absorbs it into his being.

During His last instruction to the disciples before the cross, Jesus used the analogy of the branch abiding in the vine to describe the relationship His followers are to have with Him. The narrative found in John 15:1-8 poses the question: How can this relationship be? Twice in the discussion Jesus gives the answer which is found in vss 3, 7.

You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you... If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.


The secret is so simple it is hard to grasp. Jesus abides in us through the medium of His word. In this passage Jesus teaches that His sayings are to be in the Christian's mind and heart. As the Word of God is meditated upon, the believing individual takes into his life the person of Jesus Christ who then lives out His life in him.

Thus the teaching of Jesus is in harmony with the teaching of the Old Testament. The success of the spiritual life is found not in the inward-looking to self to see what is happening within. It is not the attempt to generate some inner energy which puts us into harmony with God. It is rather an attachment to Jesus Christ so that His power may change the inner man. As the apostle Paul stated:

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (Rom 12:1, 2)

Practical consequences of the biblical understanding

It is important for the Christian to understand the principle that Christian meditation is focused not on the inner experience, but rather, in God's person, word or activity. There are contemporary authors who suggest it is appropriate for Christians to learn techniques of

meditation practiced by the followers of eastern religions for the enhancing of Christian meditation.\(^1\)

An author who is aware of the problems of trying to bring Eastern and Christian meditation together but still seeks to do so is Thomas H. Troeger.\(^2\) He gives the following synopsis of the problem as he understands it.

This reservation about meditation is well founded. The practice of any meditative method can bog down in a number of the ego's mudholes; over concern with one's body, fascination with technique, the exaltation of consciousness, privatism, self-righteousness about one's discipline, the substitution of the self for God.\(^3\)

This warning should be heeded by the Christian practicing biblical meditation. When meditation becomes a form or a means to an end, it loses its vitality and usefulness as a discipline to bring the individual closer to Jesus Christ.

Morton Kelsey seems to be the only writer who has dared to mention the most important negative aspect of meditation. He understands that meditation opens the door to other realities that are just as real if not more real than any in the physical realm. Thus meditation

\(^1\)Klemens Tilman, *The Practice of Meditation*, trans. David Smith (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), is an example of this approach.


\(^3\)Ibid., p. 22.
should not be undertaken because others are doing it or for diversion.

Perhaps the most pertinent of his statements concerning this negative aspect is found in the following:

Certainly there is a danger of illusions coming from the inner world, and learning to deal with them is one part of the preparation I am talking about. On the other hand, simply acquiring knowledge about this world is far more difficult than ordinary study of physical things. Just as in the physical world, there seem to be many spiritual things that are destructive when handled in one way, but open up new life when we approach them differently. In addition, there is a reality of radical evil found in the inner world that is bent on seizing power and destroying the individual. If we must realize that we face this reality, as Jesus and the early Church did and as Jung seems to understand, then the task is even more difficult. One is much like a soldier at night trying to avoid a stalking enemy.1

If meditation is a part of the believer's spiritual life, he can be assured that God has provided the means to keep him from being overcome by Satan. The means God has provided is the objective meditation upon His person, word, or activities in behalf of man. The meditation on these themes provides the bulwark which keeps the believer from the subtle temptations of Satan.

Through the Word of God, in particular, the power of Christ is brought into the life and the individual is secure from the attacks of Satan.

1Morton Kelsey, The Other Side of Silence (New York: Paulist Press, 1976), pp. 70, 71
A summary of the distinction between biblical meditation and other forms can be found in this statement.

To seek the face of the living God the Christian does not launch a voyage to inner space nor does he center on abstract infinity. Rather he meditates on the Christ of the Scripture and on the Scripture of Christ. He fills his thoughts with what the Bible says about Jesus, for he is not attempting to imagine a Christ, but to learn about the real Christ. The disciple who would learn from his Master must treasure His words. The practice of meditation seeks to appropriate the words of Jesus in the widest sense; not only the colored sayings in a "red letter" New Testament, but the words of the Spirit of Christ speaking through Old Testament prophets as they "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them." 1 Pet. 1:11. and the words of the New Testament apostles and prophets who "confirmed unto us" the words of Christ and the whole counsel of God. Heb. 2:3.

All of this is in direct contrast to Eastern meditational practice. Richard Foster explains the distinction in this way:

Eastern meditation is an attempt to empty the mind; Christian meditation is an attempt to empty the mind in order to fill it. The two ideas are radically different. . . . Christian meditation goes far beyond the notion of detachment. There is need for detachment—"sabbath of contemplation" as Peter of Celles, a Benedictine monk of the twelfth century, put it. But we must go on to attachment. The detachment from the confusion of all around us is in order to have a richer attachment to God and to other human beings.2

1Clowney, CM* Christian Meditation, pp. 29, 30.
2Foster, Celebration of Discipline, p. 15.
Ellen G. White and Meditation

Ellen G. White, one of the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and considered a prophet by the Church, wrote much about meditation. The purpose of this section of the paper is to compare some of her writings with biblical understandings.

Certainly the following passage helps us to see that she saw meditation as an important part of the life of the Christian.

With the word of God in his hands, every human being, wherever his lot in life may be cast, may have such companionship as he shall choose. In its pages he may hold converse with the noblest and best of the human race, and may listen to the voice of the Eternal as He speaks with men. As he studies and meditates upon the themes into which 'the angels desire to look' (1 Peter 1:12), he may have their companionship. He may follow the steps of the heavenly Teacher, and listen to His words as when He taught on mountain and plain and sea. He may dwell in this world in the atmosphere of heaven, imparting to earth's sorrowing and tempted ones thoughts of hope and longings for holiness; himself coming closer and still closer into fellowship with the Unseen; like him of old who walked with God, drawing nearer and nearer the threshold of the eternal world, until the portals shall open, and he shall enter there. He will find himself no stranger. The voices that will greet him are the voices of the holy ones, who unseen, were on earth his companions—voices that here he learned to distinguish and to love. He who through the word of God has lived in fellowship with heaven, will find himself at home in heaven's companionship.¹

What a fascinating statement! Those who practice biblical meditation will become such close friends with

heavenly beings that those beings will first be recognized in heaven by their voices. Thus the experience of oneness with Jesus and the sense of His presence may be a living reality. The believer may experience the presence of Christ, hear His voice, and learn to obey, even as a child learns and responds with loving obedience to the voice of his father.

In *Christ's Object Lessons*, Mrs. White writes:

> God bids us fill the mind with great thoughts, pure thoughts. He desires us to meditate upon His love and mercy, to study His wonderful work in the great plan of redemption. Then clearer and still clearer will be our perception of truth, higher, holier, our desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought will be transformed by communion with God through the study of the Scriptures.¹

This statement accords with the principles of meditation found in the Bible. That is, the focus of the believer's meditation is to be on the person, work, or activity of God.

White uses the airing out of a room as an example of the work of God in purifying the life of the believer.

> The Lord purifies the heart very much as we air a room. We do not close the doors and windows, and throw in some purifying substance; but we open the doors and throw wide the windows, and let heaven's purifying atmosphere flow in. . . . The windows of impulse, of feeling must be opened up toward heaven, and the dust of selfishness and earthliness must be expelled.

The grace of God must sweep through the chambers of the mind, the imagination must have heavenly themes for contemplation, and every element of the nature must be purified and vitalized by the Spirit of God. . . . As we meditate upon the perfections of our divine Model, we shall desire to become wholly transformed and renewed in the image of His purity. We are called to come out and be separate from the world that we may be the sons and daughters of the Most High.1

Meditation which centers in the person, word, and work of God is the means of bringing about a positive change in those who utilize this discipline. It is not that the meditation makes the change, but as the believer opens the life to the influence of the presence of God that the Holy Spirit brings about the needed changes in the life. He sweeps away the dust of selfishness and earthliness. As the defilement of the world is taken out of the life, the believer reflects the image of Jesus Christ.

White also understood that meditation strengthens the Christian in the conflict over evil. This is illustrated in her comments about the failure of the disciples to cast out a demon in a boy that was brought to them while Jesus was on the Mount of Transfiguration. Explaining why the disciples failed to overcome Satan in this instance, she says,

In order to succeed in such a conflict they must come to the work in a different spirit. Their faith must be strengthened by fervent prayer and fasting, and humiliation of heart.

They must be emptied of self, and be filled with the Spirit and power of God. Earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith,—faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work,—can alone avail to bring men the Holy Spirit's aid in the battle against principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and wicked spirits in high places.1

White endorses the idea that meditation should be fixed on the objective activity of God while the inward work of the transformation of the life is accomplished by God's power.

Meditation on the person, word, work, or activity of God keeps the Christian from dealing with unknown forces, either in the imagined things internally or with the reality of evil in the person of Satan and his angels as they seek to counterfeit the relationship with Jesus Christ. This kind of meditation prepares the individual to enter into prayer.

Prayer

One of the most difficult areas of the spiritual life to define is the point at which the individual has moved from meditation to prayer, or from prayer to meditation. The reason for this difficulty is that each discipline is informed by the other. Meditation, to be fulfilled, needs the verbal response to the presence of God which is what prayer is all about. For man to pray

as he ought he needs to have a sense of the presence of
God and His care for the individual which comes from
meditation on the word, activity, or person of God.
However, since the Bible does treat the two disciplines
separately, it is well for us to view them as
complementing each other.

Jesus' Example in Prayer

It is appropriate to study the example of Jesus'
use of prayer to gain an understanding of how important
this discipline was to Him. From His example the
believer learns how to develop a prayer life that
deepens the personal experience with God.

On a Sabbath after ministering during the
services in the synagogue, Jesus accepted an invitation
to go to Peter's house. There He healed Peter's mother-
in-law. This healing encouraged the residents of the city
to bring their sick ones to Jesus to be healed. Because
it was the Sabbath the people did not bring the sick to
Jesus until after sundown. Thus it is probable that
Jesus spent an extended period of time that evening
ministering to the needs of the people. Mark 1:35
records: "Now in the morning having risen a long while
before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary
place; and there He prayed."

Jesus did not let the busy evening interfere with
His communion with the Father in prayer. He got up
before the day's demands began so He could gain from personal communion with His Father. If prayer was that important to Jesus, His followers should also find prayer so important they make room for it in the daily schedule no matter how busy they may be.

This is not the only time that Jesus sought such communion with the Father. Luke 5:16 reveals that finding the time to be alone with the Father was something that Jesus did often. "So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed." This being constantly in touch with the Father through prayer is revealed in other ways also. When confronted with temptation, Jesus turned instinctively to the Father for direction and guidance.

One such instance was at the close of the feeding of the five thousand. The disciples became convinced that Jesus was the promised Prophet and should be crowned king. They shared their thinking with the crowd so John records:

"Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, 'This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.' Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to make Him King, He departed again to a mountain by Himself alone. (John 6:14, 15)"

Mark, in his version of the story, records what happened as follows:

"Immediately He made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitudes away."
And when He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray. (Mark 6:45,46)

As one studies these texts it becomes evident that this was a time of temptation for Jesus. The disciples desired Him to be made king. If Jesus became king it would circumvent the plan that God had for Him to save mankind. The temptation was real. Jesus, in order to cope with the temptation, made the disciples get into the boat while He went to the mountain to be alone with His Father. In this time of temptation, Jesus needed to be reassured of His Father's love and for the assurance that He was doing the Father's will. As William Barclay says:

> The approval of God nerved him to meet the criticism of men. He drew strength for the battle of life from the peace of God—and it is enough for the disciple that he should be as his Lord.¹

There are other incidents when Jesus prayed in response to temptation.² However, there is another event in the life of Christ that illustrates His communion with the Father in prayer on a regular basis. Jesus received word that Lazarus was very ill. After the death of Lazarus Jesus went to the tomb. There He offered a prayer in which he said:


²Matthew 11:25, John 12:27 and Luke 22:42 are other examples of Jesus meeting temptation by communication in prayer with His Father.
Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that you always hear Me, but because of the people standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me. (John 11:41, 42)

Jesus is so confident of His relationship to the Father that He prays on this occasion, not because He needs to, but because the people expect Him to do so. He already knew that He was acting in accordance with the Father's will. This demonstrates the continual communion Jesus had with the Father. Just as Jesus had such a relationship with the Father through prayer, so those who are His children today may experience the same kind of relationship with the Him.

Jesus' Teaching about Prayer

Jesus' teachings about prayer are compatible with the things discovered in His prayer life. He sought to teach the disciples how to have such a warm, intimate, relationship with the Father. This is borne out best in Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus gave His hearers an example of the intimacy of prayer when He taught them to pray, saying, "Our Father in heaven." These words teach the believer that he may approach God as father. The fatherhood of God means that He listens to us at any time just as a good earthly Father is open to talking with his children. David Read comments:

So when we use words, when we say: 'Our Father,' we are not saying something about God,
but to him. We are expressing ourselves, opening our life and spirit to Another. This is communication person to person.1

In Matt 6:6-8, Jesus laid the ground work for the example He gave in this prayer. He said:

But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. But when you pray do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.

Jesus is stressing the intimacy and relationship of prayer. He is reassuring his hearers that when they pour out their hearts to God, He hears them and answers their prayers. It is essential that the believer ask God for those things which are needed.

But there is a need to tell God what we want, and to ask Him. Parents give to their children many gifts for which they do not ask: a bed, in which to sleep, food to eat, clothes to wear, protection as far as possible, and many other things. On the other hand, there are some things parents cannot give to their children unless and until they ask for them. . . .

Likewise God gives us many gifts for which we do not ask: the air we breathe, the sun that shines, the rain that falls. But there are many other gifts that God knows we need. Yet He cannot give them to us until we recognize our need for those gifts and are willing to receive them. The asking is expressing of our desires, and thus, the asking is of utmost importance. All of us have missed out on many, many blessings which God has had for us, simply because we never have asked Him.2


God chooses the time and place to answer and in answering the individual's relationship is acknowledged openly.

In this relationship it is not many words that are important, rather it is the communication, the sharing with the Father of the personal needs, praising Him with thanksgiving, and enjoying His presence that is of value before God.

This concept is expanded with Jesus' words, "thy will be done." It is when the believer wants to achieve the will of God that God can bless. This verse indicates that the heart of the one praying must be in tune with God.

For prayer is, first and foremost, not seeking to impose our will on God, but seeking to get our wills in line with his. How often we take our passionate desires to God and ask him to make things turn out the way we want them; how seldom we really expose ourselves to the risk of knowing his will and thus finding the backing of his rule.¹

The willingness of the praying believer to seek to know and follow the will of God demonstrates a spiritual maturity which declares the believer is in tune with the will of God.

This concept is expressed also in John 14:13, 14. "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name I will do it." At first the words of

¹Read, Holy Common Sense, pp. 42, 43.
this text seem to give a blank check to anyone who seeks God in prayer. However, it should be noted that,

the word 'name in the Bible means 'spirit' or 'power.' This condition affirms that we must make our requests in the 'spirit' of Christ. Now, if we ask anything in the spirit of Christ, we signify our acceptance of God's will. Then the promise is fulfilled; 'That I do.' Never forget, therefore, that a condition, is either explicitly stated or implied by Jesus in what, at first glance, may appear to be sweeping and ill-considered promises.1

This relationship is further explained by Jesus in Matt 7:7-11,

Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him?

Commenting on these verses John Bonnell says,

Here, then, we are at the heart of prayer. The God whom you meet is your Heavenly Father. Wherefore, as his child, bring all your problems, all your desires, all your longings to him, asking him to decide what is your deepest need. In his infinite wisdom he will give you that which will be a blessing, not an evil to you. When you go to God in prayer, if you are truly sensitive to his spiritual presence, there will be times when all your problems and desires and longings will be forgotten in the realization that God is with you and nothing else really matters. Then, when your prayer is ended, you will be so undergirded with spiritual power that you will wonder why you were ever baffled by these problems.2


2Ibid, pp. 36, 37.
Avoiding Dangers

Understanding prayer as the expression of a relationship with the Father, the Christian avoids the dangers inherent in the prayer life. These dangers are the following: (1) the blank check approach to prayer which makes God subject to the whims of mankind, (2) believing prayer is a heavenly charm to ward off evil, (3) a parachute to be used in time of trouble, (4) a letter to Santa Claus telling of all the things we want, and (5) an attempt to change the mind of God.¹

These dangers are avoided because prayer is the intimate communication between the believer and his God. While intimacy takes time to develop, when it does develop in the relationship it helps avoid the danger of the fragmented prayer life.

Intimacy requires development. We can never know God as it is our privilege to know Him, by brief and fragmentary and unconsidered repetitions of intercessions that are requests for personal favors and nothing more. That is not the way in which we can come into communication with heaven's King. 'The goal of prayer is the ear of God,' a goal that can only be reached by patient and continued and continuous waiting upon, pouring out our heart to Him and permitting Him to speak to us. Only by so doing can we expect to know Him, and as we come to know him better we shall spend more time in His presence and find that presence a constant and ever-increasing delight.²

¹Ibid., pp. 32, 33.

When the believer has experienced the personal intimate conversation with God which is called prayer, he knows that it is the living connection with the Father.

Ellen G. White and Prayer

Ellen G. White understood the importance of prayer as the avenue of intimate communion with God. In her writings she stresses the importance of maintaining a personal prayer life.

It is impossible for the soul to flourish while prayer is neglected. Family or public prayer alone is not sufficient. In solitude let the soul be laid open to the inspecting eye of God. Secret prayer is to be heard only by the prayer-hearing God. No curious ear is to receive the burden of such petitions. In secret prayer the soul is free from surrounding influences, free from excitement. Calmly, yet fervently, will it reach out after God.¹

The believer constantly has new trials to face and trials which are similar to those already experienced but are enough different from them so that he must rely on the continual light which comes from God. "Prayer and faith will do what no power on earth can accomplish."² This makes it necessary to have time for meditation and prayer.


Mrs. White indicates that this prayer life is to reflect the kind of prayer life Jesus enjoyed while here on earth.

Jesus himself, while He dwelt among men, was often in prayer. Our Savior identified himself with our needs and weaknesses, in that He became a suppliant, a petitioner, seeking from His Father fresh supplies of strength, that He might come forth braced for duty and trial. He is our example in all things. He is a brother in our infirmities, 'in all points tempted like as we are;' but as the sinless one His nature recoiled from evil; He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and a privilege. He found comfort and joy in communion with His Father. And if the Savior of men, the Son of God, felt the need of prayer, how much more should feeble, sinful mortals feel the necessity of fervent, constant prayer.1

Furthermore, the believer is to approach God as he would an earthly father.

The infinite God, said Jesus, makes it your privilege to approach Him by the name of Father. Understand all that this implies. No earthly parent ever pleaded so earnestly with an erring child as He who made you pleads with the transgressor. No human, loving interest ever followed the impenitent with such tender invitations. God dwells in every abode; He hears every word that is spoken, listens to every prayer that is offered, tastes the sorrows and disappointments of every soul, regards the treatment that is given to father, mother, sister, friend, and neighbor. He cares for our necessities, and His love and mercy and grace are continually flowing to satisfy our need.2

1White, Love Unlimited, pp. 93, 94.

She comments again about the relationship between the believer and the Father:

No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our Heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He takes no immediate interest. 'He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.' Psalm 147:3. The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul for whom He gave His beloved Son.1

In accord with the Biblical evidence Ellen G. White understands that prayer is the believer's communion with the Heavenly Father. This communion, modeled after the life of Jesus, is to influence all aspects of the believer's life.

Fasting

The Biblical Base for Fasting

Fasting is essentially an unexperienced discipline in the lives of most Christians of the 1980's. This discipline is not used because there is a failure to understand the biblical teaching about this discipline. The study of the Scriptures about fasting reveals this discipline is one that is to be a part of the believer's experience.

Old Testament

The Old Testament evidence for this discipline reveals it was used in two major ways. (1) It was a

1White, Love Unlimited, p. 100.
means of demonstrating repentance for sins which had been committed by the individual or nation, and (2) it was practiced by the individual or the nation in times of distress.

Demonstrates repentance

After the ark had rested at Abinadab's house for twenty years, Israel under Samuel's guidance gathered at Mizpah to confess their sins and express their desire to return to God. It is recorded that a fast was included in the ceremonies that were conducted on that occasion.

So they gathered together at Mizpah, drew water, and poured it out before the Lord. And they fasted that day, and said there, "We have sinned against the Lord." (1 Sam 7:6)

Noting there is disagreement among the interpreters of this text, the Adventist Bible Commentary comments on the ritual of the pouring out of the water:

Israel expressed recognition of their own unworthiness and solemnly rejoiced in their new found trust in a heavenly Father, who, in spite of their spiritual wandering, received them with open arms.1

As an expression of sorrow for sin and their repentance the people fasted.

Nehemiah, cupbearer for King Artaxerxes, led a migration of Jewish exiles back to Jerusalem. There he found that the progress on rebuilding the temple and the city had come to a halt. He then led out in

1SDA Bible Commentary 2:482.
reestablishing the rebuilding program. After the rebuilding, was finished the feasts—Day of Atonement and Tabernacles—were celebrated. Two days after the conclusion of these feasts a day of national penitence was held. Thus, the day was one devoid of any national significance and the nation could concentrate on the purpose of the day.¹

Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, in sackcloth, and with dust on their heads. Then those of Israelite lineage separated themselves from all foreigners; and they stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. And they stood up in their place and read from the Book of the Law of the Lord their God for one-fourth of the day; and for another fourth they confessed and worshiped the Lord their God. (Nehemiah 9:1-3)

These verses show fasting was used as a demonstration of sorrow for sin. The fast was accompanied by confession and forsaking of sin to demonstrate the genuine nature of the fast. The forsaking of sin in this instance was demonstrated in the breaking off of relationships with the heathen around them.

Compare ch. 10:28 from which it appears that the "strangers" were the heathen surrounding the state of Judah. This act represented a voluntary renunciation of all heathen customs and contacts.²


The service closed with the people renewing the covenant with God. Those Christians who choose to use the fast as an expression of repentance would do well to follow the example of Israel in taking time to renew their covenant of allegiance and obedience to God.

Another passage which demonstrates that fasting was done during times of national confession of sin is Joel 2:14.

Consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly; gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord your God, and cry out to the Lord.

The context of this verse reveals that the land had suffered a locust plague and was undergoing a serious drought. God gave Joel a message to declare to the people the way to stay the calamity that had befallen them. The way is to experience contrition expressed in conducting a fast.

Fasting was a sign of national penitence (1 Sam. 7:6). Although it is probably not meant that literally all the inhabitants of the land (cf. vs. 2) should gather in the temple, yet the phrase implies a small population living near Jerusalem, as was the case after the return from the exile. The verse reaches a climax in cry to the Lord, the purpose of the preceding preparations.\(^1\)

Joel declared this fast to be an expression of humiliation and repentance before God.

Now, therefore says the Lord, turn to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning. So rend your heart and not your garments; return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm. Who knows if He will turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind Him—a grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord your God? (Joel 2:12-14)

The truly penitent believer will find God reaches out to him with forgiveness if he repents of the evil of his ways. That expression of repentance includes fasting as a means of expressing that sorrow for sin.

In times of distress

The second major use of this discipline in the Old Testament was in times of distress when the nation or individuals felt the need for God's special intervention in the circumstances in which they found themselves.

King Jehoshaphat called for a national fast because Judah was being attacked by a coalition of kings.

It happened after this that the people of Moab with the people of Ammon, and others with them besides the Ammonites, came to battle against Jehoshaphat. Then some came and told Jehoshaphat, saying, 'A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, for Syria; and they are in Hazazon Tamar (which is En Gedi). And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. (2 Chr 20:1-3)

Jehoshaphat knew the armies of Judah would not be able to defeat the armies arrayed against the nation. The only source of help for the nation was God's. So Jehoshaphat called upon the nation to fast and ask for God's help in this time of emergency.
God heard the prayers of the people and answered by making the enemies think that a superior force was coming against them. In their haste to flee, they killed each other. All Judah had to do was gather up the spoils. There is mention of a special emphasis on repentance. This does not mean that there was no confession of sin on this occasion, instead the focus of the fast was on the emergency situation and the need for God's intervention.

David fasted as an individual at the birth of the child conceived during his illicit relationship with Bathsheba.

And the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and it became very ill. David therefore pleaded with God for the child, and David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground. (2 Samuel 12:15, 16)

David had repented of his sin with Bathsheba, and Nathan was sent to assure David that God had accepted his repentance and given him forgiveness. At the same time Nathan told David the newborn child would die. David fasted and prayed, asking God not to take the child's life. God carried out the judgment which Nathan under God's direction had delivered. The child died. David's counselors worried about how they would tell the king the child was dead. David was so full of grief while fasting and pleading for the child's life, they were afraid the news would cause him to give up on life.
David became aware of the death of the child and ceased fasting, washed himself, and ate. The counselors did not understand David's actions.

Then his servants said to him, "What is this that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive, but when the child died, you arose and ate food." So he said, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept;" for I said, "Who can tell whether the Lord will be gracious to me, that the child may live?" But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him; but he shall not return to me." (2 Sam 12:21-23)

David knew there had been times when God had seen fit to turn aside a penalty in response to sincere repentance. When God did not give a favorable response, David humbly yielded to the divine will.¹

There are two instances in the life of Daniel that illustrate fasting as a part of a special petition to God. The first instance was Daniel's prayer that the seventy years of captivity for Judah would come to an end.

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans--in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord, given through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. (Dan 9:1-3)

Daniel combines both functions of a fast in this situation. He is seeking the blessing of the Lord in

¹SDA Bible Commentary, 2:653.
delivering his nation from the seventy years of captivity. In his prayer he confesses his sins and the sins of the nation. As Daniel intercedes for himself and the nation, he used the fast as an aid to devotion.

"Fasting and sackcloth and ashes" are employed as auxiliary means to aid devotion. Fasting helps to keep the mind unencumbered and also reminds him who practices it that he has not deserved even food from God. To remove clothing and to substitute a coarse wrap strongly remind the suppliant that not even the comforts of good clothing are his right and due reward. 'Ashes' were put upon the head as a token of grief since Daniel sincerely grieved over his and his people's sins. (cf., Ezra 9:3).1

In response to Daniel's prayer God sent Gabriel to answer his prayer. This experience of Daniel tells this modern generation that prayer has its disciplines, Gerald Kennedy says:

Because of his lack of understanding Daniel turns to the source of all wisdom. But he does not approach God effortlessly. He comes before the throne with fasting, in sackcloth and ashes. This is a judgment on our tendency to approach God easily and carelessly. Much of our praying is no more than vaguely wishing God would do something for us. Prayer has its disciplines, and the more serious our need the more agonizing must be our prayer2

The second instance in the life of Daniel in which we see fasting used in conjunction with a special petition of God is found in chap. 10.


In the third year of Cyrus King of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazar. The message was true, but the appointed time was long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision. In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled. (Dan 10:1-3)

There is probably no significance to the time of three weeks. He did not partake of a complete fast but limited his food intake to very plain foods. The use of ointments was considered luxurious and therefore he did not anoint his body. Daniel did not fast to prepare himself for a divine revelation.

To assert categorically that Daniel was preparing himself to receive a vision is contrary to what the Scriptures tell us regarding visions. Visions are not brought about by personal preparation. Men could not bring about a state of mind that would be favorable for the Lord to impart a vision to them. They did not attempt to persuade the Lord to what He would otherwise have been reluctant to give.

If Daniel was not seeking a vision, then what was the basis for his fasting and praying?

Much more plausible is the supposition that on the one hand Daniel grieved over Israel's sufferings and adversities, which were many, in this third year of Cyrus; on the other that he prayed God's mercy upon this His afflicted people. After the analogy of chapter nine we also assume that he grieved over his own sins and shortcomings and saw in them, in part, at least, a cause of Israel's adversity. Since a term of three full weeks is spent on his prayers and his mourning, that shows with what faith and

1Ibid. 6:501.

2Leupold, p. 445.
persistence he addressed himself to this holy task. Prayer for the church of God was engaged in very assiduously by some of these old saints of God. They believed in the efficacy of prayer and prayed as though everything depended on their prayer.  

Here then is the secret of fasting, it is a discipline used to help focus the mind and energies on the needs at hand. Denying one's self in fasting is a demonstration of total dependence on God for all the blessings of life.

The Old Testament also contains a passage which describes the true fast.

Why have we fasted, they say, and You have not seen? Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice? In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, and exploit all your laborers. Indeed you fast for strife and debate, an to strike with the fist of wickedness. You will not fast as you do this day, Is it a fast that I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, nd to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?

Is not this the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, and hide yourself from your own flesh? Then your light shall break forth like the morning, Your healing shall spring forth speedily, and your righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, an the Lord will answer; You shall cry, and he will say, Here I am. If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, If you extend your soul to the hungry

1Ibid., p. 455.
and satisfy the afflicted soul. Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the noonday. The Lord shall guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. (Isa 58:3-11)

These verses demonstrate the contrast between the concepts of the religious man's fast and the fast of God. God probes deep into the wound that sin has made to show man his real need.  

The fast that is only a form is meaningless to God. The true fast is demonstrated in the moral relationships which the believer maintains with his fellowmen.

In this oracle they are confronted with a God who has great blessings in store for man, who is eager that his light should shine in all man's darkness, but who will leave him in darkness and despair until he is willing to open his life to God in that costly way that makes it open also to his brother. One of the unique features of the Biblical faith is that there is no genuine relation with God that is not at the same time a relation with the brother. No man can know God and close his heart against his brother. This was what the Israelites of Second Isaiah's day did not understand. They thought that by performance of certain religious ceremonies they could repair their relation with God, but they were not prepared for the changes in their ways of dealing with each other, and particularly with their more needy brethren in the community, that would be demanded by a true covenant relation with their God.

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If it was true in the days of Isaiah that a man's relationship with God could be measured by his relationship with His fellowman, it is certainly true today also. The believer who utilizes the discipline of fasting when approaching God either in repentance or seeking God's intervention in the affairs of life must be willing to do God's will to his neighbor within the church and without.

New Testament

The New Testament also demonstrates the use of the discipline of fasting. While the New Testament does not have any examples of fasting as being done in repentance, except possibly for Paul's fast in Damascus, it does include examples of individuals and the church praying for some special intervention on God's part in their affairs.

Examples of fasting

The centurion Cornelius was fasting and praying for a better understanding of the will of God. God sent an angel to tell him to send to Joppa to the house of Simon the Tanner and ask for Simon Peter, who would explain God's will to him. This was the beginning of the church's mission to the Gentiles (Acts 10:30, 1-6). F.
F. Bruce states Cornelius was a god-fearer. As such he believed that God would hear and answer his prayers and was fasting for more knowledge about the God he had learned to serve. This prayer and fasting experience resulted in the conversion and baptism of Cornelius and his family.

Another example of fasting in the book of Acts is at the call of Saul and Barnabas.

Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, 'Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away. (Acts 13:1-3)

The first lesson these verses teach about fasting is that it must have been engaged in by the leadership of the church on a regular basis. Vs 2 says "As they ministered and fasted." It was a part of the leadership they modeled. The second lesson taught by these verses is they continued to pray and fast to be sure they had understood the directions given by God. Fasting was an important part of the leadership selection process.

Leadership modeling the discipline of fasting is also seen in the first missionary journey.

So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. (Acts 14:23)

It is safe to conclude that fasting was an important part of the spirituality of the early church as recorded in the book of Acts.

Jesus on fasting

A study of the New Testament is not complete without looking at Jesus' statements about fasting. What Jesus had to say about fasting was so important for God's people to know that the Holy Spirit impressed each of the writers of the synoptic gospels to record the question raised because Jesus' disciples were not fasting.

And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees were fasting. And they came and said to Him, 'Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?' So Jesus said to them, 'Can the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days. (Mark 2:18-20)

Jesus answered the question tactfully to keep a wedge from being driven between his disciples and the disciples of John. Jesus' answer is based on the recognition by the Jews that there were times when certain religious obligations were not binding on a person. Jesus refers to this understanding in talking about the bridegroom. It is impossible for the disciples to fast when he is with them. But the day will come when
they will fast because he is no longer with them. Thus, Jesus leaves open the possibility of fasting as a part of His followers' spiritual life in the future.

The passage in which Jesus gives the most instruction about fasting is found in Matthew 6:16-18.

Moreover, when you fast do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance for they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

Some have made a distinction between a command and a duty as they have expounded on the meaning of these words. If these verses are a command, then the believer is obligated to fast. If these verses only outline a duty, then fasting is done as an expression of respect for God.

A command is an order, whilst a duty is an expression of respect. Christians do not fast simply because they have been told to do so (although this may happen in the case of local church fasts, or civic fasts), but because it is one natural outcome of their discipleship—they fast for the same reason that they pray. . . . Fasting is a duty required of the disciples of Christ, when God—in His providence—calls to it, and when the case of their own souls—upon any account—requires it. However it is not so much a duty for its own sake, as a means to dispose us for other duties. It seems that there

"quite clearly, is implicit teaching of, and almost an advocacy of fasting... It was something that was regarded by our Lord as right and good for Christian people."

Another view is that Jesus is neither commending or condemning fasting.

Jesus does not here commend fasting, nor does He condemn it. Whether a man fasts is a matter of concern to him alone. In fact, the very essence of fasting is the consciousness of personal need for doing so. The point in Jesus teaching is that fasting is to be a personal experience entered into because of that sense of need, and not as a pious formality or to earn a reputation for superior piety. There is no virtue in fasting simply because a man is commanded to do so.

Perhaps this understanding is closer to the real meaning of what Jesus was trying to teach His followers. Jesus does not tell His hearers that they must fast. It seems rather that He expects it to be a part of their lives. Thus Jesus is upholding the ideal that fasting must be done from the heart, reflecting the inward spirit of the person who is fasting. Thus Jesus calls attention to the necessity of keeping the fast between the individual and God. God will reward the person openly, thus showing the world the depths of the individual's relationship with Him.

The value of fasting derives from the interior motivation to aid one's growth in the spiritual life through prudent and gentle correctives to offset the influences of sin in

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2SDA Bible Commentary, 5:349.
all of its self-centeredness, and to aid one's
growth in the positive development of Christ-like
virtues.¹

In the light of these verses it is safe to say

that our Lord was more concerned about the
manner in which Christians fast, than the time of
such fasting. This being the case, we may assume
that our motives are more important than the
frequency or duration of our fasting.²

The manner of the fast is similar to what Jesus
teaches about prayer. The fast is to be an expression of
a personal relationship with God. Thus, the believer who
is fasting does not brag about the fast but awaits the
Father's blessing to express what is happening between
them. Jesus' promise is that the fast entered into
humbly will be rewarded with the presence of the Father.

The way the fast works in the life of the
believer is captured in these words by David Smith,

Fasting does not create faith, for faith
grows in us as we hear, read, and dwell upon,
God's Word; it is a work of the Holy Spirit to
bring faith to God's people. However, fasting
has the capacity to encourage faith in the one
who is involved in this discipline. It seems as
though the neglect of self feeds the faith which
God has implanted in the hearts of born-again
believers.³

Fasting is the discipline of abstaining from food
for a specified time for religious purposes. Those

¹Thomas Ryan, Fasting Rediscovered: A Guide to
Health and Wholeness for Your Body-Spirit (New York:

²Smith, Fasting p. 75.

³Ibid., p. 47.
purposes according to the Old and New Testaments are: (1) to demonstrate sorrow for sin and repentance and (2) to invite God to intervene in the affairs of man.

Ellen G. White and Fasting

Ellen G. White's understanding of the use of fasting as a spiritual discipline follows the same principles which have been outlined in the previous discussion. She recognizes that the fast may be used to express sorrow for sin. This appears to be her main emphasis in her writings on fasting. Here is one example from among many.1

There are sins of this same character among us today, and they bring the rebuke of God upon His church. Wherever such sins are found, seasons of fasting and prayer are indeed necessary; but they must be accompanied with sincere repentance and decided reformation. Without such contrition of soul, these seasons only increase the guilt of the wrong-doer. The Lord has specified the fast He has chosen. The one He will accept. It is that which bears fruit to His glory in repentance, in devotion, in true piety.2

In connection with sorrow for sin, the believer should also sense that earth's closing scenes are being played out in the world. Fasting plays a part in being prepared for the events to take place before the coming of Christ.

1Choice Ellen G. White quotations on fasting are included in the Resource book in the appendix.

We are living in the most solemn period of this world's history. The destiny of earth's teeming multitudes is about to be decided. Our own future well-being, and also the salvation of other souls, depend upon the course which we now pursue. We need to be guided by the Spirit of Truth. Every follower of Christ should earnestly inquire, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

We need to humble ourselves before the Lord, with fasting and prayer, and to meditate much upon His word, especially upon the scenes of the judgment. We should now seek a deep and living experience in the things of God. We have not a moment to lose. Events of vital importance are taking place around us; we are on Satan's enchanted ground. Sleep not, sentinels of God; the foe is lurking near, ready at any moment, should you become lax and drowsy, to spring upon you and make you his prey.¹

White also understands that fasting may be used to petition God for special intervention in the affairs of man.

In order to succeed in such a conflict they must come to the work in a different spirit. Their faith must be strengthened by fervent prayer and fasting, and humiliation of heart. They must be emptied of self, and be filled with the Spirit and power of God. Earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith—faith that leads to entire dependance upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work—can alone avail to bring men the Holy Spirit's aid in the battle against principalities and powers, the rulers of darkness of this world, and wicked spirits in high places.²

Mrs. White is aware that Jesus gave important instruction in regards to fasting and draws the following lesson from that instruction.


Jesus had shown in what righteousness consists, and had pointed to God as its source. Now He turned to practical duties. In almsgiving, in prayer, in fasting, He said, let nothing be done to attract attention or win praise to self. Give in sincerity, for the benefit of the suffering poor. In prayer, let the soul commune with God. In fasting, go not with the head bowed down, and heart filled with thoughts of self. The heart of the Pharisee is a barren and profitless soil, in which no seed of divine life can flourish. It is he who yields himself most unreservedly to God that will render Him the most acceptable service. For through fellowship with God men become workers together with Him in presenting His character in humanity.1

The fast is to focus on God not on self-centered thoughts. It is in that surrender to God which makes the person most valuable in God's service.

It is in this vein of service that Ellen White makes a special appeal to ministers to yield their lives to God. She says:

The minister must reach a higher standard himself, a faith marked with greater firmness, an experience that is living and vivid, not dull and commonplace, like that of the nominal professors. The word of God sets a high mark before you. Will you, through fasting and prayerful effort, attain to the completeness and consistency of Christian character? You should make straight paths for your feet, lest the lame be turned out of the way. A close connection with God will bring to you in your labor that vital power which arouses the conscience, and convicts the sinner of sin, leading him to cry: "What shall I do to be saved?2

1Ibid., p. 312.

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This look at the teachings of Ellen White concerning fasting gives us insight to the fact that she upholds biblical principles regarding the discipline of fasting. She sees fasting as a part of the Christian's life as believers seek forgiveness from God and a deeper relationship with Him. It is to be a continuing part of the believer's experience.

Our work must be accompanied with deep humiliation, fasting, and prayer. We must not expect all peace and joy. There will be sadness; but if we sow in tears we shall reap with joy. Darkness and despondency may at time enter the heart of the self-sacrificing ones; but this is not against them. It may be God's design to cause them to seek Him more earnestly.¹

**Healthfulness**

The last discipline to be considered is healthfulness. The time has come when this discipline can effectively be shared with those seeking to develop their relationship with God. "The 'signs of the times' seem to indicate a growing awareness of a need to attend to the body in the context of spirituality."² This is seen in the interest in "holistic retreats." In these retreats yoga, diet, movement, and massage are used to help the person attending to achieve the objectives of the retreat.³

¹White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:134.


³Ibid.
Union of Health and Spirituality

The first reason health and spirituality must always be kept together is because of creation. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." (Gen 2:7). Man was created as an entity complete and entire by God in the beginning. In this verse there is no evidence that man was created in some kind of dualism. It has been the influence of Platonic body/soul dualism that has given man the divided picture of himself, and the body comes in as second best.¹

The second reason for the union of healthfulness and spirituality is the incarnation.

If I accept as fact the incarnation— that the infinite Spirit broke into time and space as Jesus Christ, taking on our human body-spirit nature, linking in new creation the matter of our bodies and of all the universe to his body and blood, uniting us with himself by incorporation or assimilation into his body, promising us eternal joy in a resurrected body like his own— then the implications are staggering for the objective preciousness of these bodies of ours, which we take so much for granted. They are our most obvious underlying connection with the whole of the created universe and, through the body of the incarnate Word, with the divinity of our Creator. And every impulse toward growth in union with the living God, come through God's Holy Spirit working in our bodieselves, so that, as St. Paul asserts, our bodies (ourselves) are in truth living temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19-20).²

¹Ibid., p. 9.
²Ibid., p. 10.
The third reason for the union of healthfulness and spirituality is based on God's gift of salvation. Paul develops this idea in the book of Romans.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God which is your reasonable service. (Rom 12:1)

Paul's use of the word "therefore" marks a transition in his thinking. It seems that there is an "inner connection of a definite kind" with the arguments presented in chap. 8. This verse invites the believer to present his body as a living sacrifice in light of all God has done for him, according to chap. 8 include: (1) the gift of the Holy Spirit to the believer to enable him to have victory over the power of sin in the life. (2) the activity of the Holy Spirit in the life to give the believer the assurance he has been adopted into the family of God. (3) the ministry of the Holy Spirit that assures the believer of the future glory God has prepared for him; and (4) the ministry of the Holy Spirit that assures the believer that nothing can separate the him/her from the love of God.

In thankfulness for what God has done for him, the believer is to present his body a living sacrifice to God. Certainly, the offering of the total being to God

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demonstrates only a fraction of the thanks the believer feels for the great mercy of God in his life.

Christian morality is the response to all the mercy of God, which has been movingly set forth in the preceding chapters. It does not begin with a man's ambition to make himself a fine specimen of virtuous humanity, and so maybe, to win the approval of God. It begins with the thankful recognition that God, the source of all goodness, has done for him what he could never do for himself.¹

Paul's readers would understand the idea of sacrifice as implying giving the very best to God. When the Jews of old brought their sacrifices to be offered, the animal to be sacrificed was rejected if had any blemish.² Thus Christians are to present themselves before God in the best possible condition, physically, mentally, and emotionally. This will mean that they will seek to take the best possible care of the body.

The Christian who by faith submits himself to God's way of saving man will gladly obey this command to regard the health of his body as a matter of the highest importance. To do otherwise is to hinder the divine work of restoration.³

The fourth reason for the union of healthfulness and spirituality is that the only way in which God can communicate with man is through the physical body. It is through the physical body that we receive impressions


²SDA Bible Commentary, 6:616.

³Ibid.
about our environment. It is through the senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell that we are enabled to enjoy life. The brain translates the information passed on to it through the senses and responds on the basis of the stimuli received. And it is those same senses that God uses to direct mankind. If the brain does not function then there is no mind. On the other hand it is these senses that Satan uses to try to tempt us to turn from God's way. Thus the care of health is critical for spirituality for it aids the Christian to be aware of the voice of God speaking to him.

The fifth reason for the union of healthfulness and spirituality is that the Christian's body is a part of the temple of God. This truth is taught in 1 Cor 3:16, 17.

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him; For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are. The pronoun "you" in these verses is in the plural indicating that Paul is talking about the total church membership. Thus all the members of the church are a part of the temple of God. Anyone who does anything that tears down or distracts from the temple defiles the temple of God.¹ If the believer does injurious things to

¹See the SDA Bible Commentary 6:677.
his body, he is defiling the temple of God because what he does affects every other portion of the temple.

Paul, in discussing why Christians should flee from immorality, adds to the reasons why the believer should keep his body in the best possible condition.

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Cor 6:19, 20)

This passage, while affirming what Paul said in chapter 3, also drives the point home even further. For it is in this passage that Paul is emphasizing that the individual believer is a temple of God. Thus "every sin that is committed against our bodies is a sin against our Maker and against the Holy Spirit." Inadequate care of the body through the abuse of the laws of health is a sin because it destroys the temple of God.

The temple is the sacred dwelling place of God and therefore it should not be profaned. The temple is to be used only for the purposes ordained by God, for He owns it. Those who profane the temple incur particular guilt for their actions. This verse teaches that the

1Ibid., 6:677, 678.
2Ibid., p. 703.
believer has been purchased at a price, the price of the blood of Jesus.\textsuperscript{1}

Another text stressing the need for caring for a person's health is 3 John 2: "Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things, and be in health, just as your soul prospers."

John reassures Gaius that God wants him to prosper in health just as he is prospering spiritually. The two elements go hand in hand.

God is interested in our physical condition, and wants us to enjoy the best of health. Because of the close connection between mind and body, when the soul or character prospers, the body is better able to be healthy. (Ex. 15:26; Prov. 14:30; MH 241). Conversely, when the health of the body is neglected and bad physical habits are established, the religious life also suffers. \textsuperscript{2}

Ellen G. White and Healthfulness

Ellen White lived at a time when there was widespread ignorance of the laws of health; however, she had insight into the intimate relationship between physical and spiritual health.

The relation which exists between the mind and the body is very intimate. When one is affected, the other sympathizes. The condition of the mind affects the health of the physical system. If the mind is free and happy, from a consciousness of right doing and a sense of satisfaction in causing happiness to others, it creates a cheerfulness that will react upon the

\textsuperscript{1}Charles Hodges, \textit{An Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians} (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1959), pp. 106, 107.

\textsuperscript{2}SDA Bible Commentary, 7:695.
whole system, causing freer circulation of the
blood, and a toning up of the entire body. The
blessing of God is a healing power, and those who
are abundant in benefiting others will realize
that wondrous blessing in both heart and life.¹

According to this statement healthfulness is
promoted when believers actually follow the teachings of
Jesus Christ, for they will be doing good to others as
He did. This will promotes strength to the whole body.

She also understands the necessity for keeping
the mind clear to be able to distinguish between the
sacred and the common.

God desires us, by strict temperance, to keep
the mind clear and keen that we may be able to
distinguish between the sacred and the common.
We should strive to understand the wonderful
science of the matchless compassion and
benevolence of God. Those who eat too largely
and those who eat unhealthful food bring trouble
upon themselves, unfitting themselves for the
service of God. It is dangerous to eat meat, for
animals are suffering from many deadly diseases.
Those who persist in eating the flesh of animals
sacrifice spirituality to perverted appetite.²

A person unfits himself for service to God by
unhealthful eating because it keeps him from
distinguishing the difference between the sacred and the
common. The brain benumbed by unhealthful practices of
eating is unfit to make a right choice.

¹Ellen G. White, Counsels on Health (Mountain

²Ellen G. White, Mind, Character, and Personality
II, p. 290.

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She also understands that the body is to be presented to God as a living sacrifice, as taught by Paul.

We should consider the words of the apostle Paul, in which he appeals to his brethren, by the mercies of God, to present their bodies a "living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God". Sanctification is not merely a theory, an emotion, or a form of words, but a living, active principle, entering into the everyday life. It requires that our habits of eating, drinking, and dressing be such as to secure the preservation of physical, mental, and moral health, that we may present to the Lord our bodies—not an offering corrupted by wrong habits, but—"a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." Rom. 12:11

Ellen G. White upholds the biblical understandings about healthfulness. She draws the reader's attention to the spiritual application in daily living. She stresses the believer's need to practice good health habits in order to truly be a spiritual person.

Each one of the disciplines selected for use in the Deeper Life Conference contributes to developing a deeper relationship with God. Meditation allows one to partake of the bread of life so that the inner man is properly nourished and strengthened for the day. Prayer is the living connection with the Father. Fasting reflects the humility of the believer and expresses the intense desire for God's intervention in the life. Healthfulness enables the believer to present his body as

1White, Counsels on Health, p. 67.
a perfect living sacrifice to God in appreciation for salvation. It also keeps the avenues of the soul open so the voice of God can be heard.
CHAPTER 3

DESIGNING THE DEEPER LIFE CONFERENCE

After exploring the theological underpinnings of the selected spiritual disciplines, it was necessary to determine the form the Deeper Life Conference would take. It is the purpose of this chapter to describe the process by which the Deeper Life Conference was designed. Because the Deeper Life Conference is an adaptation of the retreat format, it is necessary to first outline the format of a successful retreat as described by those who have developed such retreats.

There are a few fundamental elements which make a successful retreat. The first section of the chapter reviews those fundamental elements which insure a successful retreat. The second section describes how these fundamental elements were used in the design of the Deeper Life Conference.

Basic Retreat Types

Classical Retreats

The review of the literature describing retreats reveals two basic retreat types. The first of these
types is the "classical retreat" because it finds its origins in the pattern established by Ignatius in 1548. The classical retreat is identified by two characteristics! (1) It follows the exercises which Ignatius had laid down and (2) it is seen as an event taking place between God and the individual. Thus the retreat has as its focus silent contemplation as the participant seeks oneness with God. Usually participants have little converse with one another.¹ James Wareham expresses the reason for such limiting of interaction among the participants:

A retreat being a time alone with God, conversation is clearly out of place. The making of a retreat is not a corporate act. The ideal is a private retreat, and it is only because, for various reasons, a private retreat is not possible for most people that the kind of retreat with which we are familiar are arranged. . . . The retreatants must be regarded as a number of people doing the same thing at the same time and in the same place, and not as a body of people doing something together. Each of them is there to be alone with God, not to be along with others, and conversation is therefore clearly out of place.²

The retreat is seen as providing opportunity for transformation in the life of the individual participating in the retreat.

