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# The Baptism of Adventist Education — 2

*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. Rev. 3:22, RSV.*



▲ George R. Knight

The Holy Spirit had a great deal to say to the church and its educational program during the 1890s. Not only were Ellen White, A.T. Jones and E.J. Waggoner taking the message of Christ and His righteousness to the churches and camp meetings, but the General Conference also had established an annual ministers' institute in which Adventist clergy could meet for several weeks each year to study the Bible and the plan of salvation.

The newly energized Prescott decided to do the same for the denomination's educators during the summer of 1891 at Harbor Springs. W.C. White described the sessions in terms of spiritual revival, stressing the emphasis on spontaneous personal testimonies. He noted that each day began with Jones' expositions of the Book of Romans. Ellen White also spoke on such topics as the necessity of a personal

relationship with Christ, the need for spiritual revival among the educators attending the convention, and the centrality of the Christian message to education.

Prescott asserted at the 1893 General Conference session that Harbor Springs had married the turning point in Adventist education. "While the general purpose up to that time," he claimed, had been "to have a religious element in our schools, yet since that institute, as never before, our work has been *practically* [rather than theoretically] upon that basis, showing itself in courses of study and plans of work as it had not previously."

Before Harbor Springs the teaching of the Bible had held a minor place in Adventist education. The convention, however, adopted a recommendation calling for four years of Bible study for students in Adventist colleges. Specifically, the delegates decided that "the Bible as a whole should be studied as the gospel of Christ from first to last." The convention also recommended that teaching of history from the perspective of the biblical worldview.

There is a side lesson of great importance as we think of the changes brought about in Adventist education at Harbor Springs. That is, when we really understand the centrality of Christ to our lives, it will affect everything we do as both individuals and as a denomination. Educationally, if our salvation depends on Christ, we had better get to know Him. ■

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*George R. Knight is a retired professor of Church History at the Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. This article is from his book, Lest We Forget, a daily devotional, published by the Review and Herald Publishing Association, page 303. Reprinted with permission.*

