

SECOND ADVENT Herald

Issue No. 7

The Voice of Truth in Perilous Times

יהוה
YAHWEH

Father

Son

Holy Spirit

THE Trinity

On the nature and function of the
"THREE GREAT POWERS OF HEAVEN"

Immutable Law of God ❧ Righteousness by Faith ❧ Seventh-day Sabbath ❧ Victory over Sin
Sanctuary Types and Antitypes ❧ Three Angels' Messages ❧ Non-Immortality of the Soul
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The coming of our Lord is at the door. The evidence is overwhelming that Jesus is coming very soon. And to those who read this editorial, let's examine ourselves, that we might be in the faith.

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" 2 Corinthians 13:5.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalms 139:23-24.

It's very easy, friends, for us to drift into a Laodicean condition. Sin is a terrible thing. It has been estimated that 100 billion people have lived and died in this world ever since sin entered it, and how many of them died without Christ?

"We are justified by faith. The soul who understands the meaning of these words will never be self-sufficient. We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything of ourselves. The Holy Spirit is our efficiency in the work of character building, in forming characters after the divine similitude. When we think ourselves capable of molding our own experience, we make a great mistake. We can never of ourselves obtain the victory over temptation. But those who have genuine faith in Christ will be worked by the Holy Spirit." *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, 1109.

As we approach the end of our wicked world, God has people that are willing to be made willing to obey God, no matter what the cost may be. Where many Seventh-day Adventists are failing is on the health message. Even though I've been a vegetarian for 60 some years, I had occasionally eaten my snacks, eaten between meals. But now, for several years, I've brought my life into complete dedication to the health message.

"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Corinthians 10:31.

We must remember that God's standard of righteousness is absolute obedience to all known truth without a compromise.

"God's ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning. The tempter's agency is not to be accounted an excuse for one wrong act. Satan is jubilant when he hears the professed followers of Christ making excuses for their deformity of character. It is these excuses that lead to sin. There is no excuse for sinning." *Desire of Ages*, 311.

For the last few years, my wife and I have been vegan in our diet. And at 87 years old, I praise God I'm still alive. This longevity I know is because of my faithfulness to God. Not only in my diet, but in every other way.

Dear friends, examine yourselves. The hour is late; the end is near; we must study to show ourselves approved unto God.

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15.

In our faithfulness, we will soon see Jesus. Let us strive to be faithful.



Ron Spear continues to add to his 55 years of active service in the Lord's cause as preacher, editor and author. He and his wife Carmen reside in Washington state and travel wherever he has speaking engagements.

THE Trinity

On the nature and function of the
“THREE GREAT POWERS OF HEAVEN.”

Dennis Priebe

The contemporary anti-Trinity movement teaches that there is no third Person of the Godhead. They believe that the Holy Spirit is a force or energy of holy influence from the Father and the Son. One representative of this movement says, “The Bible teaches that there are only two who are worthy of worship.”

A corollary of this teaching is that Jesus is literally the Son of the Father, having a beginning in time when the Father brought Him into existence. One has stated, “The Father and Son are both divine but not absolutely equal.” They believe that only in this way could Christ die, since the Father is immortal and cannot die. In support of this teaching, they point to some Adventist pioneers who clearly taught this from the 1840s to the 1890s.

As with all errors, there is a truth at the foundation of this teaching. After the Council of Nicaea in AD 325, the papal party took the title of Trinitarians. They said that the Godhead consists of three personalities and one essence or substance, using very philosophical and metaphysical terms.

Following is a sample of Catholic instruction for confirmation. “The Son proceeds from the Father by an act of the intellect and this is termed ‘Eternal Generation,’ by which we mean not only that there never was a time when the Father existed without generating the Son, but also that the act of Generation is a continuous act.” The manual teaches that there could be no separation between the Father and the Son on earth, since this would interrupt the act of generation. Thus the Son would not exist, which would mean that the Father would not exist. Since they are of one essence, neither the Father nor the Son could exist separately from the other. (Alfred Mortimer, *Catholic Faith and Practice*) Is there any wonder that the pioneers rejected this doctrine of the Trinity? J. N. Andrews said, “This doctrine destroys the personality of God and His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.” (*Review and Herald*, March 6, 1855)

Part A – Three Persons

If we want to defend the truth that there are three persons with the family name of God, it might be better to use the Biblical name Godhead, as Ellen White consistently did.

Matthew 28:19 tells us to baptize “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” “Name” is singular here, and all three that follow are on the same level, with one name. The definite article

is used for all three beings. The Three are God, and yet they are one God.

In John 14:16 Jesus promises to send “another Comforter.” The word “another” means of the same kind as Christ, with equal rank.

In 2 Corinthians 13:14, we read of “the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost.” These are three gifts from three individual beings.

1 Peter 1:2 tells of “the foreknowledge of God the Father, ... sanctification of the Spirit, ... and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” Here we find three functions of three individual beings.

The Spirit of Prophecy has many references to the three beings. “Three great powers of heaven.” (8T 254) “There are three living persons of the heavenly trio.” (Ev 615) “The eternal heavenly dignitaries—God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit.” (Ev 616) “The three highest powers in heaven—the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.” (Ev 617)

Part B – Holy Spirit

There are indications in Scripture that the Holy Spirit possesses personality traits that only an individual Being could have.

In Ephesians 4:30 He can be grieved. In 1 Corinthians 12:11 He divides “to every man severally as he will.” In Acts 16:6-7 He forbids Paul to preach in Asia and Bithynia. In Acts 15:28 “it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us” to hand down a vital decision. Notice that the Holy Spirit has a personality similar to the personality of the apostles. In Acts 5:3-4 Ananias lied “to the Holy Ghost,” which is lying “unto God.”

“The Holy Spirit, who is as much a person as God is a person, is walking through these grounds.” “The Holy Spirit is a person.” “The Holy Spirit has a personality.” (Ev 616-617)

However, we must exercise caution here. The Holy Spirit’s purpose is to reveal the Father and the Son, not Himself, so we know very little about Him from Inspiration.

“Brethren should not feel that it is a virtue to stand apart because they do not see all minor points in exactly the same light. If on fundamental truths they are at an agreement, they should not differ and dispute about matters of little real importance. To dwell on perplexing questions that, after all, are of no vital importance, has a direct tendency to call the mind away from truths which are vital to the saving of the soul. Brethren should be very modest in urging these side issues which often they do not themselves understand, points that they do not know to be truth and that it is not essential to their salvation to know....

“Where these differences exist among us, those who stand outside will say, ‘It will be time enough for us to believe as you do when you can agree among yourselves as to what constitutes truth.’ The ungodly take advantage of the divisions and controversies among Christians....

“Some are ever seeking to be original, to bring out something new and startling, and they do not realize as they should the importance of preserving the unity of the faith in

the bonds of love.... We are to pray for divine enlightenment, but at the same time we should be careful how we receive everything termed new light. We must beware lest, under cover of searching for new truth, Satan shall divert our minds from Christ and the special truths for this time. I have been shown that it is the device of the enemy to lead minds to dwell upon some obscure or unimportant point, something that is not fully revealed or is not essential to our salvation. This is made the absorbing theme, the ‘present truth,’ when all their investigations and suppositions only serve to make matters more obscure than before, and to confuse the minds of some who ought to be seeking for oneness through sanctification of the truth....

.....
“The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery not clearly revealed, and you will never be able to explain it to others because the Lord has not revealed it to you.”
.....

[What is one of these side issues, not essential to salvation?] “The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery not clearly revealed, and you will never be able to explain it to others because the Lord has not revealed it to you. You may gather together scriptures and put your construction upon them, but the application is not correct.... It is not essential for you to know and be able to define just what the Holy Spirit is.... There are many mysteries which I do not seek to understand or to explain; they are too high for me, and too high for you. On some of these points, silence is golden....

“Your mind is restless, and ... you would make the mistake that many others have made, of thinking that you have new light, when it is only a new phase of error.... You make take certain views of Scripture and, searching the Bible in the light of your ideas, may gather together a large number of texts and claim that they mean this and that, and call for anyone to prove to you that your views are incorrect.... Here is your danger, of diverting minds from the real issues for this time.... Now, my brother, it is truth that we want and must have, but do not introduce error as new truth.” (14MR 175-180)

.....
“Here is your danger, of diverting minds from the real issues for this time....”
.....

I believe that this counsel applies to all the “new light” issues that we are considering in this paper.

Part C – Jesus’ Pre-existence

What is the evidence that Jesus did not have a beginning at some point in time or before time?

In John 1:1-4 we find that Jesus was not only “with God,” He “was God.” He was not *a* God, but He was the Creator of everything. The life-principle was in Him, and He did not receive

life from anyone.

In John 8:58 Jesus claimed the name “I am” as His own. Exodus 3:14 tells us that God’s chosen name is “I AM.” “The name of God, given to Moses to express the idea of the eternal presence, had been claimed as His own.... He had announced Himself to be the self-existent One, ... whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity.” (DA 469-470)

“All through the pages of sacred history, where the dealings of God with His chosen people are recorded, there are burning traces of the great I AM.... All the communion between heaven and the fallen race has been through Christ.... Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last.” (GAG 43) Whatever we read about *Yahweh* in the Old Testament, we are reading about Christ. In Isaiah 40:28 *Yahweh* is “the everlasting God,” “the Creator of the ends of the earth.”

“In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived.” (DA 530) “Christ is the pre-existent, self-existent Son of God.... He assures us that there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God.... He is the eternal, self-existent Son.” (Ev 615) “From all eternity Christ was united with the Father.” (5BC 1115) “Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from all eternity.” (RH April 5, 1906)

PP 63-64 tells us that only one equal with God could make the atonement; that only the Creator could redeem man. If Christ had received life from the Father at some point in eternity; if His life was borrowed or derived from the Father; if He was dependent on the Father for His existence; if the Father appointed Him to the Godhead, then Christ was not self-existent; He was not God in the highest sense; He is not eternal; and He could not make atonement for the fallen race and redeem mankind.

The phrase “only-begotten” is a faulty translation. Hebrews 11:17 tells us that Isaac was Abraham’s “only begotten son.” Clearly this means uniquely begotten, one-of-a-kind, unique. Acts 13:33 tells us that Christ was “begotten” from the dead.

It is of passing interest that Mary of Agreda, a visionary Catholic nun in the 1600s, said that the Word was conceived by eternal generation from the Father. In other words, Christ was born before time existed. (*The Venerable Mary of Agreda*) Perhaps the belief that Christ had a beginning and was given life from the Father is really a Catholic position.

Part D – Nature and Function

Here is a suggestion for keeping this issue in balance and resolving some apparent contradictions. The nature of the Godhead is not a central theme in Scripture. Where it is discussed, it reveals three equal beings, all existing from eternity, one in purpose and mind in ways impossible for created beings.

The central issue in Scripture is the function of the Godhead. This is always described in descending rank from the Father to the Son to the Spirit. This is the way the Godhead wants all created beings to approach them. The Father is the ultimate authority; the Son is the visible representative to created beings; the Spirit is the invisible presence with all created beings.

.....
The members of the Godhead are equal in nature and attributes, but are unequal in function and rank as they relate to created beings.... Christ always directs attention to the Father. He takes a secondary role. The Spirit always directs attention to the Father and the Son. He is almost invisible most of the time.
.....

The Father even had to explain to angels the difference between Christ and Lucifer, since both had similar functions. If this could be misunderstood in heaven, it is easy to see why we have problems understanding the Godhead.

Christ always directs attention to the Father. He takes a secondary role. The Spirit always directs attention to the Father and the Son. He is almost invisible most of the time.

The members of the Godhead are equal in nature and attributes, but are unequal in function and rank as they relate to created beings.

Part E – Adventist History

The Godhead has chosen to reveal itself gradually to the human race. This was apparently not one of the crucial issues for the redemption of mankind.

In the Old Testament, *Yahweh* was the personal name for God. The name was interchangeable for the Father and the Son. The Spirit was unknown. There were indications of plurality in the Godhead, but the emphasis was on one God—*Yahweh*.

In the New Testament, Christ was revealed as the Word of God, the Son of God. The Holy Spirit was revealed as the Comforter, the Advocate. The emphasis was on three Beings in one Godhead, descending in rank and function from the Father to the Son to the Spirit.

Early Adventists were concerned with the sanctuary and the 2300 days, the Bible over tradition, the seventh-day Sabbath, and there was not much study or revelation about the Trinity.

The Trinity in the early 1800s was a mixture of Bible, medieval philosophy, and early church councils. The Christian Connection, a Protestant organization, concluded that the Trinity was Catholic and unscriptural. Joseph Bates and James White were associated with the Christian Connection. Because the Trinity doctrine apparently made the Father and the Son identical, it was rejected by our pioneers.

God was apparently satisfied to leave things this way until the 1890s, the time when the final generation was to be formed.