The purpose of the retreat is not so much information as transformation. We will be

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transformed into Christ when His ideals and His truths become ours, when His life becomes our life, when we have the mind in us that was in Christ Jesus. We acquire this mind by meditating on His life, by really serious thinking.1

Protestant Retreats

As a result of the Reformation, changes were made in the way retreats were held. Under the influence of the Methodists, free prayers were added or substituted for the structured liturgical services. Also incorporated into the retreat were times for the participants to share personal testimonies of God's action in their lives. This openness has continued to develop in Protestant retreats in the United States where "many include community sharing in harmony with the insights that have been developing in the studies of interpersonal relations."2

John Casteel, reflecting on the purpose of the retreat, declares in words that support the necessity of interaction of the participants:

The purpose of retreat is the offering of ourselves to God in such a way that he can draw us into closer communion with himself—and through this communion grant us richer community with other persons in Christ and a truer understanding of ourselves. The root of this purpose is to be found in the Great Commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," and the second that is like it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."3

1Schutkovske, p. 17.
2Magee, Call to Adventure, p. 33.
3Casteel, Renewal in Retreats, p. 15.
This emphasis on the place of inter-personal communication in the retreat setting seems to follow the Word of God more closely. The reason being that the New Testament teaches the inter-dependence of members of the Body of Christ. Thus the retreat may provide a setting in which this lesson is learned anew by the participants.

As Douglas Steere observes:

My own experience has been largely with groups of mixed ages and backgrounds, and I have welcomed any who felt the call to come. I recall Martin Buber's speaking about his early years of teaching—how he had tried to select his students and to give himself to this hand-picked group, but how, as he grew older, he left it to God to give him whom he would. There is a natural reality about being in a mixed group with old and young. You come to realize that at all stages of life you are being invited to the feast, and that you are not unique because you are young, or middle-aged with responsibilities that have you loaded down almost to the water level, or needing to build afresh for the closing years of your life.¹

A variety of people attending the retreat, with differing levels of experience in their relationship with Christ, insure rich insights into the workings of God in the human heart. It would seem that such a mixture of people would also give those who may be despairing of further growth in their walk with Christ the courage to keep on seeking to know the Lord. If this does take place, then the retreat has been successful.

If the retreat leader sees the importance of the relationship not only between man and God but between man and man, time will be provided for the participants to share what the Lord is doing for them during the retreat hours. Thus, "the center and justification of retreat is found only in communion—in a coming to oneself, a participation with others in Christ, a being in prayer with God."\(^1\)

The similarity between the classical and Protestant retreat types is that both are concerned with enabling the participant to deepen his relationship with Jesus Christ. The contrast between the two retreat types is that the Protestant perspective also emphasizes the relationship of the participants to each other and the inter-relationship of the participant with the rest of the Christian community with which he interacts in daily living.

**Retreat Design**

We now turn our attention to the design of the retreat. Even though there are the two basic types, the development of the retreat is very similar in both types.

**Retreat Fundamentals**

In the design of the retreat several elements are

\(^1\)Casteel, *Renewal in Retreats*, p. 17.
commonly mentioned by practitioners. These elements are (1) the lectures, (2) the use of silence, (3) the times for meditation by the participants, and (4) liturgical events such as the communion service.

**Lectures**

The lectures are important because they not only help set the tone for the retreat but also provide the theme for the participants to meditate upon. Consequently, an overall theme ties together the lectures presented during the retreat. The theme helps the various elements of the retreat to contribute to the goals and to provide continuity. John Casteel believes there is only one theme which is appropriate for a retreat.

In the broadest and most fundamental sense, there is only one theme for a retreat: the need of man and the love and mercy of God. This theme can be developed and elaborated in a wide variety of ways..."2

Douglas Steere tells of outlining a sequence of

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2Casteel, Renewal in Retreats, pp. 105, 106.
retreat sermons which would meet such an objective. They began

with a description of the human condition, followed by a message on the nature of God's grace; a message on the life of prayer; and a message on the gospel ethic of unlimited responsibility for all men that has very specific implications for situations in which we stand.¹

This great need to teach men of their place before God is reinforced in words attributed to Pius XII by Clement Buckley.

An expression has been invented: Anemia of the religious life. It resounds like a cry of alarm. This anemia among all classes, both the learned and the manual laborers alike, must be attributed to an ignorance of spiritual matters, which at times is almost complete. This ignorance must be grappled with, extirpated and conquered. Such a task falls primarily on the clergy.²

Obviously the retreat should be designed to help eradicate this spiritual ignorance. The lectures are a key element in helping to dispel this ignorance as they express the love of God for man. The importance of the lectures in doing this makes it imperative that the retreat leader understand the importance of and take responsibility for the thorough preparation of these materials. Properly prepared, the retreat lectures will direct the participants in their quest to draw closer to Jesus Christ and thus to enable them to dispel

¹ Steere, Call To Adventure, p. 41.
² Buckley, p. 29.
experientially the spiritual ignorance which many of them may have.

In order to effectively develop a meaningful series of lectures for the retreat the retreat leader should carry out the following analysis.

A retreat master must carefully study and appraise the neo-pagan influences in which retreatants live and work; he must also carefully study the spiritual potential of men or women who readily give up a weekend to make the spiritual exercises. He must develop the abilities and techniques of presenting the Word of God in such manner that people will be convinced that Christian sanctity is an achievable way of life for them.¹

The retreat leader understands, on the one hand, the culture of those coming to the retreat, and on the other, the life which God has called humanity to live, and having experienced that life, becomes a bridge between this earthly life and the life God has called people to live.

Silence

The second fundamental element of the retreat is silence. The use of silence is supported by writers for both classical and Protestant retreats. "The depth of the impact of the retreat depends a great deal on the spirit of silence."² Silence provides the opportunity for the participants to be alone with God. It is this aloneness with God that is most important.³ To these

¹Ibid., p. 30.
²Ibid., p. 19.
understandings of the value of silence may be added the following insight.

The essential action in retreat is communion; and this intention will be expressed in the interior attitudes and the exterior movements that belong to the practice of silence, prayer and worship.¹

Some leaders have felt it necessary to give the participants a break from silence during the retreat weekend. This giving of a break from silence is not recommended for it only forces the participants to start the silence over again.² Unbroken silence has been compared to the unbroken sleep the body needs.

Silence has often been compared to sleep. It does for the mind and spirit what sleep does for the body. Nobody would suggest that it would be a good plan to have a break in the middle of a night's sleep, for everyone knows, often from experience, that it is a deep and unbroken sleep that is most refreshing to the body. Not everyone seems to know that it is deep and unbroken silence that is most refreshing to the soul, but it is so.³

This silence does not include talking with the retreat leader or necessary conversation at other times, such as during meals when one can quietly ask for the salt to be passed. Facial contortions at the table may bring anything but the desired item.⁴

¹Casteel, Renewal in Retreats, p. 123.
²Ibid., p. 15
³Ibid.
⁴Ibid., p. 17.
Just as important as the external silence is the internal silence.

It is as easy to spoil a retreat by one's own inward conversation as by talking with others. The silence in which the voice of God can be heard is often broken by 'the storms of passion and the murmurs of self-will.' John Everard says that 'all the artillery of the world were they all discharged together at one clap could not more deaf the ears of our bodies than the clamorings of desires in the soul deaf its ears.'

Thus the participant in the retreat will seek to quiet the heart before God so that the things God would say to him can be heard.

John Casteel recognizes that silence enables the participant to say, "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth."

Silence is inherent in retreat not only as its most effective way of achieving detachment, but also for the realization of the communion that retreat aims to encourage. Communion with God reaches its fullness in our silent waiting upon him, gazing at him in speechless adoration, listening to hear his least word. Although "it be joy to make mention of His Name," wrote Richard Hooker, "our safest eloquence concerning Him is our silence." Intent upon our own will and whim, we turn our prayer into a cry of, "Hear Lord, for thy servant speaketh," and while we cry that, we will never learn to say, "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth."

The silence of the retreat does not slight the participant's relationship with his fellowman. Rather it strengthens the relationship. Charles Whiston notes:

1Ibid., pp. 17, 18.
2Casteel, Renewal in Retreats, pp. 125, 126.
The entrance into the world of silence is in no way an escape from people or from the world. Rather it is for their sakes that we enter silence, that coming out from it we may the better serve them. Too much of our busy serving of men does not have behind it the keeping of silent companionship with Christ, and thus is often sterile or even harmful. We bring men our selves, rather than bringing them Christ in us.¹

A basic question which needs to be answered is, can the participant trust the impressions that come to him in silence? It is important that the retreat participants find the answer to this question during the retreat and discover how to test the thoughts that come to them as they practice silence at home. The best way to test thoughts is to place them before Jesus Christ as He is known by the participant, Who will reveal if they are from Him or not.

It is very seldom that we ourselves initiate a thought, desire, image or memory. They come to us; and then we give our attention to them. There is a mystery to their coming. Some of these interior actions will have as their origin—Christ. Not all, but only some of them. Our task is to learn in silence to be able to discern which of them do come from him. We can never reach utter certainty or proof that they come from Christ. There is much room for self-deception here. As thoughts, desires, imaginings, and remembrances come, we take them instantly and quietly to Christ as we now know him. How does this inner experience look when it is confronted by the living Christ? Some thoughts and desires look very shabby and sinful when seen in his presence. Those we instantly drop and cease giving our attention to them. They very obviously do not come from Christ. But other thoughts and desires seem to belong to him, and we are convinced by faith, not by certitude, that they come from him to us and are meant to

We give our attention to these and see where they will take us, what business they will transact with us.¹

Some participants may not be comfortable with the admonition to lay the thoughts that trouble them before Jesus Christ, for if they do not know Him well, they may feel they cannot trust their decisions about what He might want from them. Another method may be given them to test the thoughts that have arisen during the silence. This test is found in Isa. 8:20. "To the law and the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary notes:

Isaiah here directs men to the Word of God as the standard of truth and the guide to right living. God has revealed Himself in His Word. Whatever man may speak that is not in harmony with that Word has "no light" in it.²

This principle of checking out the message heard by what the Bible says is also relevant to the testing of the thoughts that come to a person in silence. The person confronted by thoughts, and unsure of their source, should test them by the written Word of God.

Jesus reveals another way of checking out the thoughts to see if they are from God or not. "If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My

¹Ibid., pp. 76, 77.

²SDA Bible Commentary, 4:144.
own authority" (John 7:17). Iver Powell says of this verse:

This means a deeply rooted desire to know and be in the will of God. This suggests that everything else is brought into captivity to this guiding principle. To know the will of God necessitates a nearness, a oneness with God, and such proximity demands purity of motive, cleanliness of soul, and open lines of communicative thought between God's throne and the human soul.¹

Ellen White, while not commenting specifically on this verse, does declare the importance of obedience to God in the personal life.

Thus we often find it, even in the religious world. God's express commands are transgressed; and "because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." Eccl. 8:11. In the face of the most positive commands of God, men and women will follow their own inclinations, and then dare to pray over the matter, to prevail upon God to allow them to go contrary to His expressed will. Satan comes to the side of such persons, as he did to Eve in Eden, and impresses them. They have an exercise of mind, and they relate as most wonderful experience which the Lord has given them. But true experience will be in harmony with natural and divine law; false experience arrays itself against the laws of life and the precepts of Jehovah.²

R. C. H. Lenski describes the moving of God's will upon the human will in the following words:

This willing (believing) is the touchstone: "he shall know concerning the doctrine whether it is of God or whether I am talking from myself." "Know" means "realize" not by means of mere

²White, Counsels on Health, p. 109.
intellectual process, not by reasonings and arguments but by the actual experience of letting God's will move his will. When God's will sets the human will free and fills it with new power, then, and then alone, a man knows God's will, what it really is, by having experienced in his own will what God's will does. In no other manner can this knowledge be attained. If your will is moved by God's will as this will graciously reaches out and changes your will; if your will is moved from sin toward Christ and the salvation he brings; if thus moved, it finds the curse and shackles of sin gone, a new heavenly power filling it and working in it: then you realize, indeed, that the doctrine which brought this heavenly will to you is "of God. . . ."¹

The retreat leader may also contribute to the resolution of the conflict in the participant's mind by being open to those who are struggling and inviting them to share the struggle with him. From his mature relationship to Jesus Christ and his knowledge of the Word of God, the retreat leader is equipped to help the participant find the resolution to the thoughts that have come to him in the silence of the retreat.

The silence experienced during the retreat can lead to the use of silence in the participant's daily devotional life. "Thus silence becomes an integral part of one's daily living."²

It is in the arena of daily living that the test of the power of the retreat is portrayed in the life of the participant.

One returns, sent by God, from the silent retreat right into the noisiness and clamor of the world. It is just here, and not in isolation, that the insights and life received during retreat must be tested and lived out. In most lives this will be evidenced in little things and events, rather than in spectacular, catastrophic happenings. Will others--family, colleagues, friends, neighbors--see in us the note of unselfish self-giving rather than claimfulness; humility rather than arrogance; courtesy rather than rudeness; quiet speech rather than loud speaking; patience rather than impatience; serenity rather than being frantic? If men discern these qualities of life in us, they will know that we are indwelt by Another Life, and they will yearn to know its source.1

Meditation

The third fundamental element of the retreat is the meditation. This element is coupled with silence which fosters meditation. Meditation is also prompted by the materials provided in the lectures. It has been suggested by Wareham that the retreat leader provide outlines of the lectures, especially making sure that all Bible texts used during the lecture are included so they may be the starting point of the participants' meditations.2

However, the retreat leader must also realize that the lectures may not be the only elements God uses to bring the participant to an understanding of Himself.

The purpose of the meditations given by the retreat leader is only to supply the retreatants with initial material upon which to think and

1Ibid., p. 80.
2Wareham, p. 29.
Meditate. It is suggestive material only. The words which Christ may speak to the retreatants may or may not have an connection with the addresses given. Christ's agenda always takes precedence over that of the leader.¹

Meditation coupled with silence provides the power that the participant can employ in daily living. As noted in chapter 2, meditation is the means by which the participant takes to himself the power of God's word. It is through meditation that God is able to change the individual. Through meditation on the person, word, and activity of God the participant is prepared to meet the world that waits outside the door of the retreat.

Liturical Events

The fourth fundamental element of the retreat is that of liturgical events that may be included. These liturgical events may contribute to the overall impact of the weekend when they are structured in a way that contribute to the theme of the retreat. These events may include planned worships with the entire group or the inclusion of the communion service during the retreat. The communion service may add to the specialness of the weekend by providing a vehicle that enables the participants to live again the events of Calvary.

The organized worships should be characterized by their objectivity according to John Casteel.

¹Whiston, p. 75.
Corporate worship in retreat should be strongly characterized by its objectivity. It does not center upon the needs, feelings, or subjective states of the retreatants, but upon the Reality and Presence of God, the meaning of Christ, the power and work of the Holy Spirit. Its aim is to affirm, claim, and celebrate these great truths of faith, and to do so with a convincing sense of the direct, personal communion obtaining between the retreatants and God himself.¹

It is easy in a retreat setting with an intimate group to allow the worship to become centered in subjectivity, how the retreatants feel. This subjectivity could then translate into sentimentality. The best defense against this degeneration of the corporate worship service is a "firm lifting of the center of worship to God."²

The involvement of the participants in the worship service by the singing of hymns and litanies, joining in the responsive readings, repeating unison prayers, and directed silent prayer gives the participants the opportunity to become positively engaged in the service. This kind of participation in the service does not work against the silence of the retreat, as it "often provides a disciplined and purposeful release from such tension as the silence may have caused."³

¹Casteel, *Renewal in Retreats*, p. 133.
²Ibid.
³Ibid., p. 134.
In addition to the worship services, retreats may include the celebration of the communion service.

Whenever possible this sacrament should be given a central place in the worship of retreat. The time and manner of observance will vary with the tradition of the church under whose auspices the retreat is being held. In some retreats, Communion is administered before breakfast, at least on the closing morning of the retreat. Under other circumstances, it will be the center of the worship concluding the retreat.\(^1\)

The communion service should be a time when Christian unity is represented. Thus the question of participation in the service should be handled discreetly if the retreat includes people of various religious backgrounds. In the setting of a variety of religious backgrounds, the following points should be made clear:

(1) the openness of the Lord's Table to all who want to come; and (2) the freedom of any retreatant to join in the prayers even though he does not feel free to communicate.\(^2\)

The communion service should be marked also by the same objectivity as the worship service.

The principle of objectivity applies especially to Holy Communion. The celebration should be relevant, of course, to the purpose and the meaning of the retreat. This can be done through the inclusion of appropriate prayers growing out of the concerns and experiences of the retreat, or through periods of silent prayer, especially for the offering of personal decisions and of intercessions for the church and for all men. But care should be maintained lest too many and too hasty improvisations reduce the communion to a subjective act, done mainly for the emotional satisfaction of those attending. Its

\(^1\)Ibid., pp. 134, 135.

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 135.
best relevance to retreat is to be found in the central meaning of the Table itself: the act of God in Jesus Christ for our redemption.¹

Putting a Retreat Together

In designing the retreat, and incorporating the principles that have just been outlined above, there are four additional principles that John Casteel sees as important in the planning of a retreat.

1. A retreat is a unity; every part makes its contribution. . . .

2. The actions of a retreat should follow a rhythm of alteration. . . .

3. A retreat should combine disciplined order with creative flexibility. . . .

4. The retreat should move to a climax.² . . .

The simplest way to see how all the parts fit together in a retreat is to look at three retreat schedules in which these principles are illustrated.

The first schedule as outlined by John Casteel is:

First Evening

7:00 Dinner. Introduction to the company.
8:00 Introduction to the retreat; house procedures; practical details.
8:15 Corporate Worship
8:30 First instruction or conference
9:15 Meditation and prayer.
9:45 Evening prayers.

¹Ibid., p. 135, 136.
²Ibid., pp. 168, 169.
Second Day

7:00 Rising bell.
7:30 Morning prayers
7:45 Breakfast. Reading at the table.
8:15 Personal time; kitchen clean-up.
9:00 Second Instruction or conference.
9:30 Meditation and prayer.
10:15 Work session. Silence may be lifted
12:15 Clean-up or continued
12:30 Dinner. Reading at table. Silence resumes
1:15 Quiet: resting, reading, walking, meditation, and prayer.
4:30 Third instruction or conference; or informal sharing.
5:00 Free time. Silence lifted.
6:00 Supper Reading at table. Silence resumes.
6:45 Personal time; clean-up.
7:30 Hymn-singing; poetry-reading; music; quiet.
8:00 Fourth instruction or conference.
8:30 Meditation and prayer.
9:45 Evening prayers.

Third Day

7:00 Rising Bell
7:30 Morning Prayers
7:45 Breakfast, Reading at table.
8:15 Personal time
9:00 Fifth instruction or conference.
9:30 Meditation and prayer.
10:15 Meeting for corporate silence and sharing of insight and witness.
11:15 Holy communion.
12:00 Free. Silence lifted.
12:30 Dinner. Silence lifted.
1:30 Conference on Returning Home
2:30 Benediction and adjournment.1

The second example of a retreat schedule designed to meet the fundamental principles outlined above is shared by Thomas Hennessy. This example is taken from a retreat held for high-school students at the Gonzaga Retreat House at Monroe, New York.

1Ibid., pp. 172, 173.
7:30 rise
7:55 morning prayers, followed by
dialogue Mass
  prayers after Mass
  breakfast
9:00 reading period
9:30 meditation matter explained
10:15 meditation period
10:45 reading period
11:15 meditation matter explained
12:00 meditation period
12:30 lunch, followed by
  visit to the Blessed Sacrament
  reading period
1:30 conference in the chapel, followed by
  recreation
4:00 Stations of the Cross (outside)
  meditation matter explained
5:30 meditation period
6:00 dinner, followed by
  visit to the Blessed Sacrament
7:00 informal question box
8:45 rosary
  meditation matter explained
  Benediction
10:00 night prayers; retirel

The third example of putting these fundamental
elements together is seen in a suggested schedule
developed by Douglas Steere.

**Friday:**
6:00 Dinner
8:00 Gathering in Common Room
9:45 Evening prayers (Quiet Room)
10:00 Retire

**Saturday:**
7:00 Rising Bell
7:30 Quiet Room
7:45 Breakfast
8:45 Spiritual Instruction (Common Room)
9:15 Manual Work Begins
12:15 Manual Work Ends
1:00 Lunch
4:15 Tea
4:40 Spiritual Instruction (Common Room)
6:00 Dinner

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1Hennessy, p. 119.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:45</td>
<td>Evening Prayers</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Retire</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00</td>
<td>Rising Bell</td>
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<td>7:30</td>
<td>Quiet Room</td>
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<td>8:00</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:15</td>
<td>Meeting for Worship</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30</td>
<td>Discussion (breaking silence only</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>as retreatants contribute to it.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Discussion Ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00</td>
<td>Tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:15</td>
<td>Spiritual Instruction. Silence Ends.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:30</td>
<td>Leavel</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Logistics**

**Advertising**

One item that must be taken care of after it has been decided to hold a retreat is to let the target population know about the retreat. It is true that a small group of people may plan a specialized retreat just for that group; however, it is most likely that some form of advertising will be needed to let people know of the planned retreat. Robert Cox suggests the use of written invitations that

... should be mailed ahead of time, giving complete information about the retreat—date, location, program, cost, and type of clothes needed. Invitations should emphasize the spiritual nature of the retreat. A reply should be requested by a given date, and a telephone call or visit after the invitations are sent would be helpful. To those who accept, send a

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letter suggesting proper devotional readings and prayer.¹

One church that included as a part of its ongoing ministry the holding of retreats, placed upon the retreat master, his committee, and the pastor the responsibility of recruiting participants. The retreat house where they held their retreats would accommodate thirty-two people and their goal was that at least half of those attending would be people who had never been on a retreat before. To accomplish this goal the retreats were announced for a month from the pulpit and in the church paper. Many participants were recruited "through the evangelism of those who have been on a retreat."²

Location

It is assumed in the literature reviewed that the best way to help the participants to detach themselves from the cares of life in order to concentrate on God is to provide a setting away from their homes. Holding the retreat in a quiet setting where all the activities and elements focus on the relationship with Christ enhances the participant's ability to focus on Him. Such a setting does much to insure that the participant gains the benefit designed to be received at the retreat.

¹Cox, "Houses of Commitment and Building a Retreat Program," p. 146.

However, there may be times when a local congregation cannot obtain a facility with sleeping quarters and food services. Thus the retreat would need to be an "open retreat." The retreat is open in that the participants return to their homes after the day's activities are over. Otherwise the "closed" and "open" retreats are the same.

**Meals**

In the retreat settings described in the selected literature, meals were a part of the accommodations of the retreat house, so the participants did not need to prepare meals themselves.

**Accommodations**

The retreat programs described in the literature explored for this project assume that the retreats are to be held in retreat houses where there are sleeping accommodations, either motel-type rooms, or rooms in a mansion which has been converted into a retreat center.

**Costs**

The costs of the retreat are met in several ways. One church collects the money it needs in pre-retreat meetings.¹

¹Ibid., p. 95.
One retreat leader describes a method for meeting the costs of a retreat without excluding those who may be unable to contribute a large amount of money.

Practically all retreat houses have free-will offerings. There are no fixed costs, but each one contributes what he can afford. These offerings are made in sealed envelopes and anonymously. . . . The fact that contributions as a rule are anonymous puts the making of a closed retreat within the reach of every person, no matter how rich or poor he may be. Even where there are fixed costs, arrangements can easily be made to take care of those who would not be able to meet this expense.1

Instructional

Presenter

The above discussion concerning the place of the lectures in the retreat has already provided some insight into the importance of the retreat leader relative to the success of the retreat. The important qualities of this person are summed up thus:

The Leader provides the spiritual guidance for the retreat. He should be a person of spiritual integrity who understands the nature and purpose of a retreat and should speak articulately and with sincerity.

The retreat leader may be called by other names— but his function is always to guide, instruct, and direct the soul toward communion with God. This is the vital goal of the retreat, and its leader must be self-effacing in order to turn the attention of the retreatants away from himself toward God.2

1 Chiuminatto, "What Is a Closed Retreat?" p. 12.
2 Cox, "Houses of Commitment and Building a Retreat Program," p. 146.
Helpers

When the retreat leader selects assistants or accepts offers of volunteers, he needs to remember that the primary purpose of the helpers is to make the participants comfortable and at "home."

Another function of great importance is that of seeing that retreatants are welcomed and made to feel at home. This service requires a person with a disposition of unselfish concern and graciousness who is sensitive to the personal needs of each retreatant.1

While it is true that the helpers must be concerned about the physical comfort of the participants in the retreat, they must also be sensitive to the spiritual needs of the participants. Sometimes they may be able to give the retreat leader clues about individuals who need encouragement in the spiritual life. They may also speak a word of encouragement to those who have come with a heavy load of discouragement.

Seating

The arrangement of the room where group sessions are held needs to be conducive to the purposes of the retreat. Thus the room should provide

an atmosphere conducive to warm fellowship, a maximum of face-to-face meeting, easy communication, adequate lighting and seating is basic. Chairs that are solid but comfortable are to be preferred over softly upholstered lounge chairs and divans, although the latter quickly gain occupants. Probably there is no more

1Ibid., pp. 143, 144.
 universally appreciated feature in such a room than a functioning fireplace.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 139, 140.}  

The Design of the Deeper Life Conference

The purpose of this section of this chapter is to describe the procedures used to design the Deeper Life Conference. It was decided to utilize the "open retreat" model. This design was used because the Seventh-day Adventist Church does not recognize the retreat as a part of its spiritual heritage, therefore it does not have retreat houses established or places readily available where a retreat could be held. The open retreat is designed around the necessity of the participants' returning home at the end of the daily activities.

The Deeper Life Conference is an adaptation of the Protestant retreat design. This adaptation is based on the following considerations: 1. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is grounded in the Protestant Reformation and shares the Reformation view that interrelationships with others are as important as the individual's relationship with God.

2. The Bible supports this interrelationship of the members as illustrated by Rom. 12:3-5.

For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a
measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

1 Cor. 12:12 gives additional insight into the interrelationship of the members of the body of Christ. "For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." Thus as the members of the body of Christ, all Christians are tied to each other and that which affects one affects all.¹

3. Personal interaction will help the members learn that the thoughts, emotions, and responses to the meditation, prayer, and other elements of the conference are shared by others. Thus they realize that these possibly new feelings and ideas are not unique.

Lectures

As noted during the overview of the retreat, the lectures are a very important part, for it is through the retreat messages that the participant is drawn closer to Jesus Christ. In attempting to develop a method of teaching the spiritual disciplines in a communion that does not emphasize them as a part of its spiritual heritage, it was also necessary to demonstrate the importance of the disciplines. Thus in the Deeper Life Conference the lectures served two purposes: (1) They

¹For a fuller treatment of this subject see the discussion on Healthfulness in chapter 2 of this paper.
functioned as devotional sermons in pointing the participants to a Saviour who loves and cares for them; and (2) they served to teach the participants the selected disciplines of meditation, prayer, healthfulness, and fasting.

These two objectives were brought together by building the lectures around the theme "Taste and see that the Lord is good." Each lecture built on the one before it. Each gave new insights into the Christian's relationship with Christ and disciplines that would enhance that relationship.

The opening lecture on Friday evening lays the foundation for the weekend. It is titled: "Spirituality: the Christian Lifestyle."¹ The purpose of the lecture is twofold: (1) to set the stage for the Deeper Life Conference and (2) to show how the selected spiritual disciplines aid in the growth of the believer.

The second lecture is designed to teach the participant meditation as a part of the communication process with God. It is entitled "Meditation: Drinking of the Living Water." It informs the participants that Christian meditation centers on the person, work, word, or activity of God.

The third lecture is titled "Prayer: The Living Connection with the Father." It is designed to

¹A copy of the outline for each of the lectures can be found in the appendix.
demonstrate to the participants that prayer is the expression of an intimate relationship with God. It carries the theme that the individual can taste and see that the Lord is good, by direct communication with Him at any time in any place.

The fourth lecture deals with healthfulness and is entitled "Healthfulness: Opening the Avenues of the Soul". This lecture is designed to enlighten the participants that by keeping the body in the best possible condition the Christian is opening the avenues of the soul. It is through these avenues that God communicates with man.

The fifth lecture is designed to educate the participants about the discipline of fasting. Entitled "Fasting: A Means of Approaching God" the lecture is designed to demonstrate that fasting is a biblical means for an individual to prepare his heart for the blessings of God. It is a discipline to be used at times when a special appeal is made for God's signal blessing.

After the lecture topics were chosen, the first step in preparing the outlines was exploring the Scriptures to see how the disciplines were described and to find some illustrations of their use in the lives of biblical characters.

After the investigation of the Scriptures was completed, Ellen G. White's writings were searched to determine her understanding of the importance of the
spiritual disciplines and to discover any cogent comments she might have concerning the biblical passages under study.

While the research was being conducted in the writings of Ellen G. White, research was also being done in the writings of spiritual masters and contemporary authors to discern how the disciplines might be used in the modern church setting. In the process of conducting this research, it was decided to include in the Deeper Life Conference a resource book of quotations that gave special insight into the importance of the selected spiritual disciplines.

Silence

The use of silence during an open retreat is not as easily accomplished as it is during a closed retreat where the participants do not go home. Imposing total silence upon the participants would make it difficult for them to communicate with family members who might not be attending the Deeper Life Conference. Yet, silence does contribute to the participant's ability to concentrate on the Scripture passages and to hear God speaking to him. A passage by Gerald Jud provided an insight which solved the tension between the desire for silence at the Deeper Life Conference and speaking when necessary.

We began our retreat program by having overnight silence and silence at breakfast. Even though we interpreted this retreat practice each time, it always seemed to cause tension. And at
every retreat evaluation session there were sharp opinions in regard to the value of the silence. We finally solved the problem in a very simple way. We changed the term from "overnight silence" to "overnight quietness." The explanation is, "This retreat into silence is a matter of spirit and not of law. If you have something you just must say to your wife or your neighbor, by all means do so." By simply changing this terminology and being permissive about it, we have found that our retreatants fall happily into line with silence and find much help in it.

The discipline of silence was explained to the participants in the Deeper Life Conference and they were asked to maintain quietness while gathered for the sessions of the conference. As they left they were asked to think about the things they were learning in the conference and to direct their thinking in prayer. This approach helped the participants to keep their minds on the objective of drawing closer to Jesus Christ.

Meditation

During the Deeper Life Conference it was determined to give the participants as much experience as possible in the use of the selected disciplines. This experience was provided for two reasons: (1) To help the participants overcome the fear of using the disciplines by having them do so in a setting where they could ask about their experiences and be assured that their experiences were valid; and (2) by sharing what happened

to them within the small group, they would be assured of not being the only ones who were experiencing new feelings as they meditated.

Three times were set aside for meditation, and for each period the participants were given a different passage to use as the basis of meditation. The passages were: Luke 14:15-24; Rev. 4; and Gen. 1-2:3. The use of the three passages gave the participants the opportunity to meditate on a variety of biblical passages. This gave the participants the opportunity to find out that meditation cannot always follow a set formula, but proceeds from the content of the passage chosen for meditation.

The use of the same passages by all of the participants allowed them, during the discussion time, to compare experiences based on the same passages. Thus the participants learned that they could have similar experiences. This allowed the impact of the passage to make an impression upon them without their having to worry about the validity or error of the concepts resulting from their meditation.

Liturgical Events

Since the schedule of the Deeper Life Conference was filled with meditation and lectures, liturgical events such as the communion service were not included. However, my experience with the Conferences suggests that
a closing communion service could provide a very positive conclusion to the weekend. This would be especially true if it came as the climax of all that had been happening and did not appear to have just been tacked on to the program.

Putting the Deeper Life Conference Together

After all the planning was done to insure that the fundamental elements were included in the Deeper Life Conference, it was necessary to develop a format that would bring them all together in a sensible pattern. The best way to see that pattern is to outline the Deeper Life Conference Schedule.

Friday Evening

7:30 Welcome and Introduction to the Deeper Life Conference.

Time of silence to wait upon God.

Group Discussion of silent time.


Sabbath Morning

9:30 Opening announcements.

Silence and prayer for the presence of God.

Group Discussion of reading assignments.

10:00 Second Lecture--Meditation: Drinking from the Living Water.

Break


12:00 Noon Break

1:00 Third Lecture—Prayer: The Living Connection with the Father.

2:00 Individual experience with prayer.

Group Discussion of prayer experience.

2:30 Time for individual meditation on Rev. 4:1-11.

Break

Group Discussion of experience while meditating on Rev. 4:1-11.

4:00 Fourth Lecture—Healthfulness: Opening the Avenues of the Soul.

6:00 Dismissal for the day.

Sunday Morning

9:30 Announcements

Silence and prayer to begin the day.

Group Discussion of the preceding day.

Fifth Lecture—Fasting: A Means of Approaching God.

Break

Individual Meditation on Gen. 1:1-2:3

Group Discussion of experience while meditating on Gen. 1:1-2:3.

Closing Announcements

12:00 Dismissal
Clearing the way

The planning for the Deeper Life Conferences involved two steps for permission to hold retreats. The first step was obtaining permission from the Michigan Conference Administration to leave the pastoral district to hold the Deeper Life Conferences. In July, 1985, a letter was written to Elder Glenn Aufderhar, president of the Conference requesting permission which was granted in a letter dated July 22, 1985.

The second step was to obtain permission of the pastors and church boards of the selected churches. While I was working on the Deeper Life Conference concept, both pastors of the selected churches, Donald Klinger of the Willow Brook Church and Richard Dickens of the Ann Arbor Church, had expressed an interest in helping their congregations develop a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. After permission was granted by the conference for my being absent from my pastoral district to hold the Deeper Life Conference, the host churches were formally asked for permission to hold the Deeper Life Conference in their churches.1

The pastors were asked to present requests to the church boards for the Deeper Life Conference to be held

1Copies of the correspondence relating to this permission are found in the appendix.
in their churches. The boards were informed of the experimental nature of the Deeper Life Conference and the hope that the Conference would be a means of helping the members who attended the conference to have a better relationship with Christ. It was also explained that the lessons learned from the Deeper Life Conference would be useful in building Adventist spirituality. The church boards in the three churches all approved the requests to hold Deeper Life Conferences in their churches.

Muskegon approval

In the Muskegon Church the church board was told of the Deeper Life Conference and asked to approve the holding of a Conference for the church. The board approved the request after a number of questions clarifying the purpose of the conference.

Willow Brook approval

Pastor Klinger had some questions about the Deeper Life Conference and what it would accomplish in his church. In order to help him understand the nature of the material his parishioners would be taught, I lent him the book *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster. As the lectures for the Deeper Life Conference were developed, he was informed of their content. He also presented the request to the Willow Brook Church Board which approved the holding of a Deeper Life Conference in the church.
Ann Arbor approval

Pastor Richard Dickens had been studying ways and means of helping the members of his congregation grow in a relationship with Jesus Christ. This concern was shared by several of the leaders of the Ann Arbor congregation. When the request to hold the Deeper Life Conference was presented to the Ann Arbor Church Board, it voted unanimously to have the Deeper Life Conference there.

Advertising

Advertising the Deeper Life Conference was accomplished through the use of a simple brochure\(^1\) printed on standard 8 1/2" X 11" paper. This paper was presented as a trifold brochure with the words "Taste and See That the Lord Is Good at the Deeper Life Conference."

The brochure was used in conjunction with a series of bulletin announcements to make the church aware of the coming Deeper Life Conference. Five Sabbaths before the conference the first announcement\(^2\) of the conference appeared. On the fourth Sabbath before the conference another announcement appeared in the bulletin.

\(^1\)A copy of this brochure is found in the appendix on pages 436, 437.

\(^2\)See the appendix for a sample of the announcements appearing in the bulletin.
The third and second Sabbaths a copy of the Deeper Life Conference Brochure was placed in the bulletin. An announcement was placed in the bulletin calling attention to the brochure and the need to register for the Conference. The last Sabbath before the conference a reminder was printed in the bulletin to encourage the people to register for the conference if they had not already done so.

Those who registered for the Deeper Life Conference were then sent a letter\(^1\) giving them more information about the weekend, including how to dress, what foods to bring for the noon meal on Sabbath, and giving the schedule for the weekend. They were also asked to pray that the Holy Spirit would be poured out on all who would be participating in the Deeper Life Conference.

**Location**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has no established sites for retreats. Thus the Deeper Life Conference was designed to follow the open-retreat format where the participants went home each evening after the sessions. Consequently, three criteria had to be met in the selection of a location for the holding of the Conference. The first criterion was that the location be

\(^1\)A copy of this letter is included in the appendix.
familiar to all the participants and easily accessible. The second was that the Conference could not compete for the same space that was used for the normal Sabbath School and Church Services. The third was that the location provide the privacy needed to enhance the Deeper Life Conference objectives of helping the participants draw closer to God.

In Muskegon and Ann Arbor, the Elementary school was available for use. The schools met the needs of the conference in that: (1) the participants knew the locations, (2) they were easily accessible, (3) there was no competition with Sabbath School or Church, and (4) there was privacy so the meditation and lectures were not interrupted.

In the Willow Brook Conference it was necessary to use the church building because the school did not have rooms large enough to comfortably hold the participants during the lectures and group discussions. Consequently, it was necessary to schedule the conference around the Sabbath School and Church Service times. This adjustment is discussed further in chapter 4 where Conference implementation is described.

Meals

Because the Deeper Life Conference is modeled after the open retreat, the only concern with meals was Sabbath noon. If the noon meal were to be held potluck
style and the participants were to bring food that needed to be heated or prepared in any way, they would be distracted from the purpose of the Conference. To have someone else bring food would also be a disadvantage. The presence of individuals who were not a part of the Conference and not familiar with the design of the Conference could interfere, however unintentionally, with the quiet atmosphere of the conference.

Thus it was decided that the best plan would be to invite the participants to bring food with them for the noon meal. The food they were to bring would be prepared in such a way that it would not need preparation at the conference. Sandwiches and fruit salads were recommended. Some brought soups or stews in crock pots that could be plugged in when they arrived so the food would be warm at mealtime.

To minimize the clean-up, paper plates and plastic ware were used so everything could be thrown away. Thus in just a few minutes the participants could again be settled into the atmosphere of the Deeper Life Conference. At each of the three conferences this method for handling the noon meal worked very well. The Ann Arbor Conference was held on the Sabbath of the church fellowship dinner. Participants in the Deeper Life Conference were allowed to go through line first and permitted to return to the conference without having to worry about clean-up.
Costs

The costs of holding the Deeper Life Conference are very low. Since the Conference is following the open-retreat model, it is not necessary to provide sleeping accommodations for the participants. The basic costs are for the advertising brochure and the resource booklet. The highest expense for the brochures for the Deeper Life conference was thirty-seven dollars.

Instructional Presenters

The presenter for the Deeper Life Conferences was myself. The presentations were all made by the one person because of the experimental nature of the Conference. The decision to have the presentations all made by one person is in harmony with the findings of John Casteel in his outline of the work of the retreat leader. He sees the work of the leader in the word "Interpreter." "The retreat leader is to be The Interpreter. . . ." The direction in which he leads the retreat is based on two considerations: (1) How can the purpose of retreat be advanced most surely and fully? and (2) The necessity of giving careful and explicit guidance

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1More is said about the resource book under the discussion of instructional needs for the Deeper Life Conference.

as to what the participants are to do in meditation, silence, and prayer.1

Resource Book

One of the instructional materials used in the Deeper Life Conference is a resource book2 that is provided for each participant. The purpose for providing the book is to give the participants additional background material in the spiritual disciplines. The majority of the book is devoted to selected quotations from the writings of Ellen G. White about three of the selected disciplines: meditation, fasting, and healthfulness. Also included in the book is an additional collection of her quotations on the subject of spirituality.

This material was compiled by using the Laser Concordance of the Ellen G. White writings. A listing was made of all the references on the subject I had available. Each of the references was consulted for information on the subject. A statement was then typed into a computer file for that subject. Of the many pages of quotations thus collected, the statements I considered most pertinent were selected for the resource book. This

1Ibid., pp. 182, 183.

2A copy of this resource book is included in the appendix.
same procedure was used for all four topics included in the book.

In addition to the Ellen G. White materials, the resource book includes an article by William Loveless\(^1\) taken from the January 1986, "Ministry" magazine.

To help participants understand the meaning of meditation on a Scriptural passage, the material entitled "The Paralytic" was also included in the resource book.\(^2\)

Three chapters from the book *Experiencing God Through Prayer*\(^3\) were included in the resource book. The first, entitled "Scriptural Meditation," contains some very practical instruction on the "how to" of meditation. It also includes some information on Bible praying that the participants may find helpful as they begin the use of the selected spiritual disciplines.

The second chapter included, "Beginning the Journey," illustrates the principles of Bible-praying through the use of the Lord's prayer. Madame Guyon shows the reader how to Bible-pray. This use of the Lord's prayer serves as an example of how the reader may then turn other passages into Bible-prayer.

\(^1\)This article was included because it is the only current material on the subject of meditation, written by a Seventh-day Adventist, to come to the writer's attention.

\(^2\)Kelsey, *The Other Side of Silence*, pp. 246-250.

In the third chapter included, "Surviving the Dry Periods," Madame Guyon points out that God allows dry periods so we may come to love the presence of Jesus Christ with us even more.

One form of praying that was taught during the lecture on prayer is Bible-praying. Bible-praying is taking a passage of Scripture and turning it into a prayer. It was felt the participants would gain by having a list of selected Scripture passages which could be easily used for this purpose. Consequently, in the resource book a two-page section was included which lists a number of texts that may be used in Bible-praying.

 Helpers

Because of the open-retreat nature of the Deeper Life Conference, the need of individuals to serve as helpers was limited. The pastors in the Willow Brook and Ann Arbor conferences served as helpers by taking record of the individuals who attended and comparing them with the list of individuals who had registered for the Deeper Life Conference. They also helped with the distribution of the resource book and provided assistance in seeing that the building where the Conference was being held was open on time and the heat turned on. The most important function they served was to point out individuals who might appreciate some special attention from the retreat leader because of spiritual problems.
Seating

In all three of the Deeper Life Conferences the participants were seated on folding chairs. In order that the participants might be comfortable they were told they could bring lawn chairs or cushions. During the lecture portions of the Conference, the participants were seated in rows facing the speaker. During the group discussions they pulled their chairs into groups of three and four. During meditation they were free to sit anywhere while meditating alone on the Word of God.

Summary

This chapter has provided a look at retreat design as provided by several authors. In that design we found lectures to guide the participants in their mediation, times set apart for meditation, and the use of silence. This design was then adapted for use in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and given the title the Deeper Life Conference. The design of the Deeper Life Conference uses the open retreat model and follows the traditional Protestant model of allowing the participants to enter into a discussion of what has transpired between them and God during the retreat. Chapter 4 explores in detail how this design was implemented in the three Deeper Life Conferences which were held in connection with this project.
CHAPTER 4

THE RESPONSE TO THE MUSKEGON
DEEPER LIFE CONFERENCE

In this chapter we note the first of the three Deeper Life Conferences held to fulfill the requirements for this project. The three places selected for the initial retreats were: the Muskegon Seventh-day Adventist Church in Muskegon, Michigan, the Willow Brook Seventh-day Adventist Church, Boonesboro, Maryland, and the Ann Arbor Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The Muskegon Retreat
Muskegon's Setting

The Muskegon Church was chosen because I am the pastor of the church. The city of Muskegon has been going through a transition over the last several years as major industries have closed or relocated in other areas of the country. This has caused the city to become depressed, not only in terms of economics but also in spirit. The church has shared the defeated spirit of the city.

Recently the church has experienced a revival of self-worth and turned its spirit in a positive direction.
This church would provide a setting for testing the ability of the retreat to aid individual members in finding renewed assurance in their relationship with Christ.

Muskegon's Uniqueness

The Muskegon Conference followed the design outlined in chapter 3. However, during the breaks, a young man, Eugene Stubbleski, an instructor in a health club, led the group in some simple physical exercises. These exercises were designed to stimulate the participant's thinking by the use of deep breathing exercises intended to increase cardio-vascular flow.

Muskegon Impressions

After the group had been divided into the small groups and introductions had been made, one message came through from the responses of the group—the participants had an intense and urgent desire to know God personally. This desire was also expressed in the eagerness with which the participants entered into the exercises of the weekend.

During the exercises on Friday evening, the participants were invited to spend ten minutes in total silence waiting for the presence of God. When the ten minutes were over, several mentioned a sense of calm that had come over them, putting them at ease with themselves and in tune with heaven. The next morning when the small
groups were invited to discuss their experiences of the evening before and after they got home, several reported that the sense of calm had stayed with them and they were enjoying the best Sabbath they had had for some time.

Since the Muskegon Deeper Life Conference was the first one held, I had only the information gained from reading as a basis for judging the understanding the participants had gained from the lectures and the exercises of the conference. It was natural that the participants in the two conferences which were to follow would be compared to the participants in the Muskegon conference in learning from the lectures and exercises.

The Muskegon participants reacted to the first meditation session by living the story they had meditated on. The basis for their meditation is found in Luke 14:15-24—the story of the rejection of the invitation to attend the king's feast. Nearly all of the participants felt the emotions of the rejected king. Some identified themselves with the invited guests in the story. This identification forced them to determine whether or not they were making light of the host's graciousness. Some of the group pictured themselves as the servants being sent out to compel others to come in. This raised the question of whether or not they were expressing the desire of the Host for these people to be a part of His banquet.
The enthusiasm of this group for what was happening to them during the sessions on meditation grew as the weekend progressed. They stated that the meditation sessions seemed too short. They were very open to the emotional impact of the passages selected for meditation. In the prayer sessions they were quick to sense the presence of God. This group was the most vocal of the three Deeper Life Conferences over the shortness of the group sessions. They did not want to quit talking about the good things they were learning.

All they were experiencing during the Deeper Life Conference caused the participants to blossom with hope and joy. This hope and joy were expressed in the smiles on their faces and in the testimonies in the group sessions. It seemed to me that the participants had gained a greater sense of belonging to God and a deeper response to His love.

Muskegon Surveys

Survey 1

Statistics

The initial survey, which the participants were to bring with them to the Deeper Life Conference, produced the information shown in Table 1 about the twenty-two participants who began the Conference.
### TABLE 1

**MUSKEGON SURVEY #1 STATISTICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Participant (in years)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Years in SDA Church</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6 (3)</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>(1) born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>2 (1)</td>
<td>no response</td>
<td>(2) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>(1) born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>(1) born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 65</td>
<td>8 (1)</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>(1) born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>(1) born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>over 25</td>
<td>(1) born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(5) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The use of the term "born-again" indicates the individual knew that he had been accepted into the family of God before becoming a Seventh-day Adventist. "Nonborn-again" means the individual did not have this experience before becoming a Seventh-day Adventist. If an individual did not check either answer but wrote on the survey he had been a Seventh-day Adventist all his life then that response was counted as nonborn-again. If the individual checked both born-again and nonborn-again that answer was counted as nonborn-again. If an individual did not check either answer it was counted as nonborn-again.

Open-ended questions

The open ended questions were used to check the participants perceptions of the spiritual disciplines and which of the selected disciplines they found the most helpful. Table 2 gives the responses of the Muskegon
participants to the first open-ended question which asked:

Which one(s) of the following spiritual disciplines of meditation, prayer, fasting, and healthfulness, has(have) the most impact on your devotional life at this time?

**TABLE 2**

**MUSKEGON SURVEY 1**
**RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Actually I am a flop at all three but prayer does seem to make being a flop easier.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No Response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer and Meditation, periodically healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer and Meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation if that means reading spirit of Prophecy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, health, fasting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>NR*</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, Meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Seventeen of the twenty-one respondents listed prayer as the most significant of the selected disciplines in their life. Of these seventeen, eight listed prayer as the only discipline that had an impact on their spiritual life. The second most important discipline in the participants' spiritual life were meditation and healthfulness. Both were listed six times. Fasting was mentioned once. These answers show
that the participants at the Muskegon Deeper Life Conference were probably most experienced in the discipline of prayer and were using it as a regular part of their spiritual experience.

Three responses unveiled hints that there is a recognition of the need for a closer relationship with God. (1) "Actually I am a flop at all three but prayer does seem to make being a flop easier." (2) "My devotional life is at a low point right now." (3) "My devotional life is very unorganized, spasmodic, and sometimes missing."

A fourth statement which could possibly point to the desire for a better relationship with God is the statement: "How much of 'answered' prayer is miracle, or divine intervention and how much is a change of my own viewpoint?" These statements showing a felt spiritual need correlate with the statements of the participants as they interacted in the opening small-group session of the Deeper Life Conference.

The answers to the second open-ended question, which asked: "How would you describe your understanding of God at this time, are listed in Table 3.
### TABLE 3

**MUSKEGON SURVEY #1**

**RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age SDA</th>
<th>Years Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

is that of a father towards His children in a perfect way. God, the Son, is my Saviour. He is visible. He, along with His Father, created everything that I have any knowledge of. His love is perfect as he is perfect. He is almost as powerful as His Father. God, the Holy Spirit, is a spirit form, perhaps any form. It enables us to have a resemblance of holiness, the line of communication to His counterparts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Only as revealed by Jesus life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Loving and merciful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I know that He loves me and forgives me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I think of God as my heavenly Father, who supplies all my need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Positively knowing God loves and understands and cares for us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very loving, merciful, patient, all powerful, forgiving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>He has been smoothing the road of life for me for 52 years now and I still cannot predict His leading—but try to understand and follow along by faith.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>A Father who loves us, tries to guide us, but lets us work things out for ourselves if we insist, but does not abandon us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>All powerful, all loving, all forgiving, all saving.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Seven responses (32 percent) of the above answers indicate that the participant has a personal relationship with God. This type of personal statement can be seen in the response of one 56-65+ year-olds who wrote. "My friend, my counselor, my confidante. One with whom I can talk at any time."

