

The Organized Apostasy and Tearing Down of the Faith in Seventh Day Adventism

Introduction: To the faithful brethren of the Seventh Day Adventist Church

The following is a chronological sketch of the events as they occurred in 2001 at the Willoughby SDA Church. This record was faithfully kept in a date/address book by me, Elder Timothy Lee Arnett, and documented here. It is my hope that by reading this rather lengthy history covering almost one year that the reader will fear lest his or her local church will fall into a similar snare. Our enemy is not one another. We are the Lord's brethren.

The enemy is not the "Conference brethren versus the laity," because the Lord Himself nowhere designates a hierarchy in His remnant church. No, clearly the enemy is as always the Devil and Satan who is transformed into an angel of light. And he as well as his ministers will come as wolves in sheep's clothing right into our churches in order to draw away disciples after themselves. We've been forewarned to watch and pray lest we enter into temptation. All praise and thanksgivings go out to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, our Loving Father, and the Spirit of Christ who has called His people to separate from the world and to come out of Babylon, the church of confusion. Praise to our God, the Lord, for the Bible, which is our **rule** of faith and practice. And thanks be to God for the Testimonies to the Church, which not only forewarned us of the apostasies in the last days, but also has given counsel concerning sin in His Church which is to be holy even as He is Holy.

Our High Priest Jesus, who still works on behalf of His saints in the investigative judgment, knows our trial through which we pass. It is my prayer, that all members of the Willoughby S.D.A Church who know the truth for our time and the event through which we are now passing will hold fast the pure doctrine that He has given unto us. I was there, when brother George Vandeman last preached at the Ohio Conference campmeeting, years ago, He begged the question, "Are we still the people of the Book?" The Scripture he referred us all too, was Revelation 12:17, "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." I didn't understand the true import of that question then, as I do today. We are the Seventh Day Adventist Church, and at one time that meant something, but not any longer as you will see.

Exodus 20

8. **Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.**
9. **Six days** shalt thou labour, and **do all thy work:**
10. But **the seventh day** is the **Sabbath of the Lord thy God:** in it **thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger** that is within **thy gates:**
11. For in **six days the Lord made** heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and **rested the seventh day:** wherefore **the Lord blessed the**

Deuteronomy 5

12. **Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee.**
13. Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work:
14. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it **thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is **within thy gates;** that thy **manservant** and thy **maidservant may rest as well as thou.****
15. And remember that **thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt,** and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God

Adventist Review shared a story on the Worldwide Church of God, which was infiltrated by professed evangelicals spreading their doctrines, dividing them, and convincing their leaders to give up on the sanctity of the Seventh Day Sabbath.

Does the Lord have one moral standard for the Jew and another for the Gentile, or did He save by works in Old Testament times and by faith in the new? These questions are being asked by our church members because of the infiltration of our churches by the same individuals who helped destroy the W.W.C.G. They are here, now in our ranks, and in our pulpits. Our faithful Seventh Day Adventist pastors, evangelists, and teachers quote Malachi 3:6 which says, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." They preach and teach logically, that If God could have changed the Ten Commandments then Jesus wouldn't have had to die. Amen? The holy standard of truth inside the Bible is what we believe. Amen? If it is altered then we will suffer for it both now and later as a church. See Psalms 89:34. "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." See also James 1:17. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Contrast the unchanging character of God with that of man found in verses 6-8. 6. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. 7. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. 8. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

Compare the reference of being driven with the wind and tossed, with Ephesians 4:11-15. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: (Spiritual gifts are given to men to build us up in the faith, not tear it down!)

What happened with the truths of God that were hammered out on the Bible (the Anvil of Truth) by the pioneers, and reemphasized by the Spirit of Prophecy? We were blessed to have a prophet in our midst, which assisted our forbears in the way they should go. Today however we have a new breed of pastors, teaching the people to walk contrary to the faith once delivered to the saints.

Signs of the Times:

In this day, God has called His church, as He called ancient Israel, to stand as a light in the earth. By the mighty cleaver of truth, --the messages of the first, second, and third angels, --He has separated a people from the churches and from the world, to bring them into a sacred nearness to Himself. He has made them the depositories of His law, and has committed to them the great truths of prophecy for this time. Like the holy oracles committed to ancient Israel, these are a sacred trust to be communicated to the world. {ST, January 25, 1910 par. 11}

The man of sin, the son of perdition seeks to change God's times and laws. God does not change. Antichrist will seek to change. He will oppose God and all that is called God or that is worshiped. 2 Thessalonians 2:4, Daniel 7:25, Revelation 13:1-10. We have in the Bible a faithful

record of the history of God's people from Adam to the remnant of the woman's seed, which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Simply read it as it was delivered to you and you'll find the will of God on any issue of life. Paul said, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1Thessalonians 5:23. He also said the word of God would profit us in regards to "instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Timothy 3:16,17. Obviously the Bible was given into the hands of man to allow him to become a partaker of the divine nature in and through Christ. All things are for our sakes. See 2 Corinthians 4:13-15. But what do we do with the "all things?"

The Beginning of the Controversy

At a January potluck, Pastor Chester Hitchcock frankly expresses his view of Sabbath observance and states that he goes to restaurants for fast food etc. on the Sabbath. People comment to one another and eventually word gets around to me. (Elder Timothy Lee Arnett)

Wednesday, February 7: Before prayer meeting, I talked with Chester concerning the gossip going around about him going out to restaurants on the Sabbath. He says it is true and he believes that it's okay for him to do so, because he visits people and gets hungry, and therefore he feels justified in getting something to eat since he is doing the Lord's work. At this point, I did not engage in any further discussion, I simply wanted verification from him. (MY FIRST MEETING ALONE WITH PASTOR).

Tuesday, February 27: Oasis Study* of Sabbath activities at the Madison Church. The meeting began with the Pastor asking the Oasis group this question: "Can anybody show me any place in the Bible where it is unlawful to buy or sell on the Sabbath day?" (It was evident that this was meant to be a rhetorical question, not one to be answered). Tim Arnett responded with, "Yes, I can. Nehemiah speaks against buying and selling on the Sabbath day."

*Oasis Study was a study generated by the pastor to study particular issues within Adventism. It must be noted that after this Madison O.S meeting we never had another.

Nehemiah 10 details the covenant the Jews made with God after their restoration to Jerusalem.

Nehemiah 10:31 says, "And if the people of the land (non-Jews who didn't serve God) bring ware or any victuals* on the Sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy it of them on the Sabbath, or on the holy day: and that we would leave the seventh year, and the exaction of every debt."

*victuals in other Bible references and Bible dictionaries refers to food.

Nehemiah 13 details what events occurred 15 or so years after the Jews had made their covenant.

Nehemiah 13: verse 15 “In those days I saw in Judah some treading the wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day: and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals.” Verse 16, “There dwelt men of Tyre also therein which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the Sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem.” Verse 17, “Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day?” verse 18, “Did not your fathers thus*, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? Yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath.” Verse 19, And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the Sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the Sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the Sabbath day.” Verse 20, “So the merchants and the sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice.” Verse 21, “Then I testified against them, and said unto them, why lodge ye about the wall? If ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the Sabbath.” Verse 22, “And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the Sabbath day. Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.”

*Read Jeremiah 17:19-27, Ezekiel 8:1-18, and you’ll see what Nehemiah is talking about in Nehemiah 13:18. The Sabbath was profaned by the traffic between the Jews and their heathen neighbors. The modern day hotdog stand, and open-air market would be similar to what they were experiencing at that time only on a larger scale. Can you see Isaiah 58:13,14 or the fourth Commandment, Exodus 20:8-11 being fulfilled in such a setting? When you compare what occurred between the times of Jeremiah and Ezekiel the former being a pre-captivity prophet and the later being himself bound with Daniel in Babylon, one would see that Sabbath breaking led to more grievous sins. The list of abominations committed by the Jews, which led them into captivity is Nehemiah’s focus. It should be ours too!

Here's why. Remember the covenant the Jews made about not buying food and ware from the people of the land? Nehemiah 10:31 Well at this time the men of Tyre were selling fish and wares to the Jews. But later on, in Nehemiah's absence, the Jews themselves were engaged in selling victuals and bearing burdens of foodstuffs (victuals) they were bringing to market. Point made, is that they covenanted then (Nehemiah 10:31) not to buy on the Sabbath, and yet had apostatized to the point of engaging in bringing food to market and engaging in commerce on the Sabbath of the Lord (Nehemiah 13:15-22). They were the ones, who were in the worst transgression, for they were the people of God, and had they not previously confessed by their covenant that these things were unlawful to be done on the Sabbath day? In verse 17, Nehemiah warned them of the evil the Lord had sent upon them. What was Nehemiah’s precedent for saying these things?

Moses warned the Jews of this time in Deuteronomy 28:1-14, which detailed the blessings to follow those who “hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all His commandments.” And then in verses 15-68 the curses.

Please notice these verses in particular:

45. Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes, which he commanded thee:

46. And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed forever.

47. Because thou serest not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things;

48. Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee. (See Jeremiah 28:12-14)

49. The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; (Jeremiah 4:7, 13; Lamentations 4:12,13, 19)

50. A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young:

51. And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee.

And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the Lord thy God hath given thee.

