

Criticizing a Messenger

In 1888, at a General Conference Session of Seventh-day Adventists, two young ministers, A.T. Jones (pictured to the right), and E.J. Waggoner presented some studies on “righteousness by faith” which were not received very well by many of the leading brethren. In fact, the brethren treated them with criticism, suspicion, and contempt.



However, Ellen White, who was at the conference, saw the beauty of truth in their presentations, and heartily supported them. She declared their message to be “the beginning of the loud cry” (*Review and Herald*, November 22, 1892) and “the third angel’s message in verity” (*Review and Herald*, April 1, 1890). Because of her support, the critical brethren started doubting her as well, murmuring that she was secretly influenced by these men, and was swayed by their arguments.

This saddened Ellen White, for she saw that Satan was insinuating himself through these critical brethren, to shut out the light that the Holy Spirit wanted to bring to the church. She later spoke of it as the saddest time of her life (*The 1888 Materials*, ch. 19, p. 179), and the lowest point for the denomination (*The 1888 Materials*, ch. 211, p. 1796).

However, for a year or two after 1888, she traveled with Waggoner and Jones to camp meetings around the USA, bearing her testimony with theirs. She hoped that if the leaders were reluctant to take up this message, that perhaps the common people would receive it gladly. And many of them did.

Now regarding the message itself, in the Adventist understanding, the term “loud cry” refers to the worldwide warning given in *Revelation* 18:1-4, which is the last message given to the world before Christ’s second advent, and which finishes the work that Jesus assigned to the church in the following

passage:

Matthew 24

¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

This was the message that the brethren refused to accept—the very gift of the Holy Spirit that Adventists were looking forward to, and praying for. But how could this be?

The problem was that the works of many in the church comprised an “Ishmael”, a child of the flesh, and the Lord, through Waggoner and Jones, was offering them an “Isaac” instead. But their response was similar to Abraham’s (only without the humility and repentance of Abraham): “Oh that Ishmael might live before you!”

It was too great a sacrifice to admit that they, who thought themselves to have the truth for that time, and who had labored and sacrificed to build it up, had actually missed the very heart of the message, and were therefore, “blind leaders of the blind.”

Some years later, many of those who were critical did openly repent of their attitudes and actions at that conference. But the “revenge upon sin” that should have marked a true, deep repentance, did not follow. There were very few among the ministers who really took up the gospel message these two men were presenting and helped them to present it. In 1892, Ellen White described the problem like this:

Testimonies to Ministers, p. 467

The prejudices and opinions that prevailed at Minneapolis are not dead by any means; the seeds sown there in some hearts are ready to spring into life and bear a like harvest. The tops have been cut down, but the roots have never been eradicated, and they still bear their unholy fruit to poison the judgment, pervert the perceptions, and blind the understanding of those with whom you connect, in regard to the message and the messengers.

Waggoner and Jones continued in denominational work for about 15 more years, until the early 1900's, writing, preaching, and ministering. Shortly after the turn of the century, Waggoner got into some marriage difficulties, and Jones became antagonistic towards the church leadership. These difficulties marked the end of their service to the church. Their unique gospel emphasis, blending the power of Christ with the high standard of purity and perfection required to meet the Lord at His return, was soon lost.

As the 1900's wore on, their writings were not republished, nor re-studied, and their history was mostly forgotten (we should mention that there was one man who gave the trumpet a clear sound during this stark period: Meade MacGuire).

This neglect put the church in a dangerous position, because when God sends a message, it is to heal the church and to remove spiritual blindness. When this healing is not joyfully received and embraced, then the blindness deepens, and the chance of being deceived by a counterfeit gospel increases. This danger is well expressed in the following Bible principle:

2 Thessalonians 2

¹⁰ ...because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

¹¹ And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.

And sure enough, the delusion was on its way. Here is how it developed, year by year, and how the Lord attempted to meet it (red background is negative, green background is positive):

1947: a book on the history of Ellen White's influence in the Adventist church was published: *The Fruitage of Spiritual Gifts* by L.H. Christian. This book had some chapters which spoke of the 1888 conference, where the author was in attendance as a young man of about 17 years of age. But his inter-

pretation of the conference is so out-of-harmony with the testimonies of Ellen White as to be incredible. He charges the messengers with being extreme, argumentative, and fanatical. One of the men who resisted the message (J.H. Morrison), and even wanted to debate against Waggoner, he holds up as “honored.” This was the first harbinger of worse things to come.

