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**The Seventh-day Adventist  
Evangelical Conferences of  
1955-1956**

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## A WORD OF EXPLANATION

In this Brochure, we have brought together all the presently available source documents involved in the Seventh-day Adventist - Evangelical Conferences during 1955-1956. These documents are from the pens of some of the participants - the chief participants for the Evangelicals, Donald Grey Barnhouse and Walter R. Martin; and for the Seventh-day Adventists, the chairman of the Conferences, T. E. Unruh.

It must be noted that the observations and evaluations of these conferences on the part of the Evangelicals were written immediately at the conclusion of the dialogues, while the summation from the Adventist viewpoint did not come till twenty years later in 1977, and are written as an historical post-script. In fact, it must be remembered that the rank and file of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, including most of its ministry at that time, did not know who all were involved in these conferences, nor who the primary author of the book resulting from these dialogues - Questions on Doctrine - was, until the article appeared in Adventist Heritage written by T. E. Unruh.\*

There remains - still out of reach of research - the original answers given by the Adventist conferees to Barnhouse and Martin. The book - Questions on Doctrine - while purporting to be those answers, is not, but is rather a revision of what was given to these men. Because of this, we must conclude that what Walter Martin and Donald G. Barnhouse have written is an accurate statement of what the Adventist conferees did say to these men, and what the original answers did read as given to them. A careful evaluation of what T. E. Unruh has written reveals that the highest levels of the Adventist hierarchy were involved in the denial of basic, historic Adventist Christology. The list of names reads like a Who's Who of the executive officers of the General Conference at that time.

Although the book - Questions on Doctrine - is not being reprinted, and is no longer available at Adventist Book Centers, the follow-up book - Movement of Destiny - authored by the primary writer of Questions on Doctrine, is still being promoted. Movement of Destiny teaches the same heresies in Christology as did Questions on Doctrine, and bears the nihil obstat of the present president of the General Conference, Neal C. Wilson, and in the first edition, the imprimatur of the then "first minister" of the Church, Robert H. Pierson. In the second edition, a statement by Elder H. M. S. Richards, Sr., was substituted for Pierson's. Further the Statement of Beliefs voted at the 1980 General Conference reflects these same deviations from the historic teachings of the Church in the areas of the Incarnation and the Atonement. This makes it even more important that we understand what did take place during the Seventh-day Adventist-Evangelical Conferences in 1955-1956. The present theological crisis in the Church is not something that happened over night, nor is it the work of one man, but its roots go back to the betrayal of the trust placed in men who were suppose to stand "as guardians of the spiritual interests" of God's professed people. (See Testimonies for the Church, Vol V, p. 211)

Wm. H. Grotheer, Manager  
Publications & Research  
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\*Adventist Heritage, Vol. 4, #2, pp. 35-46. (Reproduced with Permission)

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# The Seventh-day Adventist Evangelical Conferences of 1955-1956

T. E. Unruh

A series of conferences between Seventh-day Adventist and Evangelical leaders, begun in the spring in 1955 and running into the summer of 1956, led to the publication of two books: the first, *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine*; the second, *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism*. The first is a definitive statement of contemporary Adventist belief, established on a broad international consensus of church leaders and prepared for publication by a representative committee appointed by the officers of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The second work, by Walter R. Martin, a leading expert on American cults, defines and examines Seventh-day Adventist doctrines, using the first work as source and authority. In his book Martin removed the Seventh-day Adventist church from his list of non-Christian cults and acknowledged that all whose beliefs followed the *Questions on Doctrine* should be counted members of the Body of Christ (the Christian church in the Evangelical definition) and therefore his brethren. While some Adventist and non-Adventist dissidents have been vociferous in their denunciation of the Adventist definitions and the Evangelical evaluation, in retrospect the

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*Now living in Grand Terrace, California, T. E. Unruh is a retired minister. When the events described here took place, Unruh was president of the East Pennsylvania Conference.*

conferences improved the understanding and appreciation of the Seventh-day Adventist church on the part of many Evangelical leaders, and likewise warmed many Adventist leaders toward the Evangelicals. It was a time when the gates between sheepfolds stood open.

There was no thought of precipitating anything of such historic consequence when I wrote a letter on November 28, 1949, commending Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse for his radio sermons on righteousness by faith based on the book of Romans. At the time, Dr. Barnhouse was a popular radio preacher, minister of the Tenth Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, author of a number of Evangelical books, and founder and senior editor of the influential *Eternity* magazine. I was the president of the East Pennsylvania Conference, with headquarters in Reading.

In his reply to my letter Barnhouse expressed astonishment that an Adventist clergyman would commend him for preaching righteousness by faith, since in his opinion it was a well known fact that Seventh-day Adventists believed in righteousness by works. He went on to state that since boyhood he had been familiar with Adventists and their teachings, and that in his opinion their views about the nature and work of Christ were Satanic and dangerous. He concluded by inviting this strange Adventist to have lunch with him.

We did not then get together for lunch, but we did correspond for a time. I returned a soft answer



*Donald Grey Barnhouse, radio pastor and editor of ETERNITY magazine, put Martin in touch with T. E. Unruh, because of Unruh's earlier exchanges with Barnhouse.*



*Though his first attempts at improving Barnhouse's understanding of Adventism resulted in further criticism, author T. E. Unruh had established that Adventists want to be understood. This provided an opening for future dialogue.*

to the first letter from Barnhouse and sent him a copy of *Steps to Christ*, at the same time affirming the evangelical character of Adventists doctrine. I thought we had an agreement that Barnhouse would publish no further criticism of Adventists before there was further contact and clarification. However, in *Eternity* for June 1950, he sharply criticized *Steps to Christ* and its author. After that, I saw no point in continuing the correspondence.

The Barnhouse article was entitled, "Spiritual Discernment, or How to Read Religious Books." It illustrated the difficulty that conservative Christians sometimes have in understanding one another. Here a man of great spiritual stature, a bold crusader for truth, revealed his prejudice against Adventism and Ellen G. White, whom he erroneously called, "founder of the cult." Concerning the first chapter of *Steps to Christ*, entitled "God's Love for Man," Barnhouse charged that so much emphasis on God's love neutralize His justice and that extending that love to unregenerate man smacked of the universalism

characteristic of the writings of the cult. He quoted a number of statements which he called half truths introducing Satanic error, like a worm on a hook, "the first bite is all worm, the second bite is all hook. That is the way the Devil works." Yet this man came to respect Ellen White as a sincere Christian and a great spiritual leader and to acknowledge that Seventh-day Adventists were his brethren in Christ.

**I**n the spring of 1955, almost six years after my correspondence with Dr. Barnhouse began, I heard from Walter R. Martin, who had seen our correspondence and who asked for face-to-face contact with representative Seventh-day Adventists. Martin had written a chapter critical of Adventism in his *Rise of the Cults* and now wanted to talk with Adventists before doing further writing on the subject of our doctrines.

Walter Martin had come to the attention of Dr. Barnhouse when the former was in this early twenties, a graduate student in the history of



*A sincere Christian who intended to expose Adventism as a sect, Walter R. Martin found himself confronted with evidence that Adventists are indeed Christian. Even though he feared it might mean financial ruin, he determined to present the facts as he saw them.*



*W. E. Read, who was a Field-Secretary for the General Conference in 1955, joined the group of Adventist conferees at Froom's request.*

American religion at New York University. By 1955 Martin had to his credit several books about American cults which were recognized as standard works in that field. He was a consulting editor on the *Eternity* staff, a Southern Baptist clergyman, and a member of the Evangelical Foundation, known to the faithful as "How Firm a Foundation," an organization started by Christian businessmen who managed the financial aspects of the Barnhouse enterprises.

It was understood at the outset that Martin, a research polemicist, had been commissioned to write against Seventh-day Adventism. Nevertheless, he declared that he wanted direct access so he could treat Adventists fairly. When I explained this to friends at the Adventist headquarters in Washington, D.C., they agreed that Martin should be treated fairly, and provided with the contacts he sought. Martin expressly asked to meet LeRoy E. Froom, with whose *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* he was already familiar. Froom suggested the inclusion of W. E. Read, then a field secretary of the General Conference. I served

as moderator or chairman throughout the series of conferences.

In March 1955, Martin came to Washington for his first meeting with the Adventists. With him was George E. Cannon, a professor of theology on the faculty of the Nyack, New York, Missionary College. At this first conference the two groups viewed each other with wariness. As the Adventists had anticipated, Martin had read widely from D. M. Canright, E. S. Ballenger, and E. B. Jones, as well as other detractors or defectors. Martin, for his part, seemed to expect a degree of resistance and cover-up, such as he may have met in some of his other investigations. This first meeting can best be described as a confrontation.

Martin began going through a list of questions which reflected his reading. We Adventists, rather than launching into a defense, began with a positive presentation in which we emphasized those doctrines held by our church in common with Evangelical Christians of all faiths in all ages. We stated our conviction that the Bible is the

inspired Word of God and the only rule of Adventist faith and practice. We affirmed our belief in the eternal and complete deity of Christ, in his sinless life in the incarnation, in his atoning death on the cross, once for all and all-sufficient, in his literal resurrection, and in his priestly ministry before the Father, applying the benefits of the atonement completed on the cross. And, finally, while setting no time, we affirmed our belief in the imminent premillennial return of Jesus Christ.

It quickly became clear to the Adventist conferees that both questions and answers would have to be formally stated in writing, that the answers would have to be made crystal clear to the Evangelical conferees and to those they represented, and that a way would have to be found to demonstrate the consensus we were sure we had. Martin was given books and periodicals to substantiate the claims we had made in our opening statement.

Following the first day of discussion both groups were busy into the night. The immediate concern of the Adventists was the list of questions with which Martin had begun his interrogation. Froom, who had a facile pen, took the responsibility of composing the initial answers, in a document running into twenty pages, whipped into shape by his secretary after hours. Until two o'clock in the morning Martin gave his attention to the reading matter we had given him.



The second day will never be forgotten by those who participated in the conferences. As the morning session began Martin announced that, as the result of the first round of discussion and the reading matter he had been given, he was admitting that he had been wrong about Seventh-day Adventism on several important points and had become persuaded that Adventists who believed as did the conferees were truly born-again Christians and his brethren in Christ. In a dramatic gesture he extended his hand in fellowship.

Martin faced serious problems as a result of his turn-about. He had become convinced that Adventists stood with other evangelical Christians on an impressive number of basic doctrines. He was not convinced that Adventists were right on doctrines we describe as "present truth," nor was he ever convinced of these. But how was he to write a book in which he would expose what he considered the errors of Adventism, while at the same time revealing his honest conviction that there existed sufficient common denominators to justify the inclusion of Seventh-day Adventists in the Evangelical Christian community — and still satisfy those who had commissioned him to write a book against Seventh-day Adventism? In his concern, he asked the Adventist conferees to join him in praying for divine guidance.

We Adventists also faced problems. The Evangelical conferees were satisfied that we were presenting contemporary Adventist doctrines, because we were supported by the 1931 statement of fundamental beliefs, which appeared regularly in official yearbooks and manuals of the church, and by the amplified statement in the baptismal covenant. But, they asked, if the Adventist church had reached a firm consensus why did they find contrary or misleading statements in Adventist publications, for sale in Adventist book and Bible houses? We explained that this was the result of efforts by the church to avoid an officially adopted creedal statement, and the denomination's preference for an open-end theology which permitted new light to penetrate in depth. This explanation did not impress them. They asked if we did not think that we ourselves were to some extent to blame if these erroneous statements were used against us. We could only reply that correction had begun.

While church leaders had known of the conferences from the start, a point was reached where we thought it was wise to make a formal

← From the first formal meeting, to the publishing of the book *QUESTIONS ON DOCTRINE*, LeRoy E. Froom was actively involved in composing the written distillation of the conferences.

report to the church. In a long letter to Froom and Read, dated July 18, 1955, I reviewed the progress in understanding achieved so far in the conferences, and expressed the hope that the Adventist conferees could be relieved of other responsibilities so as to have more time for what was expanding into a significant encounter, soon to include such a notable Evangelical as Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse. A copy of this letter was sent to R. R. Figuhr, president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Thereafter Figuhr gave the support of his office to the conferences and the publication of the definitive statement of Adventist belief which resulted.

Martin's immediate concern was his relationship with his sponsor, Dr. Barnhouse. He reported to his chief his conviction that both had been wrong in their judgment of contemporary Adventists, whom he had become convinced were not cultists but truly members of the Body of Christ. He then asked Barnhouse if he, Martin, was still a member of the team, and if he should go ahead with the book he had been commissioned to write, which now would have to be different from the one they had projected. Barnhouse gave him some reassurance but was not troubled himself. Shortly thereafter he asked to have the conferees meet with him at "Barchdale," his home in Doylestown, Pennsylvania.

In anticipation of the extension of Evangelical participation in the conferences Froom early in August urged the enlargement of the Adventist conferee group. He recommended the inclusion of R. Allan Anderson as a regular member because of the latter's background as evangelist, college teacher of religion, author, and especially because of his gift for diplomatic dialogue with leaders of other communions. Anderson was the secretary of the Ministerial Association of the General Conference and editor of *Ministry* magazine. Since April he had been participating in the conferences. Thereafter he was a member of the team, a tireless and valuable participant in the preparation of the text of the developing questions and answers. We four Adventists were authorized by the General Conference to plan with Martin and Cannon for the meeting with Barnhouse at his home in Doylestown. The planning session was held in Anderson's Washington office on August 22.

So it came about that on August 25 and 26, 1955, we four Adventists, with Walter Martin and George Cannon, sat down with Donald Grey Barnhouse, one of the most influential men among American Protestants and internationally famous as a representative Evangelical, to discuss what Seventh-day Adventists really believe.

Having welcomed the conferees, our host expressed his deep desire that love might prevail, and invited the small company to kneel with him while he prayed for the Spirit of the Lord to be present and to guide.

Dr. Barnhouse, always a very articulate man, began the conference by explaining his attitudes towards Seventh-day Adventists. He told about his boyhood in California, near Mountain View, where he imbibed the prevailing view that Adventists were ignorant fanatics who believed the Devil to be the sin-bearer, and that a person had to keep the seventh-day Sabbath in order to be saved. Later, his bad opinions had been confirmed, he said, by reading books by men who had been Adventists but had left the movement, notably E. B. Jones. But since Martin had begun his conversations with the Adventists, and had shared his findings, Barnhouse had come to see that there were sober, truly born-again Christians among Seventh-day Adventists. With them he was glad to fellowship as brethren, while reserving the right strenuously to refute the two or three positions taught by Adventists which Evangelicals hold to be in error. On this candid note the Doylestown conference began.

*Chosen for his experience at diplomatic dialogue with leaders of other churches, R. Allan Anderson joined the Adventist conferees before the first meetings with Dr. Barnhouse.* courtesy: R. A. Anderson







*Barchdale, the Barnhouse's home, was the site of several conferences between prominent Evangelicals and certain Adventist leaders in 1955 and 56.*

courtesy: Mrs. Margaret Barnhouse

In the first Doylestown conference there was much discussion of Froom's *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, as providing an historical background for Adventism. It was clear that the Evangelicals had respect for Froom's scholarly attainments. Also, the questions and answers so far developed were reviewed in depth during both days of the conference. We came to see that many misunderstandings rested on semantic grounds, because of our use of an inbred denominational vocabulary. Our friends helped us to express our beliefs in terms more easily understood by the theologians of other communions.

Donald Grey Barnhouse, Jr., a theology consultant on Billy Graham's staff, sat with us for a time on the first day. That evening, having seen his father's attitudes change, the son challenged the father to reveal through the pages of *Eternity* his new position on Seventh-day Adventism. Before we separated that evening our host told us he had decided to do this, though he knew it would precipitate a storm and would cost him many subscriptions.

That same evening, in our motel, Martin and Cannon came to express their amazement over the change they had witnessed in Dr. Barnhouse. To them it seemed a miracle. To Martin it meant that he would not have resistance from Barnhouse in writing the truth about Seventh-day Adventism, as he had come to see it.

On the second day we observed a change in the attitude of Barnhouse toward Ellen G. White. Anderson called Walter Martin's attention to a statement in Mrs. White's *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, which Martin in turn passed to Barnhouse. The latter was so impressed with it that he excused himself to take it upstairs for his secretary to copy. The statement reads in part:

We should come to the investigation of God's work with a contrite heart, a teachable and prayerful spirit . . . We should not study the Bible for the purpose of sustaining our preconceived opinions, but with the single object of learning what God has said.

. . . If there are those whose faith in God's word will not stand the test of an investigation of the Scriptures, the sooner they are revealed the better; for then the way will be opened to show them their error. We cannot hold that a position once taken, an idea once advocated, is not, under any circumstances, to be relinquished. There is but One who is infallible, — He who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

We appreciated the warmth, honesty and deep spiritual dedication of the man who was our host at "Barchdale." We have pleasant recollections of his hearty hospitality and that of his charming wife. Our entire days were spent at the Barnhouse home, necessitating our having our meals there. For these, Margaret Barnhouse went to great lengths exploring the unfamiliar land of vegetarian cookery.

Following the two days with Dr. Barnhouse the conferees went to their tasks with renewed confidence. We Adventists had come to see that we could state our doctrinal positions with clarity, in language understood by theologians of other churches, yet never bending for the sake of clarity or harmony alone. Our position was clearly stated by Froom in a letter to Martin:

In our statements we seek to honor and safeguard truth, not merely to pass . . . scrutiny of some group. We are not seeking the approbation of any organization. All we ask is understanding of our actual teachings. We must live our own denominational life under the eye and scrutiny of God. Our sole purpose is to please Him, to whom we are accountable and whom we adore.

