

TALBOT: WHY SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM IS NOT EVANGELICAL

LifeAssuranceMinistries.org

Proclamation!

FOR FORMER ADVENTISTS
INQUIRING ADVENTISTS
SABBATARIANS
CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2010
VOLUME 11, ISSUE 3

New Adventist president sets course:

Affirms the Adventist gospel

STORIES OF FAITH:

Ransomed by Truth

Did Adventist leaders lie to Walter Martin?

A LOOK BACK AT THE ADVENTIST/EVANGELICAL DIALOGUES IN THE MID 1950'S



COLLEEN TINKER

Apologists for truth

It's funny how my perspective has changed. During my years as an Adventist I knew almost nothing about Christian apologetics. I'd heard of Josh McDowell and his book *Evidence That Demands A Verdict*, but I'd never read it. I also knew C. S. Lewis was an academic who devoted his post-conversion years to writing insightfully about Christianity, and I had read *Mere Christianity* and two or three other books of his. That was about all I knew.

Christian apologetics meant little to me because I believed "mere" Christianity was only a starting place. If I thought about Christian apologists at all, my thoughts were similar to what I thought about Billy Graham: what a shame they don't know the Sabbath. How powerful they could be for "the truth" if they were open to it.

During the eleven years since we wrote our resignation letter to the Adventist church, Richard and I have come to know several Christian apologists. It has happened gradually—at first we only vaguely understood the significance of what they were doing.

Over the past four years, however, we have come to have deep gratitude to God for what these courageous men and women do. Apologetics is hard and often-hated work, and God prepares both the work and the workers to whom He assigns the tasks. Because of their commitment to the gospel, the body of Christ has been equipped to recognize and resist a great number of false religions.

In fact, we have found ourselves swept into a swell of apologetics—and no one is more surprised than we. We didn't see this coming when we graduated from our Adventist colleges with our degrees in music and public relations.

Just as God brings us the work He prepared in advance for us to do (Eph. 2:10), He also brings people and provisions to us at just the right time. Last week He sent me Julie.

On Sunday Julie Born, the wife of our worship pastor at Trinity Church, told me she had a magazine she'd been saving for me. On Monday I went to her house and received a copy of the April, 1957 issue of *The Kings' Business* magazine. It was the official publication of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles (now Biola University), and it contained a detailed analysis of Seventh-day Adventism written

by Dr. Louis Talbot, then the chancellor of the Institute.

Julie told me her father, Walter DeBlauw, had found this old magazine in a box of publications he had received from a mentor of his who had subscribed to it. He asked Julie if "those people who work with Adventists" were still at her church. When she said yes, he asked her to give us the magazine. This unexpected gift was like finding gold. The Talbot article came exactly on time to run as a companion to our story about another set of apologists: Walter Martin and Donald Grey Barnhouse.

We are delighted to share Steve Pitcher's documented article examining the conversations between Walter Martin and Adventist leaders between 1955-56 followed by Talbot's 1957 examination of Seventh-day Adventism. Dale Ratzlaff contrasts the simple gospel with General Conference president Ted Wilson's message in his first sermon to the world church. Ane Edwards describes how she was transformed by truth, and Carolyn Macomber responds to the "second angel's message" of Revelation 14.

We pray God will reveal what He knows we need to know through the work of the gospel apologists who are featured in this issue.

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Founding Editor **Dale Ratzlaff**

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Design Editor **Richard Tinker**

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Web: LifeAssuranceMinistries.org

E-mail: proclamation@gmail.com

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Join us in study and worship

The next **Former Adventist Fellowship weekend**, titled "Choose you this day", will be held Friday, February 18, through Sunday, February 20, 2011, at Trinity Church, Redlands, California. For information and registration call 877-349-6984 or go to FormerAdventist.com and click on FAF Weekends.

Join us financially

The Life Assurance Ministries board recently met and laid plans for the coming year that left the members excited. More details will come in subsequent issues. We ask for your prayers, and please ask God if He is leading you to be part of this ministry through financial support as we seek to proclaim truth and honor our Lord Jesus. †

For further **STUDY**

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Was Paul's gospel actually Christ's gospel?

Q: Can we be certain that the gospel Paul claims to have received “through a revelation of Jesus Christ” was actually “Christ's gospel” and not something Paul interpreted through his own biases?

A: In Acts 26 Paul, a prisoner, stood before King Agrippa and told his story:

“At midday, O King, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining all around me and those who were journeying with me. And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’ And I said, ‘Who art Thou, Lord?’ And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting’”(Acts 26:13-15).

What evidence is there to believe that the risen Jesus actually communicated this message to Paul? If this account really happened as described, there can be no division between the teachings of Paul and Jesus. Consider the following clear facts from this account:

It was a supernatural event with witnesses. All the people with Paul, then Saul, were knocked to the ground. There was intense light—Saul was blinded. There was an audible voice. There was intelligent communication between Saul and Jesus—a statement, a question, and an extended answer.

It was an unexpected revelation. The stricken Saul had understood Jesus to be a false teacher. The revelation of this event, therefore, was not the result of his own wishful thinking but was diametrically opposed to his current understanding.

This event was accompanied with several other revelations including the vision to Ananias recorded in Acts 9. God told him: 1) the name of the street where he was to go, 2) the name of the home owner, 3) the identity of “a man from Tarsus named Saul,” 4) the information that “he is praying.” Moreover, Ananias was told that 5) Paul was a chosen instrument of Jesus, 6) that he was to bear Jesus' name before the Gentiles, kings and sons of Israel, and 7) Jesus would show him how much he was to suffer. Finally,

God confirmed these revelations with another miracle: 8) healing Saul's blindness.

Saul-now-Paul's experience had the markers of the voice of God. Throughout Scripture God's calls to people were frequently marked by His repetition of their names. For example:

But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am” (Gen. 22:11).

God called to him from the midst of the bush, and said, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am” (Ex. 3:4).

Then the LORD came and stood and called as at other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for Thy servant is listening” (1 Sam. 3:10).

We see this same pattern recorded in the gospels:

But the Lord answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things” (Lk. 10:41).

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling” (Mat. 23:37).

So, when Jesus spoke to Saul saying, “Saul, Saul” as recorded in both Acts 9 and 26, the call had the markers of Jesus. And here is the “gospel of Jesus” that was dictated to Paul:

“But arise, and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; delivering you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me” (Act 26:16-18).

Here, in broad strokes, Jesus outlines His gospel—a divine revelation that is designed to:

- Open blind eyes.
- Turn lost sinners from darkness to light.
- Transfer people from the dominion of Satan to the kingdom of God.
- Mediate forgiveness of sins to people.
- Guarantee an inheritance to the children of God.

Jesus' gospel effects these blessings among those who have been sanctified by faith in Christ—not by any work or offering, but by faith in Jesus alone.

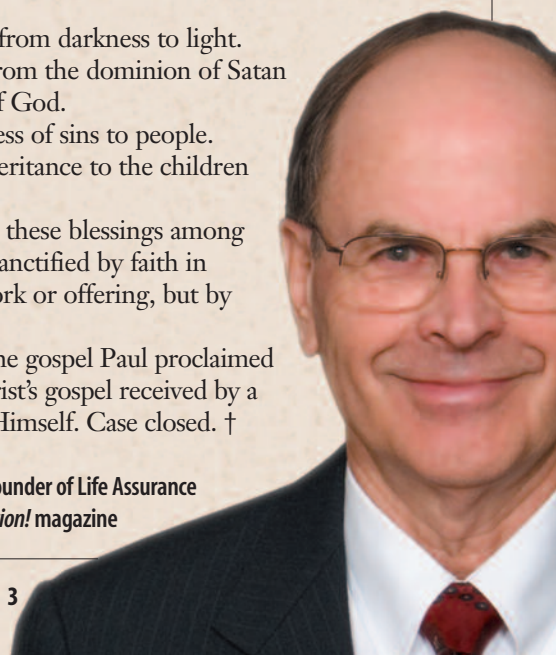
Without question the gospel Paul proclaimed is none other than Christ's gospel received by a revelation from Jesus Himself. Case closed. †

Dale Ratzlaff, the founder of Life Assurance Ministries and *Proclamation!* magazine

If this account really happened as described, there can be no division between the teachings of Paul and Jesus.



Dale and Carolyn Ratzlaff have authored five books concerning Adventism: *Sabbath in Christ*—a volume that explains new covenant Sabbath rest, *Cultic Doctrine of Seventh-day Adventism*—explores the unique doctrine of a pre-advent judgment that decides eternal destinies, *Truth About Adventist "Truth"*—a little book that's perfect to give to Christians that need to understand Adventism, *Truth Led Me Out*—in which Dale Ratzlaff tells his own story of following Jesus, no matter the cost, and *My Cup Overflows*—Carolyn's autobiography. Each of these books is available at www.LifeAssuranceMinistries.com or by phoning 800-355-7073.



Ransomed by Truth

ANE EDWARDS



YOU HAVE RANSOMED ME, O LORD, GOD OF TRUTH. PSALM 31:5

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Spiritually speaking, each of us is born into this world already kidnapped, a prisoner of the enemy, separated from God. Our way out of this spiritual dilemma is to act on the instructions God left for us in His Ransom Note, Scripture.

Imagine the implications of being kidnapped and your family receiving a ransom note riddled with error so they cannot ascertain how to rescue you. Compare that scenario to the implications of receiving an erroneous version of God's Ransom Note.

Contradiction has gone unnoticed

I came dangerously close to betting away my eternal life by relying on authority figures to accurately present God's Ransom Note to me. Since I had no desire to do the research myself, I gratefully allowed others to do that work for me. I felt confident that those I viewed as smarter than myself must also be right.

It was shocking, therefore, to discover that the ransom note I received and accepted as authentic had actually lulled me into a false sense of security, causing me to believe I had found the real saving Jesus when indeed I had not. I'd literally been worshipping a god of someone else's making—a god who looked nothing like the saving Jesus in Scripture.

The Jesus my authority figures led me to and on whom I had been relying had not even completed atonement for our sins yet. He is still working His way through a second phase of atonement,

an investigative judgment.¹ In fact, the ransom note given to me says that the investigative judgment is “as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross.”²

Imagine, then, how perplexing it was to discover Hebrews teaching something entirely different! Hebrews could not make it more clear that Christ's work of atonement was completely finished at the cross and is never to be taken up, ever again!³

Realizing I had been falsely taught a two-phase atonement was shocking indeed, but what sky-rocketed my alarm to a new level was discovering Ellen White boldly revealing the following demonic scheme as a warning to us. In her chapter on the investigative judgment, she says this, “The archdeceiver hates the great truths that bring to view an atoning sacrifice and an all-powerful Mediator. He knows that with him everything depends on his diverting minds from Jesus and His truth.”⁴

How could she be so aware of Satan's scheme and then go on to publish a book that does exactly what she warned us about, detailing an unbiblical two-phase atonement—a process that completely negates Jesus' one time, all-sufficient atoning sacrifice? How is it possible for that contradiction to go unnoticed?

The Jesus to whom my ransom note led cannot offer eternal life until after everyone's name has passed through his investigative judgment.⁵ In fact, the completion of that process is necessary to determine who the actual citizens of heaven will be.⁶

Scripture, however, repeatedly teaches otherwise. John 5:24 makes it clear that Jesus gives eternal life at the moment we believe. Think about that profound truth! John could not call it eternal life at the moment of our belief IF we can later reject or lose it. Scripture also describes us as heavenly citizens at the moment of conversion.⁷

I am saved

My ransom note also incorrectly taught me, “Those who accept the Savior, however sincere their conversion, should never be taught to say or feel that they are saved.”⁸ Imagine my ecstatic relief to discover 1 John 5:13 teaching that God literally wants believers to know they are saved.

Further, my ransom note incorrectly stated, “Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them.”⁹ The whole of Scripture says otherwise. Ephesians 1-2 teaches we are sealed at the moment of belief while we are still dead in our sins. Moreover, it goes on to teach that God even seats us beside Christ immediately. Colossians 2:12-14 adds to these rich promises by revealing God forgave all our sins at Christ’s death, nailing them to the cross.

That was a most shocking revelation—God forgave all my past, present and future sins at the cross! It was especially shocking because the Jesus I’d been taught is still reviewing detailed records of our sins, making decisions about who can actually be forgiven,¹⁰ pleading for us while Satan stands there making accusations against us.¹¹ Why does Ellen White portray Christ this way? Colossians 2:15 says Christ defeated Satan at the cross.

Jesus diminished

My ransom note also mistakenly taught me that the scapegoat used in the Day of Atonement represents Satan.¹² Imagine my horror to discover Leviticus 16 teaches that atonement for Israel was made using this scapegoat, and that the high priest laid his hands on the scapegoat’s head to confess the sins of Israel over it. Neither of those descriptions fit Satan! How was it possible for another appalling teaching to go so unnoticed—a teaching that again plays directly into Satan’s scheme to undermine Christ’s atonement, thereby diverting our minds from the truth?

I also incorrectly learned from my ransom note that Moses had been raised from the dead and taken to heaven,¹³ even though Scripture never hints at such an event. In fact, such an event blatantly contradicts 1 Corinthians 15:23. This passage states that there is a specific order in which the dead are raised and taken to heaven, and Christ is clearly named as being the first to fulfill that role.

My ransom note also mistakenly taught me Jesus and Michael the Archangel were the same being,¹⁴ even though Hebrews 1:5 says God never called His Son an angel.

When I discovered that errors such as these—Moses’ resurrection, the scapegoat’s representing Satan, and Michael’s being Jesus—are unabashedly written right into the passages of the Adventist-produced *Clear Word* as though they are truths, I was grief stricken. The Adventist apologetics used to support these aberrant teachings, however, are even more appalling to me than are the teachings themselves. Such apologetics only serve to bind people deeply to unscriptural lies.

**Truth is a Person!
Truth is our
Ransom! Jesus
said, “I am the
way, and the
truth, and the
life.” Truth sets
us free from the
kidnapped con-
dition into which
we are born.**

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It didn’t take long for a very distinct and disturbing pattern to emerge. I soon realized my version of the ransom note repeatedly bumped Christ from the picture, diminished His role as Savior, and portrayed an entirely different plan of salvation than the glorious plan outlined in Scripture. As I came to those realizations, I suddenly understood why Paul calls any other gospel “cursed.”¹⁵ Such a gospel holds no power to change me. Suddenly my entire life began to make sense.

Unbeliever

Those who knew me would have never pegged me as an unbeliever. In fact, my life was so enshrined with religious performance, I didn’t even notice I wasn’t. I was too busy manufacturing my perfect Pollyanna appearance. That facade kept me so busy I never realized I had no longing for Jesus. I longed to be righteous; I longed for Sabbath; I even longed to go to heaven, but I had no longing for Jesus. How could I? I had never been introduced to the saving Jesus. Nearly everything I believed about Him as taught to me in my ransom note actually negated who He was.

No wonder I fell away after many years of sincerely trying to become righteous. I had been pursuing a god who had not yet completed atone-



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Ane (Jones) Edwards is a stay-at-home mom/freelance graphic artist residing in Nebraska. She was raised in a very traditional Adventist home. About six years ago Ane and her husband dropped their nets and joined the body of Christ, only to discover truth abounds in His body in a much greater degree than ever presented as possible outside of Adventism. Ane is committed to helping others find the Jesus who radically changes lives.

ment for me—a god who had no power or authority to keep me saved. I believed in a god who could not yet consider me a citizen of heaven—a god whose prophetess was allowed to contradict Scripture.

How could God rain down on me in abundant relationship when my beliefs so dramatically altered who His Son is? Jesus is the only way into heaven. What does it mean when everything you believe about Jesus negates who He is?

I know what it meant when Israel called the golden calf the god that brought them out of Egypt. It was unnerving to discover I had actually been close to being the person who could one day stand before Christ only to hear Him say, “I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!”¹⁶

I diligently tried for many years to attain the type of Christ-like righteousness Ellen White taught I must attain.¹⁷ I genuinely believed her when she said Christ came in the flesh to prove this attainment of righteousness could be done.¹⁸ Those beliefs are costing many people dearly! All know they have never attained Christ-like righteousness for a minute, let alone an entire day. No wonder so many people grow weary of trying and fall away with no remorse. Requiring Christ-like perfection sets the stage for hopelessness and is counter-intuitive to Christ’s substitutionary atonement. This requirement completely negates what He accomplished for us on the cross, “... for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.”¹⁹

Relief

Imagine my welcomed relief to discover Christ’s sole purpose for coming was to be my Substitute because of my own inability ever to attain perfection.²⁰ Now I no longer count on my own goodness or my ability to obey God’s law, but I trust Christ to save me, for God’s way of making me right with Him depends on faith.²¹

Thankfully I soon discovered my ransom note also incorrectly taught that right before the time of trouble begins, Jesus will cease interceding for me. During this fearful time, I had learned, I would be expected to stand before God based on my own righteousness.²² What a relief to discover instead that Hebrews 7:25 promises Jesus will always live to intercede for me, thus erasing any fear that I will ever have to stand on my own righteousness.

Recently my daughter asked how my view of salvation now differs from what I believed as an Adventist. I led her to those radically life-changing, life-giving promises found in Ephesians 1 and 2. Together we read how believers are immediately sealed with the Holy Spirit at the moment they place their trust in Jesus and thus

are guaranteed eternal life and are spiritually seated beside Christ at that moment. We read how those promises are not based on our works but are solely a gift from God—that even our faith to believe is His gift to us.

I then asked her where Ephesians even remotely suggested she must first pass an investigative judgment before any of those promises could actually be hers to claim. Suddenly she slammed her Bible shut and fled from the room.

Later I sat, heartbroken, as she wept, describing a horrible feeling of panic that overcame her when she realized how deeply rooted her false beliefs about salvation were. She said that when those beliefs rose up within her, they completely overrode everything she had just clearly seen Ephesians teaching to be true.