Ellen White was in Australia when W. W. Prescott visited there. He developed a new style of evangelism based on righteousness by faith and the character of God (the 1888 message). He spent time working with Ellen White, and he began to question the pioneers’ teaching on the deity of Christ and the Godhead. A. G. Daniells supported his new direction. At the same time Ellen White was putting *Desire of Ages* together, in which she differed sharply with the pioneers

on the preexistence of Christ.

M. L. Andreasen had become an Adventist just four years earlier. He said later that some leaders doubted that Ellen White had really written “original, unborrowed, underived.” In 1902 he made a special trip to California to investigate this for himself, and he found these statements in her own handwriting. Because of her influence and the new studies on the Godhead, Adventist theology on the Godhead took a different direction from that of some of the pioneers.

Why did this happen so late in Adventist history? Apparently God had an order of priority for introducing truth to the new church. He introduced publishing work in the 1840s, church organization in the 1850s, health reform in the 1860s, and righteousness by faith in the 1880s. God paced the introduction of new truth to preserve the unity of the church. Knowing the character of God was a higher priority than knowing the nature of God.

Now some are advocating a return to the pioneers’ anti-Trinity position. The most dangerous aspect of this is the question raised about its chief advocate. Did Ellen White really write all that has been published under her name? Whenever we find something in her writings which contradicts our beliefs, we find some acceptable reason to set her aside. This is the heart of higher criticism. It makes her writings of none effect, since our beliefs take priority over inspiration. This is the essence of the churches of Babylon. One person commented, “Ellen G. White was inspired by God in almost all her writings, but either she or someone messed with her writings.” In

this case everyone is free to pick and choose whatever agrees with his or her opinions. Perhaps even conservative Adventists will have to decide between the authority of God and the authority of men.

Final Thoughts

Satan doesn’t care how he traps God’s people, whether in worldliness, Laodiceanism, or foreign things to take our attention away from the real test for the remnant. There is only one test in the Bible: obedience to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. In other words, righteousness by faith. This may not be as glamorous or exciting as researching names, or the Trinity, or prophecies, or Hebrew observances. Being part of the 144,000 is about surrender of the heart, victory over all sin, and daily walking with God as Enoch did. The 144,000 is more about character than knowledge. God will continue to teach us where we have made mistakes. Let us keep our focus clear and not be sidetracked with “new light” which isn’t new and isn’t light.



Dennis Priebe has 40 years of experience as a pastor, 11 years as a teacher, and 20 years as a seminar speaker for Amazing Facts. He and his wife Kay have one son, Matthew. Dennis’ one desire is to prepare people for what he believes to be the very soon return of Jesus to this world.

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WE RUN TO HIM

We run to Him for forgiveness
Every time we fall.
Why not flee to Him for strength
To keep from falling at all?

We know our points of weakness—
Be it food or tongue or lust.
He’ll give to us grace to resist;
He knows that we are dust.

He has pity on weak mortals.
He strengthens, lest we fall.
Let’s go to our merciful Father.
He’s said, “On Me you may call.”

By faith the ancients did win
In the struggle ‘gainst self and sin.
The same may be true of His people
In the midst of this world we’re in.

Believe His promises, friend;
They are totally righteous and true.
Each one is a lifeline, a fortress,
And they’re given for me and for you.

Anonymous



ABSOLUTE SURRENDER

A believer will fail in his Christian experience unless he makes a full surrender of his will.

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Pr 14:12. Why is eternal death the "end thereof"? Because "the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jer 10:23. Man does not have enough wisdom and discernment to walk safely in this life. God knows that; God knows the enemy of souls far better than we do, and He wants to draw us into the paths of righteousness, so He can save us. But there is a condition. He cannot do this for us unless we surrender to Him. Anything less than full surrender means that the person is still a tool, a pawn, of Satan, and God cannot, will not, work with a divided mind, a double-minded heart. He will not use His power in cooperation with evil.

"God accepts nothing less than absolute surrender of the mind, the heart, the will, the strength, the entire being, to His control. The Lord can guide. His voice will be heard in reproof, in warning, and in encouragement. Then there will be brought into the work a power which comes alone from God, simplifying all the movement of the life of the soul...." 7MR 164.2.

Civil War Surrender

In 1865, after Civil War casualties had mounted to 630,000 dead and about 1 million injured, Confederate army leader

General Robert E. Lee recognized that surrender was the only option for the South. Lee's forces would be at the mercy of the victors, and Lee wondered on what terms the surrender would be accepted. What concessions would the Union's General Ulysses S. Grant demand of the South? The slaughter and destruction on both sides had been so great, and the losses of life and property so high, that surely he would exact a heavy price for the rebellion of the South.

As it turned out, Grant did not humiliate the conquered men or put its leaders on trial or severely punish them. He permitted the Confederate armies to return home with their horses and wagons and their American citizenship, to rebuild their lives and communities. All that had to be surrendered were their weapons of war, from rifles to artillery. Grant even commanded 25,000 rations of food be delivered to the starving men of the Southern armies. How compassionate and wise was Grant in this restoration of national peace, compared to Benhadad, king of Syria.

Benhadad's Terms

1 Kings 20:1-6 records less impressive surrender terms. Benhadad, joined by 32 others kings, warred against Samaria. He "sent messengers to Ahab king of Israel into the city,"

demanding all of Ahab's silver and gold, and all of his household, including immediate family. The overpowered Ahab conceded: "I am thine, and all that I have." Emboldened, Benhadad expanded his demands to "the houses of thy servants; and it shall be, that whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes, they shall put it in their hand, and take it away." This greedy plundering of Israel Ahab refused, and the Lord ultimately defeated Benhadad, for Israel's sake.

Surrender to God

Jeremiah 29:11-13 details God's surrender terms. That passage assures us of the heavenly King's good intentions toward us, but they can be fulfilled only with the full surrender of "all our heart." "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with *all your heart.*"

The only item God wants us to surrender is our hearts, the seat of our will. Ps 119:2: "Blessed are they ... that seek Him *with the whole heart.*" Prov 23:26: "My son, give Me thine heart..." Pr 23:26. But how do we give God our hearts?

Joel 2:12-13: "Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend *your heart*, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God..." In other words, outward expressions mean nothing. Only inward conviction of sin, true repentance, and a seeking after pardon mean anything to God.

Trusting God Enough to Surrender

Some fear surrendering themselves fully to God. They prefer one foot in the heavenly kingdom, and one in Satan's kingdom. They imagine the cost of self-denial to be too great, yet if they do not fully surrender, they will lose an eternal inheritance that is far beyond price. Such find themselves the most miserable of men, unless they drown the voice of the Holy Spirit with worldly distractions. But Jesus persists in love. He says, "Learn of Me,... for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest.' We are to enter the school of Christ, to learn from Him meekness and lowliness. Redemption is that process by which the soul is trained for heaven. This training means a knowledge of Christ. It means emancipation from ideas, habits, and practices that have been gained in the school of the prince of darkness. The soul must be delivered from all that is opposed to loyalty to God.

"In the heart of Christ, where reigned perfect harmony with God, there was perfect peace. He was never elated by applause, nor dejected by censure or disappointment. Amid the greatest opposition and the most cruel treatment, He was still of good courage. But many who profess to be His followers have an anxious, troubled heart, because they are afraid to trust themselves with God. They do not make a complete surrender

to Him; for they shrink from the consequences that such a surrender may involve. Unless they do make this surrender, they cannot find peace.

Some imagine the cost of self-denial to be too great, yet if they do not fully surrender, they will lose an eternal inheritance that is far beyond price.

"It is the love of self that brings unrest. When we are born from above, the same mind will be in us that was in Jesus, the mind that led Him to humble Himself that we might be saved. Then we shall not be seeking the highest place. We shall desire to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn of Him. We shall understand that ... the value of our work is in proportion to the impartation of the Holy Spirit. Trust in God brings holier qualities of mind, so that in patience we may possess our souls.

"The yoke is placed upon the oxen to aid them in drawing the load, to lighten the burden. So with the yoke of Christ. When our will is swallowed up in the will of God, and we use His gifts to bless others, we shall find life's burden light. He who walks in the way of God's commandments is walking in company with Christ, and in His love the heart is at rest. When Moses prayed, 'Show me now Thy way, that I may know Thee,' the Lord answered him, 'My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.' And through the prophets the message was given, 'Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.' Exodus 33:13, 14; Jeremiah 6:16." DA 330.

A New Power Takes Charge

"When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan. But unless we do yield ourselves to the control of Christ, we shall be dominated by the wicked one. We must inevitably be under the control of the one or the other of the two great powers that are contending for the supremacy of the world. It is not necessary for us deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. We have only to neglect to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light. If we do not co-operate with the heavenly agencies, Satan will take possession of the heart, and will make it his abiding place. The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness. Unless we become vitally connected with God, we can never resist the unhallowed effects of self-love,

self-indulgence, and temptation to sin. We may leave off many bad habits, for the time we may part company with Satan; but without a vital connection with God, through the surrender of ourselves to Him moment by moment, we shall be overcome. Without a personal acquaintance with Christ, and a continual communion, we are at the mercy of the enemy, and shall do his bidding in the end." DA 324.

Man admits, "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jer 10:23. He understands that "the steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way." Ps 37:23. He trusts God's promise: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." Ps 37:23. And he trusts because he knows that our only safety is to "walk by faith, not by sight." 2 Cor 5:7.

Faith vs. Feeling

There is not sufficient wisdom, enough goodness, is us to order our own lives. We are not to live according to what we see or think or feel, or according to circumstances. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it?" Jer 17:9. All we think or do must be molded by what we have learned of God's will for His obedient, happy people. We must know the difference between pure faith and deceptive feeling. "Faith and feeling are distinct, one not being dependent upon the other. Faith, relying upon the naked promise, takes God at His word, not because of any special feeling, but because the Lord has said it, and will fulfill His word." RH January 15, 1884. Thus it is that when we exercise our faith, God "worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil 2:13.

Our Power

Each one of us, in the second probation given to mankind, has been given the power of choice. We may choose what we do, and often when and how we do it, and by our choices we choose our eternal destinies. But when we surrender that one power we have been given—that of choice—a "new power" from above takes possession of our heart. "The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan." But unless we do yield, "we shall be dominated by the wicked one." DA 324.

We may claim, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Gal 2:20. If not fully surrendered, we can't walk by faith, but with total self-surrender to His will and His ways, Christ lives *in us!* What a privilege!

But we must spread all our plans before the Lord: "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him,

and He shall direct thy paths." Ps 3:5-6.

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." Ps 37:23.

"For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." What did Abraham do? "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was *strong in faith, giving glory to God.* And being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform." Rom 4:3, 20-1. He lived *by faith.*

"The prayer of the publican was heard because it showed dependence reaching forth to lay hold upon Omnipotence. Self to the publican appeared nothing but shame. Thus it must be seen by all who seek God. By faith—faith that renounces all self-trust—the needy suppliant is to lay hold upon infinite power.

"No outward observances can take the place of simple faith and entire renunciation of self. But no man can empty himself of self. We can only consent for Christ to accomplish the work. Then the language of the soul will be, Lord, take my heart; for I cannot give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I cannot keep it for Thee. Save me in spite of myself, my weak, unchristlike self. Mold me, fashion me, raise me into a pure and holy atmosphere, where the rich current of Thy love can flow through my soul." COL 159.

A Constant Submission of Will

"It is not only at the beginning of the Christian life that this renunciation of self is to be made. At every advance step heavenward it is to be renewed. All our good works are dependent on a power outside of ourselves. Therefore there needs to be a continual reaching out of the heart after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the soul before Him. Only by constant renunciation of self and dependence on Christ can we walk safely." Ibid.

"Nothing is apparently more helpless, yet really more invincible, than the soul that feels its nothingness, and relies wholly on God." PK 174. The "flesh profiteth nothing." John 6:63.

"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform [it] until the day of Jesus



Christ.” Phil 1:6. “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” Phil 2:12-13.

Our part is to surrender. Quite frankly, we need Him more than we realize. He is all power, and He is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” 2 Pet 3:9.

Are We Worthy?

Are we worthy of all this divine compassion? Not at all. Job 25:5, 6: “Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in His sight. How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?” Only



the unsurpassed love and pity of God can make such wonderful promises of forgiveness and salvation. “Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary;

and they shall walk, and not faint.” Isa 40:28-31.

Without Surrender, No Victory

When we surrender, when we give up our only power—that of choosing for ourselves—and submit our ways unto the Lord, then we may have *all His power* working in and for us. What a generous exchange that is weighted entirely in our favor! In exchange for something that has led us to damnation, we get many things that lead us to salvation! Why do we even hesitate to fall on our knees and ask God to take over every single aspect of our lives? But *desiring* holiness and salvation is not enough. Our wills must be yielded.

When we give up our only power—that of choosing for ourselves—then we may have all His power working in and for us.

“The tempted one needs to understand the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man—the power of decision, of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. Desires for goodness and purity are right, so far as they go; but if we stop here, they avail nothing. Many will go down to ruin while hoping and desiring to overcome their evil propensities. They do not yield the will to God. They do not choose to serve Him.”