We saw that, while there had been doctrinal deviation, and this was still a possibility, it was essential for us to demonstrate the existence of a majority position, a preponderant view, that a consensus actually existed, and that we were correctly reflecting that consensus. As means to this end the General Conference arranged a trip



*R. R. Figuhr, General Conference president from 1954 to 1966, supported the Adventist conferees in their meetings with other Christian leaders.*

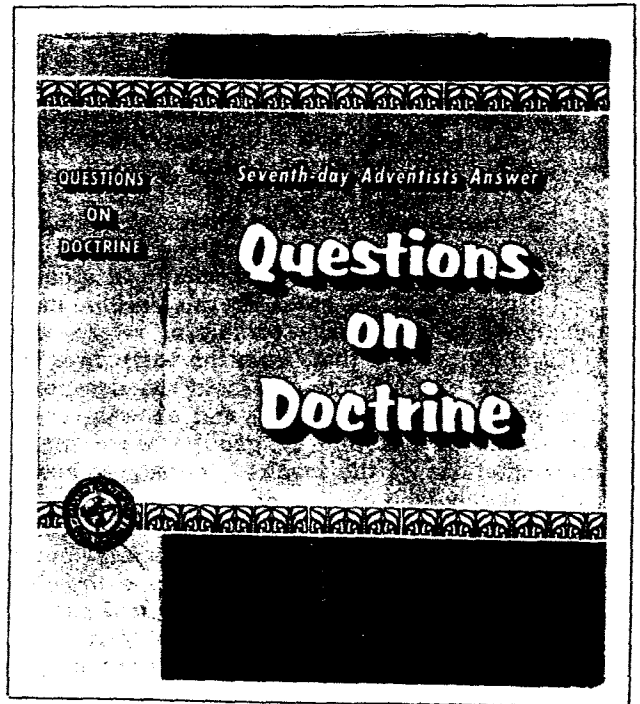
for Martin to the West Coast, where Anderson was to introduce him to representative Adventists. On this trip Martin spoke in Adventist churches and met the staff of the Adventist radio station, Voice of Prophecy. In the East, Martin met with the staff of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary and spoke at an assembly there. On overseas trips he observed Adventist missions in action and found occasion to clarify misconceptions about Adventists held by missionaries of other denominations.

In another dimension, it was planned to demonstrate consensus by submitting the questions and answers to Adventist leaders in North America, and then around the world, using a mailing list of more than 250 names. The document by this time had grown to some sixty questions and answers, and was beginning to be thought of as having book possibilities — a definitive statement of contemporary Adventist

\*Members of the committee: R. R. Figuhr (chairman), A. V. Olson, W. B. Ochs, L. K. Dickson, H. L. Rudy, A. L. Ham, J. I. Robison, W. R. Beach, C. L. Torrey, F. D. Nichol, T. E. Unruh, R. A. Anderson, L. E. Froom, W. E. Read.

theology, in convenient reference book form. A committee of fourteen members was appointed with General Conference approval, to prepare the document for distribution to church leaders, then to analyze and evaluate the feedback. Figuhr, the president of the General Conference, was chairman of this committee.\* Correspondence relating to the project was entrusted to J.I. Robison, the president's secretary. The response was good, the consensus was demonstrated, and the decision to publish was made. Thus *Questions on Doctrine* came into being.

The conferees on the Evangelical side were also assessing the support of their new stand on Adventism. Martin, in November 1955, reported talks with Pat Zondervan, who was to publish *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism* and who was interested in the new direction the book was taking. A month later, Martin reported going over the questions and answers in their entirety in a five-hour session with Dr. Barnhouse, and stated that Barnhouse was satisfied that Adventists were fundamentally evangelical in all matters concerning salvation.



*An editorial committee chosen by the General Conference prepared the book SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS ANSWER QUESTIONS ON DOCTRINE, based on the points raised in the evangelical conferences.*

credit: Review and Herald

Martin also reported that Grank E. Gaebelein had written to James DeForest Murch, stating his opinion that the Seventh-day Adventist church would qualify for membership in the evangelical group, if they so desired. Dr. Gaebelein was the founder and director of the famed Stony Brook School (of which Martin was a graduate), a member of the Reformed Episcopal church, and an official in the National Association of Evangelicals. Dr. Murch, prolific author of religious works, publications director and later president of the National Association of Evangelicals and the editor of *United Evangelical Action*, was a member of the Disciples of Christ.

Meanwhile, correspondence between Froom and E. Schuyler English, editor of *Our Hope* and chairman of the revision committee of the *Scofield Reference Bible*, resulted in an editorial statement by Dr. English in February 1956, correcting misconceptions about Adventist doctrines as to the nature of Christ in the incarnation, the Trinity, and the completed atonement on the cross, followed by an article by Walter Marin in November 1956, the earliest affirmation of the essential Christianity of the theology of Adventism on matters relating to salvation to appear in a non-Adventist journal of note.

A second two-day conference at the home of Dr. Barnhouse took place in May of 1956, days which Barnhouse described as spent in mediation, communion, and discussion. This time our host questioned the Adventist conferees closely about our concept of the role of Ellen G. White as God's messenger to the remnant church and the weight the Seventh-day Adventist church gave to her writings compared to the Scriptures. There was also thorough discussion of the Adventist teaching regarding the heavenly sanctuary and the role of Christ as priest, mediating the sacrificial atonement completed on the cross. By this time we had assembled an impressive exhibit of references which demonstrated that, from the early days of our church, Mrs. White had held the doctrinal concepts we were espousing, and showing that deviations of persons or groups were misrepresentations of the inspired messages, however sincerely held.

In August 1956, Russell Hitt, the managing editor of *Eternity*, came to Washington to go over with us the long-awaited Barnhouse article repudiating his former position on Adventism. Supporting articles by Martin, to follow in *Eternity*, were also gone over. We were given permission to quote or otherwise refer to these articles.

So it came about that a year after the first Doylestown conference, where Dr. Barnhouse had come to see that he would have to report his new position on Adventism, *Eternity* for September

1956, carried his article, entitled "Are Seventh-day Adventists Christians?" The article was written with courage and clarity, and it was lengthy. The author began:

In the past two years several evangelical leaders have come to a new attitude toward the Seventh-day Adventist church. The change is a remarkable one since it consists of moving the Seventh-day Adventists, in our opinion, out of the list of anti-Christian and non-Christian cults into the group of those who are brethren in Christ; although they still must be classified, in our opinion, as holding two or three very unorthodox and in one case peculiar doctrines. The steps in our change of attitude must be traced and the justification of our changed attitude documented. Adventists who read this should realize that evangelical readers have been conditioned through the years for thinking that Adventists must be classified as non-Christians. This present article will explain reasons why this should no longer be so.

Barnhouse went on to give an account of the conferences and the mutual understandings resulting, and to announce the two forthcoming books, Martin's and ours. He defined the areas of agreement which he considered sufficient for identifying Adventists as members of the Body of Christ, within the evangelical definition. The three major areas of disagreement he described as conditional immortality, observance of the Seventh-day Sabbath, and the investigative judgment. To these he could give no credence at all, though the first two had historical foundation in the Christian church. The last he described as a doctrine never known in theological history until the second half of the nineteenth century.

The supporting articles by Martin appeared in later issues of *Eternity*. The first gave the historical background of modern Adventism, the second a comprehensive statement of what Adventists really believe, and the last dealing with Adventism's unique or unusual doctrines. In these articles Martin was both lucid and fair. And while Adventists did not find his criticism of their distinctive doctrines either palatable or convincing, they did appreciate his candor, as he wrote at the end of his second article:

However, whatever else one may say about Seventh-day Adventism, it cannot be denied from their truly representative literature and their historic positions that they have always as a majority, held to the cardinal, fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith which are necessary for salvation, and to the growth in grace that characterizes all true Christian believers.

# eternity

MAGAZINE OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH



In this issue

The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism . . . . . Walter R. Martin  
A Northern Christian Looks at the Race Question . . . . . Joseph T. Berke  
Report from Hong Kong . . . . . Donald Gray Barnhouse

OCTOBER  
1955

*ETERNITY* magazine, which carried both Barnhouse's and Martin's articles acknowledging Adventists as Christians, lost nearly one-fourth of its subscriptions as a result. The loss was temporary though, for within a year circulation was higher than ever. credit: Eternity Magazine

Barnhouse, speaking for Martin as well as himself, ended his historic article with these words:

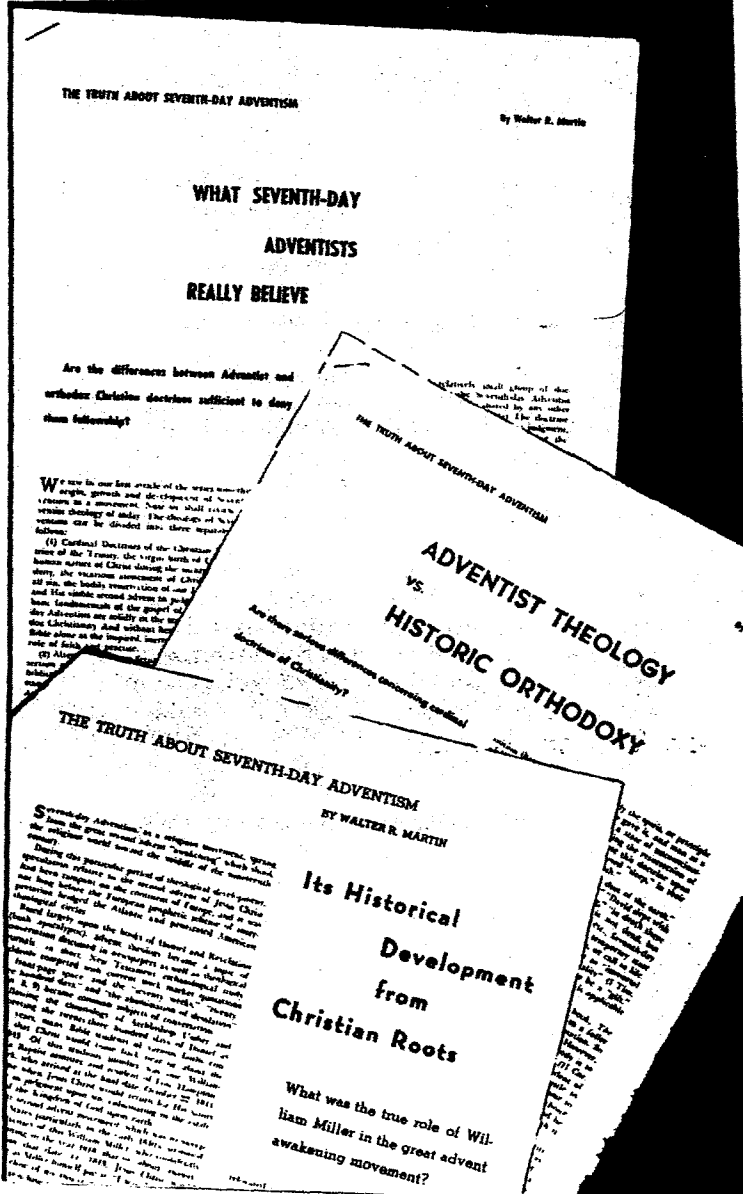
In conclusion, I should like to say that we are delighted to do justice to a much-maligned group of sincere believers, and in our minds and hearts take them out of the group of utter heretics . . . . to acknowledge them as redeemed brethren and members of the Body of Christ. It is our sincere prayer that they may be led to consider further the points on which they are so widely divergent from the rest of the Body of Christ and in so doing promote their own spiritual growth and that of their fellow Christians.

It was a sobering experience as the conferees came to this point in the lengthy dialogue to see the warm Christian friendliness of the Evangelicals. They expressed a concern that the Adventists might come to see as they saw. But they also

realized that we Adventists, moved by the same Christian spirit, hoped that exposure to the special truths we believed would lead the Evangelicals to believe as we did. This we all saw as a dilemma of the Body of Christ, which only the Holy Spirit could resolve.

The expected storm broke quickly. There were at least a few of the peers of Barnhouse and Martin, English, Caebelein and Murch, for whom their stand was gall and wormwood. The *Sunday School Times*, published in the City of Brotherly Love where Dr. Barnhouse had his pastorate, carried a series of

The three part series Martin wrote for *ETERNITY* magazine cited points of agreement and difference between Evangelicals and Adventists. Though he still argued against certain doctrines, he acknowledged that they had been held by Church leaders throughout history, such as Luther. credit: Eternity Magazine



articles against Adventism. The *King's Business*, official organ of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles (BIOLA), ran articles by Louis Talbot, the editor, attacking not only the Adventists but the editor of *Eternity* as well. While these attacks could not be considered typical, they at least showed that the editor of *Time* was less than correct when he announced in the December 31, 1956 issue that the Fundamentalists had made peace with the Adventists.

When *Eternity* lost one-fourth of its subscribers in protest, and the sale of Martin's books plummeted, Barnhouse asked anxiously, "Are you sure of your positions?" On Martin's affirmative answer, Barnhouse said, "Then we will go ahead." Within a year the *Eternity* subscriptions were higher than before, and there was again a good market for Martin's books.

Meanwhile, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists was taking a direct hand in planning the book taking shape from the questions and answers. In September 1956 the General Conference Officers appointed a small editorial committee.\* On January 23, 1957, the Review and Herald Publishing Association was invited to manufacture the book "as compiled by a committee appointed by the General Conference," accepting the manuscript in its completed form. And on January 30 the executive committee of the publishing house accepted the manuscript for publication on a "text basis." The General Conference officers approved the title, *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine*, and also the short title, *Questions on Doctrine*. The officers also approved the exact wording of the introduction as it later appeared in the book over the signature of the editorial committee. Here it was made clear that the book was the work of a representative selection of participants, not of an individual, nor even of the committee, and that those preparing the answers made no claim to having provided the final word on Christian doctrine.

In September the officers recorded a series of actions having to do with publicity and distribution. Union conference papers and Adventist magazines would be asked to run advertisements. Non-Adventist periodicals would be invited to run ads and to publish book reviews. A suitable four-page folder was to be printed for distribution to non-Adventist clergymen. High-ranking religious leaders in North America were to receive complimentary copies. Churches were to be invited to

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Members of the editorial committee: A. V. Olson (chairman), W. E. Read, M. Thurber (book editor of the Review and Herald Publishing Association), W. G. C. Murdoch, R. Hammill, L. E. Froom, and R. A. Anderson, consultants.

put copies in their libraries and to present complimentary copies to Protestant ministers in the community. Book and Bible houses were to stock *Questions on Doctrine*.

*Questions on Doctrine* was published late in 1957. It was designed to begin with the "Statement of Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists," first published in 1931, later given General Conference approval, and regularly included in church manuals and yearbooks of the denomination. This was to make clear to Adventists and non-Adventists alike, that in presenting an amplified statement on doctrine the General Conference was not setting forth a new theology, but was clarifying and amplifying the doctrines most generally believed by contemporary Seventh-day Adventists. Included in appendices was an extensive compilation from the writings of Ellen G. White, covering such subjects as the Diety and eternal preexistence of Christ and His place in the Trinity; His divine-human nature in the incarnation; His completed sacrificial atonement on the cross; and His priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. These were the areas which had been found to be most frequently misunderstood and misquoted. This compilation was later included in Volume 7-A of the *Seventh-day Adventists Commentary* series. Many of these same quotations appeared in the *Ministry* magazine, between May 1956, and March 1957, under the title, "Counsels from the Spirit of Prophecy."

The editor of *Ministry*, R. A. Anderson, made sure during the months preceding the publication of *Questions and Doctrine*, that the Adventist clergy was fully informed of what to expect. He described the conferences with the Evangelicals and the removal of century-old misunderstandings. He explained the procedure for getting a doctrinal consensus from world leaders in the church. The unity of belief so demonstrated he attributed to the influence of the writings of Ellen G. White. There were also articles during this period from W. E. Read on the nature of Christ and from L. E. Froom on the atonement.

It came as a surprise to the planners, after the demonstration of a solid consensus from world leaders in the church and the preview in *Ministry* of what was to come, that *Questions on Doctrine* should be subjected to attack from Adventist sources. The critics seemed to be saying the same things, suggesting a common source. This was not hard to find. M. L. Andreason, a respected retired Adventist theologian, author and Bible teacher, had widely circulated eleven mimeographed documents and six printed leaflets addressed to the churches. In these the writer

accused the compilers of *Questions on Doctrine* of attempting to change traditional doctrines, and he accused the officers of the General Conference of planning to revise the writings of Ellen White to conform.

A formal denial of these charges was prepared by A. V. Olson, a General Conference vice president, and chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Ellen G. White Estate. This reply, dated September 6, 1960, was sent at the request of the General Conference officers to officers of the overseas divisions of the church and to all union conference officers and local conference presidents in the North American Division. The incident was soon closed, and the author of the criticism made his peace with the church to which he had formerly given distinguished service.

The Zondervan Publishing House had originally scheduled publication of Walter Martin's *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism* for January 1957, as part of the series on cult apologetics. There were delays, but so long as there was a possibility of his book coming out first he was supplied with page proofs of the Adventist book, so he would have reliable references. Martin had promised that in describing the teachings of contemporary Seventh-day Adventists he would only use statements from the book to be published with the approval of the General Conference. As late as October 1959, R. A. Anderson and W. E. Read, with H. W. Lowe, chairman of the Biblical Study and Research Group of the General Conference, were going over Martin's galleys, preparatory to writing a statement to be included in the book. *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism* was, and is, a notable book. In the "Foreword" Barnhouse stated:

Since leaders of Adventism agree that this book fairly represents their theological position, this work is a milestone in Christian apologetics; for, during this study, brethren talked and prayed together, assessed each other's position and agreed to disagree while still obeying the Lord's command to love one another.

In the author's "Preface" Martin reminded both Adventists and non-Adventists that still to be healed were wounds caused by ignorance, prejudice, and an unforgiving spirit, of which Adventists as well as non-Adventists were guilty. But, he wrote, the place of healing is at the cross. Meeting there, we find strength and grace to keep the "lost commandment," that we love one another.

The Adventist statement, over the name of H. W. Lowe, as it appeared in Martin's book, asked that members of the Adventist church, when reading the last chapter of the book, in which Martin described his points of disagreement with Adventism, would remember the fair

Special 8-page Green Report

## Why Seventh-day Adventism Is Not Evangelical

**EDITOR'S NOTE.** This month we are starting the first in an important series of articles on the Seventh-day Adventist system of religion. This never-before-published series has just been completed by Dr. Louis T. Talbot, chancellor of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, and long-time (25 years) researcher into the cults and religions of our day.

As a sidelight to this important series we're printing part of a letter we received a few weeks ago from a woman who had been raised as a Seventh-day Adventist. Here's her letter.

Sirs:

I was a Seventh-day Adventist for 29 years, but I became dissatisfied with so much unhappiness that my husband and I and our four children began going elsewhere in search for something better. Just the two older children and I were members. They got so they wouldn't

please turn page



*Some evangelical publications reacted strongly to the acceptance of Seventh-day Adventists as evangelicals. This issue of the KING'S BUSINESS by the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, was one of the most pointed.* credit: Bible Institute of Los Angeles

and accurate statement of Adventist teachings set forth in the earlier portions of the book. Lowe also expressed the gratitude and respect the Adventist leadership felt toward Martin for his correct recording of their beliefs and for his attitude of Christian brotherhood.