How well I know the feeling she described—the truth feels wrong, and the lies feel right. Deeply ingrained error has the power to maintain a claw-like grip on its victims. We simply cannot wait until Scripture “feels” right to act upon it. Truth really matters! Every sliver of truth as well as any sliver of a lie directly impacts our ability to understand essential doctrines and to experience the reality of Jesus.

There is a biblical principal we must apply, especially when, because of deep indoctrination, truth feels so wrong. God is under no obligation to give us more clarity when we are not willing to respond to the truth He has already revealed. In fact we can lose the light of truth if we won’t act upon it. The enemy is just waiting to snatch truth away from us.²³

Revelation through truth

God reveals Himself to us through truth. Truth leads us into the deepest, most passionate, radically life-changing relationship possible. “The LORD is near...to all who call upon Him in truth.”²⁴ “...true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”²⁵

Truth is a Person! Truth is our Ransom! Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.”²⁶ Truth sets us free from the kidnapped condition into which we are born.

If spiritual things bore you or make you cringe, or if you are not living a life pleasing unto God, please seriously evaluate whether or not you received the correct Ransom Note. Make sure you are worshipping the real, saving Jesus of Scripture! Apart from knowing Him, no radical, life-changing power can ever occur in your life. Instead, you will spend your entire life trying to manufacture a righteousness only He can credit to your account.

In Him you will be ransomed by truth! †

Endnotes

¹ White, E.G., *The Great Controversy*, pp. 480, 489, 490.

² *ibid.* p. 489.

³ Hebrews 7:27; 9:26-29; 10:10-12, 18, 26.

⁴ *The Great Controversy*, Ch. 28, p. 488.

⁵ *ibid.* Ch. 28.

⁶ *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 4, Daniel 7:10, p. 828.

⁷ Ephesians 2:19; Hebrews 11:13; 1 Peter 2:11.

⁸ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 155.

⁹ *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 214.

¹⁰ *The Great Controversy*, Ch. 28.

¹¹ *ibid.* p. 484.

¹² *ibid.* Ch. 23, pg. 422; Ch. 28, p. 485.

¹³ *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 1 (1870), p. 342.

¹⁴ Blanco, Jack, *The Clear Word*, Jude 9, Review and Herald Pub. Assoc.

¹⁵ Galatians 1:8-9.

¹⁶ Matthew 7:22-23.

¹⁷ *The Great Controversy*, Ch. 39, p. 623.

¹⁸ *Acts of the Apostles*, Ch. 52, p. 531.

¹⁹ Galatians 2:21 (NASB).

²⁰ Romans 8:3; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21.

²¹ Philippians 3:9.

²² *The Great Controversy*, Ch. 39, pp. 613-614.

²³ Matthew 13:12, 19; Mark 4:25.

²⁴ Psalm 145:18 (NASB).

²⁵ John 4:23-24 (NASB).

²⁶ John 14:6 (NASB).

Before you read any further...



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We are pleased to share two articles looking back to the historic conversations between Adventist leaders and Walter Martin and Donald Grey Barnhouse in the 1950s. The first, a documented piece by Stephen Pitcher showing evidence that the Adventists deceived Martin and Barnhouse, is an important contribution to the body of existing work that has recounted and analyzed those discussions occurring over 50 years ago.



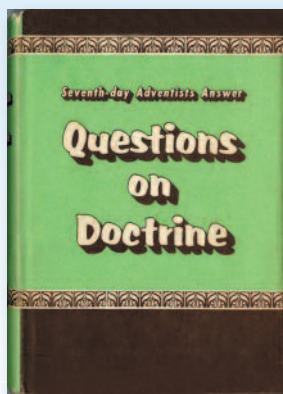
Dr. Walter Martin

The second piece is a direct response to the articles published in 1956 by Barnhouse in *Eternity* magazine (which he edited) in which he proclaimed Seventh-day Adventists to be evangelical believers. Written by Dr. Louis Talbot, chancellor of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles (now Biola University), this article ran in the April, 1957 edition of the widely circulated *The King's Business*, the official publication of the Institute, and documented Talbot's reasons for denying Barnhouse's conclusion.

Behind the scenes

We acknowledge that in spite of evidence strongly suggesting that the Adventists were less than transparent with Martin, and that Martin himself had grave questions about what he was told, he expressed the highest regard for the personal integrity of the men with whom he discussed Adventist doctrine in 1955 and 1956. Moreover, he reportedly stated as late as 1989 that—in spite of the discovery and admission of her extensive plagiarism—Ellen G. White was a God-fearing woman whom the Lord used and whose writings served a devotional purpose.

We should further note that when Martin engaged in the pivotal discussions with Adventist representatives in the mid-1950s, he was a graduate student in his 20s. Despite his youth, Martin had already published *The Rise of the Cults* and two full-length works on Christian Science and the Jehovah's Witnesses, and Adventist leaders worried about Martin's potential condemnation of Adventism. The men with whom he conversed were older and were specifically approved to represent the General Conference to Martin and Barnhouse. They knew how to adjust their vocabulary to sound evangelical while retaining their historic Adventist beliefs. Martin did not realize that while these men were the official representatives of the Adventist church, they did not represent "official" Adventism.

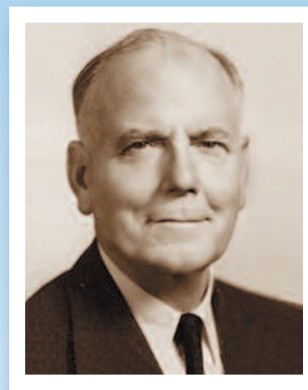


Consequences of the discussions

One long-term consequence of these discussions, and the resulting *Questions on Doctrine* (QOD) the Adventists published in 1957 to answer Martin and Barnhouse, is that the Adventist church has been widely accepted as an evangelical denomination. In fact, it has engaged in discussions with the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) and in 2007 produced a joint agreement which required the Adventists to endorse the WEA's statement of faith, thus perpetuating the same lack of disclosure they practiced on Walter Martin.

Meanwhile, QOD went out of print a few years after its release and was not reprinted until 2003, when it was published by Andrews University Press in an annotated edition as part of its "Adventist Classic Library."

When QOD first appeared it produced a firestorm of controversy within the Adventist church that has never abated. Adventists knew it did not accurately represent their doctrines, but some altered their personal beliefs to reflect the book's language. Today, although Adventists vary in the ways they articulate their doctrines, Adventist beliefs have not changed. The denomination is as dependent upon Ellen G. White now as it ever was. Adventists are still as adamant about the Sabbath, their state-of-the-dead doctrine and annihilation, and their "great controversy theme" as they have always been.



Dr. Louis Talbot

Meanwhile, Talbot, a personal friend of Barnhouse, had done in-depth studies of Adventist teachings from the church's official printed material. Talbot strongly disagreed with Barnhouse's conclusions in *Eternity* and wrote a series of responses. The article which we reprint in this issue (with permission from Biola University) was published the same year as QOD. It reminds us that even though Martin and Barnhouse were misled by the Adventists, major apologists and theologians among their Christian peers understood that Adventism couldn't simply change because a small panel of men declared it.

Today the Adventist church appears to be endorsing true Adventism. In his first sermon to the world church on July 3, 2010, newly elected General Conference president Ted Wilson stated: "Don't reach out to movements or megachurch centers outside the Seventh-day Adventist Church which promise you spiritual success based on faulty theology....Look WITHIN the Seventh-day Adventist Church....The historic biblical beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will not be moved....Utilize wonderful resources such as the Biblical Research Institute's new book on hermeneutics that helps us know the correct way to interpret the Scriptures."

We pray that the following articles will help clarify the past and shine the light of truth on the subject of Adventism today. †



Did Adventist leaders **LIE** to Walter Martin?

A look back at the Adventist/Evangelical dialogues in the mid 1950's

STEPHEN D. PITCHER

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The story has often been told over the last 50 years. Walter Martin, the well-known cult researcher and Christian apologist, went to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1955 to make sure he accurately understood Adventism's doctrinal positions. He had written a chapter about Adventism in *The Rise of the Cults* (Zondervan, 1955), and before he wrote more he wanted to question Adventist leaders directly. After several conferences with Martin and evangelical colleagues including Donald Grey Barnhouse in 1955 and 1956 (one count put the number of meetings at 18), the Adventists published *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine: An Explanation of Certain Major Aspects of Seventh-day Adventist Belief* (often called QOD) in 1957. This book was the Adventists' official answer to Walter Martin and his colleagues.

Numerous accounts of this story focus not primarily on the events of the discussions themselves but on their backlash from both within and without the Adventist Church. As many have stated and re-stated, the publication of QOD resulted in more and longer-lasting controversy within the Adventist Church than has any other issue the Church has faced.^{2,3,4}

Raymond Cottrell, associate editor of the *Adventist Review* and also of the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, practically prophesied about these 50 years of conflict as QOD was being prepared for publication:

Let us be certain that nothing gets into the proposed book that will take us the next 50 years to live down.⁵

In October of 2007 a QOD 50th anniversary conference was held at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. This event was not so much a celebration as it was a time for various individuals within Adventism (and two non-Adventists) to discuss issues from the QOD controversy which have persisted over the past five decades. Although many Adventists have opposed QOD, many have favored it, though their favor reflects a variety of viewpoints and agendas. Whether for or against the book, all of the

conference participants agreed that QOD was a watershed event in Adventist history.

One particularly revealing event in the “QOD saga” occurred in 1984 when Walter Martin and William Johnsson, then editor of the *Adventist Review*, met for discussions on the *John Ankerberg Show*. The resulting five-program television series, “Who Is Telling the Truth About Seventh Day [sic] Adventism?,” aired in 1985.

The question now needs to be asked. Did someone lie about Seventh-day Adventism? To answer this question, we will first look at the Adventists and the evangelicals involved in the “Martin conversations”—and then examine various responses to QOD. Juhyeok (Julius) Nam’s doctoral dissertation “Reactions to the Seventh-day Adventist Evangelical Conferences and *Questions on Doctrine, 1955–1971*,” is an excellent resource on this subject, but it only examines work written before 1972. Numerous issues, however, have arisen since 1971, particularly from the *John Ankerberg Show*, which we will address as well.

The Adventists

The Adventist leaders involved in the conferences with Walter Martin and his colleagues were Leroy Edwin Froom, W. E. Read, and Roy Allan Anderson—a trio nicknamed FREDA inside leadership circles). Froom was a key player who maintained contact with General Conference president Reuben R. Figuhr. In a letter dated August 8, 1955, Froom cryptically wrote to Figuhr about the pending talks:

The time has come for some things to happen, and I believe that there is opportunity now to go forward with certain things. I know that I am speaking in generalities and parables, but if I get into particulars, it would take too long and I would have to explain the whole thing.⁶

All three Adventist conferees were “highly respected leaders.”⁷ Read had received training in biblical languages but was not proficient.⁸ Anderson had dealt with non-Adventists for several years and could understand and use their Christian phraseology. Froom was a researcher and historian who had compiled multi-volume works on prophetic and conditionalist faith throughout Christian history. “But the facts are that our Adventist trio, untrained as theologians, was no match for Martin and Barnhouse, specialists in Calvinistic Evangelicalism.”⁹

The uninvited Adventists—the lunatic fringe

Milian Lauritz Andreasen, Raymond F. Cottrell, and Francis D. Nichol were influential Adventists who were not invited to participate in the Adventist-Evangelical conferences. In fact, Andreasen and Nichol were specifically barred from participation. That these three and many others who had been influential in Adventism were not included is quite telling. These men in “the fringe” were so respected within Adventism that their opinions and possible objections to the QOD project had far-reaching effects, influencing countless laypersons who admired and learned from them.

Nichol was the editor of the *Review and Herald* from 1945 to 1961, and supervising editor of the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*. Many consider him the leading Ellen White apologist of the twentieth century.

Cottrell was an associate editor of both the *Review and Herald* and the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*. A notable scholar proficient in both Hebrew and Greek, he identified five areas of concern about the forthcoming QOD—concerns which were largely ignored. In an unpublished sixteen-page letter to General Conference leaders, he listed the categories of his concern: “(1) change in Adventist theology; (2) Ellen G. White; (3) the remnant church; (4) Adventism in relation to other evangelical churches; and (5) the proposed book on Adventism by Martin.”¹⁰

Andreasen was one of Adventism’s most influential theologians of the 1930s and 1940s. He was a proponent of “Last Generation Theology” which holds that the generation alive when Christ returns will have to have reached perfection. He strongly opposed the publication of QOD and felt that the Adventist Church was being severely compromised. His story is well-known as he made it his last mission in life to warn the Adventist Church of the heresy that was coming into the Church through QOD. Many during those years pointed to his *Letters to the Churches* which articulated the reasons for his disapproval as just cause for assigning him to the lunatic fringe of Adventism—yet those *Letters*, far from being discarded as the work of a lunatic, are still being circulated to this day.

How did the man who was arguably the foremost theologian in the Adventist Church become consigned to the lunatic fringe? The reason was not Andreasen’s theology; rather, he was marginalized because he opposed working with evangelicals and making Adventist doctrines palatable to Protestant Christians.

Andreasen’s writings were significant within Adventism. For example, some of his works were included in the Christian Home Library (CHL), a collection that epitomizes Adventist writing and which features all the works of Ellen White. The CHL offers works that all Adventists can agree clearly state their positions without resorting to non-Adventist phraseology. In effect, they did not rely on agreements with Babylonish theology to make the case for Adventism.

Though Andreasen’s books eventually faded in popularity and were absent from Adventist Book Centers (ABC) for many years, they are again being sold. His book *The Sanctuary Service* is currently available through the ABC.¹¹



“You know, this stuff that we’re seeing now indicates that there never really was any change, and that they have not told you the truth, and they didn’t tell Barnhouse the truth, and that ‘you were misled and you’ve got to set the record straight.’”¹

WALTER MARTIN

Ironically, Leroy Froom, one of the key participants in the Evangelical-Adventist meetings, was a typical Adventist and sounded much like the “lunatic fringe” to which Andreasen had been relegated. Unlike Andreasen, however, Froom reached out to Martin and Barnhouse in the 1950’s. This apparent cordiality belied his earlier hostility toward working with those from “Babylon”. The Adventist Church has always taught that the Pope is the Antichrist, that the Roman Catholic Church is the Whore of Babylon (Revelation 14:8), and that the Protestant churches are its harlot daughters. In *The Ministry* magazine for April, 1944, Froom endorsed this traditional Adventist belief when he wrote:

How dare a man contemplate, or have the temerity to present, the degree of doctor of divinity, gained in the universities of Babylon, as a credential for teaching or preaching this threefold message, the second stipulation of which is, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen . . . Come out of her, My people.” How dare we accept such a Babylonian credential in lieu of mastery of the truth? Shall a man go into Babylon to gain strength and wisdom to call men out of Babylon? To ask the question is but to disclose how far some have compromised with Babylon, as they have gone back to Babylon to drink from her wells of wisdom. Oh, for the living waters of truth fresh from the Word!

Someone needs to sound an alarm. We need to grip ourselves and halt a growing trend that, if it becomes entrenched, will bring disaster through neutralizing our message. . . . Otherwise we shall go the way of all other religious bodies before us, who started out with a heavenly message, but who have bogged down in the morass of worldly scholarship with its erudite haziness, its loss of spiritual vision, and its blurring of truth, until its virility and its power to witness have virtually disappeared.¹²

What happened between 1944 and the 1950s to cause Froom to make such an apparent about-face?

Apparently avoiding the label “cult” was even more important to Froom than avoiding collaboration with those from Babylon. In the 1940s Froom would have agreed with Andreasen, Cottrell and Nichol. In the 1950s, however, Froom appeared to trample his own convictions, leading out in the conferences designed to convince the evangelicals from “Babylon” that Adventism was truly Christian, while the very men with whom he agreed theologically were cast off to the sidelines to witness the unthinkable.

“A powerful circle”—the non-Adventists

The Evangelicals involved in the conferences were primarily Walter R. Martin, Donald G. Barnhouse and George E. Cannon. Martin, in his mid-20s, was a consulting editor with *Eternity* magazine with specific training in apologetics and cults. Barnhouse, the senior theologian, Martin’s mentor, and a world-renowned Bible teacher, pastored the Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia for many years and served as editor of *Eternity* magazine. Cannon was a professor of New Testament at Nyack Missionary College in Nyack, New York.

The effects of Martin’s work were already known in religious circles. Martin had classified the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society (Jehovah’s Witnesses) as cults. With that label the organizations had a very difficult, if not impossible, time convincing informed individuals of their orthodoxy. The leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was aware both of Martin’s conclu-

sions regarding the Mormons and the Jehovah’s Witnesses and of his influence, and the Adventists did not want the same stigma being attached to their church.

Froom knew the power of the individuals with whom he was meeting. In a letter to General Conference president Figuhr, Froom stated:

I do not know where all this will lead, but we do know that we have won friends in a powerful circle—friends who believe that we have been unjustly treated and are set to make a defense of our adherence to sound Biblical positions.¹³

Wordsmiths—why did the Adventists change their language?