“God has given us the power of choice; it is ours to exercise. We cannot change our hearts, we cannot control our thoughts, our impulses, our affections. We cannot make ourselves pure, fit for God’s service. But we can choose to serve God, we can give Him our will; then He will work in us to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus our whole nature will be brought under the control of Christ.

“Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be made in the life. By yielding up the will to Christ, we ally ourselves with divine power. We receive strength from above to hold us steadfast. A pure and noble life, a life of victory over appetite and lust, is possible to everyone who will unite his weak, wavering human will to the omnipotent, unwavering will of God.” MH 176.

But will we surrender? This is where the proverbial rubber meets the road. Do we trust a sovereign God to do what He offers to do? Do we believe the Creator can recreate us in His image? Whom else can we trust with our souls?

Will we have peace in our lives and souls? Christ is calling each one of us, inviting us to surrender the only power we have into His hands, so that He can impart His power to us. But our surrender must be total, before He can begin His work in us.

Entering in at the Strait Gate

In ancient times travelers hurried to get inside the gates of a city before sunset, when the gates of the city walls were locked against invaders. Those arriving too late were at the

mercy of robbers or worse. “The belated traveler, hurrying to reach the city gate by the going down of the sun, could not turn aside for any attractions by the way. His whole mind was bent on the one purpose of entering the gate. The same intensity of purpose, said Jesus, is required in the Christian life. I have opened to you the glory of character, which is the true glory of My kingdom. It offers you no promise of earthly dominion; yet it is worthy of your supreme desire and effort. I do not call you to battle for the supremacy of the world’s great empire, but do not therefore conclude that there is no battle to be fought nor victories to be won. I bid you strive, agonize, to enter into My spiritual kingdom.

“The Christian life is a battle and a march. But the victory to be gained is not won by human power. The field of conflict is the domain of the heart. The battle which we have to fight—the greatest battle that was ever fought by man—is the surrender of self to the will of God, the yielding of the heart to the sovereignty of love. The old nature, born of blood and of the will of the flesh, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. The hereditary tendencies, the former habits, must be given up.

“He who determines to enter the spiritual kingdom will find that all the powers and passions of an unregenerate nature, backed by the forces of the kingdom of darkness, are arrayed against him. Selfishness and pride will make a stand against anything that would show them to be sinful. We cannot, of ourselves, conquer the evil desires and habits that strive for the mastery. We cannot overcome the mighty foe who holds us in his thrall. God alone can give us the victory. He desires us to have the mastery over ourselves, our own will and ways. But He cannot work in us without our consent and co-operation. The divine Spirit works through the faculties and powers given to man. Our energies are required to co-operate with God.

“The victory is not won without much earnest prayer, without the humbling of self at every step. Our will is not to be forced into co-operation with divine agencies, but it must be voluntarily submitted. Were it possible to force upon you with a hundredfold greater intensity the influence of the Spirit of God, it would not make you a Christian, a fit subject for heaven. The stronghold of Satan would not be broken. The will must be placed on the side of God’s will. You are not able, of yourself, to bring your purposes and desires and inclinations into submission to the will of God; but if you are ‘willing to be made willing,’ God will accomplish the work for you, even ‘casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.’ 2 Corinthians 10:5. Then you will ‘work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.’ Philippians 2:12, 13.” MB 141-2.

Many Will Seek to Enter, But Not Be Able To

“But many are attracted by the beauty of Christ and the glory of heaven, who yet shrink from the conditions by which alone these can become their own. There are many in the broad way who are not fully satisfied with the path in which they

walk. They long to break from the slavery of sin, and in their own strength they seek to make a stand against their sinful practices. They look toward the narrow way and the strait gate; but selfish pleasure, love of the world, pride, unsanctified ambition, place a barrier between them and the Saviour. To renounce their own will, their chosen objects of affection or pursuit, requires a sacrifice at which they hesitate and falter and turn back. Many “will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.” Luke 13:24. They desire the good, they make some effort to obtain it; but they do not choose it; they have not a settled purpose to secure it at the cost of all things.

“The only hope for us if we would overcome is to unite our will to God’s will and work in co-operation with Him, hour by hour and day by day.”

“The only hope for us if we would overcome is to unite our will to God’s will and work in co-operation with Him, hour by hour and day by day. We cannot retain self and yet enter the kingdom of God. If we ever attain unto holiness, it will be through the renunciation of self and the reception of the mind of Christ. Pride and self-sufficiency must be crucified. Are we willing to pay the price required of us? Are we willing to have our will brought into perfect conformity to the will of God? Until we are willing, the transforming grace of God cannot be manifest upon us.” MB 143.

But for those who trust, the promise is sure: “The Lord will work for all who put their trust in Him.... Upon no useless material does the Master bestow such careful, thorough work. Only His precious stones are polished after the similitude of a palace.” MB 11, 10.



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ON UNITY OF THE FAITH: A LETTER TO LEADERS AND LAYPERSONS

General Conference President Ted Wilson's call for revival and reformation will more likely occur if it is understood why revival and reformation are needed in the first place. Many are not aware of the recent history presented in this article. May our beloved church, God's remnant people, shore up the pillars of our faith and stand firmly for the right. Such is our present privilege and duty before God.

We hear many calls for unity in our church, but there is only one basis for unity that Jesus wants for us: "Unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God..." Eph 4:13. While every local church may face interpersonal problems, our Seventh-day Adventist Church has been experiencing some very serious doctrinal divisions which are far more destructive to church unity than any personal conflicts. In fact, these doctrinal issues often are the true cause for church conflict, whether locally, nationally or internationally.

Adventist history confirms there have been departures from the faith that have caused deep separation within our ranks. The article that follows is a brief history of one major departure. The links and publications provided are but a sampling of material that is available for further investigation. This history is presented to the reader not to point fingers, "for all have sinned," but to make absolutely clear what some of the pillars of our faith are. It is presented to "make straight paths" for believers' feet. We would not want one soul lost because of belief in error.

"Faith in a lie will not have a sanctifying influence upon the life or character. No error is truth, or can be made truth by repetition, or by faith in it. Sincerity will never save a soul from the consequences of believing an error. Without sincerity there is no true religion, but sincerity in a false religion will never save a man. I may be perfectly sincere in following a wrong road, but that will not make it the right road, or bring me to the place I wished to reach." 2SM 56.

Questions on Doctrine: New Theology vs True Theology

In 1957, the General Conference published a book called *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine* (usually

referred to as *Questions on Doctrine* or QOD). It was written to avoid an anticipated "cult" portrayal of Seventh-day Adventism in a book to be written by Walter Martin, a published cult researcher, and commissioned by Donald Barnhouse, the editor of *Eternity*, a Calvinistic evangelical magazine, who denounced core Adventist beliefs.

When it was republished in 2003 by Andrews University Press (annotated edition or QODAE), George Knight, respected Adventist author and historian, wrote in the foreword an assessment of the first printing's impact: *Questions on Doctrine* "easily qualifies as the most divisive book in Seventh-day Adventist history.... Its release brought prolonged alienation and separation to the Adventist factions that grew up around it." Knight also stated, "Official Adventism may have gained recognition as being Christian from the evangelical world, but in the process a breach had been opened which has not healed in the last 50 years and may never heal."

What caused the separation and alienation? What caused the division in our church that we are still dealing with? What caused us to fail to achieve the "unity of the faith and ... the knowledge of the Son of God" that is our duty and privilege? Very simply, three QOD authors at the General Conference, representing official Seventh-day Adventism, "thought to change" long-standing pillars of our faith. Two core beliefs were changed in order to gain acceptance from evangelicals, whose doctrines we consider erroneous.

The Atonement

Two main changes were made. First, it was claimed that atonement was totally completed at the cross. QOD author LeRoy Froom wrote for *Ministry* magazine (1957) that "the sacrificial act on the cross [is] a complete, perfect, and final atonement for man's sins"—that the cross was a "full and complete sacrifice."

That false doctrine essentially undermines most of Seventh-day Adventism's distinctive teachings, most notably that of the need and provision for both justification *and* sanctification, the latter enabling victory over sin, as opposed to the idea that one can be saved in sin. It challenges the whole book of Hebrews. It makes Jesus' high-priestly ministry in the



heavenly sanctuary unnecessary. It even makes the heavenly sanctuary superfluous. It rejects the investigative judgment proclaimed by the first angel of Revelation 14 and undermines or negates Adventist understanding of what happened in 1844, at the close of the 2300-day prophecy. It also undermines the call of the first and second angels of Revelation 14.

The destruction of that pillar in official publications caused immense damage to our organized church. It was one of the “false theories, such as the doctrine that there is no sanctuary. This is one of the points on which there will be a departing from the faith.” LDE 177

In contrast, Ellen White wrote in her 1888 *Great Controversy*, page 489, “The intercession of Christ in man’s behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was his death upon the cross.” She also wrote, “It is as necessary that He should keep us by His intercessions as that He should redeem us with His blood.” OHC 50. Her writings are consistent with Paul’s explanations in Hebrews, but Froom’s are not. We need not only justification (courtyard/cross) but sanctification (sanctuary). Froom’s teaching of a contrary doctrine also denies the prophetic inspiration of Ellen White.

While that false understanding of the atonement agreed with the evangelicals whom the authors were trying to please, in order to avoid having Adventism labeled a cult, it created major divisions within the church because the position was not supported by the Bible or by the Spirit of Prophecy. But there were more departures from doctrinal truth mixed in with the doctrinal truth the book also contained.

The Nature of Christ

The second major area of attempted change concerned the nature of Christ. In the QODAE foreword, George Knight noted that the book represented “a substantial shift in understanding” from that held from the church’s beginning. QOD author R. A. Anderson declared, “In only three or four places in all these inspired counsels have we found such expressions as ‘fallen nature’ and ‘sinful nature.’” (R. A. Anderson, “Human, Not Carnal,” *Ministry*, Sept. 1956).

That is simply not true. From 1852 onward for 100 years, Adventists *not once* wavered in their belief that Christ had assumed man’s fallen nature, as evidenced in 1,200 published statements by Adventist leaders, one third of which came from Ellen White. (See Ralph Larson’s comprehensive *The Word Was Made Flesh*). Furthermore, there are clear Biblical teachings that Christ is both our Substitute and our Example. For instance, Jesus identified Himself as one of us, calling Himself “the Son of man.” As man was made, so was Jesus “made a little lower than the angels.... For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren... Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also himself likewise

took part of the same.... Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto his brethren....” Heb 2-17.

Nevertheless, QOD claimed that Adventists believe that Christ took the unfallen human nature! In Froom’s own book *Movement of Destiny* (p. 467), he wrote that the official Adventist position on the nature of Christ does not depend upon “regrettable statements still lingering in a few of our books.”

A Chasm Developed

Our beloved church split deeply over these doctrinal changes, and the split was made much worse when QOD was sent unsolicited to our seminaries and universities to be used in instruction there. Many trusted the book’s contents because it was published by the General Conference. Some raised their voices against it, but they were powerless to stop its spread.

The book was fundamental to the rise of the destructive and divisive “new theology” now infiltrating our denomination. Today the few pastors who do preach the truth about Jesus’ human nature realize their preaching contradicts what is becoming mainstream Adventism. Many Adventist pastors simply avoid teaching the nature of Christ and what it means to us because of its “controversial” or “undecided” nature. Thus beautiful, salvational truths treasured by our pioneers are not revealed to our people and the world, and as a result, the evangelical theology that “we will be sinning till Jesus comes” (“saved in sin”) permeates our church, sometimes subtly, sometimes openly.

Self-Supporting Ministries Defend Faith

One immediate result of QOD was the rise of independent or self-supporting ministries. Andrews University theologian and author Herbert Douglass wrote that “most, if not all, of the so-called ‘dissident’ or ‘independent’ groups of the last 45 years are direct results of the explicit and implicit positions espoused by [*Questions on Doctrine*] on the atonement and the incarnation.” (See <http://qod.andrews.edu>. One can also read Douglass’ book *A Fork in the Road: Questions on Doctrine / The Historic Adventist Divide of 1957*, published by Remnant Publications, 2008.)

Although some negatively depict self-supporting ministries as “divisive” and “offshoots,” Adventist history reveals a very different story. The independent ministries arose in the emergency to defend the Adventist faith against the “offshoot” doctrinal falsehoods being brought into the church at this time.

The Holy Spirit now directs us: “It behooves every soul whose life is hid with Christ in God to come to the front now, and to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. Truth must be defended and the kingdom of God advanced as they would be were Christ in person on this earth.” SW 7.25.05.



