

“Mark Finley Weighs in On the Tithe Debate” was posted on the HopeLives365 YouTube channel on 7/29/26. As you may know, the Michigan Conference fired Pastor Ron Kelly and forbade Dr. Conrad Vine to preach. Their sin, as far as I can tell, was that Conrad exposed and condemned the failure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to support members who, for conscientious reasons, refused the COVID-19 vaccination and Ron failed to demote Conrad from his position of elder in the Village Seventh-day Adventist Church. In addition to Conrad’s stance on the vaccine issue, he also has said that there is no biblical mandate that all tithe has to go through officially approved Seventh-day Adventist Church channels. What probably hit the church dignitaries the hardest was what has been said to be a noticeable decrease in tithe donations to the Michigan Conference.

Rather than acknowledge the errors that took place on the part of Seventh-day Adventist officialdom and making things right, said officialdom has been attempting to prove their point from the Bible (even though most, maybe all, don’t believe there is a single infallible Bible in the world at this time) and Spirit of Prophecy. The last YouTube video I reviewed on the subject was by Pastor Mark Howard of the Michigan Conference who neglected to post certain Spirit of Prophecy passages and who, in quoting the Watson letter, failed to post all relevant parts of it. It will be interesting to see if Mark does any better.

In the window below the video it says, “Pastor Mark Finley spent hours in the primary documents: Ellen White’s own statements on the storehouse, the testimony of her son W.C. White on how her finances actually worked, and the full text of the 1905 Watson letter, most of which never gets quoted. In this video we lay out exactly what she did, why she did it, and what her example does and does not permit today.”

The review I did on Mark Howard’s video is found at:

www.adventiststoday.com/MarkHoward4.pdf

The link to this video is found at:

<https://youtu.be/EVywIMLwPic?si=iJ6iaoPfmL7pr7wX>

Mark starts by posting some Ellen White quotations on the storehouse.

“If all the tithes were brought into the storehouse, God’s treasury would not be empty.” *Pacific Union Recorder*, 10/10/1901.

“A faithful tithe is to be brought into the treasury.” *Testimonies to Ministers* page 305.

“If our churches will take their stand upon the Lord’s word, and be faithful, paying their tithe into His treasury, more laborers will be encouraged to take up ministerial work.” *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, page 249.

As others before him, Mark goes to the Old Testament to show that tithes have to go to the storehouse because Abraham was noted on one occasion to pay tithe when there was no temple

storehouse and the children of Israel were told to pay tithe on their agricultural products; you know a tenth of their grapes, sheep, cows, goats, etc. Mark hasn't mentioned any mandate in the New Testament to pay tithe in the Christian era because there is no such mandate and because without the writings of Sister White, he would be left with not much of anything.

At 2:53 Mark says, "Um, the question sometimes is asked, what was Ellen White's practice in returning tithe and didn't she at times return tithe in, um, to, ah, individuals? Let's let's, look at that. Let's, let's carefully study that. Then Mark said he has spent many hours last week going over documents relevant to the tithe issue. It will be interesting to see what relevant quotations he failed to find or failed to disclose.

Some Ellen White quotations were posted at 4:34.

"The tithe is sacred, reserved by God for Himself. It is to be brought into His treasury, to be used to sustain the gospel laborers in their work." *Review and Herald*, 5/9/1893.

"It is devoted solely to the support of the gospel." *Review and Herald*, 5/9/1893.

"God has not changed. The tithe is still to be used for the support of His ministry." *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, page 250.

"It is part of the minister's work to teach those who accept the truth through his efforts to bring the tithe to the storehouse, as an acknowledgment of their dependence upon God." *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, pages 247-248.

"The tithes and offerings are to be placed in His treasury, and held sacred for His service as He has appointed." *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, page 247-248.

Mark says, "So, here we have time after time Ellen White is talking about bringing the tithes into the treasury of the Lord. She equates that with the storehouse; she equates that with supporting God's ministers." Here are some things Marky hasn't mentioned yet.

"His people today are to remember that the house of worship is the Lord's property, and that it is to be scrupulously cared for. But the funds for this work are not to come from the tithe. The tithe is to be used for one purpose--to sustain the ministers who the Lord has appointed to do His work." *Ellen G. White Manuscript Releases* 7 page 135 or Manuscript 82, 1904.

"A very plain definite message has been given to me for our people. I am bidden to tell them that they are making a mistake in applying the tithe to various objects which, though good in themselves, are not the object to which the Lord has said the tithe should be applied. Those who make this use of the tithe are departing from the Lord's arrangement. God will judge for these things. One reasons that the tithe may be applied to school purposes. Still others reason that canvassers and colporteurs should be supported from the tithe. But a great mistake is made when the tithe is drawn from the object for which it is to be used—the support of the ministers." *Testimonies for the Church* volume 9 pages 248-249.