Although approving of many positions articulated in QOD by the delegated committee, Raymond Cottrell and others later admitted that there were serious problems in the text. Cottrell believed the book was telling “only part of the truth as to what Adventists believed on [certain] points.”¹⁴ Nichol stated:

It seems evident that some statements were clearly made to Martin and some typewritten forms of answers were given to him that many of us, on mature consideration are unable to support.¹⁵

Froom was aware of the new, non-Adventist wording the committee members were using to answer Martin’s questions. In a letter to Figuhr dated April 26, 1955, Froom wrote:

It may seem that some of the statements are a bit different from what you might anticipate. If you knew the backgrounds, the attitudes, the setting of it all, you would understand why we stated these things as we have.¹⁶

The annotated edition of QOD, reprinted as part of the Adventist Classic Library, was published in 2003. The annotations were written by George R. Knight, professor (now retired) of church history at Andrews Theological Seminary. In his introduction he notes:

The authors at times push the facts a bit too far on such issues as Adventism’s historic understanding of the Trinity and they even present their data in a way that creates a false impression on the human nature of Christ. But given the desire to please and the importance of the answers, the volume overall is a remarkably courageous statement of traditional Adventist doctrinal understanding.¹⁷

When it comes to wordsmithing, Andreasen, Knight, and a host of others have all agreed in print (at different times in the past 50 years) that the heading on p. 650 of QOD (in Appendix B) was more than just a modification of the words used to state Adventist belief. Referring to Christ, it reads, “Took Sinless Human Nature.”¹⁸ It has been amply demonstrated from the writings of Ellen G. White, who is “the final court of appeal”¹⁹ within Seventh-day Adventism, that Jesus took our sinful, fallen human nature, “degraded and defiled by sin.” Prior to the writing of QOD, Ellen White’s words were the standard Adventist description of Christ’s human nature.

Most Adventists are familiar with the following quotes from Ellen White regarding Christ’s human nature. These quotes are completely contrary to the frankly deceptive statement in QOD:

Think of Christ’s humiliation. He took upon Himself fallen, suffering human nature, degraded and defiled by sin.²⁰

Clad in the vestments of humanity, the Son of God came down to the level of those He wished to save. In Him was no guile or sin-

fulness; He was ever pure and undefiled; yet He took upon Him our sinful nature.²¹

Before the publication of the annotated QOD, Knight wrote *A Search for Identity: The Development of Seventh-day Adventist Beliefs*. In it he clearly identifies how the Adventists in the 1950s rationalized the rewording of their doctrine of an atonement that was not completed on the cross:

The issue of the complete atonement in many ways was a semantic adjustment made to enable the Adventist leaders in dialogue with Barnhouse and Martin to communicate their belief in the sufficiency of Christ's death. They felt safe in that approach since they could quote Ellen White as essentially saying that the atonement took place on the cross. Thus the authors of *Questions on Doctrine* could note in agreement with the evangelicals that Jesus had "provided" the sacrificial atonement on the cross while still not yielding the Adventist understanding that the atonement continued in the heavenly sanctuary where Christ "applied" the benefits of His sacrificial atonement.²²

The crafting of phraseology that sounded orthodox to evangelicals while not renouncing historic Adventist positions intentionally obscured the true nature of Adventist beliefs. Martin and Barnhouse were convinced that the Adventist church had changed some of its cultic doctrines to conform to the evangelical understanding. In reality,

[QOD] represents a total rejection of Barnhouse and Martin's dispensational understanding of the Second Advent and the covenant, while it is a courageous statement of the Adventist position on such controverted topics as the Sabbath, the mark of the beast, Daniel 8, the investigative judgment, the state of the dead, hell, Babylon, the remnant, and other topics that were offensive to the evangelical community.²³

Since QOD

Following the publication of QOD various storms of controversy broke out both within and outside the Adventist Church. These have been well documented by Juhyeok Nam in his doctoral dissertation as well as by many others over the past 50 years. Reactions outside the Adventist church run the gamut, from claiming that the Adventists had completely deceived Martin and Barnhouse,²⁴ to praise that the Adventists were rightly recognized as part of the Evangelical community.²⁵ Following the publication of QOD, in 1960 Walter Martin authored *The Truth about Seventh-day Adventism*. This was to be a companion volume to QOD, sold in Adventist Book Centers; however, the General Conference reneged on its promise to Martin that it would sell his book as well.

Following the release of QOD and of Martin's book, the Adventist presses published many books and articles defending Adventist beliefs, bolstering the Adventist "pillars" that QOD had camouflaged and which Martin's book did not endorse. The first significant reactions to QOD and Martin's work took place on the ministerial level. The Adventist magazine *The Ministry* published a series of articles from June, 1960 to July, 1961 to counter Martin's new volume. These articles were compiled into a book entitled *Doctrinal Discussions*, to which three of the men involved in the Evangelical-Adventist conferences contributed.

W. E. Read wrote articles on the investigative judgment, its biblical basis, and the time for this phase of the judgment. Roy A. Anderson wrote an article arguing for conditional immortality, and Edward Heppenstall contributed two articles on the hour of God's judgment having come.

In his introductory endorsement of *Doctrinal Discussions*, President R. R. Figuhr assured the readers of this new book that "the Bible, we believe, clearly establish[es] the solid scriptural foundation of Seventh-day Adventist doctrines."²⁶ As one reads the articles in *The Ministry* and *Doctrinal Discussions*, however, it becomes clear that the writers could not defend Adventist doctrines from the Bible alone; the articles contain at least 18 references to the writings of Ellen G. White in support of various positions.

What is actually promulgated in *Doctrinal Discussions*? One telling example of the articles' traditional Adventist tone is this statement by Heppenstall, one of the most evangelical of Adventist leaders:

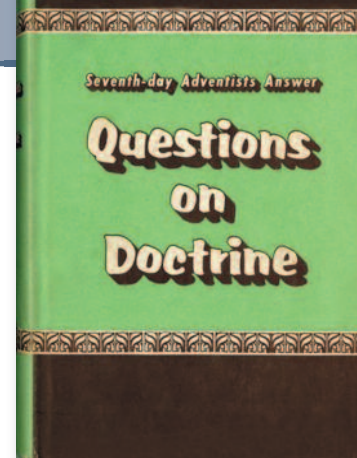
It is important to notice that the central issue in all these scriptures concerned with the work of judgment is the justification and vindication of God, not of man. The great concern is that God is declared righteous. Only as this becomes true can the saints be proclaimed righteous. It is the vindication of God and His throne that alone guarantees the triumph and vindication of the believer.²⁷

Heppenstall's essay—written specifically to defend traditional Adventist theology against the challenge by Walter Martin—indicates that the believer's triumph and vindication depends not on the cross but on the judgment and vindication of God "alone". Moreover, this belief puts God the Creator on trial before His creatures on whom His vindication ultimately depends. Ironically, Heppenstall has long been championed as one of the most Christ-centered, cross-centered Adventist thinkers within Adventism.

Other endorsements of traditional Adventism since the publication of QOD include *The Atonement* by Edwin Reiner (Southern Publishing, 1971) which includes many theological statements of the kind which Martin and Barnhouse opposed. Reiner indicates that the sins of humanity were laid on Jesus at his baptism, that part of the Atonement was Christ's victory over Satan in the wilderness temptations, and that the Sabbath is included in the Atonement. Some of Reiner's statements, in order, are as follows:

After coming up from the water [of baptism], Jesus bowed in prayer on the banks of the Jordan. Laden with man's sins, He prayed for each person....²⁸

As for Jesus, He now stood in a vastly different position than He had previously. The Sinless One must now [following His baptism] feel the shame of sin.²⁹



Following the publication of QOD various storms of controversy broke out both within and outside the Adventist Church.

Despite His human limitations and with the terrible weight of humanity's sins crushing Him, He withstood the pressures which Satan put upon Him. He did not succumb to the most dangerous temptation man faces....³⁰

Christ stood at His symbolic tree of knowledge of good and evil....³¹

More important, the salvation of man hung in the balance, and the trial of Christ in the wilderness would decide man's eternal fate. Christ won out over His appetite, thus pointing to the fact that man had a chance to overcome his sinful nature.³²

Christ's victory was as complete as had been Adam's failure.³³

Since God has designated the seventh day as a sign of His authority, anyone who spurns His command to honor the Sabbath virtually rejects His leadership. Those who profess to follow Christ cannot enter into the rest of faith (Hebrews 4:9) while willfully breaking the Sabbath, for to reject one is to reject the other.³⁴

Since the beginning in 1844 of the investigative judgment prophesied by Daniel, the Sabbath has truly become a test to the Christian world.³⁵

The statements contradict Jesus' statement that all things—even the Sabbath—have been handed over to Him by the Father (Matt. 11:27-29).

Reiner included 58 pages of quotations from Ellen White to substantiate his view of the Atonement.

In retrospect, it is clear that, although the Adventist church published QOD using words that sounded much more like mainstream Christianity than any of their previous publications, the book did not signify any change of doctrine or belief. Moreover, the church moved quickly to reassure its members that there was no change in Adventist doctrines.

William Johnsson and Walter Martin

Although Walter Martin was aggressive in defending “the faith, once and for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3), he was also outspoken on the principle that Christians are not to attack fellow believers. Often during his ministry he defended the Adventist church as an evangelical Christian denomination on the basis of its statements in QOD, insisting that Adventists were not to be treated like the many cults with which he dealt. In keeping with his conviction, when Martin appeared with William Johnsson (then editor of the *Adventist Review*) on the John Ankerberg Show in 1985, Martin and Ankerberg often referred to William Johnsson as “brother,” encouraging him to continue speaking truthfully about his own convictions as well as about the beliefs of the Adventist Church.

By the time the series with Martin and Johnsson was produced, QOD had been out of print for several years. Martin pressed Johnsson to explain why the book was not being reprinted, but he got no answer. Moreover, Johnsson could not clearly answer Martin's questions about whether the atonement was finished at the cross. Nevertheless, despite Johnsson's evasions and growing discomfort with Martin's questioning, Martin continued to acknowledge Johnsson as a brother in Christ.

Johnsson recounts his memories of the Ankerberg Show in his 2008 autobiography, *Embrace the Impossible*. Chapter 10, “Contending for the Faith”, is dedicated to the events of those programs.

Johnsson states that, in agreement with General Conference president Neal C. Wilson, he was to “appear as the church's representative that Ankerberg had been publicly calling for.”³⁶ Nevertheless, Johnsson claims he refused to quote Wilson during the interviews.

I could have embellished my reply. I could have told Martin, “I asked our world leader, Neal C. Wilson, that very same question—whether the church has repudiated *Questions on Doctrine*—and he stated that we have not”... But I chose not to piggyback on anyone else's convictions. I took my stand as an individual Adventist, ready to answer from the heart.³⁷

If he had a direct statement from the General Conference president but refused to share it, Johnsson failed in his role as representative of the Adventist Church.

The second program included a discussion of the investigative judgment and Hebrews 9 during which Johnsson claimed expertise in the exegesis of Hebrews 9 and 10. These two chapters had been the subject of his doctoral dissertation, *Defilement and Purgation in the Book of Hebrews*, which he had written under the direction of professor L. E. Keck at Vanderbilt University. He reports the exchange:

Just for a few minutes I found a respite—Martin moved into the book of Hebrews. Soon, however, he realized that I was well versed in that area, so he dropped Hebrews and went to a different subject.³⁸

The transcript, however, reveals a different picture. Following a discussion of the Greek term *ta bagia* and whether it refers to the sanctuary in general or to a specific apartment of the sanctuary, Martin and Johnsson had this exchange:

Martin: And would the person who wrote the article [an older, definitive work on *ta bagia*] admit to the Adventist doctrine of 1844 and the second apartment of the sanctuary and Jesus going in there? Would they say that Hebrews 9 would admit that?

Johnsson: I don't think you get all that from Hebrews 9.

Martin: Oh, no. Not at all from Hebrews 9.³⁹

Johnsson then redirected the discussion to the judgment seat of Christ. It was not Martin who dropped Hebrews; it was Johnsson who changed the subject and failed in his role as contender for the Adventist faith—in his area of expertise.

Throughout the interviews Johnsson struggled to uphold Adventist beliefs from a biblical standpoint and seemed inadequately prepared. Neal Wilson had told him, “It will be difficult, Bill. You will face a no-win situation. They will try to trap you with the questions they put to you. But if you can just stay calm and sweet and make clear that as an Adventist you believe in righteousness by faith, that will be sufficient, whatever else they try to trick you into saying.”⁴⁰

Although Wilson warned him that he would face a difficult situation, Johnsson seems truly perplexed in retrospect and recounts his feelings while on the program:

Inside I was beginning to boil... And this was purportedly a Christian television show? Yes, the name of Jesus was mentioned, along with references to the Bible and various Christian doctrines, but the attitude, the spirit of the show, was overwhelmingly negative, designed to put the Seventh-day Adventist Church in a bad light.⁴¹

The “bad light” that Johnsson felt shone on the Adventist church, however, did not grow out of a predetermined negative attitude. Rather, Walter Martin persisted in asking Johnsson specific questions. For example, Martin asked Johnsson if all his sins

were forgiven and fully atoned at the cross, and he asked why QOD was allowed to go out of print if the Adventist church really taught what the book stated. Johnsson could not give definitive answers to Martin's questions.

In fact, throughout all five programs, Johnsson persistently referred to the *Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists* to answer Martin's questions and refused to give straight, personal answers. When Martin was pressing Johnsson regarding the authority of Ellen White in the Adventist Church, Martin—who knew that the public statements of *Fundamental Beliefs* are carefully worded to conceal the true import of Adventist doctrine—declared:

[The] fundamental beliefs today are essentially worthless, because you can find an equal if not superior number of quotations on the same subject from your own publishing houses which disagree with it.⁴²

Johnsson continues through this chapter of his book with many statements about the emotions he was experiencing throughout the program, saying that the Adventist Church was under attack and that he was constantly on the defensive. Later in the chapter, he refers to a letter from Edward Fudge, a member of the Church of Christ and the author of *The Fire That Consumes*, a book defending conditional immortality. Johnsson was assured by Fudge that “[I had] comported myself in a truly Christian manner. ‘In fact,’ he wrote, ‘you were the only Christian on the program.’”⁴³

Finally, Johnsson declares that, if given the opportunity, he would do such a set of interviews again, even if it looked like a setup.

But I would make sure one aspect was different. I would have in the audience someone—at least one person—to whom I could look and know that they were a friend and praying for me. Walter Martin had his cheering section in the audience, and he played up to it. I felt dreadfully on my own.

But I was not on my own. The Lord was there, by my side, right through.⁴⁴

In reality, Johnsson was ill-equipped to go five rounds with Walter Martin. Wilson's advice to Johnsson to stay “calm and sweet” and to reiterate that he believed in “righteousness by faith” would never convince a theologian like Martin that Adventist doctrine is Christian. Martin's concerns about Adventism were not allayed by these interviews, and Johnsson's obfuscation only intensified Martin's legitimate doubts. Even QOD—the original “proof” to Martin that Adventism was evangelical—was out of print, and Johnson could neither explain the church's resistance to reprinting it nor articulate the Christian doctrine of a completed atonement. Furthermore, he could not deny the central role of Ellen G. White but persistently parroted the official *Fundamental Beliefs*.

In reality, Adventism's teachings denigrate the person and work of Jesus Christ by saying the atonement occurs in two or three phases with the cross constituting only the first phase, while the final phase is the believer's appropriation of the benefits of Christ's righteousness to ultimately vindicate God. These are definitely not orthodox Christian teachings.

The Adventist church in practice

Ever since the Adventist church published *Questions on Doctrine* to convince Martin and Barnhouse that it was not a cult, the

organization continued publishing materials endorsing traditional Adventism. In other words, QOD did not alter the church's doctrines and teachings. A quotation from *The Review* in 1971 shows that even fourteen years after QOD was published, some very un-Protestant positions were held by Adventists and promulgated in the official church magazine:

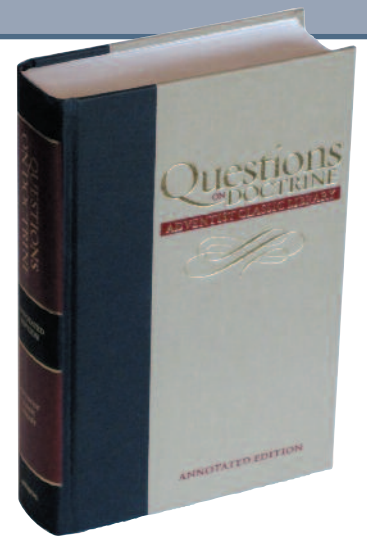
When will the people of God cease trusting their own wisdom? When will they come to the place where they will cease to measure, construe, and interpret, by their own reason, what God says to them through His appointed channel?

When we come to the place where we place no trust in man nor in the wisdom of men, but unquestionably accept of and act upon what God says through this gift, then will the spirit of prophecy, as set before us in the Bible and as witnessed in the present manifestations of this gift be confirmed among us and become, in fact, the counselor, guide, and final court of appeal among God's people. Under the leadership of Christ, through this gift, the cause of God will move forward with mighty strides to final victory.⁴⁵

Although this quote was written decades before, it's interesting that the same church that had produced QOD would allow this article to be published in 1971.

Ted Wilson, elected as General Conference President at the General Conference session in Atlanta in 2010, has made some similar claims for the writings of Ellen G. White. In his Sabbath message on July 3rd of this year, he states:

The same spirit that moved the holy men of old has again, in these last days, raised up a messenger for the Lord. My brothers and sisters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Lord has given us one of the greatest gifts possible in the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy. Just as the Bible is not outdated or irrelevant, neither is the testimony of God's end-time messenger. God used Ellen G. White as a humble servant to provide inspired insight about Scripture, prophecy, health, education, relationships, mission, families and so many more topics. Let us read the Spirit of Prophecy, follow the Spirit of Prophecy and share the Spirit of Prophecy. ... The Spirit of Prophecy is one of the identifying marks of God's last-day remnant people and is just as applicable today as ever before because it was given to us by heaven itself. As God's faithful remnant, may we never make of none effect the precious light given us in the writings of Ellen G. White.⁴⁶



The authors at times push the facts a bit too far on such issues as Adventism's historic understanding of the Trinity and they even present their data in a way that creates a false impression on the human nature of Christ.