Most of the participants (68 percent), chose to describe God by using words that place God on a different plane from their own. This way of describing God includes, for example, the words "God loves us."

Respondents do not describe a personal relationship with God from the perspective of the first person.

The responses to the third open-ended question are shown in Table 4. This question asked: How would you describe your spiritual fellowship with other members of your local church at this time?

**TABLE 4**

MUSKEGON SURVEY #1
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responent</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responder</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 4—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responder</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>They are as dear to me as my blood relatives in general and I think most of them like me OK.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very little. I have not had too much contact with other church members the last few years, except for my camping buddy, Arlene Loree. We have had spiritual fellowship in nature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Fair.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The responses to this question reveal that the participants are able to relate to their fellow believers. Some of them do feel isolated and alone. However, eleven of the participants (50 percent), gave answers in the first person describing their relationships with other church members as good. The answers to the fourth open-ended question which asked: "How would you describe your devotional life at this time," are shown in Table 5.
## TABLE 5
MUSKEGON SURVEY #1
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18 3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Pretty much the same. Read from the Bible after praying, then pray, and if morning, somewhere in there do my lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35 1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Weak at best. I have real discipline problems in all areas of my life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>36-45 1-2</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Too little. Too hurried. Where and when I can fit it in. Governed more by law than by love. But improving... Wanting to be expanded in time and depth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45 1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>My devotional life at this time is very helpful and becoming more stable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45 1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I am progressing real well some days, but find that I need to be more disciplined in my daily devotional experience at this time. Hopefully this conference will help me achieve this objective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45 21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Almost constant attitude of prayer. Sabbath School study is Friday night. Morning and evening worship are not a part of my devotional life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age Years SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36–45 25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Fairly consistent. Feel the need for more, but don't know what it is I need; probably more self-discipline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>36–45 25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46–55 NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I read the Bible, study and pray each day but there seems to be something lacking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46–55 25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I talk to God a lot, He's my friend through the day. I don't study my S.S. lesson every day, tho that is a struggling goal for me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56–65 6–10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Know should spend more time in prayer and with the Bible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>56–65 25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>A bit lax.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>56–65 NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Bad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>56–65 21–25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Average.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+ 3–5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>65+ 11–15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>See question 4, devotional life at a low point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>65+ 25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I am very regular in my morning worship and my Sabbath worship, but sometimes it seems as if I don't feel my love for God and my thankfulness as I should.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65+ 25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 5—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Not all it should be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>There is probably room for improvement in lines of study (in depth) and prayer. Unless I have something really pressing to pray for, it is hard for me to keep my mind on what I am doing—sorry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very poor. I am and always will be a loyal Seventh-day Adventist but think I am missing something.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I need to spend more time in my private devotions. I would like greater power in my life to live for God.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question on the survey reveals the reason for the intense desire on the part of the participants at this Conference to really know God. Of the twenty-one responses, only four express confidence in the participant's devotional life. Six of the participants describe some form of devotional life, then go on to comment as did one person in the 46-55-year-old bracket, "I read the Bible, study and pray each day but there seems to be something lacking." Another participant expressed his feelings in this way, "Very poor. I am and
always will be a loyal Seventh-day Adventist but think I am missing something." The answers to this question resound with cries of help from people who feel that they are missing important ingredients in successful Christian lives and closer relationships with God.

The answers to the last open-ended question on the survey are to be found in Table 6. This question asked: What are your expectations for or needs to be met at the Deeper Life Conference?

TABLE 6
MUSKEGON SURVEY #1
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18 3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I hope to come closer to Christ, have a better devotional life, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35 1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I would like to learn how to be more open and trusting with God. Learn to improve my devotional life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| #3         | 36-45 1-2     | born-again     | That Jesus might be more alive in my life. That every second, every minute, every hour of every day might be "in Jesus". That I may know how I am to walk with Him. That I may grow and deepen in my experience of every facet of spirituality as presented and studied in this conference. That I
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SDA</td>
<td></td>
<td>may know what Christian growth is. That I may each day replace more of the evil in my life with (the good of) the fruits of the Holy Spirit. That I may know God (better) by bringing Jesus, His Son alive in my life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I feel that I will discover new truths and grow in this experience. In addition, I expect some new wonderful surprises, also, and believe that I will be introduced to new and deeper ways of meditation and devotional experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>To become closer to Jesus Christ our Lord. To be more patient in my daily life. To be more disciplined in my search for all the truths that Jesus has taught us. To be able to turn the cheek when being wronged or taken advantage of as Jesus did. To be more charitable to our fellowman as Jesus taught us to be. To be obedient to our ever loving Master who love us tremendously. To be really thankful for all He has given us, for without Him I would have nothing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>The reason for disappointments in life is expectation; therefore, I don't expect a thing. My needs consist of (1) Patience with those I am closest to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>For a more vibrant and deep Christian experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>To have a deeper understanding of what is expected of me as a Christian and how to go about it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>To strengthen my faith in Christ. To have a greater closeness to Christ that I may better know His will in my life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I always feel the need to be closer to God, to know and recognize His still small voice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>To be uplifted and drawn closer to Christ. To really realize what Christ has done for me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>To know Christ better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>How to overcome doubt and be more spiritually minded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Much closer to my Lord Jesus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responder</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I would like to know how to get more devotion into my life. Also I do want to be closer to Jesus than I am right now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>A closer walk with God. I need help to forgive myself for mistakes I have made, and help to forget them. I know God has forgiven.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Better and closer Christian life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Hoping to be drawn much closer to my Lord.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I do realize and appreciate the way the Lord takes care of me and directs me in many ways but I must admit that my mind is on the mundane things of life most of the time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I hope it will help me get closer to God and to develop some kind of a devotional pattern for my life. My family is not very interested in spiritual things. One son is, but I fear in an academical way. He sometimes gets close to God, but not the church, and too much of an Seventh-day Adventist to be a good member of any other church. I tried to get him to come to this meeting with me, but he declined.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The participants' responses to this question again reveal desire for improved devotional lives. The participants want to know Christ better. The answers to this question simply restate the cries for help expressed in the previous question.

Survey 2

The second survey was given to the participants after the last session on Sunday morning. They were asked to fill it out and leave it with the Conference director. This survey gives a picture of the feelings of the participants immediately after the Deeper Life Conference was concluded. From this survey I learned what happened to the participants during the Deeper Life Conference and whether or not they believed that the Conference would make an impact on their devotional lives in the future.
Statistics

Twenty-one people filled out a survey at the end of the Muskegon Deeper Life Conference. One participant dropped out of the Conference because of the collection of Ellen G. White writings in the resource book. He told me that the church (meaning the Adventist church as a whole) used Ellen G. White inconsistently; therefore, he did not want to be part of the Conference. Table 7 shows the break down of the participants into the various groupings.

TABLE 7
MUSKEGON SURVEY #2 STATISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Participants (in years)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Years in SDA Church</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6 (3)</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>(1)born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2)nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>(2)nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>2 (1)</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>(1)born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1)nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 7—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Participants (in years)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Years in SDA Church</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over 65</td>
<td>7 (1)</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6)</td>
<td></td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>(1)born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(5)nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Open-ended Questions

The first open-ended question in this survey asked:

Which one(s) of the spiritual disciplines discussed during the retreat, meditation, prayer, fasting, and healthfulness, do you think will have the most impact of your spiritual life at this time?

The responses of the participants to this question are shown in Table 8.

TABLE 8

MUSKEGON SURVEY #2
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18 3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-gain</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35 1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-gain</td>
<td>Healthfulness first because I am so far away but meditation will be something I will work at as well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>36-45 1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-gain</td>
<td>Fasting!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### TABLE 8—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>1–2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I think that meditation will have the most impact on my spiritual life at this time, because during the conference, putting myself into the scripture passages while reading and meditating brought the process alive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>1–2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer, fasting, and healthfulness, ie, Prayer and fasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>21–25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation—prayer—fasting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer and healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46–55</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation and prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46–55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>All.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56–65</td>
<td>6–10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>56–65</td>
<td>11–15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer, fasting is something I will consider.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>56–65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>All have had an impact, but I really appreciated the meditation. I need all to make my life complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>56–65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 8—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>All four, prayer, healthfulness, meditation, fasting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, fasting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation and prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Fasting and healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In answer to this question the participants showed a definite change in thinking of the selected disciplines which would be most helpful to them in the future. In the first survey, prayer was the most important of the disciplines to the participants. In the second survey, prayer was still the discipline listed most often as the one most helpful. However, meditation had moved up to thirteen responses and was listed first in all the listings which included meditation and prayer.

Ten listings in this survey responded to this question listed healthfulness as one of the disciplines.
most helpful to the participants. This was up from six in the first survey.

Only one person listed fasting in response to this question in the first survey. Seven participants listed this as a discipline that was going to be helpful to them in the future.

Thus the participants understood at the end of the Conference the necessity of including the selected disciplines in their personal spiritual lives. This limited reaction to the disciplines of healthfulness and fasting may be due to two reasons: (1) The disciplines may have seemed hard for the participants to use. For instance, some of the participants during the group sessions mentioned difficulties they had in living up to their understanding of the health principles espoused by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Thus they may have felt they could not use the discipline of healthfulness in their lives. (2) Fasting, while not totally unknown to the participants, may have seemed something to be practiced only in extreme situations and not something they would use very often. Therefore, it would not impact greatly on their lives.

Table 9 gives the participants responses to the question: "How did your understanding of God change because you attended this Conference."
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I can't really explain the difference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Not a change in understanding so much as a closer relationship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I feel that I now know better how to view His relationship to me and how to approach and relate back to Him. I definitely gained a better sense of direction and response in our relationship. I now know better what it means to &quot;return to God.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Changes of my understanding of God because of Conference attendance. Brought to light a clearer understanding of prayer, fasting, healthfulness and meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I needed the time to be with Him in a controlled environment without distractions, to appreciate, learn more, study, and appreciate all that He has given us. His love being the most important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No real change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>About the same.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age Years</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 9—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It has confirmed my image of God as being a loving, all wise, merciful and interested Father to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>God seeks a very personal relationship with me.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In comparing the answers to this question with the answers to the same question in the first survey, the biggest difference in the two sets of answers is the language used to describe the understanding of God. In the first survey the participants usually described God impersonally, as a person out there, and not in terms of relationship or friendship. In this survey they describe their relationship to God in words that express relationship and friendship. Their statements arise out of personal experience and are reflective of that experience.

The third open-ended question asked: "How would you describe the fellowship in your group during this conference." The responses to this question are shown in Table 10.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resident</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It was pretty good. I would come again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Felt comfortable with my group but had little in common with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Closer and deeper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>The fellowship in my group during the Conference was friendly and open and gave the opportunity to learn something about group participation that I didn't know before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It was really good to be able to share our thoughts, and what we got out of this Conference. It was very rewarding and broadened our knowledge of the Lord and to be able to discipline ourselves to spend time with the Lord on a daily basis, and especially in times of struggle or disappointments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very good. I became better acquainted with some who attended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Strained at first but friendly at the end. It was hard for some to share.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very good—especially the fellowship with God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55 NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Close, like a family.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46-55 25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Sincere.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65 6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>We got to know one another better. We were drawn closer to each other.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>56-65 11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very good.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>56-65 25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>It was a very close one. We shared our thoughts with each other.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>56-65 25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>High spiritual quality.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+ 25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>It has been a feeling of warmth and friendliness, especially within the small group. I have felt an appreciation of deeper perception in others—they have seen what I didn't see.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>65+ 3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I listened close and got a lot about prayer and meditation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>65+ 25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Good.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65+ 25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Good, helpful. I think as the meeting progressed, we became better at opening up with each other.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+ 25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very wonderful.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These answers reveal what the participants gained from the group discussions. Most of the descriptions of the relationships in the group tell of closeness to and learning from one another. At least two of the participants commented on the growth that took place in the groups. The first said, "Strained at first but friendly at the end. It was hard for some to share."

The other participant said, "Good, helpful. I think as the meeting progressed, we became better at opening up with each other."

The fourth opened question asked the question: "How would you describe your devotional life now at the conclusion of this conference." The answers to this question are shown in Table 11.
TABLE 11
MUSKEGON SURVEY #2
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I don't know. It was only a weekend, but I think I'll have a richer devotional life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I am more aware what a devotional life is and the steps for attaining it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I definitely feel that it has been deepened and given a new and improved sense of direction. I feel now that I am better able and more willing to be &quot;in Jesus,&quot; to carry Him with me in my daily walk with Him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I believe that now after the Conference, my devotional life will be more productive, because of being brought to light on new thoughts and ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It is much better because of the need for it on a continuous basis and the discipline that it takes to take time to be with the Lord, as we seem to make time for many other projects or events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I see and feel a need to spend more time and effort on my devotional life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Same as before but now I have more tools to make it more meaningful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Finally, I have experienced taking the Word by itself and having it speak to me. Very rich.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Same yet. Plans for changes tho.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Much better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Have made some decisions and ways to have a devotional time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I have more peace of mind. I really have now that there is a way to help me. I believe that this has really brought me closer to God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Improved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Time has been too short for a change at home. Here, I still find it hard to keep my mind from jumping to practical matters. I think I can improve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>More spiritual.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 11—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Much better. I have a pattern to follow. I know a little of what I have been missing. I plan to carry through as much as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>More complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Perhaps a little more substantial than before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>More eager to pursue it faithfully.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The answers to this question reveal that the participants had their understanding of the devotional life enlarged by their experiences during the Deeper Life Conference. There are three elements which provide this insight: (1) The participants began to understand the need for a consistent devotional life; (2) they have, as one participant wrote, "more tools to make it meaningful"; and (3) the participants experienced the true meaning of the devotional life. One participant wrote of the experience in these words: "It sure was a peaceful time. I brought the peacefulness home with me and I mean to keep it there. It has helped me calm myself."
The fifth opened question asked: "How would you describe your experience at this conference." Table 12 gives the participants responses to this question.

**TABLE 12**

**MUSKEGON SURVEY #2**
**RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It was pretty good. It has taught me different things. The experience is pretty new and so I can't describe it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>A very deep calm that I always wondered if I would ever feel when hearing other people talk about it. A greater sense of the need for a daily walk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Enlightening, rewarding, helpful, much needed at this time in my spiritual or Christian experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>My experience at that Conference has been most rewarding and thought provoking, again giving credit to the spiritual disciplines and group and individual participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It was great and really enriching experience to get closer to God and share with each other common problems and needs that we all can share in. God's love is everlasting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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and ever so bountiful. We have to share with Him like He shares with us without exception till the end of time.

<p>| #6  | 36-45  | 21-25 | nonborn-again | My reading of the writings of Mrs. White has been minimal. The booklet pointed out some things I was not really aware of, mainly concerning meat-eating. |
| #7  | 36-45  | 21-25 | nonborn-again | It was hard to get into it but it was meaningful. |
| #8  | 36-45  | 25+   | nonborn-again | Very Rewarding. I am overwhelmed with the whole experience. The only need I feel would be sharing what I have learned or experienced. |
| #9  | 46-55  | NR    | nonborn-again | Great—learning to take scripture, read pray and meditate will really be helpful in the future study. |
| #10 | 46-55  | 25+   | nonborn-again | Rewarding—at this point I feel close to God. I seem to always need to have that rejuvenated in my life. |
| #11 | 56-65  | 6-10  | born-again    | I was drawn closer to God. Have a better understanding of God. |
| #12 | 56-65  | 11-15 | nonborn-again | I realize how much there is to learn and how much help there is in the Bible that I didn't know was there. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>It sure was a peaceful time. I brought the peacefulness home with me and I mean to keep it there. It has helped me calm myself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Unity with brothers and sisters in Conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I've learned a lot of prayer and meditation. I have to learn more (meditation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I am glad to know what Christian meditation is, and I believe it will help me have a deeper Christian experience and a closer walk with God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Enlightening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very good. Very helpful. Very uplifting. I liked that we practiced as well as listened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Blessed greatly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Pleasant and instructive. I like the casual, comfortable atmosphere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very uplifting. The experience has been genuine.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants' answers to this question, recorded general satisfaction with the Deeper Life.
Conference in that most shared something they had gained from the conference. They expressed their impressions that the practice of the disciplines and the group sessions helped them gain something from the conference. As one participant replied, "My experience at that conference has been most rewarding and thought provoking, again giving credit to the spiritual disciplines and group and individual participation."

The final open-ended question on this survey asked: "What suggestions do you have for improving the Deeper Life Conference." The responses to this question are recorded in Table 13.

**TABLE 13**

**MUSKEGON SURVEY #2**

**RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #9**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Making Sabbath not so long. A little more 'How to'.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>That it be a continuing effort so that the encouragement to grow and keep on. I would be very interested in a more intense study of one aspect at a time. Possibly at a weekend away from home. All in all a great experience. Christianity at its best!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Recommendation of bringing lawn chairs and/or seat cushions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I would like to have a follow-up conference and to see more people next time, and possibly to do it in the outdoors if possible for a day, if not for the whole weekend. This would be great and challenge the mind and the body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>The exercises by Eugene could perhaps be made a part of each &quot;break&quot; on Sabbath to keep us awake.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Suggestions of reading material on meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Count off for groups so no hesitancy there. Say at beginning of sharing times that we want to hear only what happened to you—not theology. It would help not to lose the focus of what the Conference is all about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I'll have to think about that because it was so good the way it was. Just continue to have these weekends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I would have liked more discussing with each other in our individual groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 13—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>56–65</td>
<td>11–15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Have none.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>56–65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>56–65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Two weekends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>More so as the day approaches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>There was an ideal number of people participating. I think each session should stay with about that size, even if you have to limit registration and tell some to wait for next time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I have none.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Nine hours is too long for good productive concentration. 9:30—4:00 would be better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>We should have more time to tell what we have discovered when we meet in our small groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The suggestions given by the participants as they responded to this question reveal that some of them felt the need for more time in the small groups. Others suggested that the time on Sabbath should be shortened.
and Sunday lengthened. Several of the participants suggested that there needed to be follow-up weekends. These weekends would help them to grow in the disciplines they had learned. They also suggested that by devoting a entire weekend to a given discipline they could learn more about that discipline.

Survey 3

This survey was sent to the participants approximately six months after the Deeper Life Conference was held. They were asked to fill it out and return it in the postage-paid envelope. The third survey was used to ascertain any long-lasting changes in the devotional life of the participants. It was felt that if the participants had maintained new devotional habits for six months after the Deeper Life Conference they would probably continue to maintain them.

Statistics

The statistics showing the number of participants responding to the third Muskegon survey are shown in Table 14.
### TABLE 14

MUSKEGON SURVEY #3 STATISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Participants (in years)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Years in SDA Church</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6 (2)</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>(2) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>(1) born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>(1) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>(2) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>3 (1)</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>(1) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>(2) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 65</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>(1) born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(3) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Open-ended Questions

The first open-ended question asked:

Which one(s) of the spiritual disciplines discussed during the Deeper Life Conference meditation, prayer, fasting, and healthfulness have had the most impact on your devotional life since the conference.

The responses to the question are recorded in Table 15.
TABLE 15
MUSKEGON SURVEY #3
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Prayer and healthfulness. I feel that meditation and fasting would have (had) a greater impact if I could concentrate on them more and implement them into my daily devotions and spiritual life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation and prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, meditation, and healthfulness have had the most impact on my devotional life since the Conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Haven't had much of a devotional life since the conference so it would be hard to answer the rest of the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation. I am now much freer to open the Bible and read it and meditate on it, than before the Conference. I couldn't get much out of doing that before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation and prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The responses to this question demonstrate that for the participants who answered this survey, their prediction that meditation would be the discipline that would make the most difference to them as a result of the Deeper Life Conference has been proven accurate. Ten responses to this survey list or mention meditation as the discipline that has had the most impact since the Conference. Of those ten, eight listed it first of the disciplines that have made the greatest difference in their spiritual life. Prayer was listed eight times as being important to the participants. For two of the
participants it was still the discipline that had the most impact on their devotional life.

The other two selected disciplines were ranked lower than they had been in the second survey. Healthfulness received four responses in this survey versus ten in the second survey. Fasting received only one response in this survey versus seven in the second survey.

Perhaps these two disciplines received low ranking because of the manner in which the Deeper Life Conference was conducted. During the Conference three meditation sessions had time allotted for prayer, while there was no way for the participants to practice healthfulness and fasting. These were presented only in lectures, so they could not be practiced in the same manner as meditation and prayer.

In the second survey, fasting was mentioned seven times. The participants looked forward to putting the discipline into practice. Since it was taught that fasting is to be done in times of emergency or of seeking God for a special blessing, the participants may not have felt the need to fast in their lives. Fasting also demands that a person break out of the routine of life in order to conduct a fast. By skipping meals a participant might be questioned by his family as to his reasons for fasting or he/she might be reluctant to share his/her reasoning and thus decide to avoid fasting altogether.
The second open-ended question on the survey asked: "How has your understanding of God changed since you attended the Deeper Life Conference." The responses to this question are provided in Table 16.

**TABLE 16**

**MUSKEGON SURVEY #3**

**RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It's more real.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Closer confidant. Have a better understanding of God as a friend and protector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I am looking more to Jesus which is bringing me into a &quot;right&quot; relationship and understanding of the Father and Holy Spirit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>A deeper relationship in Christ through meditation and prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I've learned that by praying and meditating I can feel a greater closeness to Christ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Without Him we have nothing, and with Him we are able to achieve goals, help our neighbors, be ever so thankful for all that He has given us. Also, His love for us is unyielding and will last forever.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Can't change if you don't study.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 16—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+ nonborn-again</td>
<td>I knew Him as a tremendous Friend before and still do. However, I think this Conference helped me to not be “afraid of the Bible” as far as getting a blessing from it, solely in my devotions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>11-15 nonborn-again</td>
<td>I know of ways to get closer to God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+ nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+ nonborn-again</td>
<td>I am more aware of His presence and this awareness has added new dimensions to my relationship with the Lord.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+ born-again</td>
<td>He was my constant Friend before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+ nonborn-again</td>
<td>Through meditation and prayer, you spend more time in your morning and evening worship. Your devotional life is upgraded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+ nonborn-again</td>
<td>The more I study the better I understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65-</td>
<td>25+ nonborn-again</td>
<td>Not too much.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eight of the fifteen participants or (53 percent) who answered the survey spoke of a better relationship with God as a result of the Deeper Life Conference.
Assuming that those who returned the surveys were the ones helped most by the Deeper Life Conference means that (36 percent) of those in attendance gained a better understanding of God. Those who expressed a better understanding of God as a result of the Conference described their understanding in experiential terms. This is revealed in the first person personal pronouns the participants used to describe their relationship with God. They talked of feeling closer to God and of knowing His presence.

The answers to this question reveal that the participants must be willing to use what they have learned once they leave the Deeper Life Conference and return to the world of family, work, and play. There is evidence that some of the participants failed to follow through on the devotional life. One participant in response to this question said, "Can't change if you don't study." Apparently this person was not studying at all, thus there had been no growth in the life. Another said, "I know of ways to get closer to God." This statement implies that the person knows what to do but has chosen not to use the spiritual disciplines. Another participant chose not to answer this question, suggesting that he had no improvement in his/her relationship with God. This may have been because he/she did not practice the selected disciplines.
It should be noted that the instances of growth have taken place across every age and length-of-membership group in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Thus the Deeper Life Conference seems to demonstrate that the Conference can speak to the spiritual needs of all age groups and length-of-membership groups in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The third open-ended survey question was, "How would you describe your spiritual fellowship with the other members in your local church? Did what you learned in the conference affect it in any way." The responses to this question are found in Table 17.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responder</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Not very good, not a whole lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>More open, more able to share spiritual things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Improving. Yes. As I grow spiritually my relationship with them grows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>A deeper relation with Christ brings a closer spiritual relationship with other members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I feel the spiritual fellowship with other church members has improved because the sharing and caring at the conference has carried over.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I am still learning to be more patient and try not to let the devil turn me away from the Lord's teachings, and my spiritual fellowship with other members is growing and I feel more comfortable with the other members, and will keep trying to be a better Christian with the Lord's help and His direction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Fair. No, only because I haven't used it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Not really—already had good fellowship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I think I'm a little more tolerant of others. When difficult situations occur, I think &quot;What would Jesus do—or say?&quot; This helps to make a decision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>There is always a closeness in fellowship, the promise is there, when we are gathered there . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Good. Not a great deal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 17—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>56–65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I can't say that my fellowship with members has changed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I feel that I have a good spiritual fellowship. I suppose I was helped through the Conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I learned to know and love Ann Strandberg. I developed a deeper friendship with Rhoda and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>My spiritual fellowship with the other church members seems to be satisfactory; I feel that I am accepted at face value and I really love them too—including the Pastor and his family.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nine responses (41 percent) from participants indicated they believe that their relationships with other members of the church improved as a result of attending the Deeper Life Conference. This is seen again in the use of first person personal pronouns to describe what is happening to them.

As a result of the Conference the participants feel more secure in telling others about spiritual things. If this is true for the participants in this Conference, it implies that if the church expects its
members to be comfortable in sharing spiritual things with society it must help its members to find a warm personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Out of that relationship they will then feel secure in sharing with others outside the church family their spiritual discoveries.

The fourth open-ended question on the survey asked: "How would you describe your devotional life at this time." The participants responses are recorded in Table 18.

**TABLE 18**
MUSKEGON SURVEY #3
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Growing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Could be much improved I'll admit, but has been better since the conference. I make a better effort to have devotions every day and to study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very good. Through meditation and prayer and study, I can have a much better understanding of His Word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It is better than it was before, but I am constantly working on it to get more out of it and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responder</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>become closer to Jesus until He comes for us. I pray to Him a lot and hope to achieve a personal bond with Him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Improved with a growing sense of purpose and direction. One of maturing. It is becoming the most important aspect of my daily life as it should be. I desire it and am working to develop it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I always realize an awareness, of a need to continue and increase my devotional activities, to grow stronger in Christ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Could be better, simply by finding more time in a day for it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I don't spend as much time as I need to. I'm lazy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I feel that it has improved. I really enjoy meditating on God's word that I might get the message for the day that He would have me to get.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>It has been cut short by so many duties calling me. I haven't the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 18—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>time I'd like for study and meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Growing better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I read and study the Sabbath School lesson and/or the Bible each day but probably my prayer life could be improved upon. I would like to have an opportunity to discuss this with Pastor Yeager some time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the fifteen participants who responded to this survey, nine gave answers which testify to their growth in the devotional life. These nine represent 41 percent of the original twenty-two people who attended the Muskegon Deeper Life Conference. Assuming that only those participants sent back surveys who had found the experience at the Deeper Life Conference rewarding, the number of participants gaining from the Conference increases to 68 percent. Thus it appears the Deeper Life Conference made a significant impact on the lives of the participants in helping them improve their devotional lives.
The fifth open-ended question asked the participants, "How would you describe your experience at this conference." The responses to this question are recorded in Table 19.

**TABLE 19**
MUSKEGON SURVEY #3
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respon-</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dent</td>
<td></td>
<td>SDA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Good, except for a sore rear and cramped bones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>A great learning experience, especially for a new Christian.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>My experience in this conference has increased my concentration on meditation, prayer, fasting and healthfulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>As an experience I've never before experienced. The closeness to Christ and each person that participated in the conference was wonderful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It was very enlightening experience that one should cherish for a long time. I felt a closeness to the Lord that I hadn't had before, and the time of quiet and peacefulness with the Lord was very special. I pray to the Lord for guidance and hope that He will give me direction till the end time comes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TABLE 19—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responder</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>A Relaxing, low key, casual. Similar to my everyday experience. But, because there was no great emotional drama—lasting. I have been able to carry forth the experience into my daily life and easily keep it there. It was certainly more spiritual than physical and I feel it has awakened or quickened my spiritual life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Excellent—But it wasn't long enough to get everything in—like more small group discussion and whole group discussion. But still very beneficial. The meditation times were great. That's where I learned how to gain a blessing from studying the Bible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>56–65</td>
<td>11–15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I learned how to meditate and to make it meaningful. It's important to me to be close to Jesus and now I know what measures it takes to get that closeness. There is a deeper spiritual life that I'm aware of, and now I have the tools that can allow it to happen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age Years</td>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>United fellowship with brothers and sisters of church. Good to be of one mind—one purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Uplifting. More determined to have and to keep this new experience with the Lord.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>It was a very pleasant experience. It helped me understand Christian meditation. I saw how to understand some of the descriptions in Revelation as symbolic. It taught me more about how to study the Bible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It is good to improve your relationship with God, through the medium of many counsels of His people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Positive, exciting, very uplifting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I thought it was very well presented instruction and some of it was new to me—but in over 50 years of studying and teaching I guess I have come in contact with most of the basics, and perhaps I am too old and set in my thinking to really absorb progressive ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each of the participants responded positively to this question by telling of some way in which the Deeper Life Conference had benefited him. With 68 percent of the total number of participants who started the seminar speaking of a positive benefit they gained from the Conference, it appears that the subject matter of the Conference and the meditation time had met a spiritual need in the lives of the participants.

The last open-ended question asked: "What additional suggestions do you have for improving the Deeper Life Conference." The responses to this question will be found in Table 20.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resident</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-19</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Have the stuff written down, what is fasting for, what is meditation for, and how to, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-36</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>More follow up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Try and find time to discuss mutual topics that a few or all would be interested in, and possibly a different setting if that is possible for part of the conference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 20—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>A more comfortable and unfamiliar setting would help. More time to cover all areas thoroughly through lecture, group discussion and sharing, and quiet personal time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I suggest that deeper life conference participants read the hand out materials and really concentrate on lectures, studies and instructions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Can't think of anyway to improve. I just enjoyed it the way it was and found it a real blessing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>You did a good job. Perhaps it was too general in some areas. Received too much material to cover in a short time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I have none.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Have it more often.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>More of the same.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I thought it was very well done.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The answers to this question not only provide some helpful suggestions but also reflect the positive impact of the Deeper Life Conference on the spiritual lives of the participants. Several of the participants again commented on the positive force the Conference was, some coupling it with a suggestion for making it better, others merely commenting on the Conference.

Two of the participants suggested that having the Conference at a place that is not a part of the participants' lives might be helpful. This, of course, would be the ideal if there were a place or places readily available. It does suggest that those who have experienced the Deeper Life Conference might be willing to share the costs of a follow-up retreat in a center which would require participants to pay.

The Muskegon Deeper Life Conference seems to have demonstrated that in this church setting it is a useful tool for helping the participants enhance their spiritual lives in three ways: (1) They learned how to have a deeper relationship with God, (2) they learned how to make their devotional exercises more meaningful by communication with God through meditation and prayer, and (3) they learned how to share the experience with others, enhancing relationships with their fellow Christians.

The evidence from the three surveys from the Muskegon Deeper Life Conference demonstrates that a deep
spiritual hunger was felt by the participants across the age and length-of-membership groups that were present. Also the participant's responses to finding ways of meeting that spiritual hunger was the same across the age and length-of-membership groups. From this one Conference it appears that the Deeper Life Conference reaches across the boundaries of age and length of membership to help satisfy a spiritual hunger in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

This third survey provides the basis for comparing the overall results of the three Deeper Life Conferences because it reveals the attitudes of the participants toward what they learned at the Deeper Life Conference six months later. The questions of most importance are 5, 6, and 7. They are the questions that reveal the changes that have taken place in the participants' lives as a result of the changes in devotional patterns. Question 5 allowed the participants to describe their understanding of God. Question 6 allowed them to describe their relationship to their fellow church members. Question 7 allowed them to describe their devotional lives. In this Deeper Life Conference 36 percent of the participants described a better relationship with God; 41 percent described their relationship to their fellow church members as improved; 40 percent felt their devotional life had improved as a result of the Deeper Life Conference.
Chapter 5 considers the Willow Brook Deeper Life Conference.
CHAPTER 5

THE RESPONSE TO THE WILLOW BROOK
DEEPER LIFE CONFERENCE

In this chapter we examine the second of the three Deeper Life Conferences held to fulfill the requirements for this project. This Conference was held in the Willow Brook Seventh-day Adventist Church, Boonesboro, Maryland.

The Willow Brook Retreat
Willow Brook's Setting

The Willow Brook Seventh-day Adventist Church was chosen as a church in which to test the Deeper Life Conference because it was in transition from rural to institutional church. Originally peopled by members from the small towns and farms around it, it was changing because of the move of the Review and Herald Publishing Association into the area. The Review brought with it Seventh-day Adventist families who provided its working force, some of whom chose to join the Willow Brook Church. These people range from those who edit the paper to those who operate the printing and binding equipment.

It was felt that a Deeper Life Conference at
Willow Brook would allow the concept to be tested on people who have given their lives to full-time service to the church. It would also provide an opportunity to help them assess their spiritual needs and to determine whether or not the Deeper Life Conference retreat concept could help meet those needs. The church had grown from a membership of 200 to almost 400 in three to four years.

Willow Brook's Uniqueness

The Willow Brook Conference was held in the Willow Brook Seventh-day Adventist Church in Boonesboro, Maryland. Because there was no other place for the group to meet, it was necessary to adjust the schedule of the conference to fit around the Sabbath School and worship services. Thus the conference reconvened on Sabbath just after the church service and ran until 7:00 p.m. This made the Sabbath a very long day for those who chose to come to Sabbath School, church service, and the conference. This element that was not really helpful to the conference for those involved in the conference became so weary they were unable to participate to the fullest extent.

Another factor that worked against the success of the conference was the number of families who traded off coming to the seminar. Both husband and wife wanted to attend and yet felt the need for one to stay home with children. Thus they took turns attending sessions.
While they may have gained some insights into achieving a deeper spiritual experience, they did not gain all they had the right to expect from the conference.

This changing of participants in the seminar also made the work of the small groups more difficult. Since all the members of each group were not there every time, the continuity so essential for the success of a small group was broken. Thus it was often necessary to shift people from one group to another so they would have the opportunity to share their learning. During the course of the weekend, most of the groups were disrupted at least once.

Willow Brook Impressions

The first impression of the Willow Brook Conference was that the people attending the conference had a more positive attitude about their relationship to Jesus Christ than were those who attended the Muskegon Conference. Their desire to improve their relationship with Christ was the reason for their attendance at the conference.

As a result of this impression, it was felt that this conference might well test whether or not those who expressed a positive relationship with God would find the conference helpful, or if they would see it as a waste of time.
The second impression was that these people seemed better able to express what was going on in their relationship. They could talk about the Lord and verbalize that relationship much as they might talk about their relationship with a close friend. This was especially evident on Sabbath when the group had completed the exercise in which they were to picture Jesus coming to them across an open field. Several of the participants were able to describe in great detail Jesus' meeting and welcoming them.

One young lady described meeting Jesus in the middle of the field where they hugged and then walked to some nearby rocks where she sat on Jesus' lap and shared with Him the problems and joys in her life. Others were equally vivid in their descriptions of their impressions during this exercise. While the men were not as dramatic in their pictures, they also had experiences with Jesus that were both intellectual and emotional.

One participant who worked at the Review and Herald was very open about her experience during a period of meditation. While meditating on Rev. 4, she began drawing the things she was seeing. On Sunday morning she wrote out her meditation on Gen. 1:1-2:3 and read it to the whole group after the others in her small group encouraged her to do so.1 After the conference she wrote

---

1This meditation entitled "Creation" can be found in the appendix.
an account of another meditation which she shared during her department's worship. It was so expressive that one of the editors requested a copy for possible use in one of the magazines published by the company.

Willow Brook Surveys

Survey 1

Statistics

There were twenty-six individuals who submitted surveys at the beginning of the Willow Brook Deeper Life Conference. Table 21 shows the break down of the participants into groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Participant (in years)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Years in SDA Church</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>2 (1)</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>2 (1)</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3 (1)</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>7 (2)</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 21—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Participant (in years)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Years in SDA Church</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>(1) born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(7) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Open-ended Questions

The first of the open-ended questions in this survey asked:

4. Which one(s) of the following spiritual disciplines of meditation, prayer, fasting, and healthfulness, have the most impact on your devotional life at this time?

Table 22 shows the responses of the participants to this question.

TABLE 22

WILLOW BROOK SURVEY #1
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer and healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Not sure. All important. But never fasted for spiritual reasons—I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>16–20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>need food to think clearly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>21–25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, fasting, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>46–55</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Meditation. Every day my mind is constantly on the things of the Lord. I find that meditation helps me with my day to day living. It gives me hope and strength for life's trials. It helps me to put the kingdom of God first as there are so many things we can fill our lives with that does not bear fruit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>46–55</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Prayer, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46–55</td>
<td>6–10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer and healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>46–55</td>
<td>21–25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, but getting weaker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>46–55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>46–55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>56–65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>56–65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>56–65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>56–65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer and meditation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the responses to this question twenty-one of the twenty-six participants mentioned prayer as the spiritual discipline that had the most impact on their lives at the time they filled out the survey.

Meditation was mentioned six times and every time it was put at the beginning of the list. This means that there were more people in this conference who knew about and were using meditation than in the Muskegon Conference. Healthfulness was mentioned ten times as being used by the participants as a part of their devotional life. No one listed it first in the order of disciplines which were being used in their lives.

Fasting received only one response from the participants.
The second open-ended question asked: "How would you describe your understanding of God at this time."
The responses to this question are given in Table 23.

**TABLE 23**

WILLOW BROOK SURVEY #1
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responder</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again He's coming soon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again He's coming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>born-again Growing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again Growing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again My Heavenly Father - the one who has made provision for me to be saved, if I so choose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again A wonderful Creator God patiently working with me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again Poor, but willing to learn more as time passes on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again The more I thought I knew about God as I was growing up the more I found out that I have just begun. When I think of all that God has created, His great wisdom and almighty power that He has and then realize that this Great Being loves me, I am in awe. The key to understanding God is in understanding His love.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 23—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Like a Father who is kind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Still have a lot to learn, but can feel and understand His tremendous love and forgiveness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Average, but I would like to know Him as a Father.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I am happy He is an understanding God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Close.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>My understanding of God is what I see in Jesus, love, compassion, understanding, and longsuffering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>A loving Father.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Like a Father, forgiving, loving, kind, always there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Still growing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Most loving Father.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>A loving Creator who is my Father and has a great plan for us to be happy here and for ever.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

and to do this will take a life time and more. The greatest example of God's love is the cross. When we realize who God is and then look at the cross we have to be amazed. I wasn't born yet, but He died for me.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resident</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>He is the Almighty — He loves His creation, heavenly and all inhabited planets. He's the Ruler of the Universe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very deep and an abiding faith that He can meet all my needs, that without Him I can do nothing, but with Him everything is possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>A Father that loves each one of us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#23</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I understand Him to be a most kind, loving wonderful creative being. He desires that I become like Him that I may be safe to share in His kingdom. By following Jesus His Son, my Lord and Saviour, whom He sent to be my perfect example. I will, by my surrender and His grace—be able to fulfill this, His great heart's desire for me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#24</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>God is love, all powerful, knows the end from the beginning, therefore knows what is best for each one of us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#25</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very friendly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#26</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Willow Brook responses to this question show that fourteen (54 percent) of the participants describe God in terms of personal relationship. That is, they are using first person personal pronouns in describing their understanding of God. These participants are able to articulate their relationship with God in words such as "I know" or "I feel." Thus on the basis of this question it seems that this group of participants is more secure in its relationship with God than was the Muskegon group. In the Muskegon conference only 33 percent of the participants described their understanding of God in personal terms.

The third open-ended question asked: "How would you describe your spiritual fellowship with other members of your local church at this time." The responses to this question will be found in Table 24.

**TABLE 24**

WILLow BROOK SURVEY #1
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responder</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age Years SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again Minimal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again Other than our weekly attendance, we have no spiritual fellowship with other members. I fellowship more spiritually with members of another Seventh-day Adventist Church and also with Christians of another denomination. I've had weekly Bible study groups with other Christians. Our own seem too busy or not interested.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again Not wild at this time, I need to improve on my own spiritual life as of now! But I do love my fellowship with the church members; they are good to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again I have a close relationship with a few of the members. We are open with each other and have no problems expressing to each other many things. I feel quite at home when I attend church services. I believe we are brothers and sisters of the Lord's. There are many I don't know on a personal basis but yet you can feel the love they have for you and everyone else. I believe God is working in the Willow Brook Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responder</td>
<td>Age Years</td>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#23</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#24</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Fourteen of the participants saw their relationships with fellow members of the church in a positive light. This is 54 percent of the participants; whereas 41 percent of the Muskegon participants felt they had a good relationship with the rest of the church.

The reason that twelve (46 percent) of the Willow Brook participants may feel they do not have as good a relationship with their fellow-members may result from the fairly rapid growth of the church in recent years due to the relocation of the Review and Herald. The influx of new members would probably impact on the social order of the church and might cause the older members of the church to feel left out.

The fourth open-ended question asked: "How would you describe your devotional life at this time." The responses to this question are given in Table 25.
TABLE 25
WILLOW BROOK SURVEY #1
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Not good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>My low. Enjoy it lots - but can't seem to fit everything important in the day. Always in hurry, it seems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Weak, but growing. Somewhat irregular.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I continue to desire such, but never seem able to break away from my busy schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Unorganized! I wish I could have more private devotion time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Not as strong as it should be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>My strongest areas are reading the Word and meditation. I find I have more problems expressing myself verbally in prayer. I feel I stand in great need of having the Holy Spirit intercede for me. Prayer for me is a private relationship or time for me and God. If ever one should feel humble it is at this time. I do feel a need to have prayer with another when we are studying the Word</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 25—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Strong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Personally I have a deep daily devotional life but I would like our family to have more of a devotional life beginning with a daily devotional.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Bad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Failing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Irregular.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It is not on a regular daily schedule, usually on Fri. night and Sabbath.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Normal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Not deep enough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Inadequate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Could be improved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Time alone with God. Preferably several hours a day. If something interrupts this plan as much as I can and get</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There were five participants who described their devotional lives as strong or told of the joy of communion with God. The rest of the participants expressed either the need for better devotional lives, or expressed lack in the devotional lives they did have. Thus 73 percent of the Willow Brook participants
expressed the need to improve their devotional life. The Muskegon Conference had 82 percent of its participants who expressed the need to improve their devotional life.

These observations are important, for as has been noted while discussing the Muskegon Conference, the participants there seemed to have an intense desire to know God that was revealed in the opening small-group discussions and in the initial survey. Willow Brook, on the other hand, did not express the same intense desire to know God. From the opening group session the participants in this conference seemed to have a relationship with Christ that they wanted to improve. It was expected from the attitudes of the Willow Brook participants at the opening session that more of them would have positive devotional lives than is revealed by the survey.

In spite of the seemingly positive relationships with God that the Willow Brook participants portrayed, the figures indicate that these participants really needed to learn how to have good devotional lives.

Perhaps, the discrepancy between the participants' descriptions of God in this survey and in the opening session of the conference can be explained in light of the rapid growth of the church and the social changes that it created in the church. Question 6 which explores the perceptions of the individual's relationship to other church members gives us some insight. In the
responses to that question it becomes apparent that the participants did not have close relationships with other members of the church. If people do not have close relationships with each other, they mask their true feelings. That masking could have been done during the opening session and on question 5. Their responses to question 7 then, may be more descriptive of their true feelings.

Another explanation for the discrepancy between what the participants say about their relationships with God and the answers to question 7 may be the participants' lack in understanding the growth that is to take place in the Christian's life after he/she is born-again. These participants may have understood that they were accepted into the family of God and received the privileges of the sons of God when they were born-again, but they may have never absorbed the reality that the Christian is to continue to grow in Christ as the branch grows in the vine. Consequently, they would believe they have a relationships with Christ and yet appear to be lacking in the closeness to Christ that comes with daily communion with God through meditation and prayer. The responses to this question seem to reveal that lack in their lives.

The last open-ended question on this survey asked: "What are your expectations for or needs to be met
at the Deeper Life Conference." The responses to this question will be found in Table 26.

**TABLE 26**

**WILLLOW BROOK SURVEY #1**

**RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>12-18</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age Years</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responder</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#23</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#24</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In response to this question, the majority of the participants were expecting to find ways of deepening their relationship with Christ. Their second expectation was the enhancing of their devotional lives. The third was the improvement of their prayer lives.

These expectations also showed the lack of that living relationship in the life that was discussed in the comments on question 7. These answers lend credence to the idea that the participants did not understand the need for continued spiritual growth in Christ as a part of the ongoing Christian experience.

Survey 2

Statistics

Twenty participants answered the second survey at the Willow Brook Deeper Life Conference. The break down of the participants into groupings is shown in Table 27.
### TABLE 27

**WILLOW BROOK SURVEY #2 STATISTICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Participant (in years)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Years in SDA Church</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>5 (1)</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>(1) born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>(1) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>2 (1)</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3 (1)</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>7 (1)</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>(2) born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(4) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Between the beginning survey and the survey at the end of the Deeper Life Conference, there was a loss of six individuals. Two of these were in the 12-18-age category. These young people had come to the opening meeting at the insistence of their mother who hoped they would become interested in the Conference. They dropped out after the first session. Two or three individuals had to work on Sunday and thus did not participate in the second survey. The balance of the attrition and the addition of three people in the 26-35-age category was due to the coming and going of people who tried to
participate in some of the sessions as either interest or other obligations would allow.

While these changes affect the outcome of the second survey, the survey should still give a picture of how well the conference met the perceived needs of the Willow Brook participants.

Open-ended Questions

The first of the open-ended questions asked:

Which one(s) of the spiritual disciplines discussed during the retreat, meditation, prayer, fasting, and healthfulness, do you think will have the most impact of your spiritual life at this time.

The responses to this question are recorded in Table 28.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respon-</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dent</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>SDA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, healthfulness and meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>All of them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation since it is an area in which I needed development in. The techniques discussed are useful and I'm looking forward to developing them personally in my devotional life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>16–20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation and prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>46–55</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Meditation. I believe that when I study the Bible I will be able to get more of a spiritual blessing out of the passages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46–55</td>
<td>6–10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation and prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56–65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>56–65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation and healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>56–65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer and fasting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer, fasting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Meditation and prayer – all of them are important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Healthful living, fasting and prayer. I will have to really work on Biblical meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer, fasting, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation and Prayer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While prayer is still important to twelve of the participants, it is second to meditation. Of the twelve who mention it as making an impact on their devotional life in the future, only two list it first.

In response to this question, all nineteen of the participants listed meditation as one of the disciplines they expect to make an impact on their devotional lives in the future. This is in contrast to the six who were already using this discipline in the first survey. Fifteen of the participants listed meditation first. This swing toward meditation is probably due to the practice the participants had in meditation. They were enthusiastic about it and believed that it would have the most impact on their devotional lives.

Five participants anticipate healthfulness to make an impact on their devotional life, however, only one lists it first. This is in contrast to ten who said healthfulness was making an impact on their lives at the time of the first survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>All - prayer, meditation, fasting and healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Six participants anticipated that fasting would make an impact on their lives in the future.

The second open-ended question asked: "How did your understanding of God change because you attended this Conference?" The responses to this question are found in Table 29.

**TABLE 29**
WILLOW BROOK SURVEY #2
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responder</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I came to the point where I could visualize Him as intimate friend and counselor and thus pour out my soul to Him more completely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I feel I've improved on my relationship. I got to know Him better as my own personal Saviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I've seemed to have developed a clearer picture of who God is and what God wants for my life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>There's no change in understanding. More of a commitment and desire. Had no time or opportunity to think and do these things as we did this week-end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Revelation 4 helped me to realize more the spectacular glory of God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I realize more than ever before, His continuing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>presence with me, moment by moment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I don’t believe it changed. Maybe more aware.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It became more distinct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It was emphasized even more clearly, when you call upon God, He will listen and be with us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>My understanding of God didn’t change. I know His power in my life, but I learned other techniques to use in my relationship with Him that I might see more power realized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>My understanding has deepened in that relationship has been emphasized and practiced. Relationship has been improved.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 29—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Not much. I see my limitations due to my being stifled as a child. I'm just not able at this time to visualize spiritual things. I have no problem with physical things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I see Him as a more caring God for me personally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Realizing His grandeur and patience for us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Drew me closer to Him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It made me more aware of how to pray and that God is concerned about all areas of my life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thirteen (65 percent) of the twenty participants who responded to this question who either described their relationship with God as being improved or were able to enhance the relationship they already had. This compares to 43 percent in the Muskegon Survey. The question might be raised as to what the answers may have been had all the participants in the conference been able to attend all the sessions. It is possible that even more would have gained a broadened and more personal relationship with God.
The third opened question in this survey asked the question, "How would you describe the fellowship in your group during this conference." The answers to this question may be found in Table 30.

### TABLE 30
WILLOW BROOK SURVEY #2
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>We were already friends, but we gained much insight into our spiritual thought-processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Very rich—a little held back due to not knowing each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very open and warm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Each can stimulate and give insights to other two – resulting in a closer relationship and working together. What we aren't able to do alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>A bit reserved but open in general. Some were less open in the beginning but by the end we felt more of a closeness and openness with each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Excellent – enlightening – inspiring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I enjoyed meeting new people and making new friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I enjoyed my group. Very open with their feelings. A sense of love and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>concern for others. Learn from them things you didn't see on your own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very close and open - very receiving, yet giving of themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Would like to have more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very open and willing to share.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>56-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Healthful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>56-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very uplifting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Very helpful. All seeking to be closer to the Lord and to help one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Good. People certainly have different insights and abilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Super.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very uplifting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Drew us closer to each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Friendly - helpful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 30—Continued

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All of the participants describe the relationship within their groups in positive terms. Some spoke of being drawn together and others of the learning that took place in the groups.

