**Selected Quotes on What is Church, Organization, Authority, Babylon, Laodicea...etc.**

1. What is church? in the New Testament, the term church is used to describe believers assembled for worship
   a) **In a specific place:** "For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it."
   b) **Living in a certain locality:** "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye." 1 Corinthians 16:1
   "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia." Galatians 1:1,2 "Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house." Colossian 4:15
   c) **A group of congregations existing in a given geographical are:** "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." Acts 9:31
   d) The whole body of believers scattered throughout the world: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" Matthew 16:18. "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God" 1 Corinthians 10:32

   *Note: The "body" metaphor stands strongly against idea of the invisible church being the "true" church. A body, by definition, exists only when all the body parts are brought together as a visible, living entity.*
2. The one fold has always been an identifiable entity in the world. The altars of Abraham, the wilderness tabernacle, the temple, the various synagogues, the churches planted by the apostles—all were material structures in geographical locations where God met with His people. "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read." Luke 4:16
3. Jesus is not opposed to organization. He organized the twelve desciples and sent them out to cover assigned territory in a systematic way. "Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece. And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart. And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them. And they" departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere." Luke 9:1-6. Later He organized seventy disciples (Luke 10:1)
4. "Jesus gave sanction to the authority of His organized church and placed Saul in connection with His appointed agencies on earth. Christ had now a church as His representative on earth, and to it belonged the work of directing the repentant sinner in the way of life" (Acts of the Apostles, P. 122)
5. "The organization of the church at Jerusalem was to serve as a model for the organization of churches in every other place where messengers of truth should win converts to the gospel" (The Acts of the Apostles, p. 91).

6. “When anyone is drawing apart from the organized body of God’s Commandment-keeping people, when he begins to weigh the church in his human scales, and begins to pronounce judgement against them, then you may know that God is not leading him. He is on the wrong track” (Selected Messages, bk. 3, p.18).
7. “In the ministry of Christ and His apostles, those who were converted to the truth were brought into church relationship; and every stray, lost sheep that was found, was brought to the fold of the church, that under the direction of the Master, through the, they might go in and out and find pasture” (“Sanctification,” Signs of the Times, October 23,1879).
8. “Many have an idea that they are responsible to Christ alone for their light and experience, independent of His recognized followers on earth….but He respects the means that He has ordained for the enlightenment and salvation of men; He directs sinners to the church, which He has made a channel of light to the world” (The Acts of the Apostles, p. 122).
9. “The spirit of pulling away from our fellow laborers, the spirit of disorganization, is in the very air we breathe. By some, all efforts to establish order are regarded as dangerous—as a restriction of personal liberty, and hence to be regarded as popery. They declare that they will not take any man’s say-so; that they are amenable to no man. I have been instructed that it is Satan’s special effort to lead men to feel that God is pleased to have them choose their own course” independent of the counsel of their brethren” (Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, pp. 488, 489).
10. “There are little companies continually rising who believe that God is only with the very few, the very scattered, and their influence is to tear down and scatter that which God’s servants build up” (1TT, p. 417)
11. “Those who are carrying this message of error, denouncing the church as Babylon, are neglecting their God appointed work, are in opposition to organization, in opposition to the plain command of God spoken by Malachi in regard to bringing all the tithes into the treasury of God’s house, and imagine that they have a work to do in warning those whom God has chosen to forward His message of truth. These workers are not bringing greater efficiency to the cause and kingdom of God, but engaged in a work similar to that in which the enemy of all righteousness is engaged. Let these men who are rising up against the ways and means ordained of God to forward His work in these days of peril divest themselves of all unscriptural views concerning the nature, office, and power of God’s appointed agencies” (Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, p. 53).
12. Additional quotes:
    a) “God is leading out a people. He has a chosen people, a church on the earth, whom He has made the depositaries of His law…. He would reprove and correct them. The message to the Laodiceans is applicable to Seventh-day Adventists who have had great light and have not walked in the light….The message to pronounce the Seventh-Day Adventist Church Babylon, and call the people of God out of her, does not come from any heavenly messenger, or any human agent inspired by the Spirit of God.” 2SM 66.2.
    b) “How Satan would exult to have a message go broadcast that the only people whom God has made the repositories of His law are the ones to whom this message applies.” 2SM 68.2. “I do not doubt your sincerity or honesty…to those who were accusing the church of Seventh-day Adventists of being Babylon… the word has been given me, “Believe them not.” “I have not sent them, and yet they ran.” 2SM63.3. see also GC 382.3