GEORGE KNIGHT

Later in his presentation, Wilson again refers to the Spirit of Prophecy (Ellen G. White):

While the Bible is paramount in our estimation as the ultimate authority and final arbiter of truth, the Spirit of Prophecy provides clear, inspired counsel to aid our application of Bible truth. It is a heaven-sent guide to instruct the church in how to carry out its mission. It is a reliable theological expositor of the Scriptures. The Spirit of Prophecy is to be read, believed, applied and promoted. . . . Let me repeat a conviction of mine, a personal conviction: there is nothing antiquated or archaic about the Spirit of Prophecy; it is for today and until Christ returns.⁴⁷

Wilson does not say that the Bible alone is paramount. He states that “While the Bible is paramount... the Spirit of Prophecy provides clear, inspired counsel...” The phrasing is ambiguous at best, intentionally misleading at worst. Is Wilson affirming that the Bible is paramount, or is he stating that the Spirit of Prophecy is a “reliable theological expositor of the Scriptures”? Should we go to the Bible alone, or are the writings of Ellen G. White to be “read, believed, applied and promoted”? Is the Bible God’s counsel to all Christians for all time, or are we to read the Spirit of Prophecy “today and until Christ returns”?

Wilson, like many in the Church who voted him into office, does believe that the writings of Ellen G. White are inspired counsel. In fact, his endorsement expounds upon the 18th fundamental belief of the Church which states:

18. The Gift of Prophecy: One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord’s messenger, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. (Joel 2:28, 29; Acts 2:14-21; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 12:17; 19:10.)⁴⁸

Ellen White’s writings are a “continuing and authoritative source of truth.” Although followed by a statement about the Bible being the standard, it is interesting to note that it is the writings of Ellen White—and not the Bible itself—which “make clear that the Bible is the standard.” In effect, Ellen White is the standard for Adventist theology, because her writings are not only needed to identify the Bible as the “standard”, but they are also “a continuing and authoritative source of truth.”

Following the adoption in 1980 of the 17th fundamental belief (renumbered in 2005 as the 18th fundamental belief) affirming the prophetic gift of Ellen G. White, an *ad hoc* committee of the Adventist General Conference met to work out a detailed statement on Ellen White. This statement was published in the July 15, 1982, issue of the *Adventist Review* and the August, 1982, issue of *Ministry* magazine. Included with many excellent statements about Ellen White’s writings not being on a par with Scripture was an unusual declaration. Following ten affirmations are ten denials. The first of these denials reads:

We do not believe that the quality or degree of inspiration in the writings of Ellen White is different from that of Scripture.⁴⁹

The authors then state:

We conclude, therefore, that a correct understanding of the inspiration and authority of the writings of Ellen White will avoid

two extremes: (1) regarding these writings as functioning on a canonical level identical with Scripture, or (2) considering them as ordinary Christian literature.⁵⁰

With statements like these one can easily become confused regarding Adventism’s official belief regarding Ellen G. White. Nevertheless, we must conclude that if the “quality” and “degree” of inspiration are no different from that of the Bible, the confusion is meant to obfuscate. Since Adventism regards her inspiration to be equal to that of the Bible writers, we must conclude that no matter what role they assign to her writings, members are to regard her counsel as authoritative in the same way they regard the Bible to be authoritative. In other words, Adventists need Ellen White in order to properly interpret and apply the Bible.

Did Adventist leadership lie to Walter Martin?

The definition of “lie” is to tell an untruth with the intent to deceive. Included in the definition is the act of not telling the whole truth, or telling partial truths with the intent to mislead. Given this definition of “lie,” the simple answer to the question must be a clear “Yes, Adventist leadership lied to Walter Martin.” We can go to great lengths to discuss the specifics of the word-smithing they did when explaining their doctrines, comparing the language of QOD to earlier written positions. Unfortunately very few remain who were a part of that experience. Those who were there, such as Herbert Douglass, are clear that *Questions on Doctrine* was not in harmony with historic Adventist positions, and it resulted in a deep and long-lasting controversy within the Adventist Church.

George Knight, an accomplished historian and scholar, has documented well many of the issues that arose from QOD. His book *A Search for Identity* and his detailed annotations in the republished *Questions on Doctrine* provide many important details that indicate the Adventists involved in drafting QOD were not fully honest in the ways they articulated Adventism’s doctrinal positions.

Finally, in his dissertation, Juhyeok Nam extensively documents the history of QOD from before its publication until 1971. He provides documentation on reactions from outside and inside the Adventist Church. These include private letters, not intended for publication, which have direct and significant bearing on exactly how and why the Adventist participants in the 1950s meetings concealed the truth.

Walter Martin stated the facts himself on the John Ankerberg Show in 1985. It’s now time to admit that the Adventists did not tell Martin, Barnhouse, and their evangelical colleagues the truth. It’s time to set the record straight.

Will the Adventist leadership repent?

Regarding the direction the Adventist Church was taking in the 1970s and 1980s, Walter Martin said:

I fear that if they continue to progress at this rate, that the classification of a cult can’t possibly miss being re-applied to Seventh Day [sic] Adventism.”⁵¹

Following the death of cult leader Herbert W. Armstrong in 1986, his Worldwide Church of God labeled Armstrong’s writings heretical, repented of its errors, and joined the greater Christian community.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church had a similar opportunity in the 1950s. When meeting with Martin they had the chance to come clean about their anti-trinitarianism, multi-phase atonement, identification of “Sunday worship” with the mark of the beast, Sabbath requirement, prophetess Ellen White, and many other unbiblical beliefs. They instead chose to rework the wording of their positions to appear acceptable to evangelical Christians.

Seventh-day Adventism has been able to infiltrate the evangelical community because key leaders deceived Walter Martin into believing they were evangelical Christians (albeit with a number of heterodox teachings and practices). Under this facade, however, the church has never renounced or stopped teaching its founding doctrines, and now, with the election of Ted Wilson as General

Conference president, there is renewed emphasis on proclaiming and embracing true Adventism.

Regardless of the church’s corporate stance, however, individual Seventh-day Adventists always have the opportunity to admit the truth. Jesus is calling, “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your soul” (Mt. 11:28–29).

The voice from heaven in Revelation 18 calls all those caught in false religion:

Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues; for her sins are heaped high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities” (Rev. 18:4–5, ESV). †

Endnotes

- ¹ Walter Martin indicating what Evangelicals and some Fundamentalists would say given the current problems and direction of the Adventist church. Transcript from the *John Ankerberg Show*, “Who’s Telling the Truth About Seventh Day Adventism?,” 1985, p. 26.
- ² Knight, George, *Questions on Doctrine*, Annotated Edition, Andrews University Press, 2003, p. xiii.
- ³ Nam, Juhyeok, “Reactions to the Seventh-day Adventist Evangelical Conferences and *Questions on Doctrine*,” 1955–1971, doctoral dissertation, 2005, p. ix.
- ⁴ Fiedler, Dave, *Hindsight*, Ch. 41, “Adventism and Walter Martin,” Academy Enterprises, 1996, pp. 235–263.
- ⁵ Cottrell, Raymond F., “Suggestions on *This We Believe*,” as quoted in Nam, p. 255. (*This We Believe* was an earlier working title for *Questions on Doctrine*.)
- ⁶ Letter from Froom to Figuhr, August 8, 1955, on General Conference letterhead.
- ⁷ Douglass, Herbert Edgar, *A Fork in the Road, Questions on Doctrine: The Historic Adventist Divide of 1957*, Remnant Publications, 2008, p. 26.
- ⁸ Nam, p. 240.
- ⁹ Douglass, *A Fork in the Road*, p. 27.
- ¹⁰ Nam, p. 240.
- ¹¹ *The Sanctuary Service*, by M. L. Andreasen is for sale in the Loma Linda, CA, Adventist Book Center as of Aug. 1, 2010.
- ¹² Froom, Leroy Edwin, “The Subtle Inroads of Scholasticism,” *The Ministry*, April, 1944, pp. 13, 30.
- ¹³ Letter from Froom to Figuhr, April 22, 1955, on General Conference letterhead.
- ¹⁴ As quoted in Nam, pp. 252–253.
- ¹⁵ As quoted in Nam, p. 253.
- ¹⁶ Letter from Froom to Figuhr, April 22, 1955, on General Conference letterhead.
- ¹⁷ Knight, George R., *Questions on Doctrine*, Annotated Edition, 2003, p. xxx.
- ¹⁸ *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine*, p. 650, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1957.

- ¹⁹ Owen, Roderick S., “The Source of Final Appeal,” *The Review*, June 3, 1971, p. 6. (Owen was an educator in the Adventist Church from 1883 until his death in 1927.)
- ²⁰ White, Ellen G., *Youth’s Instructor*, December 20, 1900. Also in *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Vol. 4, p. 1147.
- ²¹ White, Ellen G., *The Review and Herald*, Dec. 15, 1896.
- ²² Knight, George R., *A Search for Identity, The Development of Seventh-day Adventist Beliefs*, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2000, p. 168.
- ²³ Knight, George R., *Questions on Doctrine*, Annotated Edition, p. xxix, italics in original.
- ²⁴ Christian leaders such as M. R. DeHaan, Anthony A. Hoekema, Jan Karel van Baalen, Harold Lindsell, and Dr. Louis T. Talbot went on record that the Adventists should not be welcomed into evangelical fellowship. This is well documented in Juhyeok Nam’s dissertation and in Herbert Douglass’s *A Fork in the Road*.
- ²⁵ Although fewer in number, noteworthy Christians began to accept Adventists into the Evangelical community. These included E. Schuyler English (general editor of the Scofield Reference Bible and a close associate of H. A. Ironside), Frank S. Mead (editor-in-chief of the Fleming H. Revell Company) and many others.
- ²⁶ Figuhr, R. R., *Doctrinal Discussions*, Review and Herald Publishing Association, not dated, p. 8.
- ²⁷ Heppenstall, Edward, “The Hour of God’s Judgment Is Come,” in *Doctrinal Discussions*, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1961, p. 172.
- ²⁸ Reiner, Edwin, *The Atonement*, Southern Publishing Association, 1971, p. 146.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 147.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 150.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 151.
- ³² *Ibid.*, p. 152.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, p. 156.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 173.
- ³⁶ Johnsson, William G., *Embrace the Impossible*, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2008, p. 140.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 145.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*
- ³⁹ Transcript from the *John Ankerberg Show*, “Who’s Telling the Truth About Seventh Day Adventism?,” 1985, p. 9.
- ⁴⁰ Johnsson, pp. 140–141.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 143.
- ⁴² Walter Martin, transcript from the *John Ankerberg Show*, “Who’s Telling the Truth About Seventh Day Adventism?,” 1985, p. 20.
- ⁴³ Johnsson, p. 147.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁵ Owen, Roderick S., *The Review*, June 3, 1971, p. 6. Owen worked for the Church from 1883 until his death in 1927. This article was included in *The Review* in 1971 under its editor, Kenneth H. Wood.
- ⁴⁶ Wilson, Ted, Sabbath Sermon, “Go Forward,” July 3, 2010, delivered at the quinquennial General Conference session in Atlanta, GA, approximately 12:45 into the presentation.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.* approximately 45:40 into the presentation.
- ⁴⁸ Fundamental Belief #18, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*, 2nd ed., 2005, Pacific Press Publishing Association, p. 247. <http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/fundamental/index.html>.
- ⁴⁹ *Adventist Review*, July 15, 1982, p. 3; *Ministry*, August 1982, p. 21; “The Inspiration and Authority of the Ellen G. White Writings.”
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁵¹ Walter Martin, transcript from the *John Ankerberg Show*, “Who’s Telling the Truth About Seventh Day Adventism?,” 1985, p. 26.



Stephen Pitcher was raised a non-Christian but met Jesus at the age of 17. Subsequently he studied with Mormon teachers, but Walter Martin’s teaching kept him from converting. Later, it was Walter Martin’s endorsement of Seventh-day Adventists as evangelical brothers that gave him “permission” to become an Adventist before marrying his Adventist fiancée. Fifteen years later Steve began to learn the truth about the origins of Adventism and the doctrinal issues that remain today. Ten years ago Steve left Adventism and now stands on Jesus alone. He attends Trinity Church in Redlands, California, where he has been active in Former Adventist Fellowship.

Why Seventh-day Adver



LOUIS T. TALBOT, CHANCELLOR
BIBLE INSTITUTE OF LOS ANGELES

Reprinted from *The Kings Business*, April, 1957

The following letter to the editor of *The King's Business*, written by an un-named former Seventh-day Adventist, introduced Talbot's article when it was first published in 1957. Based on the mail we receive, this letter could have been written this year.

Sirs:

I was a Seventh-day Adventist for 29 years, but I became dissatisfied with so much unhappiness that my husband and I and our four children began going elsewhere in search for something better. Just the two older children and I were members. They got so they wouldn't go to church any more. Then two years ago we were all converted and became members of a Conservative Baptist church.

God has greatly blessed us as we labor for Him together. It is indeed wonderful to know that one is saved now and not have to wait till Jesus comes to know whether you will be or not.

We have met with plenty of opposition both from my family and the SDA church. But God has seen us through every trial and given us the words to speak. It has meant real Bible study on our part in order to cope with the many questions and accusations that have come to us.

The recent articles in Eternity have been disgusting to us. Someone sends a Review & Herald [the official Adventist magazine written for members] to me once in awhile, and they still print the very things Eternity says they now deny. I have known some pretty disgusting things and beliefs that have gone on in the SDA church since I was 16. I only wish I had the nerve to leave it long ago. We children were always afraid to go against our parents' wishes.

The Adventists are so filled up with Mrs. White's interpretations that they will only read what she prescribes for them to read and seem afraid to read before and after to find the real meaning of a verse.

I was impressed to speak to my brother and sister-in-law only recently. They seemed so unhappy. They said they have always felt empty...just like something was missing. The sister-in-law is now ready to step out, but my brother is afraid. They, too, were told that all they had to worry about was keeping the law, and we weren't to have any feeling. If we did, it was spiritualism working in us. Believe me, you know when you are saved and have Christ as your Savior, and you don't need someone to tell you.

Before two years ago I wouldn't listen to my husband when he read the Bible until one day he read to me Galatians 5:4. I began to see the light and began to do some studying on my own. It's all so wonderful I want to shout His praises to all.

(The writer's name was withheld by the editors)

ntism is not evangelical

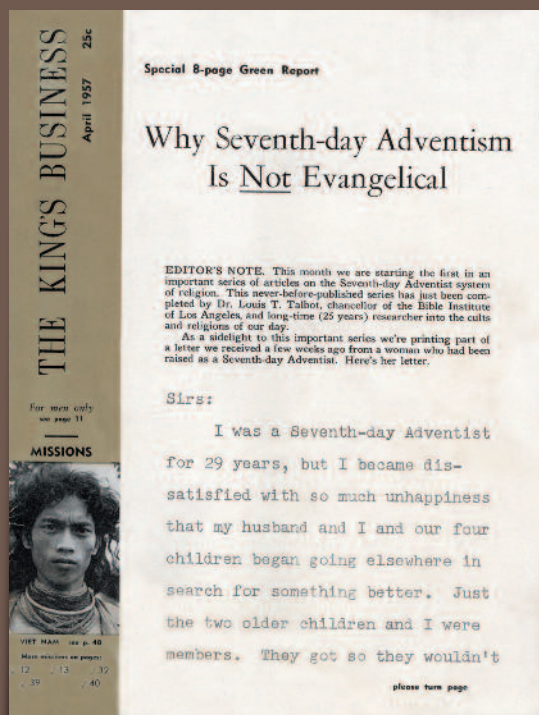
Readers of *The King's Business* are well acquainted with the stand of this magazine on false religious systems, also that of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, Inc., of which it is the official publication. Since its first issue in 1910, this periodical has accepted the responsibility not only to declare (to the best of its ability) “the whole counsel of God” in its purity, but also to obey 1 John 4:1 and 2 John 19, 11: “...believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine [the doctrine of Christ], receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”

This position of fidelity to scriptural counsel has involved the exposure of false teaching in the light of God's Word. In following this course *The King's Business* has had “good company” in the persons of some of the most gifted Bible teachers the Lord ever gave His church—such stalwarts of the faith as I. M. Haldeman, C. I. Scofield, A. C. Gaebelein, W. G. Moorehead, W. L. Pettingill, J. M. Gray, A. T. Pierson, W. E. Biederwolf, and a host of others now with the Lord.

But since God never leaves Himself without witness in any respect, present-day expositors of the Word such as Martin R. DeHaan, Charles E. Fuller, Wilbur M. Smith, William Culbertson, John R. Rice, John F. Walvoord, Charles L. Feinberg, and many others are following in the train of these giants of the past generation in this dual ministry of proclaiming truth and disclosing error under the lens of Holy Writ.

Cult exposé important phase of ministry

My own “cult ministry” (not by any means the major part or the most enjoyable aspect either of the labors the Lord has committed to my hands) came into being in 1932 when I was called as pastor of the historic Church of the Open Door in downtown Los Angeles, which city was then fast becoming known as “the



This article first appeared in the April, 1957, edition of *The Kings Business*, the official publication of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles (now Biola University), and the largest Christian periodical of its day. Dr. Talbot directly responds to Donald Barnhouse's publications in *Eternity* magazine in which he introduced Seventh-day Adventists as brothers in Christ. We reprint this first in a series of articles by Louis Talbot with permission from Biola University.

cult center of America.” I shortly discovered that I should have to do something about the unscriptural systems of religion which were encroaching upon the Body of Christ, confusing and leading astray many of the lambs of the flock.

To refute these false doctrines, I did not rely upon books written by others, however good they might be; but I went directly to the headwaters of this flood of heresy, that is, to the books and other writings of the founders and leaders of these systems. I prepared hundreds of slides, using quotations verbatim from these authoritative writings and in “lecturing upon the cults” threw on the screen these statements side by side with the scriptural passages which proved them false. God was pleased to bless this method in a marked way, and to His glory I am glad to say that many were led out of these entanglements into the life of faith in Christ.