Scorn and Derision

Unfortunately, this ugly part of Adventist leadership history is known by others and is used to warn people from Seventh-day Adventism. In the July-September issue of *Proclamation*, a magazine of selective exegesis by and for former Adventists, and in an article entitled “Did Adventist leaders lie to Walter Martin?” the writer accused the QOD authors of “rework[ing] the wording of their positions to appear acceptable to evangelical Christians” (p. 15). That it was an intentional deception is evidenced by the writer’s findings that many Adventist publications still hold to traditional Adventist beliefs. “Martin did not realize that while these men were the official representatives of the Adventist church, they did not represent ‘official’ Adventism.” (pg. 7). Even George Knight, in his own book *A Search for Identity: The Development of Seventh-day Adventist Beliefs*, noted a “semantic adjustment” made by the QOD authors, who used orthodox, not Adventist, phraseology to make it appear to Martin and Barnhouse that our beliefs had been changed.

The *Proclamation* author’s last subtitle is, “Will the Adventist leadership repent?” (p. 14) We hope so, because it can hardly be denied that “wordsmithing” was practiced to mislead the evangelical world. The sad fact is that it has misled Seventh-day Adventists, as well, as previous and following paragraphs attest. The destruction within Adventism is more extensive than the *Proclamation* writer is aware. Repentance, confession and a return to our fundamental beliefs is needed for healing to occur.

Recently, at the Annual Council at General Conference headquarters on October 9th, Elder Ted Wilson said that we must “not align ourselves with other religious organizations or ecumenical bodies.” He quoted *Selected Messages*, vol. 2, page 371: “There is to be no compromise with those who make void the law of God.... Our testimony is not to be less decided now than formerly; our real position is not to be cloaked in order to please the world’s great men.”

He spoke about “What Might Have Been” in 1901, at a General Conference session. The Holy Spirit would have been poured out then, but the meeting closed without it, because there was *no break made with past mistakes*. Men given great light had “not walked in that light. Men did not humble themselves before the Lord as they should have done.” 8T 104, italics added.

We pray the same conditions will not continue to hold the Holy Spirit in abeyance. “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” 2 Cor 6:2.

Douglass’ QOD Anniversary Report

At the *Questions on Doctrine* 50th Anniversary Conference held at Andrews in 2007, Herbert Douglass’ topic was “The

QOD Earthquake—Attempted Merger of Two Theological Tectonic Plates.” This forthright analysis of the source of present denominational disunity comes from Douglass’ introduction: “George Knight spoke for many in his usual fresh way when he wrote that QOD became the most divisive book in the Adventist world over the last 50 years. Many believe that denominational confusion ever since has been a devastating price to pay for the theological detour. Those who think otherwise have been in a historic/ theological coma.... In discussing the far-reaching effect of *Questions on Doctrine* with a Union committee recently, I was not surprised, just sad. Some of the reaction was, ‘That was long ago, Herb. We are more interested in today and the future.’ Or, ‘That was decided by our brethren years ago. Why try to go over it again?’ When I suggested that most independent ministries that thrive in our churches today exist because of what happened in 1957, I got more blank looks. But also a new interest to hear more. Every cause has an effect and nothing is without cause....” (www.herbdouglass.50megs.com/QOD_Earthquake2007.htm)

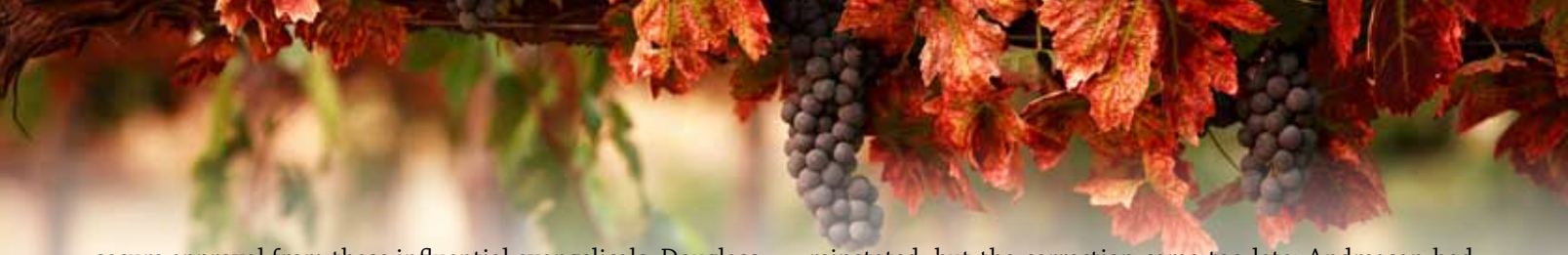
Later in his anniversary conference report, Douglass noted “scholarly fraud” evident in the General Conference’s QOD publication. “In the early 1970s while serving as one of the Review and Herald editors, I had the library resources to check all the QOD statements in its Appendixes and Indexes. I was repeatedly shocked at the obvious bias of those who had collected the Ellen White statements. Many statements were deliberately altered with unethical use of the ellipsis (...); many were obviously used only in part, removing the clarity of the context.”

A “third problem” Douglass noted “was the method the Adventist trio employed in using non-Adventist references to support certain positions. Fair enough.... But when the trio tried to defend our century-old understanding of the unique importance of Christ’s human nature,... an immense line of Protestant scholars could have been presented to underscore this long-standing position of Adventist leaders, but not one was referred to.”

M. L. Andreasan

“If God abhors one sin above another, of which His people are guilty, it is doing nothing in case of an emergency. Indifference and neutrality in a religious crisis is regarded of God as a grievous crime and equal to the very worst type of hostility against God.” 3T 280.

One of the strongest protestors against QOD was M. L. Andreasan, a highly respected theologian at the GC level. He would have been the most qualified one to “... *Answer Questions on Doctrine*,” but he, like some others, was not included in the formulation of QOD because he would not have participated in the compromise with evangelical representatives Martin and Barnhouse that was intended—a compromise that we recognize as a rejection of Biblical and SOP truth in order to



secure approval from these influential evangelicals. Douglass stated in his report that “other church leaders pled with General Conference administrators to at least let Andreasan see the manuscript before publication—all were denied.” And indeed, an earlier poll conducted by Froom himself showed that “nearly all” Adventist leaders agreed that Jesus took the fallen human nature. Nevertheless, Froom, Anderson and Reed, acting as representatives of the denomination, took a stand before the non-Adventist world that was markedly opposite what almost all members believed from the beginning of our movement!

One Andrews University website (god.andrews.edu) states, “For Leroy Edwin Froom, one of the authors of *Questions on Doctrine*, the book ‘completed the long process of clarification, rectification of misconceptions, and declarations of truth before [the Christian] Church and the world.’ But M. L. Andreasan, a theologian and author on the sanctuary doctrine, saw the book as ‘the most subtle and dangerous error’ and ‘a most dangerous heresy.’”

Preachers and Teachers Became Silent

Douglass, in his 50th Anniversary Conference report, wrote, “Many authors and teachers through the years swallowed some of the unsupportable conclusions of QOD (such as those Dr. Knight has pointed out in his Annotation), thus making QOD’s assertions the accepted magisterium. In many ways the word has been out since the 1960s that pastors and teachers should not speak out on subjects such as the sanctuary and the humanity of Christ because such topics were *divisive*. But when did the divisiveness begin?” (Italics his.)

Douglass concluded his presentation with this: “Though not a popular message, the Adventist message on Revelation 14 is a prophetic message of present truth. But Martin and Barnhouse [the evangelicals QOD writers were trying to appease], it seems, never were given even a clue as to the biblical basis for our allegiance to the three angels of Revelation 14.

What if Martin and Barnhouse were given the big picture of what is going on in the Great Controversy and how we are living in its closing days? Such was the opportunity of the century that was strangely ignored.” (Italics his.)

An Upholder of Truth

Andreasan’s unsuccessful attempts to persuade leaders to stop the spread of the doctrinal errors in QOD were published in pamphlets and later collected into a book *Letters to the Churches* (1959, available at TEACH Services). The GC executive committee’s response to Andreasan’s published protests was to suspend his ministerial credentials and deny him his monthly sustenance. After other ministers protested such treatment, and after Andreasan himself was forced to apply for welfare assistance, the credentials and sustenance were

reinstated, but the correction came too late; Andreasan had died. Personal accounts reveal he was broken-hearted about the betrayal of his church by his colleagues.

Andreasan and others at all levels in our denomination have been “powerless to stop” (5T 210) this undermining of the “faith once delivered to the fathers.” As Ellen White rightly prophesied, “The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church would be discarded. Our religion would be changed.... A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written.... *Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement....*” 1SM 204, emphasis added.

Unity Before Power

One pastor wrote concerning the new theology on the nature of Christ: “The ‘new birth,’ being ‘born of the spirit,’ being a ‘new creation,’ ‘partaking of the divine nature,’... being ‘holy’ as our ‘Father in heaven is holy,’ are *incapable* of being rightly understood, and consequently, the danger lingers that we remain in our sins.” (Daniel Ferraz, “The Humanity of the Son of God is Everything to Us,” *Adventists Affirm*, summer 2009.)

Kenneth Wood, former editor of the *Review and Herald* and chair of the White Estate Board of Trustees wrote, “It is my deep conviction that before the church can proclaim with power God’s last message to the world, it must be united on the truth about Christ’s human nature.” (Douglass, *Fork in the Road*, p. 79) That’s how serious this removal of this pillar is.

“Seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils”

Our beloved church is being attacked from other quarters, as well. Dr. Samuel Koranteng-Pipim (author, evangelist, professor, director of Public Campus Ministries for the Michigan Conference), in his GYC 2009 sermons, focused on the spiritualism that has invaded our church. (gycweb.org/resources/audio.html—download is slow.) In *Adventists Affirm*, special GYC edition 2009, p. 32, he wrote, “As the new spirituality Trojan horses are wheeled into our [Adventist] churches, we may all do well to heed the warnings we have been given.” Then he quotes from 1SM 200 (and others): “In the book *Living Temple* there is presented the alpha of deadly heresies. The omega will follow, and will be received by those who are not willing to heed the warning God has given.... Dangers that we do not now discern will break upon us, and I greatly desire that they shall not be deceived.” (See gycweb.org or drpipim.org.)

Thomas Mostert, former president of the Pacific Union Conference, in his book *Hidden Heresy: Is Spiritualism Invading Adventist Churches Today?*, points out the spiritualism already in our churches, and some of its sources (whose teachings and philosophy we’ve been hearing from our pulpits). It cannot be denied that some are already deceived, for conferences have been offering spiritualistic seminars and programs to



leadership and laity for several years, and thus it has entered many local churches.

Dr. Lewis Walton, attorney, author, and frequent speaker within Adventism, describes the development of the omega in our church in his book *Omega II: God's Church at the Brink* (Christian Media Services).

And in *Here We Stand: Evaluating New Trends in the Church*, numerous well-known Adventist leaders, including some in the GC's Biblical Research Institute, cautioned in the light of the great controversy about methods of church growth, doctrinal challenges, creation, worship and music styles, marriage, local church leadership, and church structure. The cautionary voices are many and unanimous: Laodicea is in danger!

War on Many Fronts

Brothers and sisters, we are in a very real war. As Ellen White wrote, "But few know what our churches are to experience." 5T 76. The enemy assaults us on many fronts: the teaching of evolution in at least one of our denominational universities (La Sierra), to name yet another. Adventist minister and popular youth speaker David Asscherick protested that practice in a widely-distributed letter to conference leaders. (See www.educatetruth.com/letters/david-asscherick-email-to-the-general-conference and www.educatetruth.com/featured/la-sierra-outraged-over-educate-truth-article) *Spectrum* magazine commented that the creation-evolution controversy "underscores how divided we are, and how desperately we need new consensus."

One wonders why the Genesis creation account has become so doubted that we need this "new consensus," given the abundance of Adventist and secular scientists who ably discredit evolutionary theory. One also wonders why those evolution-minded professors are employed in denominational institutions and supported by our tithes.

Spectrum's editors have taken a position that those teachers who "examine 'the evolutionary process'" are Christians whose teachings are fully compatible with "a vibrant Adventist Christian faith." "Vibrant," in this context, means "evolving," "emerging," as in the new "emergent church movement" that first appeared in the fallen churches of Babylon and has now crept into our own church under a different name. (Hear Pipim's "*Understanding Post Modernism & the Emergent Church*" presentation and others at GYC: www.gycweb.org/resources/audio.html.) The "emergent church" movement is not based on "absolute truths" upon which one may base his/her faith, but on "developing" truth. There are no steady pillars on which to build a sure foundation.

Blowing the Trumpet

Many faithful watchmen on the wall in the GC and elsewhere in denominational employ, as well as in self-supporting

work, have been sounding trumpets of alarm about Adventism's involvement in Rome's ecumenical movement ("What communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?" 2 Cor 6:14-5). About ordination of women. (Read *Prove All Things: A Response to [the GC publication] Women in Ministry*.) About "unbelief in the Testimonies [that] has been steadily increasing as the people backslide from God." RH 8.30.06. About lowering of Christian standards; destruction of the sanctuary message; silent pulpits regarding the three angels' messages and the necessity of preparation for the close of probation. About GC lawsuits against brethren (1 Cor 6:1-9; 3SM 303). About pressure to modify the church's biblical stand on homosexuality. (See *Homosexuals are God's Children, Too!* by a former homosexual—now Adventist minister at www.victorjadamson.com.) About the GC's quiet trademarking of the names "Ellen White" and "Seventh-day Adventist" and their variants, despite heaven's clear testimony that "Seventh-day Adventist" "is the name the Lord has given us." FLB 304. (See www.sdadefend.com, archives.) About our educational and medical institutions' departures from heavenly principles of health reform and true education, and more.

