

Waymarks 10000

Those who have read my autobiography know the background of what happened on one spring day in 1977, when I went upstairs into the attic of our little country home in southern Illinois, knelt down, and told God I was giving Him the rest of my life.

I already loved Him, but this was a deeper commitment. Henceforth, aside from time for my family, I was going to spend all my hours working exclusively for the Lord.

The decision was immediately made to go back on the radio, with a weekly broadcast of dynamic *Great Controversy* readings, as I had done in 1963-1964. There were absolutely no funds to work with; but I had learned, from earlier years of living and working by faith, that my task was to do my appointed work—and my kindly Father would care for the details.

Skipping over some of what followed (you can find it all in my book: *The Story of My Life, 120 pp., \$7.95 + \$1.50 p&h*), the first broadcast started in September 1977, using part of a nest egg of \$400, which a friend donated for air time. By the end of the month, I decided to start a newsletter to any supporters I might have, telling them what was happening.

But what should I call the newsletter? I discovered, as I have found ever since, that when I prayed the Lord gave me the best name to use. An old song by Frank Belden (Ellen White's nephew) came to mind: *Look for the Waymarks as You Journey On*. You will find it in *Christ in Song 586, Church Hymnal 671, and Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal 596*).

I had a typewriter which I had purchased new in the late 1960s; and, looking around, I found some old carbon paper my mother had given me 20 years before. So I interleaved five sheets of carbon paper between six sheets of paper and typed a full page. That gave me enough copies for my supporters, plus a few extra.

Then I mailed out the first issue of *Waymarks*. It carried an October 1977 date. As I recall, there were three or four folk sending a little money to help out by that time.

This continued on for a time. By January 1978, the broadcasts had been going for three months,

and about 12 broadcasts had already aired. I was dickering with radio stations for possible expansion. That, of course, was done by faith; I had no certainty that, from month to month, I could keep even one station going.

January was a great turning point for *Waymarks*. It was the last month I typed one-page carbon copies. I clearly recall that I had eleven donors by that month. So I had to type the newsletter three times in order to get enough copies to mail out. That left me with four extra copies.

Then, after mailing the newsletters, in the back of the stationery store in Harrisburg, I noticed some high-priced photocopiers. At least I thought they were high priced! a couple thousand dollars for just one! Looking at them, I thought I would never own one of those things; economy was needed in the Lord's work and they were just too expensive.

But the sales clerk mentioned, in passing as he was ringing up a ream of paper I was purchasing, that the store let selected friends make copies on their photocopiers for 5 cents a copy. Well, I was a selected friend, for I purchased stationery supplies there.

And that was the story of how I discovered the photocopier. I went home and put the old carbon paper back in a file folder and tucked it deep into a drawer. I had learned of a new way to publish *Waymarks*.

The months passed, and I kept working on the broadcasts. All this is told in my autobiography. My concern at this time was to overcome a variety of obstacles in making broadcast tapes and keeping them on the air.

But, in the summer of 1978, the thought came to mind that it would be a good idea to reprint something from the Spirit of Prophecy on a sheet of paper for distribution. Thinking about it, it seemed well to put all, or most, of *The Sufferings of Christ*, by Ellen White, into a single 11 x 17 tract.

I had no typesetting equipment, and probably could never afford any. But I could make photocopies in town. So I tried to prepare a layout of portions of the book. But that afternoon as I looked at the result, it was clearly a poor representation of God's Word. The type was reduced, hard to read,

and photocopy material had to be twisted sideways on the sheet in order to make everything fit.

That night, as I retired, I prayed to my wonderful heavenly Father. Surely, there must be a way that all this excellent material could be printed in inexpensive format for easy distribution. Everyone needed the Spirit of Prophecy writings!

Climbing into bed, as I lay there, the thought came to check on IBM Selectric Composers. Years before, in eastern Washington, I had a friend who had purchased one that used 7-inch tape reels. But, as I recalled, he paid a lot of money for it. Then a picture, of how wonderfully such a machine could prepare Sabbath tracts and Spirit of Prophecy compilations on 11 x 17 sheets, came before me. Was it possible that I could somehow obtain something like this?