The fourth open-ended question asked, "How would you describe your devotional life now at the conclusion of this conference." The responses to this question are to be found in Table 31.

### Table 31

**WILLOW BROOK SURVEY #2**

**RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #7**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10 nonborn-again</td>
<td>Much improved!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>11-15 born-again</td>
<td>It'll be richer in that I know another way to study my God's word and to actually relate to God by meditating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>11-15 nonborn-again</td>
<td>A bit more intense and therefore more spiritual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>21-25 born-again</td>
<td>No time yet to know if different.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>21-25 nonborn-again</td>
<td>At this time I'm still trying to organize a time. Early morning before my son awakes seems to be the best time. I tried this Sabbath morning and enjoyed reading the scriptures and highlighting my Bible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eleven of the twenty of the participants (55 percent) anticipated that their devotional lives would be better because they had taken part in the Deeper Life Conference. This compares to 62 percent in the Muskegon Conference who anticipated changes in their devotional lives.

Some who did not respond to this question by talking of improvement in their devotional lives felt that they already had good devotional lives so a change would not result from the conference. One participant mentioned attending a previous conference which taught some of the same principles so he was already practicing what had been taught at this conference.

The fifth open-ended question asked the question, "How would you describe your experience at this conference." The responses to this question may be found in Table 32.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Enlightening and growing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I felt like I was on the &quot;Mountain top&quot; Thank you P. Yeager.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Uplifting and more aware. I enjoyed the insights into fasting and meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Excellent. Been trying to reach this experience by myself - better it is with friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very positive. Satan really tried to discourage me but Christ was victorious on my behalf. I felt closer to the group as a whole as we fellowshipped together spiritually. Conferences like this helps us to get to know each other and would encourage more of it year-round so all members could share.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I feel closer to Jesus - I especially enjoyed imagining meeting Him in the meadow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I enjoyed it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very moving. Enlightening and enjoyable. I feel at</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Seventeen participants described their experiences at the Deeper Life Conference in positive
Two did not respond at all to the question, and one expressed frustration in the following words, "Bewildered by my inability to meditate."

From the positive responses by the participants in this conference it may be noted that by the end of the conference the participants felt they had had a positive experience.

The final open-ended question on this survey asked: "What suggestions do you have for improving the Deeper Life Conference." The responses to this question are recorded in Table 33.

### TABLE 33
WILLOW BROOK SURVEY #2
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responder</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Offer the option for spouses to work in separate groups. Give more time for group interactions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>To me it is excellent, but why don't we pray about it and see what God says?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Make it longer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Finish the meeting at end of day sooner. We're too tired to think clearly and express ourselves if too long. Plus, we're hungry. Needs follow up of projects, etc. to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 33—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>deepen what we learn (with some people).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I think it would be helpful to know for example our Sabbath lunch break in advance for those who had to make plans with other family members. This is not a criticism, just a suggestion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Make Sunday a little longer, Sabbath a little shorter. It might also be nice to have audience participation in some readings or quotes or scripture. Thanks for everything.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Should be a week-end or better, a week retreat where all aspects can be covered and experienced without interruption.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>More days, less hours at one time. Some like me can't sit long.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Maybe tables to sit by would be helpful, rather than juggling Bible, notebook and Seminar book on your lap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>More on necessity of a closer walk with God.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 33—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Perhaps a little singing as a means of expressing praise and thankfulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Don’t change having spouses in different groups. If made an option, who would dare to go to another group?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Make it longer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Do not pull back from uplifting the law and the Testimonies. If we do there is no light in us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As in the Muskegon Conference the participants in the Willow Brook Conference offered suggestions for improvement that centered on personal comfort. Such elements as tables to sit at so the participants would not have to juggle their materials on their laps, and a change in time on Sabbath and Sunday to shorten the hours and to give participants a chance to relax could easily be provided for in other conferences.

It must be kept in mind that the Willow Brook Conference was held on Sabbath after the first church service and Sabbath School. A number of the participants
came for both of those services and stayed on in the afternoon for the conference. This made an extremely long day for them.

The suggestion that spouses be allowed to work together resulted from my instructions that spouses were to be in different small groups. Some of the couples took exception to this instruction because they wanted to be in the same groups. In contrast to this request was the suggestion that in the future if spouses were given the option of being in the same group if they wanted, problems could arise because, "if made an option, who would dare to go to another group."

Survey 3

Statistics

Table 34 presents the breakdown of the grouping of the six participants who responded to the third survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Participant (in years)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Years in SDA Church</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>2 (1)</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>(2) born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A return of six surveys out of the twenty-six that were sent seems to be a small response on the part of the Willow Brook participants. Steps were taken when the surveys were sent out to insure a better return. Pastor Klinger put an announcement in the bulletin reminding the participants to send back the surveys they had received in the mail. When it became obvious that the surveys were not being returned, Pastor Klinger again put an announcement in the bulletin and made an oral announcement to return the surveys.

Open-ended Questions

The first open-ended question asked:

Which one(s) of the spiritual disciplines discussed during the Deeper Life conference - meditation, prayer, fasting, and healthfulness - have had the most impact on your devotional life since the conference.

The responses to this question are recorded in Table 35.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respon-</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dent</td>
<td>SDA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>Definitely meditation, although prayer has assumed a more important role recently. Healthfulness is a standard practice in our home - we are strict veggies. Fasting, I'm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prayer was the discipline that was listed five times as the discipline making the greatest impact on the lives of the participants since the conference.

Meditation was listed three times as the discipline making the greatest impact on their lives since the conference. All three of these participants listed meditation first in their lists.

Healthfulness was listed three times as the discipline with the greatest impact on their lives since the conference. Healthfulness was not listed first by any of the participants.

Fasting was not mentioned in any of the lists of disciplines that had an impact on the participants' lives.

The second open-ended question in this survey asked: "How has your understanding of God changed since
you attended the Deeper Life Conference. The answers to this question may be found in Table 36.

**TABLE 36**

WILLLOW BROOK SURVEY #3
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>He's closer now than He's been in quite some time. Day by day I'm learning more and more wonderful things to advance my understanding of Him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I thought more clear and more right. But it seem's to be gone now. I lose sight of God so often, and down I go in to sin again. Why, when God has been so very good to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It has not changed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>A closer relationship with God and a clearer realization that God wants us to establish relationships with people to vindicate His character to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>More real to me. I especially appreciated the meditation time. It was most meaningful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 36—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>My understanding of God has certainly been enhanced since attending the Deeper Life Conference. I believe that by reading and studying the Sabbath School lessons and meditating upon what I learn each day this has surely helped me in realizing Jesus' presence in me.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Five of the participants, 19 percent of the total participants, described a closer relationship with God as a result of the conference. This compares to 36 percent for the Muskegon Conference. These descriptions are in the first person pronouns which reveal that the participants have found closer relationships with God. One of the participants said that his relationship with God had not changed.

The third open-ended question of this survey asked: "How would you describe your spiritual fellowship with the other members in your local church; Did what you learned in the conference affect it in any way. The responses to this question may be found in Table 37.
### TABLE 37

**WILLOW BROOK SURVEY #3**

**RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I've always been on friendly terms with most of my fellow church members. The conference didn't diminish or improve that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No, I've kept it all to myself. I need help ever so much, or I'll not make it to heaven at all, and I do not want to miss out on going to heaven at all. I want to see all my sister and brother and Mom and Dad there too, really I do, can you help me in any way at all, Thank you so much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No. I would describe my fellowship with other members as respectful, kind and understanding and happy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Very good. Yes, it helped me to realize more that christianity is a relationship with God and people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Helps me to help others more.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Five of the six responding participants gave answers which revealed that their relationships with the other members of the church have improved. This is 19 percent of the original twenty-six conference participants. This figure compares to 41 percent of the Muskegon Conference. The change that can take place in the life of one who enters a relationship with God was expressed in the last response to question 6. The participant said, "Yes, I believe it has, because instead of having a critical spirit toward some of my brethren, I have a loving spirit toward everyone in our church family."

The fourth open-ended question asked the participants; "How would you describe your devotional life at this time. The participants responses to this question may be found in Table 38.
TABLE 38
WILLOW BROOK SURVEY #3
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resident</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Advancing. My prayer life and Bible study has improved greatly. Meditation has been no major problem as I've always enjoyed it. New dimensions of devotional life have opened up recently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Not as good as it should be. I want to spend time but I don't. The devil keeps on my back at all times. It's so very hard to get rid of him any more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I feel that my devotional life is not as strong as it could be, if I gave it more and more time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Very good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I try every day to read the Bible, in the early morning hours, and pray and meditate upon what I read. Or just what comes to mind to talk with Him as I think.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I have a very definite walking, talking relationship with my Lord. That vine-branch relationship which I know is so vital to my Christian experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Three (12 percent) of the participants described their devotional lives as having grown since the Deeper Life Conference. This compares to 41 percent for the Muskegon Conference. Another participant's description of his devotional life seems to be positive, but there is no way to judge whether or not it has improved as a result of the Deeper Life Conference.

Two participants described problems in their devotional lives. The first mentioned wanting to spend time in devotions, but not succeeding. This person also commented that the devil was constantly on his back. The second participant suggested that his devotional life was not as strong as it could be if he spent more time on it.

The fifth open-ended question asked the participants; "How would you describe your experience at this conference. The answers to this question are found in Table 39.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respon-</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dent</td>
<td>SDA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Enlightening. I showed me new things to do, encouraged me in those things I already did, and pushed me forward in the whole experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 39—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I've enjoyed it very much. I learned a lot of new things that I didn't know before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Interesting, helpful, worthwhile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I learned more about how to meditate and the benefits from meditation, and made several new friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Very helpful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Exciting, learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the responding participants answered question 8 with positive comments, which is interesting in the light of the comments about God and the devotional life showing that some of the participants apparently had not gained anything from the Conference. It may be that the participants learned something at the conference that benefited them in ways that did not show up in the surveys.

The last open-ended question asked the participants: "What additional suggestions do you have for improving the Deeper Life Conference. The answers to this question are found in Table 40.

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TABLE 40
WILLOW BROOK SURVEY #3
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>None at this time. Since devotional activities tend to be personalized by the individual, all you can really do is provide direction and ideas or sources of ideas. I feel that you're already doing that. Lean heavily on E.G. White and Bible for ideas and guidance. Satan does have his counterfeits!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>More time to cover the whole book and to discuss it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>More time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I can think of none, except to get it to more Seventh-day Adventists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It was such an exciting and learning experience to me that I really don't know how it could be improved upon, except to say that in my own experience, I should try to find more time to practice what I learned.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The responses to question 9 do not give any suggestions that would need to be used in future Deeper Life Conferences. One participant used this question to record the impact of the conference on him, an exciting learning experience.

Assuming that those who gained the most from the Deeper Life Conference were those who returned the six-month survey, it means that 23 percent of the people filling out the first survey found the Deeper Life Conference helpful to them. This is not so large a percentage as those who responded to the final survey of the Muskegon Deeper Life Conference. Sixty-eight percent of the participants of the Muskegon Deeper Life Conference filled out the third survey.

Both of the conferences had one common element, in each the participants seem to have the same level of knowledge of the selected disciplines before the conference began. This is revealed in the answers to the first survey when they listed the disciplines that had the most impact on their devotional lives. In answer to the question about their devotional lives in the first survey, the participants in both of the conferences recorded a similar lack of devotional experience and a desire for their devotional lives to be enhanced.

At the close of the two conferences as recorded, in the second surveys, it appears that the Willow Brook participants had grown more in their understanding of
God. Sixty-five percent of the participants in the Willow Brook Conference felt they had grown in their understanding of God, while only 43 percent of the Muskegon participants felt they had grown in their understanding of God. This difference between the two conferences is the most striking one. This particular statistic is striking because it is out of line with the information provided by the other questions. Perhaps the reason the Willow Brook Conference participants gained so much from the conference, is that with their sense of relationship to God going into the conference they were able to concentrate better on the things being taught. Using meditation and prayer they did draw closer to God over the week-end. However, that satisfaction with what they gained over the week-end may have kept them from putting into practice the things they learned for from the results of the third survey we find that the Muskegon participants appear to have gained in their relationship with God.

Another difference that the second survey reveals is the prediction of the improvement of the devotional lives of participants. Fifty-five percent of the Willow Brook participants anticipated growth in their devotional lives, while 67 percent of the Muskegon participants anticipated better devotional lives.

From looking at the common elements of the two conferences, it could be expected that they would reflect
parallel growth in the third survey. However, the statistics for the third survey show that this is not so. The third survey reveals that 41 percent of the Muskegon participants recorded better relationships with God, while 15 percent of the Willow Brook participants recorded better relationships with God. Forty-one percent of the Muskegon participants recorded better relationships with their fellow church members, while only 15 percent of the Willow Brook participants recorded better relationships. Forty-one percent of the Muskegon participants recorded improved devotional lives at the time of the third survey. Only 12 percent of the Willow Brook participants recorded improved devotional lives at the time of the third survey.

Before any conclusions can be drawn about the implications of these findings, the Deeper Life Conference at Ann Arbor needs to be examined for the information from the surveys done there.
CHAPTER 6

THE RESPONSE TO THE ANN ARBOR
DEEPER LIFE CONFERENCE

This chapter considers the third Deeper Life Conference held in fulfillment of the requirements for this project.

The Ann Arbor Retreat
Ann Arbor's Setting

The last place chosen to have a Deeper Life Conference was Ann Arbor, Michigan. Pastor Richard Dickens invited the Conference to Ann Arbor because he believed the Deeper Life Conference offered an opportunity for his people to develop their spiritual awareness. It provided an opportunity to test the retreat concept in a church that had a high percentage of members who are involved in graduate or postgraduate studies.

The Ann Arbor Church is the home church for many students attending the University of Michigan and, occasionally, students from Eastern Michigan University which is located in Yipsilanti, Michigan, not far from Ann Arbor. It would be an opportunity to determine how
those with a graduate education might view their spiritual needs and whether or not the retreat concept could meet those needs.

Ann Arbor's Uniqueness

The Ann Arbor conference was held in the elementary school on the same grounds as the church. The room where the conference was held was crowded with participants. This crowding did not seem to detract from the ability of the participants to gain from the instruction and the meditation times. The small groups just pulled their chairs closer together during discussion times.

A physical change in location took place for the Sunday morning session, due to the rental of the school by another group for the day. Consequently, the last session was held in the church building. This move did not seem to detract in any way from the conference, perhaps because the change was announced from the beginning of the conference and was anticipated. The small-group sessions on Sunday went much better than anticipated in the confining structure of pews which restrict group discussion.

The groups compensated for the restrictions of pew seating in at least two ways: (1) some moved physically—one group moved into the ministers' room next to the platform and others who could also moved from the
pews; and (2) those who could not physically move but solved the problem by turning as far as possible to talk to those behind them while those in back leaned on the pews in front to be a part of the group. The interaction that had already taken place over the life of the conference was not broken by the inconvenience of pews.

Ann Arbor Impressions

From the opening of the conference it was noted that those who were participating in the conference were more capable in the use of verbal skills than those in the other conferences. However, it was much harder to get these participants to describe their feelings and what was happening to them as a result of use of the disciplines they were learning. Perhaps their unwillingness to describe personal emotions and reactions was based on the influence of most education in focusing on the objective elements of experience and in stifling the expression of subjective reactions because, supposedly, they are not reliable.

Some time after this conference, this observation was shared with a participant in a second Deeper Life Conference held in Muskegon. Dr. Mark Smalley said he found meditation difficult at first because his education had taught him that reality is found only in those things which can be seen, touched, or measured. It was hard for him to trust his subjective reactions as he read and
thought about the passages under consideration. This observation might explain why many of the participants at the Ann Arbor Conference had a hard time moving from analysis of the text to assessment of its impact on them.

The change in the ability to deal with the subjective emotions was usually expressed by change in the use of language as the participants talked of their experiences. Prior to the change, the participants would use language that would include the whole group: "We this" and "we that," or "Seventh-day Adventists should" are examples of this type of language. As the change in thinking took place, the language began to change to "I should," "I feel," or "I know."

As the individuals began to make the change, their reactions to the meditation periods were more positive. Rather than trying to explain objective truth, they began to live with the passage and reflect on its effect on them. The reader of the Bible cannot be isolated from it. It appeared that this group began to experience the power of God in their lives as they meditated on the Word, because they were willing to stay with meditation during the entire assigned time.

On Sabbath, before time had been called on the first meditation period, some of the participants quit early and were talking in the hall. After the second meditation period, fewer were doing so. On Sunday morning all the participants stayed with the exercise.
until called back into the group session. Since many of those who broke off their meditation were active students, it may be that the fifty minute time frame of most classes caused them to desire a break early, since the meditation times were one hour long.

Ann Arbor Surveys
Survey 1

Statistics

There were twenty-six participants who turned in the first survey at the Ann Arbor Conference. The break-down of the participants into groups is shown in Table 41.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Participant (in years)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Years in SDA Church</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>11 (3)</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>(1) born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>(2) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>(3) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>8 (1)</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>(1) born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>(2) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>(2) born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>5 (1)</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>2 (1)</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Open-ended Questions

The first open-ended question on this survey asked:

Which one(s) of the following spiritual disciplines of meditation, prayer, fasting, and healthfulness, have the most impact on your devotional life at this time.

The answers to this question may be found in Table 42.

TABLE 42
ANN ARBOR SURVEY #1
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Prayer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, healthfulness.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, meditation, healthfulness, fasting.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, healthfulness.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>A combination of all the above, but mostly meditation, prayer, and healthfulness.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation and prayer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, healthfulness.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 42—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>SDA Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5, born-again</td>
<td>Prayer has the most impact on my devotional life at this time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5, nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, fasting, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5, nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation and prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10, born-again</td>
<td>Prayer basically, but I have started to get into fasting, I feel that I am more in tune spiritually and control myself in all areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10, born-again</td>
<td>Prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>11-15, born-again</td>
<td>Prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+, nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation and prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>16-20, nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer. Healthfulness is something I am learning about. I want to learn the meaning of fasting and meditation to a Christian.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+, nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+, nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, healthfulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#23</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+, nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#24</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+, nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer and meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#25</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>6-10, nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer and healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#26</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+, nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each of the twenty-six participants in this survey listed prayer in his/her response to question 4. Of these twenty-six participants, seven listed prayer as the only discipline that had an impact on their lives at the time of the survey. Nine participants listed prayer first of the disciplines that had an impact on their lives at the time of the survey. The listing of prayer in this survey parallels the initial survey done in each of the other conferences, where prayer was the discipline that most participants were using.

Meditation was listed nine times as a discipline that had the most impact on the lives of the participants at the time of the survey. Seven times meditation was listed first.

Healthfulness was listed eleven times; however, it was never listed in first place or by itself.

Fasting was listed by two participants as having an impact on their spiritual lives at the time of the survey.

The second open-ended question on this survey asked: "How would you describe your understanding of God at this time." The answers given in response to this question may be found in Table 43.
TABLE 43
ANN ARBOR SURVEY #1
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>He is the Creator. He has given me all of my abilities and even life itself. He has a perfect plan for every one of His children, including me. He loves me more than I can imagine and knows me better than I know myself. I feel the need to know Him better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Merciful, forgiving and loving Father.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>He is patiently waiting for me to let go of my fears and trials. He is very loving yet I'm quite angry at this time. I don't understand all the trials. I suspect I haven't learned something necessary for the cycle to end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>He is love.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>He is loving and kind. Forgiving when you ask Him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>A bit above minimum. Reading the Bible/The Voice of Prophecy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>My God is a God of love, able to take care of me completely, willing to do anything and everything for me for my good. He can help me reach a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>God, a caring Father.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I understand fully God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I know He exists and loves us. But I don't feel that I have a close relationship with Him as much as I want to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>God is very patient with me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Faith in God knowing that without Him I can accomplish nothing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I know that God loves me. He had forgiven me of my sins in my past and knowing this, I can love others (my children) when they break my heart. The Lord understands all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Improving, becoming clearer/and the true source of my strength.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Omnipotent, wonderful, most loving, just, patient, forgiving, Creator and Father, who has led me back to Him to know and love and serve Him more dearly and completely in spite of my stumblings. But He means business too—His love is most great but not to be taken advantage of. Christ's blood is so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age Years</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>precious—I wish to stumble less, serve more and know Him more completely in my life.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Loving, understanding, forgiving. A friend you can trust solely.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Still growing (as I grow closer in relationship, I see His loving character more).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Having a foundation upon which to build.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I am in awe of all the things He wants to and will do for us. I love Him very much and cannot imagine living without Him. He is my best Friend.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Loving, merciful, forgiving, caring, the &quot;Good Shepherd.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>We all need to know God better.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#23</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All sufficient, concerned and able to meet all my needs and to perfect His character in me.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#24</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|            |           |                   | God is the only being who knows me better than I know myself. I know that God is all loving, that He disciplines those He
TABLE 43—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#25</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>loves, but doesn't mercilessly beat them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#26</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Much more to learn. I need a better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>appreciation of His goodness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ten of the participants or 38 percent described God in terms of friendship—that is, with the first person personal pronouns. This compares to 32 percent in the Muskegon survey and 54 percent in the Willow Brook survey. These percentages seem to indicate that the Ann Arbor group is almost as insecure in its relationship to God as was the Muskegon group.

The third open-ended question in this survey asked: "How would you describe your spiritual fellowship with other members of your local church at this time." The answers to this question may be found in Table 44.
TABLE 44
ANN ARBOR SURVEY #1
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I have many friends at church. I feel, however, that there are many times when I wish our interactions were more spiritual and not just social in a Christian context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Growing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Close with some, distant with many. I seem to have many trials and I need encouragement (not pity or criticism as I frequently get). Spiritual admonition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>New enough so as not to be overwhelmed by the weaknesses that are always present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>The only time I have spiritual fellowship with members is through Choir practice, Potluck, and pathfinders. Except for this one special friend we have Bible study together and are really close because we are both single parents. So we know what each one is going through and we can keep each other uplifted when the one is down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Minimum, attending church regularly and choir practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It's a slower process than should be, but a little growth is attained I would say week after week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I think I'm too busy to get to know each other and to lend my spiritual fellowship with other members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Average.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Good and enjoyable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It is alright.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Not an active fellowship, other than Sabbath day at church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very spiritual and uplifting. Harmonious and peaceful, strengthening and loving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Quite close with the Tuesday night Bible study that has met for three years. Fairly close to another Sabbath evening that has temporarily disbanded. I find working together—Vacation Bible School, Sabbath School—whatever—doing God's work to be a good way of developing the loving closeness of Christian family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I do sure enjoy my brothers/sisters of Church, my family away from home, there is so very much to learn about each and every individual person in the Congregation. One day I hope to touch base with each and everyone, and call them by name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Some I don't really know. Those I associate with—good/fair. Those I know more personally quite well, supportive, uplifting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>non-again</td>
<td>Warm—I sense acceptance and mutual appreciation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Warm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I love my brothers and sisters and want us all to be together in His kingdom. But I have difficulty communicating with some of my fellow Christians and I want to learn to listen with my heart as well as my ear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Need more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#23</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Growing in intensity and understanding each week.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 44—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#24</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I spend a good bit of time talking with my friends at church about things not spiritual, but I rarely talk with them about spiritual matters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#25</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>All right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#26</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Good.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fourteen of the twenty-six participants (54 percent) express their relationship with their fellow church members in positive terms. This compares to 41 percent at Muskegon and 54 percent at Willow Brook.

Looking at the comments in answer to this question it appears that the reason for the dissatisfaction by the other twelve participants may arise out of the busy life which many students face, thus their time with other members of the church was limited.

The fourth open-ended question asked: "How would you describe your devotional life at this time." The answers to this question may be found in Table 45.
### TABLE 45
ANN ARBOR SURVEY #1
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26–35</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I am suffering greatly in this area. I am a person who is involved in many things (mainly church-related) and I find myself so busy that I push my devotional life aside very easily.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26–35</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Need work, need to pray and meditate more, I also pray to God for help in my devotional life. I need to read more the word of God. I need more strength to overcome my spiritual and mental laziness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26–35</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It is becoming inconsistent. I don't know if or where I'm working from one day to the next (or what time I need to be up in the morning). Occasionally, I don't even pray before I go to sleep. There are so many bizarre circumstances that keep popping up like mushrooms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26–35</td>
<td>6–10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Devotional life at present consists of morning study (reading), of the Sabbath School. Recently finished the &quot;Desire of Ages&quot; and making slow progress through the &quot;Great Controversy&quot;. Prayer is important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Not very good. I try to have time but with everything on my shoulders I'm so tired. It was going better when I lived with my Mom, but since my children and I moved into our own place, it's not to good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>A great deal whenever I can everyday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>A regular day by day experience trying to cultivate thoughts upon spiritual things. A personal time with my best friend, when everything goes better that day than if neglected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very low maybe for lack of time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very bad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Need to work on it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Irregular. Little time spent in devotional life every day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I am searching a deeper relationship with God by going to different churches trying to decide which one is the correct one for myself and my girls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Growing lazy at this, not spending enough time in devotion. Always putting it off until later.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 45—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5 nonborn-again</td>
<td>Continuous and growing closer to the Lord day by day as I draw nearer to Him through prayer, study, worship, fellowship, witnessing and/or sharing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5 nonborn-again</td>
<td>After a slump due to the hectic pace of worldliness getting back to teaching, my devotional life has been quite inspired or rich lately. I've been setting aside more time again and have really felt the Holy Spirit's influence—feelings of more peace, praise, patience etc. Delighting in God's love.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10 born-again</td>
<td>Not what I wish it to be. I have many books but can't seem to find the time to read them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10 born-again</td>
<td>Not so good—I know I need to spend more deeper study and prayer with my Saviour. Right now it seems to be more surface.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>11-15 born-again</td>
<td>Filled with His presence—enjoyable but painful at times—self-discovery is not always a happy time but necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+ nonborn-again</td>
<td>Present but in need of improvement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Six of the participants or (23 percent) described their devotional lives in positive terms, this compares with 18 percent for Muskegon and 19 percent in Willow Brook. They enjoyed the time spent with God for they were spending it with Someone with whom they had a personal relationship. The rest of the participants described their devotional lives as lacking and needing help.

This question brings us to the inner thinking of the participants about their spiritual lives just as it
did for the Willow Brook participants. The participants in this conference may have been masking their feelings, or were unaware of the spiritual hunger they felt. Participants in this conference did not seem to openly express an intense desire to find a deep relationship to God that had been expressed in the Muskegon Deeper Life Conference. The answers to this question suggest there was almost as great a need for the development of the devotional life as there was in the Muskegon Conference.

The fifth open-ended question asked: "What are your expectation for or needs to be met at the Deeper Life Conference." The responses to this question may be found in Table 46.

TABLE 46
ANN ARBOR SURVEY #1
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5 born-again</td>
<td>I feel that I lack discipline, both in my spiritual life and in general. I would like to become motivated to put seeking God's kingdom first, no matter how busy I am. I believe that's my first step to having a closer walk with the Lord.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5 nonborn-again</td>
<td>I expect to come closer to Christ, I expect to strengthen my devotional life. I need God to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>control my words and my thoughts. I pray that God will help me to overcome the lusts of the flesh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 46—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I have not had much time to think about it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>They are open.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I desire a closer walk with God all the time. I am hoping to be refreshed on concepts I already know and learn some new ways to have a fulfilling relationship with my Lord.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#23</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>To learn how to better glorify God with the gifts and talents He has given me. To reach inward to promote more personal growth. To become more effective in my prayer life. To lead others into a deeper commitment with Jesus Christ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#24</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>To learn how to spend more time in personal devotions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#25</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I want to increase my understanding of God and the way prayer helps us live a good life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#26</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Ann Arbor participants' expectations of the Deeper Life Conference were similar to those expressed by the participants in the Muskegon and Willow Brook Conferences. These may be summarized as: (1) a deeper relationship with God, (2) a positive devotional experience, and (3) an improved prayer life. These expectations are cries for help from people seeking a deeper relationship with God. One participant expressed his cry in these words:

I feel that I lack discipline, both in my spiritual life and in general. I would like to become motivated to put seeking God's kingdom first, no matter how busy I am. I believe that's my first step to having a closer walk with the Lord.

Survey 2

Statistics

There were twenty-four participants who filled out the second survey at the end of the Ann Arbor Deeper Life Conference. That is two fewer than filled out a survey at the beginning of the conference. The break-down of the participants responding to this survey is shown in Table 47.
TABLE 47
ANN ARBOR SURVEY #2 STATISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Participant (in years)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Years in SDA Church</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>8 (3)</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>(1) born-again (2) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>10 (1)</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>(2) born-again (1) nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>2 (1)</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These statistics reflect the loss of three participants in the 26-35-age category. Two participants were gained in the 36-45-age category. There was a loss of one in the 46-55-age category. The only known reason for the loss of these participants was that they had work appointments on Sunday.

Open-ended Questions

The first open-ended question on this survey asked:

Which one(s) of the spiritual disciplines discussed during the retreat, meditation, prayer, fasting, and healthfulness, do you think will have the most impact of your spiritual life at this time.
The responses to this question are recorded in Table 48.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Meditation and healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, fasting and healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation and prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Healthfulness, prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation and healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer, healthfulness, fasting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Meditation, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Meditation has the most impact in my spiritual life. Prayer—how to pray and just talk to the Lord.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation and prayer. New resolve on health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I feel that meditation, as well as fasting would be very inspirational for me. I have experienced great joy with these disciplines, but never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 48—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>straying from the main source of prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Prayer, meditation, healthfulness, fasting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, and prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, fasting, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>How can I choose one—they all work together—and I shall use them all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Yes—even fasting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#23</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation and prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#24</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meditation, prayer, healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fourteen participants believed that prayer would continue to have the most impact on their devotional lives in the future. Of these fourteen, two felt so strongly about prayer's impact on their lives that they listed it first of the disciplines that would have the most impact on their lives.
Meditation was the discipline, thought by twenty of the participants as, having the most impact on their lives after the conference. Nineteen of the twenty listed it first of the disciplines that would impact on their lives. In this survey, meditation has again moved into prominence on the list. It is probably for the same reasons it moved up in the Muskegon and Willow Brook Conferences, it was the discipline used most during the conference.

Ten participants thought healthfulness would make an impact on their lives in the future. One of the participants made healthfulness first on his/her list.

Five of the participants thought that fasting would make an impact on their devotional lives in the future. None of them placed it first on their list.

One of the participants had a good insight into the relationship of the disciplines to each other when he said, "How can I choose one--they all work together--and I shall use them all."

The second open-ended question on the survey asked: "How did your understanding of God change because you attended this Conference." The answers to this question are to be found in Table 49.
TABLE 49
ANN ARBOR SURVEY #2
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I think I understand more clearly that God is always ready to be with me in prayer and meditation and is in fact with me all the time. I want to learn to feel His presence more and more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>My understanding is basically the same. But I see a God who is calling me for a deeper communication. I see a God who wants to talk to me more often.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Many things I've read, heard, or studied previously jelled. It has helped me to be less critical of others and look at how others view similar topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>That He is loving. That you can have a closer walk with God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>How patient and loving He is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Through meditation I learned that He loves me no matter what, or who I am.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Reestablished my belief that my God is all sufficient and I'm an important member of the body of Christ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I have more the assurance that God love me like I am.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Became aware of an inner peace that He provides. My understanding of God now must be strengthened, was, and very certainly will be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Making me more aware of &quot;needs&quot; of dual communication with God, not just talking, but truly listening for communion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>God wants the will and wants all of my life to be His will.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Not a lot. I've used these techniques somewhat in my devotional life. Probably I've gained new appreciation of the depth of His word and the joy of His Spirit being so with a group as I felt it was here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>The conference helped reinforce the different methods to draw closer to the Father.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>It magnified His character more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>It is a closer relationship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>21–25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I learned that God wants us to diligently seek Him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It became more personal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>46–55</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>He means to draw us closer to Him through practicing all of the spiritual exercises mentioned above. He has a definite plan for us to follow to be victorious throughout our Christian walk with Christ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>46–55</td>
<td>11–15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I have been thanking God that nothing is hid from Him—but now I've caught a glimpse of how minute the detail is—and my human mind still does not grasp it all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>46–55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Did not change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>46–55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>He became more sharply focused in my mind as a personal being and friend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#23</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>6–10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I feel much closer to Him and understand Him better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#24</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>6–10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It deepened—a better appreciation which will continue as I continue to be consistent in the prayer, Bible study, and meditation practiced during this Conference.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Twelve participants (50 percent) of the twenty-four who answered this question felt their understanding of God had changed for the better because of the Deeper Life Conference. These changes were again marked by the use of the first person in their understanding of God or other expressions of personal relationships with God. This compares to 58 percent at the Muskegon Deeper Life Conference and 65 percent at the Willow Brook Deeper Life Conference.

The third open-ended question asked: "How would you describe the fellowship in your group during this conference." The answers to this question may be found in Table 50.

**TABLE 50**

**ANN ARBOR SURVEY #2**  
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respon-</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Pretty good. If anything was lacking, it was a real concern (spiritually) for the others in the group. Perhaps we all came with needs and weren't able to give as much (including myself).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I felt a very close, free, open communion in my group. As I looked around the room and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 50—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>listened, I saw God's hand in putting us together. We all seemed to fit together in our own individual needs, experiences, and yet we still saw things differently. None of us had &quot;the right&quot; understanding. We merely saw things differently and were enriched by one another's experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very good. We got to know how each one perceived things differently but yet we were all in tune with each other. I became closer to them all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>OK.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Very good. I learned new ways to relate myself to God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Excellent—a very important, rewarding part of the seminar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Very good. We were honest and shared our most sincere feelings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Not much, since my group dwindled to myself then moving to 2 other groups through 3 days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Fellowship in my group was a blessing. In this small group I was able to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### TABLE 50—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>express myself and not feel ashamed. We were all in one accord.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Very open, devout, sharing the love of the Lord with the enthusiasm of drawing nearer to Him and each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Very pleasant, friendly. I felt very comfortable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Supportive, uplifting, closeness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>It was good. We were able to feel comfortable with each other and yet have one person we could relate to easier than the whole group. Our group was very friendly and supportive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I found that our fellowship in my group was very good, because individually we would find different meanings to the same Bible texts, then when we added our individual meanings we had one grand meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>One of growth and understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Excellent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>My sisters are terrific. We truly love and appreciate each other.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 50—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years</th>
<th>SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very stimulating fellowship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Excellent and rewarding with the varied insights on different passages and experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#23</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I feel we understand and know one another much better and are closer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#24</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very good—a closeness which steadily grew. A better appreciation of those participating in the Conference.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the participants except one described the relationship in their group as good or better. The only participant who did not was one of those caught in the problem of changing groups because of people dropping out of the conference. His statement was, "Not much, since my group dwindled to myself then moving to two other groups through three days."

One of the most positive statements about the interaction of the groups was recorded in this statement:

> I felt a very close, free, open communion in my group. As I looked around the room and listened, I saw God's hand in putting us together. We all seemed to fit together in our own individual needs, experiences, and yet we still saw things differently. None of us had "the right understanding". We merely saw things
differently and were enriched by one another's experiences.

Certainly this is the kind of fellowship that should be expected among Christians.

The fourth open-ended question asked: "How would you describe your devotional life now at the conclusion of this conference." The answers to this question may be found in Table 51.

**TABLE 51**

**ANN ARBOR SURVEY #2**
**RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #7**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26–35</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I'm looking forward to experimenting with some of the techniques of spiritual discipline that I learned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26–35</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I have better understanding on how to pray and meditate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26–35</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It's back to where it was before I stumbled (during a drought) but now I have new weapons, and more support for what I've done right. I needs work and effort but we're rolling again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26–35</td>
<td>6–10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>My devotional life will be better. I needed something like this because it's hard for me to just pick up something and do it. I have to be taught how.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age Years</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26–35</td>
<td>6–10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Rough edges are being smoothed. Some things I was already doing, now know how important it is and why.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>26–35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I learned what &quot;devotion&quot; can do for my spiritual life. I don't believe that I can call myself a Christian without close relationship with God through daily meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>26–35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>A mountain top experience, excited about delving more deeply into meditation and some fasting with prayer and renewed effort to improve more fully the health principles I know and continually learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>26–35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I'm determined to spend more time in devotional time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I am more devoted to pleasing God. I want to make sure I am abiding by His law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Much needed and helping me to be a successful Christian.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Much closer with the Lord and I feel not only that He is my God but my friend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I feel enriched and uplifted, eager to pursue this meditation on a regular basis. I also feel moved to again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>sincerely try a more healthful style of eating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I will give more time to my devotional life, set aside the special hours needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I pray that I will have a stronger one by putting these things I've learned, into practice more regularly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>More meaningful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I am now more motivated to study my Bible and spend time with God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Given new energy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>A deeper devotional life as a result of this conference which I hope to maintain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>You have opened new vistas of understanding for me. I am looking forward to the continued practice of what we have begun here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Will take more time for meditation and prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Now the things I have done in the past have been sharpened and the value and necessity to continue and pursue a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 51—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responder</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SDA</td>
<td></td>
<td>deeper commitment is clearer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#23</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It will help me to have a much better understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#24</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It continues to need improving.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The responses of the participants to this question reveals that fifteen (63 percent) believe that what they learned in the Deeper Life Conference would enable them to have a better devotional experience. This compares to 81 percent in the Muskegon Deeper Life Conference and 55 percent in the Willow Brook Deeper Life Conference.

Some indicated that the Conference brought them back to the level of experience that they had in the past. They expressed the hope that it would continue and grow in the future.

The fifth open-ended survey question asked: "How would you describe your experience at this conference?" The answers to this question are in Table 52.
TABLE 52
ANN ARBOR SURVEY #2
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Because the conference was held at a very busy time for me, and at a time in which my devotional life was not very good, my first reaction was, &quot;How can I possibly begin incorporating these things into my life right now?&quot; I feel my answer was that not getting my devotional life in order is like having the cart before the horse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It has reinforced my will to fast, pray and meditate more often.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Praise the Lord! I really needed the blessings that God poured out here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It gave me a closer walk with the Lord and the actual part of getting in there and trying it really helped. It was uplifting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It was good. A lot of technical material that will be put to good use. Was difficult to fully concentrate on God perhaps because of the conference setting (where it took place). One always wants a mountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Fun, exciting and very rewarding. A real blessing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>The techniques given and practiced right there was a great help and encouragement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>It was very enriching. I enjoyed the meditation sessions and then sharing my thoughts with others in my group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>A breath of fresh air.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>A lighting to my life with my place with the Lord, or in the Lord.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>A communion, an education, and an inspiration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Very filling. I gained a better insight to the prayer,(power?) and great sources to tap into the prayer(power)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Moving, supportive, uplifting, warm, enlightening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>It was refreshing to spend time meditating. It was enlightening to share the meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>One of promoting peace and calm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I was especially brought closer to the presence of the Lord and my brethren which was both uplifting (strengthening) and joyous.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It was refreshing and enlightening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meaningful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#23</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>An experience I needed and enjoyed very much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#24</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Very worthwhile.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All but two of the twenty-four participants answered this question. All who responded gained from the conference in one of the following ways: (1) the motivation to take the time for personal devotions, (2) techniques to use in making the devotional time...
profitable, and (3) insights into the significance of the
selected spiritual disciplines.

The last open-ended question in this survey
asked: "What suggestions do you have for improving the
Deeper Life Conference." The answers to this question
are to be found in Table 53.

TABLE 53
ANN ARBOR SURVEY #2
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I personally needed a little more motivation—especially Friday night. Perhaps a more enthusiastic approach, with a more specific outline of what would be happening would have helped. In general, a very good experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>More breaks in the long sessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Meeting at Au Sable, a large home removed from our homes or a similar idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I don't really know.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Commitment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Blank note sheets in the booklet. More time for meditation and group interaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Years SDA</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Practicing more meditations and how to pray. Meditation sessions could be a bit shorter. 40 minutes is too long.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Second day was long—but a blessing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>The Rev. 4 imagery was awkward. Might suggest starting a fast Sat. night to Sun night so people might experience it in their desire particularly at this time for spiritual growth. Thanks! I think and pray this ministry will bear much fruit. God bless you!.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>More of an open/outdoor experience. More time for meditation and sharing with others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I think it was done well, so maybe an addition like Deeper Life Conference II.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>(1) Have persons who attend make a personal commitment to study or meditate 5 minutes a day. (A reachable goal.) They can study longer than that but that much of a commitment for a beginner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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is not too high and should give them a goal at least. (2) Have persons in the group or persons who live in the same area and who are comfortable with each other—make a pact to encourage each other in their meditation, findings, and to help each other—be responsible for each other in a spiritual sense—have someone they are accountable to for their commitment to meditate. (3) Have Psalm 103 for meditation after Rev. 4—or some other passage such as that. (4) Having persons coming to the seminar in casuals during Sabbath, especially Church time was disturbing for me—I would rather see you have a service similar to S.S. in format—singing, Bible study with the S.S. lesson that may lead on or continue through Church time. For meditation, use the vehicle or structure many people are familiar with so when they attend S.S. and Church the next week or in later years, they can automatically incorporate the principles of meditation (carry-over) the attitude into the S.S. and Church service the way they usually attend but with a
TABLE 53—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responder</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>11–15</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>new awareness of God's presence there, gained from the seminar. This way the experience of Divine Presence is divorced from the S.S. and Church structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>21–25</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Inviting the Seventh-day Adventist members in all of the district, instead of just the members of the church hosting the conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Thank you for the time you spent with us this week-end! May God bless you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>46–55</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Unknown at this time, only to suggest having them about once a year, bringing in a new focus or focal points.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 53—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>greater unity and a deeper sense of togetherness for these times and this is one way. Also, Deeper Life will enable us to stand when alone with the Lord in adversity, or situations; even in a crowd that knows not God. Thank you for this enlightening experience; very much needed and very well carried out in Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>That the people who attend really share with those that did not attend. Maybe this way the parking lot will indeed be full of cars of people attending the next conference. God's continued blessings on you and your work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Too long on Sabbath.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Try to obtain a more natural (outdoor) environment to stimulate thought processes. Incorporate more information on the value of exercise along with diet in maintaining spirituality at the highest level. Thank you for the chance to participate in this conference. I'd be interested in the results of your research.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 53—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#23</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Just more of the same.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#24</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Seems good as is, but as time goes sometimes there is a particular need developing in the church which can be met by this type of Conference which is quite adaptable to the needs of individuals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the exception of one participant in the 36-45-age category, suggestions of ideas for improving the Deeper Life Conference center on comfort for the participants. One participant suggested extra pages in the resource book for taking notes. Another suggestion which appeared a couple of times was to have the Conference in a setting that was not familiar to the participants. Apparently, some found conducting the Conference in a familiar building distracting from the purpose of the conference.

The participant who wrote the long suggestion about changes in the Deeper Life Conference apparently missed some of the instruction given, for there were some limited suggestions for making time in the Sabbath School and church services for meditation. It was also suggested that some of the participants might want to get
together in small groups to continue practicing the disciplines of the Deeper Life Conference.

Survey 3
Statistics

Ten participants responded to the third Ann Arbor survey. The break-down of the participants into groupings is shown in Table 54.

TABLE 54
ANN ARBOR SURVEY #3 STATISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Participant (in years)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Years in SDA Church</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25-35</td>
<td>3 (1)</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3 (1)</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lack of replies to the third Ann Arbor survey can be accounted for by the many participants who were in the closing days of a school term, so they did not take the time to answer the survey. Pastor Dickens made verbal announcements and placed an announcement in the
Open-ended Questions

The first open-ended question on this survey asked:

Which one(s) of the spiritual disciplines discussed during the Deeper Life Conference meditation, prayer, fasting, and healthfulness have had the most impact on your devotional life since the conference?

The answers to this question can be found in Table 55.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resident</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I started out good but then I haven't been doing any of it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Prayer, meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-35</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Healthfulness and meditation certainly promotes within me a &quot;clearer, energetic&quot; mind in order to appreciate the exalted character of the truth...&quot; CD p. 8, 47, there's much growth to be done there yet. Everything else (of world, etc.) becomes inferior to salvation and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 55—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responder</th>
<th>Age Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>eternal life which inspires me to conform my life to the life of Christ. (Ibid).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again Meditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again Meditation and prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again Healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again Prayer and healthfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again Meditation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prayer was listed three times as the discipline that had made an impact on the lives of the participants since the conference. Two of the participants listed prayer first.

Meditation was listed seven times by the participants as one of the disciplines that had made the most impact on their lives since the conference. Five of these participants either listed meditation first or as the only discipline in their list.

Three of the participants listed healthfulness as the discipline that made the most impact on their lives since the conference. Two of the participants listed it first.
None of the participants listed fasting as one of the disciplines to have an impact on their lives since the conference.

The second open-ended question asked "How has your understanding of God changed since you attended the Deeper Life Conference." The answers to this question may be found in Table 56.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responder</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26–35</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Not much change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26–35</td>
<td>6–10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>It really was when I attended the meetings and I know I need to get back into it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26–35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>God is a personal friend, who cares truly and every day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>I am more disciplined in my spiritual life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36–45</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>I've realized not only will God draw near unto us as we draw nearer to Him by implementing the above spiritual disciplines (#4), but He is also making us fit to be a place wherein He may dwell, so that the fruits of the spirit may be made manifest.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Four of the participants expressed in their description of God that they had come to know Him better since the conference. This figure represents fifteen percent of the total participants who answered the first survey. This compares to 36 percent for Muskegon and 19 percent for Willow Brook. This number might have been higher had more of the participants returned the third survey. The rest of the participants either indicated there was no change in their view of God or did not respond to the question.

The third open-ended question asked: "How would you describe your spiritual fellowship with the other members in your local church? Did what you learned in
the conference affect it in any way." The answers to this question may be found in Table 57.

TABLE 57

ANN ARBOR SURVEY #3
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Three of the participants (12 percent) of the original number found the Deeper Life Conference had helped them to have better relationships with their fellow church members. This compares to the third survey for Muskegon in which 41 percent of the original number described a positive growth in relationship to their fellow members. The third Willow Brook survey revealed 19 percent felt there had been a positive change in relationship to the other members.

The fourth open-ended question in this survey asked: "How would you describe your devotional life at this time." The responses to this question may be found in Table 58.

**TABLE 58**

ANN ARBOR SURVEY #3  
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resident</th>
<th>Age Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5 born-again</td>
<td>Needs improvement, need to pray more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10 nonborn-again</td>
<td>It's not very good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+ nonborn-again</td>
<td>Still in need of regularity but better in quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR born-again</td>
<td>I am becoming more sincere with my devotional life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5 born-again</td>
<td>Good. My devotional life is the strengthening force of my life. Christ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Only two participants revealed that they had grown in their devotional lives since the Deeper Life Conference. The rest of the participants seemed to be struggling with their devotional lives. The two reflecting growth in their devotional lives represented 8 percent of the original twenty-six who turned in the first survey. This compares to 41 percent of the Muskegon Deeper Life Conference and 12 percent for the Willow Brook Conference.

The fifth open-ended question in this survey asked: "How would you describe your experience at this
conference." The answers to this question can be found in Table 59.

TABLE 59
ANN ARBOR SURVEY #3
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Interesting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>My experience at the conference was really good. I felt closer. But then when you get back into your homes, it's really hard to get the time. I know we all must take the time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Encouraging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Very enlightening. I was astounded as to the differences in meanings of the scriptures from different people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
<td>Enlightening. I felt the power of God drawing me closer to those in my group and it helped me to understand and know them better. Meditation comes best for me when it's not planned as was at the conference. Though it was a good guide to understand better the importance of meditation and how to prepare a setting most beneficial to us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
<td>Rewarding.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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All ten participants who responded to the third survey gave positive responses to question 8. They had found something to help them in the Deeper Life Conference even though it may be seen in the other questions that not all were using the things they had learned.

The final open-ended question on the survey asked: "What additional suggestions do you have for improving the Deeper Life Conference." The answers to this question may be found in Table 60.
TABLE 60
ANN ARBOR SURVEY #3
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>born-again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 60—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age Years SDA</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>their spiritual fellowship with one other. Suggestions and sharing experiences on how to help one overcome spiritual independence would be beneficial.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again I think it was very good and helpful. I realize time was a premium but I would like to see a little more relating the importance of diet and exercise on spiritual well-being.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>nonborn-again No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>nonborn-again No response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>25+</td>
<td>nonborn-again Good as is.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most helpful suggestion gleaned from the answers to question 9 was the idea of sharing some of the felt needs from the first survey. This could be a good way of helping participants to see that they are all in similar circumstances which might bring about fellowship more quickly. The biggest drawback to carrying out this suggestion is that the first survey is not examined until after the first session and this would defeat any attempt to share it with the group.
Examination of the results of the Ann Arbor Deeper Life Conference would suggest that the results are very similar to the results of the Willow Brook Conference. The participants did not appear to have an intense desire to grow spiritually, and this survey indicates that while there was some growth in the three areas we have used as the marks of an improved spiritual life, that growth was not very large when compared to Muskegon. Willow Brook, which did not have the growth of Muskegon, still was higher in the three areas than was Ann Arbor. While there was growth at the Ann Arbor Conference, the resultant figures still raise the question as to why one of the Conferences evidenced so much more growth than in the other two.