1949: *Captains of the Host*, by Arthur Spalding is published. It was a history of Adventism. There were some pages devoted to 1888, but Spalding's verdict is that it was “the rancors aroused by personalities, much more than the differences in beliefs, which caused the difficulty.” He also claims that Adventists always believed in justification by faith, they just didn't quite live it as good as they should have. He charges Waggoner and Jones with “conceit and arrogance”, and accuses them of “extreme statements” and of “failing to show humility and love.” Thus by attacking supposed faults of the messengers, he shows an utter incapacity to appreciate the “loud cry” and “latter rain” message that they were bringing. But the Lord would not let this delusion continue unchallenged...

1950: Robert Wieland and Donald Short, two ministers stationed as missionaries in Africa, presented a thesis to the General Conference entitled *1888 Re-Examined*, which appealed to the leading men to repent of the church's rejection of that message, and return to it's glorious light. Their treatise was considered, then rejected with the assertion that the “Holy Spirit was already being poured on the church” hence there was no need to go back to the 1888 message.

1952: Wieland and Short prepared an appeal to reconsider the decision, which they presented to the General Conference.

1955: the church sent some of its leaders to dialogue with prominent evangelical leaders. The Adventist men were eager to show that they were indeed doctrinally sound on the key

areas of the evangelical faith. But in their presentations, they compromised some essential Adventist doctrines, such as the atonement in the Most Holy Place, the role and authority of Ellen White's writings, and the humanity of Christ. These particular compromises were then written up in books, and changes were made to other published works, such as *Bible Readings for the Home*, to reflect the new views. But the Lord again sought to counter these dangerous compromises...

1955: Robert Brinsmead enrolled in Avondale College, Australia, to study theology. He was to emerge as a major figure in the "Awakening Movement", a revival of the original Adventist teachings on the "everlasting gospel and the judgment," and with a strong 1888 emphasis. This movement was destined to collide head-on with the new compromising evangelical views.

1955: Fred Wright, an Australian Adventist, teaching in New Zealand at the time, discovered and experienced the 1888 gospel of deliverance from the bondage of sin, after over a decade of trying and failing to find a lasting victory over his evil temper. Soon, others saw the change in him and were asking for Bible studies. For a while, he was loosely associated with the Brinsmead Awakening. His local church asked him to stop teaching others his doctrine, but he could not do this because it was the gospel that saved him. So he was disfellowshipped from the Seventh-day Adventist church. But the requests for studies continued to increase, and he experienced a call from God to full-time ministry. He was reluctant to accept this at first, but after the Lord met the conditions he requested, he put himself fully into the work. His ministry eventually led to the formation of *The Sabbath Rest Advent Church*.

1957: the church published *Questions on Doctrine*, a result of the evangelical conferences, and written by Leroy Froom and fourteen other leading men. It presented the new compromising views of the sanctuary and nature of Christ.

1957: At the age of 82, one of the last living witnesses of 1888, Meade MacGuire, publishes *Lambs Among Wolves*, a book that clearly teaches the 1888 gospel message.

1958: the General Conference published its second rejection of Wieland and Short's appeal to reconsider the 1888 message, titled *A Further Appraisal of 1888 Re-Examined*. They had requested that Wieland and Short not distribute their manuscript, but somehow one copy got out, and...

1959: A.L. Hudson put all the documents together (*1888 Re-Examined* and all the correspondence concerning it) and titled it *A Warning and its Reception*. This was initially presented to the President of the North Pacific Union Conference in an attempt to bring the 1888 Message to their attention, after failed attempts at the General Conference level. This also failed and the complete publication was then printed and distributed widely to church members.