The next day, I drove to Evansville, Indiana, the nearest IBM dealer, and was there given a demonstration of an IBM Selectric Composer. A rather small, black, stand-alone machine; it had replaced the earlier, clumsy Composer model my friend in eastern Washington earlier had. No longer were the 7-inch reel tapes needed to store memory.

But the price of this brand new machine was \$12,000, plus tax. I drove home.

The months passed; and, although some months were skipped, issues of *Waymarks* continued to made on my typewriter, photocopied, and mailed out. Eventually, my mailing list grew to about 20, then 25.

As discussed in detail in my autobiography, in November 1978, accompanied by my oldest daughter, Linda, I drove to the home of an elderly widow in Arkansas, who offered to let me make radio recordings in her home during the winter months. I had no other warm place in which to make them.

At about that time, the strong conviction came over me—that the written word was more powerful than the spoken word. I continue to hold that belief to this day. What is spoken goes out in the air, and the hearers soon forget it. What is written is read over and over again, then passed on to still others to read. Gradually, the conviction deepened, that I should write instead of broadcast.

One might wonder why I would not continue doing both. The problem was that I was working essentially alone. I could not work at the radio broadcasts and carry on a serious writing and publication schedule also. But the changeover did not occur all at once.

While in Arkansas, a friend in Ardmore, Oklahoma, phoned and told me of a man in that state who was occasionally willing to help Adventist projects.

So one spring day, Linda and I drove past Tulsa

to his country home. We stayed there that night; and, the next morning, I presented my project to him. I wanted to purchase some used printing equipment and, hopefully, some kind of typesetting machine.

He paused for a moment, and then said that, in a few months, he would give me \$10,000 for my publishing project. But, he added, not a dime more. And he never did. That faithful brother and his wife are now at rest in the Lord. I will meet them again later and tell them what their money got started.

A new IBM Composer were obviously out of the question, but was there not the possibility of purchasing a used model? Checking into this, I contacted a man on Long Island, New York, who bought and sold used Composers and fonts.

Arriving back in Illinois that spring, two \$5,000 checks eventually came in the mail from our friend in Oklahoma. A secondhand Composer would cost \$8,000; yet I knew that, without some type of useable type composition device, I could not accomplish what was needed.

So I contracted to purchase one from New York. I clearly recall the day I went down to a bank, in Harrisburg, and cashed those checks. I had \$10,000 in cash in my pocket. I had never seen so much money in my life, and was quite nervous. Then I drove to the airport, at Marion, to get the Composer. It was a COD arrangement; and I feared that, as I handed over the \$8,000, that I might be getting a lemon which would never work. From what I later learned about how things are done in New York City, it was a very real fear.

But it did work, just fine. Acquiring that typesetting machine in July 1979, I immediately set to work. One project consisted of Sabbath tracts; the other was the Spirit of Prophecy compilations which I considered to be urgently needed.

Yet I had no place to work. Without going into detail, my sister-in-law, Fay, who lived a mile down the road purchased a small two-section, one-room, former schoolhouse and parked it on her property; she told me I could use it free of charge. Throughout the fall and winter of 1979-1980, I prayed for funds for a press, folder, and plate-processing equipment; I began typing material for tracts.

One day, I pasted up my first 11 x 17 tract layout. It was *Out of the Cities [RS-1]* and included most of the booklet, *Country Living*. As I stood there, looking at the finished job, Fay walked in and I showed it to her. Deeply moved, her eyes filled with tears.

Little by little we were moving forward. And, little by little, issues of *Waymarks* kept being mailed out. Of course, they were not printed. But now they were being typeset on the Selectric Composer. When each

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one was completed. I would make photocopies in town at that stationery store, bring them back home, fold them by hand, put them in envelopes, hand-write addresses, and mail them out.

Fortunately, I had my children to help me in the office by this time. Ellen (named after our favorite author) would help me receipt donations, make radio tape copies, and mail them off.

Eventually, we were able to purchase a used Multilith 1250 from a firm in St. Louis. Now, we could print. But, oh, did we have problems with that printing press! Mark, only about 11 at the time, helped me with the printing. I prayed that God would give him talent for what he was doing. That prayer was answered. Mark did his best; and he became very capable at everything he attempted thereafter. Eventually, we traded that press in on a used A.B. Dick and had no further press problems.