In retrospect, the publication of *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism* and *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine*, improved relations between Evangelicals and Seventh-day Adventists. Martin's book did not convince all Adventist isolationists that its author and Barnhouse spoke for the Evangelicals, or that fraternal relations were desirable or safe. And the publication of *Questions on Doctrine* did not

convince all Evangelicals that Adventists were not heretics in Christian robes. Isolated attacks on Adventism continued. And Martin's book could not be bought in Adventist book stores.

Paul Hopkins, the executive secretary of the (Barnhouse) Evangelical Foundation, struck a hopeful note in a letter to me, dated May 6, 1960:

Quite honestly, I can see that what you began with us is still only the beginning and I recognize that you are going to have the same problems within your group that we have in ours. There is much land still to be possessed before the members of the Body of Christ can recognize one another as we should. In the meantime, let us continue to work and pray that the day may come sooner than we might normally expect.

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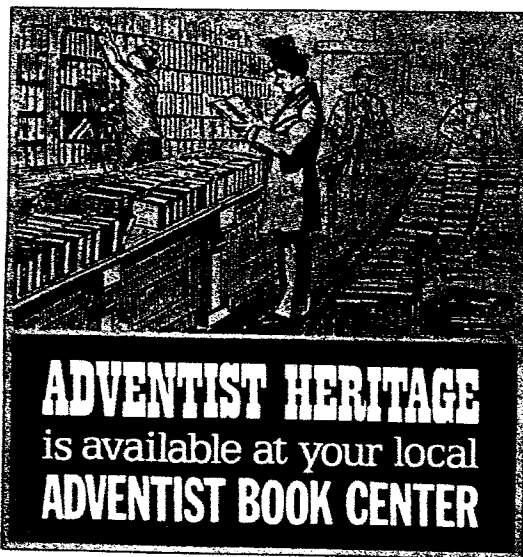
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# Are Seventh-day Adventists Christians?

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## A NEW LOOK AT SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM

By DONALD GREY BARNHOUSE

In the past two years several evangelical leaders have come to a new attitude toward the Seventh-day Adventist church. The change is a remarkable one since it consists in moving the Seventh-day Adventists, in our opinion, out of the list of anti-Christian and non-Christian cults into the group of those who are brethren in Christ; although they still must be classified, in our opinion, as holding two or three very unorthodox and in one case peculiar doctrines. The steps in our change of attitude must be traced and the justification of our changed attitude documented. Adventists who read this should realize that evangelical readers have been conditioned through the years for thinking that Adventists must be classified as non-Christians. This present article will explain reasons why this should no longer be so.

Our change of attitude goes back to our acquaintance with a young man whom I first knew in New York City as a member of my weekly Bible class there. When I first knew him, the Rev. Mr. Walter R. Martin was still in his early twenties, busily engaged in his study of American religious history. He is at present a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in New York University, working on his thesis in the field of non-Christian religions that had their beginning in America. Of these the best known are Christian Science, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormonism, Unity, and up until very recently Seventh-day Adventism.

Already Mr. Martin's volumes *Jehovah of the Watchtower*, *The Christian Science Myth*, *The Rise of the Cults*, and a textbook, *The Christian and the Cults*, have become standard works in their field.\* Mr. Martin joined the staff of ETERNITY magazine first as consulting editor on the cults and now as a full-time member of the staff of the Evangelical Foundation.

A little less than two years ago it was decided that Mr. Martin should undertake research in connection with Seventh-day Adventism. We got into touch with the Adventists saying that we wished to treat them fairly and would appreciate the opportunity of interviewing some of their leaders. The response was immediate and enthusiastic.

Mr. Martin went to Takoma Park, Washington, D. C., the headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist movement. At first the two groups looked upon each other with great suspicion. Mr. Martin had read a vast quantity of Adventist

literature and presented them with a series of approximately forty questions concerning their theological position. On a second visit he was presented with scores of pages of detailed theological answers to his questions. Immediately it was perceived that the Adventists were strenuously denying certain doctrinal positions which had been previously attributed to them. As Mr. Martin read their answers he came, for example, upon a statement that they repudiated absolutely the thought that seventh-day Sabbath keeping was a basis for salvation and a denial of any teaching that the keeping of the first day of the week is as yet considered to be the receiving of the anti-Christian "mark of the beast." He pointed out to them that in their book store adjoining the building in which these meetings were taking place a certain volume published by them and written by one of their ministers categorically stated the contrary to what they were now asserting. The leaders sent for the book, discovered that Mr. Martin was correct, and immediately brought this fact to the attention of the General Conference Officers, that this situation might be remedied and such publications be corrected. This same procedure was repeated regarding the nature of Christ while in the flesh which the majority of the denomination has always held to be sinless, holy, and perfect despite the fact that certain of their writers have occasionally gotten into print with contrary views completely repugnant to the Church at large. They further explained to Mr. Martin that they had among their number certain members of their "lunatic fringe" even as there are similar wild-eyed irresponsibles in every field of fundamental Christianity. This action of the Seventh-day Adventists was indicative of similar steps that were taken subsequently.

The next phase of the discussion moved in August, 1955, to a place in the country outside Philadelphia. There, four of the leaders of Seventh-day Adventist thought came for a two-day conference in the home of the editor-in-chief of ETERNITY. Here they, together with Mr. Martin and Professor George Cannon of the Nyack Missionary College, spent two full days going over the approximately hundred pages of the Seventh-day Adventist answers to Mr. Martin's questions. At the outset the seven of us, on our knees, prayed together approaching God through the Lord Jesus Christ alone.

At that time I made a statement to these men approxi-

\* These are all available from ETERNITY Book Service.



mately as follows: I want to explain to you my attitude toward Seventh-day Adventism. In the providence of God I was born in a little town in California about forty miles away from Mountain View where Ellen G. White, revered teacher in the Adventist movement, had her headquarters. At that time the followers of the Adventist movement that came into our town and others of the region were, from our point of view, colossally ignorant fanatics. We considered them to be the descendants of the Millerites who in 1844 were supposed to have gone on top of a hill to await the Second Coming of Christ on a certain night, and who were utterly deceived and discredited. We understood that the Seventh-day Adventists believed the devil to be the sinner,\* that a person had to keep Saturday in order to be saved,\* thus denying the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Later on all of my bad opinions about the Adventist movement had been confirmed and established, I thought, by books which had been written by men who had been Adventist preachers and who had left the movement; notably, there was a series of works by E. B. Jones which showed that he had been a Seventh-day Adventist layman missionary and had believed a long list of horrible things which he had since abandoned now that he had been "saved."

I went on to state to my guests that in many conversations with Walter Martin through the previous year and through reading their prepared statements I had come to see that, beyond question, there were sober, sane, truly regenerated men among the leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist church. While they still held positions which were totally alien to my thinking and which I had to repudiate, I was ready to admit that some of these positions had been held in the past by noted Christians (Martin Luther held one of these positions which with the modern Lutheran church I repudiate), and that I was ready to extend a hand to these men as Christian brethren though I still reserve the right strenuously to refute the two or three positions which evangelicals hold to be in error.

These leaders accepted my explanation and acknowledged that they understood the difficulties.

The seven of us worked through the Adventist statement for two days. Mr. Martin had further conferences with the Adventist leaders in Washington, D. C., and in Glendale, California. He was invited to preach in two of the large Adventist churches in the country and spoke to their theological seminary and to the employees of the *Voice of Prophecy* broadcast. In May, 1956, the same group of Adventist leaders returned to my home in Pennsylvania for another two-day conference.

Now the time has come to make known to the general public the results of the hundreds of hours of labor that have been expended by Mr. Martin and the similar time

\* Absolutely repudiated in Seventh-day Adventist theology today we are now informed.

that has been put forth by many Adventist leaders.

Mr. Martin's book on Seventh-day Adventism will appear in print within a few months. It will carry a foreword by responsible leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist church to the effect that they have not been misquoted in the volume and that the areas of agreement and disagreement as set forth by Mr. Martin are accurate from their point of view as well as from our evangelical point of view. All of Mr. Martin's references to a new Adventist volume on their doctrines will be from the page proof of their book, which will appear in print simultaneously with his work. Henceforth any fair criticism of the Adventist movement must refer to these simultaneous publications.

The position of the Adventists seems to some of us in certain cases to be a new position; to them it may be merely the position of the majority group of sane leadership which is determined to put the brakes on any members who seek to hold views divergent from that of the responsible leadership of the denomination.

(1) Notably, the Adventist leadership proclaims that the writings of Ellen G. White, the great counselor of the Adventist movement, are not on a parity with Scripture. While the Adventist church claims to have received great blessing from the ministry of Mrs. White, they admit her writings are not infallible, but in all fairness they do revere her writings as special counsels from God to their movement. Her writings incidentally are *not* a test of fellowship in the Seventh-day Adventist church.

(2) While the Adventists keep Saturday as the Sabbath, they specifically repudiate the idea that Sabbath-keeping is in any way a means of salvation. They acknowledge freely that Christians today who keep Sunday in good faith are as much members of the Body of Christ as they are.

(3) To avoid charges that have been brought against them by evangelicals, Adventists have already worked out arrangements that the *Voice of Prophecy* radio program and the *Signs of the Times*, their largest paper, be identified as presentations of the Seventh-day Adventist church.

The Adventists specifically repudiate any teachings by ministers or members of their faith who have believed,

(Continued on page 43)

Have the Seventh-day Adventists been proselytizers? During the course of our dealings with Adventist leaders we brought up the complaints, common on the mission field, that Adventist missionaries and workers have been proselytizers. The leaders affirmed vehemently that they have been doing everything possible to prevent such proselytizing, and, while there may have been such cases in the past, they hold that such methods are not now in use. In cooperation with them we will gladly receive from any missionaries in the world fully-documented instances of such proselytization that have taken place during the past two years. Such documentation, if any, sent to the Rev. Mr. Walter R. Martin, in care of ETERNITY, will be forwarded to Adventist leaders, who have promised a thorough investigation.

## SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

proclaimed, and written any matter which would classify them among Arians. That is to say, they hold that Jesus Christ is the eternal Word of God, second member of the Godhead, eternally existing with God as God, and they repudiate absolutely any concept that Jesus was a created being. While many of their Bible teachers have shown that "the angel of Jehovah" in the Old Testament is none other than Jesus Christ, this position is one that I myself have taken and taught in my book, *The Invisible War*. The word "angel" means "messenger" and Christ's action as a "messenger" did not and does not make Him a creature or less than God. This declaration on the part of the Adventist leaders specifically removes them from classification with Jehovah's Witnesses who are Arians in the modern sense, and the Adventists totally repudiate the Jehovah's Witnesses' concept of Christ. The Adventists take their place in the very center of traditional Christianity's Trinitarian doctrine as accepting the Christology of the New Testament of the Fathers, the Reformers, and all true evangelicals.

(4) The Seventh-day Adventist position on salvation is Arminian, classifying them with Wesley and the modern groups such as the Holiness and Nazarene movements. I discovered, however, in our long talks together that these brethren have what I think is a misconception of Calvinism. They would not find it too hard to get along with the modern Calvinism which is held by most evangelical Baptists and Presbyterians today and vice versa.

We discovered that there are still some sharp areas of disagreement. To my mind, the most important of these is the Adventist belief in "conditional immortality." They believe that death brings unconscious "soul-sleeping" and that the lost are to be annihilated, thus denying the doctrines of hell and eternal punishment. When we realize, however, that both Martin Luther and William Tyndale held this doctrine, we cannot on this ground alone divorce the Adventists or sever them from the true Body of Christ. We most heartily disagree with them on these doctrines and pray that they will soon move to a position of belief with the vast majority of evangelical Christians throughout the centuries.

We also disagree on the question of the Seventh-day Sabbath. A great amount of time was spent in our early meetings to spell out the fact that Adventists do not believe in legalism as a part of salvation though everything in their practice seems to indicate that they do. They recognize clearly that some of their teachers have taught the contrary, but they take a position (to us very illogical) that the Ten Commandments are to be obeyed, but that their teaching has no part whatsoever as a down payment or a part payment toward salvation which they and we in common confess to be by Christ alone on the basis of His expiatory death on Calvary.

The final major area of disagreement is over the doctrine of the "investigative judgment," which is a doctrine never known in theological history until the second half of the nineteenth century and which is a doctrine held exclusively by the Seventh-day Adventists. At the very beginning of our contacts with the Adventist leaders, Mr. Martin and I thought that this would be the doctrine on which it would be impossible to come to any understanding which would permit our including them among those who could be counted as Christians believing in the finished work of Christ. In order to understand this doctrine of "investigative judgment" it is necessary to devote a few paragraphs to Adventist history.

In the early nineteenth century there was a great increase in the study of Bible prophecy. Dr. LeRoy Froom, the eminent Adventist historian, in his monumental four-volume history of the development of Adventist teaching on prophecy, shows clearly that innumerable Bible students from a score of denominational affiliations were carried away with date-setting for the Second Coming of Christ. The reason for this is (what I believe to be) a false interpretation of Daniel's prophecy of 2,300 days. In Daniel 8:14 a figure is given of 2,300 days. In the early nineteenth century it became fashionable to equate this with 2,300 years, interpreting this verse by association with Ezekiel 4:6 where it is stated, "I have appointed thee each day for a year." Since 2,300 years from Daniel would fall toward the end of the first half of the nineteenth century, thousands of people believed that the Second Coming of Christ would take place in that period. Anglicans, Presbyterians, Lutherans, etc. spent extraordinary amounts of time and effort in figuring out the chronologies, and ultimately the consensus agreed on 1844.

It should be realized that there was no Seventh-day Adventist church at that time. All of these "Adventists" were in the major denominations. One William Miller of Baptist background even placed the advent between specific months. The newspapers of America were filled with headlines concerning the matter. A historical study of the events demonstrates that these people were serious-minded students who were definitely self-deceived. The story that they dressed in flowing white robes and went to the top of a hill has been exploded. Hoodlums did dress up in flowing robes and in ribald fashion mocked these people, but they themselves were dreadfully sincere.

Dr. Froom, in the fourth volume of his work, describes these events as "The Great Disappointment." Out of the "Great Disappointment" grew the Seventh-day Adventist church. It will be impossible to understand the movement unless it is realized that most of the Adventists before 1844 kept Sunday were found in dozens of denominations and had no common doctrine or organization. In their disappointment little segments of these disillusioned people drew together. One of the segments kept Saturday as the Sabbath. Still another of the segments believed in conditional immortality and soul-sleeping, and a third segment fell upon the doctrine of "the investigative judgment." The latter doctrine, to me, is the most colossal, psychological, face-saving phenomenon in religious history! It would further seem to me that the various segments, each with a distinctive doctrine not held by the majority of Christendom, drew together and consolidated on the basis of the acceptance of each other's peculiar heterodox teachings. The error of conditional immortality and the error of Sabbatarianism are both well known. That of the "investigative judgment," however, now requires further explanation.

On the morning after the "Great Disappointment," two men were going through a corn field in order to avoid the pitiless gaze of their mocking neighbors to whom they had given their final witness and had said an eternal goodbye the day before. To put it in the words of Hiram Edson (the man in the corn field who first conceived this peculiar idea), he was overwhelmed with the conviction "that instead of our High Priest coming out of the Most Holy of the heavenly sanctuary to come to this earth on the tenth day of the seventh month at the end of 2,300 days.

He for the first time *entered* on that day the *second* apartment of that sanctuary, and that He had work to perform in the Most Holy before coming to this earth." It is to my mind, therefore, nothing more than a human, face-saving ideal! It should also be realized that some uninformed Seventh-day Adventists took this idea and carried it to fantastic literalistic extremes. Mr. Martin and I heard the Adventist leaders say, flatly, that they repudiate all such extremes. This they have said in no uncertain terms. Further, they do not believe, as some of their earlier teachers taught, that Jesus' atoning work was not completed on Calvary but instead that He was still carrying on a second ministering work since 1844. This idea is also totally repudiated. They believe that since His ascension Christ has been ministering the benefits of the atonement which He completed on Calvary. Since the sanctuary doctrine is based on the type of the Jewish high priest going into the Holy of Holies to complete his atoning work, it can be seen that what remains is most certainly exegetically untenable and theological speculation of a highly imaginative order. What Christ is now doing, since 1844, according to this version, is going over the records of all human beings and deciding what rewards are going to be given to individual Christians. We personally do not believe that there is even a suspicion of a verse in Scripture to sustain such a peculiar position, and we further believe that any effort to establish it is *stale, flat, and unprofitable!* This doctrine is linked with that of the scapegoat (Azazel) of Leviticus 16, whom Seventh-day Adventists, in company with not a few recognized non-

Adventist Hebrew scholars, believe to be Satan. It should be noted, however that the transaction with the scapegoat is in no way to be construed as part or completion of the atonement which Adventists believe Christ alone vicariously made on Golgotha. The meaning of the "scapegoat" teaching is that Satan merely bears away into final annihilation his responsibility in tempting man to sin, much as the master criminal who must pay a penalty for plotting and directing a crime though he never actually committed it. This concept while admittedly strange is not heretical because it is divorced from the doctrine of the atonement in Adventist theology so that it becomes only a kind of "legal transaction" *not* in any sense a *vicarious bearing of sharing* in the sin atonement of Christ on the Cross. This editor, of course, flatly rejects such an interpretation and reserves the right to consider it as a somewhat bizarre excursion into the field of speculative theology.

To sum up, I would say that the differences between other evangelicals and the Seventh-day Adventist position are three:

(1) The unimportant and almost naive doctrine of the "investigative judgment."

(2) The more serious doctrine of Sabbath-keeping, which is not sufficient to bar Seventh-day Adventists from the fellowship of true Christians but which makes such fellowship very difficult because of the overtones of legalism that has a tendency to gnaw at the roots of the truth of sovereign grace to unworthy sinners; and

(3) Finally, the most serious difference, to me, is their belief in conditional immortality (i.e., soul-sleeping and the

annihilation of the lost). The fact that they can name the names of famous Christian theologians or thinkers who have believed this error is no justification for our believing it, since it so thoroughly contradicts the historic biblical position. "To depart" is not to be unconscious in sleep, but to be *with* Christ "which is far better." (Phil. 1:21-23). I will save the detailed refutation of this doctrine for a further issue.

In conclusion, I should like to say that we are delighted to do justice to a much-maligned group of sincere believers, and in our minds and hearts take them out of the group of utter heretics like the Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, and Christian Scientists, to acknowledge them as redeemed brethren and members of the Body of Christ. It is our sincere prayer that they may be led to consider further the points on which they are so widely divergent from the rest of the Body of Christ and in so doing promote their own spiritual growth and that of their fellow Christians.

