

# ***Satan's All-Time Greatest Deception***

**The ultimate end-time  
doctrinal deception designed  
to destroy all Christians**

**Richard C. Vaughn**

## SATAN'S ALL-TIME GREATEST DECEPTION

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## **Dedication**

This book is dedicated to the pioneers of Seventh-day Adventism, and especially to God's faithful prophet Ellen G. White, as well as to all present-day Adventists who are trying to dissipate the doctrinal fog that has enveloped all Christians, including our brothers and sisters around the world who are yet caught up in the greatest of Satan's deceptions. Above all, this book is dedicated to our eternal Father God and His only truly begotten Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is the way, the Spirit of truth, and the light of the world.



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## Foreword

The message of this book is an urgent one for all Christians. The divisive controversy about who God is — “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” as the Bible says, or the Trinity doctrine’s three-gods-in-one-god being—is no inconsequential matter. It is a salvational issue, because it directly concerns whom we worship. It has to do with the One from whom we hope to receive the privilege of entering heaven. The concern on the heart of the author is that “thousands have a false conception of God and His attributes. They are as verily serving a false God as were the servants of Baal.” (RH Dec. 3, 1908)

Is it possible that most Christians are unintentional idolators? Until a few years ago, both the author and I were. As almost all Christians currently do, we continually broke God’s first commandment, though we didn’t realize it at the time. We had an unexamined faith; we believed what we were told by pastors, teachers and leaders. We accepted as our source of eternal life an implausible, unscriptural three-gods-in-one god that cannot save anyone. We would read God’s Word, which explicitly tells of one true God, His sole begotten Son, and His Spirit, and give up trying to make those sacred words fit our parroted misconceptions. In other words, we trusted our souls’ destinies to an interpretation that does not bear scrutiny. We placed our trust in “what saith the church” instead of “what saith the Lord.”

Ignorant, perhaps, of clear warnings from Ellen White’s writings that point out the trail of the serpent in this matter, Seventh-day Adventists are nonetheless without excuse, for her writings are readily available. In addition to making plain the identities of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, her writings clearly contradict the reinterpretation of a few passages from her pen that are claimed to prove her support of the Trinity doctrine.

Ellen White wrote of the necessity of reasoning soundly: "...It is important that in defending the doctrines which we consider fundamental articles of faith, we should never allow ourselves to employ arguments that are not wholly sound. These may avail to silence an opposer, but they do not honor the truth. We should present sound arguments, that will not only silence our opponents, but will bear the closest and most searching scrutiny...." (CW 40)

The origin and crux of the Godhead debate is two-fold. First, unless the apostolic and pioneer understanding of the Godhead is first proved wrong, what need is there for another interpretation? What error has surfaced in God's Word that has necessitated an entirely new understanding of the Godhead? Why haven't we been told about that error, to keep us from it? To date, proponents of the Trinity doctrine have been unable to show the error of a literal biblical understanding. What, then, justifies the presence of the Trinity doctrine in Seventh-day Adventism?

Second is the lack of soundness of the arguments that have been used to sustain the Trinity doctrine. They have not borne investigation; they are "not wholly sound," as Richard Vaughn in his book clearly and repeatedly demonstrates not only from Scripture, but also from the Spirit of prophecy, from church history and church publications, and by "cogent reasons," as Martin Luther phrased it when defending himself before the Diet.

Falsehoods can persist only when there is a neglect of searching the inspired writings for ourselves to learn what is truth. The weight of evidence presented in this book should convict every honest but wavering heart as to the true identity of our God, His sole begotten Son, and His holy Spirit. It is crucial knowledge, for shall we receive the seal of the living God if He isn't the God we worship?

Jean Handwerk



## Preface

I have written this book for three reasons:

1. Revelation 12:9 “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which *deceiveth the whole world.*” This includes just about everyone.
2. 1 Peter 5:8 “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” This warning to be extremely alert needs to be regarded by all, especially when deception in spiritual matters is running rampant.
3. 2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish.” God wants us to be saved, and He could not have done more to make it a reality for each one of us. Few will be saved, however, because they will have chosen satanically-inspired fatal deceptions.

And thus, the purpose of this book is to expose the greatest of all Satan’s deceptions to everyone who names Jesus as their Lord and Savior. This common doctrinal deception is designed to ensnare everyone, regardless of his or her denomination or other church affiliation.



# **Satan's All-Time Greatest Deception**

## **Introduction**

In the garden the serpent did not touch the woman, but he did coax her with deceitful words to commit the first sin. Eve was thus deceived into sin, but Adam recognized the deception and made a deliberate choice to disobey God's express command. It was his act that brought a legacy of death for his descendants. Mercifully, though, Christ our Savior stepped in with a message of hope for the doomed race. He foretold a long battle between the spiritual seed of the serpent and the spiritual seed of the woman, but in the end, the woman's seed, though "bruised," would deliver a fatal blow to the serpent and his followers. For the next four thousand years, in various ways, God had a church on earth composed of those who were loyal to Him. They were always a minority in the ever-increasing population. For example, by Noah's time there was only a remnant of eight souls saved from the flood. Nevertheless, throughout the remainder of the Old Testament, God still had a church of faithful souls, which is symbolized in God's Word as a pure woman.

In New Testament times, Jesus started a new church movement, with the gospel open to "whosoever will." Everyone, regardless of their past circumstances, could come to the Father through Christ alone. More and more believed in Jesus' atoning death and imputed life. That brought about cruel persecution as Satan's animosity was stirred. As Satan became more skillful in his deceptive power, he worked within the Christian church, which ultimately became a religious system that, even today, opposes God while professing to exalt, obey and worship Him. That church is represented in Scripture by a harlot woman. Throughout history, the harlot has committed spiritual adultery by seeking the strength of the civil state to increase her influence, rather than trusting in God to lead and sustain her. But even though the harlot-woman church has persecuted faithful believers, God has always had a visible remnant who resisted worshipping outside of the will of God. For a time they comprised God's true church, but the "pure woman" did

not retain her purity. Today, several centuries since the Reformation began, we can see on the cover of this book the true condition of that woman. God's church is firmly ensnared in Satan's coils.

Seventh-day Adventists have a profound understanding of the true seventh-day Sabbath and are free from the satanic deception of the counterfeit Sabbath—the mark of the beast. However, the overwhelming majority of the Christian world remains deceived on that issue, and are therefore either knowingly or ignorantly transgressors of the fourth commandment. The question today is whether or not ignorance of the Sabbath truth is an acceptable excuse for transgression. For the majority, it is not, because most Christians have had the time, opportunity, and/or resources to learn the truth. Most are spiritually indolent, allowing multiple distractions to occupy their spare time, coupled with the fact that they trust their souls' salvation to their spiritual leadership. They also rest in the false belief that the majority cannot be wrong. In the time of trouble, though, events will transpire that will not permit willful ignorance. When the latter rain is poured out and the three angels' messages are preached world-wide with great power, they will get the call to make an eternal life-saving decision to come out of Babylon.

The counterfeit Sabbath is truly a major deception, but it is *not Satan's all-time greatest deception*. The purpose of this book is to present exactly what that deception is, and how deceived Adventists and other Christians can escape Satan's plan for their destruction. Without a doubt, his all-time greatest deception has all of the Christian world ensnared, including the majority of the Seventh-day Adventist Church at every level. What makes this deception so insidious is that it involves the transgression of the first commandment. That makes it more than a serious issue; it is a life-or-death issue.

As recorded in Isaiah 14:14, Satan boasted, "*I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.*" That was not an idle boast. In what ways is Satan now like the most High God? Well, let's see. What does God have that Satan has engineered himself to have? God has a Sabbath; He warns His people in Isaiah 58:13 to stop trampling on His holy day. Satan has Sunday as his sabbath, and almost

the entire Christian world gives it undue reverence. They know not whom they obey when they think to “keep holy” that common day. But the Sabbath issue, as important as it is, is not the end point for Satan, though. He is pleased with his efforts to have world-wide recognition of and obedience to his counterfeit Sabbath, but what he wants yet—what he wants more—is total worship of all those who claim to be the children of God. This is why in getting as much of the Christian world, including Adventists, to believe one particular erroneous doctrine, he can get all to break the first commandment, as well. They will think they are worshipping God when they are actually worshipping Satan. This has been the primary object of his attack.

What has been his diabolical plan? Isaiah 14:13 reveals it: “For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north.” Satan has claimed that from his own throne, he will receive worship that was intended for the eternal Father. Has he made this blasphemous goal a reality? Besides the counterfeit Sabbath, does he receive the worship of the Christian world by the transgression of the first commandment? The answer is Yes. Have the overwhelming majority of Seventh-day Adventists also fallen into his trap? Have they either ignorantly or knowingly become transgressors of the first commandment, as well? Again, the answer is Yes.

Satan definitely has gained his objective. This book will expose this greatest of all Satan’s ingenious deceptions, one which the leadership in Adventism embraced, all too willingly, in 1980. Satan wants people to believe that this is an irrelevant side issue that merits no attention, but your salvation may hinge upon your correct understanding of the issues involved, which we will thoroughly examine.

Isaiah 58:1 says, “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.” Since salvation for many is at stake, this book will cry aloud and not spare, in showing believers where they have been ensnared.

As you study the contents of this book, Satan's all-time greatest deception will be made perfectly clear to anyone who reads the evidence with an open mind and without prejudice or bias. God will not give the light of truth to a closed mind. Hear the message from the writings of Ellen White, God's messenger for these last days:

"If persons listen to God's message of reproof, warning, or encouragement while their hearts are filled with prejudice, they will not understand the true import of that which was sent them to be a savor of life unto life. Satan stands by to present everything to their understanding in a false light. But the souls that are hungering and thirsting for divine knowledge will hear aright, and will obtain the precious blessings that God designs to convey to them. Their minds are under the influence of His Holy Spirit, and they hear aright...." (5T 695)

Truly, "we have many lessons to learn, and many, many to unlearn. God and heaven alone are infallible. Those who think that they will never have to give up a cherished view, never have occasion to change an opinion, will be disappointed. As long as we hold to our own ideas and opinions with determined persistency, we cannot have the unity for which Christ prayed." (CW 37)

"...When hearts are purified from selfishness and egotism, they are in harmony with the message God sends them. The perceptions are quickened, the sensibilities refined. Like appreciates like. 'He that is of God heareth God's words.'" (5T 695)

Please note that there will be minor duplication of some Spirit of prophecy quotations in the different chapters. It is done for the understanding of the chapter's topic. Repetition is sometimes useful, as it deepens the impression. Also, italics have been used throughout for emphasis; when in the original, though, it has been noted.

I encourage you to pray that God will make His truth clear to your understanding.

Richard C. Vaughn

## Chapter 1

### **“Agitate, Agitate, Agitate”**

All the evidence in this book has one beneficent purpose, which is to help the reader discover how cruel the deception is that we have been taught to believe. Once the truth is realized, there will be a deep, abiding joy in the brilliant gems of biblical truth that have been hidden from our view for too long.

God’s prophet has given this counsel, “For years the voice of God has been saying to us, ‘Agitate, agitate, agitate.’ Study every point of truth, that you may know for yourselves what is truth in distinction from error.” (SSW, April 1, 1892)

So what is the cruel deception that our church has embraced and now teaches? It is contained in our current published *Fundamental Beliefs*. It is a four-part set of doctrinal beliefs that has rejected and replaced the biblical principles or beliefs about Father, Son and Holy Spirit that were held “with great unanimity” by our Adventist forefathers. (Preface, *Fundamental Principles*, 1872) This new, four-part set of beliefs rejects a literal reading of the Bible, which the Holy Spirit through Ellen White commended to us, which is how the pioneers read and understood God’s Word. Instead, it espouses a doctrinal position that is not plainly stated in the Bible and is not “new light,” which always builds upon earlier understanding, but a completely “new view.” That “new view” is the trinitarian concept of three self-existent, coeternal, coequal Gods being the “one God” of the Bible. A doctrine of three Gods is obviously tritheism, so, to avoid that charge, it is claimed that they are inseparably all one God. To sustain that view, it has been necessary to develop a new biblical understanding (hermeneutic) of who God is and how our salvation is accomplished. That new interpretation of God’s Word is this: The “oneness” of Father and Son, according to the new view, is not only in character and purpose, but is also numeric. In other words, they are written

about as if they are separate Gods, yet, in addition to “God the Holy Spirit,” the three “persons” are also claimed to be only one God.

Also, on our behalf, the three nameless, equally sovereign Gods are acting out temporary metaphorical roles of “Father,” “Son,” and “Holy Spirit” in the plan of redemption for humanity. No one knows for sure how atonement for God’s broken law could have been accomplished in reality by a metaphorical Son who was really a sovereign God who couldn’t die. Nor is it plain how one of the three Gods supposedly died on the cross when all three are claimed to be inseparable—hence their “oneness.” This supposed role-playing will persist until the end of the great controversy. Nobody knows what will happen when it’s all over, so far as the “real” Gods behind those roles are concerned. Any answer would continue the speculation. And, of course, being coeternal, there cannot be a true heavenly Father existing before His Son. The tender and true Father-Son oneness spoken of so often in Scripture is claimed to be only metaphorical and only temporary. And what of the promise that we may become sons and daughters of God? Since there supposedly is no true heavenly “Father,” is that also mere metaphor and also limited to the duration of the great controversy?

### **What did our pioneers believe in this regard?**

Our pioneers were almost unanimously non-trinitarian. What does that mean? It means that they believed the literal biblical revelation of one eternal, Almighty God the Father and His only begotten Son Jesus Christ, and that the Holy Spirit is the omnipresence of the Father and the omnipresence of the Son. These topics will be discussed in detail in other chapters.

### **Is there proof that they held a non-trinitarian position?**

Most Trinitarians acknowledge that our pioneers were non-trinitarian. Evidence can easily be found in the book titled *“The Trinity”* (2002), written by three Andrews University professors: Woodrow Whidden, Jerry Moon, and John W. Reeve. Jerry Moon, a respected Adventist historian, wrote on page 190, “That most of the leading SDA pioneers were non-trinitarian in their theology has become accepted Adventist history....”



On page 191, he stated, “From about 1846 to 1888 the majority of Adventists rejected the concept of the Trinity—at least as they understood it. All the leading writers were anti-Trinitarian...”

Moon addressed the dilemma the church has found itself in since its adoption of the Trinitarian doctrine in 1980. A deepening doctrinal divide hinges on two possible, startling realizations: “... Either the pioneers were wrong and the present church is right, or the pioneers were right and the present Seventh-day Adventist Church has apostatized from biblical truth.” (Ibid., 190)

The three Andrews University professors believe the pioneers were in error, but let’s reason this out. In those forty-two years from 1846 to 1888, Sister White had numerous visions from God. If their position on the Godhead was incorrect—in other words, if they didn’t understand who our God is—don’t you think the Holy Spirit would have directed her to correct their view?

### **So what does the conference church say today about our denomination’s original understandings?**

From the *Adventist Review* of January 6, 1994, we can read, “Adventist beliefs have changed over the years under the impact of ‘present truth.’ Most startling is the teaching regarding Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.... The Trinitarian understanding of God, now part of our fundamental beliefs, was not generally held by the early Adventists.”

And in *Ministry* magazine, October 1993, page 10, we read, “Most of the founders of Seventh-day Adventism would not be able to join the church today if they had to subscribe to the denomination’s Fundamental Beliefs. More specifically, most would not be able to agree to belief number 2, which deals with the doctrine of the trinity.”

### **What does the Spirit of Prophecy say about “new views”?**

“Personality,” according to Webster’s 1828 dictionary, is “that which constitutes an individual a distinct person.” It is what makes each of us who we are—our character, our personal identity. Mrs. White

wrote that those who would promote new views “concerning the personality of God or of Christ” do not see clearly; they are as “blind men.” “Those who seek to remove the old landmarks are not holding fast; they are not remembering how they have received and heard. Those who try to bring in theories that would remove the pillars of our faith concerning the sanctuary or concerning the personality of God or of Christ, are working as blind men. They are seeking to bring in uncertainties and to set the people of God adrift without an anchor.” (MR 760 [1905])

God’s prophet also wrote this: “...The truth of God is not in harmony with the traditions of men, nor does it conform to their opinions. Like its divine Author, it is unchangeable, the same yesterday, today, and forever. Those who separate from God will call darkness light, and error truth. But darkness will never prove itself to be light, nor will error become truth.” (5T 62)

Today it is said that the pioneers were in error. If that is true, then it is saying that God misled Ellen White and the pioneers. It is saying that the Spirit of truth guiding our pioneers failed to uphold truth. Sister White warned prophetically of the very deception that has happened in our midst: “The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists.... *The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error.* A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of *intellectual philosophy* would be introduced....” (ISM 204, emphasis added throughout)

I will be commenting more on that full quotation in later chapters. As I see it, “intellectual philosophy”— “men’s theories and speculations, falsely called science and philosophy” (CH 164)—is a primary part of the problem creating the dilemma.

## Chapter 2

### 10.0 on the Richter Scale

The Richter scale, created in 1935 by American seismologist and physicist Charles F. Richter, measures the magnitude of an earthquake. Seismographs record the amplitude of the waves from an earthquake, which are then used in a logarithm to calculate the quake's size and strength. Adjustments to the measurements are made for various factors including distance from the seismograph and the quake's epicenter. Each gradation is ten times stronger than the previous. For example, a 5.0 earthquake is ten times stronger than a 4.0.

On April 18, 1906, a devastating earthquake struck San Francisco, equivalent to 7.9 on the Richter scale. It killed an estimated 3,000 people and left half of the city's population of 400,000 homeless. Though very destructive and resulting in the loss of many lives, it was not the worst in recorded history. The world's largest earthquake with an instrumentally-documented magnitude occurred on May 22, 1960, near Valdivia, in southern Chile. It was assigned a magnitude of 9.5 by the United States Geological Survey. It is referred to as the "Great Chilean Earthquake" and the "1960 Valdivia Earthquake." This would have been 20.6 times stronger than the San Francisco earthquake. It, along with the resulting tsunami, killed an estimated 1,600 people and, because of the vast territory affected, it left nearly two million people homeless.

At the General Conference session in Dallas, Texas, in 1980, something far more devastating than a 10.0 earthquake occurred that ushered in Satan's all-time greatest deception. Only God knows, and time will tell, how many Seventh-day Adventists will be lost because of well-intentioned but misguided men and women participating in that session. Some of our long-established, long-published *Fundamental Principles* concerning the Godhead were changed so that they now state what neither the Bible nor the Spirit of prophecy has ever stated. Those

altered beliefs were then first published in 1981 as part of Adventism's *Fundamental Beliefs*. The changed beliefs about the Godhead are listed below, having been copied from the General Conference website as of November 11, 2017 ([www.adventist.org/beliefs](http://www.adventist.org/beliefs)), with very brief comments added concerning them. Subsequent chapters will cover the topics in depth. Scripture references included with each belief have been excluded for the sake of brevity.

### Fundamental Belief #2 - **The Trinity**

“There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three coeternal Persons. God is immortal, all-powerful, all-knowing, above all, and ever present. He is infinite and beyond human comprehension, yet known through His self-revelation. God, who is love, is forever worthy of worship, adoration, and service by the whole creation.”

Note - Since the pioneers were non-trinitarians, this belief would have been unacceptable to them because of its tritheistic concept of three separate and distinct, self-existent divine beings. Moreover, belief #2 states that the three beings are co-eternal. In other words, none preceded the others, nor came after the others. All three have always been. This logic leads directly to the conclusion that there cannot be a true Father-Son relationship, as neither came after the other. That necessitates a new way of interpreting the Bible, of turning the Father-Son relationship into a metaphor. The word *co-eternal* may give support to the trinity theory, but it is neither Scriptural nor found in the writings of God's prophet.

### Fundamental Belief #3 - **The Father**

“God the eternal Father is the Creator, Source, Sustainer, and Sovereign of all creation. He is just and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. The qualities and powers exhibited in the Son and the Holy Spirit are also those of the Father.”

Note - Taken by itself, this belief can hardly be argued with. Everything written there about the Father is true. The difficulty and

division come from what is *not* said about the Father in this belief. In other words, this belief doesn't stand alone, but is linked with beliefs #2, 4, and 5. In #2, the Father is indirectly said to be but one of three Gods making up one God. Thus the "eternal Father" of #3 is not "Sovereign," as the belief states, but "co-Sovereign," according to the Trinity doctrine expressed in our published *Fundamental Beliefs*. Soon we will learn what the pioneers believed about the Father.

#### Fundamental Belief #4 - **The Son**

"God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through Him all things were created, the character of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is accomplished, and the world is judged. Forever truly God, He became also truly human, Jesus the Christ. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived and experienced temptation as a human being, but perfectly exemplified the righteousness and love of God. By His miracles He manifested God's power and was attested as God's promised Messiah. He suffered and died voluntarily on the cross for our sins and in our place, was raised from the dead, and ascended to heaven to minister in the heavenly sanctuary in our behalf. He will come again in glory for the final deliverance of His people and the restoration of all things."

Note - The pioneers would reject Fundamental Belief #4 for reasons that will be shown in subsequent chapters of this book. Suffice it to say for now that we know of no one who has ever doubted that Jesus is fully divine, fully deity. Trinitarians and non-trinitarians also agree that Jesus is equal with the Father, but they disagree as to why that is so. They agree that Jesus is eternal, but disagree as to how that characteristic came about. Essentially, the controversy about #4 revolves around the concepts intended to be communicated in the deliberate choice of the first four words: "God the eternal Son." Biblical terms could have been used to state who Jesus is, but a human-originated term was used instead. His divinity is emphasized in those four words, but the Bible—and Jesus Himself—almost always emphasized His Sonship: "Son of God," and never "God the Son." The word "eternal" is often used to

deny Jesus' true Sonship, but the Bible presents His divine Sonship as the reason He is legitimately called "God." I would make this final point for now: If there are three individual Gods in God, of which God is "God the Son" a Son, and where is the inspired support for the answer?

### **Fundamental Belief #5 - The Holy Spirit**

"God the eternal Spirit was active with the Father and the Son in Creation, incarnation, and redemption. He is as much a person as are the Father and the Son. He inspired the writers of Scripture. He filled Christ's life with power. He draws and convicts human beings; and those who respond He renews and transforms into the image of God. Sent by the Father and the Son to be always with His children, He extends spiritual gifts to the church, empowers it to bear witness to Christ, and in harmony with the Scriptures leads it into all truth."

Note - Again, the first four words are the ground of doctrinal conflict concerning the Holy Spirit. The words are a human-derived term implying a concept not found in God's Word. Both Trinitarians and non-trinitarians believe in the existence of the Holy Spirit, and that He has a personality. The doctrinal division concerns WHO He is: a third, coeternal, independently-existing God, as the fundamental belief indicates, or the "one spirit" the Bible refers to as "the Spirit of God" and "the Spirit of Christ," "His Spirit." The grammatical possessives used in those phrases will not be ignored by the honest student of the Bible. This topic will be discussed more in future chapters.

There is much more to Trinitarian beliefs about the Godhead than what appears in these four beliefs—enough outside the bounds of Scripture to attract charges of tritheism and speculation. But even with only what we just read from our present official *Fundamental Beliefs*, a sharp difference can be seen from what the published *Fundamental Principles* were that guided our pioneers in the early years of Adventism.

**What were the published *Fundamental Principles* of the pioneers in 1872?**

“-I- That there is one God, a personal, spiritual being, the creator of all things, omnipotent, omniscient, and eternal, infinite in wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, truth, and mercy; unchangeable, and everywhere present by his representative, the Holy Spirit.

“-II- That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father, the one by whom God created all things, and by whom they do consist; that he took on him the nature of the seed of Abraham for the redemption of our fallen race; that he dwelt among men full of grace and truth, lived our example, died our sacrifice, was raised for our justification, ascended on high to be our only mediator in the sanctuary in Heaven, where, with his own blood he makes atonement for our sins; which atonement so far from being made on the cross, which was but the offering of the sacrifice, is the very last portion of his work as priest, according to the example of the Levitical priesthood, which foreshadowed and prefigured the ministry of our Lord in Heaven.”

A belief about the Holy Spirit was not quoted here. That is because in the *Fundamental Principles* there was no belief specifically referring to the Holy Spirit. There is a strong biblical reason for that, which you'll soon learn. Principles I and II are what our pioneers believed: First, that there is one eternal God, who is the source of all things and who is omnipotent, omniscient, and everywhere present by His omnipresent Spirit; and secondly, that there is one Lord Jesus Christ, the begotten Son of the Eternal Father, whom He appointed to be Creator and to whom He gave all His attributes.

What did the pioneers believe about the Holy Spirit beyond the little you just read? Consider the following two quotations from two well-known pioneers whom Sister White neither corrected nor disagreed with:

“The *Holy Spirit* is the *Spirit of God*; it is also the *Spirit of Christ*. It is that divine, mysterious emanation through which they carry

forward their great and infinite work.” (Uriah Smith, GCB, March 18, 1891, 146-147)

“Here we find that the *Holy Spirit* is both the *Spirit of God* and the *Spirit of Christ*.” (E. J. Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness* [1890], 23)

There are those in leadership positions today that say our pioneers were in error, but that claim is not in harmony with the writings of Ellen White:

“Many of our people do not realize how firmly the foundation of our faith has been laid. My husband, Elder Joseph Bates, Father Pierce, Elder [Hiram] Edson, and others who were keen, noble, and true, were among those who, after the passing of the time in 1844, searched for the truth as for hidden treasure. I met with them, and we studied and prayed earnestly. Often we remained together until late at night, and sometimes through the entire night, praying for light and studying the Word. Again and again these brethren came together to study the Bible, in order that they might know its meaning, and be prepared to teach it with power. When they came to the point in their study where they said, ‘We can do nothing more,’ the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me, I would be taken off in vision, and a clear explanation of the passages we had been studying would be given me, with instruction as to how we were to labor and teach effectively. Thus light was given that helped us to understand the scriptures in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God, was made plain to me, and I gave to others the instruction that the Lord had given me.” (ISM 206)

This is true concerning all the doctrines and landmarks of our faith. The pioneers received light from God and wrote from a non-trinitarian perspective, regarding which God never had Sister White make any challenges or corrections. Their writings are a matter of record.



## Chapter 3

### Here, There and Everywhere

We have been created in the image of God with a very limited degree of two of His specific attributes, the first being intelligence. At birth we have a brain that is virtually an empty vessel. Over time it accumulates what our senses experience, filtered through each individual's unique brain pathways according to prior thinking, choices, and experiences. At some point we may even try to come to an understanding of our infinite, eternal Father God. If we do so, we will learn that, unlike us, He has omniscience. Exactly what does *omniscience* mean?

*Webster's 1828 Dictionary* says the following: "...The quality of knowing all things at once; universal knowledge; knowledge unbounded or infinite. Omniscience is an attribute peculiar to God."

The second specific attribute of God that we are born with in a very limited degree is strength, or power, both physical and mental. As we increase in age, we generally increase in strength. At some point, though, we plateau and then begin a decline in this attribute. We learn that God has something we find difficult to understand, since it is outside and beyond our experience. He is said to have *omnipotence*. What does *omnipotence* mean?

In the same dictionary, we read, "...1. Almighty power; unlimited or infinite power; a word in strictness applicable only to God. Hence it is sometimes used for God. The works of creation demonstrate the omnipotence of God....

"2. Unlimited power over particular things; as the omnipotence of love...."

The third attribute of God that is unique to Him alone is omnipresence. What is *omnipresence*?

Again, we resort to *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* for the definition: "...Presence in every place at the same time; unbounded or universal presence; ubiquity. Omnipresence is an attribute peculiar to God."

While we have endless reasons to be grateful for divine omnipotence and omniscience, it is the importance to humanity of God's third attribute of omnipresence that will be referred to in this chapter, as well as other chapters of this book. It is especially relevant in any discussion about the Godhead, for if understood, it prevents misunderstandings.

Much of what we will study, with the resulting conclusions, will be how the pioneers understood the Godhead. They searched the Scriptures and believed God's Word "as it read," without additional hermeneutical interpretations. That simple fact is why our pioneers were non-trinitarian.

What did the Bible tell them? The same as it tells us. Here is what Jesus said, as recorded in John 14:23: "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." But in order for the Father and the Son to abide in us — in our hearts/minds — there must be a non-physical way they can do so. It can only be done by the Spirit of God and of Christ. They come to us now spiritually, not physically. This is what Romans 8:9-11 told the pioneers, and now tells us: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the *Spirit of God dwell in you*. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if *Christ be in you*, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the *Spirit of him* that raised up Jesus from the dead *dwell in you*, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his *Spirit that dwelleth in you*."