The following information was on the back of tithe envelope I picked up in Florida in 2019. Pastors/ministerial got 34.6%, education got 24.7%, office administration got 7.7%, church planting/evangelism got 1.7%, publishing/literature got 1.2%, trust services/communications got 1.2%, church adult ministries got 0.5% and camp meetings got 0.3% and 22% went “to the worldwide organization of the Seventh-day Adventist church who used it for assistance to small sister conferences, institutional allocations, admin operations and overseas missions. Years ago I wrote to the Ohio Conference and the West Virginia Conference to find out what tithe was used for and in both places a portion was used for things other than the support of ministers. Is it possible that Mark, a long time General Conference insider, doesn’t know that?

At 6:23 Mark says, “Now what was it Ellen White’s desire that individuals could use the tithe in any way they wanted? There are some people that have taken that position and they have quoted part of a letter that Ellen White wrote in January of 1905 that for them seems to indicate that. I make give you a little background on what Ellen White’s own practice was on tithing, what she did and why she did it.” NOTE: where I’ve entered “make” in the last sentence, Mark wasn’t too clear in pronunciation and that’s what it sounded like to me.

No, it wasn’t “Ellen White’s desire that individuals could use the tithe in any way they wanted” and I never heard Ron Kelly, Conrad Vine or any other Seventh-day Adventist minister say that.

Allegedly there was a time when if a minister retired, he no longer got funding and this was allegedly the reason Ellen White sent tithe to some of them. Mark then starts to discuss the Watson letter. Mark thinks it’s relevant that Ellen White labored with the conferences to support these neglected ministers. I believe what he’s getting around to is that church members should “labor” with conferences about the problems therein whilst continuing to give them money.

Mark then says what W. C. White allegedly said about how Ellen White distributed her tithe. Marky posts no reference on what W. C. White allegedly said but I’m more interested in what Ellen White said anyway. According to Mark, there were times when, “as a prophet” Ellen White was impressed to send money to ministers not being adequately supported. In other words, if you’re not a prophet, you’re probably not allowed to do that. He said “she would counsel with the brethren, leadership of the church, to support them, if they didn’t, she would take some money from her tithe.” Allegedly the tithe wouldn’t go directly to the impoverished ministers but rather through the Southern Missionary Society.

At 9:16 Mark wants you to “notice some key points.” “First she would contact the conference. Secondly, if they did not respond, she would take portions of her tithe. These were extreme cases. This was not her regular practice. In addition to that, she said she was commissioned by the Lord to do that as a prophet of God. But notice this tithe was going to ordained ministers and it was going through the Southern Missionary Society who distributed it to these ordained ministers.”

Mark says he’s going to read you “portions” of the Watson letter because some people have only circulated parts of the letter “that can give you a, a very wrong impression.” Yeah, so Marky is going to discuss parts of the letter just like others are doing. Here are the parts Marky thought were important. Will they give you a very wrong impression? Mark emphasizes the problem was that these ministers in the South didn’t have sustentation and it was before Social Security. It’s

interesting that the problem was in the South and apparently not so much in other parts of the Lord's vineyard in the United States of America.

"My brother, I wish to say to you, be careful how you move. You are not moving wisely. The least you have to speak about the tithe that has been appropriated to the most needy and the most discouraging field in the world, the more sensible you will be." From the Watson letter.

Notice that the "brother" was told that the "least" he had to speak about the matter the better. Maybe Mark should have heeded that part of the counsel.

"It has been presented to me for years that my tithe was to be appropriated by myself to aid the white and colored ministers who were neglected and did not receive sufficient properly to support their families. When my attention was called to aged ministers, white or black, it was my special duty to investigate into their necessities and to supply their needs." From the Watson letter.

"If there have been cases where our sisters have appropriated their tithes to support the ministers working for the colored people in the South, let every man, if he is wise, hold his peace. I have myself appropriated my tithe to the most needy cases brought to my notice. I have supplied their needs from the tithe as God has instructed me to do." From the Watson letter.

Notice that the "sisters," not the prophet, sent tithes to support "ministers working for the colored people in the South." If they were "working" they weren't retired and probably not particularly aged either. Perhaps Marky doesn't understand ENGLISH. That can happen when you read too many "easier-to-read" fake "the Bible."

"I commend those sisters who have placed their tithe where it is most needed to help do a work that is being left undone, but if this matter is given publicity, it will create a knowledge which would be better left as it is. I do not care to give publicity to this work which the Lord has appointed me to do and others to do and others to do." From the Watson letter.

Mark apparently needs to read that a few more times so he can understand it wasn't just the prophet doing the Lord's bidding but others as well and that he shouldn't be giving it publicity.