END

- 17 -

# THE TRUTH ABOUT SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM

BY WALTER R. MARTIN

**S**eventh-day Adventism, as a religious movement, sprang from the great second advent "awakening" which shook the religious world toward the middle of the nineteenth century.

During this particular period of theological development, speculation relative to the second advent of Jesus Christ had been rampant on the continent of Europe, and it was not long before the European prophetic scheme of interpretation bridged the Atlantic and penetrated American theological circles.

Based largely upon the books of Daniel and Revelation (both apocalyptic), advent theology became a topic of conversation discussed in newspapers as well as theological journals; in short, New Testament eschatological study suddenly competed with current stock market quotations for front-page space, and the "seventy weeks," "twenty-three hundred days," and "the abomination of desolation" (Dan. 8, 9) became common subjects of conversation.

Following the chronology of Archbishop Ussher and interpreting the twenty-three hundred days of Daniel as literal years, many Bible students of various faiths concluded that Christ would come back near or about the year 1843. Of this studious number was one William Miller, a Baptist minister and resident of Low Hampton, New York, who arrived at the final date, October 22, 1844, as the time when Jesus Christ would return for His saints and usher in judgment upon sin, culminating in the establishment of the Kingdom of God upon earth.

The great second advent movement, which was to sweep the United States particularly in the early 1840's, stemmed from the activities of this William Miller, who confidently taught, beginning in the year 1818, that in "about" twenty-five years from that date, i.e. 1843, Jesus Christ would come again, or as Miller himself put it, "I was thus brought in 1818 at the close of my two-year study of the Scriptures to the solemn conclusion that in about twenty-five years from that time all the affairs of our present state would be wound up" (*The Midnight Cry*, Francis D. Nicol, p. 35, Review and Herald, Washington, D. C.).

Lest anyone reading the various accounts of the rise of Millerism in the United States come to the unwarranted conclusion that Miller was a "crackpot" and an uneducated tool of Satan, the following facts should be known: The great advent awakening movement which spanned the Atlantic from Europe was bolstered by a tremendous wave of contemporary biblical scholarship, and, though Miller himself was uneducated, there were literally scores and scores of interpretative prophetic scholars, both in Europe and the United States, who espoused Miller's view before he himself announced it; and in reality his was only one more voice proclaiming the 1843/1844 fulfillment of Daniel 8:14, or the twenty-three-hundred days' period allegedly dating from 457 B.C. and ending in 1843/1844. William Miller was born in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, on February 15, 1782, and while still a young child his family

This is the first of three articles. Next month Adventist theology will be examined.

## Its Historical Development from Christian Roots

What was the true role of William Miller in the great advent awakening movement?

relocated in Low Hampton, New York, close to the Vermont State borderline. Miller was raised by a deeply religious mother, but despite her zeal for his conversion Miller himself at length became an infidel, and only after a soul-searching experience which culminated in his conversion did he begin his preparation for the ministry in the Baptist Church. A great many books have been written about William Miller and the rise of the Millerite movement, but to this writer's knowledge none of them has ever accused Miller on verifiable grounds of being either dishonest or deceptive in his prophetic interpretation of Scripture. Indeed, he always enjoyed the reputation among all who knew him as an honest, forthright, Christian man. One does not have to endorse the errors of Millerism and its unbiblical date-setting record, therefore, to have respect for the historical figure of William Miller, for regardless of his shortcomings Miller himself was a deeply religious Christian who, had he had the benefit of a more extensive understanding of the Scriptures, most probably would never have embarked upon his date-setting career.

Clearly it may be seen that although Miller popularized the 1843/44 concept of Christ coming again, he was far from being alone; it we hold Miller up for scorn we must also hold up a whole ream of internationally known scholars who have some of the best educations in the world but who had a "blind spot" in prophetic interpretation and so endorsed the Millerite interpretational system of



William Miller

chronology. It was the Lord Jesus Christ who said, "No one knoweth the hour of my return," and at another time the Master plainly stated that it was not given to us, His followers, to know the times nor the seasons "which the Father hath put in his own power." This should have been enough to deter the Millerites from their foolhardy quest to set a date for the return of the Lord, but, unfortunately, they persisted in their chronological speculations and suffered tremendous humiliation, ridicule, and abject despair.

According to the prophetic interpretations of William Miller, he had set the time for the probable return of the Lord somewhere between March 21, 1843 and March 21, 1844 (*The Midnight Cry*, p. 169), and as the time drew nigh a religious frenzy shook the Millerite world—the Lord was coming back!

Zealous though the followers of Miller were and terribly sincere in their faith as they must have been, stark disappointment waited them as the Jewish year "1843" faded from time and the Lord had not come. As the realization that the dream closest to their hearts had not materialized sank into the consciousness of the disillusioned Millerites, word from William Miller was eagerly sought, and with his characteristic honesty it was shortly forthcoming. Wrote Miller in the very shadow of spiritual anguish: "Were I to live my life over again, with the same evidence that I then had, to be honest with God and man I should have to do as I have done. Although opposers said it would not come, they produced no weighty arguments. It was evidently guess-work with them; and I then thought, and do now, that their denial was based more on an unwillingness for the Lord to come than on any arguments leading to such conclusion. I confess my error, and acknowledge my disappointment; yet I still believe that the Day of the Lord is near, even at the door; and I exhort you, my brethren, to be watchful and not let that day come upon you unawares" (*Memoirs of William Miller*, Sylvester Bliss, p. 256).

In the wake of this stunning declaration by their leader, the Millerites strove vainly to reconcile the prophetic interpretation of the Scripture to which they had adhered with the stark reality of the fact that Christ had not come again. And with one last gasp, so to speak, Miller with reluctance endorsed what has come to be known historically as "The Seventh-month Movement" or the belief that Christ would come on October 22, 1844, the tenth day of the seventh month according to the Karaite reckoning of the Jewish Sacred Calendar (*The Midnight Cry*, p. 243). Once again the Millerites' hopes were lifted, and October 22, 1844 became the new battle cry for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. The outcome of the "Seventh-month Movement" can best be summed up in the words of Dr. Josiah Litch, one of the leaders of the Millerite movement, who from his home in Philadelphia wrote on October 24 these words, "It is a cloudy and dark day here—the sheep are scattered—the Lord has not come yet" (*The Midnight Cry*, p. 263).

From Litch's statement, it is a simple matter to piece together the psychological framework of the Millerites in the wake of these two disappointments. They were shattered and disillusioned people—Christ had not come to cleanse the sanctuary, to usher in judgment, and to bring the world into subjugation to the "everlasting gospel." Instead, the physical sky was cloudy and dark, and the historical horizons were black with the failure of the Millerite movement. There was, understandably, terrible confusion, of which God, the Scripture tells us, is not the author.

The final phase of the Millerite movement, then, came to a close with the "Great Disappointment" of 1844, and as the Millerites began to disintegrate as a movement there gradually emerged other groups (First-day Adventists, etc.) but in our study we are concerned primarily with three distinct segments which later joined in an indissoluble fusion eventually producing the Seventh-day Adventist denomination as we know it today. William Miller, it should be noted, was *never* a Seventh-day Adventist and confessed himself that he had "no confidence" in the "new theories" which emerged from the shambles of what was previously the Millerite movement. Dr. LeRoy Froom of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, in the fourth volume of his masterful series *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers*, p. 828-29, succinctly states exactly what Miller's position was. Wrote Dr. Froom: "Miller was outspokenly opposed to the various new theories that had developed following October 22, 1844, in an endeavor to explain the disappointment. He deplored the call to come out of the churches that had been given, and he never accepted the distinctive positions of the Sabbatarians. The doctrine of the unconscious sleep of the dead and the final destruction of the wicked was not, he maintained, part of the original Millerite position, but was introduced personally by Storrs and Litch. He even came to deny the application of a parable in *The Midnight Cry* to the Seventh-month Movement and eventually went so far as to declare unequivocally that the movement was not 'a fulfillment of prophecy in any sense.'"

The theology of William Miller, then, except for his chronological speculation, differed from the Seventh-day Adventist theological interpretations in these three distinct ways: Miller denied the Seventh-day Sabbath, the doctrine of the unconscious sleep of the dead, and the final annihilation of the wicked—all doctrines held by the Seventh-day Adventist denomination. He also differed theologically

in that he never held to the "day of atonement" and "investigative judgment" theories as developed by Seventh-day Adventists. For William Miller the era of chronological speculation was over, and he died shortly thereafter, a broken and disillusioned man who was, nevertheless, honest and forthright when in error or when repudiating error, and there can be no honest doubt that he now enjoys the presence of the Lord whose appearing he so anxiously awaited.

We return now to the three branches or groups which eventually united to form the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, for it is important that the reader understand the early background of Seventh-day Adventist history and theology.

Each of the three groups mentioned held a distinctive doctrine. The group headed by Hiram Edson in western New York proclaimed the doctrine of the sanctuary "as embracing a special or final ministry of Christ in the Holy of Holies in the heavenly sanctuary, thus giving new meaning to the message. The Hour of God's Judgment has come." The second group, headed by Joseph Bates, with the main following in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, advocated the Sabbath feature or the observance of the Seventh-day "as involved in the keeping of the commandments of God." The third group emphasized the "spirit of prophecy" or the testimony of Jesus, which they believed was to be manifest in the "remnant church" (Rev. 14:6-12, also Rev. 12:17, 19:10), or "The last segment of God's church of the centuries." Between the years 1844 and 1847 the thinking of these two groups crystallized and was actively declared and promulgated in the writings of their respective leaders, Hiram Edson, O. R. L. Crosier, Joseph Bates, James White, and Ellen G. White.

Though the name "Seventh-day Adventist denomination" was not officially assumed by the group until 1860 at a conference held in Battle Creek, Michigan, Seventh-day Adventism had been born, and in 1855 the headquarters of the movement was centralized in Battle Creek, where it remained until 1903, when the national headquarters was moved to Washington, D. C.

The three distinctive doctrines of Seventh-day Adventism, which were previously enumerated, will be discussed along with others in the second and third articles of this series on Seventh-day Adventism, so at this time we shall omit any discussion of them. However, the Adventists had a definite theological platform, which through the years has varied little, but which in comparatively recent years has undergone a very def-

inite evolution toward a more forthright declaration concerning the principles of the historic Christian faith, especially as they are embodied in the tenets of orthodox Christian theology. These matters as previously stated will be discussed in our second and third articles.

As is the case with most religious movements, one extraordinary personality often dominates the entire history of the group, and Seventh-day Adventism is no exception to this rule. The dominant personality of Seventh-day Adventism was Ellen G. White, one of the most fascinating figures ever to appear upon the horizon of religious history, and a controversial personage whose memory and work have been alternately praised by Adventists and damned by their enemies since the early years of the movement's history. Born Ellen Gould Harmon in Gorham, Maine in 1827, and reared a devout church-going Methodist in the city of Portland, Mrs. White, early in her religious experience, became known as an unusual person, for she bore witness to certain "revelations," which she believed she had received from Heaven, and as early as the age of seventeen embraced the Adventist faith of the Millerites (*E. G. White Life Sketches*, pp. 64-68).

Although Mrs. White, after her marriage to James White, a prominent Adventist leader, eventually exerted a tremendous influence upon the thinking of Seventh-day Adventists—and does to this day through her prolific writings—she never claimed for herself infallibility in matters of inspiration; or as Dr. Froom has put it, "She neither claimed nor accepted the role of infallibility, which is vastly different from inspiration, or the influence of the spirit of God upon the spirit of the submissive servant and messenger. Like the prophets of old she illuminated and applied truth and gave guidance to her fellow believers. She did not lay claim to the title of prophet, preferring to be called a 'messenger' and 'servant' of God."

The writer has read extensively in the publications of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination and almost all of the writings of Ellen G. White, including her testimonies, and feels free to state that there can be no doubt that Mrs. White was a "born again" Christian woman who truly loved the Lord Jesus Christ and who dedicated herself unstintingly to the task of bearing witness for Him as she felt led. It should be clearly understood that in some places orthodox Christian theology and the interpretations of Mrs. White do not agree; in fact, in some places they are at direct

loggerheads, but on the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith necessary to the salvation of the soul and the growth of the life in Christ, Ellen G. White has never written anything which is seriously contrary to the simple, plain declarations of the gospel. One may disagree with Mrs. White's interpretation of the atonement and the scapegoat; one may challenge her stress upon the Seventh-day Sabbath, health reform, and conditional immortality, etc.; but no one can fairly challenge her writings on the basis of their conformity to the basic principles of the gospel, for conform they most certainly do! Many critics of Seventh-day Adventism have assumed a priori—mostly from the writings of professional Adventist detractors such as E. B. Jones—that Mrs. White was a fearsome ogre who devoured all who opposed her, and they have never stopped saying that Seventh-day Adventists believe that she is infallible despite the published official position of the denomination, which states the direct contrary to these perversions. To quote the official denominational position: "Ellen G. White's writings are not the source of our expositions. We derive our faith from the Scriptures, and our interpretations of prophecy were all established before Mrs. White spoke or wrote thereon. We hold her writings in highest esteem and believe that the Holy Spirit illumined her mind in the penning of these counsels to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Their conformity with biblical, historical, and scientific facts is truly remarkable we feel, but we do not and never have put them on a parity with Scripture as some falsely charge."

In addition to this statement the following comment from representatives of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, which is the governing body and voice of Seventh-day Adventism worldwide, clearly states the denominational position relative to Ellen G. White: "Seventh-day Adventists uniformly believe that the canon of Scripture closed with the book of Revelation. We hold that all writings and teachings are to be judged by and are subject to the Bible, which stands alone and unique as the source and norm of our Christian faith. We do not consider Ellen G. White to be in the category of the writers of the canon of Scripture. Her writings are regarded by Adventists as containing special counsel from God concerning personal religion and the conduct of our denominational work. That portion of her writings which might be classified as prediction actually forms a very small segment. And even when she deals with what is coming on earth, her statements are only amplifications of Bible prophecy. She did not assume the title of

prophet, but simply a messenger of the Lord. "To claim to be a prophetess is something that I have never done . . . but my work has covered so many lines that I cannot call myself other than a messenger sent to bear a message from the Lord" (*Review and Herald*, July 26, 1906).

While it is true that Seventh-day Adventists hold Mrs. White and her writings in great esteem, the Bible is their only rule of faith and practice. We as fellow Christians may violently disagree with their attitude toward Mrs. White, but nothing she ever wrote on those doctrines essential to salvation or Christian living would characterize her in any way as being other than a Christian in every sense of the term.

D. M. Canright,<sup>1</sup> in his two books on Ellen G. White, has gone into great critical details based upon his early association and personal acquaintance with Mrs. White, and many of the points which Canright makes from the standpoint of a personal opinion no one is capable of challenging for the simple reason that nobody ever had source material enough to question Brother Canright's analysis. Having read D. M. Canright, E. B. Jones, and every major work on Seventh-day Adventism printed in the United States and Europe over the past fifty-seven years, the writer, too, is unable to determine whether or not Canright's judgments where Mrs. White is concerned are 100 per cent valid. If the reader is seriously interested in a comparison of the two positions he is urged to read F. D. Nicol's book, *Ellen G.*

*White and Her Critics* and compare it with Canright's volumes. *The Life of Mrs. E. G. White and Seventh-day Adventism Renounced*, at the end of which reading he is free to make up his own mind as to the character and work of Ellen G. White. To this writer as a student of comparative religions it is irrele-

vant whether or not Mrs. White as a person was actually everything that Brothers Canright or Nicol proclaim. After all, she never claimed infallibility for herself, and, therefore, to refute Ellen G. White either as a person or theologically is certainly *not* to refute Seventh-day Adventism per se, for there

<sup>1</sup> An ex-Adventist leader of great magnitude and a personal friend for many years of Ellen G. White. He left the movement, became a Baptist minister, and wrote much against SDA. His criticisms where they bear upon the Sabbath, soul sleep, annihilation of the wicked, the sanctuary doctrine, the investigative judgment, the spirit of prophecy as manifested in Mrs. White, and health reform in SDA are frequently well taken; however, much has changed since Canright's day and his work must be viewed in the light of current SDA theology.

are schools of interpretation within the Seventh-day Adventist movement which disagree with Ellen G. White's interpretations on some points, and it is significant to note that her writings are *not* a test of fellowship in the denomination! To emphasize this point the *Review and Herald*, February 15, 1870, made the following statement: "We therefore do not test the world in any manner by these gifts. Nor do we in our intercourse with other religious bodies who are striving to walk in the fear of God in any way make these a test of Christian character."

Another significant fact is that James White, three times President of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, when speaking on the work of his wife, expressly declared that "Adventists do not, however, make a belief in this work a test of Christian fellowship" (*Review and Herald*, June 13, 1871). F. M. Wilcox who for thirty-five years was editor of the *Review and Herald*, the Adventist denominational church paper, wrote, "In the practice of the church it has not been customary to disfellowship one because he did not recognize the doctrine of spiritual gifts. . . . A

member of the church should not be excluded from the membership of the church because of his inability to recognize clearly the doctrine of spiritual gifts and its application to the second advent movement" (*The Testimony of Jesus*, pp. 141, 143).

Today the Seventh-day Adventist denomination numbers over a million throughout the world, operates a total of forty-two publishing houses and produces literature in more than two hundred languages, while publishing over three hundred periodicals, which include correspondence courses, Sabbath School lessons, etc. In their Bible study courses, advertised over the *Voice of Prophecy*, their official denominational radio program, the Adventists have enrolled more than three million persons, and the *Signs of the Times*, their weekly paper, has a circulation of over a million copies per month.

In addition to their tremendous printed propaganda the Adventists have excelled in medical works on the mission field and in the United States and have numerous sanitariums and hospitals, which enjoy excellent reputations.

We cannot hope to cover the entire scope of Seventh-day Adventist historical development in an article of this length. However, enough has been shown to indicate clearly that from meager beginnings in the wake of the Great Disappointment of 1844 and the collapse of the Millerite movement, the Seventh-day Adventist denomination has pressed forward and expanded until today it constitutes an important segment of American Protestantism. Its theology will be the subject of our next article.