All these things mentioned are Satan's snares, permitted by God: "God will arouse His people; if other means fail, heresies will come in among them, which will sift them, separating the chaff from the wheat." CW 40.

Revival and Reformation

"A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. There must be earnest effort to obtain the blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow His blessing upon us, but because we are unprepared to receive it. Our Heavenly Father is more willing to give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. But it is our work, by confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer, to fulfill the conditions upon which God has promised to grant us His blessing. A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer. While the people are so destitute of God's Holy Spirit, they cannot appreciate the preaching of the word; but when the Spirit's power touches their hearts, then the discourses given will not be without effect. Guided by the teachings of God's word, with the manifestation of His Spirit, in the exercise of sound discretion, those who attend our meetings will gain a precious experience, and returning home will be prepared to exert a healthful influence." RH 3.22.87, emphasis added.

"...Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from the spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit..." RH 2.25.02.



Reformation in what respect? In part, from the history herein. We must know the solid biblical foundations of what are now “controversial” topics, and their importance to us personally as we prepare for close of probation.

We’re told the whole church will never be revived. 1SM 122 (1887). We’re enjoined to read and study *for ourselves*, to “work out *your own* salvation with fear and trembling.” Phil 2:12. Yet God’s true church is charged to be “of one accord:” “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” 1 Cor 1:10.

Confessing and forsaking sin, forgiving as our Lord has forgiven us, let all who “love His appearing” work together to

be “the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in.” Then He will pour out His latter rain upon us and finish His work here on earth. May God give us the wisdom and courage and consecrated zeal to restore, guard, and proclaim our precious faith till Jesus comes.



Jean Handwerk serves as managing editor of SECOND ADVENT Herald. For a fuller account of the development of Questions on Doctrine, one can either order a copy of Vance Ferrell’s book *Our Evangelical Earthquake: the Evangelical Conferences and their Aftermath* (Harvestime Books, 931-692-2777) or read a condensation of his book on our website at www.secondadventherald.org.

The Christian Life

Ellen G. White

The Holy Spirit will work if self will not interpose.

A [Romans 5:1-6; Colossians 1:25-29, quoted.] solemn responsibility rests upon the men who teach God’s Word. They are not to try to work the Holy Spirit; they are themselves to be worked by the Holy Spirit.

Our Greatest Opportunity at Risk

We greatly desire that at this time the Holy Spirit may show every professing Christian the fullness and perfection of Christ’s atoning sacrifice. It was a whole and entire sacrifice that Christ made for the sins of the world. We are living and working and breathing in a low atmosphere. Now and then we get glimpses of Christ, but much selfishness is manifested. Our failure to appropriate the grace of Christ leaves us defective and faithless, unable correctly to represent Christ. By clinging to self, ministering to our selfish interests, we dishonor

God, and the sacred word we minister is made to taste of the uncleaned vessel through which it is communicated. Self is so largely revealed that the sacredness of the truth is lost sight of.

Will not those who profess to be Christians walk in the light of the Sun of Righteousness showing by their life and character that they realize the value of the atoning sacrifice of Christ our Saviour? The truth is not to be rendered lusterless by a manifestation of our own unsanctified, selfish spirit. The truth must shine forth in the life; then Christ is glorified. Emptied of self we must be, else we cannot show that Christ is formed within, the hope of glory. The Lord would have self hidden, for when it appears, souls are misled. The preciousness and importance of truth must appear, and will appear, when self is hid with Christ in God; then Jesus will be revealed in our lives. Our characters will be molded after the divine similitude. Then the Holy Spirit will control the human agent. Men will possess the attributes of Christ.

New Births Rare

The minds of many are clouded with unbelief because those who unite with the church as the chosen of God do not reveal the virtues that are the fruits of the Spirit. Joining the church is not a sure evidence that a man has joined himself to Christ. The new birth is a rare experience in this age of the world. This is the reason why there are so many perplexities in the churches. Many, so many, who assume the name of Christ are unsanctified and unholy. They have been baptized, but they were buried alive. Self did not die, and therefore they did not rise to newness of life in Christ.

Thousands who claim to be religious are not Christians. Paul was very strict in carrying out his religion, but he was not a Christian until Christ revealed Himself to him and talked with him, showing him that he was persecuting his Master in the person of His saints. Then Paul was converted. He became one of the sect he had despised and hated; and for his love of Christ he received the same cruel treatment that he had once cooperated with others in giving.

“The new birth is a rare experience in this age of the world.”

The churches have an abundance of the religion and zeal that Paul had. Many persecute those who differ from them in religious matters. But no true Christian will persecute one who conscientiously differs from him in faith. Those who try to force the consciences of their fellowmen do it because Christ is not abiding in their hearts. They do not realize that they have the attributes of Satan, but he delights to make them his instruments to bear witness against God’s chosen ones. They strive to make them observe rites that have no foundation in the Word of God. When these persecutors have the Spirit of Christ, they will hear and receive the words of Christ “Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm” (1 Chronicles 16:22). Christ and Him crucified will absorb the whole soul.

[Colossians 3:12-17, 23-25, quoted.]

Perfection

What does God require? Perfection, nothing less than perfection. But if we would be perfect, we must put no confidence in self. Daily we must know and understand that self is not to be trusted. We need to grasp God’s promises with firm faith. We need to ask for the Holy Spirit with a full realization of our own helplessness. Then when the Holy Spirit works we shall not give self the glory. The Holy Spirit will graciously take the heart into His keeping, bringing to it all the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. We shall be kept by the power of God through faith.

When we are daily under the control of God’s Spirit, we shall be commandment-keeping people. We may show to the world that obedience to God’s commands brings its own reward, even in this life, and in the future life eternal blessedness.

Notwithstanding our profession of faith, the Lord by whom our actions are weighed, sees but an imperfect representation of Christ. He has declared that such a condition of things cannot glorify Him.

Self our Greatest Hindrance

It means much to commit the keeping of the soul to God. It means that we are to live and walk by faith, not trusting in or glorifying self, but looking to Jesus our advocate as the author and finisher of our faith. The Holy Spirit will do its work upon the heart that is contrite, but never can He work upon a self-important, self-righteous soul. In his own wisdom such a one would mend himself. He interposes between his soul and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will work if self will not interpose.

Where is our dependence? Where is our help? God’s Word tells us: “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said



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unto you” (John 14:26). The Holy Spirit is ready to cooperate with all who will receive Him and be taught by Him. All who lay hold on the truth and are sanctified through the truth are so united with Christ that they can represent Him in word and action. They have put on Christ, and they possess a power that enables them to reveal the truth to others. May the Holy Spirit speak to the hearts of God’s chosen people, that their words may be as choice as gold, as they give the bread of life to those in transgression and sin. [John 14:21, 23, 24, quoted.]

If through the imputed righteousness of Christ we strive to keep God’s commandments, we shall not be fractious when things do not please us. We will say, “I am not my own, I am bought with a price. I am the property of Christ, who has bought me with His own blood.” “Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:20).

[John 15:4-5, quoted.] We show that we are fruit-bearers by pure words, unselfish planning in the meekness and lowliness



of Christ, by softened hearts full of sympathy, love, and compassion. [Galatians 5:22-26, quoted.]

The “Better Covenant”

God’s people are justified through the administration of the “better covenant,” through Christ’s righteousness. A covenant is an agreement by which parties bind themselves and each other to the fulfillment of certain conditions. Thus the human agent enters into agreement with God to comply with the conditions specified in His Word. His conduct shows whether or not he respects these conditions.

“Obedience to God’s commands brings its own reward, even in this life, and in the future life eternal blessedness.”

Man gains everything by obeying the covenant-keeping God. God’s attributes are imparted to man, enabling him to exercise mercy and compassion. God’s covenant assures us of His unchangeable character. Why then are those who claim to believe in God changeable, fickle, untrustworthy? Why do they not do service heartily, as under obligation to please and glorify God? It is not enough for us to have a general idea of God’s requirements. We must know for ourselves what His requirements and our obligations are. The terms of God’s covenant are: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself” (Luke 10:27). These are the conditions of life. “This do,” Christ said, “and thou shalt live” (verse 28).

Christ’s death and resurrection completed His covenant. Before this time, it was revealed through types and shadows, which pointed to the great offering to be made by the world’s Redeemer, offered in promise for the sins of the world.

Anciently believers were saved by the same Saviour as now, but it was a God veiled. They saw God’s mercy in figures. The promise given to Adam and Eve in Eden was the gospel to a fallen race. The promise was made that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head, and it should bruise His heel. Christ’s sacrifice is the glorious fulfillment of the whole Jewish economy. The Sun of Righteousness has risen. Christ our Righteousness is shining in brightness upon us.

God’s Desire

God did not lessen His claim upon men in order to save them. When as a sinless offering Christ bowed His head and died, when by the Almighty’s unseen hand the veil of the Temple was rent in twain, a new and living way was opened. All can now approach God through the merits of Christ. It is because the veil has been rent that men can draw nigh to God.

They need not depend on priest or ceremonial sacrifice. Liberty is given to all to go directly to God through a personal Saviour.

It is God’s pleasure and will that the blessings bestowed on man shall be given in perfect completeness. He has made provision that every difficulty may be overcome, every want supplied through the Holy Spirit. Thus He designs that man shall perfect a Christian character. God would have us contemplate His love, His promises, given so freely to those who have no merit in themselves. He would have us depend fully, gratefully, rejoicingly, in the righteousness provided for us in Christ. To all who come to God in His appointed way, He freely listens.

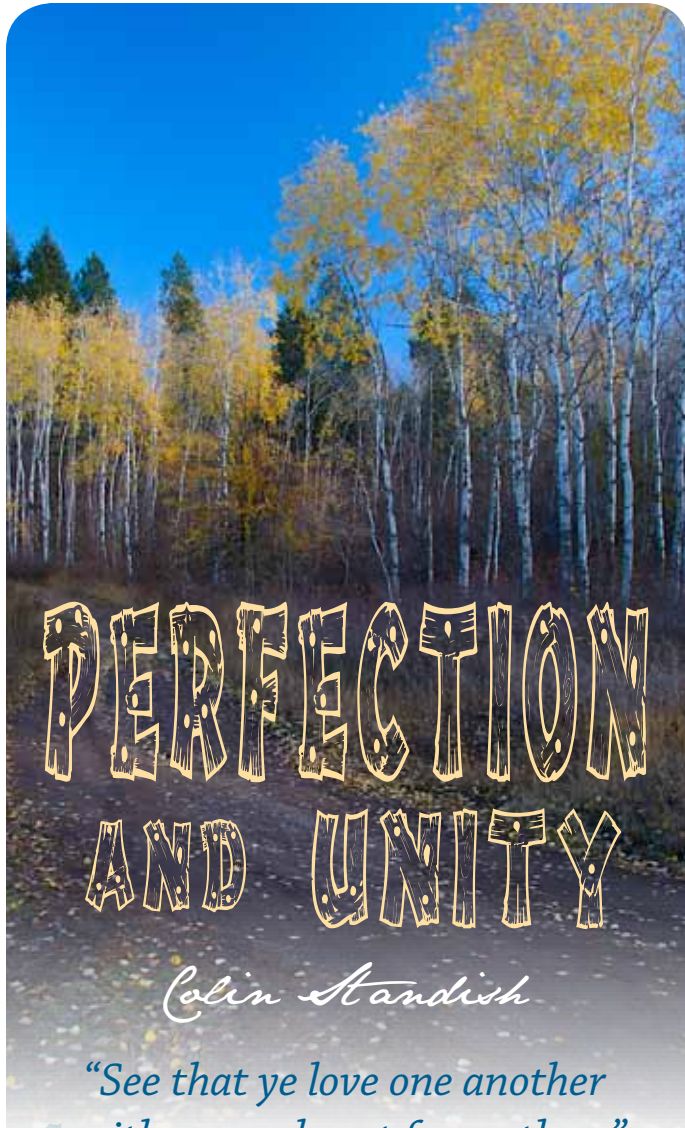
[2 Corinthians 3:18, quoted.] Beholding Christ means studying His life as given in His Word. We are to dig for truth as for hidden treasure. We are to fix our eyes upon Christ. When we take Him as our personal Saviour, this gives us boldness to approach the throne of grace. By beholding, we become changed—morally assimilated to the One who is perfect in character. By receiving His imputed righteousness, through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, we become like Him. The image of Christ is cherished, and it captivates the whole being.

The Lord abides with the contrite soul. [Isaiah 57:15 and 66:12 quoted.]—Ms 148, 1897.