Mark once again alleges that Sister White's tithe sent for needed ministers always went through the Southern Missionary Society but has never posted a quotation from Sister White or anyone else anything to that effect.

Finally a quote comes at 14:07 but there is no page number given and it's said to come from *Ellen G. White and the Tithe*. I looked on eBay for a publication with that title and found none.

"During the greater part of my connection with Mother's business since 1881, a full tithe has been paid on her salary to the church through her conference treasurer. Instead of paying tithe on the increase from her books, there has been set apart an amount greater than a tithe, from which she made appropriations from time to time in accordance with the instruction above."

Mark like other Seventh-day Adventist blowhards before him emphasizes that it's fine to send tithe through official channels even though it's being misused. Once Mark is through discussing his opinions gleaned through numerous hours of research last week, you'll get the entire Watson letter to read for yourself as well some quotations Marky didn't find or neglected to tell you about.

Mark mentions the widow who donated her last bit of money to a corrupt organization and was complimented by Jesus. Mark reads quotes from Sister White.

“Speak plainly and openly in the right spirit.” *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, page 249.

Mark thinks you should speak properly to leadership. It would be nice if that worked. At this point I think a better plan is to support those portions of God's vineyard that are using it appropriately instead of supporting arrogant officialdom.

Another quote is posted as Mark reads it from his notes at 18:18.

“We are still to pay our tithe into the conference treasury.” *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, page 249.

Mark would like you to read stuff about tithe in volume 9 of *Testimonies for the Church*. I think that's a very good idea and if you go to *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, page 249 that was posted as above in quotation marks you will NOT find that quotation on that page or on any other page I'm aware of. If Mark deliberately posted a nonexistent Ellen G. White quotation, then he's a liar. Mark posts some more from that reference.

“Some have been dissatisfied and said, ‘I will not any longer pay my tithe into this treasury, for I have no confidence in the way things are managed at the heart of the work.’ But will you rob God because you think the management of the work is not right? Make your complaint. Send in your petitions for things to be adjusted and set in order, but do not withdraw from the work of God and prove unfaithful because others are not doing right.” *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, page 249.

Understand that neither Ron Kelly, nor Conrad Vine nor I have ever said to stop paying tithe. The issue is that officialdom wishes for all money to go through them even if what they do with it isn't right.

Mark provided another quote.

“You who have been withholding your means from the cause of God, read the book of Malachi. See what is spoken in regard to tithes and offerings. Can you not see that it is not best, under any circumstances, to withhold your tithes and offerings because you are not in harmony with everything your brethren do? The tithes and offerings are not the property of any man, but are to be used in doing a certain work for God.” *Special Testimonies*, Series A, No. 1, page 27 from 1890.

If someone is supporting ministers or other full-time workers that are hunting and fishing for souls with their tithe, they are NOT withholding their means from the cause of God. Marky and others really ought to drop the statements to the effect of “give us money even though we are misusing it.” Marky and others should also consider the result to themselves if they are complicit in using tithe for purposes other than the purposes delineated in the Spirit of Prophecy that they love to quote because there is NO New Testament mandate to pay tithe during the Christian era.

More of the quotation follows.

“Unworthy ministers may receive some of the means thus raised, but dare anyone because of this withhold from the treasury and brave the curse of God? I dare not. I pay my tithes gladly and freely. If the conference business is not managed according to the order of the Lord, that is the sin of the erring ones. But the Lord will not hold you responsible for it if you do what you can to correct the evil. But do not commit sin yourselves by withholding from God His own property. *Special Testimonies*, Series A, No. 1, page 27 from 1890.

I believe that to be true. If you don't know of a better option, I don't think God will hold you responsible for what is done with the money by Seventh-day Adventist officialdom.

At 21:16 Mark says, “God has called us, to return to Him, our tithe. He's called us to be faithful, in giving, to the Lord. He's called us, to support His worldwide work through our tithes. Now offerings, we can give at our discretion. Tithe is holy. Tithe is set aside by God. Tithe is designed by God to go to His treasury, His storehouse to support His work, around the World. That's God's plan. That's God's work! Uh, you know, how can you say, well in this particular conference there may be some pastors who are unfaithful therefore I'm going to channel my tithe to this supporting or independent ministry when that's not biblical at all. Uh, but somebody says, bu, but Ellen White, wait a minute, what did Ellen White do? At an exceptional time, at an unusual time, she channeled, some tithe, not all of her tithe by any means, but some, she channeled it to ordained ministers who, had no sustentation, who had no social security, she channeled it to them. To use that concept to direct our tithe, otherwise than to God's storehouse and treasury is not in harmony with the counsel of the Bible or the counsel that she has given.”