# WHAT SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS REALLY BELIEVE

**Are the differences between Adventist and orthodox Christian doctrines sufficient to deny them fellowship?**

We saw in our first article of the series something of the origin, growth and development of Seventh-day Adventism as a movement. Now we shall review briefly Adventist theology of today. The theology of Seventh-day Adventism can be divided into three separate sections, as follows:

(1) Cardinal Doctrines of the Christian Faith: The doctrine of the Trinity, the virgin birth of Christ, the perfect human nature of Christ during the incarnation, His eternal deity, the vicarious atonement of Christ on the cross for all sin, the bodily resurrection of our Lord from the grave, and His visible second advent to judge the world. On these basic fundamentals of the gospel of Jesus Christ, Seventh-day Adventists are solidly in the tradition of historic orthodox Christianity. And without hesitation they recognize the Bible *alone* as the inspired, inerrant Word of God, the only rule of faith and practice.

(2) Alternate Views on Secondary Teachings: The second section of theological beliefs concerns alternate views on biblical doctrines, either view being admissible from the standpoint of Christian belief and argument, such as Arminianism versus Calvinism, Historicist eschatology versus Futurist, etc., so that the Adventists find themselves at times on one side and at other times on the other side relative to theological issues that have never fully been settled throughout the history of the Christian Church.

(3) Doctrines Peculiar to Seventh-day Adventism: The

third division involves a relatively small group of doctrines which are peculiar to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and which are not held or shared by any other groups. These distinctive doctrines are: (a) The doctrine of the heavenly sanctuary, (b) the investigative judgment, and (c) the restoration of spiritual gifts, including the "spirit of prophecy."

A concise statement of what Seventh-day Adventists do believe from an authoritative source will probably serve to establish their adherence to the basic principles of Christian theology far better than a hundred articles by a non-Adventist. Therefore, the following statement, prepared by a group of leading theologians of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, appearing in a new book soon to be released by the Review and Herald Publishing Association, covers the subject quite thoroughly and is reproduced here by permission.

"Seventh-day Adventists believe that the unfolding light of Bible truth is progressive and is to shine 'more and more unto the perfect day' (Prov. 4:18). And we have sought to walk in the advancing light of truth. We have never driven in formal creedal stakes, and said, 'This is the truth; thus far and no farther.' Ellen G. White, one of our leading writers, wrote in 1892: 'New light will ever be revealed on the Word of God to him who is in living connection with the Sun of Righteousness. Let no one come to the conclusion that there is no more truth to be revealed. The diligent, prayerful seeker for truth will find precious rays of light yet to shine forth from the Word of God.'—(*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, 1892, p. 34.) The founding fathers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church over a century ago came out of various denominational backgrounds. While all were premillennialists, some were Trinitarian; others were Arian. The majority were Arminians; a few Calvinists. Some insisted on immersion; a few were content with sprinkling. There was diversity on these points. And, as with various religious groups, our early days were characterized by transition and adjustment. A church was being brought forth. As these men were already born-again believers, the initial study and emphasis was placed upon the

**The Christian life is not an imitation but an inspiration**



distinctive teachings of the movement. And they were similarly occupied in developing an effective organization.

"In those early years relatively little attention was paid to the respective merits of Arminianism in contrast to the Calvinist position. The historic differences of thought involved had reached back to Augustine and Chrysostom. They did not concern themselves with 'absolute decrees,' 'divine sovereignty,' 'particular election,' or 'limited atonement.' Nor did they, at first, seek to define the nature of the Godhead, or the problems of Christology, involving the deity of Christ and His nature during the incarnation; the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit; the nature, scope, and completeness of the atonement; the relationship of law to grace, or the fullness of the doctrine of righteousness by faith; and the like.

"But with the passage of years the earlier diversity of view on certain doctrines gradually gave way to unity of view. Clear and sound positions were then taken by the great majority on such doctrines as the Godhead, the deity and eternal preexistence of Christ, and the personality of the Holy Spirit. Clear-cut views were established on righteousness by faith, the true relationship of law and grace, and on the death of Christ as the complete atonement for sin.

"A few, however, held to some of their former views, and at times these ideas got into print. However, for decades now the church has been practically at one on the basic truths of the Christian faith.

"This statement should therefore nullify the stock 'quotations' that have been circulated against us. We are one with our fellow Christians of denominational groups in the great fundamentals of the faith once delivered to the saints. Our hope is in a crucified, risen, ministering, and soon-returning Saviour."

It is true that there is still some literature in print and on the shelves of libraries that reflects some of the earlier positions just mentioned, but precautions are being taken to limit further circulation and to present a unified and true picture of Seventh-day Adventist adherence to the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith.

In contrast to this development in Seventh-day Adventism, it is to be noted that there are many publications circulated today in evangelical bodies, dealing with the Seventh-day Adventist denomination that are seemingly unaware of or unconcerned with the present positions of the church. This writer has read all the anti-Adventist publications issued within the last fifty-seven years and listed in the catalogs of the Library of Congress and the New York Public Library. Less than 20 per cent of these volumes are now up to date or contain the true Seventh-day Adventist positions as they are stated and published in contemporary Adventist circles.

My research has uncovered the fact that not only have many unrepresentative quotations cited from earlier Seventh-day Adventist publications been expunged from the current editions of these publications, but that many of the critics of Seventh-day Adventism constantly make unethical use of the elipsis—the deletion of parts of sentences, and sometimes whole paragraphs in between

sentences—in order seemingly to indict the Adventists for holding beliefs that they most strenuously reject. The abuse of ethics by some Christian writers and publishers, both non-Adventist and Adventist, is shocking when one makes a close survey of the conflicting literature involved!

This writer is by no means a Seventh-day Adventist, nor do I as a Baptist at all hold their distinctive doctrines, which we shall discuss next, but an impartial study of the facts extending over a seven-year period, interviews with leaders in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and a thorough acquaintance with a voluminous amount of Adventist and non-Adventist publications, has led me as a research polemicist to believe that a reasonable re-evaluation of the position of Seventh-day Adventism is called for in orthodox evangelical circles today. The need for abandoning the out-of-print quotations and questionable

statements that have been repudiated by the Adventist denomination ought also to be recognized by Christian publishers who wish to present the truth. Surely none is interested merely in issuing books and pamphlets to sell and make money, irrespective of the truthfulness of their contents.

Seventh-day Adventists then, assuredly accept the Bible as the inspired revelation of God to man, the sole rule of faith and practice. Their theology embraces the orthodox doctrines of the Trinity, the deity and eternal preexistence of Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Godhead, His miraculous conception and Virgin birth, sinless human nature during the incarnation, vicarious atoning death on the cross, bodily resurrection, literal ascension, priestly

"The very fact that our positions were now clarified seemed to us to be sufficient. Our teachings, we felt, were clear. And no particular statement of change from those earlier ideas appeared necessary. Today the primary emphasis of all our leading denominational literature, as well as the continuous presentations over radio and television, emphasizes the historic fundamentals of the Christian faith.

"But the charges and attacks have persisted. Some continue to gather up quotations from some of our earlier literature long since out of date and print. Certain statements are cited, often wrested out of context, which give a totally distorted picture of the beliefs and teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church of today.

"All this has made it desirable and necessary for us to declare our position afresh upon the great fundamental teachings of the Christian faith, and to deny every statement or implication that Christ, the second Person of the Godhead, was not One with the Father from all eternity, and that His sacrifice on the cross was not a full and complete atonement. The present belief of Seventh-day Adventists on these great truths is clear and emphatic. And we feel that we should no longer be identified with or stigmatized for certain limited and faulty concepts held by some in our formative years.

ministry as Intercessor before the Father, and His second personal, pre-millennial advent to judge the world.

In addition to this, all reliable, representative, Seventh-day Adventist literature holds to the fundamental doctrines of the new birth, justification by faith, progressive sanctification by the indwelling Holy Spirit, and salvation by grace *alone* through the blood of Jesus Christ, *apart* from the works of the law. Should anyone reading this article desire proof of the official Seventh-day Adventist position on these statements they should address a letter or postal card to: The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Department I, Takoma Park, Washington 12, D. C., and confirmation sufficient to convince any honest investigator will be forthcoming immediately. In the early months of 1957 the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will release a new book dealing with contemporary Seventh-day Adventist theology, which should supersede individual-author publications on the basis of authoritative theological positions, stating unequivocally the adherence of the General Conference, and of all true Seventh-day Adventists, to the fundamentals of the gospel just stated.

Seventh-day Adventism in 1956 is a far cry from the Adventism—rightly criticized in certain areas—of Dudley M. Cairright in his book *Seventh-day Adventism Renounced*. Whoever attempts to refute Adventism today by using Cairright and by quoting him as authoritative in every area of his criticism of Seventh-day Adventism is tearing down a straw man. Where Cairright deals with the divergent views of Adventism as they affect the historic Christian message, he is relevant.

However, many of the earlier minority positions in Adventism have either been reversed or revised in line with the convictions of the leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination that advancing light and progressive truth make necessary clarification and

adherence to the cardinal truths of the gospel.

Dr. LeRoy E. Froom, one of the Secretaries of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, writing in a new theological publication to be released early in 1957, clearly states the Seventh-day Adventist denomination's repudiation of all extremist or personal positions of the past that misrepresent the clear teachings of the church and of distorted positions wrongly attributed to them. Writes Dr. Froom:

"We wholly reject the thought that the atoning sacrifice of Christ on Calvary was either insufficient or incomplete. We totally reject the concept of a dual atonement. We utterly repudiate the postulate that human works are in any way a ground of acceptance with God. And we reject the blasphemous and abhorrent suggestion that Satan plays any part in our salvation."

He also lists popular "errors" in the religious world repudiated by Adventists: "We likewise reject the evolution hypothesis, the fallacy of a second probation, the fantasy of ultimate restorationism, or universalism, as well as spiritism, unitarianism, pantheism, ritualism, anti-nomianism, and rationalism. And we reject the practice of infant baptism and baptismal regeneration."

In addition, he states categorically: "And we similarly reject all such Roman Catholic doctrines as the superiority of tradition and the insufficiency of Scripture, the immaculate conception, the mass and transubstantiation, communion in one kind, purgatory, penance, veneration of images, indulgences, invocation of saints, absolution, and extreme unction."

The positions presented in this covering statement by Dr. Froom, speaking as a leading authority on Adventist history and theology, are fully supported by the declarations of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. It is one more evidence that Seventh-day Adventists wish to correct all misrepresentations, and any misinterpretations of some in the past, and to fellowship with the other members of the body of Christ.

### The Scapegoat Teaching

One of the common charges raised against Seventh-day Adventist theology is that it makes Satan a co-sinbearer with the Lord Jesus Christ. This charge is based upon Leviticus 16, where one goat was slain for a sin offering and the other goat was sent out into the wilderness in the Old Testament symbolism. The second goat's title was "Azazel," and Seventh-day Adventists, in company with a number of prominent scholars who

are not Adventists, maintain that this goat represents Satan.

It is the Adventist teaching that when the Lord Jesus Christ returns from heaven with His saints at the close of the millennial thousand years, to end the great and terrible day of Jehovah. He will place upon Satan, or the devil, the full responsibility for Satan's role as instigator or tempter to sin. The Adventists reason that Satan is indirectly involved, where guilt is concerned, in that he was the originator of evil who caused our first parents to sin and ushered death into the world. Therefore it is only fitting, they believe, that according to the type he should be punished for his responsibility in bringing about the rebellion of both angels and men against the Creator, and he must therefore bear the retributive punishment for his responsibility in the sins of all men.

However, the Adventists repudiate completely any suggestion or implication that Satan is in any degree their "sin-bearer," pointing out that, in the Old Testament symbolism, only the first goat was slain as a vicarious offering. The second goat was not killed, but sent out into the wilderness to die. And they maintain that Satan similarly bears away to final annihilation his part and responsibility as the master criminal who plotted the development of sin and has sustained it throughout the period of God's grace toward lost men. To quote a recognized Adventist authority:

"Now concerning my sin, Christ died for my sins, (Romans 5:8). He was wounded for my transgressions and bore my iniquities (Isaiah 53). He assumed my responsibilities and His blood alone cleanses me from all sin (I John 1:7). The atonement for my sin is made solely by the shed blood of Christ, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission (Heb. 9:22)."

The "scapegoat," then, stands for Satan in Lev. 16, according to Seventh-day Adventist theology. It is he who, in the final analysis, is to have rolled back upon his head not only his own sins but the responsibility for all the sins he has caused others to commit. In their theology Satan does not vicariously bear the sins of anyone! He has no part whatsoever in the already completed atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. As Dr. Froom has succinctly said:

"Satan's death, a thousand times over, could never make him a saviour in any sense whatsoever. He is the arch-sinner of the universe, the author and instigator of sin. Even if he had never sinned, he still could never save others. Not even the highest of the holy angels could atone for our sins. Only Christ, the Creator, the one and only God-man, could make a substitutionary atonement for men's transgressions. And this Christ did completely and perfectly and once-for-all on Golgotha."

The literature of Seventh-day Adventists in past years, and even occasion-

ally in some current publications, has unfortunately not been altogether clear in this differentiation, when the scapegoat was discussed. But neither Ellen G. White nor the overwhelming majority of Adventist writers has ever held that Satan was in any degree a vicarious substitute or a sin-bearer, much less a co-worker with Christ in the atonement. All Seventh-day Adventists are in harmony with the teachings of the General Conference that Jesus Christ shed His blood upon the cross *once for all*, and it was on that perfect sacrifice alone and Christ's completed atonement, that they have rested, and do now rest, all hope for their salvation.

### Salvation by Law or Grace?

In 1888 at an important convocation of Seventh-day Adventist leaders, Ellen G. White encouraged members of the denomination to stand forthrightly upon the clear scriptural teaching of salvation by grace *alone* through the blood of Jesus Christ *apart* from the deeds of the law. There had been some confusion on this point. But Mrs. White emphatically rejected the ideas of a certain segment of Adventist leadership at the time, which held that salvation was by grace, but was contingent in some respect upon the works of the law. The official position of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination declares:

"The law cannot save the transgressor from his sin, nor impart power to keep him from sinning. In infinite love and mercy, God provides a way whereby this may be done. He furnishes a substitute, even Christ the Righteous One to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him' (II Cor. 5:21). That one is justified, not by obedience to the law but by the grace that is in Christ Jesus. By accepting Christ man is reconciled to God, justified by His blood from the sins of the past, and saved from the power of sin by His indwelling life. Thus the gospel becomes 'the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth' (Romans 1:16). This experience is wrought by the divine agency of the Holy Spirit, who convinces of sin and leads to the Sin-Bearer, inducting the believer into the new covenant relationship, where the law of God is written upon his heart, and through the enabling power of the indwelling Christ, his life is brought into conformity to the divine precepts. The honor and merit of this wonderful transformation belongs wholly to Christ (I John 2:1,2; 3:1; Romans 3:20; 5:8-10; 7:7; Ephesians 2:8-10; 3:17; Gal. 2:20; Heb. 8:8-12)." ("Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists," p. 4, of *Seventh-day Adventist Year Book*, 1956.)

Seventh-day Adventists have reacted

rather violently against the modern trend toward Antinomianism or the concept that the Christian has nothing to do with the moral law and especially the Ten Commandments. They maintain, and rightly so, that although one is saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, wholly apart from the law, and while he is free from the condemnation of the law, he is certainly not free from the moral obligations of God's moral law. For the Adventists (as for other informed Christians) it is just as wrong for a Christian in the Christian Era to lie, to cheat, to steal, to commit adultery or to blaspheme *now* as it was for mankind to do so before Calvary. And it has been their emphasis upon this point, in the face of certain Antinomian tendencies in evangelical circles through the years, which has largely been responsible for characterizing them as "legalists." That there are some legalistic tendencies in Adventism however, there can be no doubt. But whatever legalistic tendencies do exist, in no way impugn the fundamental adherence of Adventists to the gospel of Christ and the cardinal doctrines thereof.

Historically, the Seventh-day Adventist denomination has ever emphasized the blood of Jesus Christ and His grace alone as the true basis for salvation, and their emphasis upon the law stems mainly from a desire to avoid the error of Antinomianism.

### The Doctrine of the Heavenly Sanctuary

This particular doctrine, in its present form peculiar to the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, was first promulgated by Hiram Edson, a prominent early Adventist, and a former Millerite minister. In the wake of the Great Disappointment of October 22, 1844, Edson reexamined the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 and the twenty-three hundred year-days, as ending in 1844. This examination culminated in what is today known, among Adventists, as the "sanctuary truth." Hiram Edson came to believe that the Lord had imparted to him a clearer interpretation of Daniel 8:14 relative to the Heavenly sanctuary, which Edson transferred from the earlier Millerite concept of the earth as being the "sanctuary," to recognition of Heaven as the sanctuary, according to Hebrews 8 and 9. Instead of committing Miller's error, however and stating that Christ was to come to earth in 1844 to cleanse the earthly sanctuary by fire, Edson believed that Christ at that time passed from the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven into the second apartment of the heavenly sanctuary in 1844. Christ then came to complete this final phase of His heavenly ministry, which commenced in

1844, and come back to this earth bringing rewards with him at His glorious second advent—distinctly a future event. In a manuscript setting forth his life and experience, Edson records the event thusly:

"After breakfast I said to one of my brethren, 'Let us go and see and encourage some of our brethren.' We started, and while passing through a large field I was stopped about midway of the field. Heaven seemed open to my view and I saw distinctly and clearly that instead of our High Priest coming out of the Most Holy of the Heavenly Sanctuary to come to this earth on the tenth day of the seventh month, at the end of the 2300 days. He for the first time entered on that day the second apartment of that sanctuary; that he had a work to perform in the 'most holy' before coming to this earth. That He came to the marriage at that time (as mentioned in the parables of the ten virgins); in other words to the ancient days to receive a kingdom, dominion and glory; we must wait for His return from the wedding. . . .

"While I was thus standing in the midst of the field, my comrade passed on almost beyond speaking distance before missing me. He inquired why I was stopping so long, and I replied, 'The Lord was answering our morning prayers, by giving light with regard to our disappointment.'"

In Edson's mind then, and in the minds of many early Adventists, Heaven contained a literal sanctuary with a first apartment and a second apartment, constructed long the lines of the ancient Hebrew tabernacle. According to Edson, Christ entered the second apartment of the sanctuary in 1844 for the "first time," to perform His final judgment work in the "Most Holy," or second apartment, which would place Christ in the first apartment of the sanctuary from the time of His ascension until October 22, 1844.\*

This second work that the Lord was expected to perform, and which He has been carrying out since 1844 according to Adventist theology, has been a work of "investigative judgment," that is, a review of all believers, covering their lives, their works, etc., and when man's probationary period is closed, the Lord Jesus Christ will come out of the heavenly sanctuary and return to earth, bringing all rewards *with* Him, and ushering in the great and terrible day of God Almighty.