1959: M.L. Andreasen, one of the leading theologians in the church, joined the fray by protesting the changes to the historic doctrines which were in the book *Questions on Doctrine*. His protests were published in a number of pamphlets called *Letters to the Churches*. He saw these deviations as the beginning of a fulfillment of Ellen White's prophecy that there would be an "omega of apostasy" that would enter the church (the "alpha of apostasy" being the pantheistic teachings that John Harvey Kellogg had tried to introduce in the early 1900's). He said:

"Our members are largely unaware of the conditions existing, and every effort is being made to keep them in ignorance. Orders have been issued to keep everything secret, and it will be noted that even at the late General Conference session (1958) no report was given of our leaders' trafficking with the evangelicals and making alliances with them. Our officials are playing with fire, and the resulting conflagration will fulfill the prediction that the coming Omega 'will be of a most startling nature.'"

1959: Robert Brinsmead published his first book, *God's Eternal Purpose*, which strongly emphasized the traditional Adventist view of the atonement in the Most Holy Place of the Sanctuary in heaven, combined with the 1888 teaching of Christ's temptation in sinful human nature which gave us the ability to overcome all sin, and the necessity of the last generation to reach perfection through Christ's ministry in the Most Holy Place. These were, of course, the very points that the new evangelical teachings had denied!

1960: the Australasian division published a review of Brinsmead's writings, casting them in a negative light.

1960: Walter Martin, one of the evangelicals whom the Adventist leaders met with, published *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism*, a book recognizing the new views of Adventist doctrine, and declaring Adventists to be a Christian body, and that the men he met with to be "brothers in Christ."

1961: R.F. Cottrell and a General Conference committee met with Robert and John Brinsmead to discuss their "Awakening" revival teachings. The finished report was entitled *Errors of the Brinsmead Teachings*, and continued to keep the controversy over righteousness by faith and 1888 unresolved.

1961: the Brinsmead brothers were disfellowshipped from the Adventist Church for their views and agitation on Righteousness by Faith and Christian character perfection.

1962: M.L. Andreasen passes away. During the three years of his involvement in the controversy, his ministerial credentials and pension were revoked by the church, but then were later reinstated. There was a rumor that he changed his views, but a letter written before his death clearly states, "I did not recant!"

1962: a book is published: *By Faith Alone* by Norval F. Pease. This book attempted to rebut *1888 Re-Examined* and teaches that the 1888 message is being taught by the church,

and is the same as the message of justification as taught in the creeds of the Protestant churches. An interesting conclusion, since Adventists traditionally taught that Protestants became Babylon in 1844, by their rejection of the “everlasting gospel” of Revelation 14. How then could they have rejected the gospel, and yet had it all along anyway? One must be a theologian to answer such questions.

1966: another book covering the history of 1888 is published, *Through Crisis to Victory, 1888-1901* by A.V. Olson. It is endorsed by the EGW Estate as an answer to Wieland & Short’s *1888 Re-Examined*. It proposes that by 1901, all the opposition to 1888 was overcome and the whole experience was one of complete victory (hence the title of the book). This seems quite contrary to what Ellen White wrote in 1901:

Letter to P.T. Magan, December 7, 1901

We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children Israel, but for Christ’s sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequences of their own wrong course of action.

Donald Short remarked to this that if 1901 was victory, then where is the latter rain? He observed that if we don’t accept the responsibility for the delay in the latter rain, then we end up blaming God; just what Ellen White said would be adding “sin to sin.”

1971: *Movement of Destiny* by LeRoy Froom is published, one of the last and most vigorous attempts to defend 1888 as a “great victory” and “step forward”. But the statements from Ellen White cannot be set aside, and besides, where’s that “latter rain?”

1972: Wieland and Short publish *An Explicit Confession Due the Church* in reply to Froom’s *Movement of Destiny*, rebutting his position on the 1888 message, and documenting that the message was not accepted in 1888 by many in positions of responsibility in the Church.