The statements from their own books could not be gainsaid by adherents of these systems. Sometimes many were present in my meetings, not only in the Church of the Open Door but also in churches throughout the country and occasionally delegations from these sects would wait upon me after the services to take me to task for my preaching. However, since it was God's Word I was proclaiming, it was not

hard to defend my position; it was not with me they were arguing but with the Bible.

But please note this, my friends: In all the 25 years of this unique and sometimes disagreeable ministry of exposés of false teaching, *I have never been accused by the adherents of these sects of misrepresenting their teachings*. How could I be? I quoted from the writings of their own fully accepted leaders and their own official publications put out by their own well-established publishing houses. Of course, frequently I was told by these followers of false systems that I was wholly wrong in my view; that I did not comprehend their teachings; that the Bible was not the only authority because “later light” had been revealed to certain men—and women. But I was not charged with failure to state truly what they believed and taught.

At the urgent request of friends who had heard these messages, *The King's Business* asked me to publish them and the series ran in 1954-1955, after which the articles were printed in booklets. These exposés are not literary masterpieces but they do contain the essence of the teachings of these systems, corroborated by quotations from their own writers. They were prepared for distribution to friends, relatives and acquaintances confused by these cults; brief, that "he who runs may read."

I reluctantly make these personal references for two reasons: 1) to assure the readers that I am not a *novice* when it comes to studying the "textbooks" and to dealing personally with followers of these false religions; and 2) to explain why I am again writing on this subject with which I thought I had concluded in 1955.

Urged to reply to magazine articles

Since that time evangelical circles have become disturbed over what appears as a phenomenon: The hitherto highly-regarded *Eternity* magazine devoted much of its space in its September, October, November 1956 and January 1957 issues to a defense of one of these systems, Seventh-day Adventism, declaring it to be an evangelical denomination and insisting therefore that, as a Christian body, it should be received as part of the true Church of Christ.

These articles were no surprise to me, for the editor-in-chief of *Eternity* magazine (a personal friend of many years) had advised me in advance of his plan to publish them. I tried most energetically to dissuade him from this course but he did not see it that way; and, of course, it is his right to employ the columns of his publication as he wishes. This decision on his part saddened me greatly for I feel that this espousal of a system so full of heresy will hinder greatly those who are attempting to enlighten others as to the truth of God regarding the way of salvation by grace alone. It will also lessen the prestige of *Eternity* magazine among evangelicals where it has always enjoyed an enviable reputation for faithfulness to the Word.

Since the release of the articles in *Eternity*, I have been besieged with requests to reply to them. That is why I again take up the subject of Seventh-day Adventism.

Let me state first, without equivocation, that I believe these editors who are thus interpreting present-day Seventh-day Adventism as "evangelical" and advocating that the Christian church should receive its adherents with all of their heresies as "brethren beloved," are utterly wrong, both in their methods and in their conclusions.

By methods, I mean this: It is claimed by *Eternity* magazine editors that Seventh-day Adventism has abandoned many of its old beliefs, and that "sometime in 1957" a book is to be published by top Seventh-day Adventist leaders, setting forth the "new Adventism." Well, even if this is the case, why should an evangelical magazine take upon itself the responsibility of speaking for the sect? Why should not the published statements regarding promised alterations in its creed come first from the official heads of the sect? And while these Seventh-day Adventist officials are the proper spokesmen for a new position (if there is actually to be any) these views must be ratified by the hundreds of individual Adventist churches before they can be considered as

representative Seventh-day Adventism. One book—or a dozen books—are not going to change the minds of those who have been indoctrinated with their teachings for more than half a century.

To those who have any acquaintance with this sect, it has been obvious for many years that Seventh-day Adventism is most eager for the approval of evangelicals in order to propagandize its own peculiar "message." (What this "message" actually is will become evident as we continue these articles.) Take for instance, this statement which appeared in the *Signs of the Times*, an official Adventist publication, for October 2, 1956 under the heading, "Adventists Vindicated," in which the *Eternity* articles are discussed:

"As to the effect of Dr. Barnhouse's courageous reappraisal of Seventh-day Adventism, we are convinced that it will not only create a sensation in evangelical circles, but will lead thousands of the best people in all denominations to restudy the 'message' which Seventh-day Adventists feel called to give to the world in these last days."

Please note that it is here claimed that "Adventists [are] Vindicated" as they are at present, not as they are to be when they make the changes that the leaders have told the *Eternity* editors they are going to make and these editors in turn have told the Christian public! There is no mention here of any proposed change in *their* views.

Sentiment has no place whatsoever in dealing with doctrine. While I have only true Christian compassion in my heart for those unsuspecting persons who, in their ignorance of the Scriptures, are deluded by false systems, I feel no compunction at all in striking out at the heretical systems themselves. We are not living in the Dark Ages but in the era of an open Bible. The Word of God is available to all who would see light in its light. Let false teachers, in a spirit of humility and with a hunger for the real truth, come to the Word and be set straight and then cease their practices of leading others into darkness and confusion. Let them read the book of Galatians and identify themselves with those "false brethren" who sought to bring the believers into "bondage," of whom Paul wrote: "To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour..." (Gal. 2:4, 5). No shred of man-made heresies as that of the sanctuary theory, annihilation and the "scapegoat Satan" or any that I have listed will be found in the blessed Book. *When* they have altered their views, then let them come to Bible-believing churches. *Eternity* editors have reversed the order. Are evangelicals to seek fellowship with error in order to correct it? God forbid! This is utterly at variance with New Testament principles.

The news magazine, *Time*, in its December 31, 1956 issue, took up this subject of Seventh-day Adventism under the title, "Peace with the Adventists." The writer of this piece stated: "As a result of his researches [that is, those of the editor of *Eternity*], Fundamentalists have stretched out a hand, and Seventh-day Adventists have accepted it gladly."* *Eternity* does not speak for Fundamentalists. The information furnished *Time* by *Eternity's* editors simply represented the interpretation of Seventh-day Adventism by *Eternity's* editors. I have received letter after letter from Fundamentalists deeply deploring this action.

Here is one Fundamentalist (and, of course, I speak for our entire Bible Institute of Los Angeles' constituency at home and abroad now numbering in the thousands) who does *not* extend the hand of fellowship to those whose official textbooks, both new and old, at present teach:

- 1) That the Lord Jesus Christ at His incarnation assumed a sinful, fallen human nature
- 2) That the atonement was not finished on the cross of Calvary
- 3) That immortality is conditional
- 4) That the spirit of the believer does not go immediately into the presence of Christ at death but instead "sleeps" in the grave until the resurrection
- 5) That souls who reject Christ do not really "perish" (that is, endure eternal punishment) but that they will be annihilated eventually
- 6) That Satan as "the scapegoat" has some part in the bearing away of our sins
- 7) That we are not saved by *grace alone*, apart from works of any kind
- 8) That the seventh day Jewish Sabbath is God's test and seal.

I believe every one of the above mentioned teachings to be false and unscriptural, as well as other Seventh-day Adventist views about the coming of Christ and the millennium in heaven, and dietary restrictions, Mrs. White's prophetism, etc., I have mentioned the foregoing eight which seem to me to be the most destructive, and in all consistency I repudiate them.

At the same time I find it impossible to reject the views without rejecting the inventors and purveyors of them. No such logical incompatibility appears to trouble the *Eternity* editors. Having committed themselves to the unworthy cause of championing this sect, *whatever it teaches*, they have involved themselves in a strange untenable position.

In all fairness to them, they have stated emphatically that they do not believe these heresies I have listed. At the same time they must not regard them with the seriousness with which the majority of evangelicals do else they surely would have required an abandonment of these views before they took on the advocacy of the denomination. The more I consider it, the more my astonishment grows at the wonder of orthodoxy coming to the defense of a system including such heresies. Of course, in order to justify this the heresies are passed over rather lightly.

For instance, in the September 1956 issue of *Eternity* magazine one reads that the infamous "scapegoat" teaching "while admittedly strange is not heretical," and that Sabbath-keeping while a "more serious doctrine" yet "is not sufficient to bar Seventh-day Adventists from the fellowship of true Christians, but which makes such fellowship very difficult because of the overtones of legalism that has a tendency to gnaw at the roots of sovereign grace to unworthy sinners."

The doctrine of investigative judgment is called "unimportant and naïve." Of conditional immortality the editor admits

"the most serious difference" and then goes right on to say that Seventh-day Adventists should be acknowledged as "redeemed brethren and members of the Body of Christ" (p. 45). In the January 1957 issue the inconsistency of approving a sect whose teachings are *not* approved is even more marked. I quote: "It [soul-sleep] does not constitute a bar to our having fellowship with them" (p. 13); "investigative judgment...can offer no real objection between Adventists and their fellow-Christians" (p. 38); "The scape-goat interpretation...cannot be cited as a legitimate reason for refusing to fellowship with Adventists" (p. 38); "There is no reason why this view [regarding Mrs. White's counsels] should prohibit Christians of other denominations from having fellowship with Adventists, as long as Adventists do not attempt to enforce upon their fellow-Christians the counsels that Mrs. White specifically directs to them" (p. 38); "This issue [that is, dietary restrictions] fails to justify a refusal of fellowship" (p. 40).

And to climax this whitewashing process: "As noted, the serious disagreement that might most naturally arise in three areas—sleep of the dead (and annihilation of the wicked); the Sabbath; and the sanctuary-investigative-judgment theory—can be greatly mollified by understanding the true Adventist position on these doctrines... True Seventh-day Adventism, despite its differences from us, is one with us in the great work of winning men to Jesus Christ and in preaching the wonders of His matchless, redeeming grace" (p. 40).



Let me state first, without equivocation, that I believe these editors who are thus interpreting present-day Seventh-day Adventism as "evangelical" and advocating that the Christian church should receive its adherents with all of their heresies as "brethren beloved," are utterly wrong, both in their methods and in their conclusions.

The conclusion is wrong because the premise is wrong. These terrible heresies when considered in the light of God's holy Word, each and every one of them, *make fellowship impossible*. It is not at all difficult to understand Seventh-day Adventism if one can read. The only way to "mollify" (the word means "soften") these heresies is to close your eyes to them. In their determination to make Adventism "evangelical" that is just what these editors have done. Furthermore, Adventists are not "winning men to Jesus Christ"—*alone*; they are winning them to Him and their Galatian system, "the Jewish system with a Christian dress"; they do not preach "matchless, redeeming grace" alone, but *grace-plus-law*; *grace-plus-sabbath-keeping*!

What does *fellowship* with other Christian workers involve? It means that you pray for God's blessing upon their labors; that you



What does fellowship with other Christian workers involve? It means that you pray for God's blessing upon their labors; that you contribute offerings to their work. I

could not in all conscience do this for Adventists as they are now constituted. I will, however, help any dear soul entangled in Adventism to see the way out of bondage into the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free! In order for Adventists to enjoy fellowship with evangelicals, they must repudiate every single heresy that I have mentioned and a good many more and "come clean" all along the line. The issue is too clear-cut; you have to be on one side or the other.

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What think ye of Christ? The test

In this introductory article, space permits us to discuss only the first reason I have given for rejecting Seventh-day Adventism as evangelical, and that is their blasphemous teaching in regard to the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Next month we will take up the unfinished atonement sanctuary theory. I will quote from three Seventh-day Adventist authorities regarding the nature of Christ.

Leaders of this denomination have persuaded the *Eternity* editors that some of these statements "occasionally got into print"; that they were not official; and that some of the writers may be considered as being on the "lunatic fringe." I think you will agree with me that the three sources from which I quote are official, impeccable and authoritative; not only that, but it happens that in each case these identical statements have been going into Seventh-day Adventist homes for more than 50 years!

First, we quote from the book by Mrs. E. G. White ("the messenger of the Lord to the Adventist people" as she is described in their official writings) entitled, *The Desire of Ages*, edition of 1898, published by the Pacific Press [Publishing] Association, an official Seventh-day Adventist house. On page 49 of this volume this statement in regard to the incarnation of Christ occurs:

"Yet into the world where Satan claimed dominion God permitted His Son to come, a helpless babe, subject to the weakness

of humanity. He permitted Him to meet life's peril in common with every human soul, to fight the battle as every child of humanity must fight it, at the risk of failure and eternal loss.

"The heart of the human father yearns over his son. He looks into the face of his little child, and trembles at the thought of life's peril. He longs to shield his dear one from Satan's power, to hold him back from temptation and conflict. To meet a bitterer conflict and a more fearful risk God gave His only begotten Son, that the path of life might be made sure for our little ones. 'Herein is love.' Wonder, O heavens! and be astonished, O earth!"

On the face of this quotation, it may sound very sweetly sentimental, but when you analyze it, it shocks you. For it was of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself this deluded woman was speaking. There was no "risk" involved in His encounter with Satan. It was as impossible for Christ to sin as for God the Father Himself to sin. For Jesus Christ is God. How true is that

stanza by John Newton:

What think ye of Christ? is the test
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest
Unless you think rightly of Him.

Mrs. White and her followers are certainly not thinking rightly of the Lord Jesus Christ when they dare to suggest that the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, spotless Son of God, eternal Son of the eternal Father, *might* have fallen prey to Satan's temptations, and that the Father was risking our eternal salvation on one who might have failed! When you strike at the sinless human nature of the Savior, you are undermining the rock upon which the truth of His essential deity is founded.

My second quotation is from L. A. Wilcox, for many years an editor of *Signs of the Times*, which according to the latest figures given by the Adventists has been published by them for 82 years. Certainly a statement by an editor of that publication may be considered *official*. I am sure anything that Mr. Wilcox wrote did not just "happen to get in." In March 1927 he wrote: "In His [Christ's] veins was the incubus of a tainted heredity, like a caged lion, ever seeking to break forth and destroy. Temptation attacked Him where by heredity He was weakest—attacked Him in unexpected times and ways. In spite of bad blood and inherited meanness, He conquered." And again in the December 1928 issue of the *Signs of the Times* this editor, Mr. Wilcox, stated: "Jesus took humanity with all its liabilities, with all its dreadful risks of yielding to temptation."

Listen to what the Scriptures say: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God [and our Lord Jesus Christ is God]: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man" (James 1:13).

My third quotation is from one of the favorite devotional books of the Adventists, *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*. The

first copyright date in an old volume which I possess is 1888. The book is now issued in a smaller, more compact edition and is now entitled, *Bible Readings for the Home*. I do not know how long ago the statement I am about to quote appeared in this book but I have the 1944 edition of the older book, *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, and on page 174, as in the 1888 edition, the statement appears. Now this is important so please follow me closely. You can get hold of these volumes at libraries and Adventist bookstores and check it yourself. At least from 1888 to 1944, and maybe longer, the book *Bible Readings for the Home Circle* went into Adventist homes to be read to their children, supposedly bearing the true message of the Lord. That is a long time—56 years! Do you think this statement “just happened to get in”? That is too absurd to consider. This is an *official textbook* of Adventism. I quoted this passage in my booklet, *What’s Wrong with Seventh-day Adventism?* And I feel it is necessary to do so again.

Here is the quotation on page 174: “In His humanity Christ partook of our sinful, fallen nature. If not, then He was not made ‘like unto his brethren,’ was not ‘in all points tempted like as we are,’ did not overcome, and is not, therefore, the complete and perfect Savior man needs and must have to be saved. The idea that Christ was born of an immaculate and sinless mother [Protestants do not teach this, as Adventists very well know], inherited no tendencies to sin, and for this reason did not sin, removes Him from the realm of a fallen world, and from the very place where help is needed. On His human side, Christ inherited just what every child of Adam inherits—a sinful, fallen nature. On the divine side, from His very conception He was begotten and born of the Spirit. And this was done to place man on vantage-ground, and to demonstrate that in the same way everyone who is ‘born of the Spirit’ may gain like victories over sin in his own sinful flesh. Thus each one is to overcome as Christ overcame (Rev. 3:21). Without this birth there can be no victory over temptation and no salvation from sin (John 3:3-7).”

This poisonous teaching brings Christ down to our level—one who would need a Savior Himself. In the first place, this reference to His being tempted in all points (which would include murder, adultery, every crime in the catalog, if that is what it meant) does not imply that it would have been possible for Him to yield to Satan.

J. N. Darby’s excellent literal translation from the Greek is a great help in understanding Hebrews 4:15: “For we have not a high priest not able to sympathize with our infirmities, but tempted in all things in like manner, sin apart.” Our salvation was not accomplished on the mount of temptation but on the mount of Calvary where Christ once and for all destroyed the power of the devil. The temptations of Satan made no appeal to Christ. They only proved *what* He was and *who* He was. Had it been possible for Him to yield, He would not have been the holy God and Savior that—thank God—He is! Before

we go further into this matter, I want you to recall that this statement from *Bible Readings from (sic) the Home Circle* was published from 1888 to 1944 or longer so that three generations of Adventists have been indoctrinated in their own “home circles” with this slander against the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now in the new edition on another page (p. 120), this passage has been restated under the heading, “Christ’s Humanity and Temptation.” If you read it carefully you will note that it is saying the exact same thing as formerly only in different terms.

Here is the new quotation: “Jesus Christ is both Son of God and Son of man. As a member of the human family ‘it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren,’—‘in the likeness of sinful flesh.’ Just how far that ‘likeness’ goes is a mystery of the incarnation which men have never been able to solve. The Bible clearly teaches that Christ was tempted just as other men are tempted—‘in all points...like as we are.’ Such temptation must necessarily include the possibility of sinning; but Christ was without sin.”

Now instead of clearing up this great “mystery,” which is no mystery at all to anyone who goes to the Word of God and learns from it that the incarnation made no change in Christ’s essential nature, the writer of the foregoing attempts to divert the reader’s attention to something extraneous: “There is no Bible support for the teaching that the mother of Christ, by an immaculate conception, was cut off from the sinful inheritance of the race, and therefore her Divine Son was incapable of sinning.”