We have reserved further discussion of "the heavenly sanctuary," the "investigative judgment," conditional immortality, annihilation of the wicked, and the Seventh-day Sabbath for our concluding article, which will deal particularly with those doctrines and give a summary of the reasons why,

despite such views, the writer feels that it is still possible for us to have fellowship with Seventh-day Adventists.

The deviations from what is commonly called "historic orthodox theology" embraced by Seventh-day Adventism, will therefore be the subject of our final article. It has been the aim of this series of articles not to present an apologetic for Seventh-day Adventism, nor to whitewash their obvious deviations from the accepted theological views of orthodox Christianity, but rather to point out that all the evidence has not been considered where the Adventists are concerned, and what evidence has been presented has often been clouded by inaccuracy, lack of ethics, and distinct shortcomings of scholarly investigation. In order to have *something* to say against Adventism, many have been content to say *anything!* However, whatever else one may say about Seventh-day Adventism, it cannot be denied from their truly representative literature and their historic positions that they have always as a majority, held to the cardinal, fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith which are necessary to salvation, and to the growth in grace that characterizes all true Christian believers.

\* This literalistic interpretation is contradicted by Hebrews 9:12. Christ had already entered in "once" into the holy places (Greek—Hagia, plural).

# ADVENTIST THEOLOGY VS. HISTORIC ORTHODOXY

## Are there serious differences concerning cardinal doctrines of Christianity?

In the first two articles of this series on Seventh-day Adventism, we were concerned chiefly with the history and some of the theological doctrines of the Adventist denomination. We saw how Seventh-day Adventism developed from the Second Advent (Millerite) Movement following the Great Disappointment of 1844, and that the early Adventists came from varying religious backgrounds, some orthodox and some heterodox—that is, out of harmony with generally accepted doctrinal teaching in particular areas. Thus, it was some years before certain segments within the main body resolved their differences and consolidated their beliefs in a doctrinal platform acceptable to the majority.

We are concerned in this article with some of the differences between Seventh-day Adventist theology and the theology of "historic orthodoxy." We have two questions: (1) Are there major differences regarding the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith, between Seventh-day Adventist theology and evangelical orthodoxy? (2) Are the other differences that exist an insuperable barrier to fellowship between Seventh-day Adventists and evangelicals?

Extensive study reveals seven areas of disagreement. We shall note these seven areas, discuss them, and attempt to reach a conclusion based upon all available evidence, by-passing the morass of prejudice accumulating for almost one hundred years.

(1) **Conditional Immortality, "Soul Sleep" and Annihilation.**—The doctrine of "soul sleep" (unconsciousness in death) and the final extinction of all the wicked, is a cardinal tenet in the theological superstructure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This presents what is probably regarded as the greatest bar to fellowship between Adventists and their fellow Christians.

The doctrine of the "sleep of the soul"—though the term is seldom used by informed Adventists—involves the prop-

osition that at the death of the body the spirit, or principle of life in man, returns to God who gave it, and man as a "living soul" (Gen. 2:7) lapses into a state of unconsciousness, oblivious of passing time, pending the resurrection of the physical body. The Adventists base this doctrine upon various texts in the Bible where the word "sleep," in their thinking, is used as a synonym for "death."

For example, "them that sleep in the dust of the earth," "David is not ascended unto the heavens," "David slept with his fathers," "the dead know not anything," "in death there is no remembrance of thee," "Lazarus is not dead, but sleepeth," "they which are fallen asleep," etc., Seventh-day Adventists take to mean that man is in a temporary state of unconsciousness awaiting the resurrection, or call to life. They point out that the Bible never refers to "immortal souls," that it is God "who only hath immortality" (I Tim. 6:15, 16), and that immortality is declared to be a "gift," received from Christ at the resurrection and is applicable only to resurrected bodies.

Some thirty-five pages in my forthcoming book, *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism*, is allotted to a fuller study of this problem, and its solution and refutation. So at this time it will be unnecessary to go into detail. However, the Scriptures teach that to be "absent from the body is to be present [or "at home"—Greek] with the Lord" (II Cor. 5:8), and I for one do not see how any careful student of Greek today can read the first chapter of Paul's epistle to the Philippians, especially verses 21 to 23, and not come to understand that the apostle clearly meant with his choice of words that it was far better for him "to depart and be with Christ" than to remain there in the flesh, although it was needful for the Philippian Christians.

In that context the inspired apostle indisputably maintained that "to live is Christ and to die is gain." If man, as an entity, be unconscious until the resurrection, it certainly is *not* gain. Again, in II Corinthians 5:8 and that context where, although Paul states he would not desire to be "naked," that is "unclothed," until the resurrection, nevertheless, he definitely teaches that the soul will be conscious in the presence of the Lord until the resurrection, and that at the resurrection the soul will be clothed with an immortal body (I Cor. 15), the very image of the resurrection body of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible nowhere teaches what is commonly termed "soul sleep," nor is the term ever mentioned in Scripture, and we believe the Ad-

This article concludes the series on Seventh-day Adventism by the Rev. Mr. Martin.

ventists at this point are standing on weak ground exegetically.

However, it is only fair to mention that such noted scholars as William Tyndale, whose translation of the Bible was largely the basis for our King James translation; Martin Luther, great leader of the Protestant Reformation; and prior to them, John Wycliffe, himself a famous translator, all held to the doctrine of the sleep of the soul—as well as many other illustrious Christians through the centuries. This, of course does not make the doctrine true. But, one should see that if we refuse to fellowship with Seventh-day Adventists on the basis of the doctrine of the unconscious sleep of the dead then we likewise will have to refuse fellowship with Tyndale, Luther, Wycliffe, and a host of other Christians who held essentially that same view.

As far as this writer is concerned, although he is in definite disagreement with the doctrine, it does not constitute a bar to our having fellowship with them, since the basis of fellowship is Jesus Christ crucified, risen, and coming again—"God manifest in the flesh"—and *not* the nature of man or the intermediate state of the soul pending the resurrection.

The doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked is felt by many to be a purely rationalistic development in Christian theology. It assumes that in order for the universe to be "clean" all evil will have to be annihilated that good may eventually triumph. The fallacy in this thought, as I see it, is that God is not circumscribed by human concepts and methods of purging His creation. Further, what may *appear* perfectly logical to us, where a "clean universe" is concerned, may be just the opposite in the divine mind. As I see it, the Bible uses no terms which could be translated "annihilate" or "reduced to nothingness." To argue, therefore, for the annihilation of the wicked is to argue contrary to the usage of the terms employed in the Bible to describe God's final disposition of evil. Orthodox Christianity has commonly held since the early centuries of the Christian era that God intends to punish unto the everlasting ages of eternity those who commit the infinite transgression of rejecting Jesus Christ, the eternal Word made flesh (Matt. 25:46; John 3:36; etc.). Seventh-day Adventists and their theological ancestors, historic Christianity contends, have brought forth no valid scriptural evidence to the contrary, but only a rationalistic approach to what is admittedly a difficult but not insoluble problem.

In essence, then, when the Lord Jesus Christ said in Matthew 25:46, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment," He meant precisely what He said, and to argue that in this text and others like it "everlasting punishment" *means* annihilation is contrary to the usage of the terms themselves. Insofar as historic orthodoxy is concerned, the teaching of the extinction or annihilation of the wicked is at best a speculative position, unsupported by systematic theology, good exegesis, and the application of the sound principles of hermeneutics.

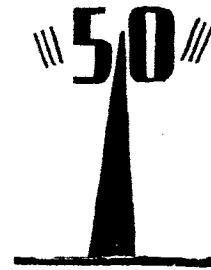
(2) **The Doctrine of the Sanctuary and the Investigative Judgment.**—The Seventh-day Adventist doctrine of the heavenly sanctuary (discussed in my second article) holds that Christ is now in the heavenly sanctuary judging who are to be accounted worthy to reign with Him; and that

when this work is completed Christ will return to earth, bringing His rewards with Him. Thus, say the Adventists, Christ is ministering the benefits of the atonement which He *completed* on the cross. As our great high priest (Heb. 4:14, 15) Christ is interceding for us, constantly forgiving and cleansing us from all sin (I John 1:7,9). The "investigative judgment" itself is a term and a doctrine peculiar to Seventh-day Adventism, and is based on an Arminian interpretation of the position of the believer as opposed to the Calvinistic doctrine of the eternal security of the believer. According to their interpretation of salvation the Adventists hold that they may lose the benefit of redemption through sin (Arminianism), and the investigative judgment is no more than a modified device of Arminianism, albeit unique.

The doctrine of the heavenly sanctuary and the investigative judgment, which they base upon Hebrews 8 and 9, constitutes no real barrier to fellowship when it is understood in its symbolic meaning and not in the materialistic, and extreme literalistic sense in which some of the early Adventist writers set it forth. The Adventists themselves recognize that none of us can know of what these "heavenly things" (Heb. 9:24) are composed. God is here talking to men in language adapted to their understanding. The earthly sanctuary, and its services, was but the "shadow of heavenly things" (Heb. 8:5).

Contemporary Seventh-day Adventist theology accepts the

(Continued on page 38)



A middle-aged man who was a very young Christian had found in the Word of God that Christians are commanded to obey every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake (1 Pet. 2:13). Rushing to a business appointment that involved catching a ferry boat, he found himself late and tempted to do seventy in a fifty mile per hour zone. He said to himself as he slowed down to the legal limit, "Lord, You wrote the Book; I didn't. I am going to obey, even if it costs my appointment." He thought he would have to wait half an hour, but to his utter amazement the ferry had been delayed ten minutes, and he made it. He had never known it to be late before. He thanked the Lord who wrote the Book, learning that He holds all circumstances in His hand; and he thanked the Lord who had given him the heart to obey.

## ADVENTIST THEOLOGY

(Continued from page 13)

doctrine in the figurative sense as great heavenly realities, and teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ is still interceding for all Christian believers before the throne of His Father. It should be carefully observed here, that this doctrine of the investigative judgment in no way implies, in Seventh-day Adventist thinking, the concept of a dual or partially completed atonement; rather, Adventists emphasize a completed, final work accomplished by Christ *alone* on Calvary for them as well as all believers, which atoning sacrifice is ministered or applied by Christ as our Great High Priest in heaven above (I John 1:7,9).

As Dr. Barnhouse pointed out in his article in September the investigative judgment is purely a speculative dogma, inherent within the structure of Adventist theology, and when properly understood can offer no real objection to fellowship between Adventists and their fellow Christians.

(3) **The Scapegoat, a Teaching concerning Satan.**—This particular doctrine was also discussed in the second article, where we saw that Adventists do *not* believe that Satan vicariously bears the sins of men. Rather, he bears only his own *responsibility* for the crime of tempting men to sin. It is not to be construed that he is a co-worker in the atonement with the Lord Jesus Christ. Though the scapegoat interpretation (of Leviticus 16), is peculiar in the light of the usual historic interpretation, it is *not* heretical. And since this area of Adventist theology does not involve a denial of the completed atonement made by Christ *alone*, it certainly cannot be cited as a legitimate reason for refusing to fellowship with the Adventists.

(4) **The Seventh-day Sabbath.**—This doctrine is just plain historical Sabbatarianism, which the Seventh-day Advent-

ists took over from the Seventh-day Baptists. In the eyes of many it smacks of legalism, especially since the Adventists claim that if one does not observe the seventh-day Sabbath he is in disobedience to what they believe to be one of the express commands of the moral law, or Ten Commandments as they describe it. But the Adventists also teach that those who keep Sunday in good faith and are honestly living up to all of the light that they have on the issue do not have this disobedience imputed to them.

Contrary to this position, St. Paul tells us in the fourteenth chapter of Romans that one man esteems one day above another, others esteem every day alike and that each should be fully persuaded in his own mind, etc. In the second chapter of Colossians, Paul also tells us that days, feasts, ceremonials, types, etc., have *all* passed away at the cross. And in Colossians 2:16 and 17 the inspired apostle specifically mentions the Sabbaths, in the *plural*, clearly indicating that as far as he was concerned the Sabbath issue was closed at Calvary.

(5) **The Spirit of Prophecy.**—The Seventh-day Adventist doctrine of the "spirit of prophecy" teaches that spiritual gifts did not cease with the apostolic church, but rather that they have been manifested through the years, and especially so in the writings and work of Ellen G. White, prominent early leader in the Seventh-day Adventist denomination. The Adventists maintain that Mrs. White was specifically guided in penning counsel and instruction to the Seventh-day Adventist denomination. They esteem her writings highly, which one cannot understand until one digests a sufficient quantity of them. They do not, however, put her writings on a parity with Scripture.

Adventists regard the "spirit of prophecy" counsels of Ellen G. White as counsels to the Adventist denomination, and there is no reason why this view should prohibit Christians of other denominations from having fellowship with Adventists, so long as Adventists do not attempt to enforce upon their fellow Christians the counsels that Mrs. White specifically directs to them.

(6) **Health Reform (unclean foods, etc.).**—The ministry of Mrs. White, throughout her many years of association with the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, uniformly encouraged what has been called "health reform." This term is much broader than the matter of diet. Mrs. White believed and taught that the Scriptures give the best outline for the care of the human body. Throughout her life she gave to the Seventh-day Adventist denomination frequent counsels on health principles, including dietary matters. Many individuals outside the ranks of Adventism,

looking at these dietary restrictions covering what they call "unclean" foods (including pork, lobsters, crabs, and various other edibles, which were all forbidden under the Mosaic law), have reasoned that Adventists are legalists in this realm and ought instead to consider

themselves "under grace" and free to eat all things, as based upon Peter's vision in Acts 10:15. Here Peter saw a great sheet filled with all manner of beasts, creeping things, and fowls. In this connection, the Lord speaking to him, said, "What God hath cleansed call not thou common or unclean."

Adventists hold that this vision concerning the edibility of "all things" is symbolic, and they quote verses 28 and 34, where Peter says, "God hath showed me that I should not call *any man* common or unclean" and adds, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons."

In answer to the charge of Mosaic legalism, a prominent Adventist authority on the Old Testament, the Rev. W. E. Read, stated the denominational position when he wrote:

"It is true we refrain from eating certain articles as indicated, . . . but not because the law of Moses has any binding claims upon us. Far from it. We stand fast in the liberty wherewith God has set us free. It must be remembered that God recognized 'clean' and 'unclean' animals at the time of the flood (Gen. 7:2, 8; 8:20), long before there was a law of Moses. We simply reason that if God saw fit to counsel His people then that such things were not best for human consumption, and since we are physically constituted as are the Jews and all other people, that such things can hardly be the best for us to use today.

"It is primarily a question of health. We attach religious significance to the question of eating insofar as it is vital that we preserve our bodies in the best health. This we feel is our duty and responsibility, for our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 3:16; 6:19; II Cor. 6:16)."

It will be seen that, in the Adventist view, certain principles of the Mosaic law are still operative today regarding the question of foods, just as certain other features of the Mosaic law are operative today regarding other truths carried over from the Old Testament to the New Testament; but these are not forced upon Adventists in a legalistic way, except as they personally feel moral responsibility or where their conscience is concerned. That certain features of the Old Testament law are taught in the New Testament, no informed theologian will deny, and these were *not* abolished at Calvary (See I Sam. 14:32, 33; Deut. 6:5; 10:12, 36, and compare with Acts 15:28, 29; 21:25; Matt. 19:19; 22:39; Rom. 13:9; Gal. 5:14).

The membership of the Adventists, now past the million mark, is scattered over most of the countries of the earth. They consistently seek to use the best foods available in the various lands, as circumstances permit, while conscientiously avoiding that which they regard as "unclean." Should any doubt that the Adventists have some ground on which to stand, they may check the instances where some Mosaic injunctions were carried over as moral responsibilities in the New Testament.

We may not agree with Seventh-day Adventists on the problem of dietary health reforms, but St. Paul tells us, in Romans 14:2-4, that we ought not to judge another's habits, etc., but leave such judgment unto the Lord. Further, that we ought to do nothing that would cause our brethren to stumble (I Cor. 8:15). Therefore, so long as Seventh-day Adventists do not attempt to enforce upon their fellow Christians these dietary restrictions this issue, too, fails to justify a refusal of fellowship.

(7) **The Remnant Church.**—The last area of conflict between Seventh-day Adventism and contemporary evangelical Christianity is the "remnant church" idea, espoused by early members of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination. Still taught in the denomination, though in a vastly different sense from its original conception the idea is that Ad-

ventists constitute a definite *part* of the "remnant church," or the "remnant people" of God, of the last days. But they just as staunchly maintain that God's *true children*, scattered through all faiths, are likewise included in this "remnant," in contradistinction to some early writers in the movement who maintained that the term "remnant" applied only to Seventh-day Adventists.

These early writers, in their formative days, developed the idea that the 144,000, mentioned in the book of Revelation, was the Seventh-day Adventist Church in literal numbers. Such restricted views have long since been repudiated by their leaders and the great majority of Adventists.

Today, the term involves a time element—the "remnant church" indicates the great last segment of the true Christian church of the Christian Era, existing just before the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Adventists further recognize that God's true followers everywhere, whom He owns as *His people* are true members of this "remnant," which will constitute the Bride of Christ at His glorious return to usher in the Kingdom of God.

If Seventh-day Adventist theology actually did maintain that they *alone* were the chosen or "remnant church," and that other Christians were excluded, we might say that a definite reason exist-

ed for hesitation, where fellowship with them is concerned. But the denominational position today clearly recognizes all true Christians as fellow members of the Body of Christ and part of the great last day "remnant people" to be manifested in the closing days of the age of grace. Some detractors still persist in quoting outmoded or unrepresentative literature and out-of-context quotations not in harmony with the true denominational position in an attempt to prove that the Adventists are rigid exclusivists on this issue. This assertion simply is not true!

#### Summary

As we draw this brief resumé of current Seventh-day Adventist beliefs to a close, we feel that the two questions that we set out to answer in the beginning have been satisfactorily covered in the light of verifiable contemporary evidence. It is definitely possible, we believe, to have fellowship with Seventh-day Adventists on the basis of their clear fundamental allegiance to the cross of Jesus Christ, and to the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith, regarding which Seventh-day Adventists are soundly orthodox. Despite their somewhat "heterodox" theological ideas in some areas, they are most certainly true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

As noted, the serious disagreement that might most naturally arise in three areas—sleep of the dead (and annihilation of the wicked); the Sabbath; and the sanctuary - investigative - judgment theory—can be greatly mollified by understanding the true Adventist position on these doctrines.