The "Conclusions and Recommendations" of this paper try to draw together the strands evident in the three conferences to determine if there is a reason for the wide variation in growth in the Deeper Life Conferences.
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The third survey from each of the three Deeper Life Conferences provides statistics demonstrating that the Deeper Life Conference may be a tool to help individuals develop a deeper relationship with God. Three questions in the survey provide the most help in identifying those who have grown as a result of the Conference. These are questions 5, 6, and 7 which are concerned with the participant's understanding of God, his/her relationship with the rest of the church members, and his/her estimate of the value of his/her devotional life. Note the comparison of figures for each of the questions and the responses in Table 61.

TABLE 61

COMPARISON OF RESPONSES IN THE THIRD SURVEY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>QUESTION #5</th>
<th>QUESTION #6</th>
<th>QUESTION #7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muskegon</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willow Brook</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Arbor</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 61 suggests that the Deeper Life Conference in which people were helped the most was the Muskegon Conference. This could reflect the fact that I was the pastor of the church, and perhaps the people filled out the third survey more readily to aid the pastor in obtaining his Doctor of Ministry degree. The return rate for the third survey from Muskegon was 68 percent. Willow Brook's return rate was 23 percent and Ann Arbor's return rate was 38 percent.

While it is true that Muskegon would have a higher return rate than the other two retreats because I was also the pastor, that does not account for the answers given on the survey. The answers to these questions are open-ended which would tend to make shared answers more evident than would be true in some other survey formats. Also the answers reveal personal feelings and insights which show the individuals gave thought to the answers they gave.

It is on the basis of these personal answers that it appears that the most growth took place in the Muskegon Deeper Life Conference. The reason for this apparent growth rate for Muskegon may center in the deep felt desire on the part of the participants to have a better relationship with God. More than in the other two conferences the participants in the survey and group discussions gave evidence of this desire.
Out of that intense desire to know God better came the motivation to practice the spiritual disciplines that had been shared with them. As they used the disciplines they were drawn into a closer relationship to God as the third survey seems to indicate.

**Personal Benefits**

This project, centered in teaching individuals to use selected spiritual disciplines for the purpose of improving their relationship with God, has also personally benefited me as director of the conference in my spiritual and professional life. The first of those benefits is a deepened personal relationship with God from the use of the selected disciplines in my life. In practicing biblical meditation, as outlined in this paper, I have sensed the closeness of God in a new way. I have experienced His presence while reading His word. I have also sensed His nearness in reflecting on nature, when I have had opportunity to meditate in the woods or on a lake. The meditation on the person, work, and activity of God has given me inner strength to meet personal problems as well as those in my church.

The second spiritual benefit for me from the development of the Deeper Life Conference was my living with the sense of God's presence. I have been challenged by two particular books in this element of Christian living. The first is *Practicing the Presence of God*, by
Brother Lawrence. The story of this brother who learned to know the presence of God as fully in the activity of the kitchen as in the partaking of the sacrament challenged me to live with the awareness that Jesus Christ was with me every moment of every day. The other book contributing to this challenge was Jean-Pierre De Caussade's *The Sacrament of the Present Moment* which also challenges its readers to live in the consciousness of the presence of God.

The consciousness of the presence of God has made it easier to follow the prescription of the Apostle Paul in 1 Thess. 5:17, "Pray without ceasing." Business trips outside my district are times of joy now. I travel in the silence of the car using the silence as an opportunity for prayer about personal problems and situations within the church. I also drive merely enjoying the presence of God.

The third benefit is the manner in which I am able to relate to those with questions about their spiritual lives, and in being able to give them direction because of my experiences. The experience of those who have attended the Deeper Life Conferences and have been helped by putting into practice the disciplines shared adds to my confidence that the suggestions I give work.

My experience in developing the Deeper Life Conference has helped me overcome my reluctance to talk to people about their spiritual lives. I have learned
that if people are not meditating and praying, they are not growing in Christ. I have begun to understand that if we as Seventh-day Adventists want to accomplish our God-given work, we must have a deep, personal, and intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. Through the conducting of the Deeper Life Conferences, the picture I have had of the average Seventh-day Adventist has been destroyed. I had always believed that the average Seventh-day Adventist would be having a daily devotional period and would be seeking to live a life in harmony with Jesus Christ through a close relationship with Him. Though there are some such Adventists, the majority are not living that life. They are devoid of a living relationship with Jesus Christ.

The realization that most Seventh-day Adventists do not have that kind of relationship with Christ has forced upon my mind the necessity of modeling that life so they might desire to learn how to have a living relationship with Jesus Christ. If, as a pastor, I can live this life before my people, it will give them tangible evidence that God will also work in their lives.

**Recommendations**

In the light of the apparent need of most Seventh-day Adventists to have a better understanding of the deeper life, it would be well if local conferences could develop a means of promoting the development of a deeper spiritual life among its members. The Deeper Life
Conferences described in this paper could serve as a model for the teaching of the deeper life. To accomplish this a local conference would need to take the following steps.

1. The conference would have to appoint someone to be the Deeper Life coordinator for the conference. That individual should understand how to develop the deeper life explaining how an individual coming for a weekend, can find a relationship with Christ. This person should have a sensitivity to the needs and struggles of individuals and should be able to instill confidence in those who may be close to giving up on the spiritual life. This individual should also be in more than casual touch with the pastorate, for it is in the pastorate that an individual becomes intimately aware of the struggles of those who want to walk with God.

This knowledge of the struggles of the average Seventh-day Adventist makes more effective the spiritual advice he provides. In order for the person to have this intimate touch with the everyday struggles of the church members, he needs to be an active pastor with an associate who could be responsible for the church during the times he would be conducting Deeper Life Conferences.

2. Provision should be made for a place in which the Deeper Life Conferences could be held. Perhaps the local conference youth camp or campmeeting facilities could be used. These Deeper Life Conference sessions...
could be scheduled outside the busiest time of the year for these facilities. By using existing facilities, the start-up costs of conducting the Deeper Life Conferences could be reduced. In addition to the Deeper Life Conferences being held at the youth camp or campmeeting facilities, open-retreat Deeper Life Conferences, such as those described above, could be held in selected churches throughout the conference.

While Deeper Life Conferences were being held either at local conference facilities or at selected local churches, instruction could be given to the pastors concurrently, giving them the tools for expressing their spiritual concern for the church or churches in their charge. They should be taught how to counsel those who come to them for spiritual aid. They should be given skills they can incorporate into the local church program to help the members in maintaining a relationship with Christ. For instance, there could be a week of spiritual emphasis designed so that those who came could be given a passage of scripture on which to meditate, with questions on the text guiding the meditation. After the meditation time had closed, small groups could be formed so the members could discuss what they learned and how they could apply the principles in their lives.

3. One method by which the experience could be kept alive would be to have an evening modeled after the Deeper Life Conference for those who have attended a
conference. During this meeting the participants could meditate, share in groups, and listen to a relevant lecture on spiritual development. Such a meeting, held three or four times a year, could give the participants the opportunity to improve their skills in the use of the disciplines.

The General Conference has, in the "Finishing the Work Document" and in the objectives for "Harvest 90," called for personal spiritual growth and renewal. One observation from the Deeper Life conferences was that the participants found it easier to share their feelings about God in the groups after the practice of meditation. It would seem that this ability to share with others would enable the participants to share that relationship with others in the workplace, the playground, and in the marketplace. Inspired by their relationship with God they will find it a joy to follow their Lord's command to proclaim the gospel to all the world. Thus the soul-winning objectives of Harvest 90 will be in addition to meeting the objectives for revival and reformation.

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July 22, 1985

Elder Norman Yeager
3478 Wanda
Muskegon, Michigan 49442

Dear Norman:

Thank you for sharing with me your intent on your project for your D.Min.

I would like very much to visit with you about the project. There is something in the brief description that I would like to analyze further.

So far as your being out of your district, I do not see that as a problem at all, as long as arrangements are made as you suggested they would be.

We will look forward to visiting in greater depth about one of the items within the project itself.

Cordially,

Glenn Aufderhar, President

/br -
Dear Don,

When we were together at your place at the end of vacation we explored the possibility of my holding a retreat in connection with my Doctor of Ministry project. You wanted some time to reflect on the request and to study the proposal. Since Elder Aufderhar has given his approval of the project, I decided to write this letter to officially request to conduct a Deeper Life Conference in the Willowbrook Church.

My suggestion as to a date for such a conference would be March 13-16, 1986. Would this date be open for your church?

Because society is changing almost faster than one can keep up with, the conference is designed to teach the people how to maintain, and deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ. For as society changes and makes demands on people to develop new value systems it is important that Seventh-day Adventist Christians know Jesus Christ and have the values He proclaimed solidly a part of their lives so they can have a positive moral influence on the society that surrounds them. Thus the conference will be designed to help the participants develop additional dimensions to their spiritual life.

As we get close to the time for the conference I will send you a brochure to hand out in your church to tell the members about the week-end. It will also have a form so they can sign up for the conference. It is my desire to have those attend who will be able to stay with us for the whole conference. The conference will not be successful if individuals only attend a portion of it. Thus we want to encourage people to sign up for the whole program. Also there will be the opportunity to share in small groups what the individuals are gaining from the experience and those groups will not function at the optimum level if the group is constantly changing because some do not return and others are joining and are not aware of what has happened previously.
The conference will aid the members of your church in drawing closer to Jesus Christ through the use of reflective methods such as meditation, solitude, Bible praying and receptive prayer. We will also introduce them to the Biblical counsels on fasting and how it can be a blessing to the spiritual life. In connection with this we will also be sharing how the Adventist health message is a spiritual discipline that can aid the persons growth as a Christian.

The ideal situation, for such a conference, would be to have the people in attendance at the conference full time and not have to go home until it was over. Since this is not practical, we will have to do our best to provide a setting where we can have that focus as much as possible. Thus they can concentrate on the object of the conference and not have to worry about all the things that intrude while not at the conference.

An essential for accomplishing this is to provide baby sitting service for those with young children. Would it be possible that there might be some who would care for the children during the retreat. This would mean about 2 hours on Friday night, all day Sabbath and then Sunday morning. Some of the ladies might be willing to take turns caring for the children during this time. We would run during Sabbath School and Church and then into the afternoon, closing the day a little before sundown. Then we would have a two to three hours on Sunday morning.

For Sabbath dinner, the ideal would be for the group to have a dinner prepared for them. This would help to keep the attention riveted on what is happening during the conference. If this is not possible then we will need to have some system for organizing the dinner. Perhaps the best thing would be for the people to bring potluck. However, there would be some instructions we would want to give the individuals attending concerning the potluck. The meal should reflect the conference teaching on simplicity in the things we eat. However, we can plan these details as we get closer to the time for the retreat.

Hopefully, this brief description of the retreat and the physical needs for a smooth running program will help you as you plan to host the retreat in your church.

Enclosed you will find the material promised you for evaluating the project. There is a copy of the paper written for Dr. Holmes' class which will give you a feeling for the type of thing the conference will accomplish. Also, there is included, the book, Celebration of Discipline. This book will give you an
overview of the subject of spiritual discipline. Because I promised to lend the book to a couple of parishioners, would you return it as soon as you have finished reading it.

Thanks for your willingness to participate in this project.

Yours in the blessed hope,

Norman A. Yeager
March 26, 1986

Elder Norman Yeager
1478 Wanda
Muskegon MI 49442

Dear Norman:

Thank you so much for the Deeper Life Conference you held at Willow Brook. Those who participated have been very positive in their comments to me. I hope you can do another one for us next year.

I really think you are "on to something" with this Seminar - it meets a felt need of many of our members. I hope the rest of your doctoral project goes well.

Sincerely,

Donald A. Klinger
Pastor

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~
September 17, 1985

Elder Norman Yeager
Muskegon SDA Church
1916 Leahy Street
Muskegon, MI 49442

Dear Norman:

I am writing to let you know that I will be glad to have you conduct a DEEPER LIFE Conference at Willow Brook next spring. You suggested the weekend of March 15. As far as the schedule here is concerned, I think the weekend of March 8 or March 22 would be better if one of those dates will work for you. If not, we will go with the 15th.

I am reading the book you sent and will get it back to you as soon as possible. Its arrival coincided with a busy time in my schedule, but I will get it read soon.

Probably we will get some time to discuss these plans in some detail when we are in Michigan at Christmas time. Please confirm the date of the conference as soon as possible.

Give my greetings to Joyce and the boys.

Sincerely,

Donald A. Klinger

[Signature]

DK/kb
Elder Richard Dickens
2821 Hawks Ave.
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

Dear Richard,

At camp meeting we were talking about the possibility of using Ann Arbor as one of the churches for testing the retreat program I am designing for my doctoral project. Elder Aufderhar has given his approval of the project so this letter is the official request to conduct a Deeper Life Conference in the Ann Arbor church.

My suggestion as to a date for such a conference would be April 4, 5, and 6, 1986. Would this date be open for your church?

Because society is changing almost faster than one can keep up with it, the conference is designed to teach the people how to maintain, and deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ. For as society changes and makes demands on people to develop new value systems it is important that Seventh-day Adventist Christians know Jesus Christ and have the values He proclaimed solidly a part of their lives so they can have a positive moral influence on the society that surrounds them. Thus the conference will be designed to help the participants develop additional dimensions to their spiritual life.

As we get close to the time for the conference I will send you a brochure to hand out in your church to tell the members about the week-end. It will also have a form so they can sign up for the conference. It is my desire to have those attend who will be able to stay with us for the whole conference. The conference will not be successful if individuals only attend a portion of it. Thus we want to encourage people to sign up for the whole program. Also there will be the opportunity to share in small groups what the individuals are gaining from the experience and those groups will not function at the optimum level if the group is constantly changing because some do not return and others are joining and are not aware of what has happened previously.

The conference will aid the members of your church in drawing closer to Jesus Christ through the use of reflective methods such as meditation, solitude, Bible praying and receptive prayer. We will also introduce
them to the Biblical counsels on fasting and how it can be a blessing to the spiritual life. In connection with this we will also be sharing how the Adventist health message is a spiritual discipline that can aid the persons growth as a Christian.

The ideal situation, for such a conference, would be to have the people in attendance at the conference full time and not have to go home until it was over. Since this is not practical, we will have to do our best to provide a setting where we can have that focus as much as possible. Thus they can concentrate on the object of the conference and not have to worry about all the things that intrude while not at the conference.

An essential for accomplishing this is to provide baby sitting service for those with young children. Would it be possible that there might be some who would care for the children during the retreat. This would mean about 2 hours on Friday night, all day Sabbath and then Sunday morning. Some of the ladies might be willing to take turns caring for the children during this time. We would run during Sabbath School and Church and then into the afternoon, closing the day a little before sundown. Then we would have a two to three hours on Sunday morning.

For Sabbath dinner, the ideal would be for the group to have a dinner prepared for them. This would help to keep the attention riveted on what is happening during the conference. If this is not possible then we will need to have some system for organizing the dinner. Perhaps the best thing would be for the people to bring potluck. However, there would be some instructions we would want to give the individuals attending concerning the potluck. The meal should reflect the conference teaching on simplicity in the things we eat. However, we can plan these details as we get closer to the time for the retreat.

Hopefully, this brief description of the retreat and the physical needs for a smooth running program will help you as you plan to host the retreat in your church.

Thanks for your willingness to participate in this project.

Yours in the blessed hope,

Norman A. Yeager
February 26, 1987

Elder Norman Yeager
3478 Wanda
Muskegon, MI. 49442

Dear Norman:

I want to thank you again for holding your seminar in Ann Arbor. The comments from the people were most favorable. More need to taste and see how good the Lord is. Your seminar facilitates so well in that direction.

Your coming was our pleasure. The Lord bless you and your family richly. I look forward to seeing you at campmeeting if not before.

In the charity of Christ,

Richard B. Dickens,
Pastor

P.S. Are you considering attending "The Seventh-day Adventist Mission in a Secularized World"? If so, let me know.

"Come to Him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight, chosen and precious."
1 Peter 2:4

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October 23, 1985

Elder Norman Yeager  
3478 Wanda Street  
Muskegon, MI. 49442

Dear Norman:

Our church board just recently voted unanimously to invite you to hold a retreat workshop the weekend of December 5-7, 1986.

I will be working on some of the details we talked of earlier (location and fellowship meal).

We look forward to the retreat and to seeing you this November at workers' meeting.

Your friend and brother,

Richard B. Dickens
FIRST WEEK:

Is your Christian experience in need of refreshing? Would you like to enrich your friendship with your Saviour? At the Deeper Life Conference you will be able to taste and see that the Lord is good. Consequently, your experience in spiritual things will be refreshed and your friendship with Jesus enriched at the Deeper Life Conference to be held in the Ann Arbor Adventist School December 5-7, 1986.

SECOND WEEK:

Is your Christian experience in need of refreshing? Would you like to enrich your friendship with your Saviour? At the Deeper Life Conference you will be able to taste and see that the Lord is good. Consequently, your experience in spiritual things will be refreshed and your friendship with Jesus enriched at the Deeper Life Conference to be held in the Ann Arbor Adventist School December 5-7, 1986.

THIRD WEEK:

The brochure enclosed in the bulletin today provides information concerning the Deeper Life Conference to be held December 5-7. This conference will assist you in developing a living consciousness of the presence of Jesus. Don't miss the special opportunity for growth in your Christian life.

FOURTH WEEK:

Have you registered yet for the Deeper Life Conference? If you haven't, fill out the blank on the brochure enclosed in today's bulletin and place it in the offering plate or give it to the Pastor. Your commitment to attend each of the sessions will ensure that you will experience the beginning of new dimensions in your relationship with Christ.

FIFTH WEEK:

Those who have registered for the Deeper Life Conference being held in the school next week are going to enjoy a very special weekend. They will have their relationship with Jesus Christ affirmed and deepened. If you want to share this experience be sure and let the Pastor know.
Dear Friend,

You have registered for an exciting experience at the Deeper Life Conference. You will find that the time you spend in this week-end will enhance all of your Christian living. You will have opportunity to experiment with several spiritual disciplines which will deepen your experience with Jesus Christ.

However, to gain the most from this week-end it is important that all who will be sharing in this experience will seek the Lord in prayer in preparation for the event. The best plans and ideas are nothing without His special blessing. So I invite you to join your prayers with the prayers of the other participants and myself for God's Spirit to be poured upon us as we share this week-end together.

Plan to bring with you to the Deeper Life Conference your Bible. There will be several times when you will need to follow along in the presentations being made, and you will also have opportunity for private reading and meditation on some passages.

Because this is the first time a program like the Deeper Life Conference has been held in the Seventh-day Adventist Church it is important to learn if the conference is helpful to those who participate in it. Thus, the enclosed questionnaire is the first of three you will receive. This first questionnaire will aid in helping us to understand your relationship to God at this time. The second questionnaire will be given out at the end of the Conference and the third one will be sent you after six months to determine the long range effects of the Conference in your life.

Your carefulness in answering the questionnaires will aid greatly in helping to shape the Deeper Life Conference into a useful tool in aiding Seventh-day Adventists grow in their relationship to God. After you have filled out the questionnaire, place it in the enclosed envelop and bring it with you to the first session of the Conference.

We want to enjoy our Sabbath noon meal together. However, because we want to concentrate on the spiritual elements we will be discussing, bring with you foods that
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Dear Friend,

It hardly seems that almost six months have gone by since we were together in the Deeper Life Conference. What a good time we had! I enjoyed so much the sharing and caring that took place in the conference.

The principles we shared I have continued to use in my devotional life and God has been blessing abundantly. It is wonderful to know that God is present with me in my devotional period and also in all my daily activities. I hope that as you have utilized the spiritual disciplines you learned, you have felt the blessing of the Lord and grown in your relationship with Him.

With this letter is the last of the questionnaires for you to fill out. Your carefulness in answering this questionnaire will aid greatly in helping to shape the Deeper Life Conference into an even more useful tool in aiding Seventh-day Adventists grow in their relationship to God. After you have filled out the questionnaire place it in the enclosed envelope and send it back to me. The envelope is stamped to make it easier for you to mail.

Thank you for being a part of the Deeper Life Conference. The conference was richer for your participation. Thanks for promptly returning the questionnaire.

May God continue to richly bless as you focus your life on Him.

Yours in Calvary's Love,

Norman A. Yeager
Pastor

NAY/ws
Survey (1)

1. How old are you?
   __12-18 __19-25 __26-35 __36-45 __46-55 __56-65 __ 65-.

2. How long have you been a Seventh-day Adventist?
   __1-2 __3-5 __6-10 __11-15 __16-20 __21-25 __over 25 years.

3. Were you a born again Christian before becoming a Seventh-day Adventist?  Yes __ No __

4. Which one(s) of the following spiritual disciplines of meditation, prayer, fasting, and healthfulness, have the most impact on your devotional life at this time?

5. How would you describe your understanding of God at this time?

6. How would you describe your spiritual fellowship with other members of your local church at this time?

7. How would you describe your devotional life at this time?

8. What are your expectations for or needs to be met at the Deeper Life Conference?
Survey (2)

1. How old are you?
   __12-18 __19-25 __26-35 __36-45 __46-55 __56-65 __65_.

2. How long have you been a Seventh-day Adventist?
   __1-2 __3-5 __6-10 __11-15 __16-20 __21-25 __over 25
   years.

3. Were you a born again Christian before becoming a
   Seventh-day Adventist? Yes __ No __

4. Which one(s) of the spiritual disciplines discussed
during the retreat, meditation, prayer, fasting, and
healthfulness, do you think will have the most impact on
your spiritual life at this time?

5. How did your understanding of God change because you
   attended this Conference?

6. How would you describe the fellowship in your group
during this Conference?

7. How would you describe your devotional life now at
   the conclusion of this Conference?

8. How would you describe your experience at this
   Conference?

9. What suggestions do you have for improving the Deeper
   Life Conference?
Survey (3)

1. How old are you?

__12-18 __19-25 __26-35 __36-45 __46-55 __56-65 __65-.

2. How long have you been a Seventh-day Adventist?

__1-2 __3-5 __6-10 __11-15 __16-20 __21-25 __over 25 years.

3. Were you a born again Christian before becoming a Seventh-day Adventist? Yes __ No __

4. Which one(s) of the spiritual disciplines discussed during the Deeper Life Conference meditation, prayer, fasting, and healthfulness have had the most impact on your devotional life since the Conference?

5. How has your understanding of God changed since you attended the Deeper Life Conference?

6. How would you describe your spiritual fellowship with the other members in your local church? Did what you learned in the Conference affect it in any way?

7. How would you describe your devotional life at this time?

8. How would you describe your experience at this Conference?

9. What additional suggestions do you have for improving the Deeper Life Conference?
SPIRITUALITY: THE CHRISTIAN LIFESTYLE

The purpose of this presentation:

The purpose of this the opening presentation is to set the stage for the Deeper Life Conference by defining what is meant by the term spirituality and how spirituality is related to the spiritual disciplines.

I. What is the Biblical understanding of spirituality?

A. The Bible does not provide a dictionary definition of spirituality.

B. The Bible gives us descriptions of the relationship Christians are to have with God.

1. Spirituality is given to the Christian by God. Ephesians 1:3-14.

   a. At least seven times in this passage the special place of Christians is stated by Paul.

   b. Christians are chosen to be holy and without blame before Him in love.

   c. Christians are adopted into the family of God.

   d. Christians respond in trust to the Word of Truth.

   e. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the life is the assurance that we have been accepted by God.


   a. God has made us alive in Christ.

   b. God has raised us to sit in heavenly places with Jesus Christ.
c. He has created us for good works in Christ Jesus.

3. Spirituality is to be lived in our everyday world.

a. Christians are to live their spirituality before our fellow Christians. Ephesians 2:19-22.

b. Christians are to live their spirituality before society.
   (1) Government Romans 13:1-5.
   (2) Neighbors Romans 13:8, 9; 1 Peter 4:15, 16.

C. The definition of spirituality.

   Spirituality is the visible expression of the individual's relationship with God as he lives under the control of the Holy Spirit after receiving the new birth.

II. Where does a person find the spiritual life.


III. How does an individual become a spiritual person?

A. The individual must experience the new birth? John 3:5-8.

B. The individual must accept the Holy Spirit that has been given to those who have experienced the new birth. Romans 5:1-5.

C. The individual must consider himself dead to the old way of life. Romans 6:1-4.

(Resource book p. 29. #61)

My Brother, arouse yourself, I pray you, and let the work of the Spirit of God reach
deeper than the external; let it reach down to the deep springs of every action. It is principle that is wanted, firm principle, and vigor of action in spiritual as well as temporal things. . . . It is impossible to have clear conceptions of eternal things unless the mind is trained to dwell upon elevated themes. All the passions must be brought under perfect subjection to the moral powers. When men and women profess strong faith and earnest spirituality, I know that their profession is false if they have not brought all their passions under control. God requires this. The reason why such spiritual darkness prevails is that the mind is content to take a low level and is not directed upward in a pure, holy, and heavenly channel. 2 Testimonies, p. 414.

D. The person must take Jesus into the personal life. John 6:53, 54, 63; John 7:37, 38.

Conclusion:

True spirituality is found in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. True spirituality is to be expressed in all the relationships of daily living. During the rest of this weekend we will be learning how to enhance the relationship with Jesus Christ and thus to grow spiritually.
MEDITATION:
DRINKING FROM THE LIVING WATER

The purpose of this presentation:

To teach the Conference participants that Biblical meditation is centered in the person, works and activity of God.

I. What is Biblical meditation?
A. Dictionary definition:

A form of private devotion consisting of deep, continued reflection on some religious theme.

B. The Biblical use of the word meditate.

1. God's people are instructed to meditate on God's Word. Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2; Psalm 119:15, 23, 24, 148.

2. God's people are instructed to meditate on God's works. Psalm 143:5; Psalm 19:1; Psalm 145:5-7.

3. God's people are instructed to meditate on God's person. Psalm 145:5-7; Psalm 63:6-8.

4. God's people are instructed to meditate on the sanctuary. Psalm 63:2; 68:24; 96:6; Hebrews 8:1,2; Revelation 4 and 5.

C. The Biblical definition of meditation.

A form of private devotion consisting of deep, continued reflection on God's person, word, or activity.

D. Ellen G. White's view of meditation is like the Bibles.

1. She instructs us to meditate.
(Resource book p. 41 #25)

We, too, must have times set apart for meditation and prayer and for receiving spiritual refreshing. *Ministry of Healing*, p. 509.

(Resource book p. 33 #1)

Merely to hear or to read the Word is not enough. He who desires to be profited by the Scriptures must mediate upon the truth that has been presented to him. By earnest attention and prayerful thought he must learn the meaning of the words of truth and drink deep of the spirit of the holy oracles. God bids us fill the mind with great thoughts, pure thoughts. He desire us to meditate upon His love and mercy, to study His wonderful work in the great plan of redemption. Then clearer and still clearer will be our perception of truth, higher, holier, our desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought will be transformed by communion with God through the study of the Scriptures. *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 59, 60.

(Resource book p. 34, #5)

All who are under the training of God need the quiet hour for communion with their own hearts, with nature, and with God. In them is to be revealed a life that is not in harmony with the world, its customs, or its practices; and they need to have a personal experience in obtaining a knowledge of the will of God. We must individually hear Him speaking to the heart. When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. He bids us be still and know that I am God." This is the effectual preparation for all labor for God. Amidst the hurrying throng, and the strain of life's intense activities, he who is thus refreshed, will be surrounded with an atmosphere of light and peace. He will receive a new endowment of both physical and mental strength. His life will breathe out a fragrance, and will reveal a divine power that will reach
men's hearts. The Ministry of Healing, p. 58.

(Resource book p. 44 #27)

As a means of intellectual training, the opportunities of the Sabbath are invaluable. Let the Sabbath school lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson Scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost. In listening to the sermon, let parents and children note the text and the Scriptures quoted, and as much as possible of the line of thought, to repeat to one another at home. This will go far toward relieving the weariness with which children so often listen to a sermon, and it will cultivate in all a habit of attention and of connected thought.

Meditation on the themes thus suggested will open to the student treasures of which he has never dreamed. He will prove in his own life the reality of the experience described in the Scripture: "They word were found, and I did eat them; and they word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." Jeremiah 15:16 "I will meditate in they statues." "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold. . . . Moreover by them is they servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward." Psalms 119:48; 19:10, 11. Education, pp. 251, 252.

2. Ellen G. White emphasis the same things as the Bible does for the Christian to meditate upon.

(Resource book p. 38 #15)
The affections should center upon God. Contemplate His greatness, His mercy, and excellences. Let His goodness and love and perfection of character captivate your heart. Converse upon His divine charms, and the heavenly mansions His is preparing for the faithful. He whose conversation is in heaven, is the
most profitable Christian to all around him. He words are useful and refreshing. They have a transforming power upon those who hear them, and will melt and subdue the soul. (RH March 29, 1870). 3 Adventist Bible Commentary, p. 1157.

(Reproducible book, p. 38 #16)
Why is it that our youth, and even those of maturer years, are so easily led into temptation and sin? It is because the word of God is not studied and meditated upon as it should be. If it were appreciated, there would be an inward rectitude, a strength of spirit, that would resist the temptations of Satan to do evil. A firm decided will power is not brought into the life and character because the sacred instruction of God is not made the study, and the subject of meditation. There is not the effort put forth that there should be to associate the mind with pure, holy thoughts and to divert it from what is impure and untrue. There is not the choosing of the better part, the sitting at the feet of Jesus, as did Mary, to learn the most sacred lessons of the divine Teacher, that they may be laid up in the heart, and practiced in the daily life. Meditation upon holy things will elevate and refine the mind, and will develop Christian ladies and gentlemen. Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 132.

(Reproducible book, p. 40 #21)
If we would permit our minds to dwell more upon Christ and the heavenly world, we should find a powerful stimulus and support in fighting the battles of the Lord. Pride and love of the world will lose their power as we contemplate the glories of that better land so soon to be our home. Beside the loveliness of Christ, all earthly attractions seem of little worth.

Let none imagine that without earnest effort on their part they can obtain the assurance of God's love. When the mind has been long permitted to dwell only on earthly things, it is a difficult matter to change the habits of thought. That
which the eye sees and the ear hears, too often attracts the attention and absorbs the interest. But if we would enter the city of God, and look upon Jesus and His glory, we must become accustomed to beholding Him with the eye of faith here. The words of our thoughts and of our conversation, and each day some time should be especially devoted to prayerful meditation upon these sacred themes. Sanctified Life, pp. 91, 92.

(Resource book, p. 41 #23)

What a theme for meditation is the sacrifice that Jesus made for lost sinners! "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." How shall we estimate the blessings thus brought within our reach? Could Jesus have suffered more? Could He have purchased for us richer blessings? Should it not melt the hardest heart when we remember that for our sakes He left the happiness and glory of heaven and suffered poverty and shame, cruel affliction and a terrible death? Had He not by His death and resurrection opened for us the door of hope, we should have known nothing but the horrors of darkness and the miseries of despair. In our present state, favored and blessed as we are, we cannot realize from what depths we have been rescued. We cannot measure how much deeper our afflictions would have been, how much greater our woes, had not Jesus encircled us with His human arm of sympathy and love, and lifted us up. 5 Testimonies, p. 316.

(Resource book, p. 41 #24)

What is more worthy to engross the mind than the plan of redemption? It is a subject that is exhaustless. The love of Jesus, the salvation offered to fallen man through His infinite love, holiness of heart, the precious, saving truth for these last days, the grace of Christ--these are subjects which may animate the soul and cause the pure in heart to feel that joy which the disciples felt when Jesus came and walked with them.
as they traveled toward Emmaus. He who has centered his affections upon Christ will relish this kind of hallowed association and will gather divine strength by such intercourse; but he who has no relish for this kind of conversation, and who is best pleased to talk sentimental nonsense, has wandered far away from God and is becoming dead to holy and noble aspirations. The sensual, the earthly is interpreted by such to be heavenly. When the conversation is of a frivolous character and savors of a dissatisfied reaching out after human sympathy and appreciation, it springs from lovesick sentimentalism, and neither the youth nor the men with gray hairs are secure. When the truth of God is an abiding principle in the heart, it will be like a living spring. Attempts may be made to repress it, but it will gush forth in another place; it is there and cannot be repressed. The truth in the heart is a wellspring of life. It refreshes the weary and restraints vile thought and utterance. 5 Testimonies, p. 600, 601.

(Number 22 could be used also.)

II. Meditation on the work, person and activity of God will keep the Christian from spiritual danger.

A. The Devil is also seeking to find those he can deceive into a false meditation. 1 Peter 5:8; Ephesians 6:10; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Revelation 12:17.

1. The Devil who can work miracles to deceive our outer senses, can also confuse our inner senses.


3. The inward look for man is composed of the danger of following the wrong leader.

Morton Kelsey: Meditation is not something one should do simply because others are doing it. It cannot be undertaken like an aesthetic exercise or merely for diversion. Whether we expect
it or not, in meditation we are opening the door to another aspect of reality, potentially just as rewarding and sometimes even more dangerous than the physical world. Not many of us would turn a child loose in the physical world without teaching that child, as best we can, how to get around safely in it. . . .

Certainly there is a danger of illusions coming from the inner world, and learning to deal with them is one part of the preparation I am talking about. On the other hand, simply acquiring knowledge about this world is far more difficult than ordinary study of physical things. Just as in the physical world, there seem to be many spiritual things that are destructive when handled in one way, but open up new life when we approach them differently. In addition, there is a reality of radical evil found in the inner world that is bent on seizing power and destroying the individual. If we just realize that we face this reality, as Jesus and the early Church did and as Jung seems to understand, then the task is even more difficult. One is then much like a soldier at night trying to avoid a stalking enemy. The Other Side of Silence, pp. 70, 71.

4. God has given us the way to avoid the dangers of falling into the enemy's hand.
   a. Christ has conquered Satan at the cross.
   b. God has given the ministry of the angels. Psalm 34:7.
   c. The Holy Spirit is given to us to guide us and teach us the truth. John 14:16-18.
   d. The Word of God is the way we attach ourselves to the Saviour. John 6:53-58; Ephesians 6:17.

III. How to engage in biblical meditation.
   A. The first part of the experience is to center down.
1. To begin have a place to meditate.

2. Then relax your body.

3. Sit in silence and wait on God.
   a. The environment of the world needs to be shut out.
   b. Silence can bring us into the presence of God as we reflect on Him.
   c. Silence can be a form of speech.

4. Begin to focus on God.
   a. Give to God your worries.
   b. Receive God's peace into your life.

5. Focus on the passage you are using for your meditation.
   a. Read the text slowly and carefully, you may want to follow this with reading the text aloud.
   b. Ask yourself the following questions:
      (1) What is said to me in this text?
      (2) What is the purpose of the text?
      (3) How does it concern me and my life?
      (4) What is its central message?

6. When it is possible, use your imagination to help you live the story.

   Listen to the conversations, look for the details of clothing, buildings and other elements of the scene. Taste the food, drink the water, feel the emotions. As the story lives for you, you gain in understanding of the situation and the truths that may apply to you today.

7. Think of how the lessons learned apply to life where you live it now.

   How will it affect your relationship to those at home, work, play, and church.
8. Write down the experience that you have as a result of your meditation experience.

The journal will aid you as you look back over your devotional life to see where God has helped you, it will also bring to your mind the precious moments with the Saviour.

9. End the time of meditation with another time of silence and prayer thanking God for what you have learned.
The purpose of this presentation:

To teach the participants in the conference that prayer is the intimate expression of a living relationship with the Father.

I. Jesus' prayer life demonstrates the living connection with the Father.

A. Jesus finds time to be alone with the Father.

1. Alone in the mornings with the Father. Mark 1:35.

2. Alone in the evenings with the Father. Mark 6:46, 47.


B. Jesus' prayer life shows He lives with a sense of the abiding presence of the Father.


II. Jesus' teaching about prayer emphasizes the relationship we have with the Father.

A. Jesus teaches we are to pray in humility. Luke 18:9-14.
B. Jesus' most extended teaching on prayer teaches relationship with the Father. Matthew 6:5-15.

1. We are to pray in secret to be seen and heard of the Father.
2. We are to avoid vain repetitions.
3. We are to be aware of the relationship with the Father so the whole life reflects that relationship.
4. We can bring all of our wants. John 14:13, 14; Matthew 7:7-11.

III. How can prayer become this expression of relationship to the Father for us?

A. Spend time every day in prayer.
   1. This time must be in harmony with your personal schedule.
   2. It is best if it can be at the same time every day.

B. Remember the ABC's of prayer.

C. Start your prayer season with a time of silence.
   1. This is a time of preparation for communion with God.
   2. In the silence wait for the presence of God.
   3. God is coming to us with open arms.

D. There are two types of praying that will deepen our relationship to God.
   1. One kind of prayer is the "Giving Prayer."
      Adoration
      Repentance
Thanksgiving

Intercession

Self, praying for

Trust

2. The "Receiving Prayer."

Silence

Accepting

Responding

Action

E. There is a way we can use the Bible in our prayer time.

1. Bible praying

   This is reading the Bible for the message of God's love. The experiencing of the love of God and looking for the love messages the Bible brings to us. "The Scriptures are letters from God about his love." Augustine.

   "The all-important aim in Christian meditation is to allow God's mysterious and silent presence within us to become more and more not only a reality, but the reality of our lives; to let it become that reality which gives meaning, shape and purpose to anything we do, to everything we are." John Main in Word into Silence.
HEALTHFULNESS:
OPENING THE AVENUES OF THE SOUL

The purpose of this presentation:

To teach the participants in the Conference that maintaining a healthy body will make it easier for God to communicate with us.

I. God has five avenues by which He reaches the human mind.

A. The eyes.
B. The ears.
C. The sense of feeling.
D. The sense of smell.
E. The sense of taste.

II. God teaches us to guard the avenues of the soul so we might be able to relate to Him.

A. We are to present our bodies a living sacrifice because of what God has done for us. Romans 12:1, 2.

1. Because we walk according to the Spirit.
2. Because we have been adopted into sonship.
3. Because nothing can separate us from the Love of God in Christ Jesus.
4. It is our reasonable service in the light of God's activity in our behalf.

(Reseource book p. 5 #9)

We should consider the words of the apostle Paul, in which he appeals to his brethren, by the mercies of God, to present their bodies a "living sacrifice," holy, acceptable unto God"... Sanctification is not merely a theory, an emotion or a form of words, but a living
active principle, entering into everyday life. It requires that our habits of eating, drinking, and dressing be such as to secure the preservation of physical, mental, and moral health, that we may present to the Lord our bodies—not and offering corrupted by wrong habits, but a—"living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." Rom. 12:1. Councils on Health, p. 67.

B. We are to guard the avenues of the soul because we are a part of the body of Christ. 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20.

1. We are a part of the body of Christian believers.

2. The Spirit of God dwells in the body.

3. Destruction of the individual body is also destruction of the larger body.

4. We have been bought for a price.

C. God wants us to be healthy. 3 John 2.

III. God has taught us how to guard the avenues of the soul.

A. We are to guard what we allow ourselves to think about. Philippians 4:8.

(Resource book p. 15, #27)

God desires us, by strict temperance, to keep the mind clear and keen that we may be able to distinguish between the sacred and the common. We should strive to understand the wonderful science of the matchless compassion and benevolence of God. Those who eat too largely and those who eat unhealthful food bring trouble upon themselves, unfitting themselves for the service of God. It is dangerous to eat meat, for animals are suffering from many deadly diseases. Those who persist in eating the flesh of animals sacrifice spirituality to perverted appetite. Mind, Character and Personality II, p. 390.

(Resource book p. 16, #28)

Eating the flesh of dead animals has an injurious effect upon spirituality. When meat is made the staple article of food, the higher
faculties are overborne by the lower passions. These things are an offense to God and are the cause of a decline in spiritual life. Mind, Character and Personality II, p. 407.

(Resource book p. 16, #29)

The relation which exists between the mind and the body is very intimate. When one is affected, the other sympathizes. The condition of the mind affects the health of the physical system. If the mind is free and happy, from a consciousness of right doing and a sense of satisfaction in causing happiness to others, it creates a cheerfulness that will react upon the whole system, causing freer circulation of the blood, and a toning up of the entire body. The blessing of God is a healing power, and those who are abundant in benefiting others will realize that wondrous blessing in both heart and life. Counsels on Health, p. 28.
FASTING:
A MEANS OF APPROACHING GOD

The purpose of this presentation:

To teach those attending the Conference that fasting is an accepted discipline which helps the individual prepare the heart for the reception of the blessings of God.

I. The Biblical reasons a person may choose to fast.

A. Fasting may be done in conjunction with repentance.

1. Israel marks her repentance at Mizpah with fasting. 1 Samuel 7:6.

2. The prophet Joel invites the people to fast and repent so God can give them a blessing. Joel 2:12-15.

3. Nehemiah leads in fast as the children of Israel seek to find restoration with God. Nehemiah 9:1, 2.

B. Fasting may be done to seek God's special favor when in distress.

1. David's fasting and prayer for the life of the child born conceived in sin with Bathsheba. 2 Samuel 12:16-23.

2. Jehoshaphat proclaims a fast in Judah when threatened by the armies of the Moabites and Ammonites and their allies came against them. 2 Chronicles 20:3.

3. Daniel fasts as he seeks the favor of God to allow his people to return to their homeland. Daniel 9:1, 2.

4. Cornelius fasts as a part of his devotional life and seeking to know the will of God for his life. Acts 10:30.

6. Jesus taught there were instances in which the devil could be overcome only by fasting and prayer. *Matthew 17:21.*

C. Fasting may be an accepted part of the Christian’s spiritual life in the last days.

1. The Bible does not counsel against fasting, rather it appears that Jesus acknowledges it will be done. *Matthew 6:16-18; Mark 2:18-20.*

2. The prophecy of Joel with its emphasis on the day of the Lord encourages a fast to accompany the repentance and humility of heart. *Joel 2:12-15.*

3. We are in the great antitypical day of atonement, therefore a fast should be a part of our celebration of this event. *Leviticus 23:27; Acts 27:9.*

(1) Because of these two verses many feel that fasting was a part of the Day of Atonement services. If this affliction of soul symbolized in fasting was a part of the day of judgement then, it should also be today.

"We are living in the most solemn period of this world's history. The destiny of earth's teeming multitudes is about to be decided. Our own future well-being, and also the salvation of other souls, depend upon the course which we now pursue. We need to be guided by the Spirit of Truth. Every follower of Christ should earnestly inquire, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' We need to humble ourselves before the Lord, with fasting and prayer, and to meditate much upon His word, especially upon the scenes of the judgement. We should now seek a deep and living experience in the things
of God. We have not a moment to lose. Events of vital importance are taking place around us; we are on Satan's enchanted ground. Sleep not, sentinels of God; the foe is lurking near, ready at any moment, should you become lax and drowsy, to spring upon you and make you his prey." Great Controversy, p. 601.

(2) This fast is also the fast of simplicity in that which we eat.

(3) Medical Ministry, p. 283. "We must be constantly meditating upon the word, eating it, digesting it, and by practice, assimilating it, so that it is taken into the life current. He who feeds on Christ daily will by his example teach others to think less of that which they eat and to feel much greater anxiety for the food they give to the soul.

"The true fasting which should be recommended to all, is abstinence from every stimulating kind of food, and the proper use of wholesome simple food, which God has provided in abundance. Men need to think less about what they shall eat and drink of temporal food, and much more in regard to the food from heaven, that will give tone and vitality to the whole religious experience.--Letter 73, 1896." (page 58).

II. The Biblical understanding of the proper fast.

A. Jesus teaches that fasting to be done in the sight of God only. Matthew 6:16-18.

1. Jesus' first instruction is that fasting is not to be done to draw attention to the one fasting.
2. The Father will reward openly the secret fast.

B. Fasting is to be accompanied by a life that is in harmony with the will of God. Isaiah 58:3-11.

1. Fasting must be free from hypocrisy.

2. Fasting be accompanied by practical godliness.

3. Fasting should be free of a critical attitude toward others.

(Resource book, p. 59, #6)

There are sins of this same character among us today, and they bring the rebuke of God upon His church. Wherever such sins are found, seasons of fasting and prayer are indeed necessary; but they must be accompanied with sincere repentance and decided reformation. Without such contrition of soul, these seasons only increase the guilt of the wrong-doer. The Lord has specified the fast He has chose. The one He will accept. It is that which bears fruit to His glory, in repentance, in devotion, in true piety. [Isa. 58:6, 7 quoted.]

"In the fast that God has chosen, mercy, tenderness, and compassion will be exercised. Avarice will be put away, and fraud and oppression will be repented of and renounced. All the authority and influence will be used to help the poor and oppressed. If this were the condition of the world, it would no more be a proverb, "Truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter;" "he that parteth from evil maketh himself a prey" (RH Oct. 13, 1891). 4 Adventist Bible Commentary, p. 1150.

III. The method for conducting a fast.

A. There is no direct Biblical direction for carrying on a fast.

1. What evidence we do have is that it is the attitude that one brings to the fast that is most important.
(Resource book 62, #16)
The fasting which the word of God enjoins is something more than a form. It does not consist merely in refusing food, in wearing sackcloth, in sprinkling ashes upon the head. He who fasts in real sorrow for sin will never court display. The object of the fast which God calls upon us to keep is not to afflict the body for the sin of the soul, but to aid us in perceiving the grievous character of sin, in humbling the heart before God and receiving His pardoning grace. His command to Israel was, 'Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God.' Joel 2:13. Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, p. 87.

2. It would be proper for the fast to be done at a time when one could be free from the hustle and bustle of life.

3. The fast may be done while carrying on the daily schedule of activities, but the thoughts are centered in God. One may live in the attitude of prayer even though not in the position of prayer.

B. The Bible does not have any instruction concerning the length of the fast.

1. The fasts of Moses and Elijah are supernatural fasts. (They were especially sustained by God.)

2. Daniel's fast (Daniel 10:3) seems to be limited to the abstinence of rich foods, and not a total giving up of food for the three weeks.

3. Those who prescribe fasting for other reasons than religious suggest that a fast over 48 hours be done only under medical supervision.

C. The fast should include the drinking of a lot of water.

D. The fast should be broken in the same spirit in which it was entered.

IV. The results of a fast.
A. We know the Lord will hear the sincere individual.

1. God heard the prayers during the fasts of Jehoshaphat, David, and Daniel.

2. We have the assurance that God will hear us.

B. There will be liberty to really pray when the mind will be clear.

C. We can anticipate God's guidance.

"On Monday, the 19th of April 1742, David Brainerd 'set apart this day for fasting and prayer to God for His grace, especially to prepare me of the work of the ministry: to give me divine aid and direction in my preparations for that great work, and in his own time to send me into His harvest.'" Fasting, p. 46.

D. We can anticipate power over evil. Matthew 17:21.

(Resource book, p. 62, #15)
In order to succeed in such a conflict they must come to the work in a different spirit. Their faith must be strengthened by fervent prayer and fasting, and humiliation of heart. They must be emptied of self, and be filled with the spirit and power of God. Earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith—faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work—can alone avail to bring men the Holy Spirit's aid in the battle against principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and wicked spirits in high places. Desire of Ages, p. 431.
CREATION

I've never seen anything like it before, nor do I expect to see such as I saw until eternity begins. It was dark—a deep darkness—only lightened by the presence of the Three. And it seemed that below me I could see the sparkle and movement of water—yes, a big, round, dark ball of water.

I looked at the faces of the Three—the Father, His love bubbling over with excitement and anticipation of greeting His newest creations; the Son, readying Himself for the supreme joy of increasing His kingdom, of expanding the gift of His love, of giving birth to life; and finally, the Spirit, hovering like the hand of a poet—poised and ready to embody His words into something tangible.

As I watched, breathlessly, it seemed I heard the Son speak and suddenly there was painfully dazzling light surrounding the liquid globe. The darkness never actually departed but was fenced in and confined. They called it day—and night. Then the Father gazed intently as the Son cloaked the watery sphere in air and set it apart from the rest of the universe. I heard more words from the Son and then, as if a glass of water had been tilted to one side, all the water pooled in one massive sea and there appeared earth—dry ground. On this dry soil I saw sprouting shafts of lush green, trees of every variety, flowers of every hue and tint. The blanket of black above me became like jeweled velvet as the stars came into being. And like a placid guardian, I saw the moon appear. I glanced at the Son, approaching low to personally oversee the creation of the animals.
Two legs, four, many legs, no legs. As the numbers grew, the symphony of voices swelled. I couldn't conceive of anything—birds, beasts, bugs, fish—that He had overlooked. But no—He drew even closer—even down to the very earth. Molding the earth into a form I didn't recognize, He leaned down, slowly—and kissed it ever so gently. And the throb of life flowed into the clay—and it became a man—a being I can only describe as the very image of His Maker. I was awed. Just when I thought He had run out of every conceivable idea on which to create another living creature, He put the crowning touch to His entire act—one like unto Him. And a lovely mate—also reflective of Him. More sons and daughters of God.

It seemed as if only moments had passed, for in heaven there is no real concept of time. Yet by the accounting of this new world, 6 of those days and nights had passed by. The Three were so delighted with their new world and their newest companions, that They wanted to spend an entire day to just contemplate the wonder and joy that They experienced in their work.

And I joined with the angels and the other sons of creation and together, convulsed with the exuberance of love for the Godhead, we shouted and sang and clapped our hands—rejoicing in the Lord our God.

Written by Patricia Mudgett at the Willow Brook Deeper Life Conference.
TASTE AND SEE THAT THE LORD IS GOOD

at the
DEEPER LIFE CONFERENCE
SELECTED QUOTATIONS FROM ELLEN G. WHITE
ON SPIRITUALITY

1. Sanctification—how many understand its full meaning? [The mind is befogged by sensual malaria. The thoughts need purifying. What might not men and women have been had they realized that the treatment of the body has everything to do with the vigor and purity of mind and heart.