O course, there is no scriptural support for the immaculate conception of Mary. That view is held only by the Roman Catholic Church. Why did not the Adventist writer say so? Then he follows with a quotation from Dean F. W. Farrar who was notoriously unsound on the nature of Christ.

All of this is quite misleading. Christ’s sinless human nature had nothing to do with Mary; His was the very nature of God Himself. Mary herself confessed Christ as her Savior: “And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior” (Luke 1:47). “That holy thing,” placed in the virgin’s womb, was the nature of God Himself, housed in that human body for nine months and then clothed with flesh, emerging into the world where He lived in spotless purity for over 30 years, and then went to Calvary as the Lamb of God to die in the body God had prepared for Him—in our room and stead, to redeem us from sin.



Mrs. White and her followers are certainly not thinking rightly of the Lord Jesus Christ when they dare to suggest that the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, spotless Son of God, eternal Son of the eternal Father, might have fallen prey to Satan’s temptations, and that the Father was risking our eternal salvation on one who might have failed!

The Adventist heresy in regard to the nature of Christ grows out of their complete misunderstanding of His humanity. His humanity was just as perfect as His deity. His humanity was just as sinless as His deity. His humanity was wholly unique.

This is explained in 1 Corinthians 15:47: “The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.” Cain was the second man on earth but in essence he was just another Adam. With Jesus Christ it was different, He was not a reproduction of Adam at all. He was the Second Adam—the unfallen Head of a new line. He was of a wholly new order. He did not inherit the fallen Adamic nature. In Him the entail of sin, condemnation and death was broken, for He was conceived of the Holy Spirit.

As the Second Man, the Lord from heaven, He was the sinless Man, the perfect Man—perfect in His freedom from human depravity, the Holy One manifest in the flesh. There was no stain of sin in the virgin’s holy Son nor was there any sin in His divine nature, for He was, from eternity to eternity, whether on earth or in heaven, “...holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners...” (Heb. 7:26). Jesus Himself said: “...the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me” (John 14:30). Satan did come

Will they make such outright declarations as these:

“We repudiate our former man-invented, wholly unscriptural teaching of the sanctuary, conditional immortality, investigative judgment—and unreservedly renounce them all”?

“We have seen the truth in the Word of God in regard to the sinless humanity of Christ and of His finished work on Calvary; of the way of salvation by grace alone apart from works of any kind—even keeping of the Sabbath; of the consciousness of the dead; of the certainty of an everlasting hell; and we now come over on to the side of evangelical Christianity in these views”?

“We publicly repudiate the writings of these persons formerly considered our authorities, but now rejected, because of their heresies”? This would need to be followed by names of authors, titles of books, dates and all essential data.

It does not seem likely to me that such statements will be forthcoming from top men in Seventh-day Adventism, but even if such a thing were to be, *one such book* would not stop the thousands of volumes pouring from their presses daily. Much has been said of their withdrawing certain books from publication and sale but books like Everson’s *Mark of the Beast*, Ashton’s *The Bible Sabbath*, and Lickey’s *God Speaks to Modern Man* were all purchased within the month in Adventist bookstores.

These books are official publications of Adventist Review and Herald Pub. Co, Washington, D.C., and they all contain the teachings I have mentioned. Will the correspondence courses called “Faith for Today” all be withdrawn? I have a complete up-to-date set filled with the same old heresies. I have said before, and I say again, that no one would be happier than I if this sect turned from its errors—all of them—but I am very, very



The Adventist heresy in regard to the nature of Christ grows out of their complete misunderstanding of His humanity. His humanity was just as perfect as His deity. His humanity was just as sinless as His deity. His humanity was wholly unique.

to Christ, but there was nothing in our holy Savior to respond to Satan’s solicitation, for He “knew no sin” (2 Cor. 5:21). Dr. C. I. Scofield expressed it very well: “Were the teaching of the Seventh-day Adventist church true, we would have a monstrosity-deity inheriting a sinful nature. If this could have been so, there could have been no sinless sacrifice, no hope for sinners, no Savior.”

Will there be a complete “right-about-face”?

I have called your attention to the manner in which these quotations from the “Bible Readings” books were handled to put you readers on your guard. When the book by the top Adventist leaders is published this year, I anticipate that it will contain many restatements of their errors rather than outright repudiations. Of course, I am judging by the past. The Adventist way has always been that of evasion and suppression rather than that of outright repudiation. Their action in the matter of “The Great Disappointment” (“The Great Blunder”?), and the “Shut Door” teaching in the early days of the sect gives abundant proof of that. I fear there will be no real change in the doctrines that I have listed, but there certainly will be an all-out effort on the part of the Adventists to convince evangelicals that such a change has taken place.

ἀδελφὸί μου!

Keep in mind that Seventh-day Adventism is not just a few “big shots,” but is composed of hundreds of churches and individual members. Even if these leaders were to repudiate some of their heresies, how about the local churches and their membership who have been “brain-washed” for three generations with such teachings as that of annihilation of the wicked? Will they accept it from stem to circumference of the denomination because these leaders say it is not so any more? What about the proselytes on the mission field who have been led astray from the truth to take up these heresies?

It is our purpose to present to *The King’s Business* readers the “visions” of Mrs. E. G. White in this series of articles. Outside of Seventh-day Adventist circles, the counsels of visions of Mrs. White are practically unknown. I find them quite at variance with the Word of God. I think the Christian public should read enough of these writings to know what kind of religious leader Mrs. White really was. I am quite sure that in the course of the last 25 years I have read all of her books. Friends have supplied me with some ancient editions. *Eternity* editors claim that “No one can fairly challenge her [Mrs. White’s] writings on the basis of their conformity to the basic principles of the gospel” (Oct. pp. 38, 39).

I challenge them on that very basis!

We shall see as we with her are “taken off in vision” and behold what her “accompanying angel” showed her. These are her expressions used again and again in her descriptions of her visions. Her publications have formed the Adventist framework for over 100 years!

We will include in our remaining space what we can of one of Mrs. White’s visions as a sample of what you may expect in articles to come. This vision is recorded in an aged copy of *A Word to the Little Flock*, the first Adventist publication. This is the unexpurgated version. As it now appears in *Early Writings*, some passages are omitted, particularly those having to do with the mark of the beast, shutting the door to heaven, etc. It is an astounding thing that the Adventists who believe these visions came from God would dare to edit them! I shall reproduce the greater part of this vision. Here it is—dated April 7, 1847, at Topsham, Maine:

“...I saw an angel swiftly flying to me. He quickly carried me from the earth to the Holy City. In the city I saw a temple, which I entered. I passed through a door before I came to the first veil (sic). This veil was raised and I passed into the Holy Place. Here I saw the altar of incense, the candlestick with the seven lamps, and the table on which was the shewbread, etc. After viewing the glory of the Holy, Jesus raised the veil, and I passed into the Holy of Holies. In the holiest I saw an ark; on the top and sides of it was purest gold. On each end of the ark was a lovely Cherub, with their wings spread out over it. Their faces were turned towards each other, and they looked downwards. Between the angels was a golden censor. Above the ark, where the angels stood, was an exceeding bright glory that appeared like a throne where God dwelt. Jesus stood by the ark. And as the saints’ prayers came up to Jesus, the incense in the censor would smoke, and He offered up the prayers of the saints with the smoke of the incense to his Father. In the ark, was the golden pot of manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and tables of stone folded together like a book. Jesus opened them, and I saw the ten commandments written on them with the finger of God. On one table was four, and on the other six. The four on the first table shone brighter than the other six. But the fourth [the Sabbath commandment] shone above them all; for the Sabbath was set apart to be kept in honor of God’s holy name. The holy Sabbath looked glorious—a halo of glory was all around it. I saw that the Sabbath was not nailed to the cross. If it was the other nine commandments were; and we are at liberty to go forth and break them all as well as to break the fourth. I saw that God had not changed the Sabbath, for He never changes. But the Pope had changed it from the seventh to the first day of the week; for he was to change times and laws. And I saw that if God had changed the Sabbath, from the seventh to the first day, He would have changed the writing of the Sabbath commandment, written on the tables of stone, which are now in the ark, in the Most Holy Place of the Temple in heaven; and it would read thus: The first day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. But I saw that it read the same as when written on the tables of stone by the finger of God and delivered to Moses in Sinai: ‘But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.’ I saw that the holy Sabbath is, and will be, *the separat-*

ing wall between the true Israel of God and unbelievers; and that the Sabbath is the great question to unite the hearts of God’s dear waiting saints. And if one believed, and kept the Sabbath, and received the blessing attending it, and then gave it up, and broke the holy commandment, they would shut the gates of the Holy City against themselves, as sure as there was a God in heaven above. I saw that God had children who do not see and keep the Sabbath. They had not rejected the light on it. And at the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully. This enraged the church, and nominal Adventists, as they could not refute the Sabbath truth. And at this time God’s chosen all saw clearly that we had the truth, and they came out, and endured persecution with us. And I saw the sword, famine, pestilence, and great confusion in the land. The wicked thought that we had brought the judgments down on them. They rose up and took counsel to rid the earth of us, thinking that evil would be stayed. I saw that all who ‘would not receive the mark of the Beast, and of his Image, in their foreheads or in their hands’ could not buy or sell. I saw that the number (666) of the Image Beast was made up and that it was the beast that changed the Sabbath, and the Image Beast had followed on after, and kept the Pope’s, and not God’s Sabbath. And all we were required to do, was to give up God’s Sabbath, and keep the Pope’s, and then we should have the mark of the Beast, and of his Image.”

Following this, the coming of Christ is described followed by these words:

“And then the never-ending blessing was pronounced on those who had honored God, in keeping His Sabbath holy, there was a mighty shout of victory over the Beast, and over his Image.”

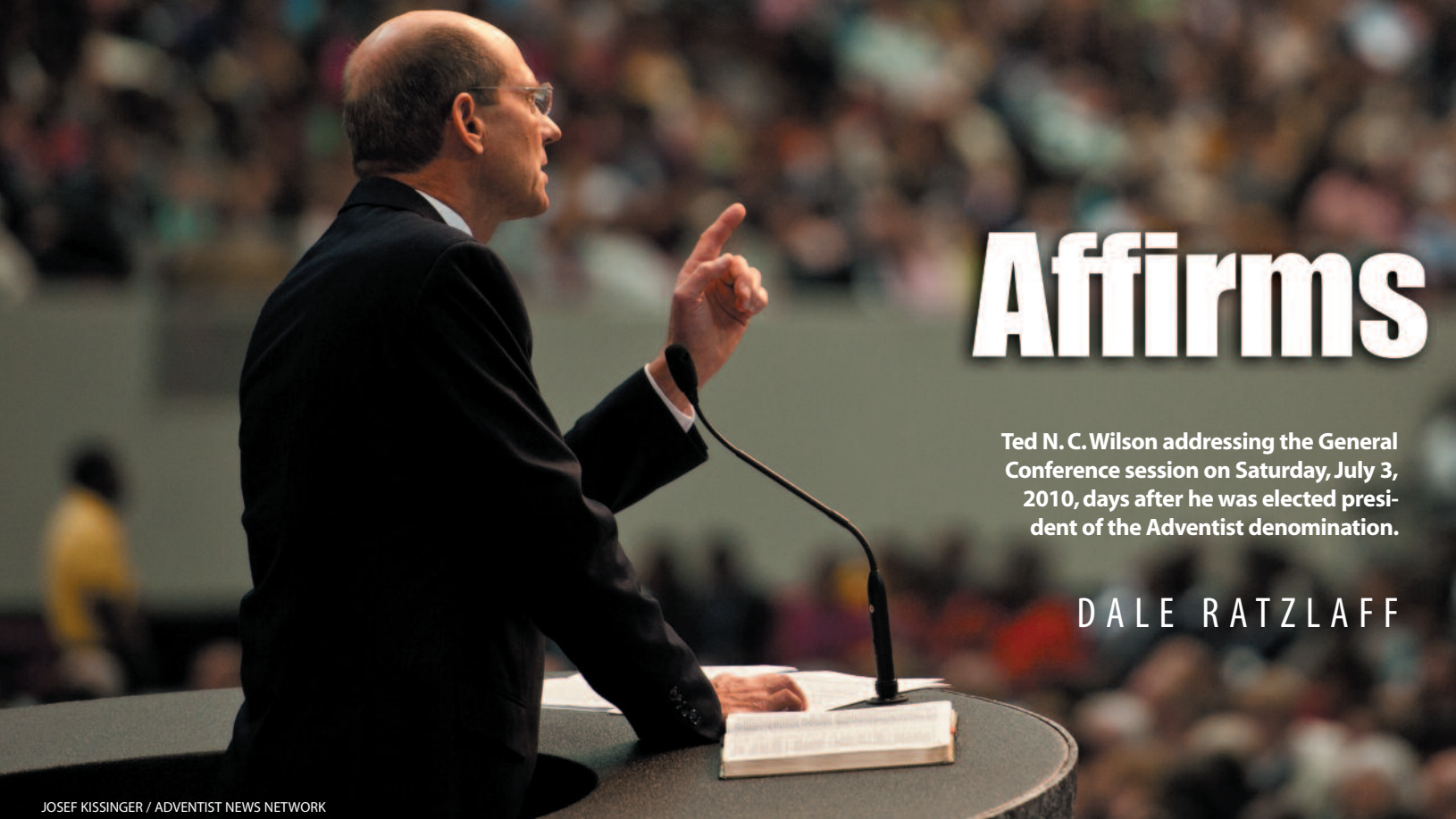
The “the jubilee” is described. We quote again:

“Soon appeared the great white cloud. It looked more lovely than ever before. On it sat the Son of Man. At first we did not see Jesus on the cloud, but as it drew near the earth, we could behold His lovely person... Jesus threw open the gates of the Golden City, and led us in. Here we were made welcome, for we had kept ‘the commandments of God’ and had ‘a right to the tree of life.’”

You see, Elder Bates had settled upon the doctrine of the seventh-day Sabbath and Mrs. White’s foregoing “vision endorsed it. The *Review and Supplement* of August 14, 1883 plainly declared: “our position on the *Testimonies* [Mrs. White’s writings] is like the keystone to the arch. Take that out, and there is no logical stopping place till all the special truths of the message are gone. Nothing is surer than this, that the message and the visions belong together, and stand or fall together.”

For once, I fully agree with an official Seventh-day Adventist statement! Now the question is: Will Mrs. White have to go? Will the “keystone of the arch” be removed and thus all the superstructure fall in a heap? This will have to be done if the heresies are abandoned, as *Eternity* claims. †

This is the end of the first installment in a series of articles on Adventism by Louis Talbot. This article is reprinted with permission from *The King’s Business*, vol. 48, No. 4, April, 1957, pp. 23–30. *Courtesy *Time*; copyright *Time*, Inc. 1956.



Affirms

Ted N. C. Wilson addressing the General Conference session on Saturday, July 3, 2010, days after he was elected president of the Adventist denomination.

DALE RATZLAFF

JOSEF KISSINGER / ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK

This summer marked the occurrence of the 59th annual General Conference session of the Seventh-day Adventist organization. This quinquennial event is memorable for the election of Elder Ted N. C. Wilson as the new General Conference president. He gave his first “presidential address” to the world organization in his Sabbath sermon on July 3, 2010—the last day of the session. The tone and content of his talk moved significantly in the direction of historical Adventism.

In this article I will present the simple gospel as it is defined in Scripture, contrast Wilson’s sermon with the gospel, and evaluate Adventism in the light of the gospel.

There are a number of statements in Wilson’s sermon that cry out for evaluation; one, however, deserves the closest scrutiny because it deals directly with the gospel. Here is his statement:

Grace is the promise of God’s pardon and the provision of God’s power—justification and sanctification. You cannot separate what Christ does FOR you (justifying you daily as if you had not sinned) from what He does IN you (sanctifying you daily as you submit to Him and allow the power of the Holy Spirit to change your life to become more and more like Jesus.) This is the everlasting Gospel spoken about in the first angel’s message. It is righteousness by faith.¹

Before we examine this statement in the light of the new covenant gospel, we must see the gospel from two perspectives: (1) its simplicity—“he who believes has eternal life”² (Jn. 6:47)—and (2) the need for accuracy defining, proclaiming, and defending the gospel with precise clarity.

Gospel simplicity

In John 4 we have the story of the Woman of Samaria. She had been and was still “living in sin.” Her theology was limited, if not faulty. When she was presented with the truth that Jesus was the Messiah, the Savior of the world, however, the story leads us to believe she received salvation: “Sir, give me this water” (Jn. 4:15). Then, after she had sipped the “Living Water”, she left her water pot there at Jacob’s well. She immediately became an evangelist: “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?” (Jn. 4:29).

And many more believed because of His word; and they were saying to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world.” (Jn. 4:41-42).

This is gospel simplicity. She probably knew nothing regarding the terms *justification* and *imputed righteousness* or *sanctification* and *imparted righteousness*. This sinning Samaritan simply believed that Jesus was the Christ, and she was saved.

Luke 19 tells the story of Zaccheus. We know little about him except that he was a tax collector, rich, and short, and he climbed into a tree because he “wanted to see Jesus.” Jesus looked up at him and invited Himself for lunch and said, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”³

We might summarize this gospel incident thus: “Look at Jesus who came to seek and save the lost, and you will have salvation.”