c) "Usually closely linked with the supposed new light was a message of condemnation of the church and its leaders…." 2SM 62:2. "This questioning, criticizing, denouncing, passing judgment on others, is not an evidence of the grace of Christ in the heart. It does not produce unity." 2SM 78.3. "Press together." In unity is your strength. Love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." 2SM 72.

d) "There will be among the remnant of these last days, as there was with ancient Israel, those who wish to move independently of the body, who are not willing to be subject to the body of the church, who are not willing to submit to advice or counsel,…men will apostatize; they will want to follow independent judgment…. serves only to discourage the leader and to bring loss of confidence in leadership among the church membership at large." GVEGW 146.

e) "All this fault-finding, this accusing of your brethren, is satanic." 2SM73.5

f) "It is a delusion of the enemy for anyone to feel that he can disconnect from the body, and work on an independent scale of his own, and think he is doing God's work. We are one body…" GVEGW 147.1

13. "Every member of the church has a voice in choosing officers of the church. The church chooses the officers of the state conferences. Delegates chosen by the state conferences choose the officers of the union conferences; and delegates chosen by the union conferences choose the officers of the General Conferences. By this arrangement every conference, every institution, every church, and every individual, either directly or though representatives, has a voice in the election of the men who bear the chief responsibilities in the General Conference" (8TT, pp. 236,237. "I have been shown that no man's judgement should be surrendered to the judgement of any one man. But when the judgement of the General Conference, which is the highest authority that God has upon earth, is exercised, private independence and private judgement must not be maintained, but be surrendered" (3TT, p.492). "The judgment of the brethren assembled from all parts of the field" (9TT, p.260).
14. "He who despises the authority of the church despises the authority of Christ Himself" (Desire of Ages, p. 805). "God has invested His church with special authority and power which no one can be justified in disregarding and despising, for in so doing he despises the voice of God" (3TT, p. 417). "You should have submitted to the judgement of the church. If they decided wrong, God could take hold of this matter in His own time and vindicate the right. He does not ay upon you the responsibility of keeping the church in order" (Manuscript Releases,. 5, p.297). "The church is God's delegated authority upon earth….It is the want of deference for the opinions of the church that causes so much trouble among brethren….The majority of the church is a power which should control its individual members….unless the advice and counsel of the church can be respected, it is indeed powerless. God has placed a voice in the church which must control its members" (5TT, p. 107). "God has bestowed power on the church and the ministers of the church, and it is not a light matter to resist the authority and despise the judgment of God's minister" (Manuscript Releases, vol. 5. P.297).
15. "Let none speak lightly of the duty of the church to administer censure and rebuke; neither let them criticize the action of the church when this painful takes becomes necessary….God has commanded that those who prove themselves unworthy of church fellowship shall be separated from His body. Those who speak against the exercise of this authority speak against the

authority of Christ" (Manuscript Releases, vol. 17, p. 164). "Sin and sinners in the church must be promptly dealt with, other may not be contaminated. Truth and purity require that we make more thorough work to cleanse the camp from Achans. Let those in responsible positions not suffer sin in a brother. Show him that he must either put away his sins or be separated from the church" (5TT p. 147).