The true Christian obtains an experience which brings holiness. He is without a spot of guilt upon the conscience, or a taint of corruption upon the soul. The spirituality of the law of God, with its limiting principles, is brought into his life. The light of truth irradiates his understanding. A glow of perfect love for the Redeemer clears away the miasma which has interposed between his soul and God. The will of God has become his will, pure, elevated, refined, and sanctified. His countenance reveals the light of heaven. His body is a fit temple for the Holy Spirit. Holiness adorns his character. God can commune with him; for soul and body are in harmony with God.]

2. We cannot serve God and the world at the same time. We must not center our affections on worldly relatives, who have no desire to learn the truth. We may seek in every way, while associated with them, to let our light shine; but our words, our deportment, our customs and practices, should not in any sense be molded by their ideas and customs. We are to show forth the truth in all our intercourse with them. If we cannot do this, the less association we have with them, the better it will be for our spirituality. If we place ourselves among associates whose influence has a tendency to make us forgetful of the high claims the Lord has upon us we invite temptation and become too weak in moral power to resist it. We come to partake of the spirit and cherish the ideas of our associates and to place sacred and eternal things lower than the ideas of our friends. We are, in short, leavened just as the enemy of all righteousness designed we should be.

3. I cannot distinctly call to mind all the persons in your church who were shown me; but I saw that many had a great work to perform. There is too much talking by nearly all, and too little meditation and prayer. With many there is too much selfishness. The mind is devoted to self and not to the good of others. Satan's power is upon you in a great degree. Yet there are precious lights among you, and those who

2. Quoted Adventist Home p. 462
are seeking to walk according to the will of God. Pride and the love of
the world are the snares which are so great a hindrance to spirituality
and a growth in grace. 2 Testimonies p. 187

4. Let ministers teach church members that in order to grow in
spirituality, they must carry the burden that the Lord has laid upon
them—the burden of leading souls into the truth. Those who are not
fulfilling their responsibility should be visited, prayed with, labored for.
Do not lead people to depend upon you as ministers: teach them rather
(p. 70) that they are to use their talents in giving the truth to those
around them. In thus working they will have the cooperation of heavenly
angels, and will obtain an experience that will increase their faith, and
give them strong hold on God. Christian Service pp. 69, 70.

5. The failure to follow sound principles has marred the history
of God's people. There has been a continual backsliding in health reform,
and as a result God is dishonored by a great lack of spirituality. Barriers
have been erected which would never have been seen had God's people
walked in the light. Shall we who have had such great opportunities
allow the people of the world to go in advance of us in health reform?
Shall we cheapen our minds and abuse our talents by wrong eating? Shall
we transgress God's holy law by following selfish practices? (p. 579) Shall
our inconsistency become a byword? Shall we live such unchristianlike
lives that the Saviour will be ashamed to call us brethren?

Shall we not rather do that medical missionary work which is the
gospel in practice, living in such a way that the peace of God can rule
in our hearts? Shall we not remove every stumbling block from the feet
of unbelievers, ever remembering what is due to a profession of
Christianity? Far better give up the name of Christian than make a
profession and at the same time indulge appetites which strengthen unholy
passions. 4 Counsels on Diet and Foods, pp. 33, 34.

6. I am instructed to bear a message to all our people on the
subject of health reform, for many have backslidden from their former
loyalty to health reform principles.

God's purpose for His children is that they shall grow up to the
full stature of men and women in Christ. In order to do this, they must
use aright every power of mind, soul, and body. They cannot afford to
waste any mental or physical strength.

The question of how to preserve the health is one of primary
importance. When we study this question in the fear of God we shall
learn that it is best, for both our physical and our spiritual advancement,
to observe simplicity in diet. Let us patiently study this question. We
need knowledge and judgement in order to move wisely in this matter.
Nature's laws are not to be resisted, but obeyed.


4. Counsels on Diet and Foods, pp. 33, 34.
Those who have received instruction regarding the evils of the use of flesh foods, tea and coffee, and rich and unhealthful food preparations, and who are determined to make a covenant with God by sacrifice, will not continue to indulge their appetite for food that they know to be unhealthful. God demands that the appetites be cleansed, and that self-denial be practiced in regard (p. 154) to those things which are not good. This is a work that will have to be done before His people can stand before Him a perfected people.

The remnant people of God must be a converted people. The presentation of this message is to result in the conversion and sanctification of souls. We are to feel the power of the Spirit of God in this movement. This is a wonderful, definite message; it means everything to the receiver, and it is to be proclaimed with a loud cry. We must have a true, abiding faith that this message will go forth with increasing importance till the close of time.

There are some professed believers who accept certain portions of the Testimonies as the message of God, while they reject those portions that condemn their favorite indulgences. Such persons are working contrary to their own welfare and the welfare of the church. It is essential that we walk in the light while we have the light. Those who claim to believe in health reform, and yet work counter to its principles in the daily life practice are hurting their own souls and are leaving wrong impressions upon the minds of believers and unbelievers.

A solemn responsibility rests upon those who know the truth, that all their works shall correspond with their faith, and that their lives shall be refined and sanctified, and they be prepared for the work that must rapidly be done in these closing days of the message. They have no time or strength to spend in the indulgence of appetite. The words should come to us now with impelling earnestness: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." Acts 3:19. There are many among us who are deficient in spirituality and who, unless they are wholly converted, will certainly be lost. Can you afford to run the risk?

Pride and weakness of faith are depriving many of the rich blessings of God. There are many who, unless they humble their hearts before the Lord, will be surprised and disappointed when the cry is heard: "Behold the bridegroom cometh." Matthew 25:6. They have the theory of the truth, but they have no oil in their vessels with their lamps. Our faith at this time must not stop with an assent to, or belief in, the theory of the third angel's message. We must have the oil of the grace of Christ that will feed the lamp and cause the light of life to shine forth, showing the way to those who are in darkness.

If we would escape having a sickly experience, we must begin in earnest without delay to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. There are many who give no decided evidence that they are true to their baptismal vows. Their zeal is chilled by formality, worldly ambition, pride, and love of self. Occasionally their feelings are stirred,
but they do not fall on the Rock Christ Jesus. They do not come to God with hearts that are broken in repentance and confession. Those who experience the work of true conversion in their hearts will reveal the fruits of the Spirit in their lives. Oh, that those who have so little spiritual life would realize that eternal life can be granted only to those who become partakers of the divine nature and escape the corruption that is in the world through lust!

(p. 156) The power of Christ alone can work the transformation in heart and mind that all must experience who would partake with Him of the new life in the kingdom of heaven. "Except a man be born again," the Saviour has said, "he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. The religion that comes from God is the only religion that can lead to God. In order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit. This will lead to watchfulness. It will purify the heart and renew the mind, and give us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship.

God requires of His people continual advancement. We need to learn that indulged appetite is the greatest hindrance to mental improvement and soul sanctification. With all our profession of health reform, many of us eat improperly. Indulgence of appetite is the greatest cause of physical and mental debility, and lies largely at the foundation of feebleness and premature death. Let the individual who is seeking to possess purity of spirit bear in mind that in Christ there is power to control the appetite. 9 Testimonies, pp. 153-156.

7. God requires all men to render their bodies to Him a living sacrifice, not a dead or a dying sacrifice, a sacrifice which their own course of action is debilitating, filling with impurities and disease. God calls for a living sacrifice. The body, He tells us, is the temple of the Holy Ghost, the habitation of His Spirit, and He requires all who bear His image to take care of their bodies for the purpose of His service and His glory. "Ye are not your own," says the inspired apostle, "ye are bought with a price;" wherefore "glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." In order to do this add to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience. [It is a duty to know how to preserve the body in the very best condition of health, and it is a sacred duty to live up to the light which God has graciously given. If we close our eyes to the light for fear we shall see our wrongs, which we are unwilling to forsake, our sins are not lessened but increased. If light is turned from in one case, it will be disregarded in another. It is just as much sin to violate the laws of our being as to break one of the Ten Commandments, for we cannot do either without breaking God's law. "We cannot love the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength while we are loving our appetites, our tastes, a great deal better than we love the Lord. We are daily lessening our strength to glorify God, when He requires all our strength, all our mind. By our wrong habits we are lessening our hold (p. 71) on life, and yet professing

5. This section of the passage is found in Counsels on Diet and Foods, pp. 36, 27
to be Christ's followers, preparing for the finishing touch of immortality.

My brother and sister, you have a work to do which no one can do for you. Awake from your lethargy, and Christ shall give you life. Change your course of living, your eating, your drinking, and your working. While you pursue the course you have been following for years, you cannot clearly discern sacred and eternal things. Your sensibilities are blunted and your intellect beclouded. You have not been growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth as was your privilege. You have not been increasing in spirituality, but growing more and more darkened. You have made too much haste to acquire property, and have been in danger of overreaching, looking out for your own interest and not regarding the interest of others as you would like to have them regard yours. You have encouraged selfishness in yourselves, which must be overcome. Closely examine your own hearts, and in your lives imitate the unerring Pattern, and all will be well with you. Preserve a clear conscience before God. In all you do glorify His name. Divest yourselves of selfishness and selfish love.  

8. It is intemperance in eating that causes so much invalidism, and robs the Lord of the glory due Him. Because of a failure to deny self, many of God's people are unable to reach the high standard of spirituality He has set for them and though they repent and are converted, all eternity will testify to the loss they have sustained by yielding to selfishness. Counsels on Diet and Foods, p. 58.

9. We should consider the words of the apostle Paul, in which he appeals to his brethren, by the mercies of God, to present their bodies a "living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." . . . Sanctification is not merely a theory, an emotion, or a form of words, but a living active principle, entering into the everyday life. It requires that our habits of eating, drinking, and dressing be such as to secure the preservation of physical, mental, and moral health, that we may present to the Lord our bodies—not an offering corrupted by wrong habits, but—"a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." Rom. 12:1.

[Let none who profess godliness regard with indifference the health of the body, and flatter themselves that intemperance is no sin, and will not affect their spirituality. A close sympathy exists between the physical and the moral nature. The standard of virtue is elevated or degraded by the physical habits. Excessive eating of the best of food will produce a morbid condition of the moral feelings. And if the food is not the most healthful, the effects will be still more injurious. Any habit which does not promote healthful action in the human system degrades the higher and nobler faculties. Wrong habits of eating and drinking lead to errors in thought and action. Indulgence of appetite strengthens the animal propensities, giving them the ascendancy over the mental and spiritual powers.

"Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul"

6. Counsels on Diet and Foods, 44, 45.
1 Peter 2:11, is the language of the apostle Peter. Many regard this warning as applicable only (p. 67) to the licentious; but it has a broader meaning. It guards against every injurious gratification of appetite or passion. It is a most forcible warning against the use of such stimulants and narcotics as tea, coffee, tobacco, alcohol, and morphine. The indulgences may well be classed among the lusts that exert pernicious influence upon moral character. The earlier these hurtful habits are formed, the more firmly will they hold their victims in slavery to lust, and the more certainly will they lower the standard of spirituality.]

Bible teaching will make but a feeble impression upon those whose faculties are benumbed by indulgence of appetite. Thousands will sacrifice not only health and life, but their hope of heaven, before they will wage war against their own perverted appetites. One lady who for many years claimed to be sanctified, made the statement that if she must give up her pipe or heaven she would say, "Farewell, heaven; I cannot overcome my love for my pipe." This idol had been enshrined in the soul, leaving to Jesus a subordinate place. Yet this woman claimed to be wholly the Lord's.

Wherever they may be, those who are truly sanctified will elevate the moral standard by preserving correct physical habits, and, like Daniel, presenting to others an example of temperance and self-denial. Every depraved appetite becomes a warring lust. Everything that conflicts with natural law creates a diseased condition of the soul. The indulgence of appetite produces a dyspeptic stomach, a torpid liver, a clouded brain, and thus perverts the temper and the spirit of the man. And these enfeebled powers are offered to God, who refused to accept the victims for sacrifice unless they were without a blemish. (p. 68) It is our duty to bring our appetite and our habits of life into conformity to natural law. If the bodies offered upon Christ's altar were examined with the close scrutiny to which the Jewish sacrifices were subjected, who with our present habits, would be accepted?

With what care should Christians regulate their habits, that they may preserve the full vigor of every faculty to give to the service of Christ. If we would be sanctified in soul, body, and spirit, we must live in conformity to the divine law. The heart cannot preserve consecration to God while the appetites and passions are indulged at the expense of health and life. . . .

Paul's inspired warnings against self-indulgence are sounding along the line down to our time. . . . He presents for our encouragement the freedom enjoyed by the truly sanctified. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8:1. He charges the Galatians to "walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." Gal. 5:16, 17.

7. Counsels on Diet and Foods, pp. 62, 63
8. These paragraphs are found in Sanctified Life, pp.28, 29.

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Deeper Life Conference

He names some of the forms of fleshly lusts—idolatry, drunkenness, and such like. After mentioning the fruits of the Spirit, among which is temperance, he adds, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Verse 24.

There are many among professed Christians today who would decide that Daniel was too particular, and would pronounce him narrow and bigoted. They consider the matter of eating and drinking of too little consequence to require such a decided stand—one involving the probable sacrifice of every earthly (p. 70) advantage. But those who reason thus will find in the day of judgement that they turned from God's express requirements, and set up their own opinion as a standard of right and wrong. They will find that what seemed to them unimportant was not so regarded of God. His requirements should be sacredly obeyed. Those who accept and obey one of His precepts because it is convenient to do so, while they reject another because its observance would require a sacrifice, lower the standard of right, and by their example lead others to lightly regard the holy law of God. "Thus saith the Lord" is to be our rule in all things. Counsels on Health, pp. 67-70.

10. You need to exercise temperance in all things. Cultivate the higher powers of the mind, and there will be less strengthening of growth of the animal. It is impossible for you to increase in spiritual strength while your appetite and passions are not under perfect control. Says the inspired apostle, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

My brother, arouse yourself, I pray you, and let the work of the Spirit of God reach deeper than the external; let it reach down to the deep springs of every action. It is principle that is wanted, firm principle, and vigor of action in spiritual as well as temporal things. Your efforts lack earnestness. Oh, how many are low in the scale of spirituality, because they will not deny their appetite! The brain nerve energy is benumbed and almost paralyzed by overeating. When such go to the house of God upon the Sabbath, they cannot hold their eyes open. The most earnest appeals fail to arouse their leaden, insensible intellects. The truth may be presented with deep feeling; but it does not awaken the moral sensibilities, or enlighten the understanding. Have such studied to glorify God in all things? Counsels on Diet and Foods, p. 83.

11. It is this increasing devotion to money getting, the selfishness which the desire for gain begets, that deadens the spirituality of the church, and removes the favor of God from her. When the head and hands are constantly occupied with planning and toiling for the accumulation of riches, the claims of God and humanity are forgotten.

9. A full discussion of this brother's situation is found in 2 Testimonies, pp. 411-420. The first part of the testimony is particularly applicable to spirituality and health.
If God has blessed us with prosperity, it is not that our time and attention should be diverted from Him, and given to that which He has lent us. The giver is greater than the gift. We have been bought with a (p. 21) price, we are not our own. Have we forgotten that infinite price paid for our redemption? Is gratitude dead in the heart? Does not the cross of Christ put to shame a life of selfish ease and indulgence. 

We are reaping the fruits of this infinite self-sacrifice; and yet, when labor is to be done, when our money is wanted to aid the work of the Redeemer in the salvation of souls, we shrink from duty and pray to be excused. Ignoble sloth, careless indifference, and wicked selfishness seal our senses to the claims of God.

Oh, must Christ, the Majesty of heaven, the King of glory, bear the heavy cross, and wear the thorny crown, and drink the bitter cup, while we recline at ease, glorify ourselves, and forget the souls He died to redeem by His precious blood? No; let us give while we have the power. Let us do while we have the strength. Let us work while it is day. Let us devote our time and our means to the service of God, that we may have His wonderful approbation, and receive His reward.

Counsels on Stewardship, pp. 20, 21.

12. When the perfect love of God is in the heart, wonderful things will be done. Christ will be in the heart of the believer as a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. But those who manifest indifference to the suffering ones of humanity will be charged with indifference to Jesus Christ in the person of His suffering saints. Nothing saps spirituality from the soul more quickly than to enclose it in selfishness and self caring.

Those who indulge self and neglect to care for the souls and bodies of those for whom Christ has given His life, are not eating of the bread of life, nor drinking of the water of the well of salvation. They are dry and sapless, like a tree that bears no fruit. They are spiritual dwarfs, who consume their means on self; but "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Christian principles will always be made visible. In a thousand ways the inward principles will be made manifest. Christ abiding in the soul is as a well that never runs dry. Christian Stewardship, p. 27.

13. A decided advancement in spirituality, piety, charity, and activity, has been made as the result of the special meetings in the church. Discourses were preached on the sin of robbing God in tithes and offerings. . . .

Many confessed that they had not paid tithes for years; and we know that God cannot bless those who are robbing Him, and that the church must suffer in consequence of the sins of its individual members. There are a large number of names on our church books; and if all would be prompt in paying an honest tithe to the Lord, which is His portion, the treasury would not lack for means. . . .

As the sin of robbing God was presented, the people received clearer views of their duty and privilege in this matter. One brother said
that for two years he had not paid his tithes, and he was in despair; but as he confessed his sin, he began to gather hope. "What shall I do?" he asked.

I said, "Give your note to the treasurer of the church; that will be businesslike."

He thought that was a rather strange request; but he sat down, and began to write, "For value received, I promise to pay—" He looked up, as if to say, Is that the proper form in which to write out a note to the Lord?

"Yes," he continued, "for value received. Have I not been receiving the blessings of God day after day? Have not the angels guarded me? Has not the Lord blessed me with all spiritual and temporal blessings? For value received, I promise to pay the sum of $571.50 (p. 96.) to the church treasurer." After doing all he could do on his part, he was a happy man. In a few days he took up his note, and paid his tithe into the treasury. He had also made a Christmas donation of $125.

Another brother gave a note for $1,000, expecting to meet it in a few weeks; and another gave a note for $300. Counsels On Stewardship, pp. 95, 96.

14. Throughout the ages, riches and honor have been attended with much peril to humility and spirituality. It is when a man is prospered, when all his fellow men speak well of him, that he is in special danger. Man is human. Spiritual prosperity continues only so long as man depends wholly upon God for wisdom and for perfection of character. And those who feel most their need of dependence upon God are usually those who have the least amount of earthly treasure and human honor on which to depend. Counsels on Stewardship, p. 147.

15. The lax way which many churches have of incurring debts, and keeping in debt, was presented before me. In some cases a continual debt is upon the house of God, and continual interest to be paid. These things should not and need not be. If there is that wisdom, and tact, and zeal manifested for the Master that God requires of every one of His servants, there will be a change in these things. The debts will be lifted. Self-denial and self-sacrifice will work wonders in advancing the spirituality of the church. Let every church member do something. Let the necessity of each acting a part be most strenuously impressed upon the worshippers.

The college and church need not be loaded with debt as it is. This shows unwise stewardship. God calls for self-sacrifice. He calls for offerings from those who can give, and even the poorer members can do their little. And when there is a will to do, God will open the way. But the Lord is not pleased with the management. He does not design that His cause shall be trammeled with debt.

Self-denial will enable those who have done nothing in the past to do something tangible, and show that they believe the teachings of the
word, that they believe the truth for this time. All, both old and young, parents and children, are to show their faith by their works. Faith is made perfect by works. We are in the very closing scenes of this earth's history; yet there are but few who realize this because the world has come in between God and the soul. \[\text{Counsels On Stewardship}, \text{p. 283.}\]

16. The agency of the Spirit of God does not remove from us the necessity of exercising our faculties and talents, but teaches us how to use every power to the glory of God. The human faculties, when under the special direction of the grace of God, are capable of being used to the best purpose on earth. Ignorance does not increase the humility or spirituality of any professed follower of Christ. The truths of the divine word can be best appreciated by an intellectual Christian. Christ can be best glorified by those who serve Him intelligently. The great object of education is to enable us to use the power which God has given us in such a manner as to represent the religion of the Bible and promote the glory of God. \[\text{Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students}, \text{p. 361}\]

17. Bible reading, the critical examination of Bible subjects, essays written upon topics which would improve the mind and impart knowledge, the study of prophecies or the precious lessons of Christ—these will have an influence to strengthen the mental powers and increase spirituality. A familiar acquaintance with Scriptures sharpens the discerning powers and fortifies the soul against the attacks of Satan.

Few realize that it is a duty to exercise control over the thoughts and imaginations. It is difficult to keep the undisciplined mind fixed upon profitable subjects. But if the thoughts are not properly employed, religion cannot flourish in the soul. The mind must be preoccupied with sacred and eternal things, or it will cherish trifling and superficial thoughts. Both the intellectual and the moral powers must be disciplined, and they will strengthen and improve by exercise.

In order to understand this matter aright, we must remember that our hearts are naturally depraved, and we are unable of ourselves to pursue a right course. It is only by the grace of God, combined with the most earnest effort on our part, that we can gain the victory.

The intellect, as well as the heart, must be consecrated to the service of God. He has claims upon all there is of us. The follower of Christ should not indulge in any gratification, or engage in any enterprise, however innocent or laudable it may appear, which an enlightened conscience tells him would abate his ardor or lessen his spirituality. Every Christian should labor to press back the tide of evil and save our youth from the influences that would sweep them down to ruin.

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10. A rearrangement of this material with some addition will be found in \emph{Gospel Workers}, p. 433.

11. \emph{3 Testimonies}, p. 160. \emph{Mind, Character, and Personality I}, p. 365.
May God help us to press our way against the current.  


18. Jesus carried into His labor cheerfulness and tact. It requires much patience and spirituality to bring Bible religion into the home life and into the workshop, to bear the strain of worldly business, and yet keep the eye single to the glory of God. This is where Christ was a helper. He was never so full of worldly care as to have no time or thought for heavenly things. Often He expressed the gladness of His heart by singing psalms and heavenly songs. Often the dwellers in Nazareth heard His voice raised in praise and thanksgiving to God. He held communion with heaven in song; and as His companions complained of weariness from labor, they were cheered by the sweet melody from (p. 74) His lips. His praise seemed to banish the evil angels, and like incense, fill the place with fragrance. The minds of His hearers were carried away from their earthly exile, to the heavenly home.  

13. *Desire of Ages*, pp. 73, 74.

19. A sister who had spent some weeks at one of our institutions in ______, said that she felt much disappointed in what she saw and heard there. . . . Before accepting the truth, she had followed the fashions of the world in her dress, and had worn costly jewelry and other ornaments; but upon deciding to obey the Word of God, she felt that its teachings required her to lay aside all extravagant and superfluous adorning. She was taught that Seventh-day Adventists did not wear jewelry, gold, silver, or precious stones, and that they did not conform to worldly fashions in their dress. When she saw among those who profess the faith such a wide departure from Bible simplicity, she felt bewildered. Had they not the same Bible which she had been studying, and to which she had endeavored to conform her life? Had her past experience been mere fanaticism? Had she misinterpreted the words of the apostle, "The friendship of the world is enmity with God, or whosoever will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God"?

Mrs. D, a lady occupying a position in the institution, was visiting at Sr. _____'s room one day, when the latter took out of her trunk a gold necklace and chain, and said she wished to dispose of this jewelry and put the proceeds into the Lord's treasury. Said the other, "Why do you sell it? I would wear it if it was mine." "Why," replied Sr. _____, "when I received the truth, I was taught that all these things must be laid aside. Surely they are contrary to the teachings of God's Word." And she cited her hearer the words of the apostles, Paul and Peter, upon this point, "In like manner, also that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but, as becometh women professing godliness, with good works." "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel. But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not


13. *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 149
In answer, the lady displayed a gold ring on her finger, given her by an unbeliever, and said she thought it no harm to wear such ornaments. "We are not so particular," said she, "as formerly. Our people have been overscrupulous in their opinions upon the subject of dress. The ladies of this institution wear gold watches and gold chains, and dress like other people. It is not good policy to be singular in our dress; for we cannot exert so much influence.

We inquire, Is this in accordance with the teachings of Christ? Are we to follow the Word of God, or the customs of the world? Our sister decided that it was the safest to adhere to the Bible standard. Will Mrs. D and others who pursue a similar course be pleased to meet the result of their influence, in that day when every man shall receive according to his works?

God's word is plain. Its teachings cannot be mistaken. Shall we obey it, just as He has given it to us, or shall we seek to find how far we can digress and yet be saved? Would that all connected with our institutions would receive and follow the divine light, and thus be enabled to transmit light to those who walk in darkness.

Conformity to the world is a sin which is sapping the spirituality of our people, and seriously interfering with their usefulness. It is idle to proclaim the warning message to the world, while we deny it in the transactions of daily life. Evangelism, pp. 270-272.

20. Those who are most actively employed in doing with interested fidelity their work to win souls to Jesus Christ, are the best developed in spirituality and devotion. Their very active working formed the means of their spirituality. There is danger of religion losing in depth that which it gains in breadth. This need not be, if, in the place of long sermons, there is wise education given to those newly come to the faith. Teach them by giving them something to do, in some line of spiritual work, that their first love will not die but increase in fervor. Let them feel that they are not to be carried and to lean for support on the church; but they are to have root in themselves. They can be in many lines, according to their several abilities, useful in helping the church to come nearer to God, and (p. 357) working in various ways to act upon the elements outside the church which will be a means of acting beneficially upon the church. The wisdom and prosperity of the church casts a telling influence upon her favor. The psalmist prayed for the prosperity of the church, "God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us. . . . That Thy way may be known upon the earth. Thy saving health among all nations." Evangelism, pp. 356, 357.

21. The proper regulation of his habits of eating, sleeping, study, and exercise, is a duty which every student owes to himself, to society, and to God. The education which will make the young a blessing to the world, is that which enables them to attain true and noble manhood or
obtaining mental training at the experience of health and morals, of spirituality, and it may be, of life. *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 72.

22. It is true that the simplicity of true godliness has to a large degree been lost from the church, and many of those who profess to be followers of Christ have become so blinded that (p. 255) they think that gain is godliness, and they devote their powers to the things of time. They do not realize that all their intellectual ability has been purchased by Christ, and that they should devote to Him the best results of their thought, that His cause may be advanced. But instead of giving their sharp, clear ideas to advance the cause, to strengthen and bless the church, they devote all their powers to advancement of their own interests. They do not gather with Christ, but lead away from Him by their words and acts. They surround their souls with an atmosphere that is deleterious to spirituality. They profess to be followers of Christ, but they do not know Him by an experimental knowledge. They do not practice religion. They do not seek to be Christians in the same way in which they would learn a trade. They profess to believe advanced truth; but it is evident that they keep it in the outer court; for it has no sanctifying power on life and character. They do not realize how much is at stake; for the salvation of their own souls and that of others is imperiled. They do not realize that in order to be a savior of life unto life they must be under spiritual discipline and training, learning in the school of Christ. Without this spiritual discipline, they become inefficient, ignorant, and undeveloped, and see not necessity for the spiritual training and knowledge which would qualify them to hold positions of influence and usefulness. If they do not consecrate themselves wholly to God, becoming learners in His school, they will do haphazard work that will result in injury to the church. *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 254, 256.

23. The one appointed to conduct Sabbath services should study how to interest his hearers in the truths of the Word. He should not always give so long a discourse that there will be no opportunities for those present to confess Christ. The sermon should frequently be short, so that the people may express their thanksgiving to God. Gratitude-offerings glorify the name of the Lord. In every assembly of the saints holy angels listen to the praise offered to Jehovah in testimony, song, and prayer.

The prayer and social meeting should be a season of special help and encouragement. All should feel it a privilege to take part. Let every one who bears the name of Christ have something to say in the social meeting. The testimonies should be short, and of a nature to help others. Nothing will so completely kill the spirit of devotion as for one person to take up twenty or thirty minutes in a long testimony. This means death to the spirituality of the meeting. *Gospel Workers*, p. 171.

24. It is often because secret prayer is neglected that long, tedious prayers are offered in public. Let not ministers go over in their petitions a week of neglected duties, hoping to atone for their neglect and to pacify conscience. Such prayers frequently result in bringing others down to a low level of spirituality. *Gospel Workers*, p. 176.
25. When Christ ascended, He left the church and all its interests a sacred trust to His followers. And the work of the church is not to be left to the minister alone, or to a few leading men. Every member should feel that he has entered into a solemn covenant with the Lord to work for the best interests of His cause at all times and under all circumstances. Each should have some part to act, some burden to bear. If all church members felt an individual responsibility, greater advancement would be made in spiritual things. The solemn burden of responsibility resting upon them would lead them to seek God often for strength and grace.

The real character of the church is measured, not by the high profession she makes, not by the names enrolled on her books, but by what she is actually doing for the Master, by the number of her persevering faithful workers. Personal, unselfish effort will accomplish more for the cause of Christ than can be wrought by sermons or creeds.

Let ministers teach church-members that in order to grow in spirituality, they must carry the burden that the Lord has laid upon them,—the burden of leading souls into the truth. Those who are not fulfilling their responsibility should be visited, prayed with, labored for. Do not lead the people to depend upon you as ministers; teach them rather that they are to use their talents in giving the truth to those around them. In thus working they will have the co-operation of heavenly angels, and will obtain an experience that will increase their faith, and give them a stronghold on God. Gospel Workers, p. 200.

26. I feel a deeper interest in this meeting than in any other that has been held this season. Michigan has not had the labor which she should have had. God has planted important institutions among you, and this brings upon you greater responsibilities than upon any other conference in the whole field. Great light has been given you, and few have responded to it; yet my heart goes out in tender solicitude for our beloved people in Michigan. The warning that the Son of man is soon to come in the clouds of heaven has become to many a familiar tale. They have left the waiting, watching position. The selfish, worldly spirit manifested in the life reveals the sentiment of the heart, "My Lord delayeth His coming." Some are enveloped in so great darkness that they openly express their unbelief, notwithstanding our Saviour's declaration that all such are unfaithful servants and their portion shall be with hypocrites and unbelievers.

Our ministers are not doing their whole duty. The attention of the people should be called to the momentous event which is so near at hand. The signs of the times should be kept fresh before their minds. The prophetic visions of Daniel and John foretell a period of moral darkness and declension; but at (p. 10) the time of the end, the time in which we are now living, the vision was to speak and not lie. When the signs predicted begin to come to pass, the waiting, watching ones are bidden to look up and lift up their heads and rejoice because their redemption draweth nigh.

When these things are dwelt upon as they should be, scoffers will be developed who walk after their own lusts, saying, "Where is the
promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." But, "when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them." "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." Thank God, all will not be rocked to sleep in the cradle of carnal security. There will be faithful ones who will discern the signs of the times. While a large number professing present truth will deny their faith by their works, there will be some who will endure unto the end.

The same spirit of selfishness, of conformity to the practices of the world, exists in our day as in Noah's. Many who profess to be the child of God follow their worldly pursuits with an intensity that gives the lie to their profession. They will be planting and building, buying and selling, eating, and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the last moment of their probation. This is the condition of a large number of our own people. Because iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold. To but few can it be said: "Ye are all . . . the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness."

My soul is burdened as I see the great want of spirituality among us. The fashions and customs of the world, pride, love of amusement, love of display, extravagance in dress, in houses, in lands—these are robbing the treasury of God, turning to the gratification of self the means which should be used to send forth the light of truth to the world. Selfish purposes are made (p. 11) the first consideration. The work of qualifying men to labor for the salvation of souls is not considered of so great consequence as worldly enterprises. Souls are perishing for want of knowledge. Those who have had the light of present truth, and yet feel not the spirit of labor to warn their fellow men of the coming judgment, must give an account to God for their neglect of duty. The blood of souls will be upon their garments.

The old standard-bearers are fainting and falling. Our young men have not been educated to feel their accountability to God; little inducement is presented for them to labor in the cause, and they enter the fields that promise the largest remuneration with the least toil and responsibility. As a people we are not advancing in spirituality as we near the end. We do not realize the magnitude and importance of the work before us. Hence our plans are not becoming wider and more comprehensive. There is a sad lack of men and women prepared to carry forward the increasing work for this time.

We are not doing one-twentieth part of what God requires us to do. There has been a departure from the simplicity of the work, making it intricate, difficult to understand, and difficult to execute. The judgment and wisdom of man rather than of God has too often guided and controlled. Many feel that they have not time to watch for souls as they that must give account. And what excuse will they render for this neglect of the important work which was theirs to do? 5 Testimonies, pp. 9-11.

27. God desires us, by strict temperance, to keep the mind clear and keen that we may be able to distinguish between the sacred and the
common. We should strive to understand the wonderful science of the matchless compassion and benevolence of God. Those who eat too largely and those who eat unhealthful food bring trouble upon themselves, unfitting themselves for the service of God. It is dangerous to eat meat, for animals are suffering from many deadly diseases. Those who persist in eating the flesh of animals sacrifice spirituality to perverted appetite. Their bodies become full of disease. Mind, Character, and Personality II, p. 390.

28. The principles of health reform should be brought into the life of every Christian. Men and women who disregard these principles cannot offer to God a pure, vigorous devotion; for a dyspeptic stomach or a torpid liver makes the religious life an uncertainty.

Eating the flesh of dead animals has an injurious effect upon spirituality. When meat is made the staple article of food, the higher faculties are overborne by the lower passions. These things are an offense to God and are the cause of a decline in spiritual life. Mind, Character, and Personality II, p. 407.

29. The view held by some that spirituality is a detriment to health, is the sophistry of Satan. The religion of the Bible is not detrimental to the health of either body or mind. The influence of the Spirit of God is the very best medicine of disease. Heaven is all health; and the more deeply heavenly influences are realized, the more sure will be the recovery of the believing invalid. The true principles of Christianity open before all a source of inestimable happiness. Religion is a continual wellspring, from which the Christian can drink at will, and never exhaust the fountain.14

The relation which exists between the mind and the body is very intimate. When one is affected, the other sympathizes. The condition of the mind affects the health of the physical system. If the mind is free and happy, from a consciousness of right doing and a sense of satisfaction in causing happiness to others, it creates a cheerfulness that will react upon the whole system, causing a freer circulation of the blood, and a toning up of the entire body. The blessing of God is a healing power, and those who are abundant in benefiting others will realize that wondrous blessing in both heart and life.

When men who have indulged in wrong habits and sinful practices yield to the power of divine truth, the application of that truth to the heart revives the moral powers, which had seemed to be paralyzed. The receiver possesses stronger, clearer understanding than before he riveted his soul to the eternal Rock. Even his physical health improves by the realization of his security in Christ. The special blessing of God resting upon the receiver is of itself health and strength. (p. 29)

Those who walk in the path of wisdom and holiness, find that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that

now is, and of that which is to come." 1 Tim. 4:8. They are alive to the enjoyment of life's real pleasures, and are not troubled with vain regrets over misspent hours, nor with gloomy forebodings, as the worldling too often is when not diverted by some exciting amusement. Godliness does not conflict with the laws of health, but is in harmony with them. The fear of the Lord is the foundation of all real prosperity. Counsels on Health, pp. 28, 29.

30. At the conference in New York, October, 1868, I was shown many who are now doing nothing, who might be accomplishing good. There was presented before me a class who are conscious that they possess generous impulses, devotional feelings, and a love of doing good; yet at the same time they are doing nothing. They possess a self-complacent feeling, flattering themselves that if they had an opportunity, or were circumstanced more favorably, they could and would do a great work; but they are waiting the opportunity. They despise the narrow mind of the poor niggard who grudges the small pittance to the needy. They see that he lives for self, that he will not be called from himself to do good to others, to bless them with the talents of influence and of means which have been committed to him to use, not to abuse, or to permit to rust, or lie buried in the earth. Those who give themselves up to their stinginess and selfishness are accountable of niggardly acts and are responsible for (p. 251) the talents they abuse. But more responsible are those who have generous impulses and are naturally quick to discern spiritual things, if they remain inactive, waiting an opportunity they suppose has not come, yet contrasting their readiness to do with the unwillingness of the niggard, and reflecting that their condition is more favorable than that of their mean-souled neighbors. Such deceive themselves. The mere possession of qualities which are not used only increases their responsibility; and if they keep their Master's talents unimproved, or hoarded, their condition is no better than that of their neighbors for whom their souls feel such contempt. To them it will be said: Ye knew your Master's will, yet did it not.

[Had you trained your mind to dwell on elevated subjects, meditating on heavenly themes, you could have done much good. You could have had an influence upon the minds of others, to turn their selfish thoughts and world-loving dispositions into the channel of spirituality. Were your affections and thoughts brought into subjection to the will of Christ, you would be capable of doing good. Your imagination is diseased because you have permitted it to run in a forbidden channel, to become dreamy. Daydreaming and romantic castle-building have unfitted you for usefulness. You have lived in an imaginary world; you have been an imaginary martyr and an imaginary Christian.] 15

31. God does not mean that any of us should become hermits or monks and retire from the world in order to devote ourselves to acts of worship. The life must be like Christ's life—between the mountain and the multitude. He who does nothing but pray will soon cease to pray, or

15. Mind, Character, and Personality, pp. 592, 593.
worship. The life must be like Christ's life—between the mountain and
the multitude. He who does nothing but pray will soon cease to pray, or
his prayers will become a formal routine. When men take themselves out
of social life, away from the sphere of Christian duty and cross bearing;
when they cease to work earnestly for the Master, who worked earnestly
for them, they lose the subject matter of prayer and have no incentive
to devotion. Their prayers become personal and selfish. They cannot
pray in regard to the wants of humanity or the upbuilding of Christ's
kingdom, pleading for strength wherewith to work.

[We sustain a loss when we neglect the privilege of associating
together to strengthen and encourage one another in the service of God.
The truths of His word lose their vividness and importance in our minds.
Our hearts cease to be enlightened and aroused by their sanctifying
influence, and we decline in spirituality. In our association as Christians
we lose much by lack of sympathy with one another. He who shuts
himself up to himself is not filling the position that God designed he
should. The proper cultivation of the social elements in our nature brings
us into sympathy with others, and is a means of development and strength
to us in the service of God.]

If Christians would associate together, speaking to each other of
the love of God and of the precious (p. 102) truths of redemption, their
own hearts would be refreshed and they would refresh one another. We
may be daily learning more of our heavenly Father, gaining a fresh
experience of His grace; then we shall desire to speak of His love; and
as we do this, our own hearts will be warmed and encouraged. If we
thought and talked more of Jesus, and less of self, we should have far
more of His presence. Steps to Christ, pp. 101, 102.

33. With those who lived at a distance from the tabernacle,
more than a month of every year must have been occupied in attendance
upon the annual feasts. This example of devotion to God should
emphasize the importance of religious worship and the necessity of
subordinating our selfish, worldly interests to those that are spiritual and
eternal.

We sustain a loss when we neglect the privilege of associating
together to strengthen and encourage one another in the service of God.
The truths of His word lose their vividness and importance in our minds.
Our hearts cease to be enlightened and aroused by their sanctifying
influence, and we decline in spirituality. In our association as Christians
we lose much by lack of sympathy with one another. He who shuts
himself up to himself is not filling the position that God designed he
should. We are all children of one Father, dependent upon one another
for happiness. The claims of God and of humanity are upon us. It is
the proper cultivation of the social elements of our nature that brings us

16. Mind, Character, and Personality II, p. 622. It is well to note that the
longer passage quoted from Steps to Christ is taken from the chapter
"The Privilege of Prayer."
into sympathy with our brethren and affords us happiness in our efforts to bless others. Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 541.

34. To be without the graces of the Spirit of God is sad indeed; but it is a more terrible condition to be thus destitute of spirituality and of Christ, and yet try to justify ourselves by telling those who are alarmed for us that we need not their fears and pity. Fearful is the power of self-deception on the human mind! What blindness! Setting light for darkness and darkness for light! The True Witness counsels us to buy of Him gold tried in the fire, white raiment, and eyesalve. The gold here recommended as having been tried in the fire is faith and love. It makes the heart rich; for it has been purged until it is pure, and the more it is tested the more brilliant is its luster. The white raiment is purity of character, the righteousness of Christ imparted to the sinner. This is indeed a garment of heavenly texture, that can be bought only of Christ for a life of willing obedience. The eyesalve is that wisdom and grace which enables us to discern between the evil and the good, and to detect sin under any guise. God has given His church eyes which He requires them to anoint with wisdom, that they may see clearly; but many would put out the eyes of the church if they could; for they would not have their deeds come to the light, lest they should be reproved. The divine eyesalve will impart clearness to the understanding. Christ is the depository of all graces, He says: Buy of Me." Testimonies, pp. 88, 89.

35. Another year of your life closes today. How can you look back upon it? Have you made advancement in the divine life? Have you increased in spirituality? Have you crucified self, with the affections and lusts? Have you an increased interest in the study of God's word? Have you gained decided victories over your own feelings and waywardness? Oh, what has been the record of your life for the year which has now passed into eternity, never to be recalled?

As you enter upon a new year, let it be with an earnest resolve to have your course onward and upward. Let your life be more elevated and exalted than it has hitherto been. Make it your aim not to seek your own interest and pleasure, but to advance in the cause of your Redeemer. Remain not in a position where you ever need help yourself, and where others (p. 262) have to guard you to keep you in the narrow way. You may be strong to exert a sanctifying influence upon others. You may be where your soul's interest will be awakened to do good to others, to comfort the sorrowful, strengthen the weak, and bear your testimony for Christ whenever opportunity offers. Aim to honor God in everything. Be thorough in whatever you undertake. Testimonies, pp. 261, 262.

17. Mind, Character and Personality, pp. 627, 628.
18. Mind, Character, and Personality, p. 725.
36. In this age of diseased piety and perverted principle, those who are converted in life and practice will reveal a healthy and influential spirituality. Those who have a knowledge of the truth as it is revealed in God’s word must now come to the front. My brethren, God requires this of you. Every jot of your influence is now to be used in the right side. All are now to learn how to stand in defense of truth that is worthy of acceptance. Those who are endeavoring to live the Christ life must call things by the right name, and stand in defense of the truth as it is in Jesus. Medical Ministry, p. 22.

37. Only that which is pure and lovely and of good report is it safe for us to follow. Human beings are under the most sacred obligations to God to be holy and uncorrupted; for they have been bought with a price, even the precious blood of the Son of God. By their baptismal vows they are solemnly pledged to do nothing which will bring an evil report upon the Christian name. Before the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the professing Christian pledges himself to discourage pride, covetousness, unbelief. And as the true Christian seeks to fulfill this pledge, he grows in self-distrust. Constantly he places more dependence upon God. His reverence and love for the Saviour continually increase, and he is a living witness for his Master. He realizes what it means to be a child of God. He has a realizing sense that the cleansing blood of Christ secures for him pardon and elevation of character. In spirituality he grows like the lofty cedar. Daily he holds communion with God, and he has a treasure-house of knowledge from which to draw. He is mighty in the knowledge of the Scriptures. His fellowship is with the Father and the Son, and he knows more and still more of the divine will. He is filled with a constantly increasing love for God and for his fellowmen. Medical Ministry, pp. 127, 128.

38. Whatever work we do, we are to do it for Christ. There are many kinds of temporal work to be done for God. An unbeliever would do this work mechanically, for the wages he receives. He does not know the joy of cooperation with the Master Worker. There is no spirituality in the work of him who serves self. Common inspirations, a desire to be thought clever by men, rule in his life. Such a one may receive praise from men, but not from God. Those who are truly united with Christ do not work for the wages they receive. Laborers together with God, they do not strive to exalt self.

In the last great day decisions will be made that will be a surprise to many. Human judgement will have no place in the decisions then made. Christ can and will judge every case; for all judgement has been committed to Him by the Father. He will estimate service by that which is invisible to men. The most secret things lie open to His all-seeing eye. When the Judge of all men shall make His investigation, many of those whom human estimation has placed first will be placed last, and those who have been put in the lowest place by men will be taken out of the ranks and made first. Medical Ministry, p. 133.

39. A new element needs to be brought into the work. God’s people must receive the warning, and work for souls right where they are;
for people do not realize their great need and peril. Christ sought the
people where they were, and placed before them the great truths in
regard to His kingdom. As He went from place to place, He blessed and
comforted the suffering and healed the sick. This is our work. God
would have us relieve the necessities of the destitute. The reason that
the Lord does not manifest His power more decidedly is because there is
so little spirituality among those who claim to believe the truth. Medical
Ministry, p. 319.

40. Those who strive to become laborers for God, who seek
earnestly to acquire in order to impart, will constantly receive light from
God that they may be channels of communication. If, like Daniel, young
men and young women will bring all their habits, appetites, and passions
into conformity to the requirements of God, they will qualify them-
(p. 42) selves for higher work. They should put from their minds all that
is cheap and frivolous. Nonsense and amusement-loving propensities
should be discarded, as out of place in the life and experience of those
who are living by faith in the Son of God, eating His flesh and drinking
His blood.

They should realize that though all the advantages of learning
may be within their reach, they may yet fail of obtaining that education
which will fit them for work in some part of the Lord's vineyard. They
cannot engage in God's service without the requisite qualifications of
intelligent piety. If they give to pleasure and amusement the precious
mind that should be strengthened by high and noble purpose, they degrade
the powers that God has given them, and are guilty before Him, because
they fail to improve their talents by wise use.

Their dwarfed spirituality is an offense to God. They taint and
corrupt the minds of those with whom they associate. By their words
and actions they encourage a careless inattention to sacred things. Not
only do they imperil their own souls, but their example is detrimental to
all with whom they come in contact. They are utterly incompetent to
represent Christ. Servants of sin, careless, reckless, and foolish, they
scatter away from Him. Messages to Young People, pp. 41, 42.

41. A faithful obedience to God's requirements will have a
surprising influence to elevate, develop, and strengthen all man's
faculties. Those who have in youth devoted themselves to the service of
God, are found to be the men of sound judgement and keen
discrimination. And why should it not be so? Communion with the
greatest Teacher the world has ever known, strengthens the understanding,
illuminates the mind, and purifies the heart—elevates, refines, and
ennobles the whole man. "The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it
giveth understanding unto the simple."

Among the youth who profess godliness, there is a large class
who may seem to contradict this statement. They make no advancement
in knowledge or in spirituality. Their powers are dwarfing, rather than
developing. But the Psalmist's words are true of the genuine Christian. It
is not, indeed, the bare letter of God's word that give light and
understanding; it is the word opened and applied to the heart by the Holy
Spirit. When a man is truly converted, he becomes a son of God, a
partaker of the divine nature. Not only is the heart renewed, but the intellect is strengthened and invigorated. There have been many instances of persons who before conversion were thought to possess ordinary and even inferior ability, but who after conversion seemed to be entirely transformed. They then (p. 66) manifested remarkable power to comprehend the truths of God's word, and to present these truths to others. Men of high intellectual standing have considered it a privilege to hold intercourse with these men. The Sun of Righteousness, shedding its bright beams into their minds, quickened every power into more vigorous action. Messages to Young People, pp. 55, 56.

42. Beware how you neglect secret prayer and a study of God's word. These are your weapons against him who is striving to hinder your progress heavenward. The first neglect of prayer and Bible study makes easier the second neglect. The first resistance to the Spirit's pleading prepares the way for the second resistance. Thus the heart is hardened, and the conscience seared.

On the other hand, every resistance of temptation makes resistance more easy. Every denial of self makes self-denial easier. Every victory gained prepares the way for a fresh victory. Each resistance of temptation, each self-denial, each triumph over sin, is a seed sown unto eternal life. Every unselfish action gives new strength to spirituality. No one can try to be like Christ without growing more noble and more true. Messages to Young People, pp. 96, 97.

43. Could a large share of the books published be consumed, a plague would be stayed that is doing a fearful work upon mind and heart. Love stories, frivolous and exciting tales, and even that class of books called religious novels,—books in which the author attaches to his story a moral lesson—are a curse to the readers. Religious sentiments may be woven all through a story-book, but, in most cases, Satan is but clothed in angel-robes the more effectively to deceive and allure. None are so confirmed in right principles, none so secure from temptation, that they are safe in reading these stories.

The readers of fiction are indulging an evil that destroys spirituality, eclipsing the beauty of the sacred page. It creates an unhealthy excitement, fevers the imagination, unfit the mind for usefulness, weans the soul from prayer, and disqualifies it for any spiritual exercise.

God has endowed many of our youth with superior capabilities; but too often they have enervated their powers, confused and enfeebled their minds so that for years they have made no growth in grace or in a knowledge of the reason of our faith, because of their unwise choice of reading. Those who are looking for the Lord soon to come, looking (p. 273) for that wondrous change, when "this corruptible shall put on incorruption," should in this probationary time be standing upon a higher plane of action.

My dear young friends, question your own experience as to the influence of exciting stories. Can you after such reading, open the Bible and read with interest the words of life? Do you not find the Book of
God uninteresting? The charm of that love story is upon the mind, destroying its healthy tone, and making it impossible for you to fix the attention upon the important, solemn truths that concern your eternal welfare.

Resolutely discard all trashy reading. It will not strengthen your spirituality, but will introduce into the mind sentiments that pervert the imagination, causing you to think less of Jesus and to dwell less upon His precious lessons. Keep the mind free from everything that would lead it in a wrong direction. Do not encumber it with trashy stories, which impart not strength to the mental powers. The thoughts are of the same character as the food provided for the mind. Messages to Young People, pp. 272, 273.

44. Christ sends His light to those who keep the windows of the soul open heavenward. Under the Holy Spirit's influence, they work the works of God. He who approaches nearest to obedience to the divine law will be of the most service to God. He who follows Christ, reaching out after His goodness, His compassion, His love for the human family, will be accepted by God as a worker together with Him. Such a one will not be content to remain on a low level of spirituality. He will constantly reach higher and higher. Our High Calling, p. 182.