Once you see the judgments referred to therein, then go and read the prayer of Daniel the prophet found in Daniel 9:1-23. Can you understand why these faithful men of God prayed what they prayed, and warned, and reproved, and rebuked the leaders and people. National apostasy led to national ruin. How does this apply to us? 1Corinthians 10:11, says, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples (examples, patterns): and they are written for our admonition (warning), upon whom the ends of the world are come." Beloved this is why we cannot allow buying and selling in stores or restaurants to come into our experience as Seventh Day Adventist Christians. We've come to far to backslide into treating the Holy Sabbath as any other day. Do we not fear God? Shall we test His forbearance in this matter, hoping that He will treat us differently than He did the nation of Judah?

This is what the Lord says in Hebrews 10: 26. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

27. But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

28. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

30. For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

31. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

The Pastor allowed no time for an indebt study of the passages in Nehemiah concerning Sabbath observance, but continued to present his personal views of the proper way to observe the Sabbath using his self-made outline as a study aid. He presented hypothetical situations to explain his views, such as: Would you go into K-mart if your pants were ripped to buy another pair? Is it okay to buy zoo tickets on another day and use them on the Sabbath? ; Although he believed that going to K-mart for pants was in accordance with proper Sabbath observance, he questioned the group to whether purchasing a ticket on another day and using it as entrance to the zoo on the Sabbath was the same as using money. He views a ticket and money as the same thing. It was clear that he was intending to steer the group in one direction—his, and that we were not going to engage in a meaningful Bible study on this topic.

He further stated that he had no problem with grocery shopping during the Sabbath hours, particularly if he had been giving Bible studies all day Friday and hadn't had a chance to shop. Another situation that he referenced was that of receiving his Conference paycheck once a month. He explained that at times, his paycheck might arrive on Friday or on the Sabbath and he is compelled to grocery shop during the Sabbath hours if there is no food in the house. Some of the group's comments included such recommendations as; he could borrow food/money from the church or make known his needs; or wait until Saturday night to shop, etc. He stated that Jesus ate fast food on the Sabbath, comparing Jesus and the disciples eating grain to him purchasing fast food on the Sabbath.

Close examination of Matthew 12:1 and Luke 6:1 will reveal that the disciples were hungry and picking grain, not Jesus. Also notice, that the Jews rebuked Jesus for what His disciples were doing. Therefore, any attempt to pattern our lives according to what this context says in regards to eating on the Sabbath day in a field of wheat or corn or whatever it was, can only be applied to what the disciples did. Our true example is Jesus Christ. And although Jesus wasn't gathering grain on the Sabbath, he defended his disciples and told the Pharisees that the disciples weren't profaning the Sabbath. The letter of the fourth precept wasn't transgressed in the slightest. Traditions of men were what the Jews were governed by in this matter.

We ought to walk as He walked according to 1 John 2:6. And Paul says in Colossians 2:6, "As ye have received Christ Jesus, so walk ye in HIM." See Luke 4:16.

The Pastor claims that stopping at Burger King for a hot sandwich while traveling between churches, bible studies, etc. is a real blessing, and is in accordance with Sabbath keeping because he is employed in the Lord's work. Where is the pattern found in scripture that the Pastor follows? Remember what Jesus said, in regards to His disciples. He would have us know that in regards to the Sabbath law, as God gave it, they were in fact guiltless. They were not making a purchase at a fruit/vegetable stand as in the days of Nehemiah, or being served by a waitress in a restaurant. They were hungry and plucked off grain to eat. They made an obvious effort to satisfy their hunger because sadly the members of the synagogue where they had recently left, wouldn't minister to their needs. There should be no confusion on this issue if we read the Word, and follow the Word Jesus Christ, however confusion has been generated by this method of teaching and line of reason, which the pastor has used to convey his personal convictions and very private interpretations.

At the Oasis meeting, several people offered alternative suggestions for a Sabbath meal. Some of the following suggestions included: Why don't you pack a lunch? Church people could take turns packing you a lunch; etc. It was also noted that there is one Sabbath a month when the pastor is at Willoughby for both the service and potluck, while Madison has a potluck meal every Sabbath, therefore there is always a place to get a Sabbath meal. I know that either church would be more than happy to prepare Cathy a plate also. To these comments, the Pastor only responded with a laugh, and no comment. It's sad that the Pastor declines the many efforts to minister to him in this matter of food being provided to him and Cathy.

It was apparent at the time of this meeting, most were not in agreement with the Pastor's views to which he responded, "Well, let us agree to disagree." (A phrase we would hear repeatedly in the future when long-standing doctrinal beliefs are called traditions of Adventism and challenged by the leadership.) There was no uproar at this meeting, only passionate dialogue concerning his "new" views on Sabbath observance. What did he expect? He later tried to convince the Willoughby Church members that there had been some kind of outbreak at this meeting, and that several people came to him after the meeting to apologize for Tim's behavior. Tim was no more or less adamant about expressing his opinion than anyone else. As a matter of fact, most seemed to be in disagreement with the Pastor's views, and one person distributed a study about what the Bible and Ellen White has to say about Sabbath observance. The study was basically ignored and we were presented with "opinions" rather than facts. (Comments made by Valerie Arnett)

The following are comments made by two Madison church members regarding the Oasis Meeting: Sandy Brock (Madison SDA member) had attended the Oasis meeting and I knew she would not hold back telling me the honest truth concerning any disturbances at the meeting. Sandy said she didn't recall any loud voices. In her own words she said, "I didn't hear any one voice above another." I guess that would mean two or more people weren't shouting over another to be heard. Now I'll share remarks made by Robert Zaidinski who said, "Actually the Pastor got pretty defensive when brothers and sisters used the Bible to defend proper Sabbath observance and how the Bible clearly states that there should be no buying or selling on the Sabbath Day." The brother also stated that in his opinion, "The Pastor caused more confusion in the meeting, rather than grounding us in the truth of God's Holy Word." What he is speaking of here is the technicalities or hypothetical situations the Pastor was using to show what he wanted us to believe. Brother Bob's main concern, "We are living in the last days right before Jesus is to return. And many are going to lose out on knowing what the real truth is if the Pastor uses other than Biblical sources to teach with."

At a later church meeting, the Pastor would admit to enjoying going out to eat on the Sabbath for pleasure, and not in conjunction with doing the Lord's work. He stated at the Madison church that he goes out nearly every Sabbath Day. He expressed that he was under a lot of pressure and stress having to care for the household, because of his wife's illness, and therefore enjoyed eating a hot sandwich and taking Cathy a milkshake on the Sabbath. Ask Lisa Salamone about her mother Dorothy, who she cares for 7 days a week. Ask her if she excuses herself for a shake on the Lord's Day

Admonition: Let it be understood by all, that the controversy surrounding "Sabbath Observance" issue has been introduced and manufactured deliberately and intentionally by Pastor Hitchcock in an effort to somehow "change" or stamp-out our, so called, "legalistic" SDA views. He knew that, as a Pastor, his personal views on these discussed issues would hold a lot of clout and be

adopted by most as sound doctrine. Wake up people! He has taken advantage of his position to impress upon you his personal ideas and influence your decisions without benefit of sound Bible truth. If you want to know who is behind the division in the church, look no further than to who stands at your pulpit. I have in my possession a 2 cassette tape called "The Seventh Day." The speaker is Chuck Missler. In his series lasting 2 hours, he covers nearly every scripture in the Bible on the subject of the Sabbath, the law of God, and the work of the cross. What scares me is that it mirrors Pastor Hitchcock's doctrines. Chuck Missler is known as "an authority on the Bible worldwide." He is an evangelical Sunday keeping minister who believes Seventh Day Adventists are legalistic, and that we don't understand Colossians 2:14-17. Why? Because we don't understand what Jesus did at the cross.

Wednesday, March 7: Following prayer meeting, Chester and I met alone to discuss his Sabbath views. He brought a paper, "Thus Saith the Lord" with him. At this time I shared with Chester that many members of the Willoughby Church had grown fearful of his personal views of Sabbath observance. After all, he is a Seventh-day Adventist pastor. I also warned of impending Conference calls which I counseled our members not to do at this time. He thanked me for this. He then said, "If anyone has a problem with my teachings, have them speak to me one-on-one about it." At this point in the conversation, I could not believe the Pastor's attitude was one of indifference, and so I told him that I believed that this was an issue that had become a great stumbling block in our congregation and that his views were in error. He then told me that I should pursue Matt. 18. He also revealed to me that many people in our churches were eating out on the Sabbath, as well as some of the elders. Some had made comments that they were set free now and that they felt like they had formerly lived a double-life, always hiding the fact that they were eating at restaurants on the Sabbath. I was in shock that an SDA Pastor would instruct me to begin disciplinary steps against him, and that he is aware of elders who agree with his theology and do the same things he does on the holy Sabbath.

(MY SECOND MEETING ALONE WITH THE PASTOR).

Monday, March 19: We had the first Elders/Deacons/Deaconess meeting at which Elder Hitchcock said all officers should have in their possession a copy of the SDA Church Manual, and Elders, Deacon or Deaconess Manual. This would prove to be very helpful in gathering information on how to deal with our escalating problem at Willoughby. Immediately I gained possession of a new copy of the church manual. I read and studied it cover to cover highlighting every topical statement relative to what responsible action could and should be taken to remedy our local church problem.