— *Manuscript Releases* Vol.12, 50-55 —



Ellen G. White (1827-1915): *The Seventh-day Adventist Church believes that when the tests of a true prophet are applied to Ellen White, they confirm beyond doubt that God bestowed upon her the promised gift of prophecy. That gift is one of two prominent characteristics of His church in the last days (Rev. 12:17; Rev. 19:10), and indeed, her prophetic gift was instrumental in the establishment of Seventh-day Adventism. Her inspired writings continue to clarify and uplift the Word of God, as well as provide invaluable health counsel.*



PERFECTION AND UNITY

Colin Standish

*“See that ye love one another
with a pure heart fervently...”*

Perfection and God’s Character

Any claims which deny that Christ has the power to give victory in the life of a wholly surrendered soul is an attack upon His character, His sacrifice, and His High Priestly ministry. ...It is Satan who challenges God’s character on the basis of His claims to provide perfection of character.

“Satan declared that it was impossible for the sons and daughters of Adam to keep the law of God, and thus charged upon God a lack of wisdom and love. If they could not keep the law, then there was fault with the Law-giver. Men who are under the control of Satan repeat these accusations against God, in asserting that men cannot keep the law of God.” *Signs of the Times*, January 16, 1896.

Perfection and Unity

In recent times, with the doctrinal and lifestyle dissonance within our church, there have been strong cries for unity.

Unity is essential before God’s servants can give a loud cry of Revelation 18:1-5....

We know that Jesus will not come until the gospel commission has been taken to every nation, kindred, tongue and people (Matthew 24:14). Though there have been remarkable efforts by the Seventh-day Adventist Church to share this message around the world, we must acknowledge the reality that the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of this world have never heard the name Seventh-day Adventist, much less the thrilling gospel that God has entrusted to this church as the depository of His truth at the end of time. Yet we know that Christ’s invitation will not be given to all the world until God’s people are empowered by the Holy Spirit. We have been promised a power greater than Pentecost. So dramatic was the presentation of the message under the power of Pentecost, that Paul was able to report before the fall of Jerusalem that the gospel “was preached to every creature which is under heaven” (Colossians 1:23). Unity preceded Pentecost:

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place (Acts 2:1).”

That same unity is necessary at the end of time before God can entrust his people with the Holy Spirit. I have listened to many sermons on unity, and have witnessed the efforts to make unity the central theme of the 1995 General Conference session. Many of those addressing the issue of unity have quoted the beautiful message of Jesus in His unity prayer:

“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent Me (John 17:21).”

**Until God’s people are sanctified,
there will not be unity.**

Those sermons to which I have listened have, however, singularly failed to address the sole basis upon which this unity can be achieved. So important is this principle of unity that Christ emphasized it twice in his prayer:

“Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth (John 17:17).” “And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth (John 17:19).”

No Sanctification, No Unity

Until God’s people are sanctified, there will not be unity. Every other call is a call for a counterfeit unity, for such calls are predicated upon that which will destroy unity. Frequently, these are calls to compromise, consensus, or the silencing of truth. God cannot bring genuine unity under false circumstances. So important is this matter that Sister White wrote:

“Unity is the sure result of Christian perfection.” *Sanctified Life*, 85.

Unity is not a goal, as it is often presented to be. It is the natural result of Christian perfection. Sadly, the widespread teaching of the “sin and live” theology has robbed our people of unity. Only a full response to church-wide calls for revival,

repentance and reformation will result in unity. The return of Jesus depends upon it. However, not all church members will respond to Christ's call. The final shaking brought about by persecution will remove all who continue in worldliness and selfishness. The truth must be held sacred. The pluralistic, eclectic, ecumenical, evangelical thrust that is bombarding the Seventh-day Adventist Church is designed to derail this church from its God-given mission. The servant of the Lord says:

"There is no sanctification aside from truth." *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 432.

Unity is not a goal.... It is the natural result of Christian perfection.

If we are to achieve that perfect unity necessary for the pouring out of the latter rain, God's people must hold the truth sacred. But more than this, they must allow the truth to be translated into the very fabric of their lives, bringing in the sanctifying principle of God's love. Thus Paul emphasized:

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ (Ephesians 4:13-15)."

Peter puts it in the most beautiful terms:

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently; being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever (1 Peter 1:22, 23)."

There is no other way to hasten the coming of Jesus Christ. The Sanctuary message is designed to lead to the justification and sanctification of God's people, the blotting out of their sins, and the uniting of the lives of men and women in God's truth, providing their title and fitness for heaven. There is NO other way.

Perfection in the Church

Perhaps the greatest challenge that faces Seventh-day Adventist preachers and teachers is to present the concept of perfection within the context of Christ our Righteousness. This centrality of Christ points men and women to the matchless claims of Christ upon their lives in service—a claim validated by the love of God demonstrated on Calvary, and proven through the mercy and long-suffering that he has shown to His people.

Perfection presented in a legalistic or Christless fashion will avail nothing. Only as the centrality of the love and power of Jesus is presented in the most winning and attractive way, can we hope to see men and women drawn from the legalism

of human effort, on the one hand, and, on the other, from the false security that Christ did it all, that all we have to do to be saved is to accept His perfect life.

Between these two failed concepts of legalism and antinomianism is the truth that Christ is able to keep us from falling into sin by His all-powerful, victorious life. God is drawing His people to the total surrender of the will to Him. In the One Who is altogether trustworthy is the hope, not only of an individual nor of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, nor of Christians, but of the whole human race. Our preaching must reflect this challenge if we are serious about the soon return of our Lord and Savior.



Dr. Colin Standish has been the president of Hartland Institute for Health and Education for 27 years. With his twin brother Russell, he authored over 70 books. The words above have been reprinted with permission from his book Perfection.



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ALL-OR-NOTHING UNITY

Randy J. Guliuzza

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For the first time, we are including an article from a non-Adventist source. The Institute for Creation Research and its free monthly publication *Acts and Facts* exist to scientifically support the Genesis account of Creation, and to uplift the Lord God who created all things by His Word in six consecutive 24-hour days around 6,000 years ago. That the Genesis account be accepted as reliable truth is critical. If one can be led to doubt or reinterpret the biblical narrative of Creation, one may then doubt or reinterpret the rest of God's Word. Evolutionary theory undermines the creation of mankind in the image of God, the Sabbath, the fall of man, the consequences of sin, the need for a Savior, the Flood, and more. However, confidence that the biblical record of Creation is true as written instills trust in the rest of the teachings of the Bible.

Which came first, the chicken or the egg? A fresh usage of this familiar question can quickly illustrate unseen strengths to the design argument. At first, the issue seems to be one of timing. That problem is real, but so is the need for the *parts* for the chicken or egg, the *information*, and *conditions* of these to be:

1. available,
2. localized,
3. capable of functioning together,
4. for a purpose, and, of course,
5. at the right time.

It doesn't matter whether the goal is the chicken or the egg; the absence of the information, conditions, or any vital part is a definite show-stopper. The chicken/egg scenario—symbolic of any reproducing organism—is really about the absolute unity of certain vital parts to vital functions.

In regard to function, designers need to know if all, some, or none of it is maintained without the full set of parts. They know that some aspects of their project can be built by increments, but at certain phases *all* of those parts must be collected together and built together or *none* of that specific function can be obtained. In the living world, these are called “vital” parts.

The fact that *all-or-nothing* unity exists cannot be ignored—especially when the known source is always real design. So, when all-or-nothing unity is found in the living world, the reasonable conclusion is that it is evidence of a real Designer's work.

Explaining the Vital Unity of Parts and Function

It is not difficult to present the case for all-or-nothing unity. A powerful, yet easily understood, statement is this: In organisms, some parts are so important to the function of life that if they are missing, life stops. Excellent examples are found for certain molecules, organs, and systems, but the explanation of these can get complicated. So the difficulty is deciding on a great example.

Thinking biblically, it is notable that Genesis' account of the first and foremost unified biologically vital system, reproduction, is absolutely contrary to classic evolutionary origins of this core process. It cannot be overstated that for evolution to proceed, it is not enough just to attain some physiological function—what is needed is *reproductive* life. Fortunately, when engaging in conversation, reproduction is a science topic where almost everyone has some knowledge.

Using reproduction as the example of all-or-nothing unity in a conversation is powerful. For the first time, most listeners will hear something that totally defies evolutionary dogma. They will be astounded to learn that the minimum number of parts necessary for an organism to reproduce is—*the organism itself*. The whole organism is vital. This is scientific fact. It doesn't mean that every part is vital, but it does mean that only the organismal unit encompasses all of the critical *parts*, *information*, and *conditions* necessary to reproduce itself according to the constraints of its life cycle.

There is no scientific evidence showing some organisms as “primitive” and some as “advanced.” Life forms are just *different*, with most being extraordinarily complex. So, in order for the single-cell bacteria, believed by evolutionists to be thoroughly primitive, to reproduce by fission, budding, or fragmentation—the bacteria itself is needed. Yet, in order to produce a human baby, a man and a woman, and all of their vital interdependent parts, are the essentials—science has shown that it cannot be broken down to any smaller level.

Another advantage of using reproduction as an example of all-or-nothing unity is that it underscores the impotence of an iterative evolutionary process—dependent on procreative processes—to explain the origin of reproduction. How do organisms “arise” by increments until they can reproduce?

This fact is so indicting that evolutionists will push back with all kinds of arguments, but they will all cheat in their explanations. Every example given will always start and end by using some vital things from the organism itself, so be looking for this. For example, yes, there is invitro fertilization, but that starts with donor egg and sperm and the embryo is returned to the normal realm of development.

Evolutionists Publish Insufficient Explanations

When in conversation, be assured that evolutionists will fail to explain the *origins* of biological information and reproduction. Point out how they simply skip explaining a main biological feature by always starting with reproducing entities.

The literature has avoided detailed explanations of all-or-nothing unity for the vital parts of reproduction. For instance, most people could do a search for the evolutionary origins of mammal reproduction. They will uncover claims that it began as a simple alteration from an egg-laying reptilian system. But details of how the changes could happen are missing. And what about the origin of a mammal's life-sustaining milk ducts? The literature states that these slowly arose from "modified sweat glands"—without a second thought of an offspring's nutritional needs pending modification.

The best evolution-based journals have published replies to all-or-nothing unity for other parts of organisms.¹ However, these articles have *all* claimed that the solution to all-or-nothing unity lies in researchers imagining where similar—not always identical—parts could be borrowed ("co-opted," "pre-adapted," or "recruited") from existing objects. Even if borrowed parts could work, which is doubtful, only condition one, availability, is satisfied. The necessary information and other four conditions are not even addressed. Thus, by taking an *in-direct* path to all-or-nothing unity, these responses not only fail to engage the true issue, but also demonstrate how imagination cannot substitute for testable findings.

Learning a Short Example

If the iterative [characterized by or involving repetition, recurrence, reiteration, or repetitiousness] evolutionary mechanism is crushed by the ultimate circular dilemma—i.e., it takes an organism to produce an organism—and only God can break the circle, then why did headlines recently declare, "Scientists create a living organism"? Can it really be that complex if "scientists have turned inanimate chemicals into a living organism that raises profound questions about the essence of life"?² Actually, the complexity is staggering.

After 15 years and \$40 million invested, results of the ongoing project—published with abundant hyperbole in *Science*³—simply confirmed that the minimum number of vital parts to make a bacterium is a bacterium. As it relates to life, these researchers copied DNA code of one species, added four segments of human-derived code, inserted this genome into a similar bacterium that had been emptied of its DNA, and,

voila, it reproduced. They "created" neither the information nor vital conditions, but were obliged to utilize an existing cell and plagiarized genetic code.⁴

The Bible has a far more scientifically accurate explanation for the origin of reproduction. In Genesis 1:11, the first biological entities are those "whose seed is in itself." Not only is the origin of all-or-nothing unity answered, but the Hebrew meaning of "seed" correctly presents reproduction as a unified whole. This one word summarizes the act of sowing, that which is sown, and the product of sowing, which contains yet more indispensable seed. The necessary conditions, parts, and information converge—an event distinctive of real design, not random forces of nature—enabling organisms to diversify, multiply, and fill new environments.

Pulling It All Together

Darwin knew the exceeding improbability of unintelligent natural forces alone building life's complexity. His theory attempts to beat the odds one tiny bit at a time, and hence is limited by:

1. Life *being* "evolvable," meaning organisms can reproduce and offspring have diverse traits.
2. The environment's ability to see, select, and save organisms' favorable traits.
3. Environmental powers acting on traits to incrementally increase complexity over many generations, thus making organisms only *look* like they were designed.
4. Use all-or-nothing unity, particularly in reproduction, to confront evolution's attempt to chip away at prohibitive improbability and explain biological design.
5. Reproduction is one of many processes revealing that *all* necessary conditions, parts, and information must come together *or nothing* of the function is achieved—a distinctive of real design.
6. Scenarios depicting organisms arising incrementally are implausible since the minimum number of parts necessary for an organism to reproduce is the *organism itself*.
7. Evolutionary explanations cheat. Reproductive origins are not explained, they start with replicating life.
8. Natural selection, Darwin's substitute god, has no ability to see, select, act on, favor, or operate as an agent of change.