Four times we are told of God's Spirit and/or Christ's Spirit dwelling "in us." (There is only "one Spirit," so they have the same Spirit. Eph 2:18; 4:4) There is no mystery; the language is straightforward and plain. The "Spirit of truth," also known as the Comforter, is none other than God and Christ in their omnipresence. In John 14:17-18, Jesus stated that fact clearly to His disciples: "Even the Spirit of truth ... ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." A divine Being, whom they already knew because He was dwelling with them as He spoke to them, would soon be "in" them—meaning by His invisible, omnipresent Spirit, which Jesus referred to in the third person as "the Spirit of truth." But in the next verse, He left no doubt as to the identity of that coming Comforter: "I" will not leave you comfortless; "I" will come to you." This is the literal Word of God accepted as truth near-unanimously by our denominational predecessors for the first 100 years of our existence.

The same teaching is throughout the New Testament: "Christ in you, the hope of glory." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." The Holy Spirit is their non-physical presence! Read how God's prophet affirms the teaching of Scripture: "By the Spirit the Father and the Son will come and make their abode with you." (BEcho Jan. 15, 1893) That Christ in His unlimited love comes to us via His omnipresent Spirit is made so plain in this passage from the writings of Ellen White. God would have us comprehend the depth of His love for us:

"...Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be *in every place personally*; therefore it was altogether for their advantage that He should leave them, go to His Father, and send the Holy Spirit to be His successor on earth. *The Holy Spirit is Himself*, divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Christ would represent Himself as *present in all places by His Holy Spirit*,—as the Omnipresent..." (Lt 119, Feb. 19, 1895; PrT May 30, 1895)

In at least one later publication of this passage, the comma after “Himself” was omitted, which could lead to a different understanding from that which was originally intended by the writer. Thus it is important to note the date of the publication. Also, it’s important to note that only Christ was *invested* with humanity, so only He could be *divested* of it. This passage, therefore, refers only to Jesus Christ. It cannot intelligently be used to argue for the existence of a third self-existent, coeternal god named “God the Holy Spirit.” And here’s another quotation from Ellen White’s writings, showing that same love manifested by the indwelling of Christ’s presence:

“In giving His commission to His followers, Christ did not tell them they would be left alone. He assured them that He would be near them. He spoke of His Omnipresence in a special way. Go to all nations, He said. Go, to the farthest portion of the habitable globe, but know that *My presence* will be there. Labor in faith and confidence, for the time will never come when I shall forsake you.

“The assurance of *His abiding presence* was the richest legacy Christ could give His disciples....” (Ms 138, Dec. 2, 1897)

It should be obvious by now that the Son of God did *not* permanently relinquish His divine attribute of omnipresence at the time of His incarnation, as some claim. If He is “in us,” He certainly isn’t there physically, so He must dwell in us spiritually—by His Spirit! And He doesn’t dwell in just one person, but in believers all around the world. so we’re talking about His omnipresence, which is accomplished by His own Spirit. It is only in His incarnation that He did not draw upon any of the attributes of divinity, but there simply is no evidence that He permanently gave up any of them, and specifically not His omnipresence. Rather, there are many passages indicating He is even now continually making use of that divine attribute on our behalf. You’ve read a sampling in this chapter, and more will be seen in the next chapter.

Despite this evidence so plain a child can comprehend it, it has been rejected. The “new view” of Trinitarianism claims that the Holy Spirit is a third, separate God, and *not* the biblical “Spirit of God” and “of Christ.” The chasm between the two views is deep; they are so different in their understanding of the Holy Spirit that both can’t be correct.

So two questions arise. First, on what basis are the clear biblical and Spirit of prophecy statements rejected in favor of the claim that the Holy Spirit is a third, self-existent god? What reasoning can possibly be presented for that third-god concept? It is the Trinitarian claim that Jesus gave up His omnipresence permanently when He incarnated. Therefore, it is reasoned, He now needs a way to dwell in believers, to guide and teach them, and since He can’t do it Himself, a third god—one with omnipresence—must do it for Him, for only divinity can do such work. But that answer raises the primary question that would settle all the debate about the topic. Where is the inspired, trustworthy evidence—speculation-free—that He forfeited His omnipresence? If this matter were soundly supported from Scripture and the Spirit of prophecy, all debate would end! The division in our midst would end! It is because the evidence has not been forthcoming that the division arose in the first place, and will continue to divide us. But that’s not all there is to the problem.

The second of the two questions is this: Why would the Son of God be said to have permanently forfeited only one particular attribute, and not all three? Why only His omnipresence, and not also His omnipotence and His omniscience? Could it be because only His omnipresence challenges the validity of the Trinity doctrine? Could it be that only Jesus’ omnipresence—His spiritual presence—remove the Trinitarian’s theological justification for a third, self-existent “God the Holy Spirit” to make up a triune god? And thus only His omnipresence needs to be denied or explained away? Because if Jesus really did retain His omnipresence and presently utilizes that divine attribute via His Spirit, does it not make another god unnecessary—redundant—even

counterfeit? So what is it that Jesus cannot do for us now, via His Spirit? Nothing. He is all we need.

Two reasons make it clear that this issue about the divine attribute of omnipresence is no small matter. First, “the Father and Son *alone* are to be exalted.” (YI July 7, 1898; SD 58) We want to be sure that we never exalt another god, as that would be a violation of God’s first commandment. “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” God lets us know exactly how having another god before Him affects Him: “...For I the LORD thy God am a *jealous* God....” (Ex 20:5)

Secondly, we must be certain that the possibility of Satan intercepting worship meant for the Father and the Son alone never becomes a reality. The concept of a third God invites worship due that God, just as worship is due to Father and Son, the two other Gods of the Trinity teaching. If thoughts are centered on, and worship is given to, and prayers are prayed to the Trinity doctrine’s third God, Satan will triumph in his plan to divert worship from the true God to a false god of his own devising, for as you read for yourself, the Holy Spirit is the omnipresent presence of God and Christ. Over and over, the Spirit of prophecy teaches us this important point: “Jehovah, our Father, and His Son Jesus Christ are *alone* to be exalted. The knowledge of God is eternal life to those who receive it....” (Ms 11, June 29, 1898)

Two important points must be made concerning this quotation. First, if there actually were a third god called “God the Holy Spirit,” why then would He not be exalted, as well? Thus, so long as some are persuaded that Jesus gave up His omnipresence and therefore that third god is needed because Jesus can’t come to us now, the risk exists that they will engage in worship of a false god

Secondly, Mrs. White wrote, “*The knowledge of God is eternal life to those who receive it.*” In messages from Scripture and the pen of Inspiration, God has given us the correct understanding of Himself. Those messages, or teachings, can dispel the false teaching that has come into our ranks. Correct understanding is critical, for it obviously

affects our eternal life. Jesus made the same point when He said, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3) A correct knowledge of God is our safeguard against deception and our hope of eternal life.

Unfortunately, what we have here in our day, in our denominational midst is Jeremiah 6:16-17 fulfilled: “Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, *We will not walk therein*. Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, *We will not hearken*.”

Jeremiah is telling Seventh-day Adventists today to ask for the “old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein,” but certain in leadership have said, “*We will not walk therein*.” While Isaiah 58:12 calls for this generation of Seventh-day Adventists to be restorers of paths to dwell in, every Adventist that is rejecting these explicit God-given statements in these chapters is saying to God, “...*We will not hearken*.” These “we will not” refusals are no small matter. When hearts are not submitted to God, there awaits only the second resurrection.

Especially, but not exclusively, does “not walking” and “not hearkening” apply to the question of who the omnipresent Spirit is. So long as Adventism clings to a third god it cannot justify with the weight of evidence from inspired writings and sound reasoning, how can it obey God’s call through Jeremiah to walk in the “old paths, where is the good way”?





## Chapter 4

### The Third Person of the Godhead

It amazes me how smart we think we are, and yet we are so willing to settle for a deception, thinking we understand truth. Pilate asked Jesus, “What is truth?” Unfortunately, he did not wait around for an answer. We read Sister White’s statements on the third person of the Godhead, and use human reasoning to explain God. For example, Mrs. White wrote, “The prince of the power of evil can only be held in check by the power of God in *the third person of the Godhead*, the Holy Spirit.” (SpTA 37 [1897]) We conclude that since the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Godhead, then the Father must be the first Person of the Godhead and the Son, the second Person of the Godhead. We also know Father and Son are divine Beings, so we automatically decide that the Holy Spirit must be a third divine Being. In spite of evidence to the contrary, we close our minds to any other explanation, much to the pleasure of the arch-deceiver. In this chapter, therefore, we will take out our spiritual microscope and examine the evidence.

First, we need to understand what the word “person” means when talking about the Spirit. I want to bring this down to a human level first, in order to clarify an important principle. We all have a visible physical body and an invisible spirit. When someone says cruel and unjust things about us, are they inflicting physical pain on any part of our body? The answer, of course, is No, but we suffer deep emotional pain. Where does this suffering take place? Deep down in our spirit. Man’s spirit is his mind, his personality—everything non-physical that makes him who he is. “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?” (1 Cor 2:11) Don’t miss this point. Our spirit is as much our person as our physical body is our person. Our spirit is not another human being; it is our mind. Christ’s Spirit in us has to do with our mind. We are transformed by the renewing of our minds” (Rom

12:2), which work in us is done by the Holy Spirit. What our mind processes is then reflected in what we think, say, and do. How much peace we have when our spirits “dwell in heavenly places.” (Eph 2:6) “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” (Rom 8:16)

In the last chapter, the identity of the Holy Spirit was revealed to be Christ in His omnipresence. His Spirit is the “third person” or “agency” of the Godhead. “Godhead” means “deity, divinity,” according to *Webster’s 1827 Dictionary*, so the Spirit of God and of Christ is the third agency “of divinity” active in the plan of redemption.

But there’s more to know about the Holy Spirit, and we will use God’s **GPS** to help us get to our destination. God’s **GPS** will help us clearly understand how well established it is just who the third person of the Godhead is and how important that gift is to us. The following are many **GPS** statements to help us in our search for the truth.

God’s Prophet Says, “Christ tells us that the Holy Spirit is the Comforter, and the Comforter is the Holy Ghost, ‘the Spirit of truth, which the Father shall send in My name.’ ...This refers to the *omnipresence* of the *Spirit of Christ*, called the *Comforter*.” (14MR 179)

That explicit, definitive statement, by itself, speaks volumes. Ellen White was inspired to write that the Comforter, who is the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth, is the omnipresence of the Spirit of whom? Christ. He couldn’t be everywhere physically with His growing church, but His invisible Spirit is *in* every believer, meaning in our minds/hearts. He will dwell where He is welcomed. Is a person’s spirit—his mind or personality—part of him, or separate from him? We know the commonsense answer to that, because we just discussed it. Now let us read a similar statement from Ellen White’s pen with more context around it:

God’s Prophet Says, “The Spirit was given as a regenerating agency, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no

avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of man to this satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the third person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. *Christ has given his Spirit as a divine power* to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress his own character upon the church.” (RH May 19, 1904)

Christ's Spirit is a divine power. It is “His own character” (His own mind, His own life), not a different person from Him. In that quotation were several references to the same Spirit; Ellen White called it “the” Spirit and well as “his” Spirit. The principle of letting her writings interpret themselves tells us that “the” Spirit, without the possessive pronoun, nonetheless is the same as “His” Spirit. And the possessive indicates ownership, not independence from Christ.

“Our condition through sin has become preternatural [outside the ordinary course of nature], and the power that restores us must be supernatural, else it has no value. There is but *one power* that can break the hold of evil from the hearts of men, and that is the *power of God in Jesus Christ*.” (8T 291)

And how does that power of God in Christ break the hold of evil in us? “There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness. That *power is Christ*. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness.” (SC 18) The indwelling Spirit of Christ is the *only* power that can break the hold of evil from our hearts!

God's prophet wrote, “The divine Spirit that the world's Redeemer promised to send is the *presence* and *power* of God.” (ST November 23, 1891) Now, come—let us reason together. If the “power of God” is “in Christ Jesus” (quoted two paragraphs above), and if the “divine Spirit” is “the presence and power of God” (as this paragraph's first sentence

states), and if that's the "only power" that can break the hold of evil from us, then we can praise God for His revelation that the "divine Spirit," the "presence and power of God," is none other than the "indwelling Spirit of Christ." Ellen White's inspired pen said explicitly: "That power is Christ."

Once the scales fall from our eyes, it seems so obvious and easy to understand. What wonderful light God has given us about the third person of the Godhead. Christ omnipresent is the Comforter, the Holy Spirit.

"Christ declared that after his ascension, he would send to his church, as his crowning gift, the Comforter, who was to take his place. This Comforter is the Holy Spirit,--the soul of his life, the efficacy of his church, the light and life of the world. With *his Spirit* Christ sends a reconciling influence and a power that takes away sin." (RH May 19, 1904) This quotation makes it plain that the Comforter that Christ promised to send "is the Holy Spirit," which is "his Spirit," meaning Christ's Spirit, with all the power and blessings needed for our deliverance.

Ellen White wrote many such statements of perfect clarity, sometimes in the very book in which it is claimed she wrote a statement indicating her adoption of the Trinity doctrine. This next statement of hers from that same book, though, denies a third-god Holy Spirit and uplifts our Savior in His continuing efforts to save us: "The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness." DA 324)

"Not until the life of Christ becomes a vitalizing power in our lives can we resist the temptations that assail us from within and from without." (MH 130)

"The Holy Spirit, which proceeds from the only begotten Son of God, binds the human agent, body, soul, and spirit, to the perfect, divine-human nature of Christ." (RH April 5, 1906)

“It is not safe to catch the Spirit from another. We want the Holy Spirit, which is Jesus Christ.” (Ltr 66, April 10, 1894)

“God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” (Gal 4:6) That fact—“Christ in us”—gives us “union with the divine.” (RH Jan. 5, 1911) So that we may know the incomprehensible value of the Spirit of the Son of God given to believers to dwell in us, transforming us and fitting us for service to God, we have these words from Inspiration:

“Heavenly intelligences are waiting to co-operate with human instrumentalities, that the world may see what human beings may become through a union with the divine. Those who consecrate body, soul and spirit to God’s service will constantly receive a new endowment of physical, mental, and spiritual power. The inexhaustible supplies of heaven are at their command. Christ gives them the life of his life. The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in mind and heart. Through the grace given us, we may achieve victories which, because of our defects of character and the smallness of our faith, may have seemed to us impossible. To every one who offers himself to the Lord for service, withholding nothing, is given power for the attainment of measureless results.” (RH Jan. 5, 1911)

Thank you, Father, for raising up your faithful prophet who gives us clarity and understanding. Her writings are a **GPS** that lifts the fog as to who the third person of the Godhead is. And yet, why is there fog in the first place? Sometimes I wonder if we read the Scriptures half-awake, when nothing registers. How many of us have read plainly-stated truths several times, but because of preconceptions, the truth never registered until finally, the light dawned? Perhaps it is because we were taught error by people we trusted, so that when truth was read in God’s Word, our brains could not accept it for what it was. Perhaps we couldn’t accept it because it would mean our trust was misplaced and that those whom we trusted to understand truth ... didn’t! It is a hard thing to acknowledge, and yet the truth of God is abundant. We talked about

John 14 earlier, but consider this further thought about the familiar passage.

### **Christ the Comforter**

For three-and-a-half years, Christ was a constant comfort to His disciples by His physical presence. Then He prepared them for His departure. In John 14:16, Jesus told them, “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you *another* Comforter, that he may abide with you forever.” Jesus was talking about Himself in His omnipresent Spirit. He reassured His disciples of His continued presence in their lives in verse 18: “I will not leave you comfortless: *I will come to you.*” His disciples knew He was talking about Himself. “Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that *thou* wilt manifest *thyself* unto us, and not unto the world?” (John 14:22) If the disciples knew He was talking about Himself, why haven’t we understood the same thing when we’ve read the same words Jesus spoke to His disciples? Is this not Laodicean blindness? Shall we not pray earnestly for that eye salve Jesus offers to Laodicea without price?

Here are four more quotations from Inspiration that identify Christ as the Comforter:

“Christ is everything to those who receive Him. He is their *Comforter*, their safety, their healthfulness.” (LHU 221)

“We adore God for His wondrous love in giving *Jesus the Comforter.*” (19MR 297)

“There is *no comforter like Christ*, so tender and so true. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. His Spirit speaks to the heart.” (AG 195)

“God calls upon His people, many of whom are but half awake, to arouse, and engage in earnest labor, praying for strength for service. Workers are needed. Receive the Holy Spirit, and your efforts will be successful. Christ’s presence is what gives power.” (*The Central Advance*, Feb. 25, 1903) Power for what? Power for service Power to resist evil. Power to honor God by our belief and our obedience.

## **Why have we not known this?**

As plain as this trustworthy evidence is, we might wonder again why so many of us have not known the truth about the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Why have we been so deceived? We are given the answer. We have been taken in Satan's seductive trap.

"The reason why the churches are weak and sickly and read to die, is that the enemy has brought influences of a discouraging nature to bear upon trembling souls. He has sought to *shut Jesus from their view as the Comforter*, as one who reproves, who warns, who admonishes them, saying 'This is the way, walk ye in it.'" (RH Aug. 26, 1890)

Isaiah 60:1-2 has never had more meaning than it does at this time in earth's history. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee."

## **My own experience**

Brothers and sisters, if we accept what the Bible literally says about Son and His Son and His Spirit, as the pioneers of Adventism did, we would have to conclude that our leaders have been deceived and have passed the deception on to us. Let me tell you about myself. I came into Adventism at the age of twenty-one. I was once an ardent defender of the Trinity doctrine—in particular, tritheism. I once bought into such beliefs as three co-eternal, co-equal gods who had no beginning and no relation to one another. None preceded the other in point of time; none came after the other; each one selecting which role he would play in the great controversy. I also believed the lie that Jesus *permanently* gave up His attribute of omnipresence when He became a man. I taught and defended these errors because I trusted the leadership who taught me. I rose up against non-trinitarians, thinking they were so deceived. But when I finally analyzed the Trinitarian beliefs, I saw that they really make no sense at all. I was reminded of the biblical counsel that we are to trust no man. Rather, we are to be noble Bereans and check all the sources for ourselves, earnestly praying for divine guidance that our

Savior is more than happy to give through His comforting omnipresence.

It was in 2013 that I learned and accepted the non-trinitarian position about the Godhead that our pioneers believed and taught. I thank God that a dear friend encouraged me to study the issue with an open mind. The evidence for our pioneers' non-trinitarian position is solid and irrefutable. As truth began to unfold, I felt so betrayed. But as the light continued to dispel the darkness, I felt liberated. Praise God! I fell more deeply in love with our God and His Son, once I understood who They really are and what They, in *agape* love, have done for me and the whole world. They are real to me and dwell in me. Precious, precious truth.

If you study the issues with a closed mind, having prejudice and bias, you will be looking for errors and you will entirely miss what the Holy Spirit could show you. But if you study the issues presented in this book as a novice reader, God will lead you to understand the same truths about the Godhead that He showed to the pioneers and to me. Please understand that to believe in a third god called "God the Holy Spirit" is to place another god before the Father, who commanded, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." "Before" means "side by side with" me, or "in addition to" me (<http://biblehub.com/commentaries/exodus/20-3.htm>) The "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" is *alone* the true God. That is the testimony of Jesus Himself in John 17:3. (Eph 1:3; 1 Pet 1:3)

### **A question for you**

Answer this summary question, please: The Jews of Christ's time were dutifully keeping the fourth commandment while simultaneously rejecting the Son of God. How can God save a person who chooses to willfully break the first commandment while dutifully keeping the fourth commandment? In other words, which is more important—the Sabbath, or the God of the Sabbath?

Satan is counting all Christian Trinitarians as his victims in the great controversy. He triumphs over their misplaced loyalty; he exults in their



acceptance of his blasphemous holy spirit. As for those who choose to pray to “God the Holy Spirit,” for which there is no Scriptural precedent or authority, they will be praying to Satan’s counterfeit god. Satan is always ready to intercept such prayers. He’s done something similar before; read *Early Writings*, pages 55-56. Satan knows “he cannot expel God from His throne but through the system of idolatry [false god(s)], he plants his own throne between the heaven and the earth, between God and the human worshiper.” (RH Oct. 22, 1895) Remember what Isaiah 14:13 said of Satan? “For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north.”

Friends, a false god cannot give us eternal life. Only the true God can. Only the Holy Spirit will lead us aright; a false, unholy spirit will lead us to destruction. The leaders in Adventism who encourage praying to this false god do not understand the gravity of the situation. They do not realize the eternal ramifications of what they are encouraging the people to do. Isaiah 9:16 tells us the seriousness of the matter: “For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.”

What is divine counsel for this crisis—or for any crisis? “Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.” (2 Chron 20:20)



## Chapter 5

### Life, Original, Unborrowed, Underived

“Jesus declared, ‘I am the resurrection, and the life.’ In Christ is *life, original, unborrowed, underived*. ‘He that hath the Son hath life.’ The divinity of Christ is the believer's assurance of eternal life.” (DA 530 [1898]; Ev 616)

Based on the above quotation in Ellen White's 1898 publication *The Desire of Ages*, some scholars claim that Ellen White was initially non-trinitarian, but later became a Trinitarian. They say, “Here is evidence. Christ's life is original; therefore, He has always been and, therefore, He is co-eternal with the Father. Also, His life is unborrowed and underived. Therefore, He could not have been begotten of the Father in eternity. Rather, He is self-existent and has always existed.”

The problem with their reasoning is this: Trinitarians have read statements such as the one above and immediately formed opinions and reached conclusions that can be proven wrong by other inspired statements related to the topic—sometimes statements from the very same article or book. Their conclusions are both hasty and incorrect, which other readily-available documentation can show. The Spirit of prophecy will explain itself very clearly. So what does that statement above from *Desire of Ages* really tell us? It's always wise to read a quotation in question in its original context.

“‘In him was life; and the life was the light of men’ (John 1:4). It is not physical life that is here specified, but immortality, the life which is exclusively the property of God. The Word, who was with God, and who was God, had this life. Physical life is something which each individual receives. It is not eternal or immortal; for God, the Life-giver, takes it again. Man has no control over his life. But the life of Christ was unborrowed. No one can take this life from Him. ‘I lay it down of

myself”(John 10: 18), He said. In Him was *life, original, unborrowed, underived*. This life is not inherent in man. He can possess it only through Christ. He cannot earn it; it is given him as a free gift if he will believe in Christ as His personal Saviour. ‘This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent’ (John 17:3). This is the open fountain of life for the world.” (ST April 8, 1897; 1SM 296-297)

From the full context we plainly learn that “original, unborrowed, underived” life can be GIVEN. It will be given to all those who believe. This is in harmony with the words of Christ, when He said that God the Father had given Him life: “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he *given* to the Son to have life in himself.” (John 5:26) What life would the Son have been given? The life which was the Father’s own original, unborrowed, underived life.

We know that in the above Scripture, Christ is talking about eternal life. To ascertain this fact, all we need to do is ask ourselves the question, “What kind of life does God the Father have in Himself?” Reason tells us it certainly cannot be mortal life; it can only be immortal life. Scripture states as much about the Father in 1 Timothy 6:16: “...Who only hath immortality....”

As human offspring receive mortal life from their parents, so this immortal life was given to Christ by virtue of His divine birth (having been begotten with that life). The Father’s life is also the Son’s life, through inheritance. God the Father is the “source of all life” (MH 397; 9T 44; 21MR 272), “of whom are all things.” (1 Cor 8:6) Christ inherited the Father’s life by birth: “I came forth from the Father....” (Heb 1:4; John 16:28) The one true God is both the God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Being the Father’s only begotten Son, Christ naturally is the only one who has the same life as God His Father, whose life is rightly described as “original, unborrowed, underived.” Christ inherited that same “original, unborrowed, underived” life that the Source of all life had to give Him.

Indeed, Christ received *all* things from the Father. He received the Father's life as His own, and it is the Father's life that flows through Christ to all those who believe in the Son. It is the Father's life that we receive through Christ. "All things Christ received from God, but He took to give. So in the heavenly courts, in His ministry for all created beings: through the beloved Son, *the Father's life flows out to all*; through the Son it returns, in praise and joyous service, a tide of love, to the great Source of all." (DA 21)

"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life,' Christ declares; 'no one cometh unto the Father, but by me.' Christ is invested with power to give life to all creatures." (RH April 5, 1906) So what kind of life does He have the authority to give to all of His redeemed ones? The Father's "original, unborrowed, underived" life, which flows from the Father to us—a life which is immortal. Wonderful reality!

"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." (John 17:2)

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life...." (1 John 5:13)

The true explanation of that quotation from *Desire of Ages* does not cast doubt or confusion on other passages in the writings of Ellen White or the Bible, but, instead, each one clarifies and complements the other to lead to an understanding that inspires faith, that we may "believe on the name of the Son of God," and have the assurance that we have eternal life. Nothing on earth can compare to the riches of that promise to us.

"The Word of God contains our life insurance policy. To eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God means to study the Word and to carry that Word into the life in obedience to all its precepts. Those who thus partake of the Son of God become partakers of the divine nature, one with Christ. They breathe a holy atmosphere, in which only the soul can truly live. They carry in their lives an assurance of the holy principles received from the Word—their lives are worked by the power

of the Holy Spirit, and they have an earnest of the *immortality that will be theirs* through the death and resurrection of Christ. Should the earthly body decay, the principles of their faith sustain them, for they are partakers of the divine nature. Because Christ was raised from the dead, they grasp the pledge of their resurrection, and eternal life is their reward.

“This truth is an eternal truth, because Christ Himself taught it. He has engaged to raise the righteous dead, for He gave His life for the life of the world. “As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me” ( John 6:57)....” (UL 78)

## Chapter 6

### Let the Pioneers Speak about the Trinity

Ellen White wrote, “When the power of God testifies as to what is truth, that truth is to stand forever as the truth. No after suppositions, contrary to the light God has given are to be entertained. Men will arise with interpretations of Scripture which are to them truth, but which are not truth. The truth for this time, God has given us as a foundation for our faith. He Himself has taught us what is truth. One will arise, and still another, with new light which contradicts the light that God has given under the demonstration of His Holy Spirit.

“A few are still alive who passed through the experience gained in the establishment of this truth. God has graciously spared their lives to repeat and repeat till the close of their lives, the experience through which they passed even as did John the apostle till the very close of his life. And the standard-bearers who have fallen in death, are to speak through the reprinting of their writings. I am instructed that thus their voices are to be heard. They are to bear their testimony as to what constitutes the truth for this time.” (CW [1905] 31-32)

God Himself taught the pioneers what is truth. That is the explicit testimony of the Spirit of prophecy in Ellen White, as you just read: “When the power of God testifies as to what is truth, that truth is to stand forever as the truth.... The truth for this time, God has given us as a foundation for our faith. *He Himself has taught us what is truth....*” (Ibid. 31) The truth about the Godhead is part of that truth, and is a “foundational” understanding that was to “stand forever.” Sadly, though, just sixty-five years after the prophet’s death, the Trinity doctrine was officially established as a fundamental belief of our denomination, replacing the fundamental principles that had long stood to define what Seventh-day Adventists believed about the Godhead. The church today says the pioneers were in error. But based on the prophet’s inspired

messages above, they are actually charging God Himself with being in error! Whom would you believe?

According to the Holy Spirit instructing us through Sister White, the deceased pioneers, through their reprinted writings, are to continue to bear their testimony as to what constitutes the truth. We will see, in this chapter 6, just what the pioneers wrote about the trinity. Then, in chapter 7, we'll review some of what they wrote about the Father. In chapter 8, we'll read some of their writings about the Son of God, and in chapter 9, a small portion of what they said about the Holy Spirit.

### **What the pioneers said about the Trinity**

JAMES WHITE – “The way spiritualizers ... have disposed of or denied the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ is first using the old unscriptural trinitarian creed, viz., that Jesus Christ is the eternal God, though they have not one passage to support it, while we have plain scripture testimony in abundance that he is the Son of the eternal God.” (*The Day Star* January 24, 1846)

J. H. WAGGONER - “...The great mistake of Trinitarians, in arguing this subject, is this: they make no distinction between a denial of a trinity and a denial of the divinity of Christ. They see only the two extremes, between which the truth lies; and take every expression referring to the pre-existence of Christ as evidence of a trinity. The Scriptures abundantly teach the pre-existence of Christ and his divinity; but they are entirely silent in regard to a trinity....” (*The Atonement* [1884] 165)

A. J. DENNIS - "What a contradiction of terms is found in the language of a trinitarian creed: 'In unity of this Godhead are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.' There are many things that are mysterious, written in the word of God, but we may safely presume the Lord never calls upon us to believe impossibilities. But creeds often do...." (ST May 22, 1879)

R. F. COTTRELL - "My reasons for not adopting and defending it, are 1. Its name is unscriptural—the Trinity, or the triune God, is



unknown to the Bible; and I have entertained the idea that doctrines which require words coined in the human mind to express them, are coined doctrines. 2. I have never felt called upon to adopt and explain that which is contrary to all the sense and reason that God has given me. All my attempts at an explanation of such a subject would make it no clearer to my friends.” (RH June 1, 1869)

J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH - "The word Trinity nowhere occurs in the Scriptures. The principal text supposed to teach it is 1 John 5:7, which is an interpolation. Clarke says, 'Out of one hundred and thirteen manuscripts, the text is wanting in one hundred and twelve. It occurs in no MS. before the tenth century. And the first place the text occurs in Greek, is in the Greek translation of the acts of the Council of Lateran, held A.D. 1215....'" (RH Nov. 5, 1861)

First John 5:7 reads, "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." Ellen White never once quoted it, and a great majority of Bible commentaries tell us that this verse has no legitimate place in the Scriptures. Please read Chapter 15, "Was 1 John 5:7 Added to the Bible?" for a better understanding of why this verse is usually not acknowledged by biblical scholars.