Sabbath, March 24: I was compelled during the praise and prayer time to petition prayer for our congregation. I said, "It has come to my attention that there is a new custom of going out to eat on the Sabbath Day. I ask all church members to open their Bibles and prayerfully seek the Lord's will in this matter." After the prayer time was over, the Church Treasurer, John Huffman, approached me with an unhappy look which he expressed my way as he threw a piece of paper into my lap while passing by in the outer aisle. It simply read "Romans 14: 12,13." I recall that he had stood with his arm around the pastor smiling, shaking his hand and talking about something. I'm not sure about whom the note was from.

Sunday, March 25: My wife and I went out to dinner with Debbie Pierce and Jim and Lisa Salamone. Once they were set I was compelled to drive up the street to the Huffman's to visit Brother John concerning the note. They invited me in and I asked John after a time to explain what it was in Romans 14 that I should consider. John seemed reluctant to make any comment about it, and so I

shared with him and Barb that there was a Sabbath issue that was only between myself and the Pastor that revolved around being served food and buying and selling on the Sabbath. I told John that he shouldn't apply the Romans 14 chapter to this matter. I knew it did not, in any way, relate to the Lord's Sabbath Day. John and Barb both expressed their personal views to me, to which I gave ear. John said the Sabbath law said that only the people in "thy house" were to rest on the Sabbath. I then saw that I should leave educational material for him to review. I left a pamphlet entitled "On Esteeming One Day Better Than Another" by Dr. Raoul Dederen of The Biblical Research Institute at Andrews University. I prayed for them and their family and returned to the restaurant.

Sunday, April 1: Upon my request, I met with Elder Hitchcock to discuss his views on Bible doctrine. At this meeting, I shared with him what the church manual had to say about not using the "pulpit as a forum" to present views that aren't in harmony with our established doctrinal platform. I shared from the Spirit of Prophecy that we should consult others who have experiential knowledge of the truth, and lay it (our view-what we consider to be new light) before them to see if it has any merit. Sadly, our meeting was unprofitable. Chester said I should follow Matt. 18, but he then said to me quite emphatically, "I will not appear before the local church board. I will only appear before the Ohio Conference committee!" And then he added to my astonishment, "And I know that they will support me 100 %!" This statement, whether true or not, planted a seed of fear, not of the Conference, but of the possibility that my labors at the local level would be overshadowed by the Pastor's confidence, not in the Word of God, but in the arm of flesh. (MY THIRD VISIT ALONE WITH THE PASTOR).

Tuesday, April 3: I met Mike Eitutus at church to prepare for my Sabbath School Class and talked about Sabbath observance and what the pastor had been preaching. I warned Mike not to follow any one man's view on so important an issue. I offered to study the Sabbath with him.

Wednesday, April 4: Prayer meeting was a disaster. The Pastor's lesson taught that the Ten Commandments were nailed to the cross. This topic was again preached at one of the Revival meetings. My personal friend, Helen Konoronski, was at this prayer meeting. She was my neighbor who lived across the street from me when I was young. She also attended my first Revelation Seminar at my mother's home back in 1984. During the lesson, the Pastor read the following statement, "The Ten Commandments were nailed to the cross." I was shocked at this statement, because up to this moment, I never knew he taught this doctrine and because my friend, Helen, was nodding in agreement. I said to Helen, "Helen don't shake your head up and down unless you know what you are being told." I said, "The Ten Commandments were not nailed to the cross!" Pastor Hitchcock then rebuked me and said, "Tim let's agree to disagree" and, "Tim you must respect my opinion!" After the meeting we met alone, and the Pastor rebuked me again and gave me a book by Martin Webber called "Who's Got the Truth." He told me that if the theologians of our church can't agree on what is truth, we shouldn't have disagreements either. I replied, "Our church (SDA) has never taught that the 'Ten Commandments were nailed to the cross.'" (MY FOURTH AND FINAL MEETING ALONE WITH THE PASTOR).

This more than fulfilled Matt. 18:15, "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his thought between thee and him alone: If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." He did not hear me; therefore I have not gained my brother.

From January until this date, April 4, I had with the pastor privately and alone on four separate occasions to discuss the following. Having followed the counsel of Our Lord in Matt: 18:15, I declare these three faults exist between myself and Pastor Hitchcock:

Proper Sabbath observance according to Scripture. See pages 1-4.

Departing from the established doctrinal views of the Seventh-day Adventist Church; and not following SDA Church Manual instructions, entitled, "The Pulpit Not a Forum" page 205. See page 7, Sunday April 1st.

The Ten Commandments were not nailed to the cross per Col: 2:14-17. See page 8. Colossians 2:14-17.

Verse 16 says, "But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."

Concerning item #3 my comments are as follows.

Colossians 2: verse 14, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; verse 15, "And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Verse 16, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: verse 17, "Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

I challenge anyone to show from a S.D.A publication, in particular, the Spirit of Prophecy, when, where, or if we ever taught what Elder Hitchcock teaches on this doctrine that the 10 Commandments were nailed to the cross. Look in the "Amazing Facts" books and tracts to see what we share to bring people to church. Wouldn't it be confusing for the person who's been taught that only the ceremonial law was nailed to the cross to then come to Willoughby and hear that the Ten Commandments were also nailed to the cross? Paul made a qualifying statement: He said "...sabbath days which are a shadow of things to come..." The seventh day Sabbath predated the entrance of sin; therefore it could not be a type, which pointed forward. It always pointed backwards as a memorial of creation. The ceremonial system was temporary in nature according to Hebrews 9:6-10. The earthly temple service had all the obvious characteristics mentioned in Colossians 2:12-17. Paul was fighting against the Judaism, which was fighting to remain alive in side the church. Jesus said, you can't put new wine into old wine skins. The unseen hand tore the curtain from top to bottom signifying an end to earthly temple services, so that the minds of all would be directed into the true tabernacle in heaven, which the Lord pitched and not man. See Matthew 27:51, Hebrews 8:2. Paul battled with men in the church including the Apostle Peter of whom he said, "He was to be blamed." Why? Because he was living a double standard, he would be a friend with the Gentile believers only, and until, those of the circumcision came along. See Galatians 2:11-21 and Acts 15. Remember Paul in this manner, "Paul a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an Apostle, separated unto the gospel of God." Romans 1:1. Sadly Paul wasn't well received by the church. As our Lord was perceived by the Sanhedrin to be some sort of radical, so also was Paul. Paul's mission was to preach the total abrogation of the ceremonial system, which the Jews were emotionally, spiritually, and yes, even financially tied to. For this, many Jewish Christians, including a few of the original apostles, did not trust Paul. However, Paul didn't mince words reproving and rebuking with all long-suffering and doctrine.

At this time, Ray Smithisler and Debbie Pierce had their first meeting with Elder Hitchcock according to Matthew 18, to discuss their concerns with him about his theology.

Debbie had shared her concerns about the Pastor's profaning of the Sabbath by going out to restaurants, etc. To which he replied: Some SDA's believe that people shouldn't wear jewelry. This comment was directed at Debbie because of her cross ring. Debbie was perplexed, and made to feel that, she somehow should defend why she was wearing jewelry. She pondered, "Well, maybe I shouldn't be wearing it." The Pastor then said he did not have a problem with jewelry. She knew this, because he has said the same in his sermons. He then went on to add that he did not wear it, because he didn't want to be a stumbling block. She reasoned curiously, "If he did not want to be a stumbling block about jewelry, then why choose to be one about the Sabbath?" Willingly, he then proudly shared the fact that he and his brother, soon to become an ordained Baptist minister, would indeed be eating at a restaurant this coming week during the Sabbath hours. What a witness to a Sunday-keeping minister, especially from a Seventh-day Adventist pastor! (THIS IS RAY SMITHISLERS AND DEBBIE PIERCES FIRST MEETING ALONE WITH THE PASTOR). This fulfills Matthew 18:15. Let it be noted, that Elder Hitchcock never allowed Matthew 18:16 to be followed with these two church members. At later public meetings he said, "If anyone wants to talk with me alone that will be fine, but there will not be anymore group meetings." Meaning no witnesses to accompany these members concerning their grievances with the Pastor. This further shows his neglect to the counsels of our Lord with respect to offences between the brethren, and intent to cease all other grievances.

Sabbath Service, April 7: The Pastor preached on the "Secret Rapture," and said, "We must respect the views of our other brothers and sisters in Christ in other churches." After this service, I talked with Elder Pat Berner about discussing Chester's theology. It was at this time that Elder Berner revealed, by his response to my concerns, that he too, had gone out on Sabbath and that, "I shouldn't be so smug as to think life is perfect." He sounded exactly like the Pastor did when he shared all the hypothetical situations that could occur. For instance, "What would you do Tim, wouldn't you pull an ox out of the ditch on the Sabbath?" I said to Pat that I understood the part of well doing, but profaning of the Sabbath and leading others by a poor example to follow our course is wrong. I was hoping that Elder Berner would be the first of the "one or two" found in Matthew 18:16 and that he would hear why we needed to meet with the Pastor.

Prior to the April business meeting, Debbie called the Pastor requesting that "unity" be added to the business meeting agenda. The Pastor informed her that now was not a good time to discuss "unity" because of the upcoming Revival Meetings. She felt this to be a rather odd response in light of all that was ensuing.