Finally, after many more years of conflict over the different issues raised by these controversies, George Knight published a biography of A.T. Jones, apparently just in time for the 1988 centennial celebration of 1888. This was not an unbiased biography, for the author stated his intent in the *Adventist Currents* magazine:

“I was doing my best to demonstrate that Jones was aberrant from beginning to end.” - *Adventist Currents*, April 1988, p. 43

While bringing out a lot of interesting details about Jones' life, it also carried a large share of evil insinuation, and criticism against Jones. I won't go into all these charges here, as it is not necessary. We only have to ask, is this the way God expects us to treat His messengers? Are we free to make historical criticism and conjecture without any testimony of appreciation for the good that the Lord tried to send to us through them? This is the question I will deal with.

It is a fact, as mentioned earlier, that Jones' later life after the early 1900's was filled with antagonism towards the church. This fact is well sustained from the testimonies and letters of Ellen White to him. One example is found in the book *Lessons from the Reformation* by Jones. This book has some good principles, but in it he tries to make the point that the church should not have a formal organization, or even a name. Clearly this is against what God led the Adventist church to do in the 1850's and thereafter.

We can honestly acknowledge these things without casting doubt upon the message the Lord sent through him in earlier years. At the time when Jones started becoming critical, there was plenty of warning from God that he was not to be trusted as the messenger of God anymore. Christ does not leave us without warning when His chosen ones take themselves out of His hand.

The problem with George Knight's assessment is twofold:

1. George Knight makes these judgments and criticisms of Jones during the time when Jones was still active as God's messenger (which I take, from the tenor of Jones' writings, to be about 1888 to around 1901).
2. Ellen White, except for her later counsels regarding the post-1901 Jones, does not make this kind of assessment of Jones' character.

Ellen White made it abundantly clear that there was a huge responsibility resting on the church to accept wholeheartedly the message of Waggoner and Jones. And she also saw the ways in which people would try to circumvent the importance of that message. It was twofold:

1. They would criticize and pick flaws in the characters of the men who brought the message, and
2. They would use any actual sins or failings of these men to dismiss the message, or prove that it was therefore a dangerous message (insinuating that the message led them into sin).

This kind of putting aside of the message because of the weakness of the messengers, she called a "fatal delusion":

Letter 24, 1892, p. 5 (To Elder Uriah Smith, Sept. 19, 1892):

It is quite possible that Elders Jones and Waggoner may be overthrown by the temptations of the enemy; but if they should be, this would not prove that they had had no message from God, or that the work that they had done was all a mistake.

But should this happen, how many would take this position, and enter into a **fatal delusion** because they are not under the control of the Spirit of God. They walk in the sparks of their own kindling, and cannot distinguish between the fire they have kindled, and the light which God has given, and they walk in blindness as did the Jews.

I know that this is the very position many would take if either of these men were to fall, and I pray that these men upon

whom God has laid the burden of a solemn work, may be able to give the trumpet a certain sound, and honor God at every step, and that their path at every step may grow brighter and brighter until the close of time.

Quite simply put, the aim is to put on fig leaves to hide our nakedness. Ellen White describes it this way:

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 1, p. 1084:

This is the covering that the transgressors of the law of God have used since the days of Adam and Eve's disobedience. They have sewed together fig-leaves to cover their nakedness, caused by transgression. The fig-leaves represent the arguments used to cover disobedience. When the Lord calls the attention of men and women to the truth, the making of fig-leaves into aprons will be begun, to hide the nakedness of the soul. But the nakedness of the sinner is not covered. All the arguments pieced together by all who have interested themselves in this flimsy work will come to naught.

It is as if a man were to put out a book on David, and over-emphasize all of his weaknesses, or to insinuate weaknesses where there might have been some, and therefore draw the conclusion that the Psalms that David wrote are dangerous because they led David into these extremes!

We always need to make a clear distinction between the messenger and the message. In general, God chooses the best material available for the job, in spite of their flaws. And He expects us to heed the message, and neither idolize, nor reject the messenger, because of his strong or weak qualities. In the end, it is His message, not theirs, and we are to receive it that way.

Ellen White clearly was blessed with the message of Waggoner and Jones, during that time that they faithfully delivered it. She called it "most precious":

Testimonies to Ministers, p. 91:

The Lord in His great mercy sent **a most precious message** to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones.

This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God.

Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent.

This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.