J. B. FRISBIE - "We will make a few extracts, that the reader may see the broad contrast between the God of the Bible brought to light through Sabbath-keeping, and the god in the dark through Sunday-keeping. *Catholic Catechism Abridged* by the Rt. Rev. John Dubois, Bishop of New York. page 5:

“Q. Where is God? A. God is everywhere. Q. Does God see and know all things? A. Yes, he does know and see all things.... Q. Are there more Gods than one? A. No; there is but one God. Q. Are there more persons than one in God? A. Yes; in God there are three persons. Q. Which are they? A. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. Q. Are there not three Gods? A. No; the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, are all but one and the same God.’...

"These ideas well accord with those heathen philosophers.... We should rather mistrust that the Sunday god [the Trinity] came from the same source that Sunday-keeping did...." (RH [March 7, 1854] 50)

J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH - "Questions for Bro. Loughborough.

"Bro. White: The following questions I would like to have you give, or send, to Bro. Loughborough for explanation. W. W. Giles, Toledo, Ohio

"Question 1. What serious objections is there to the doctrine of the Trinity?

"ANSWER. There are many objections which we might urge, but on account of our limited space we shall reduce them to the three following: 1. It is contrary to common sense. 2. It is contrary to scripture. 3. Its origin is Pagan and fabulous.... Instead of pointing us to scripture for proof of the Trinity, we are pointed to the trident of the Persians....

"This doctrine of the trinity was brought into the church about the same time with image worship, and keeping the day of the sun, and is but Persian doctrine remodeled. It occupied about three hundred years from its introduction to bring the doctrine to what it is now. It was commenced about 325 A.D., and was not completed till 681. See Milman's Gibbon's *Rome*, vol. iv, p. 422. It was adopted in Spain in 589, in England in 596, in Africa in 534. -Gib. vol. iv, pp. 114, 345; Milner, vol. i, p. 519." (RH, Nov. 5, 1861)

J. H. WAGGONER - "The [Athanasian] creed was formulated and the faith defined by Athanasius. Previous to that time there was no settled method of expression, if, indeed, there was anywhere any uniformity of belief. Most of the early writers had been pagan philosophers, who to reach the minds of that class, often made strong efforts to prove that there was a blending of the two systems, Christianity and philosophy. There is abundance of material in their writings to sustain this view. Bingham speaks of the vague views held by some in the following significant terms:

““There were some *very early* that turned the doctrine of the Trinity into Tritheism, and, instead of three divine persons under the economy of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, brought in three collateral, co-ordinate, and self-originated beings, making them three absolute and independent principles, without any relation of Father or Son, which is the most proper notion of three gods. And having made this change in the doctrine of the Trinity, *they made another change answerable to it in the form of baptism.*’— (*Antiquities*, book 11, chap. 8)

"Who can distinguish between this form of expression and that put forth by the Council of Constantinople in a.d. 381, wherein the true faith is declared to be that of 'an uncreated and consubstantial and co-eternal Trinity'? The truth is that we find the same idea which is here described by Bingham running through much of the orthodox literature of the second and third centuries. There is no proper 'relation of *Father* and *Son*' to be found in the words of the council, above quoted....

“Bingham says this error in regard to a Trinity of three co-ordinate and self-originated and independent beings arose in the church *very early*; and so we find it in the earliest authors after the days of the apostles....” (*Thoughts on Baptism* [1878] 180-181)

R. F. COTTRELL - “That one person is three persons, and that three persons are only one person, is the doctrine which we claim is contrary to reason and common sense. The being and attributes of God are *above, beyond, out of reach* of my sense and reason, yet I believe them; but the doctrine I object to is *contrary*, yes, that is the word, to the very sense and reason that God has himself implanted in us. Such a doctrine he does not ask us to believe. A miracle is beyond our comprehension, but we all believe in miracles who believe our own senses. What we see and hear convinces us that there is a power that effected the most wonderful miracle of creation. But our Creator has made it an absurdity to us that one person should be three persons, and three persons but one person; and in his revealed word he has never asked us to believe it. This our friend thinks objectionable....

"But to hold the doctrine of the trinity is not so much an evidence of evil intention as of intoxication from that wine of which all the nations have drunk. The fact that this was one of the leading doctrines, if not the very chief, upon which the bishop of Rome was exalted to the popedom, does not say much in its favor. This should cause men to investigate it for themselves; as when the spirits of devils working miracles undertake the advocacy of the immortality of the soul. Had I never doubted it before, I would now probe it to the bottom, by that word which modern Spiritualism sets at nought....

"Revelation goes beyond us; but in no instance, does it go contrary to right reason and common sense. God has not claimed, as the popes have, that he could 'make justice of injustice,' nor has he, after teaching us to count, told us that there is no difference between the singular and plural numbers.

"Let us believe all he has revealed, and add nothing to it." (RH July 6, 1869)

A. T. JONES - "Another, and most notable opponent, was Servetus who had opposed the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity, and also infant baptism...." (RH June 17, 1884)

D. W. HULL - "The inconsistent positions held by many in regard to the Trinity, as it is termed, has, no doubt, been the prime cause of many other errors. Erroneous views of the divinity of Christ are apt to lead us into error in regard to the nature of the atonement....

"The doctrine which we propose to examine, was established by the council of Nice, A.D. 325, and ever since that period, persons not believing this peculiar tenet, have been denounced by popes and priests, as dangerous heretics. It was for a disbelief in this doctrine, that the Arians were anathematized in A.D. 513.

"As we can trace this doctrine no further back than the origin of the 'Man of Sin,' and as we find this dogma at that time established rather by force than otherwise, we claim the right to investigate the matter, and ascertain the bearing of Scripture on this subject." (RH Nov.10, 1859)

## Chapter 7

### Let the Pioneers Speak about the Father

Ellen White wrote, “God has given me light regarding our periodicals. What is it? —He has said that the dead are to speak. How? —Their works shall follow them. We are to repeat the words of the pioneers in our work, who knew what it cost to search for the truth as for hidden treasure, and who labored to lay the foundation of our work. They moved forward step by step *under the influence of the Spirit of God*. One by one these pioneers are passing away. The word given me is, Let that which these men have written in the past be reproduced....

“...These articles must be reproduced. There is truth and power in them. *Men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*.

“Let the truths that are the foundation of our faith be kept before the people....” (RH May 25, 1905, emphasis added)

#### **What the pioneers wrote About the Father:**

ELLEN WHITE - She called the Father “the Sovereign of the universe” (PP 34), and the Son “the acknowledged Sovereign of heaven, one in power and authority with the Father.” (GC 495)

JAMES WHITE - “The Father sets His love upon *His elect people* who live in the midst of men. These are the people whom Christ has redeemed by the price of His own blood; and because they respond to the drawing of Christ, *through the sovereign mercy of God*, they are elected to be saved as His obedient children. Upon them is manifested the free *grace of God*, the love wherewith He hath loved them. Everyone who will humble himself as a little child, who will receive and obey the *word of God* with a child's simplicity, will be among the *elect of God*.” (ST Jan. 2, 1893; OHC 77)

J. N. ANDREWS - "That God is the fountain and source of immortality is plain from the statement of Paul. He speaks thus of God the Father: 'Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting; Amen.' 1 Tim. 6:16. This text is evidently designed to teach that the self-existent God is the only being who, of himself, possesses this wonderful nature. Others may possess it as derived from him, but he alone is the fountain of immortality.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ is the source of this life to us. 'For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.' John 5:26. 'As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.' John 6:57. The Father gives us this life in His Son. 'And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.' 1 John 5:11, 12. These Scriptures do clearly indicate that Christ is the source of endless life, and that those only have this who have Christ." (RH Jan. 27, 1874)

The following article is from the front page of *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, dated August 28, 1878. It was written by Elder D. M. Canright and titled "The Personality of God." This is not the complete article, but, rather, just segments pertinent to our topic. Canright often made a comment following the Scripture he quoted.

D. M. CANRIGHT - "Text: 'But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things.' 1 Cor. 8:6.

"There is but one true and living God. He is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, just, holy, and worthy of all praise and worship.... At the time when the Bible was written, nearly the whole world had adopted either Polytheism or Pantheism. Polytheism taught that there were many gods.... In opposition to this, Moses and the prophets set forth the grand fact that this doctrine of many gods was a lie, and that there was but one God, Jehovah the living God....

“‘Thou shalt have no other gods before me.’ Ex. 20:3. All others were false.

“‘Unto thee it was showed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him.’ Deut. 4:35. This declaration is emphatic. There is no God beside the Lord.

“‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord.’ Deut. 6:4. Here we strike the key-note of the doctrine of the Deity. ‘The Lord our God is ONE Lord.’ Not many, not a thousand, not a hundred, not ten, not three, but only ONE—one God.

“‘See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me.’ Deut. 32:39.

“‘Thou art great, O LORD God; for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee.’ 2 Sam. 7:22.

“‘Thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.’ 2 Kings 19:15...

“‘Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all.’ Neh. 9:6

“‘For thou art great, and doest wondrous things; thou art God alone.’ Ps. 86:10

“‘Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.’ Isa. 43:10. This is very strong language. ‘Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.’

“‘I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.... Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.’ Isa 44:6, 8

“‘I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me.’ Isa. 45:5. ‘I am God, and there is none else.’ Verse 22. No comments of

ours can make these declarations plainer. There is just one eternal God and no more, —one who is the Author and Father of all things.

“Turning to the New Testament, we find the same doctrine taught just as plainly as in the Old. Neither Moses nor the prophets ever set forth the unity of God more strongly than Jesus himself. He taught it and reiterated it many times. Thus he says: ‘The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul... And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth; for there is one God; and there is none other but he.’ Mark 12:29-32.

“The scribe said, ‘There is one God, and there is none other but he.’ To this declaration Jesus assented. ‘And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.’ John 17:3. Jesus says his Father is the only true God. But Trinitarians contradict this by saying that the Son and Holy Ghost are just as much the true God as the Father is. Now were I, on going into a place, to inquire for a minister of the gospel, and one were to inform me that Roger Roe was the only minister of the gospel in the place, and another were to tell me that two other persons were just as truly ministers of the gospel as Elder Roe, surely the latter would contradict the former. And precisely so do Trinitarians contradict the Saviour in this text.

“‘There is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many, and lords many); but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.’ 1 Cor. 8:4-6.

“Says the great apostle, ‘There is none other God but one,’ and ‘there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things.’ He tells us who this one God is. It is not the Holy Ghost; it is not Jesus Christ, but it is the Father. Gal. 3:20; 1 Tim. 1:17. There is, then, only one wise



God. 1 Tim. 2:5; Deut. 6:4. Those who are familiar with the Bible will see that I have selected only a few of the plainest texts upon this doctrine. How the doctrine of the trinity, of three Gods, can be reconciled with these positive statements I do not know. It seems to me that nothing can be framed which more clearly denies the doctrine of the trinity, than do the Scriptures above quoted.

“And then the Bible never uses the phrases, ‘trinity,’ ‘triune God,’ ‘three in one,’ ‘the holy three,’ ‘God the Holy Ghost,’ etc. But it does emphatically say there is only one God, the Father. And every argument ... to prove three Gods in one person, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, all of them of one substance, and every way equal to each other, and all three forming but one, contradicts itself, contradicts reason, and contradicts the Bible....

“God is self-existent, and the source and author of all things,—of angels, of men, of all the worlds,—of everything. Thus Paul says, ‘For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen.’ Rom. 11:36.

“He is the source of all life and immortality. Thus, speaking of the Father, Paul says, ‘Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto.’ 1 Tim. 6:16. Notice that this glorious God is the only one who, in himself, possesses immortality. That is, he is the fountain-head, the source of all life and immortality.... ‘For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.’ John 5:26. This statement is unequivocal. The Father has life in himself, and in his great love for his Son he bestows the same gift upon him; but it will be noticed that the Father is the one from whom the gift came....

“...How carefully Paul distinguishes between the Father and the Son. He says, ‘The Father, *of whom* are all things,’ and ‘Jesus Christ, *by whom* are all things.’ The Father is the source of everything. Jesus is the one through whom all things are done. All the authority, the glory, and the power of Christ he received from his Father....” (RH August 29, 1878)

What Brother Canright wrote bears repeating: “And every argument to prove three Gods in one person, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, all of them of one substance, and every way equal to each other, and all three forming but one, contradicts itself, contradicts reason, and contradicts the Bible....”

God never instructed Ellen White to correct Canright’s detailed, biblically-based critique of the Trinity, for she never did. Yet this unscriptural and contradictory doctrine is what Kellogg believed, and it has been in our Fundamental Beliefs from 1980 onward.

A. T. JONES - In 1890 Jones wrote, “Again, speaking of the appearing of Jesus Christ, the Word says: ‘In His times He shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, the Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see.’ 1 Tim. 6:15-16.

“Christ has brought this immortality to light.... Now as immortality is to be sought for, and as God is the only one who has it, and as Christ is the only one who has brought it to light, it follows that immortality must be sought of God, through Christ....” (*Bible Questions and Answers Concerning Man*, 3-4)

E. J. WAGGONER - “We are mindful of Paul's words, that ‘to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things and we by Him’ (1 Cor. 8:6); just as we have already quoted, that it was by Him that God made the worlds. All things proceed ultimately from God the Father; even Christ Himself proceeded and came forth from the Father....” (*Christ and His Righteousness*, 19)

We know that every one of these statements is true and accurate, because God’s prophet was never directed by God to challenge their correctness or authenticity. Rather, she was inspired to urge that their words be repeated and reprinted.

## Chapter 8

### Let the Pioneers Speak about the Son of God

From the pen of Inspiration: “The Word of the Lord has guided our steps since the passing of the time in 1844. We have searched the Scriptures; we have built solidly; and we have not had to tear up our foundations and put in new timbers.” (Letter 24, 1907)

“The time has come when we must firmly refuse to be drawn away from the platform of *eternal truth*, which since 1844 has stood the test.” (Letter 277, 1904)

#### What the pioneers wrote about the Son of God

JAMES WHITE - “The Father was greater than the Son in that he was first. The Son was equal with the Father in that he had received all things from the Father....” (RH Jan. 4, 1881)

J. N. ANDREWS - “And as to the Son of God, he would be excluded also [Paul’s description of Melchisedec’s existence in Hebrews 7:3], for he had God for his Father, and did, at some point in the eternity of the past, have beginning of days. So that if we use Paul’s language in an absolute sense, it would be impossible to find but one being in the universe, and that is God the Father, who is without father, or mother, or descent, or beginning of days, or end of life....” (RH Sept. 7, 1869)

C. W. STONE - “The Word, then, is Christ. This text speaks of his origin. He is the only begotten of the Father. Just how he came into existence, the Bible does not inform us any more definitely; but by this expression and several of a similar kind in the Scriptures, we may believe that Christ came into existence in a manner different from that in which other beings first appeared; that he sprang from the Father's being in a way not necessary for us to understand.” (*The Captain Of Our Salvation* [1886], 17)

E. J. WAGGONER - "In arguing the perfect equality of the Father and the Son, and the fact that Christ is in very nature God, we do not design to be understood as teaching that the Father was not before the Son. It should not be necessary to guard this point, lest some should think that the Son existed as soon as the Father, yet some go to that extreme, which adds nothing to the dignity of Christ, but rather detracts from the honor due him, since many throw the whole thing away rather than accept a theory so obviously out of harmony with the language of Scripture, that Jesus is the *only begotten Son* of God. He was begotten, not created. He is of the substance of the Father, so that in his very nature he is God; and since that is so 'it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.' Col. 1:19....

"...While both are of the same nature, the Father is first in point of time. He is also greater in that he had no beginning, while Christ's personality had a beginning...." (ST April 8, 1889)

"The Word was 'in the beginning.' The mind of man cannot grasp the ages that are spanned in this phrase. It is not given to men to know when or how the Son was begotten; but we know that He was the Divine Word, not simply before He came to this earth to die, but even before the world was created.... [Micah 5:2 quoted.] We know that Christ 'proceeded forth and came from God' (John 8:42), but it was so far back in the ages of eternity as to be far beyond the grasp of the mind of man." (*Christ And His Righteousness* [1890], 9)

"...As the Son of the self-existent God, he has by nature all the attributes of Deity.

"It is true that there are many sons of God; but Christ is the 'only begotten Son of God,' and therefore the Son of God in a sense in which no other being ever was, or ever can be. The angels are sons of God, as was Adam (Job 38:7; Luke 3:38), by creation; Christians are the sons of God by adoption (Rom. 8:14, 15); but Christ is the Son of God by birth." (Ibid., 11-12)

“...All things proceed ultimately from God, the Father; even Christ Himself proceeded and came forth from the Father....” (Ibid., 19)

“The Scriptures declare that Christ is ‘the only begotten Son of God.’ He is begotten, not created. As to when He was begotten, it is not for us to inquire, nor could our minds grasp it if we were told. The prophet Micah tells us all that we can know about it, in these words: ‘But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from old, from the days of eternity.’ Micah 5:2, margin. There was a time when Christ proceeded forth and came from God, from the bosom of the Father (John 8:42; 1:18), but that time was so far back in the days of eternity that to finite comprehension it is practically without beginning.” (Ibid., 21)

W. W. PRESCOTT - “As Christ was twice born, once in eternity, the only begotten of the Father, and again here in the flesh, thus uniting the divine with the human in that second birth, so we who have been born once already in the flesh, are to have the second birth, being born again of the Spirit, in order that our experience may be the same, the human and the divine being joined in a life union.” (RH April 14, 1896)

A. T. JONES - “He was born of the Holy Ghost. In other words, Jesus Christ was *born again*. He came from heaven, God's first-born, to the earth, and was *born again*. But all in Christ's work goes by opposites for us: he, the sinless one, was made to be sin, in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He, the living one, the prince and author of life, died that we might live. He whose goings forth have been from the days of eternity, the first-born of God, was *born again*, in order that we might be *born again*.

“If Jesus Christ had never been born again, could you and I have ever been born again? No. But he was born again, from the world of righteousness into the world of sin; that we might be born again, from the world of sin into the world of righteousness. He was born again, and was made partaker of the human nature, that we might be born again, and so made partakers of the divine nature. He was born again, unto earth, unto sin, and unto man, that we

might be born again unto heaven, unto righteousness, and unto God.” (RH Aug. 1, 1899, emphasis original)

JAMES WHITE - “Paul affirms of the Son of God that he was in the form of God, and that he was equal with God. ‘Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God.’ Phil. 2:6. The reason why it is not robbery for the Son to be equal with the Father is the fact that he is equal....

“The inexplicable trinity that makes the godhead three in one and one in three, is bad enough; but that ultra Unitarianism that makes Christ inferior to the Father is worse. Did God say to an inferior, ‘Let us make man in our image?’” (RH Nov. 29, 1877)

JAMES EDSON WHITE (2nd son of James and Ellen White) - “The angels, therefore, being created, are necessarily lower than Christ, their Creator. Christ is the only being begotten of the Father.” (*Past, Present and Future* [1909], 52)

J. M. STEPHENSON - “To be the *only begotten* Son of God must be *understood* in a different sense than to be a Son by creation; for in that sense all the creatures he has made are sons. Nor can it refer to his miraculous conception, with the virgin Mary, by the Holy Ghost; because he is represented by this endearing title more than four thousand years before his advent in the village of Bethlehem. Moreover, he is represented as being exalted far above the highest orders of men and angels in his primeval nature. He must therefore be understood as being the Son of God in a much higher sense than any other being. His being the only begotten of the Father supposes that none except him were thus begotten; hence he is, in truth and verity, the only begotten Son of God; and as such he must be Divine; that is, be a partaker of the Divine nature. This term expresses his highest, and most exalted nature....

“...The idea of Father and Son supposes priority of the existence of the one, and the subsequent existence of the other. To say that the Son is as old as his Father, is a palpable contradiction of terms. It is a natural impossibility for the Father to be as young as the Son, or the Son to be as old as the Father. If it

be said that this term is only used in an accommodated sense, it still remains to be accounted for, why the Father should use as the uniform title of the highest, and most endearing relation between himself and our Lord, a term which, in its uniform signification, would contradict the very idea he wished to convey. If the inspired writers had wished to convey the idea of the co-etaneous [def.: of the same age or duration] existence, and eternity of the Father and Son, they could not possibly have used more incompatible terms. And of this, Trinitarians have been sensible. Mr. Fuller, although a Trinitarian, had the honesty to acknowledge, in the conclusion of his work on the Son-ship of Christ, that, ‘in the order of nature, the Father must have existed *before* the Son.’ ...” (RH Nov. 14, 1854, italics original)

D. M. CANRIGHT - “‘For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son,’ &c. According to this, Jesus Christ is begotten of God in a sense that no other being is; else he could not be his *only* begotten Son. Angels are called sons of God, and so are righteous men; but Christ is his Son in a higher sense, in a closer relation, than either of these. God made men and angels out of materials already created. He is the author of their existence, their Creator, hence their Father. But Jesus Christ was begotten of the Father's own substance. He was not created out of material as the angels and other creatures were. He is truly and emphatically the '*Son of God*.' ... [Heb.1:1-8 quoted].

“By this we see that a very plain and great distinction is made between the Son and all the angels. They are all commanded to worship him. No created being can ever be worthy of worship, however high he may be, neither would it be right nor just for God to bid one order of his creatures to worship another. Divinity alone is worthy of worship, and to worship anything else would be idolatry. Hence Paul places Christ far above the angels, and makes a striking contrast between them....” (RH June 18, 1867, emphasis original)

R. F. COTTRELL - “But if I am asked what I think of Jesus Christ, my reply is, I believe *all* that the Scriptures say of him. If the testimony represents him as being in glory with the Father before the world was, I believe it. If it is said that he was in the beginning with God, that he was

God, that all things were made by him and for him, and that without him was not anything made that was made, I believe it. If the Scriptures say he is the Son of God, I believe it. If it is declared that the Father sent his Son into the world, I believe he had a Son to send....

“It may be objected, if the Father and the Son are two distinct beings, do you not, in worshipping the Son and calling him God, break the first commandment of the Decalogue?

“No; it is the Father's will ‘That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.’ We cannot break the commandment and dishonor God by obeying him. The Father says of the Son, ‘Let all the angels of God worship him.’ Should angels refuse to worship the Son, they would rebel against the Father. Children *inherit* the name of their father. The Son of God ‘hath by *inheritance* obtained a more excellent name than’ the angels. That name is the name of his Father. The Father says to the Son, ‘Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever.’ Heb. 1. The Son is called ‘The mighty God.’ Isa. 9:6. And when he comes again to earth his waiting people will exclaim, ‘This is our God.’ Isa. 25:9. It is the will of the Father that we should thus honor the Son. In doing so we render supreme honor to the Father. If we dishonor the Son we dishonor the Father; for he requires us to honor his Son.

“But though the Son is called God, yet there is a ‘God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.’ 1Pet. 1:3. Though the Father says to the Son, ‘Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever,’ yet, that throne is given him of his Father; and because he loved righteousness and hated iniquity, he further says, ‘Therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee.’ Heb. 1:9. ‘God hath made that same Jesus both Lord and Christ.’ Acts. 2:36. The Son is ‘the everlasting Father,’ not of himself, nor of his Father, but of his children. His language is, ‘I and the children which God hath given me.’ Heb. 2:13.” (RH June 1, 1869, italics original)

JOHN MATTESON - “Christ is the only literal son of God. ‘The only begotten of the Father.’ John 1:14. He is God because he is the Son of God; not by virtue of His resurrection. If Christ is the only begotten



of the Father, then we cannot be begotten of the Father in a literal sense. It can only be in a secondary sense of the word....” (RH Oct. 12, 1869)

URIAH SMITH - “...The Scriptures nowhere speak of Christ as a created being, but on the contrary plainly state that he was begotten of the Father. (See remarks of Rev. 3:14, where it is shown that Christ is not a created being.) But while as the Son he does not possess a co-eternity of past existence with the Father, the beginning of his existence, as the begotten of the Father, antedates the entire work of creation, in relation to which he stands as joint creator with God. John 1:3; Heb 1:2. Could not the Father ordain that to such a being worship should be rendered equally with himself, without its being idolatry on the part of the worshiper? He has raised him to positions which make it proper that he should be worshipped, and has even commanded that worship should be rendered him, which would not have been necessary had he been equal with the Father in eternity of existence. Christ himself declares that ‘as the Father hath life in himself, so hath *he* given to the Son to have life in himself.’ John 5:26. The Father has ‘highly exalted him, and *given* him a name which is above every name.’ Phil. 2:9. And the Father himself says, ‘Let all the angels of God worship him.’ Heb. 1:6. These testimonies show that Christ is now an object of worship equally with the Father; but they do not prove that with him he holds an eternity of past existence.” (*Daniel and the Revelation* [1909], 430, italics original)

“God alone is without beginning. At the earliest epoch when a beginning could be, - a period so remote that to finite minds it is essentially eternity, - appeared the Word. ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.’ John 1:1. This uncreated Word was the Being, who, in the fullness of time, was made flesh, and dwelt among us. His beginning was not like that of any other being in the universe. It is set forth in the mysterious expressions, ‘his [God’s] only begotten Son’ (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9), ‘the only begotten of the Father’ (John 1:14), and ‘I proceeded forth and came from God.’ John 8:42. Thus it appears that by some divine impulse or process, not creation, known only to Omniscience, and possible only to Omnipotence, the Son of God appeared....” (*Looking Unto Jesus* [1898], 10)

JOSEPH BATES - "My parents were members of long standing in the Congregational church, with all of their converted children thus far, and anxiously hoped that we would also unite with them. But they embraced some points in their faith which I could not understand. I will name two only: their mode of baptism, and doctrine of the trinity. My father, who had been a deacon of long standing with them, labored to convince me that they were right in points of doctrine.... I said to my father, 'If you can convince me that we are one in this sense, that you are my father, and I your son; and also that I am your father, and you my son, then I can believe in the trinity.'..."

"...In a few days I was immersed and joined the Christian church."  
(*The Autobiography of Elder Joseph Bates* [1868], 204-205)

JAMES WHITE - "'Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for THE faith which was once delivered unto the saints....' Jude 3-4 ...So the exhortation to contend for the faith delivered to the saints, is to us alone. And it is very important for us to know what the apostle meant, that we may know what for and how to contend. In the 4th verse he gives us the reason why we should contend for THE faith, a particular faith; 'for there are certain men,' or a certain class who deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.... The way spiritualizers this way have disposed of or denied the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ is first using the old unscriptural trinitarian creed, viz., that Jesus Christ is the eternal God, though they have not one passage to support it, while we have plain scripture testimony in abundance that he is the Son of the eternal God...." (*The Day Star*, Jan. 24, 1846)

"Here we might mention the Trinity, which does away with the personality of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ...." (RH Dec. 11, 1855)

D. W. HULL - "The inconsistent positions held by many in regard to the Trinity, as it is termed, has, no doubt, been the prime cause of many other errors. Erroneous views of the divinity of Christ are apt to lead us into error in regard to the nature of the atonement." (RH Nov. 10, 1859)

## Chapter 9

### Let the Pioneers Speak about God's Spirit

We have this assurance from God's messenger Ellen White: "When men come in who would move one pin or pillar from the foundation which God has established by His Holy Spirit, *let the aged men who were pioneers in our work speak plainly*, and let those who are dead speak also, by the reprinting of their articles in our periodicals. Gather up the rays of divine light that God has given us as He has led His people on step by step in the way of truth. *This truth will stand the test of time and trial.*" (1MR [1905] 55)

#### What the pioneers wrote about God's Spirit

J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH - "The Spirit of God is spoken of in the Scriptures as God's representative—the power by which he works, the agency by which all things are upheld. This is clearly expressed by the Psalmist.... Psa. 139:7-10. We learn from this language that when we speak of the Spirit of God, we are really speaking of his presence and power." (RH Sept. 20, 1898)

M. C. WILCOX - "God is the source of all life.... God's life is eternal life, even as He is 'the eternal God.' ...'But God is a person; how can His life be everywhere present?' God is everywhere present by His Spirit.... The presence of God is therefore His Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit is therefore the life of God. And so we read of 'the Spirit of life' (Rom. 8:2), that 'the Spirit is life because of righteousness' (verse 10); that 'the Spirit giveth life' (2 Cor. 3:6)." (ST June 2, 1898)

E. J. WAGGONER - "Finally, we know the Divine unity of the Father and the Son from the fact that both have the same Spirit. Paul, after saying that they that are in the flesh cannot please God, continues: 'But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is

none of His.' Rom. 8:9. Here we find that the Holy Spirit is both the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ...." (*Christ And His Righteousness* [1892], 23)

A. J. MORTON - "The Holy Spirit is divine because it proceeds from divinity. You can no more separate divinity from the Spirit of God and Christ than you can separate divinity from God and Christ. It is, therefore, the presence of the Spirit in the words of God's promises which enable us to receive the divine nature from those promises." (ST Oct. 26, 1891)

URIAH SMITH - "J. W. W. asks: 'Are we to understand that the Holy Ghost is a person, the same as the Father and the Son? Some claim that it is, others that it is not.'