But, try as we might, we could not get enough money together to purchase a good, used folding machine. So everything we sent out we had to fold by hand. Because we lacked a power cutter, everything we cut had to be cut with a utility knife. (One of these projects was a complete set of 5½ x 8½ Sabbath tracts.)

Every possible problem, hindrance, and delay occurred. I wondered, at the time, why we had so many problems; but, eventually, I realized that it was preparing us for the future. No matter what happens, we just keep going. It has become a way of life.

But, all the while, I kept typesetting and pasting up tracts. One afternoon, as I was typing, Ellen walked over to me. She had been sitting at a table as she worked. A friend in Washington State had sent us some audiotapes and Ellen, with earphones on, listened to them as she worked.

“Daddy,” she said, “You’ve got to hear this!”

“I don’t have time,” I replied and kept typing. Soon she said it again, “Daddy, you’ve got to hear this!” “I don’t have time,” was the response.

Then she walked over, while I was typing, and clamped the earphones to my ears. Before taking them off, I heard a snatch of something unusual.

Soon she said, “Daddy, you’ve just got to hear this!” Walking over, she claimed the earphones on my ears once again. “Marching, marching, always marching backwards!” I listened a little more. The guy was tearing down our Sanctuary message!

Taking off the earphones, I told her “I will listen to that tape as soon as I finished this tract.”

It was Desmond Ford, giving his October 1979 forum lecture at Pacific Union College. In it, he ripped apart a number of our historic beliefs.

The date: about February 1980. Since June 1979, I had completed the typing and layout of 23

missionary tracts on the Bible Sabbath (*BS-1-23*), 16 tracts from *Great Controversy* (*GC-1-16*), and 5 key tracts from *Great Controversy* (*FC-1-5*). (The night I completed the 16 *Great Controversy* tracts, it flashed into mind how I could put the key sections of it all into a few tracts. That was how the 5 *Final Crisis Series* tracts came to be. Consisting of 60 pages from *Great Controversy*, they are now in the back half of our books, *Shelter in the Storm* and *Mark of the Beast*). Also completed was *IC-1-2* (Spirit of Prophecy compilations on overcoming sin) and *RS-1-2* (Spirit of Prophecy standards for our people).

So I listened to that tape Ellen brought me. It made my head whirl. Years had passed since my graduation with three degrees after seven years at college and our Adventist Seminary. But whatever needed to be done must be tackled. I knelt and asked for wisdom. Then I sat down at the typesetting machine, listened to a short segment of the tape, typed it out and commented on it. I was stunned to discover that everything I heard could be answered! Fortunately, I was well-versed in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, but there was something more. I felt the hand of God in this.

The completed study, which I titled, *How Firm Our Foundation*, was 8 tracts in length (*FF-8-15*). It completely disproved Ford’s lecture. I then went on and prepared 30 tracts, providing additional refutation of his new theology errors, and called them the *Firm Foundation Series* (*FF-1-30*). Ron Spear later thanked me profusely for my work; and, later when he moved to Hope, he used the title for the name of his magazine.

From the day I knelt and asked for help in replying to Ford’s tapes, I have had no trouble writing on any subject. God does the work and I cooperate. But is not that the way it is for all of us? Nothing can be done by ourselves. We were not made to function in isolation from our Creator.

One afternoon, Jeanine, an Adventist lady who lived in the area stopped in to see what we were doing. An earnest worker, she saw we were laboriously cutting paper by hand. Offering to help, she spent the rest of the afternoon doing it for us. The next day she came back; and, from then on, she helped us all the time. Soon, we were able to hire both Jeanine and her husband Charles. They were extremely faithful and dedicated helpers.

One day, Lela Campbell walked in. An elderly lady who lived with Fay, she wanted to see what was happening here. We set her to work putting labels on envelopes by hand. Whereas normally she lay awake for hours worrying about imaginary burglars breaking in; that night, she dropped off to sleep immediately. Awaking fresh the next morning, she

decided to help us every day. And she did just that, for several years until she moved to a nursing home in Michigan.