45. We must beware that we do not become overburdened even with what seem the necessary cares of life, so that we are unable to do the most essential work. . . . The largest share of the thoughts and the busy activities that engage hands and hearts are given to selfish, personal earthly interests. These are allowed to become so engrossing as to prevent attention to the things of eternity. The soul is left to starve for want of nourishment. Mind and body become worn out by protracted hours of application to worldly things. This is just as Satan designed it should be. All the freshness and vigor of the mind, all the keen thought, is given to the world, and God has the feeble, distracted thought, the fruit of a wearied and worried mind. The things of the highest consequence, which pertain to the eternal peace, are made subordinate to the common concerns of life, and God is robbed every day of service which would strengthen spirituality, lifting the thought heavenward, and bringing the soul into communion with God and holy angels. Our High Calling, p. 280.

46. The Bible is the storehouse of the unsearchable riches of God. But those who have a knowledge of the truth do not understand it as fully as they might. They do not bring the love of Christ into the heart and life. The student of the Word finds himself bending over a fountain of living water. The church needs to drink deeply of the spirituality of the Word. Their service to God needs to be very different from the tame, lifeless, emotionless religious experience that makes many believers but little different from those who believe not. Our High Calling, p. 348.

47. When you present your petitions to the Lord, it should be in humility, without boasting of superior attainments, but with real soul hunger for the blessing of God. Christ always knows what is cherished in the heart. We must come in faith that the Lord will hear and answer
our prayers; for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Genuine faith is the faith that works by love, and purifies the soul. A living faith will be a working faith. Should we go into the garden and find that there was no sap in the plants, no freshness in the leaves, no bursting buds or blooming flowers, no signs of life in stalk or branches, we would say, "The plants are dead. Uproot them from the garden; for they are a deformity to the beds." So it is with those who profess Christianity, and have no spirituality. If there are no signs of religious vigor, if there is no doing of the commandments of the Lord, it is evident that there is no abiding in Christ the living vine. Sons and Daughters of God, p. 71.

48. The principles of truth must be interwoven with our character and life. We should cherish every ray of light that falls upon our pathway, and live up to the requirements of God. We should grow in spirituality. We are losing a great deal of the blessing . . . because we do not take advance steps in the Christian life . . .

The members of the church of Christ should gather up the divine rays of light from Jesus, and reflect them to others, leaving a bright track heavenward in the world. They are to be as the wise virgins, having their lamps trimmed and burning, representing the character of Christ to the world. We are not to be satisfied with anything short of this. We are not to be satisfied with our righteousness, and content without the deep movings of the Spirit of God.

Christ says, "Without me ye can do nothing." It is this marked nothingness, so apparent in the labors of many . . . that alarms us; for we know that this is an evidence that they have not felt the converting power of Christ upon their hearts. You may look from the topmost bough to the lowest branch of their work, and you will find nothing but leaves. God desires us to come up to a higher standard. It is not His will that we should have such a dearth of spirituality. . . .

I remember visiting in Iowa when the country was new, and I saw the farmers breaking the new ground. I noticed that they had heavy teams, and made tremendous efforts to make deep furrows, but the laborers gained strength and muscle by the exercise of their physical powers. It will make our young men strong to go into new fields, and break up the fallow ground of men's hearts. This work will drive them nearer to God . . . They will gain efficiency and ability by mastering difficulties and overcoming obstacles. Sons and Daughters of God, p. 325.

49. Christians must sever every tie that binds them to these secret orders that are not under the control of God. They cannot be loyal to these organizations and loyal to God. Either the connection with these bodies must be severed or you will assimilate more closely to them, and as the results will come to unite more fully with them, and will sever the ties that bind you to those who love and fear God. The Christian will abandon those things which are a hindrance to his spirituality, be the sacrifice ever so great. Better lose money, possessions, and life itself,
than to imperil the vital interests of the soul. 2 Selected Messages, p. 132.

50. I urge our people to make it their life-work to seek for spirituality. Christ is at the door. This is why I say to our people, "Do not consider it a privation when you are called to leave the cities and move out into the country places. Here there await rich blessings for those who will grasp them. By beholding the scenes of nature, the works of the Creator, by studying God's handiwork, imperceptibly you will be changed into the same image. Selected Messages, p. 356.

51. We want something besides bath religion. We want the living principle, and to daily feel individual responsibility. This is shunned by many, and the fruit is carelessness, indifference, a lack of watchfulness and spirituality. Where is the spirituality of the church? Where are men and women full of faith and the Holy Spirit? My prayer is, Purify thy church, O God. For months I have enjoyed freedom, and I am determined to order my conversation, and all my ways, aright before the Lord. 2 Spiritual Gifts, p. 200.

52. Dear Brethren and Sisters, the Lord has shown me in vision some things concerning the church in the present lukewarm state, which I will relate to you. The church was presented before me in vision. Said the angel to the church, "Jesus speaks to thee, 'Be zealous and repent.'" This work I saw should be taken hold of in earnest. There is something to repent of. Worldly-mindedness, selfishness and covetousness, have been eating out the spirituality and life of God's people. 2 Spiritual Gifts, p. 25.

53. Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul," is the language of the apostle Peter (1 Peter 2:11). Many regard this text as a warning against licentiousness only, but it has a broader meaning. It forbids every injurious gratification of appetite or passion. Let none who profess godliness regard with indifference the health of the body, and flatter themselves that intemperance is no sin, and will not affect their spirituality. A close sympathy exists between the physical and the moral nature. Any habit which does not promote health degrades the higher and nobler faculties. Wrong habits of eating and drinking lead to errors in thought and action. Indulgence of appetite strengthens the animal propensities, giving them the ascendancy over the mental and spiritual powers. Sanctified Life, p. 25.

54. You are indulging an evil which threatens to destroy your spirituality. It will eclipse all the beauty and interest of the sacred pages. It is love for storybooks, tales and other reading which does not have an influence for good upon the mind that is in any way dedicated to the service of God. It produces a false, unhealthy excitement, fevers the imagination, unfit the mind for usefulness, and disqualifies it for (p. 242)

20. 1 Testimonies, p. 99.

21. 1 Testimonies, p. 141.
any spiritual exercise. It weans the soul from prayer and love of spiritual things. Reading that will throw light upon the sacred volume, and quicken your desire and diligence to study it, is not dangerous, but beneficial. You were represented to me with your eyes turned from the Sacred Book and intently fixed upon exciting books, which are death to religion. The oftener and more diligently you peruse the Scriptures, the more beautiful will they appear, and the less relish will you have for light reading. The daily study of the Scriptures will have a sanctifying influence upon the mind. You will breathe a heavenly atmosphere. Bind this precious volume to your hearts. It will prove to you a friend and guide you in perplexity. 1 Testimonies, pp. 241, 242.

55. I saw that God is purifying and proving His people. He will refine them as gold, until the dross is consumed and His image is reflected in them. All have not that spirit of self-denial and that willingness to endure hardness and to suffer for the truth's sake, which God requires. Their wills are not subdued; they have not consecrated themselves wholly to God, seeking no greater pleasure than to do His will. Ministers and people lack spirituality and true godliness. Everything is to be shaken that can be shaken. God's people will be brought into most trying positions, and all must be settled, rooted, and grounded in the truth, or their steps will surely slide. If God comforts and nourishes the soul with His inspiring presence, they can endure, though the way may be dark and thorny. For the darkness will soon pass away, and the true light shine forever. I was pointed to Isaiah 58; 59:1-15; Jeremiah 14:10-12, as a description of the present state of our nation. The people of this nation have forsaken and forgotten God. They have chosen other gods and followed their own corrupt ways until God has turned from them. The inhabitants of the earth have trampled upon the law of God and broken His everlasting covenant. 1 Testimonies, pp. 355, 356.

56. Ministers must arouse and manifest a life, zeal, and devotion to which they have for quite a length of time been almost strangers because they have failed to walk with God. The cause of God in many places is not improving. Soul work is needed. The people are overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life. They are entering deeper and deeper into a spirit of worldly enterprise. They are ambitious to get gain. Spirituality and devotion are rare. The spirit that prevails is to work, to accumulate, and to add to that which they already possess. "What will be the end of these things?" was the burden of my inquiry.

Conference meetings have accomplished no lasting good. Those who attend the meetings carry a spirit of traffic with them. Ministers and people frequently bring their merchandise to these large gatherings, and the truths spoken from the desk fail to impress the heart. The sword of the Spirit, the word of God, fails to do its office work; it falls tamely upon the hearers. The exalted work of God is made to connect too closely with common things.

The ministers must be converted before they can strengthen their brethren. They should not preach themselves, but Christ and His righteousness. A reformation is needed among the people, but it should first begin its purifying work with the ministers. They are watchmen.
upon the walls of Zion, to sound the note of warning to the careless, the unsuspecting; also to portray the fate of the hypocrite in Zion. It seemed to me that some of the ministers had forgotten that Satan was yet alive, as persevering, earnest, and artful as ever; that he was still seeking to allure souls from the path of righteousness. 22 Testimonies, p. 469.

57. There are many who are deficient in spirituality and the Christian graces. A weight of solemn responsibility should daily rest upon them as they view the perilous times in which we live and corrupting influences which are teeming around us. Their only hope of being partakers of the divine nature is to escape the corruption that is in the world. These brethren need a deep and thorough experience in the things of God, and this can only be obtained by an effort on their part. Their position requires them to possess earnestness and unabated diligence, so as not to be found sleeping at their post. Satan and his angels sleep not. 2 Testimonies, p. 126.

58. Dear Brethren and Sisters in ____, June 12, 1868, I was shown that the love of the world was to a great extent taking the place of love to God. You are situated in a pleasant country, one that is favorable to worldly prosperity. This places you where you are in constant danger of having your interest swallowed up in the world, in laying up treasure upon the earth. Your hearts will be where your treasure is. You are situated where there are temptations to be plunging deeper and deeper into the world, to be continually accumulating; and while you are thus engaged, the mind becomes engrossed with the cares of this life to such an extent as to shut out true godliness. But few realize the deceitfulness of riches. Those who are anxious to acquire means are so bent upon this one object as to make the religion of Christ a secondary matter. Spiritual things are not valued and are not sought after, for the love of gain has eclipsed the heavenly zeal, perseverance, and earnestness exhibited by those who profess to be Christians, it would not be half as valuable as earthly possessions. Compare the earnest effort made to obtain the things of this earth with the languid, weak inefficient (p. 184) effort to gain spirituality and a heavenly treasure. No wonder that we experience so little of the illuminating influence from the heavenly sanctuary. Our desires are not in that direction; they are mostly confined to earthly pursuits, seeking of worldly things, and neglecting the eternal. Prosperity is blinding the eyes and deceiving the soul. God may speak, but the rubbish of earth prevents His voice being heard. 2 Testimonies, pp. 183, 184.

59. I was shown that Brother V should seek for more spirituality. You do not possess that calm trust in God which He requires you to have. You do not train the mind to run in the channel of spirituality. You indulge in too much vain, unnecessary talk, which injures your own soul and injures your influence. You must encourage calmness and fortitude of mind. You are easily excited; you have strong feelings, and express in strong terms your likes and dislikes. You need

22. This passage is found in the setting of a section entitled "Our Ministers" and is instruction for ministers to straighten up their lives.
more good religion to have a soothing influence upon you. You have been invited to learn of Christ, who is meek and lowly of heart. Precious lesson! If well learned, it will transform the whole life. Lightness and cheap talk are injurious to your spiritual advancement. You should seek after perfection of character and let your influence tell for God in your words and acts. You need earnestly seek the Lord and to take a deeper draught at the fountain of truth, that its influence may sanctify your life. Your mind is too much on the world. You should have your interest in the better life than this. You have no time to lose; make haste and improve the few hours of probation. 2 Testimonies, p. 188.

60. Sister E, you cannot realize the many blessings you have lost by making the failings of others a balm to soothe your conscience for a neglect of your duty. You have been measuring yourself by others. Their crooked path, their failings, have been your textbook. But their errors, their follies and (p. 395) sins, do not make your disobedience to God less sinful. We regret that those who should be a strength to you in your efforts to overcome your love of self, your pride of heart, your vanity and love of the approbation of worldlings, have been only a hindrance by their own lack of spirituality and true godliness. We cannot tell you how much we regret that those who should be self-denying Christians are so far from coming up to the standard. Those who should be steadfast, abounding in the work of God, are weakened by Satan because they remain at such a distance from God. They fail to obtain the power of His grace, through which they might overcome the infirmities of their nature, and, by obtaining signal victories in God, show those of weaker faith the way, the truth, and the life.

That which has caused us the greatest discouragement has been to see those in ——— who have had years of experience in the cause and work of God, shorn of their strength by their own unfaithfulness. They are outgeneraled by the enemy in nearly every attack. God would have made these persons as strong, like faithful sentinels at their post, to guard the fort, had they walked in the light He had given them and remained steadfast to duty, seeking to know and do the whole will of God. Satan will, no doubt, through his delusions deceive these delinquent souls, and make them believe that they are about right after all. They have committed no grievous, outbursting sins, and they must, after all, be on the true foundation, and God will accept their works. They see no special sins to repent of, no sins which call for special humiliation, humble confession, and rending of heart. The delusion upon such is strong indeed when they mistake the form of godliness for the power thereof, and flatter themselves that they are rich and have need of nothing. The curse of Meroz rest upon them: "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants there of; because they came not to the (p. 396) help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

My sister, excuse not your defects because others are wrong. In the day of God you will not dare to plead as excuse for your neglect to form a character for heaven, that others did not manifest devotion and spirituality. The same lack which you discovered in others was in yourself. And the fact that others were sinners makes your sins
nonetheless grievous. Both they and you, if you continue in your present state of unfitness, will be separated from Christ, and will with Satan and his angels be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. 2 Testimonies, pp. 394-395.

61. My brother, arouse yourself, I pray you, and let the work of the Spirit of God reach deeper than the external; let it reach down to the deep springs of every action. It is principle that is wanted, firm principle, and vigor of action in spiritual as well as temporal things. Your efforts lack earnestness. Oh, how many are low in the scale of spirituality because they will not deny their appetite! The brain nerve energy is numbed and almost paralyzed by overeating. When such go to the house of God upon the Sabbath, they cannot hold their eyes open. The most earnest appeals fail to arouse their leaden, insensible intellects. The truth may be presented with deep feeling, but it does not awaken the moral sensibilities or enlighten the understanding. Have such studied to glorify God in all things?

It is impossible to have clear conceptions of eternal things unless the mind is trained to dwell upon elevated themes. All the passions must be brought under perfect subjection to the moral powers. When men and women profess strong faith and earnest spirituality, I know that their profession is false if they have not brought all their passions under control. God requires this. The reason why such spiritual darkness prevails is that the mind is content to take a low level and is not directed upward in a pure, holy, and heavenly channel. 2 Testimonies, p. 414.

62. The true followers of Christ will not choose intimate friendship with those whose characters have serious defects, and whose example as a whole it would not be safe to follow, while it is their privilege to associate with persons who observe a conscientious regard for duty in business and in religion. Those who lack principle and devotion generally exert a more positive influence to mold the minds of their intimate friends than is exerted by those who seem well balanced and able to control and influence the defective in character, those lacking spirituality and devotion. 3 Testimonies, p. 24

63. Such families have brought upon this church its heaviest burdens. They come with false ideas. They seem to expect the church to be faultless and that it will take the responsibility of making Christians of those very children whom they, as parents, are unable to control or keep within bounds. They throw themselves upon the church, a terrible and crushing weight. They might be a help if they would yield their selfishness and strive to honor God and to repair the mistakes they made in their lives. But they do no such thing; they hold themselves aloof, ready to criticize the lack of spirituality in the church, whose greatest calamity is that it numbers among its members too many like themselves—dead weights, persons whose hearts and lives are unconsecrated, and whose course is all wrong. The institutions located at have carried along too many diseased and lifeless bodies for their own prosperity and spiritual vitality. 4 Testimonies, p. 193.

64. Belief in the near coming of the Son of man in the clouds of
heaven will not cause the true Christian to become neglectful and careless of the ordinary business of life. The waiting ones who look for the soon appearing of Christ will not be idle, but diligent in business. Their work will not be done carelessly and dishonestly, but with fidelity, promptness, and thoroughness. Those who flatter themselves that careless inattention to the things of this life is an evidence of their spirituality and of their separation from the world are under a great deception. Their veracity, faithfulness, and integrity are tested and proved in temporal things. If they are faithful in that which is least they will be faithful in much. 4 Testimonies, p. 309.

65. The steps upward to heaven must be taken one at a time; every advance step strengthens us for the next. The transforming power of the grace of God upon the human heart is a work which but few comprehend because they are too in- (p.445) dolent to make the necessary effort. The lessons which young ministers learn in going about and being waited upon when they have not a fitness for the work have a demoralizing influence upon them. They do not know their place and keep it. They are not balanced by firm principles. They talk knowingly of things they know nothing of, and hence those who accept them as teachers are misled. One such person will inspire more skepticism in minds than several will be able to counteract, do the best they can. Men of small minds delight to quibble, to criticize, to seek for something to question, thinking this is a mark of sharpness; but instead it shows a mind lacking refinement and elevation. How much better to be engaged in seeking to cultivate themselves and to ennoble and elevate their minds. As a flower turns to the sun that the bright rays may aid in perfecting its beauty and symmetry, so should the youth turn to the Sun of Righteousness, that heaven's light may shine upon them, perfecting their characters and giving them a deep and abiding experience in the things of God. Then they may reflect the divine rays of light upon others. Those who choose to gather doubts and unbelief and skepticism will experience no growth in grace or spirituality and are unfitted for the solemn responsibility of bearing the truth to others. 4 Testimonies, pp. 444, 445.

66. The custom of overreaching in trade, which exists in the world, is no example for Christians. They should not deviate from perfect integrity, even in small matters. To sell an article for more than it is worth, taking advantage of the ignorance of purchasers, is fraud. Unlawful gains, petty tricks of trade, exaggeration, competition, underselling a brother who is seeking to pursue an honest business—these things are corrupting the purity of the church, and are ruinous to her spirituality. 4 Testimonies, p. 494.

67. Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." "Ye are," says Christ, "the light of the world." What a responsibility! There is need of fasting, humiliation, (p. 536) and prayer over our decaying zeal and languishing spirituality. The love of many is waxing cold. The efforts of many of our preachers are not what they should be. When some who lack the Spirit and power of God enter a new field, they commence denouncing other denominations, thinking that they can convince the people of the truth by presenting the inconsistencies of the popular churches. It may seem necessary on some
occasions to speak of these things, but in general it only creates prejudice against our work and closes the ears of many who might otherwise have listened to the truth. If these teachers were connected closely with Christ, they would have divine wisdom to know how to approach the people. They would not so soon forget the darkness and error, the passion and prejudice, which kept themselves from the truth. 4 Testimonies, pp. 535, 536.

68. Do not, my sisters, trifle longer with your own souls and with God. I have been shown that the main cause of your backsliding is your love of dress. This leads to the neglect of grave responsibilities, and you find yourselves with scarcely a spark of the love of God in your hearts. Without delay, renounce the cause of your backsliding, because it is sin against your own soul and against God. Be not hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Fashion is deteriorating the intellect and eating out the spirituality of our people. Obedience to fashion is pervading our Seventh-day Adventist churches and is doing more than any other power to separate our people from God. I have been shown that our church rules are very deficient. All exhibitions of pride in dress, which is forbidden in the word of God, should be sufficient reason for church discipline. If (p. 648) there is a continuance, in face of warnings and appeals and entreaties, to still follow the perverse will, it may be regarded as proof that the heart is in no way assimilated to Christ. Self, and only self, is the object of adoration, and one such professed Christian will lead many away from God. 4 Testimonies, pp. 647, 648.

69. Our duty to act as missionaries for God in the very position where He has placed us has been greatly overlooked by us as a people. Many are eagerly turning from present duties and opportunities to some wider field; many imagine that in some other position they would find it less difficult to obey the truth. Our larger churches are looked upon as enjoying great advantages and there is among our people a growing tendency to leave their special post of duty and move to Battle Creek or to the vicinity of some other large church. This practice not only threatens the prosperity and even the life of our smaller churches, but it is preventing us from doing the very work which God has given us to do, and is destroying our spirituality and usefulness as a people. 5 Testimonies, p. 134.

70. Those engaged in the work of God cannot serve His cause acceptably unless they make the best use possible of the religious privileges they enjoy. "We are as trees planted in the garden of the Lord; and He comes to us seeking the fruit He has a right to expect. His eye is upon each of us; He reads our hearts and understands our lives. This is a solemn search, for it has reference to duty and to destiny; and with what interest is it prosecuted. Let each of those to whom are committed sacred trusts inquire: "How do I meet the inspecting eye of God? Is my heart cleansed from its defilement? Or have its temple courts become so desecrated, so occupied with buyers and sellers, that Christ finds no room?" The bustle of business, if continuous, will dry up spirituality and leave the soul Christless. Although they may profess the truth, yet if men pass along day by day with no living connection with God, they will be led to do strange things; decisions will be made not in accordance with the will of God. There is no safety for our leading
brethren while they shall go forward according to their own impulses. They will not be yoked up with Christ, and so will not move in harmony with Him. They will be unable to see and realize the wants of the cause, and Satan will move upon them to take positions that will embarrass and hinder. 5 Testimonies, p. 423.

71. All are to show their fidelity to God by the wise use of His entrusted capital, not in means alone, but in any endowment that will tend to the upbuilding of His kingdom. Satan will employ every possible device to prevent the truth from reaching those who are buried in error; but the voice of warning and entreaty must come to them. And while only a few are engaged in this work, thousands ought to be as much interested as they. God never designed that the lay members of the church should be excused from labor in His cause. "Go labor in My vineyard," is the Master's command to each of His followers. As long as there are unconverted souls in the world, there should be the most active, earnest, zealous, determined effort for their salvation. Those who have received the light should seek to enlighten those who have it not. If the church members do not individually take hold of this work, then they show that they have no living connection with God. Their names are registered as slothful servants. Can you not discern the reason why there is no more spirituality in our churches? It is because you are not colaborers with Christ. 5 Testimonies, pp. 462, 463.

72. Let each church member feel that he himself must be right with God, that he must be sanctified through the truth. Then he can represent Christian character to others and can set an example of unselfishness. If each will do this, the church will increase in spirituality and in favor with God. 5 Testimonies, p. 481.

73. We are in the great day of atonement, and the sacred work of Christ for the people of God that is going on at the present time in the heavenly sanctuary should be our constant study. We should teach our children what the typical Day of Atonement signified and that it was a special season of great humiliation and confession of sins before God. The antitypical day of atonement is to be of the same character. Every one who teaches the truth by precept and example will give the trumpet a certain sound. You need ever to cultivate spirituality, because it is not natural for you to be heavenly-minded. The great work is before us of leading the people away from worldly customs and practices, up higher and higher, to spirituality, piety, and earnest work for God. It is your work to proclaim the message of the third angel, to sound the last note of warning to the world. May the Lord bless you with spiritual eyesight. I write this in love, seeing your danger. Please consider these things carefully and prayerfully. 5 Testimonies, p. 520.

23. This passage is found in a discussion of "Unity and Love in the Church". The previous paragraph mentions: "In order to raise the moral tone of the church, each should feel it his duty to seek personal spiritual culture, through the practice of strict Bible principles, as in the sight of a holy God." p. 480.
1. Merely to hear or to read the word is not enough. He who desires to be profited by the scriptures must meditate (p.60) upon the truth that has been presented to him. By earnest attention and prayerful thought he must learn the meaning of the words of truth, and drink deep of the spirit of the holy oracles.

God bids us fill the mind with great thoughts, pure thoughts. He desires us to meditate upon His love and mercy, to study His wonderful work in the great plan of redemption. Then clearer and still clearer will be our perception of truth, higher, holier, our desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought will be transformed by communion with God through the study of the Scriptures. Christ's Object Lessons pp. 59, 60.

2. Abstract meditation is not enough; busy action is not enough; both are essential to the formation of Christian character. Strength acquired in earnest, secret prayer prepares us to withstand the allurements of society. And yet we should not exclude ourselves from the world, for our Christian experience is to be the light of the world. The society of unbelievers will do us no harm if we mingle with them for the purpose of connecting them with God and are strong enough spiritually to withstand their influence. 5 Testimonies p. 113.

3. With the word of God in his hands, every human being, wherever his lot in life may be cast, may have such companionship as he shall choose. In its pages he may hold converse with the noblest and best of the human race, and may listen to the voice of the Eternal as He speaks with men. As he studies and meditates upon the themes into which "the angels desire to look" (1 Peter 1:12), he may have their companionship. He may follow the steps of the heavenly Teacher, and listen to His words as when He taught on mountain and plain and sea. He may dwell in this world in the atmosphere of heaven, imparting to earth's sorrowing and tempted ones thoughts of hope and longings for holiness; himself coming closer and still closer into fellowship with the Unseen; like him of old who walked with God, drawing nearer and nearer the threshold of the eternal world, until the portals shall open, and he shall enter there. He will find himself no stranger. The voices that will greet him are the voices of the holy ones, who, unseen, were on earth his companions—voices that here he learned to distinguish and to love. He who through the word of God has lived in fellowship with heaven, will find himself at home in heaven's companionship. Education p. 127.

4. There are enough profitable subjects upon which to meditate and converse. The conversation of the Christian should be in heaven, whence we look for the Saviour. Meditation upon heavenly things is profitable, and will ever be accompanied with the peace and comfort of the Holy Spirit. Our calling is holy, our profession exalted. God is purifying unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. He is
sitting as a refiner and purifier of silver. When the dross and tin are removed, then His image will be perfectly reflected in us. Then the prayer of Christ for His disciples will be answered in us: "Sanctify them through thy truth: Thy word is truth." When the truth has a sanctifying influence upon our hearts and lives, we can render to God acceptable service and can glorify Him upon the earth, being partakers of the divine nature and having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 2 Testimonies p. 317.

5. All who are under the training of God need the quiet hour for communion with their own hearts, with nature, and with God. In them is to be revealed a life that is not in harmony with the world, its customs, or its practices; and they need to have a personal experience in obtaining a knowledge of the will of God. We must individually hear Him speaking to the heart. When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. He bids us, "Be still and know that I am God." This is the effectual preparation for all labor for God. Amidst the hurrying throng, and the strain of life's intense activities, he who is thus refreshed, will be surrounded with an atmosphere of light and peace. He will receive a new endowment of both physical and mental strength. His life will breathe out a fragrance, and will reveal a divine power that reach men's hearts. The Ministry of Healing, p. 58.

6. Though time is short, and there is a great work to be done, the Lord is not pleased to have us so prolong our seasons of activity that there will not be time for periods of rest, for the study of the Bible, and for communion with God. All this is essential to fortify the soul, to place us in a position where we shall receive wisdom from God to employ our talents in the Master's service to the highest account. My Life Today p. 133.

7. The nine disciples were yet pondering upon the bitter fact of their own failure; and when Jesus was once more alone with them, they questioned, "Why could not we cast him out?" Jesus answered them, "Because of your unbelief; for verily I say unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." Their unbelief, that shut them out from deeper sympathy with Christ, and the carelessness with which they regarded the sacred work committed to them, had caused their failure in the conflict with the powers of darkness.

The words of Christ pointing to His death, had brought sadness and doubt. And the selection of the three disciples to accompany Jesus to the mountain had excited the jealousy of the nine. Instead of strengthening their faith by prayer and meditation on the words of Christ, they had been dwelling on their discouragements and personal grievances. In this state of darkness they had undertaken the conflict with Satan.

In order to succeed in such a conflict they must come to the work in a different spirit. Their faith must be strengthened by fervent prayer and fasting, and humiliation of heart. They must be emptied of
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self, and be filled with the Spirit and power of God. Earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith,—faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work,—can alone avail to bring men the Holy Spirit's aid in the battle against principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and wicked spirits in high places.

"If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed," said Jesus, "ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove." Though the grain of mustard seed is so small, it contains that same mysterious life-principle which produces growth in the loftiest tree. When the mustard seed is cast into the ground, the tiny germ lays hold of every element that God has provided for its nutriment, and it speedily develops a sturdy growth. If you have faith like this, you will lay hold upon God's word, and upon all the helpful agencies He has appointed. Thus your faith will strengthen, and will bring to your aid the power of heaven. The obstacles that are piled by Satan across your path, though apparently as insurmountable as the eternal hills, shall disappear before the demand of faith. "Nothing shall be impossible unto you." Desire of Ages pp. 430, 431.

8. Above all, take time to read the Bible—the Book of books. A daily study of the Scriptures has a sanctifying, uplifting influence upon the mind. Bind the Holy Volume to your hearts. It will prove to you a friend and guide in perplexity.

[Both old and young neglect the Bible. They do not make it their study, the rule of their life. Especially are the young guilty of this neglect. Most of them find time to read other books, but the Book that points out the way to eternal life is not daily studied. Idle stories are attentively read, while the Bible is neglected. This Book is our guide to a higher, holier life. The youth would pronounce it the most interesting book they ever read had not their imagination been perverted by the reading of fictitious stories.

Youthful minds fail to reach their noblest-development when they neglect the highest source of wisdom—the word of God. That we are in God's world, in the presence of the Creator; that we are made in His likeness; that He watches over us and loves us and cares for us—these are wonderful themes for thought, and lead the mind into broad, exalted fields of meditation. He who opens mind and heart to the contemplation of such themes as these will never be satisfied with trivial, sensations subjects.

The importance of seeking a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures can hardly be estimated. "Given by inspiration of God," able to make us "wise unto salvation," rendering the man of God "perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:15-17), the Bible has the highest claim to our reverent attention. We should not be satisfied with a superficial knowledge, but should seek to learn the full meaning of the
words of truth, to drink deep of the spirit of the Holy Oracles.]

1. Counsels To Parents and Teachers pp. 138, 139.

10. All the hands in our offices should place themselves in the most favorable condition for the formation of good and correct habits. Several times each day precious, golden moments should be consecrated to prayer and the study of the Scriptures, if it is only to commit a text to memory, that spiritual life may exist in the soul. The varied interests of the cause furnish us with food for reflection and inspiration for our prayers. Communion with God is highly essential for spiritual health, and here only may be obtained that wisdom and correct judgment so necessary in the performance of every duty.

The strength acquired in prayer to God, united with individual effort in training the mind to thoughtfulness and care-taking, prepares the person for daily duties and keeps the spirit in peace under all circumstances, however trying. The temptations to which we are daily exposed make prayer a necessity. In order that we may be kept by the power of God through faith, the desires of the mind should be continually ascending in silent prayer for help, for light, for strength, for knowledge. But thought and prayer cannot take the place of earnest, faithful improvement of the time. Work and prayer are both required in perfecting Christian character.

We must live a twofold life—a life of thought and action, of silent prayer and earnest work. All who have received the light of truth should feel it their duty to shed rays of light upon the pathway of the impenitent. They should be witnesses for Christ in our offices as verily as in the church. God requires us to be living epistles, known and read of all men. The soul that turns to God for strength, its support, its (p. 460) power, by daily, earnest prayer, will have noble aspirations, clearer perceptions of truth and duty, lofty purposes of action, and a continual hungering and thirsting after righteousness. By maintaining a connection with God we shall be enabled to diffuse to others, through our association with them, the light, the peace, the serenity, that rules in our hearts, and set before them an example of unwavering fidelity to the interests of the work in which we are engaged. 4 Testimonies pp. 459, 460.

11. We have each of us an individual work to do, to gird up the loins of our minds, to be sober, and to watch unto prayer. The mind must be firmly controlled to dwell upon subjects that will strengthen the moral powers. . . . The thoughts must be pure, the meditations of the heart must be clean, if the words of the mouth are to be words acceptable to Heaven and helpful to your associates.

The mind should be guarded carefully. Nothing should be allowed to enter that will harm or destroy its healthy vigor. But to prevent this, it should be preoccupied with good seed, which, springing to life, will bring forth fruit-bearing branches. . . . A field left uncultivated speedily

1. Messages to Young People pp. 283, 284.
produces a rank growth of thistles and tangled vines, which exhaust the soil and are worthless to the owner. The ground is full of seeds blown and carried by the wind from every quarter; and if it is left uncultivated, they spring up to life spontaneously, choking every precious fruit-bearing plant that is struggling for existence. If the field were tilled and sown to grain, these valueless weeds would be extinguished, and could not flourish.

The youth who finds joy and happiness in reading the Word of God and in the hour of prayer is constantly refreshed by drafts from the Fountain of life. He will attain a height of moral excellence and a breadth of thought of which others cannot conceive. Communion with God encourages good thoughts, noble aspirations, clear perceptions of truth, and lofty purposes of action. Those who thus connect their souls with God are acknowledged by Him as His sons and daughters. They are constantly reaching higher and still higher, obtaining clearer views of God and of eternity, until the Lord makes them channels of light and wisdom to the world. My Life Today p. 83.

12. The Lord purifies the heart very much as we air a room. We do not close the doors and windows, and throw in some purifying substance; but we open the doors and throw wide the windows, and let heaven's purifying atmosphere flow in . . . The windows of impulse, of feeling must be opened up toward heaven, and the dust of selfishness and earthliness must be expelled. The grace of God must sweep through the chambers of the mind, the imagination must have heavenly themes for contemplation, and every element of the nature must be purified and vitalized by the Spirit of God.

The thoughts must be bound about, restricted, withdrawn from branching out and contemplating things that will only weaken and defile the soul. The thoughts must be pure, the meditations of the heart must be clean. . . . The noble powers of the mind have been given to us by the Lord, that we may employ them in contemplating heavenly things. God has made abundant provision that the soul may make continual progression in the divine life . . .

We give our time and thought to the trivial and commonplace things of the world, and neglect the great interests that pertain to eternal life. The noble powers of the mind are dwarfed and enfeebled by lack of exercise on themes that are worthy of their concentration. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." . . . As we meditate upon the perfections of our divine Model, we shall desire to become wholly transformed and renewed in the image of His purity. We are called to come out and be separate from the world that we may be the sons and daughters of the Most High. Sons and Daughters of God p. 107

13. But be not deceived. God is not mocked. Nothing but holiness will prepare you for heaven. It is sincere, experimental piety alone that can give you a pure, elevated character and enable you to enter into the presence of God, who dwelleth in light unapproachable.
The heavenly character must be acquired on earth, or it can never be acquired at all. Then begin at once. Flatter not yourself that a time will come when you can make an earnest effort easier than now. Every day creases your distance from God. Prepare for eternity with such zeal as you have not yet manifested. Educate your mind to love the Bible, to love the prayer meeting, to love the hour of meditation, and, above all, the hour when the soul communes with God. Become heavenly minded if you would unite with the heavenly choir in the mansions above. *2 Testimonies* pp. 267, 268

14. While with penitence and humble trust we meditate upon Jesus, whom our sins have pierced and our sorrows have burdened, we may learn to walk in His footsteps. By beholding Him we become changed into His divine likeness. And when this work is wrought in us, we shall claim no righteousness of our own, but shall exalt Jesus Christ, while we hang our helpless souls upon His merits. *Sanctified Life* p. 8.

15. Christians should be careful that they keep the heart with all diligence. They should cultivate a love for meditation, and cherish a spirit of devotion. Many seem to begrudge moments spent in meditation, and the searching of the Scriptures, and prayer, as though the time thus occupied was lost. I wish you could all view these things in the light God would have you; for you would then make the kingdom of heaven of the first importance. To keep your heart in heaven, will give vigor to all your graces, and put life into all your duties. To discipline the mind to dwell upon heavenly things, will put life and earnestness into all our endeavors. Our efforts are languid, and we run the Christian race slowly, and manifest indolence and sloth, because we so little value the heavenly prize. We are dwarfs in spiritual attainments. It is the privilege and duty of the Christian to be "increasing in the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." [Eph. 4:13.] As exercise increases the appetite, and gives strength and healthy vigor to the body, so will devotional exercises bring an increase of grace and spiritual vigor.

The affections should center upon God. Contemplate His greatness, His mercy, and excellences. Let His goodness and love and perfection of character captivate your heart. Converse upon His divine charms, and the heavenly mansions He is preparing for the faithful. He whose conversation is in heaven, is the most profitable Christian to all around him. His words are useful and refreshing. They have a transforming power upon those who hear them, and will melt and subdue the soul. (RH March 29, 1870). 3 Adventist Bible Commentary p. 1157

16. Why is it that our youth, and even those of maturer years, are so easily led into temptation and sin? It is because the word of God is not studied and meditated upon as it should be. If it were appreciated, there would be an inward rectitude, a strength of spirit, that would resist the temptations of Satan to do evil. A firm decided will-power is not brought into the life and character because the sacred instruction of God is not made the study, and the subject of meditation. There is not the effort put forth that there should be to associate the mind with pure, holy thoughts and to divert it from what is impure and untrue. There is not the choosing of the better part, the sitting at the

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feet of Jesus, as did Mary, to learn the most sacred lessons of the divine Teacher, that they may be laid up in the heart, and practiced in the daily life. Meditation upon holy things will elevate and refine the mind, and will develop Christian ladies and gentlemen. Fundamentals of Christian Education p. 132.

17. As our numbers are increasing, broader plans must be laid to meet the increasing demands of the times; but we see no special increase of fervent piety, of Christian simplicity, and earnest devotion. The church seem content to take only the first steps in conversion. They are more ready for active labor than for humble devotion, more ready to engage in outward religious service than in the inner work of the heart. Meditation and prayer are neglected for bustle and show. Religion must begin with emptying and purifying the heart, and must be nurtured by daily prayer. 4 Testimonies p. 535

18. God should be the highest object of our thoughts. Meditation upon Him and pleading with Him, elevate the soul and quicken the affections. A neglect of meditation and prayer (p.506) will surely result in a declension in religious interests. Then will be seen carelessness and slothfulness. Religion is not merely an emotion, a feeling. It is a principle which is interwoven with all the daily duties and transactions of life. Nothing will be entertained, no business engaged in, which will prevent the accompaniment of this principle. To retain pure and undefiled religion, it is necessary to be workers, persevering in effort. We must do something ourselves. No one else can do our work. None but ourselves can work out our salvation with fear and trembling. This is the very work which the Lord has left for us to do. 2 Testimonies pp. 505, 506.

19. Sabbath, June 6, 1863, I was shown some things in regard to the work of God and the spread of the truth. Preachers and people have too little faith, too little devotion and true godliness. The people imitate the preacher, and thus he has a very great influence upon them. Brother Hull, God wants you to come nearer to Him, where you can take hold of His strength, and by living faith claim His salvation, and be a strong man. If you were a devotional, godly man, in the pulpit and out, a mighty influence would attend your preaching. You do not closely search your own heart. You have studied many works to make your discourses thorough, able, and pleasing; but you have neglected the greatest and most necessary study, the study of yourself. A thorough knowledge of yourself, meditation and prayer, have come in as secondary things. Your success as a minister depends upon your keeping your own heart. You will receive more strength by spending one hour each day in meditation, and in mourning over your failings and heart corruptions and pleading for God's pardoning (p. 434) love and the assurance of sins forgiven, than you would by spending many hours and days in studying the most able authors, and making yourself acquainted with every objection to our faith, and with the most powerful evidences in its favor. 1 Testimonies pp. 433, 434.

20. As a family, you need to be sanctified through the truth. Dear sister, will you see the work to be done for you and take hold of it without delay, that your influence may be saving? Work out your own
salvation with fear and trembling. Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on THESE things."

There are enough profitable subjects upon which to meditate and converse. The conversation of the Christian should be in heaven, whence we look for the Saviour. Meditation upon heavenly things is profitable, and will ever be accompanied with the peace and comfort of the Holy Spirit. Our calling is holy, our profession exalted. God is purifying unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. He is sitting as a refiner and purifier of silver. When the dross and tin are removed, then His image will be perfectly reflected in us. Then the prayer of Christ for His disciples will be answered in us: "Sanctify them through thy truth: Thy word is truth." When the truth has a sanctifying influence upon our hearts and lives, we can render to God acceptable service and can glorify Him upon the earth, being partakers of the divine nature and having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 2 Testimonies p. 317.

21. If we would permit our minds to dwell more upon Christ and the heavenly world, we should find a powerful stimulus and support in fighting the battles of the Lord. Pride and love of the world will lose their power as we contemplate the glories of that better land so soon to be our home. Beside the loveliness of Christ, all earthly attractions will seem of little worth.

Let none imagine that without earnest effort on their part they can obtain the assurance of God's love. When (p. 92) the mind has been long permitted to dwell only on earthly things, it is a difficult matter to change the habits of thought. That which the eye sees and the ear hears, too often attracts the attention and absorbs the interest. But if we would enter the city of God, and look upon Jesus and His glory, we must become accustomed to beholding Him with the eye of faith here. The words of our thoughts and of our conversation, and each day some time should be especially devoted to prayerful meditation upon these sacred themes. Sanctified Life pp. 91, 92.

22. The theme of redemption is one that the angels desire to look into; it will be the science and the song of the redeemed throughout the ceaseless ages of (p. 89) eternity. Is it not worthy of careful thought and study now? The infinite mercy and love of Jesus the sacrifice made in our behalf, call for the most serious and solemn reflection. We should dwell upon the character of our dear Redeemer and Intercessor. We should meditate upon the mission of Him who came to save His people from their sins. As we thus contemplate heavenly themes, our faith and love will grow stronger, and our prayers will be more and more acceptable to God, because they will be more and more mixed with faith and love. They will be intelligent and fervent. There will be more constant confidence in Jesus, and a daily, living experience in His power to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him.
As we meditate upon the perfections of the Saviour, we shall desire to be wholly transformed and renewed in the image of His purity. There will be a hungering and thirsting of soul to become like Him whom we adore. The more our thoughts are upon Christ, the more we shall speak of Him to others and represent Him to the world. *Steps to Christ* pp. 88, 89.

23. What a theme for meditation is the sacrifice that Jesus made for lost sinners! "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." How shall we estimate the blessings thus brought within our reach? Could Jesus have suffered more? Could He have purchased for us richer blessings? Should it not melt the hardest heart when we remember that for our sakes He left the happiness and glory of heaven and suffered poverty and shame, cruel affliction and a terrible death? Had He not by His death and resurrection opened for us the door of hope, we should have known nothing but the horrors of darkness and the miseries of despair. In our present state, favored and blessed as we are, we cannot realize from what depths we have been rescued. We cannot measure how much deeper our afflictions would have been, how much greater our woes, had not Jesus encircled us with His human arm of sympathy and love, and lifted us up. *Testimonies* p. 316.

24. What is more worthy to engross the mind than the plan of redemption? It is a subject that is exhaustless. The love of Jesus, the salvation offered to fallen man through His infinite love, holiness of heart, the precious, saving truth for these last days, the grace of Christ—these are subjects which may animate the soul and cause the pure in heart to feel that joy which the disciples felt when Jesus came and walked with them as they traveled toward Emmaus. He who has centered his affections upon Christ will relish this kind of hallowed association and will gather divine strength by such intercourse; but he who has no relish for this kind of conversation, and who is best pleased to talk sentimental nonsense, has wondered far away from God and is becoming dead to holy and noble aspirations. The sensual, the earthly, is interpreted by such to be heavenly. When the conversation is of a frivolous character and savors of a dissatisfied reaching out after human sympathy and appreciation, it springs from lovesick sentimentalism, and neither the youth nor the men (p. 601) with gray hairs are secure. When the truth of God is an abiding principle in the heart, it will be like a living spring. Attempts may be made to repress it, but it will gush forth in another place; it is there and cannot be repressed. The truth in the heart is a wellspring of life. It refreshes the weary and restrains vile thought and utterance. *Testimonies* pp. 500, 601.

25. We, too, must have times set apart for meditation and prayer and for receiving spiritual refreshing. We do not value the power and efficacy of prayer as we should. Prayer and faith will do what no power on earth can accomplish. We are seldom, in all respects, placed in the same position twice. We continually have new scenes and new trials to pass through, where past experience cannot be a sufficient guide. We must have the continual light that comes from God.
Christ is ever sending messages to those who listen for His voice. On the night of the agony in Gethsemane, the sleeping disciples heard not the voice of Jesus. They had a dim sense of the angels' presence, but lost the power and glory of the scene. Because of their drowsiness and stupor they failed of receiving the evidence that would have strengthened their souls for the terrible scenes before them. Thus today the very men who most need divine instruction often fail of receiving it, because they do not place themselves in communion with heaven.

The temptations to which we are daily exposed make prayer a necessity. Dangers beset every path. Those who (p. 510) are seeking to rescue others from vice and ruin are especially exposed to temptation. In constant contact with evil, they need a strong hold upon God lest they themselves be corrupted. Short and decisive are the steps that lead men down from high and holy ground to a low level. In a moment decisions may be made that fix one's condition forever. One failure to overcome leaves the soul unguarded. One evil habit, if not firmly resisted, will strengthen into chains of steel, binding the whole man.

The reason why so many are left to themselves in places of temptation is that they do not set the Lord always before them. When we permit our communion with God to be broken, our defense is departed from us. Not all your good purposes and good intentions will enable you to withstand evil. You must be men and women of prayer. Your petitions must not be faint, occasional, and fitful, but earnest, persevering, and constant. It is not always necessary to bow upon your knees in order to pray. Cultivate the habit of talking (p. 511) with the Saviour when you are alone, when you are walking and when you are busy with your daily labor. Let the heart be continually uplifted in silent petition for help, for light, for strength, for knowledge. Let every breath be a prayer.

As workers for God we must reach men where they are, surrounded with darkness, sunken in vice, and stained with corruption. But while we stay our minds upon Him who is our sun and our shield, the evil that surrounds us will not bring one stain upon our garments. As we work to save the souls that are ready to perish we shall not be put to shame if we make God our trust. Christ in the heart, Christ in the life, this is our safety. The atmosphere of His presence will fill the soul with abhorrence of all that is evil. Our spirit may be so identified with His that in thought and aim we shall be one with Him.

It was through faith and prayer that Jacob, from being a man of feebleness and sin, became a prince with God. It is thus that you may become men and women of high and holy purpose, of noble life, men and women who will not for any consideration be swayed from truth, right, and justice. All are pressed with urgent cares, burdens, and duties, but the more difficult your position and heavier your burdens, the more you need Jesus.

It is a serious mistake to neglect the public worship of God. The privileges of divine service should not be lightly regarded. Those who
attend upon the sick are often unable to avail themselves of these privileges, but they should be careful not to absent themselves needlessly from the house of worship.

In ministering to the sick more than in any merely secular business, success depends on the spirit of consecration and self-sacrifice with which the work is done. Those who bear responsibilities need to place themselves where they will be (p. 512) deeply impressed by the Spirit of God. You should have as much greater anxiety than do others for the aid of the Holy Spirit and for a knowledge of God as your position of trust is more responsible than that of others.

Nothing is more needed in our work than the practical results of communion with God. We should show by our daily lives that we have peace and rest in the Saviour. His peace in the heart will shine forth in the countenance. It will give to the voice a persuasive power. Communion with God will ennable the character and the life. Men will take knowledge of us, as of the first disciples, that we have been with Jesus. This will impart to the worker a power that nothing else can give. Of this power he must not allow himself to be deprived.

We must live a twofold life—a life of thought and action, of silent prayer and earnest work. The strength received through communion with God, united with earnest effort in training the mind to thoughtfulness and caretaking, prepares one for daily duties and keeps the spirit in peace under all circumstances, however trying.

When in trouble, many think they must appeal to some earthly friend, telling him their perplexities, and begging for help. Under trying circumstances unbelief fills the hearts, and the way seems dark. And all the time there stands beside them the mighty Counselor of the ages inviting them to place their confidence in Him. Jesus, the great Burden Bearer, is saying, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." Shall we turn from Him to uncertain human beings, who are as dependent upon God as we ourselves are? (p. 513)

You may feel the deficiency of your character and the smallness of your ability in comparison with the greatness of the work. But if you had the greatest intellect ever given to man, it would not be sufficient for your work. "Without Me ye can do nothing," says our Lord and Saviour. John 15:5. The result of all we do rests in the hands of God. Whatever may betide, lay hold upon Him with steady, persevering confidence.

In your business, in companionship for leisure hours, and in alliance for life, let all the associations you form be entered upon with earnest, humble prayer. You will thus show that you honor God, and God will honor you. Pray when you are faint hearted. When you are desponding, close the lips firmly to men; do not shadow the path of others; but tell everything to Jesus. Reach up your hands for help. In your weakness lay hold of infinite strength. Ask for humility, wisdom, courage, increase of faith, that you may see light in God's light and rejoice in His love.
When we are humble and contrite we stand where God can and will manifest Himself to us. He is well please when we urge past mercies and blessings as a reason why He should bestow on us greater blessings. He will more than fulfill the expectations of those who trust fully in Him. The Lord Jesus knows just what His children need, how much divine power we will appropriate for the blessing of humanity; and He bestows upon us all that we will employ in blessing others and ennobling our own souls.

We must have less trust in what we ourselves can do, and more trust in what the Lord can do for and through us. You (p. 514) are not engaged in our own work; you are doing the work of God. Surrender your will and way to Him. Make not a single reserve, not a single compromise with self. Know what it is to be free in Christ.

The mere hearing of sermons Sabbath after Sabbath, the reading of the Bible through and through, or the explanation of it verse by verse, will not benefit us or those who hear us, unless we bring the truths of the Bible into our individual experience. The understanding, the will, the affections, must be yielded to the control of the word of God. Then through the work of the Holy Spirit the precepts of the word will become the principles of the life.