"Ans.—The terms 'Holy Ghost,' are a harsh and repulsive translation. It should be 'Holy Spirit' (*hagion pneuma*) in every instance. This Spirit is the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of Christ; the Spirit being the same whether it is spoken of as pertaining to God or Christ. But respecting this Spirit, the Bible uses expressions which cannot be harmonized with the idea that it is a person like the Father and the Son. Rather it is shown to be a divine influence from them both, the medium which represents their presence and by which they have knowledge and power through all the universe, when not personally present. Christ is a person, now officiating as priest in the sanctuary in heaven; and yet he says that wherever two or three are gathered in his name, he is there in the midst. Mt. 18:20. How? Not personally, but by his Spirit. In one of Christ's discourses (John, chapters 14, 15, and 16) this Spirit is personified as 'the Comforter,' and as such has the personal and relative pronouns, 'he,' 'him,' and 'whom,' applied to it. But usually it is spoken of in a way to show that it cannot be a person, like the Father and the Son. For instance, it is often said to be 'poured out' and 'shed abroad.' But we never read about God or Christ being poured out or shed abroad. If it was a person, it would be nothing strange for it to appear in bodily shape; and yet when it has so appeared, that fact has been noted as peculiar. Thus Luke 3:22 says: 'And the Holy Ghost

descended *in a bodily shape* like a dove upon him.’ But the shape is not always the same; for on the day of Pentecost it assumed the form of ‘cloven tongues like as of fire.’ Acts 2:3, 4. Again we read of ‘the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.’ Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6. This is unquestionably simply a designation of the Holy Spirit, put in this form to signify its perfection and completeness. But it could hardly be so described if it was a person. We never read of the seven Gods or the seven Christs.” (RH Oct. 28, 1890)

J. H. WAGGONER - “There is one question, which has been much controverted in the theological world upon which we have never presumed to enter. It is that of the personality of the Spirit of God. Prevailing ideas of *person* are very diverse, often crude, and the word is differently understood; so that unity of opinion on this point cannot be expected until all shall be able to define precisely what they mean by the word, or until all shall agree upon one particular sense in which the word shall be used. But as this agreement does not exist, it seems that a discussion of the subject cannot be profitable, especially as it is not a question of direct revelation. We have a right to be positive in our faith and our statements only when the words of Scripture are so direct as to bring the subject within the range of positive proof.

“We are not only willing but anxious to leave it just where the word of God leaves it. From it we learn that the Spirit of God is that awful and mysterious power which proceeds from the throne of the universe, and which is the efficient actor in the work of creation and of redemption.” (*The Spirit Of God; Its Offices And Manifestations* [1877], 8)

MRS. S. M. I. HENRY - “Q. Do you think the Spirit of God is a person, or is it simply the power by which God works, and which he has given to man for his use?

“A. The pronouns used in connection with the Spirit must lead us to conclude that he is a person, — the personality of God which is the source of all power and life.” (*The Abiding Spirit*, 1899)

M. C. WILCOX - "28. THE PERSONALITY OF THE SPIRIT.

Ques. 1. Some say the Holy Spirit is a person; others say He is a personality; and others, a power only. Till how long should this be a matter of discussion?...

"Ans. 1. The personality of the Holy Spirit will probably be a matter of discussion always. Sometimes the Spirit is mentioned as being 'poured out,' as in Acts 2. All through the Scriptures, the Spirit is represented as being the operating power of God....

"The reason why the Scriptures speak of the Holy Spirit as a person, it seems to us, is that it brings to us, and to every soul that believes, the personal presence of our Lord Jesus Christ....

"Because of the lack of faith, it was 'expedient,' necessary, that He should go away; for He declared, 'If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you.' John 16:7. His disciples could not realize the presence of the Spirit of God as long as Christ was with them personally. In that sense, He could be with those only who were in His immediate presence. But when He went away, and the Spirit came, it could make Christ present with everyone, whether that one was—with Paul in Athens, Peter in Jerusalem, Thomas in India, John in Patmos.

"These are simply illustrations. Wherever God's children are, there is the Spirit—not an individual person, as we look upon persons, but having the power to make present the Father and the Son. That Spirit is placed upon God's messengers, the angels; but the angels are not the Spirit. That Spirit is placed upon God's servants, His human messengers; but the human messengers are not the Spirit. They are possessed by the Spirit, and used by the Spirit, and have within them the power of the Spirit; but they are not the Spirit. The Spirit is independent of all these human or material agencies. Why not leave it here? Why not know that the Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Deity, goes out into all the earth, bringing the

presence of God to every heart that will receive it?” (*Questions And Answers*, Vol. 11 [1919, 1938], 37-39; in the 1945 ed., 33-35)

M. C. WILCOX - “Question 187. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND MINISTERING SPIRITS. What is the difference between the Holy Spirit and the ministering spirits (angels), or are they the same?

“A. The Holy Spirit is the mighty energy of the Godhead, the life and power of God flowing out from Him to all parts of the universe, and thus making a living connection between His throne and all creation. As is expressed by another: ‘The Holy Spirit is the breath of spiritual life in the soul. The impartation of the Spirit is the impartation of the life of Christ.’ It thus makes Christ everywhere present. To use a crude illustration, just as a telephone carries the voice of a man, and so makes that voice present miles away, so the Holy Spirit carries with it all the potency of Christ in making Him everywhere present with all His power, and revealing Him to those in harmony with His law. Thus the Spirit is personified in Christ and God, but never revealed as a separate person. Never are we told to pray *to* the Spirit; but *to* God *for* the Spirit. Never do we find in the Scriptures prayers *to* the Spirit, but *for* the Spirit.” (*Questions And Answers Gathered From The Question Corner Department Of The Signs Of The Times*, Pacific Press, 1911 p.18-182)

“And yet there is order observed in God's working; there is the regular channel through which His life force flows to the children of men, and by which His blessed Spirit does its work. We read: ‘The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John; who bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ.’ Rev. 1:1, 2. Here we have the order of divine procedure: (1) The Father; (2) Jesus Christ; (3) Christ's angel; (4) John the apostle and prophet; (5) the church. And as respects the latter, the messages to the church are given through the ministers, or watchmen, of that church. ‘God in His wisdom can work and does work in other ways, because conditions of men demand it, but this is the regular way.’

“The glory supreme and insupportable of the Godhead is represented in the Father. 1 Tim. 6:16. Jesus Christ has forever blended the divine with the human, and from Him flows out the Spirit of life to all His children. The angels are the mediums, the ganglia, on these great currents of God's life to reinforce, so to speak, these life currents. They can bear without exaltation God's Spirit and its outshining glory, and in themselves bring the presence of God to His children, and drive back the angels of evil which seek to destroy them.” (ST Feb. 26, 1908)

Rest assured, brethren, God is no respecter of persons. If any pioneer had made a wrong statement or advocated unbiblical teachings, God would have had Ellen White speedily challenge the error, just as she did with Dr. J. H. Kellogg regarding his book *The Living Temple*. You'll read about that in the next chapter.

To my Seventh-day Adventist brothers and sisters around the world: The lack of agreement between the words of the pioneers and the teachings of the Trinity doctrine is no side issue or small matter. What eternal purpose is served if we have come out of the Babylonian doctrine of Sunday worship, which breaks the fourth commandment, only to embrace the false doctrine of the Trinity, which breaks the first commandment? I will enlarge on this point in the upcoming chapters. We must become “the restorers of paths to dwell in,” and heartily embrace the doctrinal beliefs of the pioneers regarding the Godhead, which were established and confirmed by unquestionable divine authority. Truth has ever been unfolding, but regarding the Godhead, *our pioneers had it right*. It is so sad that the watchmen have allowed a once-settled doctrine to now be called falsehood.



## Chapter 10

### The Alpha of Deadly Heresies

In this chapter, we will study the alpha of deadly heresies in depth. Why is this important? Because Sister White saw the omega of apostasy that would come in our day, and it made her tremble for our people. We would be wise, then, to learn how to recognize the omega and avoid it, lest it threaten our salvation. But just as a person cannot know what the mark of the beast is without knowing who the beast is, so one cannot know what the omega of apostasy is unless one is clear on what the alpha of apostasy was which preceded it, because they are closely linked.

That's not the only reason a study of the alpha in our church history is imperative. Hosea 4:6 says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...." Without a knowledge of our denominational history and a consequent learning from it, there inevitably will be speculation and/or uninformed decision-making, both personally and corporately. Both can have serious consequences. Therefore, this chapter will briefly review some neglected but critically important information, because if you understand the deadly alpha, the subsequent deadly omega will be obvious.

Ellen White wrote, in reference to the alpha and omega, "Be not deceived...." Isn't that interesting! In Matthew 24, Jesus warned us against end-time deception four times. Well, brethren, in her continued quote, we read the testimony of Jesus: "Be not deceived; many will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. We have now before us the alpha of this danger. The omega will be of a most startling nature." (SpTB02, 16)

Did you catch that? God's prophet said that many would ignore this warning since "*many will depart from the faith.*" She did not mean a

departure from our current fundamental beliefs, for our religion has been considerably changed. She meant departing from the faith or the beliefs held by Seventh-day Adventists when she made that statement back in 1904. The wording makes it impossible to mean any other faith. Note also that she said, “*The omega will be of a most startling nature.*”

In Ellen White’s mind, the danger facing God’s people was obviously not a small matter, as some today think of it. To her inspired perception, this apostasy was a major concern. Ellen White’s warning words appeared in other publications in 1904: “The omega would follow in a little while. *I tremble for our people.*” (1SAT 341; Ms 46, 1904) This fearful condition which shook Ellen White compels us to study the alpha in our past denominational history, so that we may discern and shun the omega that followed it, which is now in our beloved church.

That our movement has a solid foundation cannot be doubted. Consider these words of confidence in the Lord’s leading at that time:

“Many of our people do not realize how firmly the foundation of our faith has been laid. My husband, Elder Joseph Bates, Father Pierce, ... Elder (Hiram) Edson, and others who were keen, noble, and true, were among those who, after the passing of the time in 1844, searched for the truth as for hidden treasure. I met with them, and we studied and prayed earnestly. Often we remained together until late at night, and sometimes through the entire night, praying for light and studying the Word. Again and again these brethren came together to study the Bible, in order that they might know its meaning, and be prepared to teach it with power. When they came to the point in their study where they said, ‘We can do nothing more,’ the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me, I would be taken off in vision, and a clear explanation of the passages we had been studying would be given me, with instruction as to how we were to labor and teach effectively. Thus light was given that helped us to understand the scriptures in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. *A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the*

*city of God*, was made plain to me, and I gave to others the instruction that the Lord had given me.” (ISM 206)

Referring to Adventism’s “past history” in the years from 1844 until 1893—meaning until just five years after the 1888 conference, Sister White published both an encouragement and a warning for Seventh-day Adventists: “In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what God has wrought, I am filled with astonishment and with confidence in Christ as Leader. *We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.*” (GCB [1893], 24)

Her inspired statement will be a key to this chapter’s study: “We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.”

In His wisdom, God has given His remnant people a treasure chest of wisdom and understanding of biblical doctrine. He has given us a courageous prophet who performed her role with great faithfulness. We have our pillar doctrines: the seventh-day Sabbath, the sanctuary message, the state of the dead, the second coming of Christ, the 2300-year prophecy, the three angels’ messages, the ten commandments and a health reform message. We who are historic Seventh-day Adventists embrace all of these, while in mainstream Adventism, some of these doctrines are downplayed, ignored, or under attack, along with God’s prophet. What is it that we now may be believing and teaching that is evidence that our church did indeed “*forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history*”? This is something about which we will get a detailed understanding.

Isaiah 58:12 states the following: “And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The *restorer of paths to dwell in.*” Our goal is to become restorers of paths to dwell in. In order to do so, though, we must be sure we know what those correct paths were, in which our pioneers dwelt. It is in

discovering those paths that we will learn if we are traveling in correct paths today. We will also learn what we need to avoid, which is whatever would cause us to deviate from the correct paths. Since we are dealing with “deadly heresies “ (ISM 200), we need to pay careful attention and proceed with *revealed information only*, keeping Deuteronomy 29:29 in mind: “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever.” There is no room for, and no safety in, speculation.

It is time for a historical examination. We will go back to the period of time in our denomination when that which Sister White identified as the “alpha of deadly heresies” emerged.

### **The Origin of the “Alpha of Deadly Heresies” in our Church**

The alpha of deadly heresies occurred in our church in the early 1900s, when a very prominent physician by the name of Dr. John Harvey Kellogg wrote a book entitled *The Living Temple*. As background, Dr. Kellogg completed his medical training in 1876. God gave him the knowledge and skill he had in teaching, in developing the medical work in its early days, and in the operations he performed. Ellen White not only told Kellogg that God was the source of his success, but told others as well, lest Kellogg become proud and they become jealous of Kellogg’s wide influence. At first, Kellogg was an unselfish, dedicated, greatly respected and loved man, but in him Satan recognized an opportunity to do great harm to the Advent movement, if he could be won to serve another master. As it turned out, even before James White’s death in 1881, Kellogg had discussed with Ellen White the “great light” he had discovered, which she warned him was wrong. “Those theories are wrong.... Never teach such theories..., do not present them to the people.” (MS 70, 1905) He ignored that inspired counsel, though, and presented his concept of God publicly in 1897 during the ministerial institute preceding the General Conference session that year. Some men accepted his “great light.”

Battle Creek Sanitarium burned to the ground on Feb. 18, 1902, and General Conference President A. G. Daniells suggested Dr. Kellogg

write a book on health care to raise funds for the rebuilding of the sanitarium. Daniells insisted that Kellogg's spiritualistic views be kept out of the book, and Kellogg agreed—but he didn't keep his word to Daniells. A General Conference committee refused to recommend Kellogg's book for publishing because it contained pantheistic teachings about the personality of God. Rather than God as our Sovereign Creator and personal Being, pantheism depicts Him as a depersonalized influence or essence in all nature. Kellogg had departed from the Adventist understanding of the personality of God—who He is—and replaced it with his own diminished, impersonal concept of God as a power in all nature—including sinners.

About a month after the General Conference refusal to endorse and print his book, Kellogg personally submitted his book to the Review and Herald publishing office; he would pay for the printing himself. However, the Review and Herald building burned to the ground shortly thereafter (Dec. 30, 1902), and the plates prepared for the printing of his book were destroyed. Determined to get his book to print, Kellogg then turned to a commercial printer, and in 1903, 3,000 copies of his book came off the press and began to be distributed.

God's prophet affirmed Deuteronomy 29:29: "The revelation of Himself that God has given in His word is for our study. This we may seek to understand. But beyond this we are not to penetrate." (MH 429) This statement was and is most important, because Kellogg had presumed to reject the biblical understandings God had established through the early pioneers, and to penetrate beyond that which was revealed. And as we will see, that is exactly what a misguided majority at the 1980 General Conference session did, which speculation has brought into our church the omega of apostasy. It's also noteworthy that in that same statement of Ellen White's, she said that the things that God has given us in His Word are for our study, and this we are to seek to understand.

So Kellogg ventured beyond what revelation has given us. In opposing his theological suppositions, Sister White, in *Loma Linda*

*Messages*, was a bit more specific: “The *teaching regarding God* that is presented in ‘Living Temple’ is not such as our students need.... Those who express such sentiments regarding Him show that they are departing from the faith.” (LLM 253)

This quotation’s strong wording is an important piece of the puzzle as to what the alpha of deadly heresies was. Kellogg had written something in his book that caused God’s prophet to say that those who express such sentiments show that they are departing from the faith. What faith-related, or theological, teaching had Kellogg presented that Sister White identified as the alpha of deadly heresies? She wrote, “The teaching regarding God.” Kellogg was teaching or promoting something about God that Sister White recognized as a departure from the faith. She also wrote, “In the book *Living Temple* there is presented the alpha of deadly heresies....” (1SM 200)

Mrs. White wrote even stronger words when she wrote to Kellogg on March 16, 1903, regarding other statements he was making concerning Adventists and their beliefs. “Your heart is not right with God. The Spirit of God is not working you. You need ... to be converted. You are not sound in the faith. The work which is essential to be done for our people, our youth, is to educate them to believe the truth that has made our people what they are in numbers and in strength. This is the work for this time and is to be acknowledged and not denied as you have and are denying the faith.

“While you have told the things that you have and made the statements you have before unbelievers, my heart has been sad indeed. You have evidenced that you have departed from the faith....

“You are not sound in the faith. I have stated this in my diary months ago. You have certainly placed the people of God, whom the Lord has led step by step in the ways of truth and placed upon a solid foundation, in a false showing before unbelievers. Some have departed from the faith and will continue to misrepresent the work God has given me.” (Letter 300, 1903)

Kellogg had had a conversation with Elder Spicer, portions of which the latter detailed: "...But I was urged [by Kellogg] to understand that heaven is where God is, and God is everywhere—in the grass, in the trees, in all creation. There was no place in this scheme of things for angels going between heaven and earth, for heaven was here and everywhere. The cleansing of the sanctuary that we taught about was not something in a faraway heaven. 'The sin is here ... [Dr. Kellogg said, pointing to his heart], and here is the sanctuary to be cleansed.'"

Spicer added, "I knew well enough that there was nothing of the Advent message that could fit into such a philosophy. As I had listened, one light after another of the gospel message seemed to be put out. Religious teaching that to me was fundamental was set aside." (DF 15c, W. A. Spicer, "How the Spirit of Prophecy Met a Crisis," copy A, 19-21, brackets original; taken from Arthur L. White, *Ellen White, Woman of Vision*, 438.)

In the continuation of Ellen White's letter to Kellogg quoted above, Ellen White addressed Kellogg's spiritualistic theories: "The sanctuary question is a clear and definite doctrine as we have held it as a people. *You are not definitely clear on the personality of God, which is everything to us as a people, You have virtually destroyed the Lord God Himself.*

"Why should you take the liberty to make the statements which you have made, as though you had authority for thus stating, when *they are falsehoods*? You have made the facts of our faith of none effect before unbelievers, and the truth which should ever be kept prominent and exalted with this people you have virtually denied and ignored in your many statements. How dared you to do this?..." (Ltr 300, 1903)

There were two very serious charges in her words: #1. "Not clear on the *personality* of God;" and #2. "Virtually *destroyed* the Lord God Himself." Can there be any charge more serious than the latter?

In October of that same year (1903), there was a crisis about Kellogg's teachings at the Autumn Council. Sides were being taken

until A. G. Daniells, president of the General Conference, received two letters from Ellen White that spoke against the teachings in *The Living Temple*. The letters were read to all attending, which effectively served to unify the gathering in accord with the counsel given. They read, in specific part, “I have something to say to our teachers in reference to the new book *The Living Temple*. Be careful how you sustain the sentiments of this book regarding the personality of God. As the Lord presents matters to me, these sentiments do not bear the endorsement of God. They are a snare that the enemy has prepared for these last days....

“We need not the mysticism that is in this book.... The writer of this book is on a false track. He has lost sight of the distinguishing truths for this time. He knows not where his steps are tending....” (Letter 211, 1903)

Dr. Kellogg responded to this public reading of inspired counsel graciously, saying he would modify the wording in his book concerning theological topics. “But his statements were rather erratic and changeable. His attitude alternated, and it finally turned out that the doctor never really changed.” (Arthur L. White, *Ellen White, Woman of Vision*, 443) At a later date, after one of Ellen White’s talks to workers, Kellogg made “a brief attempt at confession,” but “Dr. Kellogg had become a very vacillating man, and the repentant attitude was shallow and short-lived.” (Ibid., 456)

Ellen White explicitly denied Kellogg’s claim that her writings supported his views. In fact, she saw the dangers clearly. “,,I told him [Kellogg] that the Lord was greatly dishonored by being thus represented, and that such ideas would lead the people into spiritualism.” (Letter 271a, 1903) “...Had God desired to be represented as dwelling personally in the things of nature—in the flower, the tree, the spear of grass—would not Christ have spoken of this to His disciples?” (Letter 230, 1903) She referred specifically to the “spiritualistic views Satan has instituted in your theories.” (Letter 301, 1903) “Your ideas are so mystical that they are destructive to the real substance, and the minds of some are becoming confused in regard to the foundation of our faith....” (Letter 52, 1903)



As stated earlier, Kellogg had agreed to revise his book—to remove all theological topics—but could he be trusted? A letter written by Arthur G. Daniells, General Conference president from 1901-1922, can give us some insight. He had had a conversation with Dr. Kellogg about Kellogg’s new development in theological thought that was so alarming to Brother Daniells that Daniells decided to write a letter to Willie C. White, Ellen White’s son, to share his concerns about what Kellogg had told him. Here are a few of the most relevant parts of that letter.

Elder Daniells wrote to W. C. White, “Ever since the council closed I have felt that I should write you confidentially regarding Dr. Kellogg’s plans for revising and republishing *The Living Temple*....”

The letter continued, “...He [Kellogg] said that some days before coming to the council, he had been thinking the matter over, and began to see that he had made a slight mistake in expressing his views.... He then stated that his former views regarding the trinity had stood in his way of making a clear and absolutely correct statement; but that within a short time he had come to believe in the trinity and could now see pretty clearly where all the difficulty was, and believed that he could clear the matter up satisfactorily. He told me that he now believed in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; and his view was that it was God the Holy Ghost, and not God the Father, that fills all space, and every living thing. He said if he had believed this before writing the book, he could have expressed his views without giving the wrong impression the book now gives.”

Reader, please take another look at what you just read concerning Kellogg’s statement to Daniells. Satan had already led Dr. Kellogg into a mystical, spiritualistic representation of God—a pantheistic view. Satan then led the influential doctor to adopt a different, more deceptive spiritualistic belief that Kellogg presented as the solution to the objections the leaders had had to his book. Kellogg spoke to Daniells of his “former views regarding the Trinity.” He had held those views *before* he “had come to believe in the trinity.” That means his “*former views*” were *non-trinitarian*—the common understanding of the

pioneers. He claimed those “former” non-trinitarian views had obstructed his ability to make a “clear and absolutely correct statement” regarding God. Obviously, Kellogg had believed in one God, though he came to conceive of that one God wrongly. But then, according to Kellogg, he saw his mistake in believing in one God. According to him, it was Trinitarianism—an expanded choice of three gods—that helped him make an “absolutely correct statement” that it was God the Holy Spirit that was in every living thing (including unrepentant sinners), and not God (the Father). The first error led to the second error, and the second error was enabled by his new Trinitarian belief. It was to counter Kellogg’s teaching of the Holy Spirit as a divine essence pervading all things—animate and inanimate, saints and sinners alike—that led Mrs. White to write of the Spirit as a “person.”

Daniells continued, “I placed before him the objections I found in the teaching, and tried to show him that teaching was so utterly contrary to the gospel that I did not see how it could be revised by changing a few expressions....” (Letter, A. G. Daniells to W. C. White, October 29, 1903)

Now it’s interesting that Kellogg said that he had come to believe... what doctrine? The doctrine of the Trinity. And he specifically said he believed in “God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.” Does that sound familiar to anyone?

The General Conference president at that time (1903), in his statement above, said he did something. He said, “I placed before him the *objections* I found in the teaching.” He added, “...That teaching was so utterly contrary to the gospel...” Trinitarianism was not accepted in Adventism in 1903.

Now what do you suppose Mrs. White thought about Kellogg’s plans for revision? We’ll let her words speak for themselves. She wrote, “The writer *has not changed*.” “It will be said that *Living Temple* has been revised, but the Lord has shown me that the writer has not changed, and that there can be no unity between him and the ministers of the gospel while he continues to cherish his present sentiments. I am bidden

to lift my voice in warning to our people, saying, ‘Be not deceived; God is not mocked’ (Gal. 6 :7).” (ISM 199)

The next point must not be missed: What were his “present sentiments,” according to the written testimony of the General Conference president at that time? That he [Kellogg] believed in the Trinity—that he believed in God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. Sister White said ministers of the gospel could have no unity with Kellogg so long as he harbored those beliefs. She said his beliefs were actually a mockery of whom? Of God. She quoted Scripture in warning away from those beliefs: “Be not deceived; God is not mocked.”

What we are doing here is simply reading documents from our past history and examining the facts, because Ecclesiastes 1:9-10 tells us that we can look to the past to understand what’s happening today. “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there anything whereof it may be said: ‘See, this is new’? It hath been already of old time which was before us.” In other words, the Bible tells us that things have a habit of repeating themselves. And thus, in order to understand some of the things that are happening today, an examination into the history of our church has been a necessity.

Sister White mourned the falsehoods associated with Kellogg’s book: “In the controversy that arose among our brethren regarding the teachings of this book [*Living Temple*], those in favor of giving it a wide circulation declared: ‘It contains the very sentiments that Sister White has been teaching.’ This assertion struck right to my heart. I felt heartbroken; for I knew that this representation of the matter was not true.” (ISM 203)

She also wrote, “I am compelled to speak in denial of the claim that the teachings of *Living Temple* can be sustained by statements from my writings.” (Ibid.) She stated emphatically for the record, “There may be in this book expressions and sentiments that are in harmony with my writings. And there may be in my writings many statements which, taken from their connection, and interpreted according to the mind of

the writer of *Living Temple*, would seem to be in harmony with the teachings of this book. This may give apparent support to the assertion that the sentiments in *Living Temple* are in harmony with my writings. But God forbid that this sentiment should prevail.” (1SM 203 [1904])

The truth is that Mrs. White knew exactly who was behind Kellogg’s new belief in the Trinity. It was Satan himself. She very clearly rebuked Kellogg for the deadly heresy he had written in his book. She said it was “written under the inspiration of the arch-deceiver.” (*Battle Creek Letters*, Jan. 29, 1904, 103) She wrote, “In the past, it has been that Dr. Kellogg would make any kind of a shift or statement rather than make a full, thorough confession. The evil adviser still has power over Dr. Kellogg, who is a man that God would save and work through, if He could; but Dr. Kellogg has become self-centered, exalted by worldly policy. In order to save, as he thinks, his reputation, he will do as he has done in the past—influence men in responsible positions and then leave them to work out the difficult problems....” (13MR 377 [Jan. 20, 1904]) “...His mind is being worked by the very one who seduced the angels of God in the heavenly courts.” (Ibid., 378) “The efforts that Dr. Kellogg makes to call the youth to Battle Creek, notwithstanding the plain testimonies that have been given, show that he is working under the advice of the one who talked with Eve.” (Ibid.)

Ellen White was unable to persuade Kellogg to desist. She wrote, “...Satan’s power over him has not been broken.” (Letter 116, April 22, 1905)

In this brief history of the origin and development of the alpha of deadly heresies, Mrs. White wrote under inspiration that Kellogg was being worked by Satan; he was “inspired by the arch-deceiver.”

What is the point of giving you this historical background concerning Kellogg and his alpha of deadly heresies? It is this: While we don’t hear much about pantheistic beliefs in current Adventism, Kellogg’s spiritualistic concept of three sovereign gods was officially adopted as an Adventist doctrine at the General Conference session in

1980. It has been included in the published *Fundamental Beliefs* of Seventh-day Adventists since 1981. Brethren and sisters, shall we not fear to adopt any of the positions Kellogg took once he entered upon his downward path? Shall we not be on guard against any form of mystical teaching that he advocated and to which our prophet strongly objected to as “inspired by the arch deceiver”? Shall we not be diligent to know what Scripture and the Spirit of prophecy have revealed regarding the true identities of Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

### **“Is the Holy Ghost a Person?”**

Was there some specific theological point that Kellogg said would answer objections to his book? What was at least one of the reasons Ellen White warned that “the ministers of the gospel should not be united with him when he has his present sentiments”?