Monday, April 9: Went to Willoughby Church to set up church remodeling proposals and overhead projector for the Business meeting. At 6:30 the Pastor showed up and asked if we needed to talk again. I said no, because others and myself had talked with him about his private interpretations and opinions without any resolution. Because of his comment "that the Conference was behind him 100%," I said to him that any discussion from hereon would be futile if in fact the Conference was supporting his doctrinal position. Following the business meeting, Elder Berner said for me, "to call the elders together to meet after church the following Sabbath, April 14."

Tuesday, April 10: I talked with Elder Valle Sjoberg about the elders' meeting that Elder Berner scheduled to discuss Pastor Hitchcock's theology. He said he did not know anything was wrong. Valle hadn't been attending church because of gout and problems with his legs. However, he is an elder at our local church, and needed to be made aware of the problems. With Valle, Elder Berner, and myself present, I would then have the "two or three witness" to meet with the Pastor in fulfillment of the second meeting requirement in Matt: 18:16. Valle seemed surprised to hear about Chester's Sabbath views, and his belief that the Ten Commandments had been nailed to the cross. I encouraged him to call the Pastor himself and ask him what his views were, since Chester is very open and willing to share his views. I asked Valle to get back in touch with me if he would, or would not be attending the elders' meeting that Elder Berner had requested to be scheduled that coming Sabbath, April 14. Elder Sjoberg neglected to call me back, so I needed to find another "witness." Next, I called Elder Keene who indicated that he would be present at the meeting. To secure enough witnesses, in the event that Elder Keene could not make it to the meeting, I called on Ray Smithisler, and Paris Layne. Paris Layne refused to attend the meeting. I told him at this point, that for two months I had been trying to reconcile the Pastor's clear doctrinal differences with that of our SDA Church's established historical positions. The reason I called Elders Layne and Smithisler was because both had served in the same capacity as I: first Elder. I hoped they would appreciate the predicament I was in. It was my wish to also keep this ordeal within the ranks of the overseer's of the local church.

Sabbath, April 14: Pat Berner was not in attendance at church or the elders' meeting due to company at his home. I then went to Paris Layne and Bill Hartman (former elders) and asked if they would please hear my concerns about what was occurring in our church. They flatly refused and Bill commented that as long as he has been a member of this church, he has known that SDA's eat out at restaurants on the Sabbath Day. Russ stated that he also refused Tim's invitation to the meeting fearing to insult the presently elected elders—A decision he now regrets having made, as it might have affected other's decisions to get involved. And so Elder Keene, Ray Smithisler and I met in the basement. After we had prayer and I introduced the subject, Elder Keene immediately went on the offensive and accused me of attacking and condemning the Pastor. Elder Keene claimed that none of us are perfect, and none of us can keep the Ten Commandments. I then reminded him that the subject was whether or not that law was nailed to the cross, and if it is okay to profane the Sabbath in restaurants and grocery stores. He refused to listen and Ray Smithisler was only able to make a comment that love is the fulfilling of the law and that if we love God, we can keep the law. We then closed the meeting after only twenty minutes. Obviously I couldn't then go forward to meet with the Pastor because I didn't even have one of our current elected elders to go with me. Elders Pat Berner, Sonny Keene, and Valle Sjoberg, all refused from this day on to meet with me, or discuss our local church problem.

Friday, April 20: Elder Hitchcock called me and said he cannot tell me what I should or should not preach, but that he would advise me against discussing the Sabbath issue.

Sabbath, April 21: I Taught on Daniel 3 for Sabbath school. After I dismissed my class with prayer, I asked to be alone. I had material for the sermon that Valerie and I had prepared back in February for the Oasis meeting. I was sitting there reviewing it. Suddenly a spirit of oppression came upon me, a true demonic influence. I cried out to my Lord Jesus for deliverance. Only after my third cry did I sense a full release. I was impressed at this time with the duty not to preach to the church on the Sabbath issue, but on the authority of the Holy Scriptures in 1 Timothy 4:1-8 and 2 Tim 4:1-5. I had five minutes to prepare this sermon and the Spirit of the Lord gave me utterance to speak for forty minutes. Sadly, Paris Layne walked out during my sermon. After the sermon, I asked Elder Berner

why he failed to show up at the elders' meeting on the previous Sabbath, April 14. He did not offer an apology, but simply stated that he had company.

Sunday, April 22: I received word that Sue Cope was discouraged about my sermon. I called her to find out why she was discouraged. She stated that it was, "because of the bickering going on at the Willoughby Church." I counseled her that she need not concern herself with these issues, because she was just now returning to church after being away many years. She said we should just praise the Lord, and talk about salvation. I asked her, "What did Jesus save you from?" She replied that Jesus saved her so that she could go to heaven. I said, "Heaven is our reward, but what did he save you from?" She did not answer. I never personally said anything to her about what she does on the Sabbath and we ended our conversation. That evening Dave Passerello, Sue Cope's son, called me wanting to take me out to dinner. I asked why, because I hadn't talked to Dave in nearly five years. He hesitated, but then said I had upset his mother, and that she called him up crying on the telephone. I told him, "I haven't the foggiest idea why she is upset. As a matter of fact, I thought we had a very nice discussion." He then turned quite harsh and told me I have a "perfection problem" or something. I said to him then that he ought not worry about the problems at Willoughby since he is a member of the Chesterland church. And I told him frankly that he had never indicated to me that he held any esteem, high or low, on the spiritual matters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He said he'd pray for me, but I declined his offer.

Friday, April 27: The Revival Meetings begin. The sermon is titled, "Who is Good Enough to be Antichrist?" This sermon departed from clear biblical interpretation of what the antichrist is. The Pastor suggested that antichrist could be your wife, TV, good Bible doctrine, etc.—Anything that we put in place of God. Putting something in higher esteem than God is idolatry, whereas antichrist is clearly spelled out in the Scriptures. After the revival meeting, a group gathered to pray for the outpouring of God's spirit of truth, the latter rain. Attendees: Lois J., Russ K., Debbie P., Helen K., Ray S., and Tim & Val A.

Sabbath, April 28: I handed out a Pastor Doug Batchelor (of "Amazing Facts") E-mail message on questions about the Sabbath observance and which law was nailed to the cross, Col. 2:14-17. Elder Berner also had a letter ready for me—A letter of rebuke. A letter of rebuke, after he fails to attend an important elders' meeting that he, himself scheduled. I left a message with Pat requesting that at a later date, we sit down and discuss his letter. Since he mentioned Matt: 18, I told him he could not pursue this course until he and I sit down, and have a chance to respond to his accusations. After church service, during potluck, Chester asked if we could meet together. I said, "sure," assuming only he and I would meet. Then Elder Berner invites me to go upstairs. I asked Valerie, my wife, to accompany me. Members present were: Pastor, John H. (treasurer), Valerie A. (Tim's wife), and Elders Paris L., Pat B., Sonny K., Russ K. and Tim A. At this meeting, I was rebuked for not following through with Matt 18 (See comments on April 9). I stated to the Elders and John Huffman that the Pastor was using the pulpit and other teaching opportunities to present doctrines that are not the established views of the SDA church. I had a SDA church manual and read from the section entitled, "The Pulpit Not a Forum." I asked the elders whether or not the Pastor had ever talked about his views with any of them. They were silent. It must be noted that I have not heard of any SDA Pastor, Elder, or Lay Minister who has ever taught that it was okay to eat out on Sabbath for whatever reason, or that the Ten Commandments were nailed to the cross. These were clearly not positions held by our church.

I was very upset at this charade. I was cornered and accused of not following Matt: 18 by those, who all along, were in opposition to my efforts to fulfill that very course in Matthew 18:16. Clearly, the Pastor with certain elders had planned to shut me down.

April 30: Merrill Presslar requests that I come to his home to study Sabbath observance.

May 5: I visited the Presslar home and had Bible study with the entire family. It was a real blessing. Merrill shared that Chester, while giving the family Bible studies, would deliberately expound on the topic of Sabbath observance, continuously keeping this issue in the forefront. He would relate instances concerning Sabbath activities he and others had engaged in. For example, he would share how he had seen church members while in the grocery store on the Sabbath. He expressed humor in how they would try to hide. Merrill expressed to Chester his concern, and that he really didn't agree with what Chester shared in his Bible studies. Upon further reflection Merrill shared that the Pastor seemed to be trying hard to keep the issue of liberal Sabbath observance constantly in the forefront of his discussions. Eventually, Merrill simply cut-off any further offers for Bible study from Chester.

May 7: I spoke to the Ohio Conference president, Raj Attiken, and asked him for counsel on how I should proceed with our local church problem. Afterwards, I spoke with Pastor Hitchcock about meeting me again with one or two witnesses according to the Lords direction in Matt 18:16. The witnesses were to be Debbie Pierce, Ray Smithisler, and Merrill Presslar. These members had individually met with Pastor Hitchcock and discussed theological differences he had with the Bible, fulfilling step 1 of Matt: 18. Chester informed me that the "men of experience" that had met on April 28 to rebuke me for not going to step 2 of Matt. 18, would be there as well. I did not understand why these men needed to be in attendance, and he was not willing to explain. This pastor-created format does not fulfill Matt: 18, however my witness's were in attendance, thus fulfilling Matthew 18:16.