She also said that when she heard it presented, "every fiber of my heart said Amen":

Sermon, Rome, New York, June 19, 1889 (quoted in Manuscript Releases, vol. 5, p. 219):

I have had the question asked, What do you think of this light that these men are presenting? Why, I have been presenting it to you for the last forty-five years—the matchless charms of Christ. This is what I have been trying to present before your minds.

When Brother Waggoner brought out these ideas in Minneapolis, it was the first clear teaching on this subject from any human lips I had heard, excepting the conversations between myself and my husband. I have said to myself, It is because God has presented it to me in vision that I see it so clearly, and they cannot see it because they have never had it presented to them as I have. And when another presented it, **every fiber of my heart said, Amen.**

And interestingly enough, most of her more beautiful books came after that time period, including *The Desire of Ages*, *Steps to Christ*, and *Christ's Object Lessons*. Ellen White had no difficulty accepting the light they brought, while they were faithful, and refusing to accept their errors when they

went off the course.

So, you would think, that if others were moved by the same Spirit of the Lord that moved Ellen White, they also would be greatly blessed and helped by that message (assuming that we confine ourselves to their writings during the time of their faithful service, which really covers most of the writings that we have from these two men). But surprisingly, this is not usually the case.

George Knight, for example, gives no evidence that the points of their message were particularly valuable to him. In fact, he makes definite stands against what he calls “sinless perfection” (the idea that sin will be completely overcome by the last generation), “the sinfulness of Christ’s human nature” (the idea that Christ had the same tendencies to sin in his flesh as we do). To me, these are among the saving truths in the true Adventist gospel, and they were points that Waggoner and Jones reiterated again and again. If they were such serious errors, why is there *not a single testimony* from Ellen White to either of them warning them of their danger?

You see, it would be another matter entirely if George Knight would say,

“There is this wonderful gospel message of truth from elders Waggoner and Jones which everyone should study, and it greatly enriched me and helped me come out of my Laodicean condition. But I acknowledge that later in their lives they fell into some errors, and I don’t accept those things.”

That would be honest, and it would clearly divide between the message that God gave, and the personalities of the messengers.

When I first became an Adventist, and went through my own struggle to find salvation, I had heard of the 1888 message and started reading whatever I could find about it. I wasn’t interested in it for merely theological reasons or cu-

riosity, but because I had a soul need, and wanted whatever light the Lord had given to reveal to me where the problem might be. One of the first comments I got about it were from an elder, who said to me,

“Oh, Waggoner and Jones, you realize they fell into apostasy?”

Why couldn't he have testified to me of the “most precious message” they gave of Christ's righteousness and how to obtain it? Because that is not what he learned in his church.

To me, even as a young Adventist who did not fully understand salvation, the moment I started reading Waggoner and Jones I knew that they were writing in a way that was quite different from the standard fare. It wasn't sensational or odd, it was just as if they knew what they were talking about, and were drawing proofs and lines of thought from the scriptures that were refreshingly broad, deep, faith-building, and soul-satisfying.

Shortly after that time, when I heard Fred Wright teaching, I heard the same thing, and eventually found the new birth experience that I was lacking. To me, therefore, without the 1888 message, or at least without some who had learned that message, I would be a lost sinner today—still struggling, still failing, and doomed. Who knows how many there are like me? For that reason alone, I consider George Knight's books on the 1888 message absolutely tragic.

It is the message that God gave which is important, and not the details of the messenger's life. Christ has His own way of handling His messengers. He walks in the middle of the candlesticks, He holds the stars in His right hand.

Whenever God sends a message, you can be sure that the person He chooses will be subject to attack and criticism, for Satan will not be idle. And you can be sure that when a book like *From 1888 to Apostasy* is released, it is an attempt

(whether the author realizes it or not) to cover up the real issue. And the real issue is this:

*My salvation does not hinge
on whether A.T. Jones had a “fatal flaw”
in his character,
but it does very much hinge
on what “fatal flaws”
are in my character!*

Therefore, to talk about the real or supposed flaws of the messenger is always a distraction. It turns me away from the message that God is giving to show the fatal flaws in my character. That is why Ellen White calls it a “fatal delusion.” To stand on this ground of criticism of God’s messengers is to stand on unholy ground. God never calls a man to do this kind of work.

Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 299-300:

The word of the Lord came to Elijah; he did not seek to be the Lord’s messenger, but the word came to him. God always has men to whom He entrusts His message. His Spirit moves upon their hearts and constrains them to speak. Stimulated by holy zeal, and with the divine impulse strong upon them, they enter upon the performance of their duty without coldly calculating the consequences of speaking to the people the word which the Lord has given them.

But the servant of God is soon made aware that he has risked something. He finds himself and his message made the subject of criticism. His manners, his life, his property, are all inspected and commented upon. His message is picked to pieces and rejected in the most illiberal and unsanctified spirit, as men in their finite judgment see fit. Has that message done the work that God designed it should accomplish? No; it has signally failed because the hearts of the hearers were unsanctified.

It is Satan’s settled purpose to cut off all communication between God and His people, that he may practice his deceptive wiles with no voice to warn them of their danger. If he can lead men to distrust the messenger or to attach no sa-

credness to the message, he knows that they will feel under no obligation to heed the word of God to them. And when light is set aside as darkness, Satan has things his own way.

I include below a chart from Robert Wieland’s book, *A.T. Jones, the Man and the Message*. It shows clearly just to what extent George Knight indulged the spirit of criticism in his portrayal and interpretation of Jones’ character:

George Knight on A.T. Jones	Ellen White on A.T. Jones
Had “egotistic toes” (p. 12)	“Bear[s] the word of the Lord.” TM 97
“Careless mouth and harsh speech” (p. 33)	“The message given us by A.T. Jones...is a message of God to the Laodicean church” Letter S-24, 1892
“Self-confident” (p. 35)	“Christ’s delegated messenger” TM 97
“Never mastered the art of... Christian kindness” (p. 34)	“Man whom God has commissioned... [with] demonstration of the Holy Spirit” TM 79,80
“Harsh words and pompous attitudes” (p. 35)	“[The people] expressed their gladness and gratitude of heart for the sermons that had been preached by Bro. A.T. Jones; they saw the truth, goodness, mercy, and love of God as they never before had seen it” RH Feb. 12, 1889
“Confrontational” (p. 53)	“Had a message from God, and you made light of both message and messenger[s]” Letter B2a, 1892
“Habit of publicly belittling those who disagreed with him” (p. 53)	“The Lord’s messenger” Ms. 8a, 1888
“Perrenial problem of extremism” (p. 101)	“The Lord recognized [him] as His servant” but opponents taunted him “with being fanatic, extremist, and enthusiast” TM 97
“Never mastered Christian virtue of temperance” (p. 56)	“Some have criticized and depreciated, and even stooped to ridicule the messenger[s] through whom the Lord has

	wrought in power” GCB 1891, p. 256-258
“Fairly direct line from Jones...to the holy flesh movement” (p. 56)	“The servant of God” TM 410
“Abrasive and cocksure personality” (p. 63)	“God sent this young man to bear a special message” Letter S-24, 1892
“At his best under pressure” (p. 77)	“A.T. Jones spoke to the people,...and the people heard many precious things that would be to them a comfort, and a strength to their faith,...this...all-important privilege” Ms. 24, 1888
“Found...problem [of unchristian spirit] impossible to overcome” (p. 82)	“[God’s] chosen servant(s)...whom God is using” TM 466
“Ever excitable” (p. 100)	“To accuse and criticize [him]...is to accuse and criticize the Lord who has sent [him]” TM 466
“Rashness...[his] special weakness.” (p. 102)	“Men professing godliness have despised Christ in the person of His messenger[s]” FCE 472
“Sensational language” (p. 113)	“Upon whom God has laid the burden of a solemn work” Letter S-24, 1892
“Employed syllogistic logic to milk out the most extreme position possible” (p. 119)	“The messenger of God...Elder Jones...God is working through [him]” Letter 019, 1892
“With characteristic modesty...claimed [he was] divinely appointed.” (p. 165)	“Man divinely appointed” Ms. 8a, 1888
“Taught holy flesh” (p. 170)	“God has upheld [him],...given [him] precious light,...fed the people of God” Letter 51a, 1895
“Convinced he was God’s man for the hour,...those who did not cooperate with [him] were against God.” (p. 174)	To “differ with Elder Jones...is not from the impulse of the Spirit of God” Letter S-24, 1892