Let’s read what Kellogg himself said. He wrote a letter to G. I. Butler, in which he stated, “As far as I can fathom, the difficulty which is found in *The Living Temple*, the whole thing may be simmered down to the question: Is the Holy Ghost a person?” (Letter of J. H. Kellogg to G. I. Butler, October 28, 1903)

Kellogg defended his new Trinitarian understanding as he continued in his letter to Butler, “You say no. I had supposed the Bible said this for the reason that the personal pronoun ‘he’ is used in speaking of the Holy Ghost. Sister White uses the pronoun ‘he’ and has said in so many words that the Holy Ghost is the third person of the Godhead. How the Holy Ghost can be the third person and not be a person at all is difficult for me to see.” Ibid.

So what was the alpha “difficulty” all about? According to Kellogg, it centered on this: “Is the Holy Ghost a person?” That question sounds ironically familiar today. Kellogg believed that the Holy Ghost was a third divine person, a third god whom he called “God the Holy Spirit.” And what argument did Kellogg use to try to support this doctrine? He referred to the Spirit of Prophecy—to a specific statement of Ellen White’s, in which she wrote that the Holy Spirit is the “third person of the Godhead.” (DA 671)

Sister White's statement is true. However, problems arise when people add to her words or assume meanings she never intended or stated, such as the following assumption. They say, "Sister White says the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead. That means that the Holy Spirit is a person just like the Father and the Son are persons." But Sister White did not say that the Holy Spirit is a person "just like" the Father and the Son.

The Holy Spirit cannot be logically thought to be "just like" Father and Son for several reasons: (1) God has the "Spirit of God;" Christ has the "Spirit of Christ." Does the Holy Spirit have a Spirit? No. (2) The Holy Spirit is said to be "poured out," "shed abroad." Such things are never said about Father or Son. (3) The Holy Spirit is sometimes referred to as "it." (John 1:32; 1 Pet 1:11; Isa 34:10, for example.<sup>f</sup>) Never is that pronoun used in reference to Father or Son. (4) The Father and Son have physical bodies in whose image we are made. The Holy Spirit assumes different forms: dove-like, tongues of fire, etc., but never the image in which we are made. (5) "Father" and "Son" or "God" and "Jesus" are names of real Gods; when we talk or pray to them, we address them by those names. "Spirit" is not a personal or relational name; it is an aspect of man, as well as of God. That is the testimony of Scripture: "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." (1 Cor 2:11) One "has" a spirit "which is in him," and the spirit "knows" things. In other words, the spirit is the mind or personality of the person, not an independent entity. (6) "The" Holy Spirit is also referred to as "His" Spirit, meaning belonging to God or Christ. That possessive pronoun leaves no room for the concept of a third independent being.

The wrongs that have settled in on God's church as a result of the influential Dr. Kellogg's initial departure from the faith have undoubtedly grieved the Father's Spirit. We need to heed God's prophet, who gave us this counsel: "In His dealings with His people in the past the Lord shows the necessity of purifying the church from

wrongs. One sinner may diffuse darkness that will exclude the light of God from the entire congregation. When the people realize that darkness is settling upon them, and they do not know the cause, they should seek God earnestly, in great humility and self-abasement, until the wrongs which grieve His Spirit are searched out and put away.” (3T 265) Exposing the wrongs so they may be put away is the primary purpose of this book. We do not want to grieve our Father in heaven any longer.

It is critical—even salvational—for us to understand the issues in this doctrinal controversy, because the Bible says, “*The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be....*” If we do not get this right, we will be stuck in the omega of deadly heresy. Not even God can extricate us from our choice of error if we stubbornly stick to it.

Kellogg professed that he was a Trinitarian. I frankly do not like using word descriptions that are not found in the Bible or the Spirit of prophecy. There are two extremes: Christ and Satan, truth and error. Everyone will be aligned with one camp or the other. If we are to use any terms at all, perhaps the better choice would be this: Will we each be a Restorer, or will we choose to be non-Restorers? Remember what we read in Isaiah 58:12: “And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.” Yes, we are commanded to be repairers of the breach made in God’s law regarding the fourth commandment, on behalf of our Christian brethren who ignorantly transgress that commandment of God. Unfortunately, though, because of the failures of our watchmen on the walls of Zion, we must restore and recover other paths travelled by our pioneers. Confusion must be replaced with confidence in our beliefs.

### **Did Ellen White Become a Trinitarian?**

We know, and an earlier chapter proved, that the pioneers, including Ellen White, were non-trinitarians. However, since Kellogg stated he believed in the Trinity and cited Sister White’s writings to support his

belief, the question needing to be answered is, “Did Ellen White eventually become a Trinitarian by the late 1890s?” In other words, was she inspired to change her written understanding about who God is? Did she also come to believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit? The answer is an unqualified No. If she did, then how could she dare rebuke Kellogg in 1903 and onward for bringing that same belief to light? Then she’d be a false prophet. The Holy Spirit would be called into question, too, if He changed what He inspired her to write.

As the documented evidence shows, Kellogg believed in the three gods of the Trinity—the same three that are numbered 3, 4 and 5 in our current Fundamental Beliefs. But Ellen White basically wrote of such concepts, “That’s deadly heresy.” That means she never believed in the Trinity doctrine.

And was it God who told Ellen White to rebuke Kellogg? It certainly was, because she was writing under divine inspiration. Now if that’s the case, then how could God inspire her to oppose the Trinity doctrine, if it is really truth?

### **The Foundations of Our Faith**

In a letter addressed to Kellogg in 1903, Ellen White defended the truth very plainly: “Your ideas are so mystical that they are destructive to the real substance, and the minds of some are becoming confused in regard to the foundation of our faith. If you allow your mind to become thus diverted, you will give a wrong mold to the work that has made us what we are — Seventh-day Adventists.” (Letter 52, 1903)

Now that we know what Kellogg believed, we need to understand why what Kellogg was teaching was endangering “the foundation of our faith” that makes us Seventh-day Adventists. What is it that was considered to be the foundation at that time? In other words, what was the church teaching about this topic that Kellogg was departing from, causing Ellen White to write, “...You’re endangering the foundation of the faith;” “you’re departing from the faith”?



Let's see what was believed by the church members at that time concerning the Holy Spirit. This first quotation is from Uriah Smith in 1891: "The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God; it is also the Spirit of Christ." (4GCDB March 14, 1891) Uriah Smith was saying that there is no third independently existent god-being; he was saying that the third person of the Godhead is the omnipresent Spirit of the Father and Christ.

Here is another quotation, this time from E. J. Waggoner in 1890: "Here we find that the Holy Spirit is both the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ." (*Christ and His Righteousness* [1890] 23) Waggoner is in total agreement with Uriah Smith, and neither man received condemnation from Ellen White regarding either statement.

John Loughborough wrote in 1898: "We learn from this language that when we speak of the Spirit of God, we are really speaking of His presence and power." (RH September 13, 1898)

Does that sound to you like these brethren believed that the Holy Spirit was a person called "God the eternal Spirit?" No, they believed that the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ ("one spirit—Eph 2:18; 4:4) is the "presence and power" of God. Loughborough made a very clear definition when he wrote, "...When we speak of the Spirit, it's really the presence and power of God." It is Their omnipresence.

When God gives us His Spirit, does God give us another individual, or does He give us Himself? According to Kellogg, we are given one of the three Gods making up God. (Yes, that is confusing.) But the Spirit of prophecy answers the question this way: "In giving us His Spirit, God gives us *Himself*..." (7T 273) Sister White also wrote, "The divine Spirit that the world's Redeemer promised to send is the presence and power of God." (ST Nov. 23, 1891)

Let's see what else the servant of the Lord had to say about the Spirit. If she was to rebuke Kellogg, then she must have clearly defined in her writings what she believed, and she did. Do you know that statement of hers that says, "third person of the Godhead," a phrase that people still use today? Does she

explain to us who the third person of the Godhead is? Does she explain more about the Holy Spirit? Yes, she does.

Here is one of her statements, found in the *Review and Herald* in 1906: “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” [She is quoting John 6:63 here.] “Christ is not here referring to his doctrine, *but to his person*, the divinity of his character.” (RH, Apr. 5, 1906)

The Holy Spirit is a person. Sister White said, “It’s the third person of the Godhead.” But it is the person of *whom*? It’s the person of Christ; it is Christ omnipresent. This is who the Holy Spirit is. Kellogg was teaching the Holy Spirit is a third person different from the Father and the Son.

Finally, and without any confusion, Sister White essentially said regarding Kellogg’s theological views, “*This is deadly heresy.*” And as stated before, Kellogg gave plentiful evidence that he had indeed departed from the faith with his pantheistic view of God, even before he embraced his tritheistic view. Ellen White’s writings were consistently and emphatically opposed to his teachings. Why, then, would any true believer give any credence to any of his theological positions? Why would our denomination accept as truth what Sister White identified as “deadly heresy”? Is it because we have “forgotten the way the Lord has led us, and his teaching in our past history”?

### **The Identity of the Comforter**

For even more evidence of the correctness of the pioneers’ common understanding, let us read John 14:16-18: “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: *I will come to you.*”

God’s prophet commented about John 14, when Jesus was speaking about the Comforter that would come. “That Christ should manifest Himself to

them, and yet be invisible to the world, was a mystery to the disciples. They could not understand the words of Christ in their spiritual sense. They were thinking of the outward, visible manifestation. They could not take in the fact that they could have the presence of Christ with them, and yet He be unseen by the world. They did not understand the meaning of a spiritual manifestation.” (SW Sept. 3, 1898)

So that is what Christ meant when He told His disciples He would send them another Comforter that would be “in” them; He also told them they already knew who that would be, because the expected Comforter was at that moment dwelling “with” them. Who else but Jesus? He even said, “I will come....” So when He talked of “another Comforter,” He was talking about His own Spirit—His omnipresence without the physical limitations of the body. It still would be Himself that would come to them, but in a different form: invisibly, non-physically. And this is who Sister White called the third person of the Godhead.

Here is another powerful statement: “...While Jesus ministers in the sanctuary above, He is still by His Spirit the minister of the church on earth. He is withdrawn from the eye of sense, but His parting promise is fulfilled, ‘Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of world’ (Matthew 28:20)....” (DA 166) In other words, even while Jesus is the minister in the sanctuary above, there being where His physical body is, He is still, by His Spirit, the minister of the church on earth. This is made possible by His divine omnipresence.

On a similar note, the Bible tells us clearly how many mediators there are between the Father and man. First Timothy 2:5 states, “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” Our mediator is Christ physically in the sanctuary above, and Christ by His omnipresent Spirit down here. To say that another spirit—someone other than Christ—is mediating here on earth between God and man is saying there are two mediators. That would be saying the Bible is in error. Jesus Himself made the matter plain for us when He promised, “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the

world.” Did you note He said: “I...” — *-not* some other being. How can it be any plainer than that?

We have more to examine, and although we have read a few of these quotations from Ellen White’s writings in earlier chapters, repetition in different contexts deepens the impression. These repeated quotations should make even more sense now.

“Christ declared that after His ascension, He would send to His church, as His crowning gift, the Comforter, who was to take His place. This Comforter is the Holy Spirit, - the soul of His life, the efficacy of His church, the light and life of the world. With His Spirit, Christ sends a reconciling influence and a power that takes away sin.” (RH May 19, 1904)

Now that was very clear definition and you do not want to miss it. The Comforter that Jesus promised to send is the Holy Spirit. This Holy Spirit is the soul of His life. Question: Is the soul of Jesus’ life a different person from Himself? No, it’s His very own person, His very own personality. How can the soul of the life of Christ be a different individual from Christ? How can the Holy Spirit—Christ’s own Spirit— “*His*” Spirit—be a different third God called “God the eternal Spirit”? ([www.adventist.org/en/beliefs/god/holy-spirit/](http://www.adventist.org/en/beliefs/god/holy-spirit/)) As you can see for yourself, the Trinity doctrine presents a confused, illogical, and unbiblical understanding of the Holy Spirit.

Continuing: “...The Holy Spirit is the Comforter, as the personal presence of Christ to the soul.” (HM Nov. 1, 1893)

This is what the third person of the Godhead really is: “...*the personal presence of Christ.*” When Christ comes to us to comfort us by His Spirit, it’s very personal. It’s not a different person from Him; it’s He Himself. That fact is confirmed in this statement: “In giving us His Spirit, God gives us Himself.” (7T 273)

And here is another example of that fact. “The Lord knows all about His faithful servants who for His sake are lying in prison or who are

banished to lonely islands. He comforts them with His own presence.” (DA 669)

### **Who Is Your Comforter?**

Let me ask you this personal question: “Who is your Comforter?” That is a question that each one of us needs to answer. After all, your Comforter is the one that helps you overcome sin by faith in Christ. If you believe the doctrine that Kellogg believed—the one called the Trinity, which is actually tritheism, or a belief in three Gods—you would believe the teaching that God the Son ascended to heaven to minister there as our high priest, and now a third God—God the Holy Spirit—takes over here on earth and is your Comforter. That false Comforter, replacing the true Comforter which is the presence of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, is the role that Satan wants to fill. He wants your prayers, your worship, as that false third God. He wants to draw your worship away from the one true God to himself. So ... who is your Comforter? The true one, or the counterfeit one?

What does the servant of the Lord say? “There is no Comforter like Christ, so tender and so true.” (RH Oct. 26, 1897) And this: “The Savior is our Comforter. This I have proved Him to be.” (8MR 49)

What comfort would you receive from someone who was not “made flesh and dwelt among us,” who was not “tempted in all points like as we are,” who is therefore not “able to succor us” as we are tempted? That’s not very comforting, is it? Shall we believe that Jesus came to earth, lived here for thirty-three-and-a-half years, experienced everything that we have to experience, and then left us and sent someone else without any of those qualifying experiences to help us? I don’t think so.

It is so important that we know that it is the Spirit of Christ in His omnipresence that is in us, and not some other spirit. We are taught specifically, “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” (Gal 4:6).

First John 5:12 tells us how very important that biblical truth is: “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not

life.” Eternal life is involved in this issue; it is a salvational matter. Any other spirit in us would be that of an antichrist.

Listen carefully to my next question. What is the real reason that the church is so weak today? Could it be that the church has embraced a counterfeit third God that they have made their comforter? God’s prophet provides the answer to my question: “The reason why the churches are weak and sickly and ready to die, is that the enemy has brought influences of a discouraging nature to bear upon trembling souls. *He has sought to shut Jesus from their view as the Comforter*, as the one who reproves, who warns, who admonishes them, saying, ‘This is the way, walk ye in it.’” (RH Aug. 26, 1890)

What has the devil tried to do to weaken the churches? He has tried to keep us from the knowledge that Jesus Himself, our precious Redeemer, dwells in believers through faith in Him. With His presence we have His life, His strength to overcome, His love reflected through us to others, and all the “fruit of the Spirit.” What magnificent knowledge is that! But Satan has deceived our church into accepting another comforter—a counterfeit one that can neither sanctify nor save us. We have played right into his evil hand. This comforter today goes by the name of “God the Holy Spirit,” a personality altogether different from Christ.

Paul’s words in 2 Corinthians 11:3-4 bear repeating: “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth *another Jesus*, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive *another spirit*, which ye have not received, or *another gospel*, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.”

Sad to say, that is our denominational state, at present. The watchmen have let into our denomination “another Jesus” and “another spirit,” which means we are being taught “another gospel” which cannot save us. We who know “what saith the Lord” must be restorers of paths to dwell in. Let us not follow in Kellogg’s tragic footsteps.

## Chapter 11

### The Omega of Apostasy

It seems that every time there is a crisis in Adventism, someone usually speculates that it must be the omega of apostasy. It has been said about the publication in 1957 of the book *Questions on Doctrine*, about a host of “new theologies,” about neurolinguistic programming (NLP), about celebration churches, and about spiritual formation mandated in our higher educational institutions. More recently, it has been said about women’s ordination issues. Every single one of these developments has been serious, and some are a result of the omega, but none of these mentioned, on its own, is the omega of apostasy that caused Ellen White to tremble.

Knowing about the omega really is a life-or-death issue. Man has grossly underestimated the enemy of souls. Satan, as Lucifer, had been created with the highest intellect of any created being. The most intelligent human being that has ever lived would have but a small fraction of intelligence in comparison. Thus any person who is not fully connected to Christ is at a decided disadvantage when Satan is working out his malevolent will. We are in serious danger if only ninety percent of what we believe is true. Why? Because Satan can overwhelm us with that ten-percent error.

What I have learned has helped me, and can help you, fully understand exactly why Ellen White said, “*I tremble for our people.*” (1SAT 341) In chapter 10, the alpha of deadly heresies was clearly identified. If you have not read chapter 10, you need to do so before reading chapter 11, because this chapter is basically the conclusion of chapter 10. You cannot rightly understand the omega unless you clearly understand the alpha.

I'll begin by repeating Sister White's warning that she wrote in *Special Testimonies*: "Be not deceived; many will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. We have now before us the alpha of this danger. The omega will be of a most startling nature." (SpTB02, July 24, 1904)

Let's spend a moment on each part of this warning. "*Be not deceived.*" A familiar warning from Christ Himself, who, more than any of us, realizes the nature of our enemy and His.

What was "*this danger,*" of which the alpha was first? "Giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." Mrs. White wrote that Kellogg was "inspired by the arch-deceiver," that his book contained "mysticism," "speculation," and "spiritualistic theories." (ISM 201, 203)

What would be its result? "*Many will depart from the faith.*" There is only one faith, based on an accurate biblical understanding. God signally worked with our pioneers to firmly establish that faith, to prepare them to make God's final appeal to those who dwell upon the earth.

Of what nature would the omega be? "*Of a most startling nature.*" In other words, it would be unexpected and unsettling, due to its nature. "The spiritualistic theories regarding the personality of God, followed to their logical conclusion, sweep away the whole Christian economy. They estimate as nothing the light that Christ came from heaven to give John to give to His people. They teach that the scenes just before us are not of sufficient importance to be given special attention. They make of no effect the truth of heavenly origin, and rob the people of God of their past experience, giving them instead a false science." (ISM 203)

On what topic were the speculation and specious theories? "*Regarding the personality of God.*" (ISM 203)

What was her reaction to this prospect? "*I tremble for our people.*" (SpTB08 [1897]) It would be an alarming prospect—implying that it could cause the loss of eternal life for many of "our people." What else would cause Mrs. White to "tremble" in fear? Her trembling indicates



that the matter is an eternal life-or-death battle, with faith in the Word of God at the center of it.

Keep in mind that the alpha and omega of apostasy are closely linked; they are very close in nature, content, and time, for Ellen White wrote that the omega would follow “in a little while” after the appearance of the alpha. (1 SM 203) In fact, the latter is but a development and expansion of the former, with consequences affecting far more souls. Therefore, we have been given this counsel from the Holy Spirit through God’s messenger:

“As a people, we are to stand firm on the platform of eternal truth that has withstood test and trial. We are to hold to the sure pillars of our faith. The principles of truth that *God has revealed to us* are our only true foundation. They have made us what we are. The lapse of time has not lessened their value. It is the constant effort of the enemy to remove these truths from their setting, and to put in their place spurious theories. He will bring in everything that he possibly can to carry out his deceptive designs. But the Lord will raise up men of keen perception, who will give these truths their proper place in the plan of God.” (1SM 201; SpTB02 51 [1904])

Sister White and others protested against the alpha of deadly heresies by voice and pen, but despite the protests, it wasn’t long before the omega followed, as Mrs. White foresaw. “The omega will follow, and will be received by those who are not willing to heed the warning God has given.” (1SM 200) Mrs. White had written, “We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.” (CET 204) In prophetic warning in these two quotations, God’s prophet wrote plainly that those who “forget the way the *Lord has led*” our denomination “in our past history,” and who are “not willing to heed the warning *God has given*” through the Spirit of prophecy concerning the alpha of heresies Kellogg introduced into our church concerning the personality of God, “will receive” (will accept) the omega of apostasy.

Tragically, the omega of apostasy became fully and officially entrenched within the denomination decades ago. Through the 1920s and 30s, and even into the 1940s, our historic faith held relatively firm, but the foundational principles were slowly being chipped away. Opposition to the doctrinal changes concerning the identities and/or personalities of Father, Son and Holy Spirit proved powerless as promotion of the omega from within Adventism subtly but steadily increased. As protesters died off, the banner of truth was left to trail in the dust. Resistance to the new concept of God waned, compromises multiplied, and acceptance of a triune god grew. Then came the 1950s, when the denominational book *Questions on Doctrine* initiated a doctrinal division in Adventism that has never been healed. One well-known minister wrote, “I want my church back!” But the watchmen on the wall were asleep at their posts, except for a few courageous men like theologian M. L. Andreassen—men who were cruelly persecuted for their stand for biblical truth. And now we are reaping what has been sown.

The omega is the same insidious misrepresentation of the personality of the one true God that Dr. Kellogg advocated both in pantheism and tritheism. Both reject the Scriptural revelations about the personality of God, making mystical what was plainly understood by our pioneers. In pantheism, Kellogg represented that our holy God was not a personal Being, but an impersonal, mystical essence or influence—indiscriminating in its presence in sinners as well as believers. In tritheistic Trinitarianism, the personality of God is again misrepresented. The biblical truth is, the Father and Son are personal Beings; Scripture and the Spirit of prophecy both tell us the wonderful good news that they come to dwell in believers in their omnipresence, as the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ. But the personality of God in His own Spirit—what a reasonable person would take for granted to be obvious and true, and what a Bible student would be able to confirm in God’s Word—is essentially denied in favor of an alleged third personal being that is a separate personality from Father and Son, that

comes to dwell in us instead of Father and Son, and that can be worshipped in addition to Father and Son.

Ellen White wrote in 1904, “There are some things which we must reason, and there are other things that we must not discuss. In regard to God—*what* He is and *where* He is—silence is eloquence.” (Ms 46, 1904) Kellogg ignored that counsel, insisting he knew where God is: in everything, including air, plants, sinners, etc. Regarding Kellogg’s pantheistic reasoning, Mrs. White had this to say: “Let not the theory be presented that God would dwell in the soul-temple of a wicked man. No greater falsehood could be presented.” (1NL 124) After Kellogg’s view received objections, he then adopted the Trinity, whose three gods enabled him to say that it was God the Holy Spirit who is in everything, not God the Father. But to the non-trinitarian pioneer mind, wherever the Holy Spirit is present, it is God Himself, in His omnipresence.

Ellen White also warned, “When you are tempted to speak of *what* God is, keep silence, because as surely as you begin to speak of this, you will disparage Him.” (Ms 46, 1904) Again there is disobedience to the explicit instruction of the Holy Spirit to us through Ellen White. Our church did not totally escape Kellogg’s spiritualistic theories, as some members were ensnared by them and joined Kellogg in their promotion. And today, in our official doctrines, we dare to define *what* God is. We’ll take the definition straight from our published *28 Fundamental Beliefs*: “a unity of three coeternal Persons.” Is that not explaining *what* God is? Are we not following Kellogg’s rejection of the counsel of the Spirit of prophecy? And have we not endorsed Kellogg’s three gods ourselves—after what we know about Satan’s influence over Kellogg’s mind?

Shall we do this when even the esteemed scholars at our Biblical Research Institute (BRI) cannot explain how three gods can be one god? Even they cannot logically defend the doctrine from either Scripture or the Spirit of prophecy. These following statements were taken from a 2015 publication from that organization titled *God in Three Persons—in Theology*, pages 25 and 23. The author, associate director Kwabena

Donkor, wrote, “The defining characteristic of the Seventh-day Adventist approach to the doctrine of the Trinity is to state dogmatically the biblical positions on the relevant points without any great effort at explaining its logic,”... “without a burden to define rationally God’s oneness....”

Are Seventh-day Adventists expected to believe in a doctrine that the BRI chooses not to explain logically to fellow Adventists? On what basis should we accept it, then? Frankly, any religious dogma, to be trustworthy, requires an explanation that is not speculative but *explicitly, plainly biblical*. I know of no other doctrine that Adventism holds that is so lacking in sound biblical exegesis. Actually, on another page, the author admits why the BRI avoids any attempt to explain the Trinity doctrine. It’s because they can’t. On page 26 of that publication, the author candidly confessed, “The issue is how one may define the ‘One’ and relate it to the three Persons without falling into tritheism. It may be that theology needs to acknowledge its impotence in this matter.” It may also be—and many recognize it to be—that what the BRI has proved truly impotent to do is to conceive a way to convincingly explain something illogical and unbiblical so that it appears logical and biblical, so that it will be accepted without divisive challenges. The simple fact is, the “oneness” of Father and Son relates to their character, purpose and mind. “It is thus that God and Christ are one.” (MH 422) It is not a numerical oneness. To claim that it is, in order to make “three gods” mean “one god,” exceeds common sense, credibility and the witness of Scripture. We pray for our brethren at the BRI, that our long-suffering God would give them eye salve to discern the truth in this matter. We need courageous men—men who esteem the riches of heaven greater than the approval of men—to lead our church into “unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God.” Only when that which brought on disunity is removed, will unity regarding the biblical Godhead be restored—unity which our leading pioneers had without one word of correction from the Spirit of prophecy.

Regarding the identity and personality of God—i.e., who He is, what He is like—Jesus came to show us the Father. All that the Son did or said came from the Father. But now we’re taught that God is not our “one God the Father” of 1 Corinthians 8:6, but a three-in-one God never mentioned by Jesus or any of the authors of Scripture. The one god temporarily called “Father” is allegedly but one-third of the whole, or “true,” God. Our majestic, holy, omnipotent God the Father, the Ancient of days, “of whom are all things,” is removed from His sovereign throne of the universe to be just one of three almost-identical, unnamed gods. The Son of God—no longer a true Son, but merely acting the temporary role of “Son”—is also one of those generic, nameless three gods. The biblical narrative about an omnipotent Creator God inviting us to call Him “Father,” who loved us so much that He gave His divine, one-and-only begotten Son to live a sinless life that would later be imputed to us, and to die in our places so we could have a second probation—is reduced to metaphor in Adventism’s new interpretation of Scripture. And a Son willing to do that, out of love for us? No, not according to the Trinity doctrine. “Father” and “Son” are not real divine Persons; they are simply roles played in the cosmic controversy. The result is, to use Ellen White’s term, “to make a nonentity of God and of Christ.” (RH Aug. 6, 1908) As Ellen White predicted, “Our religion would be changed.” (1SM 204)

This teaching that makes of none effect the personality of God has found wide acceptance within Adventism today, though few have reasoned it out to realize that is what the doctrine of a triune God leads to. Its “most startling nature” comes from the fact that Kellogg’s misrepresentation of the personality of God—Who He is and where He is—“virtually destroyed the Lord God Himself,” according to Ellen White. (Letter 300, 1903) Yet a theological variant that is just as destructive is now accepted and defended by our leaders as sound doctrine. In other words, what was once regarded as part of “deadly heresies” is now “state[d] dogmatically ... without any great effort at explaining its logic.” (Kwabena Donkor, *God in Three Persons—in Theology*, Bible Research Institute (2015), 25) Indeed, the destructive

doctrine reached the point where it could be—and was—voted into our *Fundamental Beliefs* at the General Conference quinquennial session in Dallas in 1980, and then published in our 1981 yearbook. It is set forth in our *Fundamental Beliefs* two through five, which are stated in chapter 2.

In those four fundamental beliefs dealing with the Trinity doctrine and its three coeternal gods, you have the **omega of apostasy**. It began in limited scope in our midst through Kellogg, but despite Mrs. White's strong warnings about Kellogg's theology and the satanic spirit influencing him, Kellogg's unbiblical, mystical theology has been adapted and developed within our denomination until it has culminated in what Sister White foresaw as the omega. What caused her to "tremble for our people" is that which, sadly, has been embraced by the overwhelming majority of the leadership and laity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church today. Sadly, many well-intentioned Adventists, whether they are historic or otherwise, have joined themselves to this fearful doctrinal departure. Books of a new order have been written—books in support of the omega—whose authors, I believe, do not understand the gravity of the situation.