May 11: I spoke again with elder Attiken.

Friday, May 11: For the Friday night meeting, I had prepared materials to support the Bible and SDA Church position on Sabbath observance and how the Ten Commandments have not been nailed to the cross. My materials also included Elder Hitchcock's Oasis lessons from Feb. 27 and the lesson, "Was the Law Abolished at the Cross?" which I believe clearly showed his position opposite to what I was presenting. Members in attendance at this Pastor-promoted "debate" in the fellowship hall were: Tim, Val, Jacob, Melody Arnett, Russ and Jackie Koshel, Merrill and Michell Preslar, Lois Johnson, Ray Smithisler, Pat Berner, Sonny and Ellen Keene, Debbie Pierce, Paris and Lenora Layne. (I may have missed a few.)

At this meeting, the Pastor stated that I was not following Matthew 18. Be it noted, that I had requested this meeting in fulfillment of Matthew 18:16. Therefore his remark is meaningless. Please remember also, that due to the insistence of the board of elders to disregard the Lord's directions months before, concerning faults between brethren, the time was delayed. At this time, I considered their presence at this meeting to not be in accord with restoring the Church to unity, but rather an affront to Bible doctrine and the order that is to be maintained throughout the body of Christ. They refused to be witnesses, when I asked them to participate, and now when I did have witnesses they had

come to further thwart the clear directions of Christ. Any man who esteems other better than himself, thus fulfills God's will, but no man is above submission to God and his holy law. Matthew. 18:16--- "But if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may established." It was the Pastor who had stated that the "men of experience, which included the elders and John Huffman (treasurer), were also to attend this meeting. At the conclusion of my presentation of Bible, Spirit of Prophecy, and historical SDA materials which included J.N Andrews book on the "Law and the Sabbath," the Pastor, refraining from either responding to my presentation, or presenting his view, instead directed a frontal assault upon me before all in attendance. I must say that I was not surprised and neither were the majority of people by the antics used at his proposed and planned "Sabbath Observance debate meeting." I had been warned, that as usual and customary, the Pastor, instead of taking the opportunity to "prove" his personal views via the Bible, he would resort to using his "time" as a rebuking session where he intended to show how Elder Tim Arnett does not respect his pastoral authority. The Pastor listed five or six items on the dry erase board that accused me of various character flaws. Unfortunately, or fortunately, I cannot remember them all. However, one was that I called Sue Cope a sinner, which is not true. It never happened! Since then, Sue and I have talked again. I love the whole Hartman clan. I've truly attempted to express this in loving encouragement when their mom, Sister Eudora died. But things they did or didn't realize that were going on between the Pastor and myself began to surface, and then I was considered to be a troublemaker. This was apparent to me, after my April 21st sermon when I preached on the authority of the word of God. For some strange reason, Sue was discouraged with my sermon. Learning of this, I immediately called her to talk it over. As I stated previously, my call was out of concern. After this May 11th meeting, I was again directed of the Lord to make sure that me and Sue didn't have any disagreements, especially in light of the charges Elder Hitchcock wrote on the board against me. Sue informed me personally that her and I were reconciled to one another, at least in regard to not having any faults against one another. Admittedly she said she doesn't understand all the commotion over these doctrinal issues, but she assured me in these words Tim, I never told anyone especially Pastor Hitchcock that you ever called me a sinner." She then confessed, that her son David Passerello was the person responsible for calling Chester and spewing his twisted version of our conversation. I am appalled that Chester would ever repeat such allegations without having first asked me if it were so, but he was obviously walking in the flesh, and trying to protect himself.

At the conclusion of his speech, questions were fielded from the congregation. Most of the comments were favorable toward my presentation. That is an undeniable fact. Elder Berner stated he believed both our presentations were well constructed, but did not comment on the substance of either. No other comments favorable to the Pastor's position were even spoken, and it should have rang clear to him that he may be in error, and that the right and true course would be to take a Biblical stand for the Sabbath; along with the clear established view that the law of Ten Commandments are not nailed to the cross. Remember! The process of Matt: 18 is to bring about reconciliation between God and man, man and man, and, in this case, Pastor and his church. This did not happen. This more than fulfilled Matthew 18:15,16, "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." He did not hear me and therefore I went to the next step found in verse 16, "But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." I have letters from three witnesses testifying of their involvement at this meeting. This fulfilled Matthew 18:16.

The Pastor then called for a dismissal of all regular church members and for the elders to remain in attendance for a meeting. When the elders sat together, a totally different climate emerged.

The Pastor asked first whether we were going to request the Ohio Conference to become involved: to which all seven of the elders, unanimously, agreed. There was a vote that was motioned, seconded, and passed to ask the Conference to assist us in the matter of Pastor Hitchcock's doctrine that I was in opposition to. (Ohio Conference policy regarding grievances against conference employee's, which I later became knowledgeable of, stated that the local elders did not have to agree about the grievance against a conference employee, all they had to recognize, was that they were unable to, at their level of church governing to bring about reconciliatory harmony. Under such circumstances it was just cause to then involve the conference in the local church issue.) I was in harmony with the church policy in asking the elders to assist me in this issue; however, Elder Hitchcock rebuked me for calling an elders meeting. He said, "Only the Pastor has the right to call an executive meeting of the elders." As I stated, I had met with Elder Hitchcock on four separate occasions. Therefore I had to finally go to step two of our Lord's counsel, to take witness's to verify the concerns I had about his doctrines. The scriptures clearly indicates the will of God concerning an elder, and his duties to the flock of God. I seen and heard things, which were not in harmony with the truth as it is in Jesus, therefore I had to act. As Elder Hitchcock stated on Sunday April 1st, "I will not appear before the local church board. I will only appear before the Ohio Conference committee." Matthew 18:17 says, "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." The pastor neglected the Biblical and historical testimony I had presented, as well as the verification of those from the witnesses and other church members that were present on May 11th.

Then the Pastor began reading comments out of the church manual about surmising evil in respect to a brother. (See Church manual section entitled church discipline.) Be it noted, that the word "surmise" in the dictionary as well as the Bible means to guess at something. Myself and many church members are confused as to why the Pastor would charge me with surmising evil, when it is clearly evident that his views aren't in harmony with SDA historical doctrine concerning the law and the Sabbath. We aren't talking about interpreting prophecy, or straining at a gnat of some obscure passage of scripture. We are talking about the clear intent of the Ten Commandments, Sabbath observance, and whether or not any person conference employee, or regular church member has the right to enter the sacred desk and dismantle established beliefs of our church. There is no need to guess or surmise at his dissenting doctrinal views. The Pastor's personal views are proudly spoken and upheld regardless of how negatively they have affected our local congregation. I again witnessed the justification of self, the disregard of what others were trying to show him, and the lashing out against reproof for his sins. Elder Hitchcock just kept quoting references out of the church manual and directing them at my end of the table. I then asked him what he was doing? I reminded him, that I wasn't the focus of this meeting. We had voted to involve the Conference committee; therefore the meeting should have then ended. Then, the Pastor said something that floored me, "Tim you will no longer preach in the pulpit of this church!" I then stood up and said I will no longer sit here and listen to this. I said we voted to bring the Conference, and I am leaving. I then walked over behind the table where I had made my presentation to gather my Bible and notes. The pastor then shouted, "Who's in the pulpit! Who's in the pulpit!" as he walked up to the table across from me. I replied, only loud enough for him to hear, "That's okay because I still have a Sabbath School to teach and a Prayer Meeting to lead out in." To which he replied vindictively in word and character, "We'll see about that!" I left to return to my truck to put away my materials. The church members who were milling around the outside the church, told me that I was being summoned back downstairs. As soon as I entered the room, Chester imperatively spat, "You will no longer preach, teach Sabbath School, or lead out in Prayer Meeting at this church!" I replied to him, "You have no right to censure me. That can only be done in a church business meeting" at which I departed. The Pastor accusation against me was, "Tim Arnett is not following Matthew 18." Remember that according to the SDA Church Manual, censoring can only be done after steps 1 and 2 have failed, and then it goes before the church

for disciplinary action. The SDA Church Manual declares, “An erring member may be placed under censure by a vote of the church at any duly called business meeting of the church, provided the member concerned has been notified.” (See pg.183 bottom par.) Utter confusion had now come upon us.

Sabbath worship, May 12: Before the church service, the pastor met in secret with the elders with a letter that supposedly originated at the elder’s meeting the night before. Elder Sjoberg, not in attendance at the previous night’s meeting, but present at church the next day, was drawn into this secret meeting to sign this letter which he said he did not read or understand the content of. He absentmindedly signed the letter, in his words, it was because his legs hurt and he desired to get off of them to ease his pain. I never received or seen a copy of this letter(s).