<p>“Highhandedness” (p. 175)</p>	<p>“God’s messenger” Ms. 8a, 1888</p>
<p>“Extremism and harsh manners” (p. 176)</p>	<p>“I considered it a privilege to stand by the side of [Jones]...and give my testimony with the message for the time” RH March 18, 1890</p>
<p>“Rigid inflexibility” (p. 83)</p>	<p>Has “heavenly credentials” RH March 18, 1890</p>
<p>“At his self-confident best during the 1893...Conference” (p. 94)</p>	<p>“Bro. Jones has been giving the message for this time, meat in due season to the starving flock of God...Has borne the message from church to church, and from state to state; and light and freedom and the outpouring of the Spirit of God has attended the work...Seeks to arouse the professed people of God from their death-like slumber...[Opposers] will be asked in the judgment, ‘Who required this at your hand, to rise up against the message and the messenger[s] I sent to My people with light, grace, and power?’” Letter Jan. 9, 1893</p>
	<p>“God has raised up his messenger[s] to do his work at this time. Some...criticize...imperfections because [they think he does] not speak with all the grace and polish desirable...Too much in earnest,...too much positiveness, and the message that would bring healing and life and comfort to many weary and oppressed souls, is, in a measure, excluded...[The messages bear] the divine credentials...[Sets forth the message] with beauty and loveliness, to charm all whose hearts are not closed with prejudice. We know that God has wrought among us.” RH May 27, 1890</p>
	<p>“Jones speaks...quite a number...fed with large morsels from the Lord’s table” Ms. 10, 1889</p>

It is important to distinguish between criticism and rebuke. Criticism picks on flaws (real or imagined) in order to cover up the real problem. The real problem is always in the heart of the one who is criticizing. Rebuke, on the other hand, points out errors in doctrine or practice that are destroying souls. One tears down, the other is designed to save. Jesus was not criticizing the Pharisees when he pointed out their errors.

Criticism is always bad, but it takes on a whole new dimension of evil when it is directed against men whom the Lord is using to bring His messages to the people. If the Lord's messages are not heeded because someone diverted the people by criticizing the messengers, then it becomes not only the murder of a few, but it becomes mass murder. It is a much more serious crime.

Letter 0-19, 1892

I have deep sorrow of heart, because I have seen how readily a word or action of Elder Jones or Elder Waggoner is criticized. How readily many minds overlook all the good that has been done by them in the few years past, and see no evidence that God is working through these instrumentalities.

Now in the light of that list above, read again this statement from Mount of Blessing:

Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 125, 126

There may be a wonderful keenness of perception to discover the defects of others; but to everyone who indulges this spirit, Jesus says, "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye."

How does God regard this kind of character assassination?

Testimonies to Ministers, p. 97

If you reject Christ's delegated messengers, you reject Christ.

When Caiaphas said "it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not" (*John* 11:50), he inadvertently spoke a prophecy regarding Christ's atoning death for all men. Likewise, the title of

this book *From 1888 to Apostasy*, unintentionally speaks a prophecy regarding the consequences that will come on those who turn away from the light which God gave through two humble instruments.

The Jews paid a terrible price for criticizing and rejecting Christ in their day. It will be worse for us if we follow the same course.

Selected Messages, vol. 3, p. 343

You have made public the errors and defects of the people of God, and in so doing have dishonored God and Jesus Christ. I would not for my right arm have given to the world that which you have written. You have not been conscious of what would be the influence of your work.

Selected Messages, vol. 3, p. 346

God has inspired no man to reproduce their mistakes, and to present their errors to a world that is lying in wickedness, and to a church composed of many who are weak in faith. The Lord has not laid the burden upon men to revive the mistakes and errors of the living or the dead. He would have His laborers present the truth for this time. Speak not of the errors of your brethren who are living, and be silent as to the mistakes of the dead.