By the spring of 1980, we stopped the radio broadcasts. They could have been continued, but I did not have time for them and it was obvious that another work had been given me.

(By this time, we were airing in Pennsylvania; Washington State; XERF, which blanketed southern California; and WWL in New Orleans—the most powerful radio station in America. Friends in southern Illinois said they could hear it.)

At last, by May 1980, we were able to get enough money together to purchase a \$3,000 Baum folder. This was the final piece of equipment we needed in order to do serious publishing. Were we busy printing and folding tracts!

The initial 30 tracts in the *Firm Foundation Series* had just been completed. In all, by the end of May, 78 11 x 17 tracts were ready for the press.

The timing of all this was exquisite. The Glacier View meetings were to be held in July, during which time leading church leaders and Bible teachers from the world field could decide what should be done with Ford. Our *Firm Foundation* tracts (now in our 320-page *New Theology Tractbook*, \$24.00 + \$2.00 p&h) had the answers. So I mailed a couple large boxfuls of the 30 tracts to the General Conference, to be given to the men who would be attending those meetings.

You will smile at my naiveté. Later, I did also. The boxes were sent to the office of President Neal C. Wilson, with a letter asking him to distribute them.

Later, in September, the thought occurred to phone the president's office and inquire if those tracts had been taken to Glacier View and distributed. I learned from Wilson's personal secretary that, incredibly, the boxes were still setting on the floor in her office! She said she surely wished someone would get them out of there, for they were in the way. Extremely thankful that the thousands of tracts had not been burned, I told her to mail them back and I would pay the postage. Later those tracts were sent out to people asking for them.

But, in June, now that we had the press and folder, there was another task to do: the mailing out of the first printed issue of *Waymarks*. It was Number 18, and bore the date, "July '80." Only a year and a half had elapsed since I had stopped preparing copies of *Waymarks* with carbon paper.

Emblazoned across the top of every printed tract, from WM-18 through WM-91, were the words

"Pilgrims Waymarks." But that issue (September 25, 1984) was the first in an extensive series on the plight of over a thousand faithful Hungarians who had been ejected from the Adventist Church because they upheld Spirit of Prophecy principles. I was so busy preparing tracts, that the bannerhead was forgotten.

Yet the little *Waymarks* tracts continued, year after year. However, until 1994, just as many non-*Waymarks* tracts were being printed. In all, there were 19 tract series with issues of concern to the church; *Waymarks* was only one. In addition, there were 9 other tract series which comprised missionary hand-out materials for non-Adventists.

The tract, you now have in hand, is numbered "WM-1000." It has been slightly over 20 years since WM-18 was released.

Looking through my *Master Tract List*, I see that the non-*Waymarks* tracts fill nine pages, and the *Waymarks* tracts fill eleven. If we include *Checkpoints*, *Inspirational Nuggets* (the lengthy predecessor of *Checkpoints*), *Songs in the Night*, and the many ad sheets—none of which are included in the *Master Tract List*,—we would probably arrive at a figure of about 2,500 titles.

But numbers matter little. All that counts is to help one another get to heaven and to provide you with the needed missionary materials to help others find the path. Historic Seventh-day Adventism is the greatest message in the world. Without the Spirit of Prophecy, we would really be in trouble today, with all the errors and apostasy floating around!

From early 1984 onward, I have been busy writing and preparing books. Why? Gradually, I realized that books are more durable than tracts,—especially for those not of our faith.

Will we ever reach *Waymarks 2000*? I doubt it. Long before that happens, we will all be with Jesus.

May our kind Father bless and keep you. I would not have prepared this tract; for, as you probably know, I do not talk much about myself. But last month, when I realized that the next tract was to be WM-1000, it seemed appropriate to dedicate that tract to a review of

What God hath wrought.

—vf

"The great waymarks of truth, showing us our bearings in prophetic history, are to be carefully guarded, lest they be torn down, and replaced with theories that would bring confusion rather than genuine light."—2 *Selected Messages*, 101 (cf. 1SM 208, GW 103, Ev 223, 3T 440).