New Adventist president sets course: the Adventist gospel

“Grace is the promise of God’s pardon and the provision of God’s power—justification and sanctification. You cannot separate what Christ does FOR you (justifying you daily as if you had not sinned) from what He does IN you (sanctifying you daily as you submit to Him and allow the power of the Holy Spirit to change your life to become more and more like Jesus.) This is the everlasting Gospel spoken about in the first angel’s message. It is righteousness by faith.” TED N. C. WILSON

The following texts give ample evidence of gospel simplicity:

Whoever believes may in Him have eternal life.⁴

He who believes in Him is not judged.⁵

He who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.⁶

He who believes in Me shall live even if he dies.⁷

But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness.⁸

If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.⁹

Whoever will call upon the name of the LORD will be saved.¹⁰

Behold I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone, And he who believes in Him shall not be disappointed.¹¹

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.¹²

Paul defines gospel simplicity in 1 Corinthians 15. Please note that it is the simple gospel and it is the saving gospel! I have highlighted the key words:

Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, *by which also you are saved*, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that *Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to*

the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve (emphasis mine).¹³

In summary, we could say that the simple gospel is designed for unbelievers. It is a proclamation of the Christ event anticipating only one response: belief (faith and trust) in Christ.

Gospel clarity

Gospel clarity is needed to protect the integrity of gospel simplicity. While gospel simplicity is designed to be a proclamation to unbelievers so that they may respond in faith and be saved, gospel clarity is needed to weed out false teachers who think they are guarding the purity and/or morality of the church, but in actuality they are undermining and perverting the gospel—and here is the important point—they subtly, sometimes blatantly, move the object of faith away from Christ so that their adherents begin to trust partly to the righteousness that is in Christ and partly to the righteousness that is developed in their own lives.

Some would say that the simple gospel described above is “cheap grace” or only part of the “real gospel”. “The simple gospel is truth,” they would say, “but is not the complete truth. In order to be ready for Christ to come one must not only accept Christ’s righteousness that is in Christ, but there must be enough of personal righteousness for one to ‘be safe to save’ or to give the ‘final demonstration’ to the world that the law can be perfectly kept.” Usually those who include imparted righteousness in their definition of the gospel will also have behavioral lists by which a person can measure his

progress in personal righteousness. Following are a few examples where hundreds could be given.

The practise [sic] of using liquor, tobacco, tea, and coffee must be overcome by the converting power of God. There shall nothing enter into the kingdom of God that defiles.¹⁴

The Spirit of God cannot come to our help, and assist us in perfecting Christian characters, while we are indulging our appetites to the injury of health, and while the pride of life controls.¹⁵

You, my dear sister, are vain; you have lived an aimless life, when, had you been humble and lived to bless others, you would have been a blessing to yourself and to all around you. May God forgive your parents and sisters for the part they have acted in making you what you are—just that which God cannot accept, just that which, if you remain the same, will be stubble for the fire to consume in the day of God.¹⁶

You are not teachable, therefore the cause of God would not prosper in your hands. You would fail to recognize a defeat when you met with one. The cause of God would be brought into disrepute and dishonor by your labors, and you would fail to discover the fact. A certain class may be convinced by you of the truth; but more would be turned away and placed where they could not be reached by proper, judicious labor. Interwoven with your experience are things that will prove detrimental to the truth. God cannot accept you as a representative of the truth.¹⁷

In the above quotations one can see that faith in Christ is not enough; there must be a certain amount of character development before the blessings of the gospel are realized. In the New Testament, however, we learn that anyone can come to Christ just as they are. Once they are born-again, or saved, then they enter a life of obedient living which will have its ups and downs, but all the while they are beloved children of the Father trusting their salvation 100% to the righteousness that is in Christ which is God's righteousness imputed to them.

That the simple gospel of salvation in Christ could be proclaimed to the Gentiles, *while they were still Gentiles*, shook the apostolic church to its foundation. Here is the record:

But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, stood up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses".¹⁸

These legalistic believers felt they were protecting the church from losing its purity and/or morality. Obedience to the Law of Moses, they said, was "necessary". It was against this backdrop that we see the wisdom of the Glorified Jesus sovereignly choosing Saul, the well educated Pharisee. By the time this issue came to a head, Paul had already received several revelations from Christ that gave gospel clarity and protected the simple gospel from false teachers. His epistles to Galatians and Romans, as well as his other letters, provide for us the fine-tuned theology needed to answer the questions that came up in the early church and are still being asked today.

When the Galatians wanted "to be under law" and began observing "days, months, seasons, and years", Paul said, "I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain."¹⁹

The Galatian church is a case in point for our study today. They were moving away from the simple gospel by which they were saved and were adding to that Gospel which, according to Paul, made their "gospel" one of a different kind. And to the false teachers who were promoting the different "gospel", Paul gave his strongest reprimand.

But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed.²⁰

Review

Gospel simplicity is the genuine, new covenant gospel which can be proclaimed and believed and which results in salvation. Gospel clarity is needed to protect the integrity of gospel simplicity by identifying false teachers who add to the simple gospel, and who include in their "gospel" not only faith in Christ, but to some degree trust of personal performance. With this clarification we now turn to President Wilson's sermon.

President Ted Wilson's sermon, "Go Forward," a case in point

Pastor Wilson's sermon reveals the gospel confusion still present in the Adventist church. I am not casting aspersions on Elder Wilson or any other person, but I am pointing out that the Adventist system has not moved—at least as indicated in this sermon—from its historic, cultic roots. Those of us who have come out of Adventism and are ministering to transitioning Adventists must evaluate the gospel with precision and clarity. The simple gospel is our plumb-line of truth against which all evaluation is to be made, and the gospel is our plumb-line for evaluating President Wilson's sermon.

While some of his statements sound good on their own, let us consider the following:

W "As Seventh-day Adventists, we accept the Bible as the foundation for all our beliefs and see in its pages our unique prophetic identity and mission."

Really? Without the interpretation of Ellen G. White (EGW), many Adventist doctrines fall: Sabbath as the seal of God, Sunday as the mark of the beast, the Adventist church as God's only true, remnant church, and 1844 as the beginning of the investigative judgment and the cleansing of the sanctuary to name only a few. One of our readers some months ago promised \$100,000.00 to anyone who could prove the 1844 sanctuary doctrine and investigative judgment from Scripture. We had no takers. Adventist scholars know it is impossible.

W "Seventh-day Adventists have been chosen by God as a peculiar people, separate from the world... He has made them His representatives and has called them to be ambassadors for Him in the last work of salvation."

This statement taken from Ellen White is simply without biblical foundation unless one resorts to wild proof-texting from apocalyptic passages.

W“The observance of the Sabbath is not only a sign of His creatorship in the beginning but will be THE sign of God’s people in the last days in contrast to those with the mark of the beast representing an attempt to keep holy a day which God has not set apart as holy” (Wilson’s emphasis).

Here is an example of adding to the simple gospel. Adventists clearly make Sabbath-keeping a point of salvation. On the one hand they can say they believe in salvation by grace without works, yet on the other, keeping the Sabbath is necessary for salvation. The Sabbath is never set forth in the New Testament as “THE sign of God’s people.” Jesus said, “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another”²¹ We are sealed by the Holy Spirit,²² not by Sabbath keeping. The sign Christians are to remember to celebrate in the new covenant is the Lord’s Supper.²³

W“...God has proclaimed as His test of allegiance...the seventh-day Sabbath.”

Sorry, not found in the New Testament. Here Adventists are making a “test of allegiance” out of something that is not the gospel—something that is not even expected of Gentile converts.

W“Grace is the promise of God’s pardon and the provision of God’s power—justification and sanctification. You cannot separate what Christ does FOR you (justifying you daily as if you had not sinned) from what He does IN you (sanctifying you daily as you submit to Him and allow the power of the Holy Spirit to change your life to become more and more like Jesus.) This is the everlasting Gospel spoken about in the first angel’s message. It is righteousness by faith.”

Here is real gospel confusion. It is true in one sense that one cannot separate justification and sanctification in that a justified person is also declared sanctified.²⁴ Nevertheless, one must clearly distinguish between the two. Further, it is justification and justification alone that provides our right standing with God. That is why a clear gospel presentation proclaims, “This man receives sinners.” “Whosoever will, may come.” “Whoever believes in Him has eternal life.” Moreover, justification happens at the moment we believe and are born of the Spirit. It does not happen over and over again, day after day. The Holy Spirit is our guarantee that we are justified and that eternal life is ours.²⁵

In addition, as soon as one includes “sanctifying you daily as you submit to him and allow the power of the Holy Spirit to change your life to become more and more like Jesus” in the definition of “righteousness by faith”, the gospel is undermined. Even though EGW said, “God’s requirement under grace is just the same as He made in Eden—perfect obedience to His law,”²⁶ we must remember Paul’s clear statement, “as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless”²⁷ Then Paul, the Apostle of Christ’s choosing who was given the gospel by a revelation from the glorified Jesus, said,

“The Spirit of Prophecy is one of the identifying marks of God’s last-day people and is just as applicable today as ever before because it was given to us by heaven itself. As God’s faithful remnant, may we never make of none effect the precious light given us in the writings of Ellen G. White.”

“But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith” (Phil. 3:7-9).

New Testament “righteousness by faith” is not that which is worked out in our lives. Paul said that he met the requirements of the “righteousness of the law”,²⁸ and yet compared to the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith (not works), he saw the righteousness of the law as only “rubbish”. By contrast, New Testament righteousness by faith is the very “righteousness of God” that is *imputed* to us the instant we believe the good news of Christ. It is never, in this life, fully *imparted* to the believer.

Defining “the everlasting gospel” as the power of the Holy Spirit that will help us become more and more like Christ is not the new covenant gospel taught by Paul and the other Apostles. The “gospel” promoted by Elder Wilson and Ellen White includes imparted righteousness, “sanctifying you daily as you submit to Him and allow the power of the Holy Spirit to change your life to become more and more like Jesus.” This “gospel” cannot be “proclaimed” but only commanded.

Quoting from *Steps to Christ* by EGW, Wilson says, “Our only ground of hope is in the righteousness of Christ imputed to us (justification), *and* in that wrought by His Spirit working in and through us (sanctification)” (my emphasis).

As soon as one moves from trusting in 100% justification (faith in Christ’s righteousness that is in Christ) and starts to place some part of his trust in his sanctification, suddenly, all assurance is gone. How much character development must one have? Who is to determine if you have cooperated enough with the Holy Spirit so that you are becoming more and more like Jesus? Did you perfectly keep the Sabbath? Are you guarding the edges of the Sabbath? Are you late to Sabbath services? Are you keeping the Sabbath exactly as Jehovah commanded the Israelites to keep it?²⁹

Do you cook or build a fire on the Sabbath? Do you love your enemies enough? Do you pray enough? Are you wasting some of your time? Are you giving enough of your money to the Lord’s work? What about TV and what you watch? Are you spending a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of

the life of Christ? Are you up to date in reading your Bible through this year? Are you following the “light” on health reform? Do you eat between meals? Have you given up all pickles, cheese, spices and rich pastries? Do you eat meat, drink tea, coffee or have a glass of wine with your evening meal? Why are you wasting your money on family photographs which should be given to advance the Lord’s cause?

The list could go on for thousands of pages, and it does in the *Testimonies* of EGW. It should be obvious that as soon as one takes his complete trust off Christ and places even some part, no matter how small, of his trust in his own religious experience, he is headed for one of three outcomes: (1) continual guilt for not measuring up; (2) thinking he has achieved perfection which results in judging others who do not measure up; or (3) the response we have heard from hundreds of former Adventists, “I can’t be good enough; I might as well go out and enjoy a life of sin because I am going to be lost anyway. There is no hell, so that looks like the best choice.”

“My brothers and sisters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Lord has given us one of the greatest gifts possible in the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy. Just as the Bible is not outdated or irrelevant, neither is the testimony of God’s end-time messenger. God used Ellen G White as a humble servant to provide inspired insight about Scripture, prophecy, health, education, relationships, mission, families, and so many more topics. Let us read the Spirit of Prophecy, follow the Spirit of Prophecy and share the Spirit of Prophecy.”

Wow! Where should I begin to comment on this sentence? Here are just a few comments on Wilson’s “greatest gifts possible”:

Scripture: Ellen White contradicts, adds to, and confuses clear Scripture truth, including the gospel, on numerous occasions.³⁰

Prophecy: (1) She made a number of false prophecies.³¹ (2) She endorsed the false prophecy of William Miller’s 1843 chart and said it was just as God wanted it. (3) She taught that the prophecy of the “shut door” of the 10 virgins in Matthew 25 referred to the door of salvation which was closed to everyone who rejected the Adventist view of the heavenly sanctuary.³² She spoke about “the wicked world which God had rejected” in her first vision which was later deceptively removed from the text as if she had never written it.³³

Health: Ellen White did make some good comments on health. However, there are three main problems with her health message: (1) she claimed she received her health message in visions from God but it has been shown that they came from contemporaries, often from books written before hers, which were in her library.³⁴ (2) She included health principles as part of the gospel, making them works required for acceptance and blessing from God.³⁵ (a) One must give up eating meat to be translated (raptured). (b) Eating between meals is a sin. (c) Eating the wrong foods hinders the work of the Holy Spirit. (3) Many of her health declarations were wrong. Modern science has shown the following to be true, in contrast with her teachings: (a) Some meat is good for you.

(b) Coffee in moderation has been shown to help prevent a number of diseases. (c) Tea in moderation is healthful. (d) Hot pepper is good for you. (e) Sex is healthful and not debilitating as EGW claims.³⁶ (f) A glass of red wine a day is said to help prevent heart disease and lengthen life, and Jesus drank real wine—not rehydrated raisins as I was taught!

Education: To her credit she fostered education. However, she also said that one should never question what God had shown her to be true.³⁷ Her stringent requirements for students in regard to sports, pictures, bicycles, baseball, and even little children playing on Sabbath are examples of extremes.

Relationships: Again, EGW, with the help of her secretaries, wrote some good things. However, if one reads her counsel to missionaries who had children in the mission field, her warped philosophy of sex, even between husband and wife, one will immediately see that something is twisted and wrong.³⁸

Mission: EGW and her writings are the driving force behind much of the SDA mission. Following her, the SDA church sees “Christian mission” as only SDA mission, excluding the church at large.

Families: If one were to follow all the instructions EGW gives to families, children, etc., it could be, and often is, very damaging to the personality. Her writings are the foundation for dozens, if not hundreds, of cultic off-shoots from Adventism. These cultic groups are often little groups gathering in country settings seeking to get away from the wicked world where they can follow the “blue-print” of Adventism—the literal interpretation of many of her instructions.

“The Spirit of Prophecy is one of the identifying marks of God’s last-day people and is just as applicable today as ever before because it was given to us by heaven itself. As God’s faithful remnant, may we never make of none effect the precious light given us in the writings of Ellen G. White.”

Nowhere in Scripture is a last-day prophet set forth as an identifying mark of the true church. As pointed out in my book *Sabbath in Christ*, Adventists use of Revelation 12:14 and 19:10 is a travesty in that it takes Christ out of the text and puts the writings of Ellen White in His place. She, herself, blatantly claimed to be the channel of God’s communication in the last days.

In ancient times God spoke to men by the mouth of prophets and apostles. In this days He speaks to them by the Testimonies of His Spirit [writings of EGW]... The Lord has seen fit to give me a view of the need and errors of His people.” Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 147,148. (Compare Heb. 1:1-3, Ellen White usurps Christ as God’s final word.)

“The Lord is longing to reproduce in us His own character....In the book, *Christ’s Object Lessons* [p. 69] we read of Christ’s wish for His people, ‘Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be per-

fectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own. It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.’ ”

Adventists, as articulated by this statement of Ellen White, teach that the second coming is being delayed because God is waiting for a group of people to perfectly keep the law. Ellen White stated, “In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor.”³⁹ Therefore, perfection of character is not only the goal, but the requirement. By perfecting their characters, Adventists claim to be able to hasten the coming of Christ.⁴⁰

However, the Bible states very clearly that the time of Christ’s return is already fixed—and is known only to the Father.

But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone” (Mat. 24:36).

Adventists are losing hundreds of thousands of members every year. We believe that much of this exodus is caused by the increase of accurate information about the history and theology of the Seventh-day Adventist church that is now available in numerous books, periodicals like *Proclamation!* and internet websites. The truth about Adventism is readily available to anyone willing to discover it for himself. We believe this is the backdrop to the following statements of President Wilson:

“Don’t reach out to movements or megachurch centers outside of the Seventh-day Adventist Church which promise you spiritual success based on faulty theology... Look WITHIN the Seventh-day Adventist Church to humble pastors,

evangelists, Biblical scholars, leaders and departmental directions who can provide evangelistic methods and programs that are based on solid Biblical principles and ‘The Great Controversy Theme’...Don’t succumb to fanatical or loose theology that wrests God’s Word from the pillars of Biblical truth and the landmark beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church...The historic Biblical beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will not be moved.” (Wilson’s emphasis)

If we are to take President Wilson’s sermon as representing the direction of his leadership, it appears that any attempts to jettison Adventism’s cultic historical teachings are null and void. For many years I had hoped and prayed that the Adventist church would openly admit and renounce the historic errors of Adventism. I thought that exposing them to the evangelical world would nudge them to respond truthfully. However, based upon the statements of the previous General Conference president, Jan Paulson, and the current president, Ted Wilson, all hope seems to be gone. Therefore, we feel it our duty to expose the errors of the Adventist movement even more openly to keep unsuspecting truth-seeking people from being caught in the deceptive net of traditional Adventist evangelism. We feel this way for one main reason: Adventism teaches a confused gospel very similar to that being promoted in Galatia.

But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! (Gal. 1:8).