16. "There are many who find special enjoyment in discoursing and dwelling upon the defects whether real or imaginary, of those who bear heavy responsibilities in connection with the institution of God's cause. They overlook the good that has been accomplished, the benefits that have resulted from arduous labor and unflinching devotion to the cause" (4TT, p. 196)
17. "He [Jesus] fearlessly denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity, but tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes" (The Desire of Ages, p. 353). "He said nothing to unsettle their faith in the religion and institutions that had been committed to them through Moses….He did not come to destroy confidence in His own instruction" (The Desire of Ages, p.307). "Saying The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not" Matthew 23:2-3
18. "The message to the church of the Laodiceans applies especially to the people of God today. It is a message to professing Christians who have become so much like the world that no difference can be seen" SDA Bible Commentary, Vol 7, p. 966. "The message to the Laodiceans is applicable to Seventh-day Adventists who have had great light and have not walked in the light" Selected Message, bk. 2, p.66
19. "When men arise, claiming to have a message from God, but instead of warring against principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, they form a hollow square, and turn the weapons of warfare against the church militant, be afraid of them. They do not bear the divine credentials. God has not given them any such burden of labor. They would tear down that which God would restore by the Laodicean message. He wounds only that He may heal, not cause to perish. The Lord lays upon no man a message that will discourage and dishearten the church. He reproves, He rebukes, He chastens; but it is only that He may restore and approve at last." Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, pp. 22-23). "The Lord is merciful. He does not chastise His people because He hates them, but because He hates the sins they are committing" (The Upward Look, p. 240).
20. "Jesus is coming in, to give the individual members of the church the richest blessings, if they will open the door to Him. He does not once call them Babylon, nor ask them to come out, but He says, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten'" (Manuscript Releases, Vol. 1, p.301)
21. "To claim that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is Babylon, is to make the same claim as does Satan…My brother, if you are teaching that the Seventh-day Adventist church is Babylon, you are wrong. God has not given you any such message to bear….We are not to think that the chosen ones of God who are trying to walk in the light compose Babylon. The fallen denominational churches are Babylon" Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, pp. 42,59,61)
22. "At this time, when we are so near the end, shall we become so like the world in practice that men may look in vain for find God's denominated people? Shall any man sell our peculiar characteristics as God's chosen people for any advantage the world has to give? Shall the favor of those who transgress the law of God be looked upon as a great value? Shall those whom the

Lord has named His people supposed that there is any power higher than the great I AM? Shall we endeavor to blot out the distinguishing points of faith that have made us Seventh-day Adventists?" Evangelism, p. 121)

23. "God has jewels in all the churches, and it is not for us to make sweeping denunciations of the professed religious world" (Last Day Events, p. 197)
24. "Thousands in the eleventh hour will see and acknowledge the truth….These conversions to truth will be made with a rapidity that will surprise the church, and God's name alone will be glorified" (Selected Messages, bk. 2, p.16)
25. "The least deviation from right and principle will lead to separation from God and may end in apostacy" (4TT, p. 578). "The work of apostacy begins in some secret rebellion of the heart against the requirements of God's law" (God's Amazing Grace, p. 333)
26. "God has called His Church in this day, *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 the third angels, He has separated them from the churches and from the world to bring them into a sacred nearness to Himself. He has made them the depositaries 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 ancient Israel, these are a sacred trust to be communicated to the world" (5TT, pp. 455, 456)
27. "We shall have apostacies; we expect them. 'They will go out from us because they were not of us' (see 1John 2:19)" (Selected Message, bk. 3, p.425). "Frequent will be the apostasies of men who have occupied responsible positions" (Last Day Events, p. 179). "Said the angel, 'Rebellion will occur up to the time of the closing up of the work of the third angel's message. Marvel not, neither be discouraged. He who conquered the leader in rebellion stands at the head of this great work….Rebels will be purged out from among the loyal and true in due time, for the truth has gathered every kind'" (Manuscript releases, vol. 5, p. 297).
28. "There are men who will receive the truth, and these will take the places made vacant by those who become offended and leave the truth….Men of true Christian principle will take their place, and will become faithful, trustworthy householders, to advocate the word of God in its true bearings, and in its simplicity. The Lord will work so that the disaffected ones will be separated from the true and loyal ones….The ranks will not be diminished. Those who are firm and true will close up the vacancies that are made by those who become offended and apostatize" (Maranatha, p. 200).
29. "There is no need to doubt, to be fearful that the work will not succeed. God is at the head of the work, and He will set everything in order. If matters need adjusting at the head of the work, God will attend to that, and work to right every wrong. Let us have faith that God is going to carry the noble ship which bears the people of God safely into port" (Maranatha, p. 129). "If matters need adjusting at the head of the work, God will attend to that, and work to right to right every wrong" (Selected Messages, bk. 2, p. 390).
30. "Some have been dissatisfied and have said: 'I will no longer pay my tithe; 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?...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 other are not doing right" (9TT, p. 249)