The leadership of the denomination is eager to see that this position be set forth in their literature and borne out in their activities throughout the world. There is no doubt that Seventh-day Adventists desire to receive and to extend the hand of fellowship to all truly within the Body of Christ. The differences that exist between Seventh-day Adventist theology and accepted historic orthodoxy, do not justify the attitude which many have held toward Seventh-day Adventism of either the recent past, or the present. Were it not for the fact that many Christian writers and publishers have seemingly been concerned only with selling books, pamphlets, etc., and combatting certain phases of what they believe to be theological error in Adventist theology, instead of digging out the true, verifiable facts and presenting the whole picture, the Christian public today would have a much clearer concept of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. True Seventh-day Adventism, despite its differences *from* us, is one *with* us in the great work of winning men to Jesus Christ and in preaching the wonders of His matchless, redeeming grace.



## Postscript on

# SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM

By DONALD GREY BARNHOUSE

The long-awaited *Answers to Questions on Doctrine*, "prepared by a Representative Group of Seventh-day Adventist Leaders, Bible Teachers, and Editors," has come from the press. It is the vindication of the position we have taken in recent months and will soon be recognized as such by all fair-minded Christians.

About three years ago the Editor-in-Chief of *ETERNITY* approached the Adventist leaders saying that we were assigning the Rev. Mr. Walter R. Martin, a member of the staff of the Evangelical Foundation and Contributing Editor of *ETERNITY*, to make a study of their doctrines. Never have we seen such cooperation, such willingness to reveal everything, such desire for Christian fellowship, and such kindness and love in all relationships.

Mr. Martin prepared scores of questions. Their answers were hammered out with us. They gathered their best teachers and editors and have now published many of these questions with 720 pages of answers! The volume is an authoritative statement of their doctrines. They say that it is *not* a new statement of faith, but rather "an answer to specific questions concerning their faith." However, it is a definitive statement that lops off the writings of Adventists who have been independent of and contradictory to their sound leadership and effectively refutes many of the charges of doctrinal error that have been leveled against them. The writings of those who have in the past attacked Seventh-day Adventism in those areas are now out of date. From now on anyone who echoes these criticisms must be considered as willfully ignorant of the facts or victims of such prejudice that they are no longer to be trusted as teachers in this field.

At the same time that the Adventists issue their new volume Zondervan Publishing House is releasing Walter Martin's appraisal and criticism of the Adventist position. The importance of this double publication cannot be minimized. It may be the first time in modern church history that two parties with sharp differences have prayed and talked with each other and come finally to a complete understanding of the areas of agreement and disagreement. When Mr. Martin went to the Adventist headquarters in Washington, he was given complete access to all their records. The honesty of the Adventists can be seen in their attitude. When Mr. Martin asked the custodian of their vault to let him see material unfavorable to the Adventists, the man replied, "My instructions are to give you absolutely anything that

you ask on this matter." All references in Mr. Martin's volume are paged to this Adventist statement. In the front of Mr. Martin's book is a statement signed by an official of the Adventist denomination that they have not been misquoted or misrepresented by Mr. Martin.

The entire Adventist volume is an expansion of the answer to the first question in the book. We believe it so important that we are reproducing that question and answer here:

"Question 1. *What doctrines do Seventh-day Adventists hold in common with Christians in general, and in what aspects of Christian thought do they differ?*

"Christians in general are divided into various schools of thought on practically every doctrine of the Bible. On some doctrines Seventh-day Adventists find themselves in one group, and on other doctrines we may be classified quite differently. With some religious groups we hold many doctrines in common. With others we may find little common doctrinal ground. We do not accept certain doctrines held by some Christians because we feel that they are not based on the Word of God.

"Practically all Seventh-day Adventist beliefs are held by one or more Christian groups. A few are distinctive with us. Our beliefs could be classified in relation to the beliefs of other Christians under the following headings:

"1. *In Common with Conservative Christians and the Historic Protestant Creeds, We Believe:*

"1. That God is the Sovereign Creator, upholder, and ruler of the universe, and that He is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent.

"2. That the Godhead, the Trinity, comprises God the Father, Christ the Son and the Holy Spirit.

"3. That the Scriptures are the inspired revelation of God to men; and that the Bible is the sole rule of faith and practice.

"4. That Jesus Christ is very God, and that He has existed with the Father from all eternity.

"5. That the Holy Spirit is a personal being, sharing the attributes of deity with the Father and the Son.

"6. That Christ, the Word of God, became incarnate through the miraculous conception and the virgin birth; and that He lived an absolutely sinless life here on earth.

"7. That the vicarious, atoning death of Jesus Christ, once for all, is all-sufficient for the redemption of a lost race.

"8. That Jesus Christ arose literally and bodily from the grave.

"9. That He ascended literally and bodily into Heaven.

"10. That He now serves as our advocate in priestly ministry and mediation before the Father.

"11. That He will return in a premillennial, personal, imminent second advent.

"12. That man was created sinless, but by his subsequent fall entered a state of alienation and depravity.

"13. That salvation through Christ is by grace alone, through faith in His blood.

"14. That entrance upon the new life in Christ is by regeneration, or the new birth.

"15. That man is justified by faith.

"16. That man is sanctified by the indwelling Christ through the Holy Spirit.

"17. That man will be glorified at the resurrection or translation of the saints when the Lord returns.

"18. That there will be a judgment of all men.

"19. That the gospel is to be preached as a witness to all the world.

*"II. On Certain Controversial Doctrines among Conservative Christians, We Hold One of Two or More Alternate Views. We Believe:*

"1. That man is free to choose or reject the offer of salvation through Christ; we do not believe that God has predetermined that some men shall be saved and others lost.

"2. That the moral law of ten commandments, or the Decalogue has not been either changed or abolished.

"3. That baptism is to be administered by single immersion; we do not think that it may be administered by sprinkling, pouring or trine immersion.

"4. That man was endowed at creation with conditional immortality; we do not believe that man has innate immortality or an immortal soul.

"5. That the wicked will be punished by suffering and complete destruction in the lake of fire; we do not believe in an eternally burning hell in which souls are tormented without end.

"6. That the seventh day of the week is the Sabbath; we do not believe that the Sabbath has been abolished, changed to the first day, or is merely a seventh part of time.

"7. That the principle of tithing is God's plan for the support of His church; we do not believe that tithing was only for the Jews.

"8. That God created the world in six literal days; we do not believe that creation was accomplished by long aeons of evolutionary processes.

"9. That the correct view of prophetic interpretation is best set forth by what is known as the historical school; we do not accept the systems followed by either the preterists or futurists.

"10. That church and state should operate in entirely separate spheres; we do not believe that in an attempt to control men's religion or religious activities the church should dominate the state, or that the state should govern the church.

"11. That the ordinance instituted by Christ—that of washing one another's feet at the time of the Lord's Supper—is to be practiced; we do not believe that this was merely an accommodation to the customs and necessities of those times.

"12. That we should abstain from such practices as the use of alcohol and tobacco; we do not believe that indulgence in these things is fully representative of the character of our Lord.

*"III. In a Few Areas of Christian Thought, Our Doctrines Are Distinctive with Us. We Believe:*

"1. That there is a sanctuary in Heaven where Christ, our High Priest, ministers in two distinct phases of His mediatorial work.

"2. That there is to be an investigative judgment in which the destinies of all men are decided before Christ comes in the clouds of glory.

"3. That the Spirit of prophecy, or the prophetic gift, is one of the gifts of the Spirit promised to the church in the last days, and that that gift was manifested to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the work and writings of Ellen G. White.

"4. That the seal of God and the mark of the beast, mentioned in Revelation, are the symbols of the opposing forces of good and evil in the last great conflict before Christ comes the second time.

"5. That the three angels of Revelation 14 represent the proclamation of God's last message to the world in preparation for the coming of our Lord."

Reproduced here are the first few pages of a 720-page book. Any questions about any of these thirty-six statements set forth will be found fully answered in the heart of the volume.

What we set out to say publicly, more than a year ago, has been amply vindicated by the answers given here. I know that there will be prejudiced people who will not want to believe that they have been misinformed and that

*(Continued on page 45)*



Near the Kingsport Press in Tennessee a southbound bus makes a scheduled midday stop of twenty minutes so that passengers may freshen up and get a bite to eat. One driver said, as he brought his bus to a stop, "Folks, we'll be stopping here for twenty minutes. This line makes it a strict policy never to recommend an eating place by name, but if anybody wants me while we're here, I'll be eating a wonderful T-bone steak with French fries at Tony's first-class, spotlessly clean diner directly across the street."

Indirect advertising is indeed important and often more effective than the direct pitch. So is the indirect witness for Christ. The believer who reveals Christ by the way he lives, moves, walks, talks, eats, reads, pays his bills, keeps his garden free of weeds and a thousand other details of life, will probably do more than the fanatic with the sandwich-board reading, "Prepare to meet thy God."

## ADVENTISM

(Continued from page 23)

their favorite allegations have been drawn from quotations from fringe teachers who do not represent the real thought of the Adventist movement.

ETERNITY lost some subscribers by telling the truth about the Adventists. This we regret. We feel sure that this was due to an apparent misunderstanding of the issue. We are delighted, however, that many who cancelled have renewed their subscription because they have come to understand the matter and realized that we were motivated by Christian love.

We would emphasize again, as we did in our first article, that we heartily disagree with the Adventists on many of the doctrines. In fact, as my already heavily burdened schedule allows, we expect to publish biblical expositions showing some of what I hold to be fallacies in the S.D.A. position. Especially do I wish to show the error in their whole idea of conditional immortality, soul sleeping, and annihilation. I wish also to show the fallacy of the day-year theory, which is the theory that first got their forefathers off the track and caused the beginning of the movement. I hope to write on the whole question of the law and the Sabbath.

Let it be said for the very critical that the Adventists have been most careful to spell out their disagreement with the most serious charges which have been leveled against them in the past. They call Ellen G. White, "one of our leading writers" (p. 29). They say, "We test the writings of Ellen G. White by the Bible, but in no sense do we test the Bible by her writings" (p. 90). "While Adventists hold the writings of Ellen G. White in highest esteem, these are not the source of our expositions" (p. 93). And again: "While we revere [her] writings, and expect all who join the church to accept the doctrine of spiritual gifts as manifested in her experience, we do not make acceptance of her writings a matter for church discipline" (p. 96). "The Bible is the sole rule of faith and practice" (p. 22).

The most serious charge ever made against the Adventists has arisen out of a series of booklets written by one of their former workers and disavowed again and again by the responsible leaders of the church. One writer in particular set forth that Jesus Christ had a sinful human nature. The present volume approaches this statement from several different points of view and repudiates it with horror. Because this has been made such a large issue by one "defender of the faith," who has attempted to pin this error on Mrs. White herself, the Adventist leaders in this present volume boldly present thirty-six different

quotations from the writings of Mrs. White expressing herself in the strongest fashion in positive statements concerning the eternal Godhead and sinless human nature of our Lord. In another appendix are listed more than fifty quotations concerning the mystery of the incarnation in which Mrs. White expresses over and over the wonder of the Word made flesh and the glory of His sinlessness. The original difficulty arose from the fact that Mrs. White was not a trained theologian and was largely unacquainted with historical theology. She was unaware that some of her terms might be construed against her. In my opinion she lacked profundity, accuracy,

and scholarship, but she owned, honored, and taught Jesus Christ as the eternal, sinless Son of God.

While most of our readers may not wish to attempt the 720 pages of the new Adventist volume, though it is illuminating in many areas, I would recommend that they purchase, read, and circulate Mr. Martin's volume,<sup>1</sup> which renders obsolete every other non-Adventist book that has been written on the appraisal and criticism of Seventh-day Adventism.

In deep humility before God I record one final angle of this whole question. The Adventists had been maligned and persecuted for decades. Regardless of whether or not some of this was their

own fault, they were hurt by it and withdrew into themselves. One of their foremost leaders (and they have deep men of God, gifted scholars who are humble Christian gentlemen) remarked, "The editors of ETERNITY have communicated more with us in two years than the whole Protestant church did in over one hundred years because they came to us in the spirit of Christian love." More than I can say I am glad for this, because this is the crowning desire of my life that men shall know that we are His disciples because we love one another (John 13:35). END

<sup>1</sup> ETERNITY Book Service, 1716 Spruce Street, Philadelphia 3, Pa. \$3.50.

Transcript of a Recorded

CONVERSATION

between

A. L. HUDSON

and

DR. DONALD BARNHOUSE

May 16, 1958

Regarding the book

QUESTIONS ON DOCTRINE

(H) Good morning.

(B) Good morning.

(H) This is Al Hudson, Baker, Oregon.

(B) Bob Hudson?

(H) Al Hudson

(B) Al Hudson

(H) Yes

(B) Yes?

(H) On the 28th of last month I wrote you and Mr Martin and Mr. Bryant a letter relative to some articles which have appeared in your magazine on Seventh-day Adventists, etc.

(B) (To Secretary) Have we a letter from a Mr. Al Hudson, Baker, Oregon, concerning articles on the subject Adventists? All right, go ahead.

(H) The reason I mentioned that was to try to identify myself.

(B) Yes.

(H) Now, I'm in this letter ---

(B) What church are you connected with?

(H) I'm a Seventh-day Adventists.

(B) Yes.

(H) In my letter I stated what I'm calling you about. That's the reason I mentioned the letter. I thought if you might have caught it, why then you would know what-

(B) Well we get so many thousands of letters that it takes generally a long time to filter up to me.

(H) Sure, I appreciate that. Well, then I can give you just a brief resume of the situation. I'm writing a paper dealing with certain phases of developments in the Adventist church, particularly

in the last decade. Of course this matter of our relationship to the Evangelicals has come along as part of the picture. And I've read your articles in Eternity, also Mr. Martin's articles, and articles that other Evangelicals have written. Now some time ago, I talked to Mr. Martin, oh, I guess it's been about a month ago. I was interested in when his book was coming out, and so on. I had talked to Mr. Bryant of Zondervan publishing, and Mr. Martin. Then I wrote up the result of our conversation as I understood it, and sent it to Mr. Martin, asking him to confirm it, or correct it as he might see fit, and I haven't heard from him. In fact, he seems unwilling to either confirm or deny the facts that we discussed in our conversation.

(B) Well, I tell you, I know this, that I know that his book has been cleared by our office, and it is on the way. I think that Zondervan doesn't want to publish it before September.

(H) I see.

(B) That's the situation. The book proposition. They don't want to break it out at this time of the year.

(H) I see. It's a matter of financial ---

(B) I don't know. It's a matter of hitting the trade at a certain time.

(H) I see.

(B) But what can I do for you?

(H) Well, now the question: there's quite a bit of controversy over this matter in the Evangelical press, and of course it is also appearing in our press. Now there seems to be one angle of the thing that I would like to get cleared up. Have, to your knowledge, either to you or to Mr. Martin, or anyone else, have Seventh-day Adventist leaders indicated formally or informally that they desire fellowship in the National Association of Evangelicals?

(B) I don't know anything about these things. My staff keeps me protected from all controversy so that I can sit here at my desk and write, etc.

(H) I see.

(B) Now, I don't think there is any doubt of the fact that Seventh-day Adventists, that is the top leaders, understand that it is a very important thing for Seventh-day Adventists to be recognized as evangelical. But you see, the difficulty lies in the fact, that -- the one thing that I stated

about Seventh-day Adventists, namely that they are believers, has been overlooked by Talbot, and King's Business, and these people. The fact that I've said to thousands of people already, I said, "All I'm saying is that the Adventists are Christians." I still think that their doctrines are about the screwiest of any group of Christians in the world. I believe this beyond any question.

In fact, the doctrine of the investigative judgment is the most blatant, face-saving proposition that ever existed to cover up the debacle of the failure of Christ to come in 1844 as they said. When the two men walked through the cornfield, and suddenly one of them struck his head and said, "Why, Christ DID come." Why this is ridiculous, asinine nonsense. The whole of the investigative judgment is a face-saving thing, and now that a hundred years have gone by, if the Adventists had the courage-- because now the Adventists are becoming educated. A hundred years ago, the Adventists were practically all illiterate. And now they are becoming educated, and they know their doctrines will not hold the light of exegesis. Just simply cannot stand. There is no Greek, no Greek scholar in the world, that will fail to accept the fact that Christ died once and for all. And that He didn't go in and out, and that He hasn't been wandering around in the tabernacle. He has been seated, and that He has never gotten up to walk anywhere in 1844, or any other place else. Now failure to understand this is intellectual, ah, laziness or fear.

Now, you see, Seventh-day Adventist group was formed by three groups that came together, each holding a pet doctrine that was false. One group held Sabbatarianism, the others didn't at all. The second group held the investigative judgment, the other groups did not hold it at all. And the third group held the doctrine of conditional immortality, and the other groups didn't hold it at all. They were all united on the great truth of the second coming of Christ. And so, in order to come together in one union, they effected what is a compromise. Each accepted the folly of the other to get their own folly accepted. Because -- Now, if you'll drop a post card to my office, they'll send you my new booklet, "The Christian and the Sabbath," which has just been published about a week ago. You can get it free.

(H) The Christian and the Sabbath?

(B) Yes, Box 2000, Philadelphia. I have just made an exhaustive study of the folly of Sabbatarians preaching on "one man esteemeth one day above another, another man esteems every day alike." And I have just

published this, and it's on -- in fact if you listen next Sunday morning on National Broadcasting System, I'm on this subject, the Christian and the Sabbath, right now. I'm preaching six sermons on the Sabbath coast to coast on NBC, pointing out that the Adventists are wrong in keeping Saturday, the Protestant are wrong in keeping Sunday, and that the only thing to keep is, to have the attitude that every day is alike and that God not only is not entering into this day, but He HATES the Sabbath day. You see.

(H) Well, now, in your contact with Adventist leaders, which you mention in your magazine, and also Mr. Martin, do you feel that our top ranking leaders, who have as you say, become educated, are tending away from this concept of the investigative judgment as you have just mentioned it?

(B) You see, what we know is this. I cannot speak for any of these men, Roy Anderson and Froom, etc. - these are intelligent men. They'll speak for themselves. They'll tell you what they're believing and what they are doing. You wouldn't want anybody to call you up, or call somebody else up, and ask what the inside of your thinking was.

(H) No, except that you have had association with them, have talked with them.

(B) We have had great association; in fact I have a letter on my desk this minute. When I asked my secretary she just handed me a letter from L. E. Froom, and we are in correspondence right along, with the leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Movement.

(H) Well then, that was the basis of my question. Now you have mentioned in your articles in Eternity that it seems to you that there is sort of a transition period, or a ---

(B) There has to be.