Why should anyone believe that the living world only looks like it is designed, but really isn't? In fact, the design in the living world is such that it *resists* being explained by natural causes. All scientific evidence shows that creatures come programmed with innate abilities to reproduce after their kind, but not with strictly identical offspring, in order to diversify, multiply, and fill new environments. The Bible clearly says not only that the Lord Jesus Christ designed life, but also reveals how He did it: the chicken was created "whose seed [egg or sperm] was in itself"—all at one time.

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THE NEED OF HASTE IN MISSION WORK

*They are dying by tens Don't you know it?
Dying without the light.
They know not Christ as their Savior;
His cross is hid from their sight.*

*Dying while you are sleeping.
Dying while you are at play.
Dying while you laugh and chatter.
Dying by night and by day.*

*They are dying by hundreds Oh, hear it!
In the chains of ignorance bound.
They see no need of a Savior
The Savior whom you have found.*

*Some do not know they are needy;
Some of them care not at all.
But some of them hunger for Jesus,
Yet know not on whom to call.*

*They are dying by thousands Believe it!
Oh, what are you going to do?
Your Savior cares for these lost ones
And longs to save them through you.*

*They grope for light in their darkness;
They call on their gods for aid.
There is none to tell them of Jesus
And the sinners' debts which He paid.*

*They are dying by millions yes, millions!
All over the worldwide lands:
In Africa, India, China, Mid-East
Can you sit just folding your hands?*

*None, did I say? It was an error,
For God has a few lights out there.
But when it's not three to a million,
Oh, won't you begin to care?*

Pastor Tom Mose

Intimacy with God

Ron Spear

*The intimate experience that Jesus had with His Father
is the same intimate experience He offers to us
—to know His Father as He knew Him.*

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In the days before the flood, sin was overwhelming, but Enoch did not allow all those sin problems to keep him from a close walk with Jesus. Enoch walked with God for three hundred years, despite being surrounded with many, many problems. During that time he had an intimate connection with God, and because of that intimacy, he became like Jesus. That is the secret of the Christian life which we pursue.

For many of us, though, the intimacy with God that we are seeking for always seems to be out of reach. We want it, we deeply desire it, but we never seem to be able to reach it. So many times in our lives we see divorces and remarriages, along with all the problems that the church goes through. This brings discouragement to us. Many are saying, “I can’t reach the ultimate walk with Jesus that Enoch had; it’s impossible.” Many cry out, “I tried to overcome, but it doesn’t work for me.” Nevertheless, the intimacy with God that Enoch had is exactly what we must have in this final generation, if we want Jesus to take us out of this world.

Is it truly possible that we can walk with Jesus today as Enoch walked with Him centuries ago? Yes, Jesus is not beyond our reach. We must understand that to walk with Jesus is the opportunity that every Christian has. And what will be the result of this perfect walk? We will be overcomers in Christ Jesus, and He can take us home with Him.

With All Your Heart

“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.” Jeremiah 29:13. As we look at this text of Scripture and examine ourselves in this awesome time in which we live—as we watch the events of prophecy being fulfilled right before us—we ask the question, “How do I walk with Jesus as Enoch walked with Him?”

In the book of Revelation we find that the promises are

only for those that are overcomers in Christ through the Holy Spirit. Those promises are an invitation to walk with Jesus and to be a perfect overcomer: “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” Revelation 3:21.

“Walk continually in the light of God. Meditate day and night upon His character. Then you will see His beauty and rejoice in His goodness. Your heart will glow with a sense of His love. You will be uplifted as if borne by everlasting arms. With the power and light that God imparts, you can comprehend more and accomplish more than you ever before deemed possible.” *Ministry of Healing*, 514.

This statement tells us that we should meditate day and night on the character of Christ. As I ponder those words, I realize that I need to seek the Lord with all my heart if I want to be like Him. I need to respond to life’s situations like He would respond. Sometimes it seems it is beyond our grasp to have the experience of overcoming sin, but we can. We must.

Beholding, Contemplating, Imitating

I look at this experience portrayed so beautifully in the Spirit of Prophecy: “By beholding Jesus, talking of His love and perfection of character, we become changed into His image. By contemplating the lofty ideal He has placed before us, we shall be uplifted into a pure and holy atmosphere, even the presence of God. When we abide here, there goes forth from us a light that irradiates all who are connected with us.” *Ministry of Healing*, 492.

Desire of Ages, page 83, says, “It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones. As we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our confidence in Him will be more constant, our love will be quickened, and we shall

be more deeply imbued with His spirit. If we would be saved at last, we must learn the lesson of penitence and humiliation at the foot of the cross.”

In *Testimonies*, volume 6, page 393, we read: “Many fail of imitating our holy Pattern because they study so little the definite features of that character. So many are full of busy plans, always active; and there is no time or place for the precious Jesus to be a close, dear companion. They do not refer every thought and action to Him, inquiring: ‘Is this the way of the Lord?’ If they did they would walk with God, as did Enoch.”

The reason we fail to have this intimate experience is that we don't take the time.

The reason we fail to have this intimate experience is that we don't take time. We hurry through our prayers, our Sabbath School lessons, our Bible study, but we do not take that close time with Him.

A Personal Testimony

At this point I want to tell you my personal testimony. I have been preaching for fifty-nine years. I'm 86 years old. As I look back over my life, I see a young preacher that had a lot of energy and zeal for God's work. I have been all over this world, preaching in many, many countries. I spent some years in Africa. But I also had pride.

Then my first son was killed in Vietnam by a sniper during a volunteer rescue mission for the crew of a downed U.S. helicopter. He had only three or four days left to serve in Vietnam. I had been praying and pleading with God for his safety, and when I received word he'd been killed, my world fell apart. Instead of this son, suddenly all I had was a handful of medals.

“Why didn't you answer my prayer, God?” The servant of the Lord said, “In the future life ... we shall see that our seemingly unanswered prayers and disappointed hopes have been among our greatest blessings.” *Counsels to the Church*, 228. I trusted His will regarding my son, but I had also expected He would hear my prayers regarding him. It was a difficult time for me.

The morning came when I looked in the mirror when I was shaving, and I didn't like the man I saw there. God had given me talents, but I finally realized I'd been putting “self” in front, rather than letting the Lord lead. I realized I was lost. Others might have thought well of me, but God and I knew that pride was killing my hopes of eternal life.

That was 1969, and in that time of trial, I put my whole life into the hands of God. From then on, I moved closer to God and depended less and less on myself. Now I see a new picture of this preacher because I have found the secret of walking with Jesus.

I don't place myself up as an example to anyone; Jesus is our example. But there are some advantages of old age. Because I have been legally blind for five years and unable to read and do all the necessary things that my eyes helped me accomplish, I have come to have an even closer walk with Jesus. The

mist of blindness hides all the details of nature which I love so much. Many times I've cried out, “God, please give me my eyes so I can read!” but during that prayer my mind was turned to this text of Scripture for my encouragement: “My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” 2 Corinthians 12:9.

Jesus came close to me and directed my thoughts to that text. You see, I believe that Paul had a similar problem to what I have. He prayed three times for the healing of the thorn in his flesh, till God told him not to pray that prayer any more. So I also no longer pray for the healing of my eyes, but now my daily walk, my intimacy with Jesus, is closer. Jesus did it for Enoch and He will do it for me, and for any of us who are willing to overcome in His name.

In the Flesh, or in the Spirit

In my ministry I've seen a lot of conversions. Some of them were not true conversions. They didn't walk carefully with the Lord. They didn't seek for Him with all their heart, soul, mind and body. They attempted to walk with Him in the flesh and not in the Spirit. “So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” Romans 8:8, 9. So there is absolutely no salvation for any man, woman, or child if they are walking in the flesh and not in the Spirit.

There is a quotation in *Steps to Christ*, page 34, that says, “Even one wrong trait of character, one sinful desire, persistently cherished, will eventually neutralize all the power of the gospel. Every sinful indulgence strengthens the soul's aversion to God.” This explains what is keeping us from reaching the intimacy with Jesus that we desire. Our bad dispositions, our tempers, our lustful thoughts, our sinful desires keep us from having that very close intimacy with God that is demanded from those who want to walk with God as Enoch did.

Because He First Loved Us

For a few moments, dear reader, let us turn to Scripture and carefully examine God's love for us.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16.

Take a moment and think about those important words. God loved us so much that He saw that the only way He could solve the sin problem was to allow Jesus to come to this world in our fallen nature. He would be like us, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, He could be a perfect overcomer, leaving us an example that we could overcome every sin and finally sit down with Him on His throne.

In Hebrews 2:14-16 we read, “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver

them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.”

**“When self is merged in Christ,
Love springs forth spontaneously.”**

Let us remember that Jesus is the Creator of the world. Psalms 33:6, 9 says, “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.... For he spake, and it was done: he commanded, and it stood fast.” Jesus was God; He could make a world by speaking a word. He created Adam and Eve, and when they sinned, Jesus gave them a promise that He would come to this world, born of Mary, a sinner. See Genesis 3:15; Rom 1:3, 8:3; Phil 2:5, 6.

An Intimate Experience

A God who could do everything—create a world, make a human being, and even be willing to come down to our level and show us how we can live perfectly and overcome as He overcame. And today He is in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary as our High Priest. Since 1844 He is in the process of cleansing the Most Holy Place and He is watching over the Seventh-day Adventist people, its leaders, its pastors, desiring them to have an intimate walk with Him. His atoning work will soon be finished and soon probation will close, yet so few Seventh-day Adventists respond to this great gift of eternal life by walking with Jesus. “These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” John 17:1-3.

So the intimate experience that Jesus had with His Father is the same intimate experience He extends to us—to know His Father as He knew Him.

Intimacy in the Scriptures

I believe, dear reader, that the Bereans had this ultimate experience in the days of Paul and the disciples. “These were

more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” Acts 17:11.

So the ultimate experience that we must have is in the Scriptures. That close walk with Jesus is the ultimate experience that we must have for eternal life. This experience demands many things of us, all of which are encompassed in loving obedience to a God who would send His Son to this earth to die so that we might live. The ultimate choice is ours.

I’m walking with Jesus and what a joyful experience it is to have that assurance of living with Christ, the great God that came down to this world to redeem us. To think that they received Him not. Only a few, only a few in every generation, received Him. “To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pg. 136.

Who Will Be Able to Stand?

So a test is before us now. The only way we can stand is to have an intimate experience, walking with Jesus. It will bring the great love of Christ into our hearts. “When self is merged in Christ, love springs forth spontaneously. The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within—when the sunshine of heaven fills the heart and is revealed in the countenance.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pg. 384.

This was the experience of Enoch, Elijah and all the patriarchs of the Old and New Testament. This is the experience that Christ offers us today and tomorrow in perfecting our characters. Then God can say to us: “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.” Matthew 25:21, 23.

His Character, Perfectly Reproduced

I would like to say now that there are many Seventh-day Adventist Christians—yes, even among our workers around the world—that are preparing their lives to walk with Jesus. Even though the Seventh-day Adventist structure has failed in giving the Loud Cry message, God has prepared a people in the

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grassroots of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. God is now raising men up from the plow to give the last warning message. See *Counsels on Health*, pg. 395, and *Loma Linda Messages*, pg. 83. These statements paint a picture before the seekers for truth of how God is going to bring this great controversy to a close. Those who walk intimately with Jesus will give the Loud Cry to “come out of her My people.” See Revelation 18:1-4.

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” Matthew 24:14.

“Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pg. 69.1

“A character formed according to the divine likeness is the only treasure that we can take from this world to the next. Those who are under the instruction of Christ in this world will take every divine attainment with them to the heavenly mansions. And in heaven we are continually to improve. How important, then, is the development of character in this life.

**“Whatever is to be done at His command
may be accomplished in His strength.
ALL His biddings are enablings.”**

“The heavenly intelligences will work with the human agent who seeks with determined faith that perfection of character which will reach out to perfection in action. To everyone engaged in this work Christ says, I am at your right hand to help you. As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 332, 333.

God’s Work in Us

Today Christ is standing in the Most Holy Place, beckoning us to have this close walk with Him that we might have the experience of one day seeing our Redeemer Jesus Christ. This beckoning is portrayed in the following quotations:

“God’s work of refining and purifying must go on until His servants are so humbled, so dead to self, that, when called into active service, their eye will be single to His glory. He will then accept their efforts; they will not move rashly, from impulse; they will not rush on and imperil the Lord’s cause, being slaves to temptations and passions and followers of their own carnal minds set on fire by Satan. Oh, how fearfully is the cause of God marred by man’s perverse will and unsubdued temper! How much suffering he brings upon himself by following his own headstrong passions! God brings men over the ground again and again, increasing the pressure until perfect humility and a transformation of character bring them into harmony with Christ and the spirit of heaven, and they are victors over themselves.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, pg. 86.