Here's the complete Watson letter as found on pages 394 to 396 of *Ellen G. White The Early Elmhaven Years* by Arthur L. White which is volume 5 in his series of books about Ellen G. White.

“My brother, I wish to say to you, Be careful how you move. You are not moving wisely. The least you have to speak about the tithe that has been appropriated to the most needy and the most discouraging field in the world, the more sensible you will be.

It has been presented to me for years that my tithe was to be appropriated by myself to aid the white and colored ministers who were neglected and did not receive sufficient, properly to support their families. When my attention was called to aged ministers, white or black, it was my special duty to investigate into their necessities and supply their needs. This was to be my special work, and I have done this in a number of cases. No man should give notoriety to the fact that in special cases tithe is used in that way.

In regard to the colored work in the South, that field has been and is still being robbed of the means that should come to the workers in that field. If there have been cases where our

sisters have appropriated their tithe to the support of the ministers working for the colored people in the South, let every man, if he is wise, hold his peace.

I have myself appropriated my tithe to the most needy cases brought to my notice. I have been instructed to do this; and as the money is not withheld from the Lord's treasury, it is not a matter that should be commented upon, for it will necessitate making known these matters, which I do not desire to do, because it is not best.

Some cases have been kept before me for years, and I have supplied their needs from the tithe, as God has instructed me to do. And if any person shall say to me, Sister White, will you appropriate my tithe where you know it is most needed, I shall say, Yes, I will; and I have done so. I commend those sisters who have placed their tithe where it is most needed to help do a work that is being left undone, and if this matter is given publicity, it will create a knowledge which would better be left as it is. I do not care to give publicity to this work which the Lord has appointed me to do, and others to do.

I send this matter to you so that you shall not make a mistake. Circumstances alter cases. I would not advise that anyone should make a practice of gathering up tithe money. But for years there have now and then been persons who have lost confidence in the appropriation of the tithe who have placed their tithe in my hands, and said that if I did not take it they would themselves appropriate it to the families of the most needy ministers they could find. I have taken the money, given a receipt for it, and told them how it was appropriated.

I write this to you so that you shall keep cool and not become stirred up and give publicity to this matter, lest many more shall follow their example.—Letter 267, 1905.”

Mark has tried to make you believe that all tithe must go to God's storehouse or treasury, which are words he uses synonymously, and claims it means you have to give through approved denominational channels and not to independent ministries.

“Send no statement of the situation through our religious papers; because it will not be honored. Send direct to the people. God's ways are not to be counterworked by man's ways. There are those who have means, and who will give large and small sums. Have this money come direct to your destitute portion of the vineyard. The Lord has not specified any regular channel through which means should pass.” *Spalding & Magan's Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies of Ellen G. White* page 202 of the reprint with an ISBN of 9781495934735.

In Mark's hours of research last week, he must have missed that.

“I have myself appropriated my tithe to the most needy cases brought to my attention. I have been instructed to do this, and as the money is not withheld from the Lord's treasury, it is not a matter that should be commented upon, for it will necessitate my making known these matters, which I do not desire to do, because it is not best.” *Ellen G. White Manuscript Releases* 2 pages 99-100 or Letter 267, 1905.

Apparently Ellen White didn't consider the denomination the sole part of the Lord's “treasury.” Mark must have missed that as well in his hours of research last week.

Mark has also claimed all tithe must go to support “ordained” ministers even though he posted no Ellen White quotation to that effect.

“These women give their whole time, and are told that they receive nothing for their labors because their husbands receive their wages. I tell them to go forward and all such decision shall be revised. The Word says, ‘The laborer is worthy of his hire.’ When any such decision as this is made, I will in the name of the Lord, protest. I will feel it my duty to create a fund from my tithe money, to pay these women who are accomplishing just as essential work as the ministers are doing, and this tithe I will reserve for work in the same line as that of the ministers, hunting for souls, fishing for souls. I know that the faithful women should be paid wages as is considered proportionate to the pay received by ministers.” *Ellen G. White Manuscript Releases* 5 page 29 or Letter 137, 1898.

Those who give themselves to the service of the Lord, who labor for the salvation of others by doing house-to-house work, which is as taxing as, and more taxing than standing before a congregation, should receive payment for their labor. If a man is worthy of his hire, so also is a woman.” *Ellen G. White Manuscript Releases* 1 page 263 or Manuscript 149, 1899.

That’s more stuff Marky missed in last week’s extensive research or just neglected to discuss.

Instead of believing everything Mark, your pastor or anyone else says, you should study things for yourself because some people will lie to you.

www.SatanIsDead.com
www.infallibleBible.com
www.AdventistsToday.com
www.SabbathSchoolGuide.com
www.AdventistDeathConfusion.com