Why did it cause Sister White to tremble, and why is it so deadly? Simply because God's first commandment states, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." "Before me" is a Hebrew idiom that can mean "besides me," "in addition to me," or "in opposition to me." None of those things are acceptable to our Lord God; they are insulting, and they are sin. In the first commandment, He requires that He alone be worshipped. He reminds us that He is the One who delivered His people from bondage in Egypt, thus proving His power to deliver them (and us) from sin. Even the divine Son of God, when the great controversy is ended, will be "subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." (1 Cor 15:28)

But despite God the Father's sovereign command, our church has accepted a false third god called "God the Holy Spirit," a counterfeit of the true. Since this third god is supposedly coequal and coeternal with

God the Father, our members are being taught from the pulpit and in denominational publications that we may also pray to and worship this false god. Prayers and worship are being directed away from our “one God the Father” (1 Cor 8:6) and toward a false holy spirit. Who receives the misdirected prayers and worship? Not God the Father; He’s not even the intended recipient. The one who receives their prayers and worship is the one whose falsehood it is: the enemy of God. He is the same one who received worship because of another deception of his that Ellen White wrote about. Satan had discouraged the churches in the 1830s and 40s from receiving the Millerite computation of prophetic time. That led to their rejection of the true event of Jesus entering the Most Holy Place in the heavenly sanctuary to begin the investigative judgement, so the “sanctuary [would] be cleansed” in preparation for His return. Mrs. White saw Satan standing by the throne in the Holy Place that Jesus had vacated when He entered the Most Holy Place. She wrote, “I turned to look at the company who were still bowed before the throne; they did not know that Jesus had left it. Satan appeared to be by the throne, trying to carry on the work of God. I saw them look up to the throne, and pray, ‘Father, give us Thy Spirit.’ Satan would then breathe upon them an unholy influence; in it there was light and much power, but no sweet love, joy, and peace. Satan’s object was to keep them deceived and to draw back and deceive God’s children.” (EW 56)

Another danger stemming from a misrepresentation of the personality of God and of His divine Son comes when one worships a false god. It is idolatry—but consider why God hates idolatry. It is an empty, impotent, insulting substitute for the our infinitely superior, omnipotent God. It is a fatal delusion, because false gods cannot offer salvation. Our one true God dearly desires that we be saved. He hates lies because they cause the loss of eternal life for those He loves and for whom He has sacrificed everything. It is crucial that we know Him as He really is. “This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

Mrs. White penned this insight: “Few can discern the result of entertaining the sophistries advocated by some at this time. But the Lord has lifted the curtain, and has shown me the result that would follow. The spiritualistic theories regarding the personality of God, followed to their logical conclusion, sweep away the whole Christian economy. They estimate as nothing the light that Christ came from heaven to give John to give to His people. They teach that the scenes just before us are not of sufficient importance to be given special attention. They make of no effect the truth of heavenly origin, and rob the people of God of their past experience, giving them instead a false science.” (1SM 203)

What “past experience” are we robbed of, if we accept the sophistries regarding the personality of God? It is the confidence that we may have that, by His Word and by the gift of the Spirit of prophecy, God Himself has established Adventism’s understanding of the prophetic timeline, of the hour of judgment now come, of our great need of His indwelling Spirit, and of the imminent return of Jesus. We can have peace as we face the events of the future, because we know in whom we have believed. We can say with assurance, “This is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: ...we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.” (Isa 25:9)

Consider these words of encouragement and faith: “Our faith in reference to the messages of the first, second, and third angels was correct. The great way-marks we have passed are immovable. Although the hosts of hell may try to tear them from their foundation, and triumph in the thought that they have succeeded, yet they do not succeed. These pillars of truth stand firm as the eternal hills, unmoved by all the efforts of men combined with those of Satan and his host. We can learn much, and should be constantly searching the Scriptures to see if these things are so. God’s people are now to have their eyes fixed on the heavenly sanctuary, where the final ministration of our great High Priest in the work of the judgment is going forward,—where He is interceding for His people.” (RH Nov. 27, 1883)



Finally, as stated before, embracing this doctrinal heresy makes believers in the Trinity first-commandment breakers, and unless there is deep repentance and a return to the “old paths, where is the good way” (Jer. 6:16), there will be tragic ends to their earthly probations.

In Hosea 4:6, God spoke to His people: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.” Many believe that verse applies today to deceived Sunday-keepers. True as that may be, since they have forgotten the one commandment that begins with the word “remember,” it is also true that the majority of Seventh-day Adventists blindly break the first commandment while dutifully keeping the fourth. Sunday-keepers are in double jeopardy, if they are also Trinitarians. Frankly, though, “whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” (James 2:10)

God’s prophet gave us the following counsel, which we would do well to heed: “In His dealings with His people in the past the Lord shows the necessity of purifying the church from wrongs. One sinner may diffuse darkness that will exclude the light of God from the entire congregation. When the people realize that darkness is settling upon them, and they do not know the cause, they should seek God earnestly, in great humility and self-abasement, until the wrongs which grieve His Spirit are searched out and put away.” (3T 265)

In December of 1905, Ellen White wrote fearful words concerning Dr. Kellogg and his refusal to accept divinely-inspired correction: “I have lost all hope of Dr. Kellogg. He is, I fully believe, past the day of his reprieve. I have not written him a line for about one year. I am instructed not to write to him....” (Letter 333, 1905) Imagine. The Holy Spirit told Ellen White not to strive with him any more for his salvation. One thinks of the verse “Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone.” (Hosea 4:17) Solemn words.

Wrongs have settled in on God’s church that have grieved our heavenly Father’s Spirit. Shall we not admit our error and put it away

forever? Shall we not walk in the footsteps of Jesus, rather than the footsteps of Dr. Kellogg? This warning from Ellen White is unmistakable. She had written to Kellogg, “Men who are ignorant of the byways you have entered, the crooked paths you have made, are in danger of following your lead. I have been compelled to bear my testimony to the church, ‘*Enter not into that path*, to follow a course of action that will leaven your faith with evil, spoil your confidence in Bible truth, and lead you to build castles that will fill you with self-confidence and separate you from God.’” (20MR 346)

We have been given wisdom from on high: “We need no fanciful teaching regarding the personality of God. What God desires us to know of Him is revealed in His word and His works....

“Christ is the perfect revelation of God. Let those who desire to know God, study the work and teaching of Christ. To those who receive Him and believe on Him, He gives power to become the sons of God.” (CET 83)

## Chapter 12

### Another Jesus, Another Spirit, Another Gospel

Long ago, the apostle Paul revealed to us what the omega of apostasy is all about. Our Scripture is 2 Corinthians 11:3-4, and it has dual application. It not only applies to Paul's time when Jewish legalists followed him and taught against the pure gospel of Paul, trying to convince the new believers that Paul was wrong. These verses definitely also apply to the 1980-81 omega of apostasy within the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Paul wrote, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth *another Jesus*, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive *another spirit*, which ye have not received, or *another gospel*, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him." (Note: Different commentaries on this last clause indicate that "ye might well bear with him" really means "you might accept the erroneous teachings they advocate, rather than the truth of the gospel" that Paul had presented to them.)

In that passage, Paul warned us that we are just as vulnerable as was Eve to Satan's subtleties—perhaps even more so. He said that if we should become ensnared by one of Satan's sophistries, our understanding of the simplicity of Christ would become corrupted. Friends, we would be mistaken if we think this hasn't already happened to us.

What did Paul mean by "*another Jesus*," "*another spirit*," and "*another gospel*?" The remaining chapter studies will provide the answers. I invite you to really think about what you will be reading; Paul's warning is most serious for believers in any age, for a false gospel will not—cannot—present God's plan of salvation. There simply is no

other source of eternal life but the Father, and no other way to receive it except through His Son. As Jesus said, “No man cometh unto the Father except by me.” (John 14:6) So it really does matter what you believe. None of us wants to be taken in by the omega of apostasy.

The last part of Revelation 13:3 tells us that when the beast’s deadly wound is fully healed, “*all the world wondered after the beast.*” As the papacy rapidly regains power and influence, we see civil and religious leaders from around the world meeting with him, the latter setting aside some doctrinal distinctions and subordinating religious liberty in order to come into “unity” with the papal power. Does “all the world” include Seventh-day Adventists? I would suggest that a good majority of us have accepted the beast’s primary deception related to the omega.

We dare not underestimate the power of the enemy of souls working behind the scenes, and especially so when we are careless in our beliefs. Revelation 12:9 reveals the worldwide extent of his fatal deceptions: “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the *whole world*....”

Jesus clearly warned us in Mark 13:22, “For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.” There’s a good reason to be on guard: Satan, through human and fallen angelic agents, will work to “seduce even the elect, if it were possible.” The wording implies that deceiving the elect will not be possible. A caution is in order here: A person may think he is one of the elect, correct and unshakable in his understandings, when, in fact, he is not as solid as he thinks, and therefore is quite vulnerable to deception. Remember, “the heart is deceitful above all things.” “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” (Jer 17:9; 1 Cor 10:12) In any event, we may be sure that whatever those signs and wonders may be, they will be very powerful in their deceptiveness, with the intention to deceive the whole world, including those stubborn hold-outs, God’s faithful ones who “keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” But they—“the elect”—will have desired and received the “eye salve” offered by

the True Witness to the Laodicean church. They will be able to distinguish between truth and error. In love for God the Father, they will withstand the lure of the miraculous signs and wonders that will ensnare the rest of the world in Satan's trap for souls. (Revelation 13:13-14) They will retain their loyalty to the one true God.

However, it's very possible to be seduced into Satan's doctrinal lies if you are not studying and in earnest prayer. Even if you are inclined to accept the words of respected theologians, remember that they may unwittingly be putting out information that is profoundly different from what our pioneers believed and taught when the Spirit of prophecy was active in their midst. "Themselves deceived, they deceive others." (1MCP 43)

Matthew 24:24 records Jesus' words similarly to Mark 13:22: "If it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matthew used the word "deceive" while Mark used the word "seduce," both evil objectives being directed toward God's church. Matthew is even more specific when he says the "very elect." Especially does Satan have in his crosshairs those who draw closest to God. We cannot afford to be careless or indolent; we must understand what this omega is about in order to recognize and reject the deception. It is crucial not to accept "another Jesus"—one who is being presented and taught as if he were the true Jesus.

God's prophet gave us a detailed preview of the enemy's attempt to destroy God's remnant church that He raised up to be His last church before the end:

"The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist in giving up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engaging in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place, what would result? The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty

years would be accounted as error. A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath, of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure.” (1SM 204)

Everything listed here has already occurred, except the last event. So what remains to be fulfilled in this amazing prophecy? Answer: “...Storm and tempest would sweep away the structure.”

What has brought “another Jesus” into Adventism? We read in the above quotation, “A system of *intellectual philosophy* would be introduced.” There is our answer. Ellen White’s words inform us that intellectual philosophy would be the source through which not only “another Jesus,” but also “another spirit” and “another gospel” would come in, and, in fact, did come into Adventism in 1980.

What did she mean by “intellectual philosophy”? It has to do with man’s opinions, deductions and interpretations that have been exalted and preferred over the plain Word of God. What once was plain, literal, consistent and accepted by all is now being reinterpreted (misinterpreted, actually) with a new hermeneutic, which rejects the straightforward meaning of God’s Word in favor of a less-obvious and more mystical explanation of selected aspects of Scripture. In fact, the difference between the former understanding and the new view is such that what was once accepted as truth is now being termed “error”! However, brethren, “the Reformation did not, as many suppose, end with Luther. It is to be continued to the close of this world’s history.” (GC 148) This book that you are reading is a protest against the “intellectual philosophy” that threatens to obscure salvational truths revealed in God’s Word. Certain “fundamental principles” that were

established with God's leading in the early days of our denomination have been changed. Those truths need to be restored and disseminated worldwide before the prophesied deceptive "miracles" and "great wonders" so enthrall humanity that the truth can no longer be seen—or even desired. (Rev. 13:13-14)

Paul warned the Corinthians of "*another Jesus*" being preached to them. The present application of his warning has to do with the deception that is directly connected with the omega. What "*another Jesus*" was Paul talking about? It is well-known that the best and simplest way to learn how to detect counterfeit money is to study only the legitimate bills. That's because there are endless and oft-changing counterfeits, but only one true version of each bill. Likewise, in order for us to recognize this counterfeit Jesus, we must study the true.

Luke tells us the following in his account of Saul of Tarsus turned Paul the apostle, not long after Paul's conversion at Damascus: "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the *Son of God*." (Acts 9:20) Could "*another Jesus*" possibly have something to do with the *Sonship* of Christ? I would suggest that it certainly does. Could it be that there would be an attempt to block what Paul began to preach about Jesus, and a different theology presented in its place? I believe that is the case. We have some studying to do before that question can be answered with certainty, so let us consider a number of familiar Scriptures that pertain to the Sonship of Christ. Like those trained to identify counterfeit bills through the study of authentic bills, we will be studying the true Son of God.

### **The Pre-eminent Fatherhood of God and the Sonship of Christ**

In 1 Corinthians 1:9 we're told, "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his *Son Jesus Christ* our Lord." I would like you to notice, in that verse, that Paul did not preach, nor did he ever preach, "God the Son." Rather, He preached Jesus, the "Son of God." Even though Jesus is as fully God/divine/deity as is His Father, one cannot find the phrase "God the Son" anywhere in the entire New Testament. Nor can the phrase be found in any of Sister White's

writings. Does that surprise you? Frankly, while Scripture affirms Jesus' divinity, its teaching emphasis regarding Jesus is primarily on His being the divine Son of God and the critical role the Son plays in our redemption. That relationship is how His Father acknowledged Him: "This is my beloved Son." Changing the interpretive emphasis to "God the Son"—i.e., His divinity—changes the gospel to "another gospel." That is because it is now taught that Jesus cannot be both God and Son, so Jesus' true Sonship is now denied; it is said to be only metaphorical. This is very important in helping us to contrast what God is teaching us versus what man is teaching us, so that we collectively can be "the restorer of paths to dwell in." In modern application, we are to restore the beliefs of our pioneers that Ellen White, in 1906, said "remain the truth in every particular"—truths that today are accounted as error. (Letter 38, 1906)

Would you agree that the Bible is a safe guide, "a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path"? Then let us delve into the next Scripture, which is 1 Corinthians 8:6: "But to us there is but *one God, the Father*, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

In that explicit biblical statement, Paul identifies only the Father as the "one God." He has a Son whom we know as our Lord Jesus Christ. The Son is not the preeminent God of the Bible; He is the *Son of the God of the Bible*. Paul explained the reason for the difference: "all things" are "of" the Father and "by" the Son. We'll come back to this shortly.

John recorded these words of Jesus: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the *only true God*, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3) Jesus called the Father the *only true God*; Paul affirmed there is "but *one God the Father*, of whom are all things." The important points to be gleaned here from both Scripture verses are that the Father is the only true God, according to Jesus, and that He is the source of all that there is, according to the apostle Paul. Jesus thus



recognizes the Father as pre-eminent. We have more to study about that, because we want to be sure we stand with our pioneers in belief.

Why would we want to stand with them, if they're said to be in error? After all, hasn't truth been advancing, and hasn't new light come? First of all, true "new light" does not contradict old light, but, rather, complements it, enlarges upon it. The Trinity doctrine does not therefore qualify as "new light;" it is an entirely "new view" to replace the literal understanding of God's Word. Secondly, God Himself taught the pioneers what is truth. That is the explicit testimony of the Spirit of prophecy in Ellen White: "When the power of God testifies as to what is truth, that truth is to stand forever as the truth.... The truth for this time, God has given us as a foundation for our faith. *He Himself* has taught us what is truth." (CW 31-32) Thus we consider the "old paths" to be truly "where is the good way." (Jer 6:16)

The next Scripture is very important to our understanding of the relationship of the Father and the Son. This will help us know the true Jesus, so we can avoid the "other" Jesus. Paul wrote again, "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and *the head of Christ is God.*" (1 Cor. 11:3) Once again, the Father is the pre-eminent One. Jesus' full divinity is upheld, as is His Sonship.

We also may read, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort." (2 Cor. 1:3) There are certainly plenty of Scriptures that establish God as the Father of Jesus. In the New Testament, Christ is referred to as 'the *Son of God*' over forty times, and Jesus consistently referred to the one sovereign God as *His Father* sixty-five times.

Now there are many today who say that Jesus did not become the begotten Son of God until His incarnation or until His resurrection, while many others say He was begotten by the Father way back in eternity past. Who is right, and what did the pioneers believe? The answer will become obvious as we continue. Right now, let us read carefully John 3:16-18. Jesus was talking to Nicodemus: "For God so

loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath *not* believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

Nicodemus was told by Jesus that it was God who was doing the *giving* of his Son and the *sending* of His Son. When speaking of God, Jesus was obviously referring to His Father, and when speaking of the Son, he was speaking of Himself in the third person. Again in that passage, we see the Father as having the preeminence; the context also reveals a father in a true father-son relationship. It also shows the love of the Father for us in His incredible sacrifice of giving His only begotten Son for a sinful race. John 3:16 does not say He gave His Son to be begotten. The Son of God who was sent was a very particular Son—the only One that was begotten—whom He sent to earth to be begotten “in a new sense” in His incarnation. (5BC 1114)

The Father had other sons who were created or adopted, but only one special begotten Son, “brought forth” from His own substance and nature. (Prov. 8:22-30; ST Nov. 27, 1893) Only to that Son could He entrust the work of being our Redeemer-Kinsman. Only that particular Son could accomplish the atonement for divinity’s broken law; none of His created sons could—not even an angel could. Jesus is the Father’s “fellow:” “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts.” (Zech 13:7) *Strong’s Concordance* defines “fellow” as a comrade or kindred man.

Despite these explicit verses regarding the identities of God and the Son of God, many Adventists have come to believe in an intellectual philosophy (ISM 204) that says that Jesus and the Father are but two of three gods in eternity that have chosen to play roles in the great controversy. One acts out the role of divine Father, and the other plays the Son. They are claimed and taught to be co-eternal, neither one preceding the other nor coming after the other. If that claim and teaching

is true, then the relationship between the roles of “Father” and “Son” definitely cannot be a true Father-Son relationship. However, the pioneers believed none of this role-playing philosophy, for you see, it is only a philosophical theory—a speculation, if you will. There is no evidence of such role assumption in the Scriptures or the Spirit of prophecy. And yet, despite that lack of proof, the new “intellectual philosophy” interpretation is proclaimed and believed by many today as if it were gospel truth. Truly, it is “another gospel,” presenting “another Jesus,” but not the Jesus of the Bible.

In truth, this Trinitarian concept of multiple, coeternal gods temporarily assuming roles in order to deal with sin is nothing more than human speculation; nothing even suggestive of that concept is revealed in Scripture. But, if you remember, Ellen White wrote that “nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement.” Human pride will not admit the possibility of error. However, God will make truth obvious, for those who desire truth. Consider this: If there really was no true Father-Son relationship prior to the incarnation, then Sister White would not have referred to God as the Father and Jesus as the Son in their respective positions before the fall of man, when the plan of salvation was laid. But she did! God’s prophet wrote, “*Before the fall of man*, the Son of God had united with his Father in laying the plan of salvation. God was to be manifested in Christ, ‘reconciling the world unto himself.’” (RH, Sept. 13, 1906)

Ellen White also wrote this: “Before the fall of Satan, the Father consulted his *Son* in regard to the formation of man.” (3SG 36). Did you notice that while Satan was still the unfallen angel named Lucifer, Jesus was understood to be the begotten Son of God? Indeed, it was because of that very fact that Lucifer was jealous of Jesus and ended up rebelling against the government of God. And God foreknew that His remnant people in the last days would be deceived into questioning the authenticity of the divine Father-Son relationship. We are grateful that, through His prophet, He has provided an account of the fall of Satan. In

this two-paragraph excerpt, notice especially how the Father Himself refers to Christ as His Son:

"Lucifer in heaven, before his rebellion, was a high and exalted angel, next in honor to God's dear *Son*. His countenance, like those of the other angels, was mild and expressive of happiness. His forehead was high and broad, showing a powerful intellect. His form was perfect; his bearing noble and majestic. A special light beamed in his countenance and shone around him brighter and more beautiful than around the other angels; yet Christ, God's dear *Son*, had the pre-eminence over all the angelic host. He was one with the Father before the angels were created. Lucifer was envious of Christ, and gradually assumed command which devolved on Christ alone.

"The great Creator assembled the heavenly host, that He might in the presence of all the angels confer special honor upon His *Son*. The *Son* was seated on the throne with the Father, and the heavenly throng of holy angels was gathered around them. The Father then made known that it was ordained by Himself that Christ, His *Son*, should be equal with Himself; so that wherever was the presence of His *Son*, it was as His own presence. The word of the *Son* was to be obeyed as readily as the word of the Father. His *Son* He had invested with authority to command the heavenly host. Especially was His *Son* to work in union with Himself in the anticipated creation of the earth and every living thing that should exist upon the earth. His *Son* would carry out His will and His purposes but would do nothing of Himself alone. The Father's will would be fulfilled in Him." (SR 13)

*Ten times* in two paragraphs, there was mention of God's Son. This was *before* Lucifer was kicked out of heaven. When John 3:17 says, "For God sent not his *Son* into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved," common sense dictates that in order for God to send His Son into the world, He had to have a Son to send. That Son would be the begotten Son of verse sixteen. He did not send a fictitious, role-playing being. This one thing about verse 16, I must repeat, which says, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His

only begotten Son, ...” Please notice, it does *not* say, For God so loved the world, that He sent His Son “to be begotten.” He already had been begotten. You have read verse 16 often; now consider the point just made.

In *The Review and Herald* in 1907 are found these words: “The Son of the infinite God came to this earth, and honored it with his presence. He emptied himself of his glory, and clothed his divinity with humanity, that humanity might touch humanity, and reveal to fallen man the perfect love of God.” (RH, June 6, 1907).

There can be no doubt that this is referring to Christ as a divine Son in His pre-existence. This is only the same as was written sixteen years earlier: “It was necessary that the *Son* of the infinite God should *come* to be the light of the world, to be the fountain of healing mercy to a lost race.” (RH Jan. 20, 1891)

In 1899, the *Bible Echo* published a letter sent by Ellen White from Australia. In it she wrote, “Was not Christ the greatest teacher the world ever knew? Was He not the *Son of the infinite God*? and yet He said, ‘I do nothing of Myself.’” (BEcho, September 18, 1899).

There are many quotations from the pen of Ellen White that tell us exactly the same thing—that Christ was the Son of “the infinite God.” She also made it clear that Christ was the Son of God prior to His incarnation. Here are three more similar quotes:

“The *Son of the infinite God* clothed his divinity with humanity, and submitted to the death of the cross, that he might become a stepping-stone by which humanity might meet with divinity.” (RH Jan. 16, 1894)

“Although the only begotten *Son of the infinite God* humbled himself and took upon him humanity, his faith wavered not; but under the trial and test, he was equal to the proving of temptation on behalf of humanity.” (RH April 24, 1894)

“When in the fulness of time the *Son of the infinite God* came forth from the bosom of the Father to this world, He came in the garb of humanity, clothing His divinity with humanity.” (ST May 17, 1905)

What more do we know about the true Son of God, so we may distinguish between Him and “another Jesus”? We know that Jesus was God in human flesh. Among the last words to His disciples after the last supper, and only hours before the crucifixion, Jesus said that He was going away to prepare a place for them. This place, of course, was in His “Father’s house” (John 14:1-3). In response to His saying “And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know” (verse 4), Thomas asked “Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?” (John 14:5) The reply of Jesus was “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6) Then He added, “If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.” (John 14:7)

Philip responded to these words of Jesus by asking, “Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.” (John 14:8) It is evident that up to now, at least one of the disciples had not really understood the relation of Christ to the Father. He did not understand the oneness of the two divine Beings, the One having “come forth” from the Other identical in nature and character and purpose, but not in personality. Jesus, though a separate being, was the “express image” of the Father, the “outshining of His glory.” The reply of Jesus therefore probably surprised the disciples.

Jesus said to Philip: “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works’ sake.” (John 14:9-11) Jesus was describing to Philip the “oneness” of Father and Son; “they were

two, yet little short of being identical; two in individuality, yet one in spirit, and heart, and character.” (YI December 16, 1897)

A short time later Jesus also said, “Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that *I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.*” (John 14:19-20)

What follows is key to our understanding. God the Father and Christ dwell within us through the Holy Spirit. Jesus said this in John 14:18: “I will not leave you *comfortless, I will come to you.*” And in verse 23 Jesus said, “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and *we will come unto him and make our abode with him.*” Since Jesus ascended to heaven physically, He has been—still in physical form—“a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” (Heb. 8:2) The Father physically is on His throne. The only way that Jesus and the Father could come and make their abode in the disciples, or even in us, is through the power and presence of *Their omnipresent Spirit.*

The Scriptures and Spirit of prophecy are so plain in language and meaning. What need is there of human speculation that can result only in departure from what is so plainly revealed, and the consequent promotion of “another Jesus,” “another spirit,” and “another gospel? Why are we not satisfied with what God has revealed to us?

In this chapter we have spoken about the begotten Son of the Father, the biblical Jesus. But we have also discussed a little about “another Jesus” that is embraced by the Seventh-day Adventist Church today. As was noted concerning that “other Jesus,” we are taught that He is a role-playing god, co-eternal with the Father, who did not become a son until the incarnation, and then only metaphorically, since two inherently self-existent gods cannot have a true Father–Son relationship. In stark contrast, the pioneers accepted God’s Word as it reads, and believed only in the biblical Jesus, the actual Son of God. In their minds, there was no need for a new hermeneutic by which to interpret the plain language found in God’s Word! It is impossible to reconcile the two

divergent views. Simply put, one is correct; the other, error. And the Spirit of prophecy has told us which is which. We are to “take the Bible as it reads.” (GC 598; RH June 28, 1906; etc.) Consequently, my brothers and sisters, we *must* be the ones who cry aloud and spare not, for the attack is against the throne of God, God’s begotten Son and the Holy Spirit. It began in the pernicious alpha, and its subtlety and deceptiveness have deepened and spread much more here in the omega of this apostasy.

### **Telling the Truth**

What we read in 2 Corinthians 11:3, 4 bears repeating: “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth *another Jesus*, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive *another spirit*, which ye have not received, or *another gospel*, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.” Paul fears that we might accept counterfeits of those things. Having finite intellects and carnal natures, we are no different from what man has been for millennia, unless, perhaps, even more degraded physically and mentally. We must not deceive ourselves as to our true condition. Without Christ, we are no match against evil.

So far, we have been exploring how Satan, through human agents, has brought in “another Jesus.” “Intellectual philosophy” has reinterpreted the Bible to say that the Father-Son relationship is only metaphorical—and that Jesus’ metaphorical sonship began at His incarnation when He assumed the temporary role of “Son” in the divine plan for our redemption. So now we’ll expand our study even further, to once-and-for-all verify, or else expose as untenable, those philosophical interpretations. This further study will give us additional insight into the alpha and omega.

We have been told by God’s prophet, “False speaking in any matter, every attempt or purpose to deceive our neighbor, is here included. An intention to deceive is what constitutes falsehood.... All intentional overstatement, every hint or insinuation calculated to convey an



erroneous or exaggerated impression, even the statement of facts in such a manner as to mislead, is falsehood. Even the intentional suppression of truth, by which injury may result to others, is a *violation of the ninth commandment*.” (PP 309).

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, not for one second would I jeopardize my eternal life by bringing in deception of any kind. I would like to be able to say the same for those who have changed our religion. The fact of the matter is, truth and error cannot co-exist, nor can they ever agree. Those who formulated the current erroneous doctrines, along with those who teach or otherwise perpetuate them, are ninth-commandment breakers. They need our prayers. Why? Because it may be that as a result of our prayers, they may turn from their downward path, as I did. At one time I, too, taught and defended the same specific erroneous doctrines that we are talking about in this book. I had found the trinitarian teachings difficult to believe, difficult to explain logically, yet I taught them anyway. I trusted leadership and the writings of the educated and influential in those “books of a new order” that Mrs. White mentioned that have been brought into our denomination. (1SM 204) Once I put my prejudice and preconceptions aside and began to research the truths revealed in the Bible, the Spirit of prophecy, and our pioneers’ writings, I was able to see the errors in our church today for what they really are. The truth really does set you free. Truth is clear, not confusing; it is logical and easy to explain from God’s Word, and wonderfully personal.

We must resolve to heed this counsel from God’s prophet, which you’ve heard before: “In His dealings with His people in the past the Lord shows the necessity of *purifying* the *church* from *wrongs*. One sinner may diffuse darkness that will exclude the light of God from the entire congregation. When the people realize that darkness is settling upon them, and they do not know the cause, they should seek God earnestly, in great humility and self-abasement, until the wrongs which grieve His Spirit are searched out and put away.” (3T 265) There is danger in delay, as there is that “roaring lion” in our midst, seeking our destruction.

## **Satan Knows the Son of God.**

It is very easy to be caught up in the rebellion against heaven if we are careless in our studies. The following words give us precious insight as to how the initial rebellion in heaven came about when Satan was still Lucifer: “When Satan learned the purpose of God, he was *envious* at Christ, and *jealous* because the Father had not consulted him in regard to the creation of man. Satan was of the highest order of angels; but Christ was above all. He was the commander of all Heaven. He imparted to the angelic family the high commands of his Father.” (3SG 36)

It was later explained concerning the impending rebellion: “All the angels were astir. Satan was warring against the government of God, because ambitious to exalt himself and unwilling to submit to the authority of *God's Son*, Heaven's great commander.” (Ibid., p. 37) As you can see from that inspired quotation, Satan well knew of Christ's pre-incarnate position as the Son of God. What is curious is that today, many Seventh-day Adventists— especially our leadership—do not seem to know of it. They deny that in His pre-earthly existence, Christ was really a begotten Son. And yet, the writings of Ellen White make the truth unmistakable: “Satan was well acquainted with the position of honor Christ had held in Heaven as the *Son of God*, the beloved of the Father.” (RH March 3, 1874; ST April 5, 1883).