(H) Or a metamorphosis as it were out of the--

(B) I mean there HAS to be. Take for example, we have discovered a book by Ellen G. White that nobody knows exists. The Seventh-day Adventists know that it exists, and they have a copy locked in their safe in Takoma Park, Washington. And it is a book that does not exist any place else. There are only about three copies in the United States, that we know anything about. Well, they lock it up, to keep anybody from getting at it.

(H) Have you read it?

(B) Walter Martin has read it.

(H) Has he?

(B) Sure.

(H) Well, ah ---

at all, that Jesus hasn't been wandering around in heaven since 1844. He did not get up off the throne and go into an inner sanctuary. You know this was a face-saving device of men who were so scaredy cat that they were walking in a cornfield in order to keep off the main road. You know this wasn't the Holy Spirit. You know in your heart, and if you ever take the position, God is going to nullify your ministry, and at the judgment seat of Christ, you are going to answer for it.

(H) Now, I appreciate your frankness. I wish our men would come out and be just as frank as to their relationship to you and Mr. Martin, and also doctrinal positions they are taking. Frankly, there is considerable difference between what you have published and what our men are telling us. I'm just trying to find out if we have changed, if we should change, just what the status of the thing is.

(B) Everything I have published was read by Seventh-day Adventist leaders before we published. Not one line have I ever printed that was not previously read by Froom, for instance.

(H) Well, that's just what - I'm not trying to stir up any trouble. I'm a Seventh-day Adventist, and I'm not convinced even from what you say, that I should change, but I'm willing to consider it provided it is brought out in the open and handled in a business-like way. Now, if our leaders in Washington feel we should modify our position, my position is that they should come out to us as Seventh-day Adventists in the field and say, "Brethren, we have been in error on this. We'd better change to so and so and so and so." Now, they are not doing that. They're telling us that they have not changed, and yet apparently they are giving you and Mr. Martin the idea that we at least are in the process of changing or are willing to change. Now, I'm just trying to get the facts.

(B) I think what they're doing, as I say, I think these men are educated men, and some of them know Greek. We sat here with their Greek professor, some of these men know Greek, and Walter Martin pointed out, "By one offering he had perfected forever them that are sanctified." That is in the aorist tense. And one man of the top leaders said, "Now I don't know Greek," he said. ? ? myself, the three of us have had a lot of Greek, and all of - the wonderful part of our fellowship with Anderson and Froom and Unruh, and I forget the other men that came up from Washington, the top men, and we spent two days one time and two and a half another, here in my home. We entertained these men, and fed them vegetarian meals, and we had a nice time together. We had a wonderful time together.

(H) Have you ever eaten any Adventist steaks then?

(B) Huh?

(H) You mention you fed them vegetarian meals, so I thought maybe they had reciprocated with some Adventist steaks.

(B) Well, we've had them at Takoma Park and out in California. I spoke for Richards in a Seventh-day Adventist group - to all his people, etc. and I am going to preach in the Seventh-day Adventist church in Takoma Park, Washington. And we had Dr. Roy Anderson come into my pulpit in the Presbyterian church and my people heard him with great profit. He is a godly man. Now this is a whole lot better than having everybody taking Talbot's position and saying you are all anti-christs.

(H) Well, this is a complicated proposition.

(B) Let me tell you this, if you don't want, I mean if you try to write a book or anything that there has been no change in Adventism, then we're going to have to go back and say, "You are anti-christ." I will have to make a public retraction, and send it to Time magazine, and say, "Your article," - did you read it when it came out in Time?

(H) No.

(B) Well, you see Time magazine wrote a big article about my article on Seventh-day Adventism and called it "Peace with the Adventists." Well, I'll have to write Time magazine and publish in Eternity and write an abject apology to Talbot for Kings Business, Moody Monthly, and say, "I was wrong. These people are still anti-christ. Put them back with Jehovah's Witnesses where they belong," - if you start writing the way you're contemplating.

(H) You actually believe, then, that our book, Questions on Doctrine supports the attitude that you have put forth in your magazine Eternity, and which you have set forth here to me. You actually believe that the book supports that?

(B) I say this, I have a copy of it within three feet of me, and what you have done, beyond any question, in that book, in taking the position, for example, that anybody that ever said that it was necessary to keep Saturday in order to be saved, was wrong. Your book states this. Now, for instance, you don't hold that keeping Sunday is the mark of the beast, do you?

(H) Yes.

(B) You do?

(H) Yes.

(B) Well, then we might as well hang up. You belong to the anti-christ party. I'll

tell you this, brother, and you, I doubt if you're saved.

(H) Well,

(B) You don't know what salvation is. Hudson, you don't know what salvation is.

(H) Well, perhaps that's right, Mr. Barnhouse, but the Adventists believe that, too.

(B) They, now that's the point, the Adventists do not believe this. This is the point I'm making. And everywhere we said, for instance, Dr. John Sutherlin Bonnell, pastor of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian church, wrote an article in Look magazine called "What Presbyterians Believe," and he said they believe that there is no hell, and that they don't believe in the virgin birth, etc. Well, that is not what Presbyterians believe. That's what a screwball on the fringe believes. Now, in the Seventh-day Adventist movement you've got screwballs and people on the fringe.

(H) Yeah, that's apparently where I am.

(B) Well, if you believe that keeping any day but Saturday is the mark of the beast then you are of the party of the anti-christ because you deny salvation by grace alone. You do not believe that salvation is by grace alone, do you?

(H) Not in the sense that you see it, no.

(B) Yeah, in other words you believe that a man has to add something to the work of Christ in order to be saved?

[Barnhouse led Hudson into a trap at this point.]

(H) Yes, that's right.

(B) Well then, I say that is of the devil, beyond any question, and you see, you're the one that's making the difficulty, and I will print this in our magazine. Are you the pastor of a church there in Oregon?

(H) No, I'm a layman.

(B) You're a layman?

(H) I'm an officer of the church, but I'm not an ordained minister. I studied for the ministry, however, in the Adventist church, and I think I know what Adventists believe.

(B) You really believe then, that everybody who is not a Seventh-day Adventist is lost?

(H) Oh, no, I didn't say that.

(B) Well, this is what you say, because the people who are not Adventists don't keep Saturday, and won't. I hate Saturday as a Sabbath religious day. I hate it because Christ hates it.

(H) Every man must stand before God himself and on his understanding of the Bible. Now, my position is this, with reference to this controversy, that our men have not set forth Adventist teaching accurately.

(B) Your leaders, no, you see there have been divisions in your church for the past hundred years.

(H) Yes, of course there always are differences of opinion.

(B) Sure, but what I call the screwball element in your church has been the group that has printed these little tracts on the side saying Saturday is the Sabbath, and anybody who doesn't keep it is a lost soul. Well, that is the screwball element. No responsible Christian can ever say this.

(H) Well, there is a distinction there. In what Mr. Martin has printed in here on the remnant church, he told me that, as you have told me, that you have written confirmation of the approval of Seventh-day Adventist leaders before you printed this. Now Mr. Bryant - -

(B) Do you feel that you are the remnant church?

(H) That is Adventist teaching.

(B) Well, if you believe that, then you are a megalomaniac. Now let's face it. I'm not going to pull words. You just are not following the Bible.

(H) I appreciate your position. Now, of course, over the telephone here I couldn't defend that position but friend that is Adventist teaching.

(B) Well, it isn't Adventist teaching. Excuse me, but it is not.

(H) Well, that's the point. What makes you think it isn't?

(B) Well, their book, their statement, and even Ellen G. White. I can show you in Ellen G. White that she doesn't believe this.

(H) She doesn't believe that the Adventist church is the remnant church?

(B) She does not believe [that], she believes that God gave some vital truth, some latter-day truth, but she does not take the position that anybody that is not a Seventh-day Adventist is not a believer in Christ.

(H) No, she doesn't. Neither do we.

(B) Oh, yes you do.

(H) No.

(B) That's it. You just said that not keeping Saturday, keeping Sunday, was the mark of the beast. Your trouble is that you don't know what you say.

(H) Yes, I do realize what I say.

(B) Well, if you say, for instance, let me ask you this: Do you think I'm a lost soul?

(H) Friend, that is up to God.

(B) No, no, no, - but wait a minute. Let's ask a question; that's up to God but do you think that I cursing Saturday as the Sabbath, adopting the position of redemption in Christ, cursing Sunday as the Sabbath, cursing everything that is of the law, and wanting grace alone, and wanting to live in holiness, believing that all sin is removed by the blood of Jesus Christ alone, do you believe that therefore I am a lost soul?

(H) I believe that you are a disobedient follower of Christ, and that disobedience, if it is continued, will ultimately cause the loss of your soul, yes.

(B) Yeah, well, you see there's no use in your talking. You don't even believe that I'm saved.

(H) Now, I think that you will find if you will investigate the matter a little more closely that - -

(B) Thank God the leaders of Seventh-day Adventism do not hold your position.

(H) You don't think they do.

(B) I know they don't. I know they don't. We've gone on our knees together, and have gotten up from our knees together, and they say, "Brother, this is wonderful. We are redeemed and fellows in Christ."

(H) And you don't think that Seventh-day Adventist leaders believe that you are a disobedient follower of Jesus.

(B) I didn't say that. They believe that I am a born-again person; that I am saved and have eternal life. They know that I hold the Calvinistic position that I am saved forever and can never be lost. They say to me, they hold the Arminian position, but nevertheless, they definitely believe that I am a born-again believer and a brother in Christ.

(H) Well, now here, I had one of these very men who has been foremost in this relationship tell me when I was in Washington, D.C., last November; I went back for some conferences and study. He told me --

(B) Which man?

(H) I'd rather not give his name.

(B) Oh, come on now. If you're not honest enough to talk, what did you call me up for?

(H) Well, you accuse me, didn't accuse me, but wondered if I was trying to stir up personal trouble. I'm not. But I am trying to arrive as some facts. Now if I tell you this man's name personally, that is a personal thing. If I tell you the position he took, then it becomes --

(B) You said one of the men who came to my house.

(H) Well, let's put it this way. One of the men that has been - -

(B) You said one of the men that came to my house.

(H) You've got me on the spot.

(B) Sure I do. It's either Froom or Anderson or Richards.

(H) Unruh?

(B) No, Unruh is from Pennsylvania. You said Washington. That's Froom and Anderson and the the fourth man, what's his name?

(H) I don't know.

(B) You don't know. Well, that leaves it, it's Froom or Anderson who told you this.

(H) All right, I'll tell you, it was Froom. He told me that he had you men right where you were going to have to admit the seventh day is the Sabbath.

(B) Oh, he never said anything of the kind.

(H) Well, that's what he told me.

(B) We know that the seventh day is not the Sabbath.

(H) That's what he told me, and he told me in the offices of the General Conference in Washington.

(B) Well, you listen to the National Broadcasting System coast to coast next Sunday morning at 8:30. I come on over (?), and I'm preaching against the Sabbath right now.

(H) My point is this. As near as I can get information together, here, our men have been representing one thing to you and they are representing another thing to us.

(B) Well, put that down in so many words.

(H) Well, now I'll put in writing, and will you prove to the contrary? In other words, you say you have in your files stuff to support everything that you have written in Eternity magazine. Well, now will you come out with that?

(B) Well, uh --

(H) Our men are denying that. Now let's get the thing straight. I have a stack of correspondence here from our officials in Washington. I'm trying to get at the basis of this thing, and I don't know what is in your files. I know what Martin told me, and I know that he will not answer any letters in confirming what he told me, but our men are representing - -

(B) Possibly he believes that you are just a trouble maker.



(H) I think that's entirely possible. I appreciate his position. I'm not trying to cause trouble to anybody, but I want to know what our men are teaching and if we should change, I want to change with them, provided they can convince me that I should change; but to try to give the idea to you and Martin that we have changed, and to give the idea to us that we haven't changed, I don't go for that. Now, I think our men ought to come out and be honest on the proposition.

(B) Well, look, the important thing is this, where the great change has come, they have absolutely denied, and in the book, 700 page book which you have, they have denied beyond question that they hold any position which makes Christ anything other than the eternal second Person of the Godhead.

(H) I grant that.

(B) Do you believe that Jesus is the Lord Jehovah?

(H) Yes, if I understand what you mean by the Lord Jehovah. I believe that He is the second Person of the Godhead, eternally existent. He became incarnate and became a man. Now, on that point, however, there is a great controversy.

(B) Exactly. Now, you see there were Seventh-day Adventists who held that He was sinful, that He did not have a sinless nature, and they took the Docetism principle from back in the early church history. Now your leaders have come out in the strongest possible repudiation of that phase of Seventh-day Adventist teaching.

(H) They are taking the position, are they not, that Christ has the nature of Adam before he sinned, isn't that true?

(B) I hope not!

(H) What is their position as you understand it?

(B) That Christ had, that He was the God-man. Adam was a created being subject to fall. Jesus Christ was the God-man, not subject to fall.

(H) And that's your understanding of the position of our leaders?

(B) Of course! They have taken it so strongly and it is in their book. We hold they say, with the church of all the centuries that Jesus Christ was the eternal sinless son of God, etc., etc.

(H) Well, I don't want to take longer of your time. I was trying to clear up specifically the item of whether our leaders had made overtures to the National Association of Evangelicals for fellowship.

(B) I don't think they have.

(H) Now, that is what I'm trying to get at. That puts it in a different category.

(B) This would precipitate in the National Association, this would precipitate a fight that might break the National Association into pieces.

(H) In other words, it is still a matter of theological discussion in comparative religions. It's not a practical matter of determining whether or not Adventists should be admitted to the National Association of Evangelicals.

(B) Why, that has never been under discussion. I never heard about until you told me, this morning.

(H) It has come out in the Evangelical press. We have been represented as standing before the door of the National Association of Evangelicals asking for entrance. Now I'm trying to run that down and see if it is nothing but a rumor.

(B) I'll tell you what was said was this. The Seventh-day Baptists are already in. You see the Seventh-day Baptists have been a member of the National Association of Evangelicals for years. And someone stated, I believe, I wasn't at the convention, that Seventh-day Adventists had as much right in it as the Seventh-day Baptists. But I do not believe that anybody in the Seventh-day Adventist group applied or made overtures. If it had been done, it would have been done through us because, brother, I came out and said that Seventh-day Adventists were Christians. But I'm going to have to say that a man called me up from Oregon and spent a half an hour on the telephone telling me that he was not a Christian, for that's what you've told me this morning.

(H) Well, of course, that is a matter of opinion.

(B) No it isn't. Excuse me, but this is the matter. It says, if anybody come and bring not the doctrine of Christ, this is the spirit of the anti-christ. Now you see, if you do not believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal, sinless Son of God, that He could not have sinned, and goodness, we have 18 quotations from Mrs. White saying the same thing, 18 quotations from Ellen G. White stating exactly this position, and denying what you are telling me.

(H) On the other hand I have quotations that state just the opposite.

(B) One quotation.

(H) We have more than that.

(B) No.

(H) You don't have them all.

(B) Oh yes we do. Look Froom and the rest of them say that Walter Martin knows more about Seventh-day Adventists than any professor in Takoma Park, Washington, - -

(H) Well, that again is a matter of opinion.

(B) Let me tell you this, you talk to Martin, you tell him anything, and he'll give you the page number. He's got that kind of a memory.

(H) I don't question that he's read a lot of the Spirit of Prophecy.

(B) He's read it all. And everything else she ever wrote including the book they've got locked up in the safe and won't let anybody see.

(H) What's the name of that book?

(B) I don't know.

(H) You don't know, but Martin has read it?

(B) Of course.

(H) You know she wrote about 25 million words. That's quite a lot for a man to read.

(B) That's too much, you know. She was running off at the mouth, and the Holy Spirit certainly was not doing it.

(H) Do you think that Anderson and Froom agree with you on that position?

(B) Look, I know that these men are intelligent enough to know that she was a fallible human being, and that she said so herself. You don't believe that she was infallible, do you? Do you?

(H) You get into the matter of your various concepts of inspiration. You ask me a question. I'll answer it. I believe she was a prophet.

(B) Do you believe that she was infallible?

(H) Well, I say she was a prophet the same as any other true prophet.

(B) Do you believe that she was in error ever?

(H) As a human being?

(B) In her writing. Do you believe that in some of her writing that you have to point to certain sentences and say, "Boy, she sure pulled a booper! That's for the birds! It is not true."

(H) I haven't encountered any of those quotations, no.

(B) You haven't?

(H) No

(B) Oh, brother, are you a dupe. You are not honest as the people in Takoma Park or Richards. Richards doesn't hold with you.

(H) You mean the Voice of Prophecy?

(B) Yes.

(H) He feels she has written error?

(B) Of course he does. Every one of these men have said this to me. Every man. Every man. They believe that she was raised up of God to be a great blessing, and that the Spirit of Prophecy was upon her, but they all agree she wrote error in some places.

(H) You gather from your association with those men that they believe that she was a prophet though.

(B) They believe that God came upon her in a special way, and for a message to His people at a special time.

(H) Would you gather the impression in your talking with them that they feel that she was a prophet in the same sense that Isaiah and Jeremiah were?

(B) Of course not. Certainly not. They're intelligent men, and they are Christians. I mean, anybody who would say that they believe that Ellen G. White was a prophet in the same sense as Isaiah - in the first place, they are denying the Bible's word about prophecy concerning a woman. You see you simply have to put all that out of your mind before you ever accept such a thing, and you see, I mean, if you take this position, Seventh-day Adventism will have to go back into the same position as Mormonism with their Book of Mormon. A guest has just arrived for lunch, and I've got to go.

(H) I appreciate your time. Now, I'll tell you my position on Mrs White, just for the record. I don't know what you're going to publish that I have said. I hope that you have it accurately. My position is this - the Bible mentions two kinds of prophets, a true prophet and a false prophet. I believe Mrs. White was a true prophet. Now that is my position.

(B) Yeah, I know that's your position. She was just a good woman who was greatly blessed and greatly mistaken, very frequently.

(H) And you don't think Elder Froom and Richards and the others take my position, that she was a true prophet?

(B) Of course they don't.

(H) I see.

(B) None of them do.

(H) Well, I appreciate your time.

(B) They all believe now as I say, that she was a blessed woman, and that she had a special mission for God's people for a special time, but they all believe that, they know, that she wrote error. I mean, find out about the book of hers that is locked up in the safe and that nobody is allowed to see.

(H) Yes, I'll ask about that. I'll make inquiry. Thank you very much, Dr. Barnhouse. Goodbye.

(B) Goodbye.