

Q & A 25-D-1

Kneeling for public prayer, should we?

Dr. C. N. Rees

for prayer. That, of course, we all recognize. I have <sup>often</sup> talked with God when I am driving along the road, or as I sit at my desk. I feel that it is a privilege to be in communion with God, but the counsel is quite clear in the matter of the public prayer in connection with a regular service.

A number of the students asked me about this matter when I was at the school, and we discussed it a bit, and Sister White did not kneel in prayer for the benediction or for the prayer of consecration. We have instances of where she stood as she called the people to stand in consecration and then she prayed a consecration prayer with the audience. I think when we read all the statements in the Selected Messages, Book II, and if we can carry out these principles, we should work toward the ideal which is set before us.

Dear Brother Rees:

May the Lord bless you as you give study to this important matter. I want to thank you for your kind letter of February 27. I shall not soon forget the pleasant week I had on your campus. It was a privilege to be associated with you and the members of your staff and to meet from day to day with the student body. I like the spirit which I found there at the school, and my prayer is that God may richly bless this institution of His establishment.

Arthur J. White, Secretary  
You ask concerning the question of kneeling for prayer in chapel. There has come in among us during the past several decades the practice of standing for the main prayer in connection with our services. Sister White's counsel on this question is clear. You will find this set forth somewhat in Gospel Workers, pp. 175-179, in a chapter entitled, "Public Prayer," but the statement in particular on the matter of kneeling is found on page 178 where she speaks of both public prayer and private worship. This question is dealt with a little more fully in Selected Messages, Book II, pages 311-316. The fact that Sister White stopped one who was about to offer prayer and insisted that they kneel I think is quite significant. In this article she speaks of a laxness coming in among us on this question.

You might be interested to know that the Brother H referred to here is H. Camden Lacey, my mother's brother. He was, as you recall, for many years connected with our educational work in Australia and in the United States.

A problem does arise in a crowded auditorium, and our brethren have taken a position that we should, whenever possible, kneel for prayer, or when it is inconvenient, or not possible, we should stand for prayer. I think you will find this set forth in an article on public prayer which appears in the last edition of the Minister's Manual printed two or three years ago.

Also on page 316 of Selected Messages, Book II, you will find several statements from Ellen White indicating that there is no place inappropriate

for prayer. That, of course, we all recognize. I ~~have~~<sup>often</sup> talk with God when I am driving along in the car, or as I sit at my desk. I feel that it is a privilege to be in communion with God, but the counsel is quite clear in the matter of the public prayer in connection with a regular service.

A number of the students asked me about this matter when I was at the school, and we discussed it a bit, and Sister White did not kneel in prayer for the benediction or for the prayer of consecration. We have instances of where she stood as she called the people to stand in consecration and then she prayed a consecration prayer with she and the audience all standing. I think when we read all the statements in their setting the meaning is clear, and if we can carry out these principles, we should do so. We should ever work toward the ideal which is set before us.

Dear Brother Rees:

May the Lord bless you as you give study to this important matter.

With the best of wishes, I am  
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