Whenever we read the Spirit of Prophecy, we need to realize that the Spirit of God had Ellen White write what she wrote in such a way that it is not ambiguous. Her words mean what they say, and we need to beware of those who say, “She really didn't mean that.” I repeat what we just read: “Satan was well acquainted with the position of honor Christ had held in Heaven as the Son of God, the beloved of the Father.” In those words, there is no mistaking Jesus' true identity as the Son of God, prior even to “war in heaven.” Satan knew that Christ was the begotten Son of God and that He came forth from the Father. In fact, Satan owed his very existence to Christ; God, through Christ, had created Lucifer.

Because Satan knew Jesus to be the Son of God, then when Jesus left the glory and honor He had in heaven to come to earth to live as a man, Satan was aware that he probably would lose the battle for rulership that he had dared to begin. God's prophet wrote, "Satan well knew the position which Christ had held in Heaven as the Son of God, the Beloved of the Father; and that Christ should leave the joy and honor of Heaven, and come to this world as a man, filled him with apprehension. He knew that this condescension on the part of the Son of God boded no good to him." (ST Aug. 4, 1887) So Satan was very aware that his claim to be the ruler of this world would be in jeopardy.

### **A True Son and God His Father**

Jesus' actions on a number of occasions revealed Him to be the Son of God. Sister White wrote, "The flashing forth of His divinity in the cleansing of the temple, His miracles of healing, and the lessons of divine truth that fell from His lips, all proclaimed that which after the healing at Bethesda He had declared before the Sanhedrin, — *His Sonship to the Eternal.*" (DA 231)

At one point the Pharisees wanted to kill Jesus. Read what God's prophet wrote as to their reason: "The whole nation called God their Father, and if Jesus had done this in the same sense in which they did, the Pharisees would not have been so enraged. But they accused Jesus of blasphemy, showing that they understood that Christ claimed God as *His Father* in the *very highest sense.*" (RH March 5, 1901)

Whenever we read the Scriptures, it is encouraging to realize that the Spirit of God inspired so many men of diverse backgrounds, education and occupations to write in such a way that the Scriptures are not ambiguous nor contradictory, but clear and complementary. They mean as they sensibly, literally read, except for passages containing symbols, but new hermeneutical teachings have caused confusion and division. Here is how God's prophet addresses this point:

"The truths most plainly revealed in the Bible have been involved in doubt and darkness by learned men, who, with a pretense of great wisdom, teach that the Scriptures have a mystical, a secret, spiritual

meaning not apparent in the language employed. These men are false teachers. It was to such a class that Jesus declared, ‘Ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God.’ *The language of the Bible should be explained according to its obvious meaning, unless a symbol or figure is employed.* Christ has given the promise, If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine.’ If men would but take the Bible *as it reads*, if there were no false teachers to *mislead and confuse* their minds, a work would be accomplished that would make angels glad, and that would bring into the fold of Christ thousands upon thousands who are now wandering in error.” (RH June 28, 1906)

Yes, “the language of the Bible should be explained according to its obvious meaning,” and especially when the same truth is taught in two or more different verses. For example, Jesus explained to His disciples about His being begotten of the Father. John 16:27-28 records His words: “For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have *believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father*, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.” Twice in those two verses, He made it clear that He was begotten in eternity. “I came out from God.” “I came forth from the Father.” Then in John 17:8, Jesus confirmed to His Father that the disciples believed that He was begotten. “For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that *I came out from thee*, and they have believed that thou didst send me.”

John 8 contains an exchange between Jesus and the Pharisees that leaves no doubt about the topic. Jesus had repeatedly referred to God the Father as His Father. The Pharisees, knowing He was talking about literal divine Sonship, refused to acknowledge His divine lineage. They answered sarcastically in terms of His earthly parentage: “We be not born of fornication....” The topic was birth, or literal parentage. The Pharisees rejected the truth Jesus was trying to tell them, in order that they might be saved.

Those verses are simple enough that even a child can understand them, but those who want to bring in “*another Jesus*” claim they do not mean what they say, because a role-playing, metaphorical Jesus better fits their “misleading and confusing” theology. (RH June 28, 1906)

The true Father-Son relationship between God and Christ couldn’t be put more simply than this: “*God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God.*” To Christ has been given an exalted position. He has been made equal with the Father. All the counsels of God are opened to His Son.” (8T 268) This is not even a hint of role-playing in that passage. It emphasizes a real Father-Son relationship.

Somewhere way back in eternity, pre-dating even creation, Jesus was begotten or somehow came forth from the Father. The Almighty Father God has *always been*, which is something we humans with such a finite intellect cannot understand clearly. Deut. 29:29 does teach us clearly, though, that “the secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are *revealed* belong unto us and to our children for ever,” So God tells us that we *can* understand what He has revealed in His Word and by His prophets. We are not to speculate or use conjecture to explain what God has not revealed. He *has* revealed that Jesus is the begotten Son of God, but He has never revealed that there are three coeternal Gods in eternity that chose to play roles. That, indeed, is going *beyond* what God has revealed and is the result of intellectual philosophy found in “*books of a new order.*” Those books, along with the speculation and confusing reinterpretations of Scripture found in them, must be soundly rejected.

Also to be rejected is speculative reinterpretations in which “begotten” means “unique,” which certainly has not been the ages-old, “usual and customary” understanding of that word. The Bible authors and Ellen White could have used a different word if “begat” or “begotten” wasn’t the best word choice to express the truth they were revealing—but they didn’t. They used the word for their time in history that best fit the reality they were communicating. There is no indication the meaning of the word has changed since the first century AD. More recently, Ellen White wrote in English; her

usage of “begotten” was not that long ago, and the meaning of the word certainly hadn’t changed by her time, nor has it changed since her time. It has to do with conception and birth, with procreation or generation. We don’t know *how* God did it, but we do know what God’s prophet has told us: “The Jews had never before heard such words from human lips, and a convicting influence attended them; for it seemed that divinity flashed through humanity as Jesus said, ‘I and my Father are one.’ The words of Christ were full of deep meaning as he put forth the claim that he and the Father were of one substance, possessing the same attributes.” (ST Nov. 27, 1893; 7A BC 437)

“...The Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of the Father, is truly God in infinity, but not in personality.....” (UL 367)

Consider this statement about Jesus from pioneer E. J. Waggoner: “He was begotten, not created. He is of the substance of the Father, so that in his very nature he is God; and since this is so, ‘... it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.’ (Col. 1:19) ...While both are of the same nature, the Father is first in point of time. He is also greater in that he had no beginning, while Christ’s personality had a beginning.” (ST April 8, 1889)

Sister White was never directed by God to challenge this statement; Waggoner wrote the truth believed almost unanimously by our spiritual forefathers. So, you see, when Jesus was begotten of the Father, there were then not one, but two divine Beings of the same substance. What began at that moment when He was begotten was the personality of Jesus. His substance, the material that comprised His form, was 100% the Father’s DNA (Divinity-Nature-Attributes), and His substance is therefore as eternal as the Father’s is. It was Jesus’ personality that had a beginning.

Not only is Jesus’ substance the same as His Father’s, but the life He has is the same life that the Father has. “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.” (John 5:26) It came through inheritance. (Heb 1:4)

We read before that all things that exist are of the Father. In other words, He is the source of *all* things, including His begotten Son. He “*of whom* are all things” appointed Jesus to be Creator of all things—the one “*by whom* are all things.” There are many Scriptures that bear that out: John 1:3; Heb. 1:2; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:13-16; Eph. 3:9; Isa. 44:24; etc.

Ellen White wrote under inspiration of the pre-existence of Christ: “In speaking of His preexistence, Christ carries the mind back through dateless ages. He assures us that there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God. He to whose voice the Jews were then listening had been with God as one brought up with Him.” (LHU 17). A son comes after the father. The same cannot be said of the father, whether human or divine. A father exists before His son exists; the “close fellowship” between the two cannot begin until the Son comes into existence.

### **The Spirit of the Son, or “Another Spirit”?**

In chapter 9, “Let the Pioneers Speak about God’s Spirit,” we learned what the pioneers believed about the Holy Spirit—that it is not a third being like the Father and Jesus, but rather that it is the omnipresence of God and Christ, something we experience as they abide in us. Never did God’s prophet receive instruction to challenge the other pioneers’ statements. In fact, many statements in her writings support what the other pioneers wrote. Here are several Spirit of Prophecy quotations regarding the Holy Spirit, which will show that the church today teaches “another spirit” that cannot be supported by Scripture. Thus it is that when anyone teaches about a Spirit other than the Spirit defined and identified in the Bible and Spirit of prophecy, they are teaching “another gospel.” Here is what God’s prophet had to say about the Holy Spirit:

“Christ tells us that the Holy Spirit is the Comforter, and the Comforter is the Holy Ghost, ‘the Spirit of truth, which the Father shall send in My name.’ ...This refers to the *omnipresence* of the *Spirit of Christ*, called the *Comforter*.” (14MR 179)

"The holy Spirit is the comforter, as the personal presence of Christ to the soul." (RH Nov. 29, 1892)

"The divine Spirit that the world's Redeemer promised to send is the presence and power of God." (ST Nov. 23, 1891)

"By the Spirit the Father and the Son will come and make their abode with you." (BEcho, Jan 15, 1893)

"The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, which is sent to all men to give them sufficiency, that through His grace we might be complete in Him." (14MR 84)

### **"Another Gospel"**

Our pioneers taught a biblically-based Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit taught in our church today is not biblical, but speculative. The teaching of "another spirit" and "another Jesus" has inevitably led to "another gospel," just as the apostle Paul feared so long ago. What is the new gospel? These topics below are examples of how far we have been led from our solid biblical foundation:

Rather than true Father and true Son coming personally by the Spirit to dwell in us, we're told someone else comes to dwell in us—a third god who did not sacrifice himself for us, who did not live as we must live, who cannot relate to humanity as our Savior can. The Bible says that when Christ dwells in us, we have His victorious life, His divine power to overcome. What life can the supposed third god offer us? What love has he shown us? Has he lived a victorious human life? Has he done for us what Christ has done? "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." (Romans 5:10)

Jesus told His disciples that they already knew the promised Comforter because He was right then dwelling with them, and would be in them. (John 14) The disciples didn't know of any alleged third god, so it could not have been the one Christ was saying would be in us. Rather, they knew *He* would be in us, though they didn't yet understand His spiritual manifestation. (SW Sept. 13, 1898)



How can we relate to this contradiction of a strange god that we're told dwells in us? Denial seems to be the only safe course. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Not only that, we're told we can pray to, and thus worship, this unknown third god. Is that not idolatry, if the third god is a counterfeit one? And even if that third god were a true one, what is our divine counsel? "The Father and the Son alone are to be exalted." (YI July 7, 1898)

We're told the Father and Son are mere metaphorical roles. Right away the speculation gets into trouble. Can a metaphorical death atone for a real broken law? If "God the Son" cannot die, then who died on Calvary? Did anyone? And if not, how do we have atonement for our sins? Where does the metaphor end and the reality begin? This is a most critical point: Can a metaphor atone for our real sins?

Also, if God is not "Father," then how can we be His adopted sons and daughters, as the Bible promises? Or does the metaphor extend into eternal life? And where is it written under inspiration that Jesus cannot be both God and Son? In fact, Scripture affirms that He is both, so why should we believe otherwise?

The Bible says there is one God; we're now told in our *Fundamental Beliefs* that there are three gods. That is tritheism, plain and simple, but that is denied in the nonsensical insistence that three equals one. No one can explain how that can be, nor show us from Scripture that it is so. You'll read in chapter 15 that the one possible supportive test ending "these three are one" was added to the Bible and is rejected by biblical scholars. A most serious question is this: Is it not an offense against the first commandment to worship three gods instead of the one God that brought our forefathers out of the land of Egypt?

Further, we're told in the Bible that there is "one spirit." The "spirit of God" and the "spirit of Christ" is the same spirit—which Spirit is holy because God and Christ are holy. Where is any biblical or Spirit of prophecy evidence of the "spirit of" that supposed third god, if He is as "coequal" as claimed?

Even further, we are led to disobey the Spirit of prophecy, because we are told we cannot “take the Bible as it reads.” (GC 598) Rather, we are to read passages about Father and Son as metaphor. When man attempts to impose his own wisdom above the inspired writings, we know to turn away from such soul-destroying works.

This final point should suffice: We have been given the Spirit of prophecy. Ellen White’s writings have been a precious gift from heaven to Laodicea. But since the Trinity doctrine, presented in beliefs 2 through 5 in our published *Fundamental Beliefs*, has become a creedal test of membership or office-holding in many of our local churches, we have been put in the position where to be “compliant” with the corporate church’s teachings is to deny the truths about God, His Son and His Spirit stated so explicitly in her writings.

### **The Connection to the Omega**

The Bible says that Jesus is “of God ... made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” The true Jesus is meant, of course. This cannot be said of “another Jesus,” for it is a counterfeit one. Our sanctification is essential, if we would have hope of eternal life, so we must have the true Jesus dwelling in our hearts. Deception is dangerous to our souls.

Ellen White wrote, “Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is always dangerous. The enemy has great power over minds that are not thoroughly fortified by prayer and established in Bible truth.

“There are a thousand temptations in disguise prepared for those who have the light of truth; and the only safety for any of us is in receiving no new doctrine, no new interpretation of the Scriptures, without first submitting it to brethren of experience. Lay it before them in a humble, teachable spirit, with earnest prayer; and if they see no light in it, yield to their judgment; for ‘in the multitude of counselors there is safety.’” (5T 292-293)

Did you notice that those “thousand temptations” are for those who already have the light of truth? Satan will seek to shake us from our foundation, and I believe that is what he has so subtly and successfully done by way of the Trinity teaching. What is upheld in this book is “no new doctrine, no new interpretation.” but that which was held by the apostles and our pioneers before John Harvey Kellogg introduced the alpha into our midst. Unbelievably, though the alpha was strongly denied by Ellen White and many leading brethren, the outgrowth of the alpha has been embraced by our church. The omega is doing its baleful work even now. Three false gods cannot save anyone.

Some would remind us we are to “yield to the judgment” of “a multitude of counselors.” What if those counselors are all holding misconceptions about God and Christ and the Holy Spirit? What if the majority have been deceived by Satan’s All-Time Greatest Deception? What if they believe in “another Jesus” and “another Spirit” and “another gospel”? Let’s read that quotation more closely. From what group is that “multitude of counselors” to be composed? “*Brethren of experience.*” In other words, men (and women) of sound biblical foundation—men who can show from the weight of evidence in inspired writings the reason for their faith—men who have been tested and tried, whose first loyalty is to God and His truth. These “brethren of experience” are not necessarily the elders of the church; the quotation makes no such limitation. However, they can be.

What is the true cause of the division in Adventism about the Godhead? It is the complete absence of biblical and Spirit of prophecy support for the Trinity doctrine, compared to the abundant and compelling biblical and Spirit of prophecy evidence for the apostolic and pioneer view of the true gospel of our one God the Father and one Lord Jesus Christ. Throughout this book, you’ve been reading evidence against the Trinity doctrine and for biblical understanding, and there’s more to come. It is irrelevant whether these changes to new interpretations were done intentionally by “wolves in sheep’s clothing”—infiltrators assigned to the task—or by well-meaning

theologians who have themselves been deceived. We know the ultimate origin of all deception is satanic.

What is important is that we personally understand what God taught our pioneers, under the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit. All around the world, God is raising up restorers of paths to dwell in, and we want to be counted among them. We need to align ourselves on the side of truth.

How serious a matter is this? Paul did not mince words, but used strong language: “If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, *let him be accursed.*” (Gal 1:9)

Brothers and sisters, what has been discussed in this chapter is what our pioneers believed and taught. They had the Spirit of God actively working with them. If what you read in this book is different from what you have previously learned, it is because our religion has been greatly changed over many decades. The pioneers believed and taught the “biblical Jesus.” In contrast to a biblical Jesus, Father and Holy Spirit, the church today is teaching “a metaphorical Jesus,” a “third god” spirit that was unknown to the Biblical authors, and a gospel centering on a false three-in-one god that cannot save.

Satan has worked tirelessly and determinedly over many decades now to get the denomination to the point where it is today: feeling rich, increased with goods and having need of nothing, while deeply embroiled in the omega. What the arch-deceiver doesn’t want is for the sincere seekers of truth to learn the true condition of the church today: *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked*. This is especially as it pertains to his deceptive omega, the culmination of the alpha. For that reason, he and his demonic accomplices will rise up to try to stop anyone who dares to show God’s church the dangerous error it holds as truth. But there is great hope and comfort for those who desire truth. Jesus, the True Witness to the Laodiceans, offers eye salve, that we may see, and characters purified in His refining fire, that we may be edified and sanctified by the true gospel in God’s Word, and at long last, for those longing to see Jesus—white raiment, the righteousness of the saints by faith.

## Chapter 13

### Trinitarian No-Quotes 1 through 4

Exactly what are “Trinitarian No-Quotes”? Trinitarian No-Quotes are Spirit of prophecy quotations that are used by Trinitarians to support the Trinitarian position. Since Ellen White was a non-trinitarian throughout her lifetime,<sup>1</sup> any Trinitarian “No-Quote” will actually be shown to prove the opposite, or non-trinitarian, understanding. It is sad that this proof is even necessary, since many passages from her writings throughout her lifetime *explicitly* support the non-trinitarian view. Nevertheless, some Trinitarians claim to find a few statements of Mrs. White’s that allegedly support their three-gods-in-one view. An honest Trinitarian—one who acknowledges her many non-trinitarian passages throughout her lifetime—when faced with apparent contradictions in her writings, would therefore have to conclude that Mrs. White was a false prophet, and would not be able to use her writings in support of either view! But since that logical deduction has not been forthcoming, and since her writings continue to be used to support the Trinity theory, then proving the popular so-called “proofs” of three coequal, coeternal gods from her writings to be no proof at all will be the focus of this and the next chapter. *Even if* the following might fail to persuade the most ardent Trinitarian, his view would still be called into question simply by the weight of evidence challenging it.

I have devoted chapter 4—“Life Original, Unborrowed, Underived”—and chapter 5—“The Third Person of the Godhead”—as prime examples of

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<sup>1</sup>Some say Mrs. White rejected the “wrong view” of the Trinity, but matured to embrace the “correct view.” At [www.revelation1412.org](http://www.revelation1412.org) can be found a video recording of Imad Awde’s presentation *Ellen G. White and the Trinity*, which ably proves beyond any reasonable doubt that Mrs. White never embraced any Trinity doctrine of any kind.

Trinitarian misunderstanding of her writings. Below is a list of eight additional phrases or clauses that are futile attempts to prove that the Trinity doctrine is sustained by the Spirit of prophecy. With our spiritual microscope, we will dissect each one to expose the false assumptions and reveal the true intent of the quotation. The first four will be covered in chapter 13; the remainder, in chapter 14. Here is the list of what we will study:

1. Three Holiest Beings;
2. Three Highest Powers;
3. Three Living Persons of the Heavenly Trio;
4. There Never Was a Time;
5. Eternal Heavenly Dignitaries;
6. The Holy Spirit, Who is as Much a Person as God is a Person;
7. Holy Spirit is a Person;
8. Gave Themselves.

### **1. “Three Holiest Beings”**

The first item, “three holiest beings,” is from the following quotation: “You are born unto God, and you stand under the sanction and the power of the *three holiest beings* in heaven, who are able to keep you from falling. You are to reveal that you are dead to sin; your life is hid with Christ in God. Hidden ‘with Christ in God,’—wonderful transformation. This is a most precious promise.” (7MR 267; 1SAT 367)

If you have read the previous chapters, you may remember that it has been stated that Sister White never referred to the Holy Spirit as another “being.” Looking at this quotation, one might conclude that she did. What is the historical fact regarding this quotation?

This statement is actually part of a *report* of a sermon preached by Mrs. White on Sabbath afternoon, October 20, 1906, in Oakland, California. (7MR 267) The report was produced after she died, so she could not check it for accuracy, which was her usual custom. The following statement appears in the foreword of the book *Sermons and Talks*, Vol. 1, in which the phrase in question can be found: “All the messages reproduced in this volume were delivered in public and stenographically reported, or were prepared with that

purpose in view. Many of Ellen White's sermons may be found in the *Review and Herald* and *Signs of the Times*, but nearly all of those in this series have been drawn from previously unpublished manuscripts, as they appear in our files. So, although there were no tape recorders in Ellen White's day, a person may get the true 'feel' of Ellen White as a speaker by reading this book."

This is an honest admission from the White Estate, informing us that Mrs. White did not write those words; rather, they were someone's written report of what she said. It is certainly *possible* that an error was made in reporting this sermon, but Mrs. White was not around to check the transcript. Since there is that possibility, the statement cannot be used decisively by either side of the Trinity debate. Mrs. White herself warned us about using unauthorized reports. Writing about herself in the third person, she penned:

"And now to all who have a desire for truth I would say: Do not give credence to unauthenticated reports as to what Sister White has done or said or written. If you desire to know what the Lord has revealed through her, read her published works." (5T 696)

The case of "three holiest beings" is but one example of how important that counsel is for us today. In Ellen White's more than 25 million handwritten words, not once did the words "three holiest beings" appear in her published writings. The phrase under discussion in this segment was written by someone else and brought to light only after her death. Since there is only one alleged usage of that phrase that was actually written by someone else, there is no reliable proof that the words actually came from Mrs. White. We are left to assume that some well-meaning stenographer thought that is what she either said or meant. Some might quote the phrase "three holiest beings" as one evidence that Mrs. White approved the doctrine of three gods in one, but if they would follow her instruction to examine her *published* writings (those that she had approved), they would not find that phrase at all in them—and they would find several statements or passages that contradict it.

It is truly alarming when people fail to do their homework properly in light of the momentous issues we are dealing with. It is no time to be careless in our studies or our conclusions. We are reminded of William Miller's rules for Bible interpretation, which Ellen White endorsed. Rule #4 applies to so many points of controversy: "To understand doctrine, bring all the Scriptures together on the subject you wish to know; then let every word have its proper influence, and if you can form your theory without a contradiction, you cannot be in an error." To seize upon one phrase, statement or passage to support a view, while failing to investigate and/or take into account other passages that clearly disagree with that view, is dishonest and will surely lead a person astray.

Why did Ellen White highly recommend her published works, rather than reports of what she may or may not have said? It is very simple; she had verified everything that was published, because she read all the manuscripts prior to publication. It was the best way she had to prevent misunderstandings or misrepresentations of what she was inspired to give us. We shall now examine closely what the record reveals. Let all men be informed of the facts of the matter.

"I read over all that is copied, to see that everything is as it should be. I read all the book manuscript before it is sent to the printer." (3SM 90)

"I have all my publications closely examined. I desire that nothing shall appear in print without careful investigation." (10MR 12)

Naturally, Ellen White could not check anything that was published after she died. It is interesting that this statement of "three holiest beings" did not see the light of day until 1976. The date of release is noted by the White Estate as follows: "Released March 16, 1976." (7MR 273)

The following are very telling statements and really prove that Ellen White believed in only two divine Beings:

"Christ the Word, the Only Begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father, —one in nature, in character, and in purpose, —*the only*



*being in all the universe* that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God.” (GC 493)

That plainly tells us that no other being besides Christ enters into the counsels of God. No other being in all the universe! That makes only two divine beings. The only other being in the universe who *wanted* to enter into counsel with God and His Son, according to the writings of Ellen White, was a proud angel by the name of Lucifer. It was he who wanted the heavenly counsel to include a third member—himself—but he was denied that position. *Patriarchs and Prophets* tells us Lucifer’s jealousy of the Son of God’s inclusion in those counsels was a large part of what led to his rebellion in heaven.

We are told more about Christ’s divine Sonship: “*The only being who was one with God* lived the law in humanity, descended to the lowly life of a common laborer, and toiled at the carpenter’s bench with his earthly parent.” (ST Oct. 14, 1897)

There is no mention of anyone else being “one” with God besides Christ. The word “only” excludes any other options or possibilities. It is impossible for Mrs. White to say “only,” and then elsewhere contradict its meaning by including someone else. The same plain language and testimony is used in the following quote:

“The Father and the Son *alone* are to be exalted.” (YI July 7, 1898)

If the use of “only” were not sufficient evidence, the additional word “alone” should be abundantly sufficient to abolish every theory of a trinity of three coequal gods. Thus it is clear that there are only two divine Beings. If Ellen White became a Trinitarian, would she make a non-trinitarian statement like the one above in the very year that she supposedly gave evidence of a change to Trinitarianism? The fact is, the servant of the Lord was never a believer in that doctrine, which is espoused by the mother of all harlots, nor in any of its varied and multitudinous forms.

## 2. “Three Highest Powers”

The second item, “three highest powers,” is a phrase in the following quotation: “We are to co-operate with the *three highest powers* in heaven, --the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, -- and these powers will work through us, making us workers together with God.” (SpTB07 [1905] 51; Ev 617)

There is no question that there are three powers in heaven (Father, Son and the Holy Ghost), but this statement tells us nothing more than that. It is a simple listing of three. To use this statement to prove a trinity of three co-equal, co-eternal “powers of heaven” would be poor scholarly reasoning, a “reading into the text,” because nothing of the sort is stated or implied in those three words.

The “three great powers” can be correctly understood in light of what Ellen White meant. She clearly understood and taught that there is a Father and a Son and a Holy Spirit. That makes three. But the relationship of those three to each other that she clarified in other quotations prevents an interpretation of coequality and coeternity. For example, she clearly stated that God is the Father of Christ:

“God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God. To Christ has been given an exalted position. He has been made equal with the Father. All the counsels of God are opened to His Son.” (8T 268)

We have also been told in *The Spirit of Prophecy* and *Signs of the Times* that the Father, before the assembled angels, “ordained” that His Son would be “equal with Himself.” (1SP 17 [1870]; ST Jan. 9, 1879, Art. B) Why ordain Him to be equal if He was already inherently co-equal? According to the Holy Spirit through Ellen White, Christ did not inherit equality with the Father; a son is not equal to his father, if only because the Father has precedence. Christ was clearly *given* equality by the Father—*given* authority. Attributes like nature are inherited, but positions are not inherited by birth; they are earned or bestowed.

Further, Christ “has ever stood at the right hand of the Father.” (PP 38-39) He is the Father’s right-hand man, so to speak. That is not a

position of inherent equality; the one “at the right hand” obeys the Father’s will, carries out the Father’s commands.

Elsewhere she explains the identity of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ—part of or an aspect of Christ, but not an altogether different god equal to Christ and the Father. “Let them be thankful to God for His manifold mercies and be kind to one another. They have one God and one Saviour; and one Spirit--the Spirit of Christ--is to bring unity into their ranks.” (9T 189)

She tells us clearly the spirit of Christ—“his Spirit”—is the light and life of the world: “Christ declared that after his ascension, he would send to his church, as his crowning gift, the Comforter, who was to take his place. This Comforter is the Holy Spirit,--the soul of his life, the efficacy of his church, the light and life of the world. *With his Spirit* Christ sends a reconciling influence and a power that takes away sin.” (RH May 19, 1904)

This is the correct and consistent understanding of “the three highest powers in heaven.”

### **3. “Three Living Persons of the Heavenly Trio”**

The third phrase, “three living persons of the heavenly trio,” comes from this quotation: “The Comforter that Christ promised to send after He ascended to heaven, is the Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead, making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Saviour. There are *three living persons of the heavenly trio*; in the name of these three great powers --the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit--those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will co-operate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.” (SpTB07 [1905] 62-63; Ev 614)

Scripture also tells us the heavenly “trio” are God the Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit: “There is one body, and *one Spirit ... One Lord, ... One God and Father of all*, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” (Eph 4:4-6) The Spirit of prophecy concurs in this

quotation, as well: “They have one God and one Saviour; and one Spirit—the Spirit of Christ—is to bring unity into their ranks.” (9T 189) But nothing in these simple listings of three entities states or even suggests characteristics of co-equality or co-eternity. Those assumptions have to be read into the words.

Romans 8:9-11 gives us the identity of the Holy Spirit and its eternal value to us: “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the *Spirit of God* dwell in you. Now if any man have not the *Spirit of Christ*, he is none of his. And if *Christ be in you*, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by *his Spirit that dwelleth in you*.”

In those verses, you see that the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ are the same divine Spirit, and it is God and Christ, by that holy Spirit, that dwell in believers, not an entirely different person. This is precious, pivotal information for believers, because “the Spirit is life”—eternal life—“because of righteousness.” If we have a wrong concept of the Spirit, we will not be strengthened by this knowledge. Is the righteousness ours? Yes and no. It is Christ’s righteousness that is referred to, which may be ours by faith. Wondrous gift of life to such as we are! This life of the indwelling Christ is an earnest of the life that will be eternally, unspeakably joyful to the grateful receiver. The righteousness of Christ preserves the soul from spiritual death. This gift of life comes from the Father to us through the Son. Notice there is no mention of a third god in this most generous transaction. “God hath sent forth the *Spirit of his Son* into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” (Gal 4:6) “In him was life, and the life was the light of men.” (John 1:4) “But as many as received him, to them gave he power [privilege] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” (John 1:12) It is all about God and Christ. They alone deserve our love and worship.