The Pastor, at this time, chose to preach on the Sabbath; how he keeps it and why he believes the Ten Commandments are nailed to the cross. The Pastor stated at least two times during his sermon, with a sure authoritative tone the following doctrinal statement, “Going to restaurants on the Sabbath is not a sin! Let me repeat. Going out to a restaurant on the Sabbath is not a sin!” In disregard of the fact that the church members in attendance the previous night had expressed their disappointment with the Pastor for preaching and teaching these erroneous doctrines in our church, he still obviously felt compelled to continue to repeatedly and dogmatically reiterate his personal stand. There were only four or five people at this worship service that were not in attendance at the Friday night meeting, so what was he trying to do, other than punish further those who were in disagreement with him? I decided not to stay. I was quite discouraged and upset as was my family and others. I must admit my hurt got the best of me, and I slammed the door in defiance to what Elder Hitchcock was doing in our local church. For this selfish act, I apologized and asked the Willoughby congregation to forgive me. Madison copied this sermon and at their church, where the Pastor stated, “I go out almost every Sabbath.” This statement shows the downward spiral that has occurred in his doctrinal position because when he first shared his Sabbath view, he said, “I only go out to restaurants when I do gospel work.” This is what he shared at the Oasis meeting Feb. 27.

After Sabbath that evening, I had two phone conversations, the first with Elder Keene. Elder Keene asked, “Did you sign the paper today to get someone to come up?” I said, “Signed what paper?” Sonny said, “The elders are signing a paper to get the Conference to come up and get together and sort this thing out.” I replied, “I didn’t see any paper, whatsoever.” I then called Elder Ray Smithisler and asked him what he knew about the paper, that the Pastor had the elders sign. I related to him what Elder Keene had said, and Elder Ray Smithisler confirmed that he understood the paper to be such, and had added his signature the previous evening.

My questions are these: When were these first and second documents composed: possibly, before the elders’ meeting? If so, did the Pastor arrive prepared with, a handy, ready-made document in his possession prepared for censuring purposes? There were six elders, including myself, at the Friday, May 11th meeting. All six were at the table when the Pastor told me I could no longer preach. While I was putting my stuff away in the truck, elders Koshel and Smithisler went into the men’s room, so that left Pastor Hitchcock, Elders Layne, Keene and Berner. In the time it took me to walk to my truck and back, my censure included, not only not preaching, but also not teaching Sabbath School and leading out in prayer meeting. The question is: Did they have sufficient time, or the authority for that matter, to discuss these issues?

On Sunday evening, Pastor Hitchcock told me in a phone conversation what the letter(s) allegedly stated. He asked, “Are you going to write this down?” I said, yes. He continued,” Because

Tim Arnett left the elders' meeting when we attempted to address the method he used in disagreeing with the Pastor, we feel that he should not preach or teach at the church until he is willing to submit himself to our counsel." The Pastor should have followed Matthew 18:15 if he felt I was in error. Instead, I believe he used this opportunity (elder's meeting) for a continued assault on my character, which was an extension of the previous meeting.

Monday, May 14: At the conclusion of the Monthly Business Meeting, I met with the elders and the pastor to set up a date to talk with the elders. As we were standing together talking about a good time to meet, I asked to read from Testimonies to Ministers page 24-25 entitled "Unity in Faith and Doctrine." This pointed out how our church doctrine was established through fervent prayer and investigation of the Scriptures. I asked, and then I begged, because there was much opposition coming from my fellow elders (not elders Smithisler or Koshel), in particular my Pastor toward me, that we would follow this pattern to restore us again to unity. We set the date for Monday, May 21 at 6pm. Dear reader I ask you as a fellow Seventh Day Adventist, do you fear studying the scripture as a to find out whether you are in the truth, or what is being preached to you is truth? Does it matter to you anymore?

Sabbath, May 19: I taught Sabbath School on Dan.6 about Daniel being thrown into the lion's den, and ironically, my Sabbath School class was deleted from the bulletin (Pastor's wife is bulletin secretary).

Monday, May 21: I met with Pastor and elders Smithisler, Berner, Hartman, Layne, Koshel, and Keene. Pastor had a 3-point agenda prepared which I believed to be not reconciliatory. Item no. 1 stated that the Conference has no formal list of "dos and don'ts" about how the Sabbath is to be kept. He then requested a vote for those, "who want to agree with the Conference to not make a list." Elders Hartman, Berner, Keene, and Layne raised their hands. Elders Arnett, Koshel, and Smithisler abstained. Reason being, I believed it was foolish to vote because we obviously did not want to have anything to do with a manmade list that is Pharisaic in nature. Russ and Ray refused to vote as representatives of the church body, because they had trouble seeing their group as representing the church body. Then the pastor said, "Those who want to make a list..." I said, "Pastor, please don't go there! No one wants a list." I then held up my King James Bible with both hands over my head and said, "The Bible is our list, and it's our rule of faith and practice." At this meeting there was, I believe, an obvious move toward suppression of the issue at hand and to attempt to sweep under the rug any and all further discussion about the Sabbath and Law issue. The manufacturing of a do and don't list was a ploy to confuse the issue, taking the focus off the topic of discussion and putting it on an erroneous idea unsanctioned by anybody. As you can see, the idea for following the pioneer method of finding out the truth was shot down by the Pastor. It is clear that he knew his position could not hold up under the scrutiny of the scriptures. At this time the meeting again turned to Elder Arnett and his unwillingness to not agree to work with, support, agree to disagree, nor respect the Pastor's views. At this "closed" meeting, I seen necessary to: 1. Rebuke Elder Hitchcock for profaning the Sabbath and by leading others in his preaching ministry and example to do the same. 2. From departing from established SDA doctrinal views. 3. I also rebuked some of the elders for blindly following the same course as the Pastor, and for not willingly engaging in open Bible study on any of these issues. Allow me to clearly state that I rebuked Pastor Hitchcock, and elders Berner, Keene, Hartman, and Layne in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ for what they were allowing to happen in the Willoughby SDA Church. I declared that they had allowed sin to be maintained in the church. I did so in an authoritative manner. I wasn't out of control—I knew what I was doing, and why, at all times.

The Pastor then read a letter from Raj Attiken, our Conference president in Ohio, relative to disciplinary actions against myself. I then reached for the church manual that Elder Smithisler had in front of him, and firmly slammed it down on the table and addressed the Pastor. I asked, “Where does the Church Manual say that the Conference has any jurisdiction in this matter?”

If the Pastor is free from disciplinary action of his local church board, then why should I be disciplined from the Ohio Conference President who is working on behalf of his “conference employee” from the sidelines? As I’ve previously stated, no Matthew 18:15-18 steps had ever been initiated against me for any reason, so what were the grounds for discussing any actions against me? On April 28th, the Pastors and Elders ganged up on me, where I was rebuked for supposedly not following Matthew 18, which I’ve clearly shown, is false. Then at the May 11th meeting I was censured by the Pastor alone.

Another reason I asked this question was because Elder Attiken had told me on two separate occasions, May 7 and May 11, that he would not be involved in this matter until the Board of Elders requested the Conference to be involved. Note: See Friday, May 11 entry where the Elders voted to request the Conference’s assistance—Why was this voted mandate ignored? The reason is because Elder Hitchcock disregarded the elder’s vote for conference assistance, as I would later find out by a conversation with Elder Attiken. In lieu of the “assistance request” letter, a misleading Pastor-generated impromptu letter stating that, “Because Tim Arnett refused to sit with the elders, he could no longer preach and teach in the Willoughby Church.” was signed by Elders Smithisler, and one or two others at the Pastor’s prompting. I know Elder Koshel left in disgust and did not sign it. Elder Keene stated that he did not sign it, and prior to talking with Elder Keene, I did not know that this letter even existed. The following day, at church, as stated previously, Elder Sjoberg, having been not in attendance for a couple of months and not at the previous evening’s meeting, also signed the letter and later admitted that he had not even read the letter before placing his signature on it. As you may recall, the evening of May 11th, I had the phone conversation with Elder Keene when he asked whether or not I had signed, “the letter to ask the conference to come up and sort this thing out?” This was not what Pastor Hitchcock read to me over the phone, and to this date, I’ve never seen either of these letters. At this point, I could clearly see that one, the truth was being systematically suppressed, and that I myself, as First Elder, a shepherd over the flock of Willoughby, was being oppressed by the Pastor and some of the Elders. Whether or not the Conference had any knowledge of what was actually happening at Willoughby, I do not know.

Sabbaths, June 2, 9, and 16: I did not teach Sabbath School at Willoughby, hoping for reciprocity from the Pastor and the elders, although I did not agree with the Pastor’s punishment, censuring me from teaching and preaching. I then requested an Elders’ Meeting because Elder Koshel had talked with the Pastor and he concluded that the Pastor’s punishment was simply due to not meeting with the elders. I knew this was a lie, but I desired to teach. My class had two persons who weren’t baptized members of our church. Therefore, for their sake as well as my children and the rest of our class members, I was willing to attempt another meeting with the board of elder’s to sort this thing out.

Monday, June 18: At the Elders’ meeting, the Pastor set the agenda once again. He shared that we should be kind like the women in Philippi and skirted around the fact that there was still unresolved problems. Near the conclusion of this elder’s meeting, I stated that I would continue to reprove sin because the problems were not being addressed in these Pastor-led meetings. The Pastor then stated that, “since I do not want to work in harmony with the church, I don’t get to teach or preach.” He immediately had a closing prayer having made this statement. As had been done at the

two previous meetings on May 11th and on the 21st, manipulation was used to confine discussion, and point the finger of fault upon the one who reproved the Pastor of his sins. It was at this meeting that the elder's had all received the Conference publication entitled, "Grievance Against the Pastor by an Individual or Group."