31. “Nothing short of the miraculous power of God can bring human beings with their different temperaments together in harmonious action” (9TT, p. 194).
32. “Men and women will arise professing to have some new light or some new revelation whose tendency is to unsettle faith in the old landmarks. Their doctrines will not bear the test of God’s word, yet souls will be deceived” (5TT,p. 295). “We are in continual danger of getting above the simplicity of the gospel. There is an intense desire on the part of many to startle the world with something original, that shall lift the people into a state of spiritual ecstasy” (Selected Messages, bk. 2 p. 23)
33. “There have ever been of individuals of independent minds who have claimed that they were right, that God has especially taught, impressed, and led them. Each has a theory of his own, views peculiar to himself, and each claims that his views are in accordance with the word of God” (3TT, p. 428). “God has not passed His people by and chosen one solitary man here and another there as the only ones worthy to be entrusted with His truth. He does not give one man new light contrary to the established faith of the body….The only safety for any of us is in receiving no new doctrine, no new interpretations of the scriptures, without fist submitting it to brethren of experience. Lay it before them in a humble, teachable spirit, with earnest prayer; and if they see no light in it, yield to their judgement” (5TT pp.291-293)
34. “As trials thicken around us, both separating and unity will be seen in our ranks” (6TT, p. 600). “The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the sinners in Zion are sifted out—the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place” (Selected Messages, bk.2, p.380). “Many a star that we have admired for its brilliance will then go out in darkness” (Prophets and Kings, p. 188). “The Lord will not allow His work to be hindered, even though the workmen may prove unworthy. God has men in reserve, prepared to meet the demand, that His work may be preserved from all contaminating influences” (Ye Shall Receive Power, p. 271). “He [God] will raise up from among the common people men and women to do His work, even as of old He called fishermen to be His disciples” (Last Day Events, p. 204)
35. “There is a time of trouble coming to the people of God, but we are not to keep that constant before the people, and rein them up to have a time of trouble before hand. There is to be a shaking among God’s people, but this is not the present truth to carry to the churches” (1SM 180 [2SM 13].
36. What is the purpose of public trials? “God means that testing truth shall be brought to the front and become a subject of examination and discussion, even if it is through the contempt placed upon it. The minds of the people must be agitated. Every controversy, every reproach, every slander, will be God’s means of provoking inquiry and awakening minds that otherwise would slumber” (5T 453 [RH Extra Dec.11, 1888]).
37. “They[the people of God] will have the privilege of bringing the light before those who are called the great men of the earth, and if you have studied the Bible, if you are ready to give an answer to every man that asketh you of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear, your enemies will not be able to gainsay your wisdom” (Our High Calling, p. 355)
38. “The program of coming events is in the hands of the Lord. The Majesty of heaven has the destiny of nations, as well as the concerns of His church, in His own charge” (5TT, p. 753). “The church, enfeebled and defective, needing to be reproved, warned, and counseled, is the only object upon earth upon which Christ bestows His supreme regard” (Testimonies to Ministers

and Gospel Workers, p. 49). “There is no need to doubt, to be fearful that the work will not succeed. God is at the head of the work, and he will set everything in order”. (Walk not in Darkness,” Review and Herald, September 20, 1982).

39. The following quotes are from other source, not Ellen G. White:

“Above all, let’s not allow the shortcomings of others cause us to develop a “root of bitterness” and thereby lose our crown” (The Church That Does Not Fall, P. 77)

“’Now brother will betray brother to death, and the father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved’ (Mark 13:12,13). If we cannot endure the slights and rebuffs of fellow Adventists today, how will we endure that kind of treatment in some tomorrow? (The Church That Does Not Fall, P. 80)