As you ask the Lord to help you, honor your Saviour by believing that you do receive His blessing. All power, all wisdom, are at our command. We have only to ask.

Walk continually in the light of God. Meditate day and night upon His character. Then you will see His beauty and rejoice in His goodness. Your heart will glow with a sense of His love. You will be uplifted as if borne by everlasting arms. With the power and light that God imparts, you can comprehend more and accomplish more than you ever before deemed possible. The Ministry of Healing pp. 509-514.

26. Let none imagine that without earnest effort on their part they can obtain the assurance of God's love. When the mind has been long permitted to dwell only on earthly things, it is a difficult matter to change the habits of thought. That which the eye sees and the ear hears too often attracts the attention and absorbs the interest. (p. 114)

But if we would enter the city of God, and look upon Jesus in His glory, we must become accustomed to beholding Him with the eye of faith here. The words and character of Christ should be often the subject of our thoughts and of our conversation; and each day some time should be especially devoted to prayerful meditation upon these sacred themes. Messages to Young People pp. 113, 114.

27. As a means of intellectual training, the opportunities of the Sabbath are invaluable. Let the Sabbath-school lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for (p. 252) the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost. In listening to the sermon, let parents and children note the text and the Scriptures quoted, and as
much as possible of the line of thought, to repeat to one another at home. This will go far toward relieving the weariness with which children so often listen to a sermon, and it will cultivate in all a habit of attention and of connected thought.

Meditation on the themes thus suggested will open to the student treasures of which he has never dreamed. He will prove in his own life the reality of the experience described in the scripture:

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." Jeremiah 15:16.

"I will meditate in Thy statutes." "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold. ... Moreover by them is Thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward." Psalms 119:48; 19:10,11. Education pp. 251, 252.

28. Their work being always urgent, it is difficult for some to secure time for meditation and prayer; but this they should not fail to do. The blessing of heaven, obtained by daily supplication, will be as the bread of life to the soul and will cause them to increase in moral and spiritual strength, like a tree planted by the river of waters, whose leaf will be always green and whose fruit will appear in due time. Testimonies, p. 539.

29. An intensity such as never before was seen is taking possession of the world. In amusement, in money-making, in the contest for power, in the very struggle for existence, there is a terrible force that engrosses body and mind and soul. In the midst of this maddening rush, God is speaking. He bids us come apart and commune with Him. "Be still and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10.

Many, even in their seasons of devotion, fail of receiving the blessing of real communion with God. They are in too great haste. With hurried steps they press through the circle of Christ's loving presence, pausing perhaps a moment within the sacred precincts, but not waiting for counsel. They have no time to remain with the divine teacher. With burdens they return to their work.

These workers can never attain the highest success until they learn the secret of strength. They must give themselves time to think, to pray, to wait upon God for (p. 261) a renewal of physical, mental, and spiritual power. They need the uplifting influence of His Spirit. Receiving this, they will be quickened by fresh life. The wearied frame and tired brain will be refreshed, the burdened heart will be lightened.

Not a pause for a moment in His presence, but personal contact with Christ, to sit down in companionship with Him—this is our need. Happy will it be for the children of our homes and the students of our schools when parents and teachers shall learn in their own lives the precious experience pictured in these words from the Song of Songs:
"As the apple tree among the trees of the wood,  
so is my Beloved among the sons.  
I sat down under His shadow with great delight,  
And His fruit was sweet to my taste.  
He brought me to the banqueting house,  
And His banner over me was love." Canticles 2:3, 4.

*Education* pp. 260, 261.
I started "looking" at meditation about fifteen years ago when I found my own spiritual life deficient. I soon discovered, though, that you can't understand meditation by just looking at it. You have to experiment personally with it. My interest in meditation stemmed partly from some serious reading and reflecting I had been doing on faith healing, partly from discussions of transcendental meditation, and largely from the revival work of Morton Kelsey and William Johnston.

I turned to meditation with mild curiosity. Through it I've learned a lot about God's ways with people and how the Holy Spirit communicates through Scripture, sometimes almost as if by verbal dialogue. Meditation is nothing to fool around with. It is definitely not for religious tourists out looking for a new kick or a little spiritual cocktail to take the edge off the dull routine of life.

I'm going to discuss in detail what I've learned, and I hope after reading my account you will consider the cost and then join me in what I promise will be one of the most rewarding journeys you have ever undertaken.

First, let me set down in quick outline fashion what I have discovered about meditation.

What meditation is 1. Meditation is hard work. It's fun, but it demands discipline, and it never becomes easy with the passing of time. 2. Meditation can be practiced in a variety of ways. My way may not be your way, but with time, practice, and God's guidance you will discover what works best for you. 3. Scripture is the basis of Christian meditation. In fact, I define meditation as the art of personalizing Scripture. It involves using the senses and the imagination in ways so creative and rewarding that words fail to describe the experience. 4. Journaling, or keeping a brief written account of experience and insights, is most helpful. I have learned that for me progress comes only when I make faithful journal entries. Charting progress is a challenge, but I've found a way to do it. 5. Meditation is a lifestyle. It is contemplative, yet active. It is subjective, yet it deals with discipline, scheduling, writing, and, most of all, helping. I didn't come to realize just how pervasive meditation is until just three or four years ago. When I first began to meditate I looked upon it as a way of approaching God. A good Christian technique, if you please. But genuine meditation is a way of being and doing that transcends the usual undertaking of prayer and subjective thought. Meditation is a contemplative lifestyle. Each of us created in God's image is given the ability to think, feel, and act; and all of these abilities are involved in true Christian meditation.

Like it or not, meditation is related to the clock. To reap its
rewards you have to take time regularly. For me the early-morning hours are the best. After I have exercised and before I have eaten, my body and mind are most ready to cooperate in dialoguing with heaven. And that's exactly what meditation is—a dialogue with heaven based on a reflective examination of Scripture. I spend the first five to eight minutes of my fifteen- to twenty-minute meditation time reading Scripture. I enjoy reading a book of the Bible through verse by verse and word by word. The most productive passages for me in the past two or three years have been in the book of 1 Peter. It took me a couple of weeks just to finish Peter’s greeting in verses one and two. I thought (meditated) a lot about the "scattering" and moving of my family, both my departed parents, and now my own family. I recalled my happy past, my sad past, and my crossroads past. I recalled God's purpose for me and for my loved friends, and as I did so I shed tears of delight and remembrance, and tears of grief. My journal carries some stains from those intimate times of reflection of 1 Peter.

It might take me several weeks to get through a single Bible verse. If a word or phrase speaks to me, I'll stop and concentrate on the meaning of the passage in my life at the moment. I might visualize people that I'm concerned about and simply sit quietly and wait for an impulse or idea to flood my mind. This sort of quiet waiting did not come naturally to me. I'm a preacher. Proclamation is the cardinal practice in my profession. The dynamic preacher, the powerful evangelist, the well-organized, dramatic word was my early model. But a preacher from the past set me to thinking about listening to people and to God. "Do not rush into speech, let there be no hasty utterance in God's presence. God is in heaven, you are on earth; so let your words be few" (Eccl. 5:2, N.E.B.).

Some days the dialogue is more monologue, with my doing the talking or the asking. Other days the Holy Spirit actively impresses me with meanings, understandings, and relationships, that have never come to mind before. When that happens, it is a matter of eliciting personal gratitude to God for His willingness to talk. I firmly believe that our thought life is built up by that upon which the mind feeds and that it rests with each of us to determine its food.

An important component in meditation is imagination. The human gift of imagination is greatly misunderstood. When I talk about imagination, many of my friends assume that I'm referring to events or situations that are not real. But imagination is useful for far more than journeys into never-never land. Our God-given ability to see pictures in our mind is the vehicle on which all successful Christian meditation moves.

Positive Outlook

Research in stress and burnout control, biofeedback, and wholistic medicine has clearly demonstrated the intimate relationship between mind and body. Norman Cousins recalled, first in a rather brief article and then in his book, "The Anatomy of an Illness," how his focused attention

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on happy and humorous incidents affected his health in positive ways when he was dreadfully ill. It is clear that imagination sometimes produces and often greatly aggravates disease. In fact, many lifelong invalids might be well if they only thought so. Psychological literature is full of reports of the effects of a happy, upbeat frame of mind. If the wrong use of the imagination can bring on and reinforce disease processes that yield untimely death, why don't we just reverse the process and use the imagination to picture health-producing, successful states of mind? By letting the imagination take hold of things unseen, Christian meditation does exactly that.

The imagination must have heavenly themes for contemplation. As we open windows of impulse and feeling toward heaven every aspect of our lives will be purified and vitalized by the Spirit of God. Try it. Let the creative juices flow. Use your God-given ability to picture a face, a form, or a word. In imagination go back to the Biblical scenes. Think the thoughts and feel the feelings of the disciples, of Moses, of Daniel, of Rahab, and as you come to understand their lives and messages you may discern there a vividness and beauty that you never noticed before.

How to meditate Christian meditation can be done in a variety of ways, but most techniques include a period of quiet reflection on Scripture, accompanied by muscle-relaxing and breathing exercises. Subtle but real changes take place with continued experience. I am much less dependent on verbal and audio material now than I was at first. When I began meditating, I often had difficulty focusing my attention long enough to keep from drifting off to sleep or keeping my mind from wandering into random channels of thought. But with practice I found myself able to discipline my mind, and the paradox of concentrating to relax became a reality for me. I have learned that I can habituate my mind to concentrate upon spiritual things. Mental exercise brings strength just as certainly as physical exercise does.

After meditation I sometimes find real value in rewriting in a very personal way the passage I've meditated on. And God often speaks to me through the rewritten material. True, I have written it, but in most cases I did not make the connection with people and needs until I reflected on the Biblical material. To illustrate, let me share a couple of sentences of reflection on 1 Peter 4:12 from my journal: "Bill, why are you so surprised at the hostility that (name) exhibits to you. You have tried to be fair; you tried to communicate your concern last Thursday night, but (name) would have none of it. Remember, though, you probably saw the problem between you and (name) too late. Don't feel righteous in yourself, and remember you are not alone." At the time, I was having a trying experience with one of my professional colleagues who was making some unkind and, I felt, unjust comparisons. Later on, as I struggled with the succeeding verses and the problem, God actually showed me a path of behavior to follow that led to reconciliation with my brother. Today we are good friends.

Some Christians approach meditation in a very structured way, emphasizing memorization and repetition. In some ways this approach resembles Eastern meditation. A mediator friend of mine has developed a
Christian Meditation

week-long program that outlines each day's activities. I have found it very helpful in getting beginners started. This method, outlined in the box accompanying this article, can be used with real benefit with many passages of Scripture. Share what you learn. The rich material turned up in Christian meditation becomes even more exciting when shared in a small Bible study group. In my opinion every pastor needs to be accountable to a small group of Bible study colleagues. I have received more support, affirmation, and challenge to grow during those periods of my ministry when I was in regular dialogue with a small group of fellow Christians than in any other setting. For me, personal meditation and small-group sharing are cut from the same bolt of spiritual cloth—they enrich each other as nothing else can.

Meditation offers many personal benefits. I have a warm, personal relationship with many of the characters of the Bible. They become my friends as we talk together. My imagination is alive. I can focus in on a mental picture and see color and form; I can hear sounds that I never before dreamed existed. I have learned to relax. After five minutes or so I can sense myself quieting down and feeling better. Meditation has taught me to take better care of my body, to get enough exercise and rest, and most important of all, to trust in God's daily guidance.

But abstract meditation is not enough. Christian meditation must also affect lifestyle; it must be active and helping. The results of Christian meditation should be seen in Christians who are strong enough in their bodies and minds to offer effective help to others. A quiet confidence in God nurtured in meditation makes it possible to feel optimistic about the "new world" that being united to Christ ushers in (see 2 Cor. 5:17-20). After all, we come as Christ's ambassadors with the best news of all!


A Week's Meditation

Colossians 3:2, 3: "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

Day 1: Memorize the passage so thoroughly that you can say it easily with no hesitation. Repeat it often during the day.

Day 2: Get the meaning. With eyes closed, repeat the text slowly and silently to yourself for several minutes or until your mind stops racing through the pressing affairs of the day. Think about the meaning for you. Write what you believe the passage means for you.

Day 3: Apply. With eyes closed, repeat the text slowly until your
mind is calm and clear. Think about how you can apply the text to your own situation. Be specific as to time, place, event, person, and situation.

a. List the things that are most upsetting to your peace now. Can you turn them over to God? b. In what areas of your life are you not "dead?" c. Recall some time in the past where you turned a situation wholly over to God.

Day 4: Practice. In the morning, sit comfortably with eyes closed and slowly repeat for ten minutes: "My life is hid with Christ in God." Allow the meaning to sink deeply into your consciousness. Do not strain to concentrate. Do not try to prevent your mind from straying to other thoughts, but go gently back to the text. With eyes closed, visualize yourself going through the activities of the day. Silently offer these activities to God. As you visualize any difficult situations, repeat: "My life is hid with Christ in God."

Throughout the day, frequently repeat to yourself: "My life is hid with Christ in God." With frequent use, a Biblical passage becomes more and more powerful in focusing the mind on the spiritual. If you should become upset in any way, do not deny or try to change your feelings, but simply tell God about them and offer them to Him.

Before going to bed, run back over the events of the day in your mind. Offer prayers of thanksgiving to God for victories gained and blessings received. Where you have failed, thank Him for the learning opportunity. You needn't become depressed or discouraged about any of the events of the day or your reaction to them, because your life is hid with Christ in God.

Write down some of the experiences of the day.

Days 5-7: Repeat Day 4 activities. Additional passages useful with this method include Matthew 6:33; Romans 12:6-8; 14:19; Ephesians 4:32; Philippians 2:4; 4:8; Colossians 3:12,13; 1 John 4:7.

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I see myself in Capernaum. It is business that brings me here, and I am still waiting to see the Roman centurion who wants me to provide supplies. I was raised in this town, and it has been fun to wander through these streets again.

Jesus of Nazareth has just come here, and the news has spread like wildfire. A healer has arisen among my people, and they need a healer. There is so much agony and sickness. When people are prisoners politically it seems to poison their minds and also their bodies, and we have been prisoners of the Romans now for decades. I think of how interesting it would be to see this man... On every street corner there are little knots of people talking excitedly. Some are frowning, and others look happy, insisting that Jesus may be the sign that the kingdom is on the way and the Romans will be thrown out. And then there are those whose eyes are full of pain, who ask how to find the way to where He is...

Walking down an alleyway I see three men looking worried and shaking their heads. I hear one of the say: "We can't possibly get him there, just the three of us. He is too heavy, and he will have to be carried. He doesn't even want to go. He has no hope he could be healed."

At this moment another of the three glances in my direction and suddenly points at me, saying: "What about asking that man? It won't hurt to ask." As the other two turn to look at me, he explains: "We have a friend here who has been lying paralyzed in his little room for five years now. We want to take him to Jesus, but it takes four to carry a man his size on a litter. Would you be willing to help us? We think this prophet can heal him. At least it's worth a try, and stranger things than that have been happening around this Jesus. Demons have been cast out and lepers healed. This man has power."

I am silent a moment thinking, yes, it would be a friendly thing to give these men a hand, and I could kill two birds with one stone... see the healer myself, and perhaps help a poor, paralyzed man be healed. I say to them: "Why not? I have the day to kill." We exchange names and greet each other. Then the tall man, John who is apparently the leader, fills me in.

Their friend, whose name is Obadiah, seems to be a sad case for sure. These men had been good friends of his since childhood, and had watched everything go wrong for him. He had grown up a handsome and powerful man and had been an excellent stone mason. The Romans had kept him busy on all sorts of building... There was more work than he could do. He was planning to be married when the accident happened. The Roman contractor was trying to meet a deadline and...
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scheduled work on the Sabbath. Obadiah didn't want to, but felt he had to be on the job. He was tired, and lifting a big rock, he slipped and it fell back on him. He was pinned to the ground and passed out. When he came to, they found he was paralyzed from the waist down. The girl would have nothing more to do with him. There was no work that he could learn and he was too proud to beg. His friends kept him alive, just barely.

As John finished the recital, the others nodded in agreement. One of them chimed in: "He's so angry and bitter I think he wishes he could die, and he probably would if it weren't for us. He'll growl at us when we tell him what we're going to do."

We had come to the little room where he lived, and the four of us ducked through the doorway. The place was dirty and smelled sour. Obadiah looked at us and said: "What are you three doing here at this time of day? And who's this stranger? One of you is enough at a time. ... Why don't you just let me die? There's nothing to live for...." His expression was bitter and ugly, but I could see that he had been a handsome man. He had probably been almost six feet tall, and his arms and chest still looked strong, but his legs were only withered poles.

John told him the plan and his reaction was instantaneous. "Why bother with me? What hope is there? Maybe this great healer can fix backaches and stomach cramps, but you know very well that no one can mend a broken back. Have you brought this stranger here to play a trick on me?"

The three seemed to pay no attention to his ugly mood. John told the rest of us what to do. They had brought enough rope to tie to each corner of the litter, and he showed us how to wind it around our shoulders. Once we started, Obadiah didn't seem to object. Something told me that underneath his complaining was a hurting, sensitive soul.

I was thinking to myself.... How much of me is like him? ... I don't let the world know, but there's a part of me just as paralyzed and just as bitter and angry. I don't seem to be able to control it. And that's the way most people seem to ache today. I guess everybody has some part that is paralyzed..... only his shows more. Maybe it's important for me to know just where the paralysis is that is keeping me stuck in a rut....

As I groaned under the load, I couldn't stop thinking about the strange situation I was in. We couldn't talk. It took all the energy we had just to carry him. And every time someone missed a step and jolted him, he started all over about wanting to be left alone and wanting to die. Later I really had time to reflect on the whole thing.... If there really is something paralyzed in me, and I believe there is because I certainly seem to be unable to keep at the things that are most important, are there also some parts of me as determined as these fellows to get help for the paralyzed one? Is there something in me that would even go up to a stranger on the street....? Obadiah would have been a goner for sure if John weren't so strong and persistent, and if the
other two weren't just as patient and loyal. Are there, just possibly, some friends like that in me who could rescue whatever is paralyzed and help me get on the right track again? . . . Well, perhaps.

When the five of us came up to the house where Jesus was supposed to be, we could see that it was crowded, even outside. We had expected some people, but nothing like this. Obadiah kept growling that most of them were probably just curious like the ones that were always gaping at him. I figured I was the best dressed and a little older, so I spoke, asking the closest people if they would please move a little so that we could take our friend to the Healer. Nobody budge an inch. So I tried it again, a little louder, and a few people who were obviously sick muttered: "No, we got here first." Most of the others pretended not to hear.

Once again I was brought up short, thinking to myself . . . well, that's you in a nutshell. How often had I stood around gawking at something important exactly like many of these people . . . getting in everyone's way and not really caring at all? Even now part of me was as indifferent as if my ego hadn't gotten involved. I wouldn't have been too surprised to see myself go up and kick a couple of sick people in the shins and try to force my way in. I shuddered a little at how much I was seeing of myself. We may think we are different from any ordinarily so-and-so . . . but that's the time to look again . . .

But now the litter was getting heavier by the minute, and we couldn't keep Obadiah lying in the sun much longer. Three of us were about ready to give up and go home when the smallest of the friends spoke up. "Wait a minute," he said. "I have an idea . . . What about the stairs to the roof? You know I've worked on roofs. The beams in this kind of house are far apart. We could go up there. I could take off a few tile and some boards, and we could let him down from above." It was the first time I had seen him smile. He hadn't lost all his sense of humor.

We all began to feel different as we started up the stairs. We were lighthearted, as if bent on a prank. We laughed as we stacked the tiles neatly in one corner. The under current of thoughts about myself kept coming and going in the background . . . . One thing I could say for myself . . . I do have a sense of humor. That's one of my best qualities and a person certainly needs it to face all the pain and suffering we run into in this world . . . things like paralysis and, yes, even callousness and selfishness. Seeing the funny side of things is often the only thing that keeps one from giving up . . .

No one seemed to notice us until we began to lower the litter. They were all so intent on watching Jesus that they didn't realize how the light increased around Him until the last board was off and Obadiah was swaying gently over their heads. People moved back as the litter came down in front of Jesus. He looked at Obadiah and then at us peering over the edge of the roof. He nodded at us. We could tell that He knew what we hoped. His look said as clearly as words: Thank you for bringing him. His hurt needs healing. Thank you for your concern and care and faith. I had never known a look like that before. It
caused something to change in me. In that instant my own paralysis was healed, even before He did anything for the man lying motionless on the floor.

"Even Obadiah had been infected with some of our faith and hope. He was actually expecting something now, and I saw his bitter look of disappointment when all he heard were the words, "My son, your sins are forgiven." Later Obadiah told us how disappointed he had been. He couldn't have cared less about forgiveness. All he wanted was to walk again to live as a normal man at least able to get up and go to work in the morning. What kind of bad joke was this man pulling on him? He was hurting too much to care about forgiveness.

But Jesus knew what He was doing. The stuffy teachers of the law had heard His words and were ready. They had been looking for an occasion. Jesus knew that they were thinking: "How does he dare to treat God that way? No man can forgive sins; only God can." Forgiving sins was a far bigger thing than healing, far more difficult. They believed in a God who kept a strict tally on how we keep the law. After all the man before Jesus had broken the law of the Sabbath. The accident had happened because he was working on the Sabbath, and obviously he had gotten what he deserved. Instead of being resigned to His fate, or at least looking to the synagogue for help, here he was seeking help from the man Jesus. It proved that he was no good, unredeemed.

Then Jesus spoke to their thoughts, and the look on their faces showed that he had hit the nail on the head. "Why do you think such things?" He said. "Is it easier to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say to him, 'Get up, pick up your mat, and walk?'"

At first I was angry... mostly at their apparent attitude toward Obadiah, even though it was to be expected. We all knew what these religious leaders would think of him. He had no importance to them as a person, because he was a miserable sinner. I know this attitude in myself... the inner voice like theirs... which sometimes tells me: You don't deserve forgiveness or healing; you're hopeless. Nothing can heal you. Nobody but God can forgive you, and He won't because you are so vile. God wants perfection, and a sinner like you hasn't a chance with Him... These are the voices that can keep me from knowing the love that is there... that can keep me from being healed.

Jesus then rose to His full height, and a power, a numinous power seemed to flow from Him. He looked at the teachers and said: "I will prove to you, then, that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." He turned to Obadiah, reached out a hand toward him and said: "I tell you, get up, pick up your mat, and go home!" The whole place was electric. I will never forget those words or the way He said them. Everyone was watching. Obadiah looked around. He rolled over on one side and found he could move his legs. Then he turned all the way over, got up on his knees, and then stood up. Without a word he went over and threw his arms around Jesus and wept. He couldn't talk enough to say thank you. Jesus nodded to him that he could go. The
crowd . . . those people who had almost kept him from getting in . . . backed away, half in wonder, half in fear. He picked up his mat and walked out.

We met him outside as he came out, and he hugged each of us. We wanted to give him a hand, but he wanted to go it alone. We were all speechless . . . There was nothing left to say. Later when we did talk, we realized that all of us had been thinking the same thing. We had seen the breakthrough of love into our sordid world of Romans and selfishness and judging. This was a love that could break down any barrier, even bitterness, a love that could heal any brokenness of mind and soul. We talked most of that night. And the next day we went to find Jesus again, and as long as He was in Capernaum we followed Him. I missed seeing the centurion, but I found other buyers. Obadiah had no trouble finding work, and soon he fell in love and was married. I always visit him and his wife when I come to Capernaum, and I am always welcome. What a friend he is. Being with him reminds me that there is a love always reaching out to me if I don't push it away.

Selected Quotations from Ellen G. White's Writings on Fasting

1. We cannot have a weak faith now; we cannot be safe in a listless, indolent, slothful attitude. Every jot of ability is to be used, and sharp, calm, deep thinking is to be done. The wisdom of any human agent is not sufficient for the planning and devising in this time. Spread every plan before God with fasting, [and] with the humbling of the soul before the Lord Jesus, and commit thy ways unto the Lord. The sure promise is, He will direct thy paths. He is infinite in resources. The Holy One of Israel, who calls the host of heaven by name, and holds the stars of heaven in position, has you individually in His keeping. . . .

I would that all could realize what possibilities and probabilities there are for all who make Christ their sufficiency and their trust. The life hid with Christ in God ever has a refuge; he can say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). 2 Selected Messages p. 364.

2. Let the sin of pride be put away, let all superfluities of dress be overcome, and repentance toward God be exercised for the high handed robbery toward Him which has withheld money which should flow into the treasury to sustain the work of God in the mission fields. Let the work of reformation, of true conversion, be set before and urged upon the people. Let our works, our deportment, correspond with the work for this time, that we may say, "Follow me as I follow Christ." Let us humble our souls before God by humiliation, fasting and prayer, repentance of sin and putting it away. 2 Selected Messages p. 379.

3. Whenever I have seen children feeding upon flesh-meats, since the light was given me from heaven, I have felt that if the parents only knew what they were doing they would fast and (page 283) pray for moral courage and God-given grace to do right. All who feel their need of His Spirit to educate and discipline self and to properly train their children, will deny self, and take up the cross and follow Jesus.

[For certain things fasting and prayer are recommended and appropriate. In the hand of God they are a means of cleansing the heart and promoting a receptive frame of mind. We obtain answers to our prayers because we humble our souls before God.]1 If our appetites clamor for the flesh of dead animals, it is a necessity to fast and pray for the Lord to give His grace to deny fleshly lusts which war against the soul.

There should be far less anxiety as to what we shall eat and

1. Quoted in Counsels on Diet and Foods pp. 187, 188.
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what we shall drink to gratify our fleshly appetites; but we may well encourage the appetite of the soul, and pray for especial enlightenment upon the word of God, and eat and drink that word. Jesus says, "I am that Bread of life." . . .

We must be constantly meditating upon the word, eating it, digesting it, and by practice, assimilating it, so that it is taken into the life current. He who feeds on Christ daily will by his example teach others to think less of that which they eat and to feel much greater anxiety for the food they give to the soul.

The true fasting which should be recommended to all, is abstinence from every stimulating kind of food, and the proper use of wholesome simple food, which God has provided in abundance. Men need to think less about what they shall eat and drink of temporal food, and much more in regard to the food from heaven, that will give tone and vitality to the whole religious experience. —Letter 73, 1896. Medical Ministry pp. 282, 283.

4. I was shown that the advocates of truth should not seek discussions. (And whenever it is necessary for the advancement of the cause of truth and the glory of God that an opponent be met, how carefully and with what humility should they go into the conflict. With heart-searching, confession of sin, and earnest prayer, and often fasting for a time, they should entreat that God would especially help them and give His saving, precious truth a glorious victory, that error might appear in its true deformity and its advocates be completely discomfited.) Those who battle for the truth, against its opposers should realize that they are not meeting merely men, but that they are contending with Satan and his angels, who are determined that error and darkness shall retain the field and the truth be covered up with error. As error is most in accordance with the natural heart, it is taken for granted to be clear. Men who are at ease love error and darkness, and are unwilling to be reformed by the truth. They do not love to come to the light, lest their deeds should be reproved. I Testimonies p. 624.

5. This is the special work now before us. All our praying and abstinence from food will avail nothing unless we resolutely lay hold of this work. Sacred obligations are resting upon us. Our duty is plainly stated. The Lord has spoken to us by His prophet. The thoughts of the Lord and His ways are not what blind, selfish mortals believe they are or wish them to be. The Lord looks on the heart. If selfishness dwells there, He knows it. We may seek to conceal our true character from our brethren and sisters, but God knows. Nothing can be hid from Him.

The fast which God can accept is described. It is to deal thy bread to the hungry and to bring the poor which are cast out to thy house. Wait not for them to come to you. The labor rests not on them to hunt you up and entreat of you a home for themselves. You are to search for them and bring them to your house. You are to draw out

2. Quoted Counsels on Diet and Foods p.188.
your soul after them. You are with one hand to reach up and by faith take hold of the mighty arm which brings salvation, while with the other (p. 35) hand of love you reach the oppressed and relieve them. It is impossible for you to fasten upon the arm of God with one hand while the other is employed in ministering to your own pleasure. 2 Testimonies pp. 34, 35.

6. [Isa. 58:1-3 quoted.] The people here described realize that they have not the favor of God; but instead of seeking His favor in His own way, they enter into a controversy with God. They ask why, since they observe so many ceremonies, the Lord does not give them special recognition. God answers their complaints: "Behold, in the day of your fast, ye find pleasure, and exact all your laborers. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high." These fasts are only outward show, mere pretense, a mockery of humility. These worshippers, while mourning and lamenting, retain all their objectionable traits of character. Their hearts are not humbled, nor cleansed from spiritual defilement. They have not received the softening showers of the grace of God. They are destitute of the sweetness of the heavenly influence. They manifest no repentance, nor faith that works by love and purifies the soul. They are unjust and selfish in their dealings, mercilessly oppressing those whom they regard as their inferiors. Yet they charge God with a neglect to manifest His power to them, and exalt them above others because of their righteousness. The Lord sent them a message of positive reproof, showing why they are not visited by His grace (MS 48, 1900). 4 Adventist Bible Commentary p. 1150.

7. The outward signs of fasting and prayer, without a broken and contrite spirit, are of no value in God's sight. The inward work of grace is needed. Humiliation of soul is essential, God looks upon this. He will graciously receive those who will humble their hearts before Him. He will hear their petitions and heal their backslidings.

Ministers and people need the work of purification of their souls, that God's judgments may be turned away from them. God is waiting, waiting for humiliation and repentance. He will receive all who will turn unto Him with their whole heart (MS 33, 1903). 3 Adventist Bible Commentary p. 1132.

8. Jesus had shown in what righteousness consists, and had pointed to God as its source. Now He turned to practical duties. In alms giving, in prayer, in fasting, He said, let nothing be done to attract attention or win praise to self. Give in sincerity, for the benefit of the suffering poor. In prayer, let the soul commune with God. In fasting, go not with the head bowed down, and heart filled with thoughts of self. The heart of the Pharisee is a barren and profitless soil, in which no seed of divine life can flourish. It is he who yields himself most unreservedly to God that will render Him the most acceptable service. For through fellowship with God men become workers together with Him in presenting His character in humanity. Desire of Ages p. 312.

9. A legal religion has been thought quite the correct religion for this time. But it is a mistake. The rebuke of Christ to the Pharisees is
applicable to those who have lost from the heart their first love. A cold, legal religion can never lead souls to Christ; for it is a loveless, Christless religion. When fastings and prayers are practiced in a self-justifying spirit, they are abominable to God. The solemn assembly for worship, the round of religious ceremonies, the external humiliation, the imposed sacrifice—all proclaim to the world the testimony that the doer of these things considers himself righteous. These things call attention to the observer of rigorous duties, saying, This man is entitled to heaven. But it is all a deception. Works will not buy for us an entrance into heaven. The one great Offering that has been made is ample for all who will believe. The Love of Christ will animate the believer with new life. He who drinks from the water of the fountain of life, will be filled with the new wine of the kingdom. Faith in Christ will be the means whereby the right spirit and motive will actuate the believer, and all goodness and heavenly-mindedness will proceed from him who looks unto Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith. Look up to God, look not to men. God is your heavenly Father who is willing patiently to bear with your infirmities, and to forgive and heal them. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). By beholding Christ, you will become changed, until you will hate your former pride, your former vanity and self-esteem, your self-righteousness and unbelief. You will cast these sins aside as a worthless burden, and walk humbly meekly, trustfully, before God, and will at last find a place among the sanctified and holy. _ Selected Messages p. 388.

10. Ministers of Christ, you may be connected with God if you will watch and pray. Let your words be seasoned with salt, and let Christian courtesy and true elevation pervade your demeanor. If the peace of God is ruling within, its power will not only strengthen, but soften your hearts, and you will be living representatives of Christ. The people who profess the truth are backsliding from God. Jesus is soon to come, and they are unready. The minister must reach a higher standard himself, a faith marked with greater firmness, an experience that is living and vivid, not dull and commonplace, like that of the nominal professors. The word of God sets a high mark before you. Will you, through fasting and prayerful effort, attain to the completeness and consistency of Christian character? You should make straight paths for your feet, lest the lame be turned out of the way. A close (p. 401) connection with God will bring to you in your labor that vital power which arouses the conscience, and convicts the sinner of sin, leading him to cry: "What shall I do to be saved?" _ Testimonies pp. 400, 401.

11. God will arouse His people; if other means fail, heresies will come in among them, which will sift them, separating the chaff from the wheat. The Lord calls upon all who believe His word to awake out of sleep. Precious light has come, appropriate for this time. It is Bible truth, showing the perils that are right upon us. This light should lead us to (p. 708) a diligent study of the Scriptures and a most critical examination of the positions which we hold. God would have all the bearings and positions of truth thoroughly and perseveringly searched, with prayer and fasting. Believers are not to rest in suppositions and ill-defined ideas of what constitutes truth. Their faith must be firmly founded upon the word of God so that when the testing time shall come
and they are brought before councils to answer for their faith they may be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, with unction and fear. 5 Testimonies pp. 707, 708.

12. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." "Ye are," says Christ, "the light of the world." What a responsibility! There is need of fasting, humiliation, (p. 536) and prayer over our decaying zeal and languishing spirituality. The love of many is waxing cold. The efforts of many of our preachers are not what they should be. When some who lack the Spirit and power of God enter a new field, they commence denouncing other denominations, thinking that they can convince the people of the truth by presenting the inconsistencies of the popular churches. It may seem necessary on some occasions to speak of these things, but in general it only creates prejudice against our work and closes the ears of many who might otherwise have listened to the truth. If these teachers were connected closely with Christ, they would have divine wisdom to know how to approach the people. They would not so soon forget the darkness and error, the passion and prejudice, which kept themselves from the truth. 4 Testimonies pp. 535, 536.

13. We are living in the most solemn period of this world's history. The destiny of earth's teeming multitudes is about to be decided. Our own future well-being, and also the salvation of other souls, depend upon the course which we now pursue. We need to be guided by the Spirit of truth. Every follower of Christ should earnestly inquire, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" We need to humble ourselves before the Lord, with fasting and prayer, and to meditate much upon His word, especially upon the scenes of the judgement. We should now seek a deep and living experience in the things of God. We have not a moment to lose. Events of vital importance are taking place around us; we are on Satan's enchanted ground. Sleep not, sentinels of God; the foe is lurking near, ready at any moment, should you become lax and drowsy, to spring upon you and make you his prey. Great Controversy p. 601.

14. The house of Jacob, at the time this warning was given to Isaiah, appeared to be a very zealous people, seeking God daily, and delighting to know His ways; but in reality they were filled with presumptuous self-confidence. They were not walking in the truth. Goodness, mercy and love were not practiced. While presenting an appearance of sorrow for their sins, they were cherishing pride and avarice. At the very time when they were showing such outward humiliation, (p.1149) they would exact hard labor from those under them or in their employ. They place a high estimate on all the good that they had done, but a very low estimate on the services of others. They despised and oppressed the poor. And their fasting only gave them a higher opinion of their own goodness.

There are sins of this same character among us today, and they bring the rebuke of God upon His church. Wherever such sins are found, seasons of fasting and prayer are indeed necessary; but they must be accompanied with sincere repentance and decided reformation. With out such contrition of soul, these seasons only increase the guilt of the wrong-doer. The Lord has specified the fast He has chosen. The one He
will accept. It is that which bears fruit to His glory, in repentance, in devotion, in true piety. [Isa. 58:6, 7 quoted.]

In the fast that God has chosen, mercy, tenderness, and compassion will be exercised. Avarice will be put away, and fraud and oppression will be repented of and renounced. All the authority and influence will be used to help the poor and oppressed. If this were the condition of the world, it would be no more be a proverb, "Truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter;" "he that parteth from evil maketh himself a prey" (RH Oct. 13, 1891). Adventist Bible Commentary pp. 1149, 1150.

15. In order to succeed in such a conflict they must come to the work in a different spirit. Their faith must be strengthened by fervent prayer and fasting, and humiliation of heart. They must be emptied of self, and be filled with the Spirit and power of God. Earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith—faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work—can alone avail to bring men the Holy Spirit's aid in the battle against principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and wicked spirits in high places. Desire of Ages p. 431.

16. The fasting which the word of God enjoins is something more than a form. It does not consist merely in refusing food, in wearing sackcloth, in sprinkling ashes upon the head. He who fasts in real sorrow for sin will never court display. The object of the fast which God calls upon us to keep is not to afflict the body for the sin of the soul, but to aid us in perceiving the grievous character of sin, in humbling the heart before God and receiving His pardoning grace. His command to Israel was, 'Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God.' Joel 2:13. Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing p. 87.
EXPERIENCING GOD THROUGH PRAYER

Chapter 2

SCRIPTURAL MEDITATION

There are two ways of introducing you to prayer. One is by meditation on the Word. The other is by reading the Word and then meditating in prayer.

To meditate on God's Word simply means to take a portion of Scripture and begin the following procedure. Read only a small section and allow that passage to be "digested" before going on to another.

Draw from it its fullest meaning. Think it through. Try to relate it to other similar Scriptures. Commit it to memory. Then, having thoroughly examined the passage, proceed to take another one and do the same.

Try not to read more than half a page at a time. It is not the quantity of Scripture you read, but the quality that will be to your benefit.

Those who are fast readers gain no more advantage than a bee would by skimming the surface of a flower rather than penetrating it to extract its pollen.

Speed reading can be used for other subjects, but never for divine truth.

To receive profit from the Word, you must read as I have described. I am certain that by doing this, you will have made meditating on the Word a habit that will cause you to grow as a Christian.

In physical food you receive no nourishment until you chew and swallow the food. The food may taste good in your mouth as you continue to enjoy its flavor. But it is in swallowing and digesting that it benefits the body.

In an act of love, full of respect and confidence in God, swallow the blessed spiritual food He has given to you. It will cause you to become a mature Christian.

A word of caution for beginners. Don't wander from truth to truth and from subject to subject. The right way is to allow each individual truth to be meditated upon while its sweet flavor remains...
Experiencing God

As you form the habit of meditating on God's Word, it will become easier for you to bring to remembrance other Scriptures of the same nature. This will further enhance your ability to bring the Word of God into reality in your life.

The second method is to learn to pray the Word.

When you come to God in prayer, open your Bible to where you have been meditating. Remember at this point that your main objective is to focus on God's presence. Your Scripture verse will keep your mind from straying to other things.

This method of praying can be used by those of you with even a small portion of faith, because it will keep your mind from distractions. This way even a small amount of faith will enlarge in proportion when viewed by itself.

Oh, dear one, God has promised that He would come and make His abode with him who does His will. (See John 14:23.) He has promised to dwell in our innermost being—the new Holy of Holies place.

St. Augustine once blamed himself for all the lost time trying to find God's will when, from the very beginning, he could have done so by this manner of praying the Word.

When you have settled into a peaceful spirit and are fully aware of God's presence; when earthly distractions are not your primary thoughts; when your soul has properly fed on God's Word and you have chosen by an act of your will to believe it, you are now ready to communicate with your heavenly Father.

Oh, you who desire a deeper walk with God, come, enter into His presence through His Word. It is God's desire to communicate Himself to you, to impart abundant grace, and to allow you to enjoy His presence.

Chapter 3

BEGINNING THE JOURNEY

Let us begin now to practice praying the Word to God, using the Lord's prayer in Matthew 6:9-13 as an example.

Dear reader, know this fundamental truth as you begin. When Jesus prays for God's Kingdom to come, remember that He said, "the Kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21).

Before we had invited Jesus to come into our heart, we were
lost sinners. The only promise available to us was that our wages for sin was death. (See Romans 6:23.)

But now that we have repented from our sin, turned to Christ to be cleansed from our sin, and invited Him to take up His abode with us, He brought with Him the Kingdom of God with all it benefits and promises.

Let me say something now to those in the clergy. I know many of you tell your parishioners what waits for them at the end of their earthly lives. However, you often do not give clear or sufficient instruction as to how to attain it.

Make the steps to salvation understood by even the least educated in your congregation. Their attention should be on Jesus Christ alone.

Then, teach your people, by an act of profound adoration before God, how to find Him in prayer. Tell them how to get quiet inwardly, how to keep their minds from wandering, and how to build up their faith in God through meditating on His Word.

Now let's look together at the Lord's prayer and ponder the meaning of the words.

Dwell on the words, "Our Father." God has taken the initiative to invite you to become His child. He desires to be your Father. Pour out your heart's desire to Him.

Now, wait a few moments in silence before Him. Always allow some quiet time as you pray in case our heavenly Father wants to reveal His will to you.

Come to the Father as a feeble child, soiled and bruised by repeated falls, destitute of strength to stand or of power to cleanse yourself. Allow the Father to see your confusion. Then, intermingle a word of love or grief for past sins and sink once again into silence before Him.

Continue on in the Lord's prayer in this same manner. Beseech the King of Glory to reign in you. Abandon yourself to God to do a finished work in you. Acknowledge His right to rule over you.

If you feel as though you should remain peaceful and quiet rather than continue on with the prayer, do so.

Then, when you are ready, continue on with the second petition, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Ask God to accomplish in you and through you His will on earth. Surrender your freedom and will into His hands to be disposed of as He pleases.

When you find that it is God's will for you to be loving, you will desire to love. You will seek Him first for His love in which to love others.
Don't burden yourselves with frequent repetition of set forms or studied prayer. When you meditate on the Lord's prayer only once and then pray it out to the Father, it will produce more fruit than meaningless repeated words.

When you come to the verse, "Give us this day our daily bread," place yourself as a sheep before your Shepherd. Look to Him for your food. "Oh, Divine Shepherd, feed Your flock with Yourself. You are indeed our daily bread."

Tell the Father all about your family's needs, but do so remembering the one great principle of faith—God is within us.

As you pray, don't form any image of God in your mind. All our imaginations of God amount to nothing. You may, however, remember Jesus Christ in His birth or crucifixion, provided you always seek Him in His resurrected state.

Perhaps, on some occasions, you come to Him needing a physician. Then, come without mental aggravation, because He has the healing virtue for all our maladies. You have no need to exert yourself in prayer. Simply yield to God's operations within you until He completes His work.

As you experiment with prayer in this manner you will enjoy a deeper walk with God than you have ever known before. You will relish these times of rest and quiet in His presence. It is attainable for all of you who earnestly seek God. The only requirement is to begin.

Chapter 5

SURVIVING DRY PERIODS

Although God has no other desire than to impart Himself to you, He frequently conceals Himself for a purpose. It may be to arouse you from laziness, or perhaps you have not been seeking Him in faith and love.

But, for whatever reason, He does so out of His abundant goodness and faithfulness to you. Often these apparent withdrawals of Himself are succeeded by the caresses of His love.

During these seasons, you may begin to believe that the way to prove your faith is by a greater degree of affection or by an exertion of strength and activity. Surely, you may say this will induce God to revisit you.

No, dear soul, believe me this is not the way. You must await the return of the Beloved with patient love, humility, peace, and silent worship.
By doing these things, you demonstrate to the Father that it is Himself alone and His good pleasure that you seek and not the selfish delights of your own satisfaction.

Don't be impatient in your times of dryness. Wait patiently for God. In doing so, your prayer life will increase and be renewed.

In abandonment and contentment, learn to wait for the return of your Beloved. Intermingle your waiting with sighs of love. This conduct will indeed please God and compel His return.

SUGGESTED PASSAGES FOR BIBLE-PRAYING

John 13:1-11 Having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them to the uttermost.

John 13:12-20 He loves us, as he loved the disciples, in a practical way.

John 13:21-30 The disciple whom Jesus loved—and he loves us too.

John 13:31-36 Let us reflect on how Jesus loves us.

John 14:1 Believe in God, believe also in me. God loves us, in the way Jesus loved the people of His day.

John 14:2-7 Jesus is the way, the way God's love comes to us and comes forever.

John 14:8-11 He, who has seen Jesus and how he loves, has seen God and how He loves.

John 14:12-17 It is because He first loved us that we love Him; and so by the help of the Spirit we try to keep His words.

John 14:18-24 He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love Him.

John 14:25-31 The Holy Spirit will make real to us all that Jesus tells us of His Father's love for us.

John 15:1-8 Because the Lord loves us and we love Him in return, we wish to live linked to him as the branches to the vine.

John 15:9-11 Jesus loves us in the way that the Father loves Him; and we are able to find joy by abiding in His love.

John 15:12-15 Through this kind of praying we are to experience that we are the Lord's friends.

John 15:16, 17 More and more we discover that our friendship with Him is response to His love. "We love, because He first loved us".
Job 38:1-41 The majesty of God is described to Job in the elements He controls in the natural world.


Psalm 1:1-6 A description of those who have found the joy of meditation on the law of God.

Psalm 15:1-5 A description of the righteous person.

Psalm 19:1-14 A Psalm reflecting the word and words of God.

Psalm 37:1-40 This Psalm is designed to encourage faith in a God who works in man's behalf.

Isaiah 1:1-20 The pleading with men to find oneness with God again.

Isaiah 5:1-11 Isaiah sees the glory of the heavenly throne and the person of God.

Isaiah 53:1-12 Isaiah describes the death of Jesus Christ for all men.

Isaiah 55:1-13 The Messiah calls all to turn to Him and find the satisfaction and joy they desire.

Hosea 2:14-23 Listen to the tender calling of God after His wandering beloved.

Micah 6:1-16 Here is the plaintive call of God to an erring and rebellious people.

Malachi 3:1-5 A promise of cleansing and purification.

Malachi 3:13-18 God is preparing a book of remembrance of those who meditate on His name.

1 Cor. 13:1-13 The revelation of the more excellent way.

Philippians 2:5-11 Paul's description of the humility of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:3-21 The ethical demands of following Jesus Christ.

Rev. 1:1-20 The vision of the person of Jesus Christ.

Rev. 4:1-11 The throne room of heaven.

Rev. 5:1-14 Worthy, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.

Rev. 21:1-27 Yes, there will be peace at last.
With the word of God in his hands, every human being, wherever his lot in life may be cast, may have such companionship as he shall choose. In its pages he may hold converse with the noblest and best of the human race, and may listen to the voice of the Eternal as He speaks with men. As he studies and meditates upon the themes into which "the angels desire to look" (1 Peter 1:12), he may have their companionship. He may follow the steps of the heavenly Teacher, and listen to His words as when He taught on mountain and plain and sea. He may dwell in this world in the atmosphere of heaven, imparting to earth's sorrowing and tempted ones thoughts of hope and longings for holiness; himself coming closer and still closer into fellowship with the Unseen; like him of old who walked with God, drawing nearer and nearer the threshold of the eternal world, until the portals shall open, and he shall enter there. He will find himself no stranger. The voices that will greet him are the voices of the holy ones, who, unseen, were on earth his companions--voices that here he learned to distinguish and to love. He who through the word of God has lived in fellowship with heaven, will find himself at home in heaven's companionship. Education p. 127.
How would you explain, to someone who had never tasted a peach, what a peach tastes like? Are you getting frustrated just thinking about it. To describe the taste of a peach is nearly impossible. To know what a peach tastes like you have to experience the pleasure of eating one. That is what the DEEPER LIFE CONFERENCE is like. You have to experience it to really appreciate its contribution to your spiritual life.

However, there are some things about the conference that can be shared. The DEEPER LIFE CONFERENCE will affirm and deepen your living relationship with Jesus Christ.

You will learn practical ways to make your devotional life vibrant with the sense of renewed meaning, rich with the presence of the living Lord Jesus Christ, and so contagious that others will catch your joy of living in personal relationship to Jesus Christ.

A warm personal relationship with Jesus Christ will enable you to feel better, and enjoy all of life to the fullest as God intended you should.

The DEEPER LIFE CONFERENCE will let you not only talk about the spiritual peach, but you will examine and taste its goodness.

SCHEDULE

WHEN: The Muskegon Deeper Life Conference will be held February 28 through March 2 1986.

WHERE: The Conference will be held in the Muskegon Seventh-day Adventist School 3050 Evanston Ave.

Friday 7:30 p.m. Introduction to the Conference. During the evening there will be a discussion of the personal prayer life and opportunity will be given for experimentation in prayer.

Sabbath 9:30 a.m. The emphasis during the morning hours will be on meditation. What is biblical meditation? How can I make meditation a part of my experience? What can I expect from meditation?

Sabbath afternoon. Continued experimentation with the concepts you have learned and a discussion of health and spirituality.

Sunday 9:30 a.m. Further practice of the concepts learned and a discussion of fasting.

COMMITMENT

The DEEPER LIFE CONFERENCE will not cost you any money. What you are asked to bring to the conference is a commitment to following the Lord Jesus Christ and a commitment to attend all the sessions of the Conference.

DIRECTOR

The director of the DEEPER LIFE CONFERENCE is Pastor Norman A. Yeager, a candidate for the Doctor of Ministry degree at Andrews University and pastor of the Muskegon, Michigan Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The rapid technological changes in modern society have also brought many changes in the moral values held by modern culture. In order for the Christian to maintain his personal moral values and adapt in wholesome ways to the changes taking place in his society, Pastor Yeager believes the Christian must have a strong personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Therefore, he designed the DEEPER LIFE CONFERENCE to aid individual Christians in discovering new horizons in relationship to Jesus Christ. From the strength of that relationship the Christian will have a positive influence on his society.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


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Dissertations


VITA

Norman A. Yeager is currently serving as the pastor of the Muskegon Seventh-day Adventist Church in Muskegon, Michigan. He graduated in 1967 from Andrews University with a Bachelors Degree in theology. He received his Master of Divinity Degree in 1970 from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. He was ordained to the gospel ministry in 1974 at Grand Ledge, Michigan.