“All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself

with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us.” *Desire of Ages*, pg. 668.

Walk Here, to Walk There

We cannot hope to go on day by day without a continual walk with Jesus and expect to walk with Him in heaven. We must have an abundance of oil—enough to keep our lamps burning through the darkness of the night in which we are soon to find ourselves. “Behold,” says the Scripture, “the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee.” Isaiah 60:2.

These statements from *Christ’s Object Lessons* reveal to us what the result of our intimate relationship with Jesus will be:

“In the parable the wise virgins had oil in their vessels with their lamps. Their light burned with undimmed flame through the night of watching. It helped to swell the illumination for the bridegroom’s honor. Shining out in the darkness, it helped to illuminate the way to the home of the bridegroom, to the marriage feast.

“So the followers of Christ are to shed light into the darkness of the world. Through the Holy Spirit, God’s word is a light as it becomes a transforming power in the life of the receiver. By implanting in their hearts the principles of His word, the Holy Spirit develops in men the attributes of God. The light of His glory—His character—is to shine forth in His followers. Thus they are to glorify God, to lighten the path to the Bridegroom’s home, to the city of God, to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pg. 414.

“Those who wait for the Bridegroom’s coming are to say to the people, ‘Behold your God.’ The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pg. 415, 416.

Oh, that we might have that experience, that ultimate experience, that intimacy, that walk with Jesus Christ. It is available now to all who will seek Him with all their soul, heart and mind. This makes obedience in our experience an absolute necessity. May God help us in our prayer in Jesus’ name.



Ron Spear continues to add to his 55 years of active service in the Lord’s cause as preacher, editor and author. He and his wife Carmen reside in the state of Washington and travel wherever he has speaking engagements.

THE SIN OF BATHSHEBA:

An Address to Christian Women by a Brother in Christ

“And it came to pass in an eveningtide that David ... walked upon the roof of the king’s house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. And David sent and inquired after the woman.” 2 Samuel 11:2-3.

(This article has been widely distributed anonymously, as the author prefers not to be known. Understanding these issues from a man’s perspective gives added insight as to the reasons for modesty.)

We hear a great deal about the sin of David, but seldom does anyone mention the sin of Bathsheba. And it is true enough that David’s sin was very great and Bathsheba’s very small. David’s sin was deliberate and presumptuous; Bathsheba’s only a sin of ignorance. David committed adultery and murder; Bathsheba only carelessly and undesignedly exposed herself before David’s eyes.... Yet it remains a fact that Bathsheba’s little sin was the cause of David’s great sin. Her little sin of ignorance—her little thoughtless, careless exposure of herself—was the spark that kindled a great devouring flame. “Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!”

On the one side, only a little carelessness—only a little unthinking, unintentional exposure of herself before the eyes of David. But on the other side, adultery and guilt of conscience; murder and the loss of a husband; death in battle of other innocent men; great occasion for the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme; the shame of an illegitimate pregnancy and the death of the child; the uprising and death of Absalom; the defiling of David’s wives in the sight of all Israel; the sword never departing from David’s house. II Samuel 12:11-18.

Again I say, “Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!” None of this great evil would ever have taken place if Bathsheba had only been careful not to display her body in the sight of a man.

Observe: She neither designed nor foresaw any of this evil, yet she was the occasion of it all. She did not display herself purposely or wantonly: she did it only ignorantly and thoughtlessly. Yet the results of her little sin of ignorance were just the same as if it had been purposeful wantonness.

Purity of Motive Doesn’t Cancel Impure Results

Now the reason for my writing all of the above is this: There are many Christian women today who are guilty of the same carelessness as Bathsheba was. Godly women, who would recoil with horror from the very thought of wantonly displaying their bodies, do nevertheless carelessly and thoughtlessly display themselves habitually, by the manner in which they dress. I do not write to accuse them of intentional wantonness. I believe they are as innocent of that as Bathsheba was. But neither can I altogether excuse them from blame in the matter. The whole world is well aware that certain kinds of feminine dress are provocative and tempting to the eyes and heart of

a man—and are Christian women alone altogether naive and ignorant? This can hardly be; and yet I do not write to blame you, but to instruct you—to provoke you to love and good works, to make you thoughtful and caring where you have been thoughtless or careless before, to make you careful for the spiritual welfare of the weakest of your brethren, to make you wise where before you were simple.

The first thing that must be understood is that nakedness before the eyes of others is wrong. It is wrong in a man, and it is wrong in a woman. When Adam and Eve sinned, “God made coats of skins, and clothed them.” The sole reason for his clothing them was to cover their nakedness, as the Genesis account makes plain. Observe, He clothed them with “coats.” They were already wearing aprons, which probably covered as much as, or more than, much of the clothing that is worn today. Yet, in spite of their aprons, they were still naked in their own eyes and God’s.

And God did not clothe them with shorts or swimming suits or tank tops or “halter” tops or anything of the sort—not with jackets, either, but with coats, long coats, or “robes” as the word might be properly translated. Observe further, He clothed “them” with coats. He did not clothe Eve with a coat, and Adam with a pair of shorts. He clothed them both with coats—whence we may assuredly gather that nakedness is just as wrong in a man as it is in a woman.

Women React Differently from Men

But though it is equally wrong for a man to expose his nakedness as it is for a woman, it is not equally dangerous, for the passions of women are not so easily or thoroughly aroused by the sight of a man’s body—and many women affirm that the sight does not arouse them at all. A man may therefore (though he ought not to) go three-fourths naked, and not do so much damage by it. But when a woman exposes herself only a little, she becomes a fiery dart to tempt the heart of every man who sees her. Like it or not, this is the plain fact. And because this is a fact, you are not at liberty to dress any way you please.

“What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” I Cor. 6:19-20.

But if you dress in such a way as to expose your body, or parts of it, to the lustful gaze of every man who chooses to look at you, you certainly do not glorify God in your body. And if you fear God and love your neighbor, you dare not dress so. You dare not use the temple of the Holy Ghost as an instrument

of unrighteousness to allure the eyes and tempt the hearts and tantalize the passions of men.

Many men are wicked and will lust after you in spite of anything you can do to prevent it. They have “eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin” (II Pet. 2:14). Should you therefore help them to sin? Should you put further temptation in their way? Will God excuse you if you do? Other men, godly men, are not wicked, but only weak. David was not wicked. He was a man after God’s own heart. But in the presence of an unclothed woman, he was weak—and it would be a rare man who was not. Brethren in Christ are not wicked, but they may be weak. And the devil does all he can do to weaken them further. They are forced to live in a world where they are continually bombarded with sights which are designed by the enemy of their souls to weaken their morals and destroy their purity of heart.

And must Christian women help the devil do his work? Must they make themselves a temptation to their brethren even in the congregation of God? Oh, that you could understand the fierce and bitter conflict in the souls of your brethren, when you arouse their desires by the careless display of your feminine beauty. Oh, that you could hear their pleadings with God for help and deliverance from the power of these temptations. Oh, that you could see their tears of shame and repentance when the temptation has overcome them, and they have sinned with eyes and heart and mind. Never again would you plead for your right to dress as you please.

Pure Love for Brothers Erases Self-Will

The fact is, you have no such right. You have no right to destroy by your careless dress the brother for whom Christ died. You are bought with a price, and you are not your own. You are duty-bound to glorify God in your body—to clothe that body, not as you will, but as God wills. And a little of real love for the souls of your brethren would remove forever from your heart the desire to dress as you please. For “we then that are strong ought to bear with the infirmities [that is, weaknesses] of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell upon me.” (Rom. 15:1-3) Christ was willing to deny himself all the glories of heaven, and bear all the reproaches of the ungodly for your sake, in order to save your soul, and will you plead for your right to please yourself in your dress? Can you not deny yourself a little of comfort to save another man’s soul? Can you not bear a little reproach for being “old-fashioned” or “out-of-style,” in order to help your brother in his battle against sin?

A Serious Matter, Indeed

You may think I’m making too much of too little. You may suppose the case is not so serious as I have represented it to be. **But consider:** You are a woman, and cannot experience the passions of a man. You have your own passions, but they are

not the same as a man’s. They are (generally speaking) not so strong as a man’s. Neither are they so easily excited or inflamed as a man’s. Nor are they excited in the same manner as a man’s. If you would understand the workings of a man’s passions towards a woman, you must take a man’s word for it. You cannot experience it yourself. And the plain fact is, a man’s passions are easily excited by the sight of a woman’s body, as was plainly the case with David and Bathsheba, when he beheld her washing herself. Most men, ‘tis true, will be better able to resist your allurements than David did Bathsheba’s. They will not go so far as to seduce or rape you. But how do you know that they can resist the thought and desire of it? How do you know they do not sin with their eyes and heart and imagination? There is great pleasure to a man in merely looking and lusting, even though he goes no farther. You know very well the Bible says, “Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery already with her in his heart” (Matt 5:28), and will you say that this is not a serious matter? It is serious, for it is sin, and sin is serious.

Sin blights and deforms and ruins and destroys and damns. And if you would know just how serious a matter this is, you need only read the next verse, which says, “If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body be cast into hell” (Matt 5:29). Here is probably the most solemn statement in the Bible concerning the seriousness of sin, and it is spoken with reference to the very sin which you may so lightly and thoughtlessly occasion by your careless dress.

This is not a light matter and you dare not treat it lightly. At this point, you may say, “Amen. All true, but I do not need to hear it, for I dress modestly.” Are you quite sure of it? If you follow the practices and fashions of this age, you assuredly do not dress modestly, for modesty is ignored by many of them, and purposely thrown to the wind by many others. And it may be that you, being a woman, and not able to see yourself through a man’s eyes, are unable to perceive that which may really be tempting and provocative in your own dress. God would have you to be “as wise as serpents and harmless as doves” (Matt 10:16). But if you unthinkingly dress as the rest of the world does, you are assuredly neither wise nor harmless. Not wise, for however ignorant and innocent you may be, you are following a system of fashion which is designed by wicked men and devils to break down and destroy the morals of men. Not harmless, for however little you may intend it, you thus make yourself a fiery dart in the hands of the wicked one to tempt every man who sees you. You will pardon my plain speaking then, if I give you some specific instructions in order to make you wise. That being done, I have confidence that the godliness of your own heart will make you harmless.

Modesty, Please

As said before, the obvious design of God in making clothes for Adam and Eve was to cover their nakedness, and any clothing which fails to do so cannot be right. Bare backs,

Millet “Turkey”

(shape like turkey or in patties)

Serves about 10; tastes somewhat like turkey.

Blend till smooth:

1 pound firm tofu
1 large onion
1 T salt
½ t sage
¾ t thyme
1 t oregano or basil
½ cup cashews
2/3 cup water

Pour into bowl and add

6 cups cooked millet
7-9 cups corn flakes (fruit-juice sweetened)
1 cups Brazil nuts, finely chopped
1 cups onions, finely chopped

When all mixed, shape into turkey shape, if desired, then cover with finely-crushed fruit-juice sweetened corn flakes. Bake 1½ to 2 hrs at 300 degrees F.

Patties made from ½ cup or so each, bake 20-25 minutes at 350 degrees F.

To make millet: 2 cups uncooked millet, 2 t salt, 6½ cups water (to allow for evaporation). Bring to boil, simmer 45-60 minutes till light and fluffy and moist.



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bare midriiffs, bare legs and thighs, are wrong. Wrong in the sight of that God who clothed Adam and Eve with coats to cover their bare bodies. Shorts, halter tops, swimming suits, and anything and everything else which intentionally leave you partially nude have no place in the dress of a woman professing godliness. Whatever the rest of the world may do, you are bound to do right. And whatever the rest of the church may do, you are bound to do right. And the things which I just mentioned are so obvious and so flagrant a violation of the purpose of God in clothing you, that there ought not to be a moment's question as to what is right.

But (alas) the standards of the church are sunk so low in our day that there are actually Christians and preachers who will defend such things. They will actually defend what is called “mixed bathing”—that is, men and women freely mixing together in almost a state of nudity. Have they no shame? Have they no sense? I do not believe they will defend such things when they stand before the judgment seat of Christ. If they have no shame now, they will have some then. Meanwhile, we will say no more about forms of dress which so obviously thwart the purpose of God. Let us turn our thoughts to some things which, while less flagrant, nevertheless violate the evident purpose of clothing.

[The author now proceeds to specifically name several items of current fashion, the wearing of which by women tempt a man visually. He also explains that while an item may appear to be modest while a woman stands before a mirror, it is quite a different matter when she leans over, sits down, gets out of a car, climbs stairs, or reaches for something. He further points out that sometimes it is the clingy or form-hugging fabric that leads to the temptation. To read more of his plea for women to practice mindful dressing, to have an intentional concern for the spiritual welfare of males, please go to movingtowardmodesty.com and read the rest of this article. It can be found in the list of articles under the “Resources” tab.]