Monday, June 18: At the Business Meeting, I requested for the Pastor to include an item on the agenda to discuss the church's role as stated in the SDA Church Manual regarding censure. The Pastor declined. He said, "The elders are taking care of this matter." All of the members, who had attended the Friday, May 11th meeting, had come to see why the first elder had been censured. Their chief desire however, was to see how our obvious differences in doctrine could be resolved. This meeting, like the rest, was limited to one hour by the Pastor. Besides the minutes and the treasurer's report there were only four items to discuss. So there would have been more than sufficient time for the Pastor himself to explain why the first elder was clearly being censured, contrary to established gospel order in the "Church Manual" and why there was no resolution at this time over the doctrinal division in our local church. At the conclusion of this business meeting, many people were outwardly disappointed and verbally expressed strong emotions, because, for example, a full half hour was used discussing Mt. Vernon Academy, but the Pastor did not allow even one second to be devoted to discussing our local church's problems. The Preslar family, including three baptized members, and two of baptism age, informed the Pastor that this would be their last time at church. To which he responded, "Well, I guess I can't do anything more for you?" Many came expressly to discuss the current church condition and its doctrinal views. Jackie Koshel tried to express her disappointment and engage the Pastor in conversation concerning the meeting. He said that he would be happy to set up an appointment to meet with her privately at another time. Lisa Salamone also tried to converse with him, but was met with the same "appointment" request.

The business meeting adjourned at 8:30p.m. Since we weren't permitted to discuss those problems during the business meeting, we asked Elder Berner why the elders were unwilling to sit down for Bible study and resolve our problems as a church. To his credit, Elder Berner sat for an hour and a half and listened to concerns, and opened his Bible to see and hear, as well as share his views. Elder Hitchcock repeatedly reminded Elder Berner that he did not have to talk with us. Once the Bible study commenced, Elder Hitchcock requested that I leave and talk with him. I replied that I was now in the middle of a Bible study. I can't help being suspicious that the Pastor may have devised the meeting with me in an effort to draw me away from the Bible study. Let it be noted, to date, this has been the one and only Bible study ever with an elder /pastor about these issues. As you recall, the invitation to follow the example of our pioneer brethren was offered to bring about resolution within the ranks of the Elders of the Willoughby SDA Church on Monday May 14th.

Monday, June 18: At the end of the business meeting, Debbie Pierce also requested that the censuring issue be discussed at this time as it is mentioned in the Church Manual. The Pastor responded with: The elders will handle it, but he would meet individually with anyone regarding this issue. Make an appointment with him. He did decide to talk with Debbie at which time she reminded him that it was only at a Church Business meeting where censuring a person could be decided. She also expressed her concern that former elders, and sometimes their wives, were attending these elders' meetings and she did not feel that this should be allowed. Debbie wanted to impress upon the Pastor that Tim was not alone in his views concerning Sabbath keeping and other doctrinal beliefs that the Pastor has presented. The Pastor said that he wanted to handle the situation with as few people as possible being involved. Why were two derogatory letters sent out to the Willoughby Church membership as a whole? The Pastor said he loved Tim, and it was not censuring, and he wanted to

avoid it happening. She told him it was “censure” no matter what he wanted to call it, and if the Pastor was going to keep Tim from discussing any issues that were different from the Pastor’s, that Chester, also should refrain from speaking about issues that were contrary, particularly Sabbath observance and other issues. He did not respond.

(Submitted by Debbie Pierce)

Monday, June 25: I received the 3rd letter from the Pastor responding to the meeting following the Business Meeting where he was rebuked by all church members present for not allowing discussion of this most important issue.

Sabbath, June 30: The Pastor spoke to some of the elders, not elders Koshel, Smithisler, or Arnett, that a new elders’ meeting would be called, and that only one hour would be allotted, and then, “never again would we discuss these issues.” This is what Elder Sjoberg told elder Koshel in a phone conversation.

Friday, July 6: I received a letter from the Pastor telling me of the elders’ meeting scheduled for Monday, July 9. The letter stated that I personally had a list of fifteen grievances with the Pastor. I never told the Pastor any such thing---Why did he write it? I had relayed to Elder Raj Attiken that collectively we, the church members, have about ten to fifteen grievances—not that I, personally, had fifteen. As I stated in this document, I had three clearly stated grievances:

The Seventh-day Adventist doctrinal position as it relates to:

Sabbath observance according to Scripture.

The established doctrinal view that the Ten Commandments were not nailed to the cross (Col:2:14-17).

Pastor Hitchcock has departed from doctrinal integrity in regards to SDA beliefs which are clearly set forth in the Bible, Spirit of Prophecy, and historical documents authored by such men as are known to have been faithful ministers of our Lord’s remnant church throughout the past 150 or so years.

Sabbath, July 7: Between Sabbath School/Worship break, I personally went to tell Pastor Hitchcock, Elder Berner, and Elder Layne that I would not be able to attend the next elders meeting. I suggested meeting the following Sunday, and Pastor Hitchcock said it would have to be postponed until next month’s elders’ meeting.

Russ Koshel would like the church body to know that he has been contacting Chester, as well as attempting to contact the elders for the past six months in an effort to settle some doctrinal issues, mainly Sabbath observance and the fictitious belief that the Ten Commandments were nailed to the cross. He has been disappointed with the general reluctance to search the scriptures on these matters. Russ expressed concern over the virtual elimination of the Church Board, and how these issues, like Tim’s “sanction,” may have been kept out of general business meeting discussions. He is also interested in finding out whether or not the Conference’s “ordination of pastors” would require pastors to support the 27 fundamental beliefs. Russ Koshel has faithfully served the Willoughby Church in the capacity of Elder, Head Deacon, and Sabbath School Supt.

Monday, July 9: Attended monthly business meeting, which had began early and ended abruptly when my wife Valerie and I arrived along with Debbie Pierce. After the meeting, I approached Elder Pat Berner in the parking lot to ask him about the letter concerning the May 11th vote to ask the conference to assist with my grievance with Elder Hitchcock. He replied, that he had no memory of such a letter. I also asked Elder Hitchcock if I could ask him about the letter as he approached me with his hand behind his back, a yellow jacket stung him. He was quite irritated, even more than before he was stung. He said, "Tim if you want a copy of the letters, I will gladly mail you a copy!" He never did send me anything pertaining either to the conference assistance vote of the elders, or my censure from preaching, teaching, or conducting prayer meeting as an Elder in the local SDA church of Willoughby Ohio. I caught Elder Sjoberg as he was about to pull out of the lot, and asked him the same question (regarding letters sent to the Conference). I received the same reply, no memory. However Valle also wanted to share with me that He eats out on the Sabbath with his family, and a well-known evangelist who was Ohio's conference evangelist always took his family out to eat on the Sabbath. Elder Pieter Bar-k-zin. Well, if this is so then I can see why many are carrying on this way in leadership positions of our church.

Wednesday, July 25: Church clerk, Valerie Arnett drafted a letter regarding the true account of events surrounding the May 11th elders meeting, where Pastor Hitchcock censured Elder Arnett. It also relates to the gossip generated by the Elders who were supportive of the Pastor in the sense that they were themselves either profaning the Sabbath or else supportive of the idea of the Ten Commandments being nailed to the cross. The gossip was about our teen-aged children, who were present at every meeting, both seeing and hearing not only Chester's doctrine, but also his attacks upon my character in front of the church family at the May 11th meeting.

Monday, July 31: Due to the un-resolved conflicts in our local church, and the apparent underlying contempt for gospel order by the Pastor and half of our present and former elders, I knew that I had to make a step, which was formal in nature. Elder Hitchcock was pushing for an end without resolution, to which I could never agree, and for which the Word of God gives no sanction. Therefore, I sent a formal letter to all the elders including Elders Attiken, and Hitchcock stating that, "I will not again ask to sit with the eight elders of Willoughby, or respond to their request to sit with them unless and until the Conference officers are present to hear my three grievances without prejudice." Four witnesses also included their letters of testimony regarding what they had both seen and heard at the May 11th meetings.

Our Lord, in Matthew 18 gave a three-step process for resolving conflicts within the body of Christ. Perhaps some may feel that these are, "take it or leave it" principles which are subject to man-made improvements such as the Ohio Conference version of grievance procedure. I'm only critical of this policy, because rather than support the intent of Matthew 18:15-18, it created a loophole for Chester Hitchcock to take himself out and away from the arena where his actions had originated. The Willoughby SDA Church is where I addressed my concerns to him, and I will admit, he did warn me, "I will not appear before the local church, I will only appear before the Conference committee." The reason I guess is because he is an ordained minister of our church, and that in some way makes him different when it comes to sin and error, but the Biblical record indicates that sin is still sin. Whether King David or Achan, Jezebel or Mary Magdalene committed it, all must come to repentance before God. As to whether or not what the Pastor was teaching and living harmonized with SDA Church doctrine, can again be easily answered from Scripture and 150 years of books, pamphlets, study materials and the Spirit of Prophecy, which show our clear doctrinal position on all points of our faith. What troubles me, is that that these are established truths, which have been settled as truth long ago.