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek (Rom 1:16). †

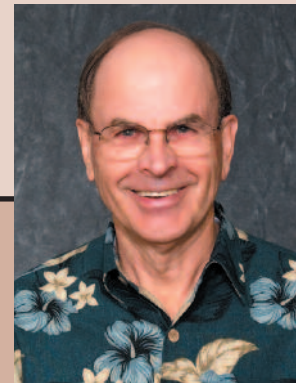
Endnotes

- ¹The General Conference Sabbath Sermon- July 3, 2010.
- ²Jn. 6:47.
- ³Lk. 19:9-10.
- ⁴Jn 3:15.
- ⁵Jn. 3:18.
- ⁶Jn. 5:24.
- ⁷Jn. 11:25.
- ⁸Rom. 4:5.
- ⁹Rom.10:9.
- ¹⁰Rom. 10:13.
- ¹¹1 Pet. 2:6.
- ¹²1 Jn. 5:1.
- ¹³1 Cor. 15:1-5.
- ¹⁴Ellen G. White, *Gospel Health*, 1897-11-01.006.
- ¹⁵Ellen G. White, *Health Reformer*, 1871-09-01.004.
- ¹⁶Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 176.
- ¹⁷Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 557.

- ¹⁸Acts 15:5.
- ¹⁹Gal. 4:11.
- ²⁰Gal.1:8-9.
- ²¹Jn. 13:35.
- ²²Eph. 1:13; 4:30.
- ²³Lk. 22:20; 2 Cor. 11:25.
- ²⁴1 Cor. 1:2; 10:14.
- ²⁵Eph. 1:13-14.
- ²⁶Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, Sept. 21, 1886.
- ²⁷Phil. 3:6.
- ²⁸See Rom. 3:21; 4:13; 9:31; 10:4,5; Gal. 2:21; 3:21; Phil. 3:6,9.
- ²⁹“God requires that His holy day be as sacredly observed now as in the time of Israel. The command given to the Hebrews should be regarded by all Christians as an injunction from Jehovah to them.” Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 296.
- ³⁰See many examples in *White Washed*, by Sidney Cleveland.
- ³¹See *ibid*, and *White Out* by Dirk Anderson for many examples.

- ³²Read the chapter, “The Swinging Door” in *Cultic Doctrine* by Dale Ratzlaff.
- ³³See *Cultic Doctrine of Seventh-day Adventists* by Dale Ratzlaff, p. 148.
- ³⁴See *Prophets of Health* by Ron Numbers.
- ³⁵One of her books/periodicals was entitled “Gospel Health”.
- ³⁶See *White Out* and other writings of Dirk Anderson for many more examples.
- ³⁷“When the power of God testifies as to what is truth [what God has shown Ellen White] that truth is to stand forever as truth. No after suppositions contrary to the light God has given are to be entertained.” Ellen G. White, *Loma Linda Manuscript*, No. 150.
- ³⁸Read *Solemn Appeal* and *Appeal to Mothers*.
- ³⁹Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 614.
- ⁴⁰*Ibid*.

Dale Ratzlaff is the founder of Life Assurance Ministries, Inc., and owns LAM Publications, LLC. He served as an Adventist pastor for 13 years, seven at Monterey Bay Academy where he taught Bible. He and his wife Carolyn left the Adventist church in 1981 when he realized he could no longer teach the investigative judgment in clear conscience. He has authored *Sabbath in Christ*, *The Cultic Doctrine of Seventh-day Adventists*, *The Truth About Adventist “Truth”*, and *Truth Led Me Out*. These are available through his website, LifeAssuranceMinistries.com.



Deeper into Christ

Greetings to you who work so hard to produce such a wonderful magazine with wonderful gospel presentations from every angle, things that even long-time gospel believers have never thought of. I just finished the “Scapegoat issue”. Fantastic!

Thank you to God and to you!

We’ve had financial straits lately, but we are going to try and give more to keep you going. We love *Proclamation!* It sinks us deeper into Christ every time.

RIDGEWAY, CO



Spawn of Satan

The final phase of the Day of Atonement Service when the sanctuary is cleansed is symbolic of the culmination of the Great Controversy when the sins of the redeemed are removed from the sanctuary and confessed upon the head of the scapegoat—representative of Satan. The scapegoat then is led out into the wilderness and ultimately perishes in the wilderness (outside of the camp). The scapegoat represents

Satan who is ultimately responsible for the sins of the righteous. Satan and the wicked perish outside of the Holy City, or camp. Satan is ultimately responsible for all of the sins of the world. The wicked die in their own sins as they have neither confessed nor repented of their sins: their robes (characters) are not washed in the blood of the Lamb.

You and your authors reveal their own ignorance by not having a clue about the Day of Atonement and how it is a type or figure of the final events that occur just before the destruction of sin, death, Satan, and sinners. All of the above will be “no more”.

Your April—June 2010 issue of *Proclamation!* by implication declares that Jesus Christ, not Satan, is responsible for the sins of the world. “[Is] therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.” Gal 2:17 However, you are “proclaiming” that “Christ is the minister of sin!”

TO TEACH THAT MY LORD AND SAVIOUR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SINS OF THE WORLD IS DAMNABLE BLASPHEMOUS HERESY.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND ME ANY MORE ISSUES OF YOUR EGREGIOUS LIES. YOU PEOPLE ARE INDEED THE SPAWN OF Satan.

I will be very surprised if you publish this letter, for it exposes you for the liars that you are.
RICHLAND, WA

Editor’s response: To be sure, we will publish your letter; it is an excellent illustration of what Adventists teach and believe—and the implications of these beliefs.

The Bible teaches that Adam is responsible for mankind’s sin. Satan is not responsible for man’s sin; he is responsible for his own sin (1 Cor. 15:22; Rom. 5:15-17).

Moreover, Ephesians 2:3 says we are by nature objects of wrath, and Colossians 1:13 says we are naturally citizens of the domain of darkness.

The Bible never holds Satan responsible for the sin of humanity. Adam is the one blamed, and because of Adam, we are born utterly depraved and without life or hope. As Romans 3

says, there is no one who understands, seeks God, or does good. Satan is not blamed for this condition.

Jesus came to redeem man; Satan was not part of the equation at all. Jesus took responsibility for the sin of man. This doesn’t make Him responsible for the cause of sin any more than it makes me responsible for my son’s breaking a neighbor’s window with his ball if I pay for the window. But He “became sin for us” (2 Cor 5:21). The bronze serpent that Moses lifted up in the wilderness was a symbol of the serpents that were biting Israel and killing them. Yet that serpent represented Jesus; He became sin and was lifted up—all without being a sinner. He completely took into Himself human sin and died a human death to redeem humans from death.

In brief, the Bible teaches:

- Adam is responsible for human sin, and each person is born accused of sin and condemned to hell (Eph 2:3; 1 Cor 15:22).
- Satan is the deceiver and the accuser, but he is not the originator of human sin. Adam freely and with open eyes chose to sin and thus sentenced all humanity to death.
- Jesus became sin and became a curse (2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13); He became human so He could pay a human debt to God. Jesus paid the price that He Himself as part of the Trinity demanded for sin.
- Jesus nailed both the sin with which we’re born and all the sins we commit to the cross, and His blood covers us and qualifies us to become His righteousness in Christ (2 Cor. 5:21).
- All sin is removed from us when we accept Jesus—and it goes onto Him (Is. 53:6; Jn. 1:29). Satan does not carry our sin away—Jesus does.
- When we blame Satan for human sin, we refuse to admit what the Bible says about us: we are dead by nature and responsible for our own sin.
- We cannot enjoy God’s forgiveness if we do not admit that we are responsible for our sin and repent.
- Finally, being forgiven of our sin results in our spirits being brought to life by the Holy Spirit. THIS life is what God requires for us to see the kingdom of heaven (John 3:3-5).

Dividing the body?

I am utterly amazed, appalled—baffled even—by the letters I read in *Proclamation!* One Adventist after another is accusing *Proclamation!* of “church bashing”, when all of my life as an Adventist I heard the bashing of Catholics and “apostate protestants” and the downright demonization of anyone who left the SDA church and disagreed with any of its teachings. There wasn’t one single evangelistic “effort” that I attended or with which I helped

...this has been one of the most educational issues you have published since I started receiving Proclamation! I will read this over and over.

Ellen White’s teaching. I was even telling others a lie. Thank you for this wonderful issue. I will always use it for reference—I wish I had dozens of copies of it. I feel brave enough now to send it to some of my

friends who are Adventist, especially my daughter who is into historic Adventism. I fear for her.

Again, this has been one of the most educational issues you have published since I started receiving *Proclamation!* I will read this over and over.

MT. PLEASANT, NC

LIFE ASSURANCE MINISTRIES

MISSION

To proclaim the good news of the new covenant gospel of grace in Christ and to combat the errors of legalism and false religion.

MOTTO

Truth needs no other foundation than honest investigation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and a willingness to follow truth when it is revealed.

MESSAGE

“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God; not of works, that no one should boast.” Ephesians 2:8,9

as an Adventist where I didn't hear this type of bashing of other churches. Now that the proverbial shoe is seemingly on the other foot, they are saying that *Proclamation!* is "dividing the Body of Christ". When has the Adventist church ever identified itself with Christendom as a whole? Aren't the Sunday Christians going to receive the Mark of the Beast?...Adventists who are writing in might think they can pull the wool over other people's eyes, but this former Adventist remembers everything that they teach very clearly—including how desperately they try to convert people in these other denominations into the "remnant church". Jesus had a word for people like this while He was on this earth...I believe it was "hypocrites".

AUTUMN MCMINIMY
GARDEN GROVE, CA

We were so deceived

Thank you so much for all you are doing for us former Adventists. I know you don't need to be told, but I know from reading some of the letters, they can be pretty cruel. You are doing a necessary work for us by showing us where we were wrong, and it's not "Adventist bashing" as even some of my Adventist friends think. We were so deceived, and it takes someone who's been there to help straighten things out. I do lots of studying in other places, as well as my own studies, but I appreciate so much your addressing particular issues. I believe there are so many who are on the verge of leaving, and it won't take much to get them out. That's where what you're doing is so important. I give all the credit to God for His sovereign timing, but I will always have a special place in my heart for *Proclamation!* as it was the thing that, at the right time, started the change that led to me being born again and finding a whole new life based on Truth. I will be learning the rest of my life, but you gave me the tools to start. Eternity will know what you have done by the fruit of your lives. Thank you again and again.

FULTON, NY

Fulfilling prophecy

Your *Proclamation!* is the greatest evidence I have seen—fulfilling the prophesy of the "shaking time". Please remove my name and address from your files.

LOMA LINDA, CA

Sorry for you

Do not send us *Proclamation!* no more (sic). That book makes me sick. I feel so sorry for people like you when God comes. Do you ever read the Bible?

I pray for you, to open your eyes to God's word.

NEW HARMONY, ID

Of goats and Adventism

I couldn't set the last issue down until I read it cover to cover. More than one "old goat" in Adventism had this teaching screwed up royally (especially Ellen White). Thanks for the superb insights, et al.

HALF MOON BAY, CA

Questions not welcome at seminary

My story sounds like hundreds of others. I was raised an Adventist, educated in the denomination's school system, entered denominational employment as a pastor, was intensely loyal and mission-driven, but eventually studied myself out of membership. The final straw was an enrollment interview with the Dean of the [Andrews University] seminary, Dr. Gerhard Hasel (deceased). I was entering the doctor of theology program to find answers to a number of troubling issues with Adventist doctrine (the distinctive ones, mostly). During a 2.5-hour interview with Dr. Hasel, we discussed my questions. After discovering my motive for enrolling in the program, he said that I would not be welcome at the seminary. My questions, he felt, might unsettle others with whom I would associate. His last instructive words were (roughly quoted), "Your first duty is unquestionably to accept the inspiration of Ellen White because she interprets Scripture for the denomination." I left the interview confused, frustrated, and disappointed. After a three-year examination of Bible doctrines on my own (none of my pastoral friends or supervisors had reasonable answers), I became a former Adventist. A few still pray for me.

VIA EMAIL

You folks seem like spoiled children

In all the articles I have read in your magazine, one issue stands out. That issue is the Sabbath. You hate it, or so it seems. You could not find it in you to "enter into its rest," so you lash out at it. You know very well that there is no authority given to a change, but you accept the world's majority opinion because you do not wish to be "different". But "different" is what Christians are called to be. To stand for the right unto death. If Adventists repudiated Ellen White, but kept the Sabbath, you'd still be unhappy. If they repudiated the Sabbath, but kept Mrs. White, you'd still be unhappy, but I think much less so. I dare say that the Sabbath is by far your biggest hangup. You folks seem like unhappy spoiled children, who because they are rebellious in heart, blame their parents for their own failings. You tried to keep the Sabbath by works and not faith, then attribute that failing to the Sabbath as somehow faulty. You seem to think that you cannot be wrong so it must be that the Sabbath is.

If the "Law", that is the virtual embodiment of the Commandments, was not given until Sinai, and Paul says that before the law came "no sin was imputed," then did God destroy the antediluvian people, except for Noah and his family, for no reason? Was God being capricious? If no law had been given, what was these people's sin? How could they sin, if there was no law? Which of the commandments given at Sinai were they free to violate? Only the fourth?...

Again, Jesus stated that "the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath," but it seems that someone thinks that they are "greater" than the creator by changing His day. Where is it that God Himself said the Sabbath

In all the articles I have read in your magazine, one issue stands out. That issue is the Sabbath. You hate it, or so it seems. You could not find it in you to "enter into its rest," so you lash out at it.

was done away? Since He gave it, He would have to repeal it, personally. If the Ten Commandments are done away, He would also have said so personally. Where is that written? Where? Nowhere!!

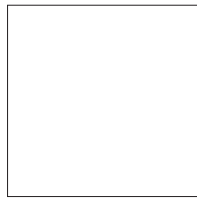
KINGSFORD HEIGHTS, IN

Editor's response: First, it is not we who say sin was not imputed before the law was given; it was Paul in Romans 5:12-14. He states that death reigned even without the law, from Adam until Moses. Paul means exactly what he says; we cannot try to "explain" his meaning so it fits our presuppositions.

Second, Hebrews 4:1-9 explains that God set a new day called "Today" to enter His rest because Israel had not entered the weekly rest. Finally, Hebrews 7:12 states that "when the priesthood is changed [Jesus established a non-leitical priesthood in the order of Melchizedek], of necessity there takes place a change of law also." The law of the new covenant is no longer the written law; it is the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that has set [us] free from the law of sin and of death" (Rom 8:2).

In the new covenant, the law is fulfilled and obsolete (2 Cor. 3; Hebrews 8:13), and we live by the Spirit instead of by the law (Romans 8). †

MAIL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR TO:
Editor, *Proclamation!* Magazine
P.O. Box 905
Redlands, CA 92373
OR EMAIL EDITOR: proclamation@gmail.com



The life EXAMINED
with Carolyn Macomber

Coming out of Babylon is difficult. Nevertheless, blessings follow obedience. Revelation 14:8 and 18:4 quote Isaiah 21:9b where Babylon's fall is described, "Babylon has fallen, has fallen! All the images of its gods lie shattered on the ground."

Idolatry is one of the main characteristics of Babylon in Scripture and is defined as "extreme admiration or love shown for somebody or something." Idolatry can be self-centered or outright self-glorification.

Babylon is first mentioned in Gen. 11:1-9 in the story of the Tower of Babel built on the plain of Shinar. Scripture states that the tower builders desired to "make a name for themselves".

Years later Isaiah describes Babylon's demise: "You felt secure in your wickedness and said, 'No one sees me'. Your wisdom and your knowledge, they have deluded you; For you have said in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one besides me' (Is. 47:10, NASB). This phrase is also reflected in Isaiah 47:8 and Daniel 4:30.

God does not share His glory or worship with anything else. In Isaiah 42:8 He says, "I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols" (NIV). Moreover, "I, even I, am the LORD, and apart from me there is no savior (Is. 43:11, NIV)."

Throughout the book of Isaiah the Lord declares that He alone is to be worshiped, glorified, and praised. In contrast, Babylon sports a mentality of "me-ism", selfishness, wanton luxury, and independence from God.

The first angel in Revelation 14 declares, "Fear God, Give Him glory, and

THE SECOND
ANGEL'S MESSAGE:

**BABYLON
IS FALLEN,
COME OUT!**



worship Him." The second angel proclaims that Babylon is fallen, having caused the nations to commit adultery. What is this "adultery"? It is giving the throne of our hearts to anything or anyone besides God.

What occupies your heart? Where do you place your faith? Do you place your security in the "one true remnant church"? Do you define yourself by doing things well? Is your heart occupied with people, ministry, or circumstances? On whom or what are you depending? Who or what is the object of your trust?

Seventh-day Adventists believe

that the call to come out of Babylon in Revelation 14:8 is a call for those who worship on Sunday to come out of "Sunday worshiping" and instead honor Saturday. Considering the context of Babylon throughout the Bible, it is quite a stretch to equate it with "Sunday worship".

Are you the master of your life, or have you turned the keys of your heart over to the Lord God Almighty? Have you repented of your self-centered idolatry—including believing you "know the truth"—and chosen to submit your life to Jesus Christ? What are you depending on—a remnant church? The day you worship? The 10 commandments? Your bank account or position?

Come out of this Babylon mentality.

One Former Adventist told me recently, "As I studied my way out of Adventism, I kept hearing the phrase, 'Come out'. Yet, I wanted to stay in the Adventist Church and make a difference. My life is so different now that I have received Jesus as my Savior, and my focus is on Him, not on a day, a denomination or my own 'good deeds'!"

Do you need to come out of Babylon? †

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Carolyn Macomber is a doctoral student at Andrews University. Discovering increasing inconsistencies between Adventism and the Bible, she withdrew her membership from the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 2009. She is a member of The Chapel Evangelical Free Church near Andrews University in St. Joseph, Michigan, is a children's teaching leader for the St. Joseph Bible Study Fellowship, and is co-founder and leader of the Former Adventist Fellowship at The Chapel. She will share her discoveries in this column, and you can read her experiences of processing out of Adventism into the Christian community at her blog at www.keriananderson.wordpress.com. You can watch her testimony at www.FormerAdventist.com (click "Defending the Faith").