Therefore, it is apparent that an Achan is in the camp. Sister White counseled that in her day, young ministers merely had to pick our publications to learn our message. And Paul the Apostle could say to the elders of the Church of Ephesus, “For I have not shunned to declare unto you, all the counsel of God.” Acts 20:27 I realize that this would hurt the pride of a person who wants to find some new thing that no one has ever shared from scripture. But the fact of the matter is, is that the truth is older than any of us, and it never changes. That is why it is called the Word of God, because the Author declares, “I am the Lord, I change not.” Malachi 3:6

But again, as Elder Hitchcock stated in his May 11th sermon to the Madison SDA church, “What I say might seem new to you, but not to the church.” Question: Wasn’t he just addressing the church? Oh, did he mean the church leadership way up there somewhere in Mt. Vernon, or at the GenCon headquarters? Forgive me, but Elder Hitchcock has been including a lot of people as members of his sect of Adventism. If his doctrines are endorsed by the leaders of our state, union, divisional, and general conferences, then the half of the Willoughby Church which has been praying for, and begging him to repent of his sins will have to apologize to him for not realizing that he was taught to say these things. And then leave the ranks of the SDA church as a whole, for then she would clearly be in apostasy if her leaders believe and teach such errors.

Wednesday, August 8: I received a letter from the Pastor informing me of an August 14th meeting with Elder Raj Attiken. (Only the local elders past and present were to attend).

Tuesday, August 14: Elder Attiken came to our church and met with the elders. He permitted no Bible discussion. He said that 6 pastors validated Chester, however their names, church districts, and the process by which Elder Hitchcock was validated, weren’t discussed. He also said, “We will not discuss theology, this is not a theological problem.” Elder Attiken merely came to give this report, which is all it was. He had not come to hear the concerns I had along with half the church family had about Chester’s “theology.” He had come to put an end to the process of Matthew 18:15-18. Elder Hitchcock then gloated, and said he had in effect, won the standoff. But he said, “I want a win-win situation, I want Elder Arnett to go up front with me in front of the church and say, I don’t agree with Pastor Hitchcock, but I am willing to work with him.”

I then responded, “Chester, if I did that then I would be participating in your sins. I’ve told you before that I am convicted that this is a sin issue.” To this, Chester turned to Elder Attiken and asked what they could do now as the church elders.” Then Elder Bill Hartman blurted out what Chester was really wanting to ask for, “If Tim doesn’t want to work with the Pastor, then let’s disfellowship him.” I then said, “If you’re going to disfellowship me, then you will have to do it in front of the church. You will have to tell the church what my sin is, that I am being disciplined for.” To this Elder Attiken said something I felt wasn’t relative to what we were presently discussing, which was disfellowshipping Tim Arnett.

Ohio Conference President Attiken admonished us by saying, “I must warn you, that Willoughby will be removed from the sisterhood of churches if you make a stand on the Sabbath observance issue.” I thought, wow! Is that a threat? Then I asked him. “Elder Attiken, is that a threat? He never responded and then the meeting digressed into petty nonsensical commentary. I was also threatened at this meeting with physical violence by two of the elders. I will not openly state their names (God knoweth) suffice it to say, that this is the lowest form of debasement any Christian can go, to actually threaten to punch out another brother in Christ. Elder Attiken then said we would conclude with prayer, at which time I stood to leave.

Why would I choose to leave at this point you ask? Long ago the Lord convicted me as to the importance of putting all sin under the blood of Christ before coming into His presence, or else all I say is for nothing. Proverbs 28:9, 13 says, He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination. He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.” This meeting wasn’t what the Lord intended. There wasn’t resolution, only a covering of sins. Again I quote the word of wisdom, “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy.” Verse 13.

How could I participate any further in this meeting when I didn’t even get to present my grievance? Why did the Conference leadership of our Church come in, and not address the valid concerns of the membership of our Church members. Obviously, it is because they were forcing the new theology that they believed, down our throats. Someone else got their way, and I’m not talking about anyone who was seen with eyes at this meeting. The spirit of Satan was present, and clearly carried the day, because the fruits of the carnal mind which wars against God’s law, and gospel order was apparent in that no toleration of the facts were allowed to be presented.

Conference Letter dated August 15: I wish to reply to the statements made by the Conference President concerning his perception of what occurred on August 14th.

Closure of discussion on these “issues of concern” does not represent the resolution called for in Matthew 18:15-18. He might feel he has brought closure, (a sociological term for concluding something) but how can sin be concluded within the confines of the church. It cannot remain, for St. Paul told the Corinthian church to “purge out the old leaven, and sin shall not have dominion over you.” 1 Corinthians 5:7; Ezekiel 20:20,21 and 38; Romans 6:14.

The phrase, “allegations of theological error” as used in the letter wasn’t discussed at this meeting. Neither were my three grievances. Had we discussed them, I’m sure they would have been mentioned point by point in the Conference Presidents letter. This letter has given the impression to all the church members that these issues were discussed when in fact they were not.

Validation is meaningless without substance. What was Chester asked? Elder Hitchcock, “Did you in fact publish materials for Bible study, that the Ten Commandments were nailed firmly to the cross? Is it true that you are teaching your congregation that it is proper to grocery shop or eat in restaurants on the LORD’S, HOLY SABBATH DAY? None of the facts were presented to us and therefore cannot constitute a true and honest report of how Elder Hitchcock was validated. There are no documents, reports, nothing at all to verify what the Elder Attiken said. This is called a power play, a manipulation on a grand scale of what is the truth, and what is true gospel order in the Church of Jesus Christ. Only in the judgment, will the truth be known.

August 15th, The letter from Conference President Raj Attiken was read by Elder Bill Hartman to a group of people who hadn’t been in Church for decades. Why they were there, only those who invited them know. But in the end, the Church voted to accept Sin and an apostate as their leader, instead of Jesus Christ. Elder Bill Hartman also indicted the Columbia Union as being part of this apostasy, saying that it was their officers who validated Chester Hitchcock.

Sadly, the faithful members who had not compromised their faith now saw no other alternative than to separate from the Willoughby SDA congregation. We never intended on dropping our membership, for we were practicing members of the faith, not just attendees. At our next scheduled Church board meeting, the following people resigned from their offices that they held that year (2001).

Timothy Lee Arnett- from Head Elder, Sabbath School Teacher and Community Services Assistant

Valerie Arnett- from Community Services Director and Church Clerk

Ray Smithisler- Elder

Russ Koshel-Sabbath School Superintendant

Debbie Pierce-Interest Coordinator

Lisa Salamone-Community Services

At this Church board meeting, the pastor asked me point blank, whether I was also dropping my membership from the SDA Church, to which I replied, "I will always be a Seventh Day Adventist.!" One by one, each of us formally resigned, with not one objection I might add.

At the conclusion of this meeting Sister Debbie Pierce was gathering her personal belongings, which were both gifts and evangelistic materials that she worked on at Church to give to people during birthdays and holidays. (She said she wanted to take them home because she did not for see returning to the Willoughby Church). I had left the building, and the door was locked behind me, but then I noticed the women being harassed by pastor Hitchcock, the treasurer John Huffman, and Elder Bill Hartman. The door flew opened and out came Lisa Salamone with some of Debbie's things. I reentered the building and enquired as to what was going on. Then I was told that the Willoughby Police had been called. I asked why they were called, and then they pulled up. This was so very embarrassing to have to go through this. The pastor went outside and told the police that we were no longer members of the Church, which was a lie. The community at large was most likely surprised to see patrol cars surrounding our building with lights flashing in the night. Elder Hitchcock is the one who bears the responsibility for all these horrible occurrences.

After that night, we knew that we would never be able to return, and we were asked never to return also. Later on, letters were sent out, to try to shame us into returning to their Church, and their beliefs.

April 16th, 2002, A letter was sent saying that they had to keep Church records in order (some excuse), and that we needed to decide what we were going to do. And then a few months latter, we were formally dropped from the roles of the Church without a hearing or anything. Nearly twenty faithful Adventists were dropped, which included children as well who were away at school and had nothing to do with these events. My wife's grandmother who had had brain surgery, and was in a nursing home, was also cut off. This was very cruel, and unjust. All this, to keep an unqualified minister in the pulpit, who has preached error and profaned the Sabbath of the Lord, our God. When Sister White was told the value of a soul, the angel said to look at the cross. Today, one sinner is worth more than twenty saints.

I am still waiting for justice from the Church leadership of Seventh Day Adventists, but doubt that it'll ever occur. It is obvious that apostasy is in the SDA organization, and that it is an organized apostasy.

In His Service,
Elder Tim Arnett

Elder Timothy Lee Arnett

7thDay Christian Church of Adventist Believers

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I wish to extend my thanks to the following people for their faithfulness to Jesus and His truth and for their prayers, encouragement, and support:

The Arnetts		Pastor Joseph	The White Estate,
Debbie and Bob Pierce	O'Brien		Larry Crews
The Salamones	3ABN)	(Prayerline @	Elder Doug Batchelor
The Preslars			(Leader/
The Fields	Smithisler	Elder R.	Speaker @ Amazing
Lois Johnson		Elder Koshel and Jackie	Facts)
Helen Konorosky		Elder G. Brown	Elder J.N. Andrew
Sherri Brown		Elder J.	(Author/
Pastor Fritz	Dimanyuk		Missionary, History of
Krieger		Elder D. Rogers	the Sabbath
		Elder G. Petrjck	

c.c. Willoughby Church Members
Ohio Conference

Columbia Union

N.A.D

G.C.S.D.A