The Spirit of prophecy gives us many details about the Father-Son relationship between God and the Son of God. Coequality and co-

eternity are not included in those details; rather, a true Father-Son relationship is spoken of in the writings of Ellen White. “In Christ is gathered all the glory of the Father. In Him is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He is the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of His person. The glory of the attributes of God are expressed in His character.” (7BC 907)

Here is where simple logic brings home truth to the believer. Consider: If the Son of God is inherently self-existent, as is taught about the Trinitarian “God the Son” — needing nothing from the God the Father for life and power, but possessing His own life and power as a separate God inherently equal to God the Father—then why would such an independently-existing God be the “brightness” of a different God’s glory? Why would an independently-existing God be the “express image” of a different God? And why would the attributes of a different God be “expressed in His character”? Wouldn’t he have his own glory, his own image, his own attributes? Or is it simply obvious by now that the begotten Son partakes, receives, inherits all those things from His true Father, as His divine birthright and inheritance? (Heb. 1:2-4)

The Father is all the fullness of the Godhead, but He is invisible to us mortals. The only way we can know God is if He is manifested. That manifestation, so necessary to us, has been accomplished through His Son, His trusted representative, because Christ inherited the Godhead (divinity) of His Father. “The love of God, manifested toward fallen man in the gift of his beloved Son, amazed the holy angels.... He possessed divine excellence and greatness. He was equal with God. It pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell.” (2SP 38; see also Col 1:19; 2:9)

“He was God manifested in the flesh.... He was not the Father but in Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” (6MR 112) Christ possessed, by divine birth, the glory of His Father. (Heb 1:2-3; John 1:14; 2 Cor 4:6) “They were two, yet little short of being identical; two in individuality, yet one in spirit, and heart, and character.” (YI December 16, 1897)

We've discussed the Spirit already, but Ellen White describes him in more than one way. Just a few paragraphs ago, we read that "the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Here is an additional understanding about the Spirit of God and of Christ: "Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him?" (Isaiah 40:13) "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" (Romans 11:34) "You have the Bible. Study it for yourself. The teachings of the divine directory are not to be ignored or perverted. The *divine mind will guide* those who desire to be led." (TDG 188) "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, *he will guide you* into all truth." (John 16:13)

"The same *divine mind* that is working upon the things of nature is speaking to the hearts of men and creating an inexpressible craving for something they have not. The things of the world cannot satisfy their longing. The *Spirit of God* is pleading with them to seek for those things that alone can give peace and rest--the grace of Christ, the joy of holiness. Through influences seen and unseen, *our Saviour* is constantly at work to attract the minds of men from the unsatisfying pleasures of sin to the infinite blessings that may be theirs in Him." (SC 28)

In those five passages above, "divine mind" and "Spirit of God" and "our Saviour" are not three different entities; those terms refer to the same entity—the mind or Spirit of Christ. In other words, Christ in His invisible omnipresence.

Since Jesus is the only begotten Son of God, He has inherited that spirit, that mind, that divine character (nature) from His Father. They both have the same one Spirit (Romans 8:9); this spirit is holy, because it is the mind of God and Christ. I emphasize the importance of this understanding, for if we believe in a false Spirit—someone other than Christ—we are on very dangerous ground, as the next quotation tells us:

"'Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.' This is close language. Who can stand the test? The word of God is to us a daguerreotype of the mind of God and of Christ, also of man fallen, and man

renewed after the image of Christ, possessing the divine mind.” (RH June 22, 1886) (A “daguerreotype” is a picture image or exact copy.)

Speaking of God’s mind, or God’s thoughts, we read this wonderful description: “By coming to dwell with us, Jesus was to reveal God both to men and to angels. He was the Word of God,--God’s thought made audible.” (DA 19)

“Who is Christ?--He is the only begotten Son of the living God. He is to the Father as a word that expresses the thought,--as a thought made audible. Christ is the word of God.” (YI June 28, 1894)

Let us read again the full paragraph from which the phrase was taken. Remember that we have already shown a heavenly hierarchy of Father and obedient divine Son. They are equal in every sense except the Father has preeminence, having always existed, and being the source of all life. That is the reason the Son is dutifully obedient to the Father. And now, as we read the paragraph, let us pay particular attention to the portion after the ellipsis:

“The Comforter that Christ promised to send after He ascended to heaven, is the Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead, making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Saviour. There are three living persons of the heavenly trio. In the name of these three powers,--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will cooperate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ. ... He who has continual faith in the Father and the Son has the Spirit also. The Holy Spirit is his comforter, and he never departs from the truth.” (BTS March 1, 1906)

Your attention is called to two points. First, it is faith in Father and Son that brings the Spirit. In other words, one’s faith is to focus on Father and Son, not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will be given when faith is exercised in Father and Son. There is thus a distinction made between the Father and Son, and the Spirit. With the Father and Son comes the Spirit of the Father and of the Son.

Secondly, the Comforter is sent to us “in all the fullness of the Godhead.” This fullness we have seen to be the divinity (the divine mind/life) of the Father, which His Son inherited and manifests to us now by sending us His spirit. Since the Spirit is the very life and soul of Christ (John 10:15, 17; Luke 23:46), then when He sends it to us, we partake of its fullness. Is this not the most wonderful, undeserved, gracious gift? What potential heaven sees in us frail mortals whom they love so dearly.

“The Father gave His Spirit without measure to His Son, and we also may partake of its fullness.” (GC 477)

There is a flow of glory and life from the Father to the Son, coming to us through the channel of the Spirit. As by faith we trust the Father and the Son, They (not someone else) will abide with us by their very own personal, invisible, omnipresent presence. “By the Spirit the Father and the Son will come and make their abode with you.” (BEcho January 15, 1893)

“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and *make our abode with him.*” (John 14:23)

With Christ within, “the sinner then stands before God as a just person; he is taken into favor with Heaven, and through the Spirit has fellowship with the Father and the Son.” (3SM 191)

This is the glorious understanding of the true Father, Son and Holy Spirit when we allow the Testimonies to explain themselves. There is nothing in these quotations to support three coequal, coeternal gods. How can anyone be persuaded to accept “another Jesus” and “another Spirit”? Such acceptance can come only by repeated exposure to the error and the silencing or dying off of those who protest against it. What great loss is incurred when we lose sight of the truth. That is why God calls us to be “restorers of paths to dwell in.” You have seen the quotations for yourself. How can anything exceed the wisdom and love and grace revealed in the literal inspired understanding of Father and Son, and their untiring, unselfish efforts to bestow eternal life upon each one of us!



## **Did Mrs. White Become Trinitarian?**

There is something else to consider when discussing Mrs. White's statement of "three living persons of the heavenly trio." It is always helpful, when doing a study, to ask ourselves, "What are the time, place and circumstances that called forth that wording?" The passage in our present study was written in November 1905. From other statements written at that time period, we learn that Dr. Kellogg's apostasy was a frequent topic in Ellen White's writings. In plain words which cannot be mistaken, Sister White declared that Kellogg had joined forces with Satan.

"Letters have come to me with statements made by men who claimed to have asked Dr. Kellogg if he believes the testimonies that Sister White bears. He declares that he does, but he does not." (SpTB07 60 [1905])

"The ministers of God are being drawn in and deceived by his science." (Ibid., 61)

"I am so sorry that sensible men do not discern the trail of the serpent. I call it thus; for thus the Lord pronounces it." (Ibid.)

"God does not accept Dr. Kellogg as His laborer, unless he will now break with Satan." (Ibid., 64)

Right after quoting the Bible passage speaking of the "depths of Satan" (see Revelation 2:24), she referred to the doctrine Kellogg was teaching as "advanced scientific ideas," and said such "sentiments" are "not to be trusted." (Ibid., 62) What was the influential Kellogg teaching that caused Ellen White to use this strong language in 1905? What doctrine was he teaching that originated with Satan?

While most are aware of Kellogg's pantheistic teachings, many are not aware of Dr. Kellogg's Trinitarian theology. (See chapter 10: "The Alpha of Deadly Heresies.") Sister White was refuting not only pantheism, but also the Trinitarian theology that Kellogg had come to believe and promote, namely, as he stated it, "God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit." Both views do away with the true

personalities of God and Christ, “spiritualizing” them away, making them “nonentities,” according to Ellen White.

She wrote, “...Again and again we shall be called to meet the influence of men who are studying sciences of satanic origin, through which Satan is working to make a nonentity of God and of Christ.” (9T 67-68 [1909]) “I am warned that the less our ministers handle the subject of pantheism, the less they will help Satan to present his theories to the people. Let the truth for this time be kept before them. Never, never repeat the spiritualistic sentiments, the strange, misleading theories, which have for years been coming in.” (CW 93)

Common sense reasoning tells us that Mrs. White never accepted any Trinitarian doctrine. Her 1905 statements about Kellogg’s deceptive teachings obviously cannot counter pantheism (God in everything) and trinitarianism (three gods, with only “God the Holy Spirit” in everything) while simultaneously supporting them! Mrs. White would have contradicted herself if she condemned Kellogg’s spiritualistic teachings and then went on to believe and write in support of Trinitarianism in the very same year! Some claim Mrs. White rejected the “wrong” view of the Trinity but accepted the “correct” view, but that is not so. Any Trinitarian doctrine makes “non-entities” of God and Christ, and promotes a counterfeit Holy Spirit. Her arguments against Kellogg’s alpha theories apply to any version of Trinitarianism.

It is in this historical context that we read that statement about the “three living persons of the heavenly trio.” Therefore, the statement she made about those three cannot honestly be misconstrued to teach the Trinity doctrine of a three-gods-in-one God. Instead, she must have meant something which is not immediately apparent—at least to many of us today. It may well have been immediately understood by Adventist believers in 1905, as many were aware of the Kellogg controversy at that time period. Today, we know she and Kellogg did not teach the same thing about the Holy Spirit—and consequently, not about Father and Son, either, so what did she possibly mean? What did she understand and write about the Holy Spirit? We addressed this topic earlier, but these next two quotations mention the aspect

of spiritual omnipresence, which is conducive to greater understanding. They also certainly refuted Kellogg's corrupted view of God and Christ and the Holy Spirit.

"Christ tells us that the Holy Spirit is the Comforter, and the Comforter is the Holy Ghost, 'the Spirit of truth, which the Father shall send in My name.' ...This refers to the omnipresence of the Spirit of Christ, called the Comforter." (14MR 179)

"Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally; therefore it was altogether for their advantage that He should leave them, go to His father, and send the Holy Spirit to be His successor on earth. *The Holy Spirit is Himself*, divested of the personality of humanity and independent thereof. He would represent Himself as present in all places by His Holy Spirit, as the Omnipresent." (14MR 23)

As can be plainly seen from those inspired statements, the Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of Christ;" it is Christ's very own omnipresence by which He (not someone else) represents Himself "as the Omnipresent." And His indwelling Spirit is life to us because with His presence in us, by faith, comes His righteousness. As you read earlier, "the Spirit is life because of righteousness." We do not have that life if we do not have "Christ in us." These words take on great doctrinal and personal significance as we grasp what God is communicating to us: "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (1 John 5:11-12)

As in all her other writings, Ellen White maintained that God the Father and His Son were the only divine Beings. "The Father is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily..." "The Son is all the fullness of the Godhead manifested." (Ev 615) This is her consistent position in *all* her writings. This was the belief of the entire denomination at that time. Having established this faith in two Beings who are the fullness of the Godhead, she then said the "Comforter is the spirit *in* all the fullness of the Godhead." Did you notice the difference in wording? Ellen White made a distinction between the first two—Father and Son—and the third one, the Comforter. The Father and Son *are* "all the

fullness,” but the Spirit comes *in* their fullness, meaning the Comforter brings us the fullness of the Godhead, which is the Father and the Son. It is those Two who come to abide with us in Spirit form: “Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” (John 14:23)

Mrs. White defined the Comforter even further and more specifically when she wrote with perfect clarity, “This refers to the omnipresence of the Spirit of Christ, called the Comforter,” whom she described as Christ Himself, “divested of the personality of humanity.” Christ alone had assumed “the personality of humanity; thus only He could be divested of it. Truly, her writings explain themselves and give us a sure path for our feet.

This, then, is a faithful understanding of the “three living persons of the heavenly trio.” The Holy Spirit is not another separate, third, inherently self-existent divine being. There was and is no third divine being *just like* Father and Son. There is the Father, His Son, and His Spirit/life/mind. We pray earnestly for unity on this matter, for we are without excuse when we have such explicit statements before us from the Holy Spirit through the Bible authors and Ellen White: “They have one God and one Saviour; and one Spirit—the Spirit of Christ—is to bring unity into their ranks.” (9T 189)

#### **4. “There Never Was a Time ...”**

The fourth item, “there never was a time,” is taken from the following quotation: “Christ is the pre-existent, self-existent Son of God.... In speaking of his pre-existence, Christ carries the mind back through dateless ages. He assures us that *there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God*. He to whose voice the Jews were then listening had been with God as one brought up with Him.” (ST Aug. 29, 1900)

The phrase “pre-existent Son of God” means Christ was the Son of God in His pre-existence, i.e., before He came to earth. Then He became the Son of God in Bethlehem “in a *new* sense.” (ST August 2, 1905) Ever since the

birth of Christ in heaven (back in the “dateless ages” of eternity), He has been in close fellowship with His divine Father, just as a human son ideally would be with his father. A “son,” defined by the common and reasonable understanding of that word throughout history, comes *after* his father in sequence. The word “father,” by that same common and reasonable understanding, refers to the one who necessarily precedes his offspring. If we “take the Bible as it reads,” as we are instructed to do (GC 598), we may be confident that Jesus’ Sonship is a real and literal one based on birth (“brought forth”—Prov 8:24, 25).

It is after clarifying this fact—that Christ was the Son of God in His pre-existence—that Ellen White says there never was a time when He was not in fellowship with the eternal God. The meaning should be clear to all. At some point and for an unknown duration, the “ancient of days” was without the Son, but once the Son came into existence, whenever and however that happened, then the Father was always with the Son and the Son was always with the Father. We would expect that it would be a “close fellowship,” since the Father and Son are “one” in their pure natures, characters and purpose. While some use the statement in question to prove Jesus was not begotten of His Father, a literal reading of God’s Word is fully sufficient to explain the concept of there “never [being] a time when He was not in close fellowship with His Father.” Therefore, far from denying the fact that Christ is the only begotten of the Father, this passage in question actually states the very truth of the divine Sonship of our Master.

And so far as knowing anything about when the Son came into existence, let us again use the unfailing key: “The testimonies themselves will be the key that will explain the messages given, as scripture is explained by scripture.” (Letter 73, 1903; 1SM 42)

“Christ was the Son of God; He had been one with Him before the angels were called into existence. He had ever stood at the right hand of the Father....” (PP 38)

In the first quotation in this section #4, Ellen White said that, “in speaking of His preexistence, Christ carries the mind back through the

dateless ages.” We cannot put a date on Christ’s birth in heaven because of those “dateless” ages. We cannot compute His pre-existence by our human calculations; it is beyond our ability and comprehension.

“Here Christ shows them that, although they might reckon His life to be less than fifty years, yet His divine life could not be reckoned by human computation. The existence of Christ before His incarnation is not measured by figures.” (ST May 3, 1899)

“Angels of God looked with amazement upon Christ, who took upon Himself the form of man and humbly united His divinity with humanity in order that He might minister to fallen man. It is a marvel among the heavenly angels. God has told us that He did do it, and we are to accept the Word of God just as it reads. And although we may try to reason in regard to our Creator, how long He has had existence, where evil first entered into our world, and all these things, we may reason about them until we fall down faint and exhausted with the research when there is yet an infinity beyond.” (7BC 919)

Nor is it essential for us to know what God has not chosen to reveal to us. Again, if we are obedient to the inspired instruction to “take the Bible as it reads, unless symbolic language is used” (GC 598), then the literal, customary meaning of the biblical terms “Father” and “Son” is sufficient to refute the Trinitarian concept of three coeternal gods.

We have now closely examined the first four items in the first of two chapters on Trinitarian No-Quotes. As you can see, rather than taking a short grouping of words and interpreting them to say what was not said, a simple study, as we have done, will make the true interpretation obvious. None of these four statements from God’s prophet was written to support a Trinitarian position.

Note: Much of the material covered in this chapter and in chapter 14 came from *Putting the Pieces Together*, by Nader Mansour, and is used with permission. The entire booklet and many others can be read online or freely downloaded from [revelation1412.org](http://revelation1412.org); look under “Literature.”

## Chapter 14

### Trinitarian No-Quotes - 5 through 8

In Chapter 13 we studied Trinitarian No Quotes 1 through 4. This chapter will cover the last four No-Quotes—numbers 5 through 8—again with the intent to show that these quoted phrases do not mean what Trinitarians have interpreted them to mean, but, instead, support the non-trinitarian pioneer position. Those four No-Quotes are:

5. Eternal Heavenly Dignitaries;
6. The Holy Spirit, Who is as Much a Person as God is a Person;
7. Holy Spirit is a Person;
8. Gave Themselves.

#### 5. “Eternal Heavenly Dignitaries”

The phrase “eternal heavenly dignitaries,” is from the following quotation: “The *eternal heavenly dignitaries*--God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit--arming them [the disciples] with more than mortal energy, ... would advance with them to the work and convince the world of sin.” (Ms 145, 1901; Ev 616)

The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are the eternal dignitaries of Heaven. There is no doubt that there are three. No one denies that there is a Holy Spirit! But are they three separate divine beings?

The Spirit of prophecy quotation above does not tell us about the relation among the Father, Son and Spirit. It does not tell us that they are three beings. It does not tell us that the Spirit is a co-equal being with God and Christ. It does not tell us that Jesus is begotten of His Father. It merely tells us there are three, which everyone believes. Sometimes all three of them are listed together, but more often only two of them are. Why is that, and what is the relationship among those three, if any? Let us allow the writings of Mrs. White to answer those

questions for us. We shall again make use of that trusty key, letting the passages explain one another.

“The Scriptures clearly indicate the relation between God and Christ, and they bring to view as clearly the personality and individuality of each. [Hebrews 1:1-5 quoted] God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God. To Christ has been given an exalted position. He has been made equal with the Father. All the counsels of God are opened to His Son.” (8T 268)

“Christ was the Son of God; He had been one with Him before the angels were called into existence.” (PP 38)

“A complete offering has been made; for ‘God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son,’-- not a son by creation, as were the angels, nor a son by adoption, as is the forgiven sinner, but a Son begotten in the express image of the Father’s person, and in all the brightness of his majesty and glory, one equal with God in authority, dignity, and divine perfection. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” (ST May 30, 1895)

As you have read for yourself, Christ’s literal Sonship is affirmed both in Ellen White’s writings and in God’s Word, in which both Father and Son speak in acknowledgement of Christ as the Son of God. The next quotation is very explicit, as well:

“The dedication of the first-born had its origin in the earliest times. God had promised to give the *First-born of heaven* to save the sinner.” (DA 51)

Based on that quotation, we can confidently conclude that Jesus came to earth at the appointed time to be “born again.” In other words, when He was born on earth, He became the Son of God in “a new sense.” Notice:

“In His humanity He was a partaker of the divine nature. In His incarnation He gained *in a new sense* the title of the Son of God. Said the angel to Mary, ‘The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee:



therefore, also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God' (Luke 1:35). While the Son of a human being, He became the Son of God *in a new sense*. Thus He stood in our world--the Son of God, yet allied by birth to the human race." (1SM 226, 227)

"While upon this earth, the Son of God was the Son of man; yet there were times when His divinity flashed forth." (8T 202)

"...The whole [Jewish] nation called God their Father, and if Jesus had done this in the same sense in which they did, the Pharisees would not have been so enraged. But they accused Jesus of blasphemy, showing that they understood that *Christ claimed God as His Father in the very highest sense.*") RH March 5, 1901)

From the clear passages above, we learn that Christ was begotten of His Father, in that He was the First born in heaven long before the incarnation took place. It is easy to understand things when we allow Mrs. White to explain herself. Things will become even plainer as we proceed, so let us continue to our second question on this topic of "eternal heavenly dignitaries:"

What relation does the Spirit hold to the Father and Son? The trustworthy key will show us that "the" Spirit is "his" Spirit, referring either to the Spirit of God or of Christ—which is the same Spirit, as there is but "one Spirit." (Eph 4:4)

"Christ declared that after his ascension, he would send to his church, as his crowning gift, the Comforter, who was to take his place. This Comforter is the Holy Spirit,--the soul of his life, the efficacy of his church, the light and life of the world. With his Spirit Christ sends a reconciling influence and a power that takes away sin." (RH May 19, 1904)

Not only does Christ give "a reconciling influence and a power that takes away sin" when He gives us His Spirit, but He also gives us His life!

“The impartation of the Spirit is the impartation of the life of Christ.” (DA 805)

“Christ gives them the breath of His own spirit, the life of His own life. The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in heart and mind.” (DA 827)

“...The Spirit is life because of [Christ’s] righteousness.” (Romans 8:10)

Where did this life of Christ originate?

“For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.” (John 5:26)

Thus we know that the Father and Son share the same life (Spirit). It is the same “one Spirit” (life) of the Father and Spirit (life) of the Son, as we can see in the quotation below.

“But ye are not in the flesh, but in *the Spirit*, if so be that the *Spirit of God* dwell in you. Now if any man have not the *Spirit of Christ*, he is none of his. And if *Christ be in you*, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the *Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead* dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by *his Spirit that dwelleth in you*.” (Romans 8:9-11. See also Galatians 1:1; Ephesians 3:14-17)

Therefore, when we have that life (Spirit) of the Father and Son, we are really having communion and fellowship with them both.

“That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” (1 John 1:3; see also 2 John 9)

“By the Spirit the Father and the Son will come and make their abode with you.” (ST January 15, 1893)

“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” (John 14:23)

“The sinner then stands before God as a just person; he is taken into favor with Heaven, and through the Spirit has fellowship with the Father and the Son.” (3SM 191)

We can indeed praise the Father and Son for their magnificent gift. What gift can possibly exceed the fact that they share their life with us via Their indwelling Spirit!

“...The followers of Christ are to become like Him—by the grace of God to form characters in harmony with the principles of His holy law. This is Bible sanctification.... This work can be accomplished only through faith in Christ, by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God.” (Mar 231)

“...If we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ and are filled with the joy of His indwelling Spirit, we shall not be able to hold our peace....” (SC 78)

Truly “grace and peace” have been “multiplied unto [us] through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given us *all things* that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue....” (2 Peter 1:2-3) That “all things” includes the truth of their indwelling presence by the Spirit. This, then, is the defensible, reasonable, inspired, wonderful understanding of who “the eternal heavenly dignitaries” are. But there is more.

The book *Evangelism* by Ellen White is actually a compilation of her writings related to that topic. The selected passages were assembled in book form years after her death, with introductory headings supplied by the editor(s) and/or compiler(s) before each quoted passage, and published in 1946. A number of E. G. White statements about the Godhead were included in the compilation, and the supplied headings for those quoted passages gave evidence of the Trinitarian leaning of those who wrote those headings. Thus when Mrs. White’s Godhead quotations were read in conjunction with the supplied headings, they seemed to imply that she was advocating the Trinity doctrine. For

example, one of the short introductory headings was “The Eternal Dignitaries of the Trinity.” The quotation from her writings that followed that heading began with these words: “The eternal heavenly dignitaries—God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit....” In that listing of three, the compilers of *Evangelism* assumed or implied that she was supporting the Trinity doctrine, which she was not. In truth, the word “Trinity” in the heading was used in a wording and sense never utilized by Mrs. White during her lifetime. In fact, she used the word “trinity” only once in her writings when she referred to “the world’s trinity” of “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.” (Ltr 43, May 19, 1898)

Unfortunately, that *Evangelism* quotation is still used to justify or support the Trinity doctrine. Common sense and honest scholarship tell us, though, that no doctrine can reasonably be supported by a straightforward list of three. Also, had the full context of the quoted portion been included in the book, there would have been no justification for using the heading that was used. The full context includes at minimum the paragraphs before and after the sentence or phrase or word being studied. In this case, we’ll look only at the paragraph just before the one from which the phrase “eternal heavenly dignitaries” was quoted, as well as paragraph in which the phrase was used. (That phrase was actually used at least four times in her writings.) We will quote from *Manuscript Releases*, Volume 16. The first of the two paragraphs is below. Note especially Mrs. White’s unusual emphasis of Jesus’ words in the third sentence: “Hear it....”

“There was kept before them that His people must be a combined, united power in love and efficiency, to become a light amid the moral darkness. By these combined forces [He] specified that they all may be one. Hear it, every one who is a Seventh-day Adventist; hear it: ‘As Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.... I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may

know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me' (John 17:21, 23).

Jesus, as He spoke to the Father, named only two divine Beings—the Father and Himself—with whom we have the stupendous privilege of being “one.” That “one” is not numerical, any more than the “oneness” of Father and Son is. And Jesus said of Himself in this quotation “I in them.” That answers who the Comforter is that has come to dwell in us. In John 14, Jesus told His disciples, “I in you.” Further, the Holy Spirit was not included by Jesus when He spoke to His Father in that passage above because Jesus knew “the Spirit” is the Spirit “of” God and “of” Christ; it is Father and Son—They Themselves—in spiritual presence.

The unnamed editor(s) and compilers of *Evangelism* were men of experience in Seventh-day Adventist understanding of God’s Word. No doubt they also were quite familiar with the writings of Ellen White. It is more than probable that their advocacy of the Trinity doctrine influenced their misinterpretation of the passage quoted, hence the misleading brief heading that was supplied, which has added to the confusion about the Godhead. However, their interpretation was not based on sound biblical exegesis. Enough evidence contrary to the Trinity doctrine was in that two-paragraph passage to give pause to such a heading. Especially is it true that a listing of three does not give evidence in any degree to the concept of three gods in one. Not only that, but they most likely well knew that Mrs. White had always been a non-trinitarian. Some may claim Mrs. White rejected the “wrong view” of the Trinity, but matured to embrace the “right view,” but at [www.revelation1412.org](http://www.revelation1412.org) can be found a video recording of Imad Awde’s presentation *Ellen G. White and the Trinity*, which proves beyond any reasonable doubt that Mrs. White never accepted any version of the Trinity doctrine. So for the editor(s) and/or compiler(s) to put such a misleading heading to introduce a passage from her writings was unprofessional, at the very least. The prophet warned of attempts to make her writings say something other than what she intended.

The danger of believing in three coequal, coeternal gods is that the truth about who the Holy Spirit really is, and His crucial role in our spiritual growth and in our service to our Lord, is kept from us. In the absence of knowledge of the true, we accept the false. We are led to believe a false gospel and worship a false god who cannot save us. It leads us to break the first commandment. Further, without the understanding of the presence and power of our indwelling Savior to draw upon, we become spiritually vulnerable. Satan understands that, even if we don't. To deceive us and make us vulnerable to his snares is identified as one of the objectives of Satan: "...He has sought to shut Jesus from their view as the Comforter...." (RH Aug. 26, 1890)

The following passage from the writings of Ellen White is the continuation of the context for the phrase "eternal heavenly dignitaries." We've just discussed the paragraph preceding the one in which the phrase is found. Next is the paragraph containing the phrase itself. This passage from Mrs. White makes the conflict between our life-giving Savior and the destroyer plain. It focuses on Satan's attack against the truth about the Holy Spirit, and reinforces Jesus' message in the previous paragraph of our need to be "a combined, united force"—"one" with each other and with Them.

"The Lord Jesus described the difficulties they should meet. Having called their minds to rise to an eminence, He bids them behold the vast confederacy of evil arrayed against God, against Christ, against all who unite with these holy powers. Christ tells them they were to fight in fellowship with all the children of light; that satanic agencies would combine their forces to extinguish *the light of the life of Christ* out of their ranks. But they were not left to fight the battles in their own human strength. The angelic host coming as ministers of God would be in that battle. Also there would be the eternal heavenly dignitaries—God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit—arming them with more than mortal energy, and would advance with them to the work, and convince the world of sin." (16MR 204)

In the first paragraph, we read of only two divine Beings “in” each other. We may be one “in” them—in Father and Son. What Christ was talking about could not be possible physically, but only by the Spirit. So it is that the Holy Spirit is one of the heavenly dignitaries, because without it dwelling in us, we would have no way to be “in” Father and Son.

In the second paragraph, we read that we may “unite” with these holy powers. What are the forces of evil trying to do? “Extinguish the light of the life of Christ” out of our ranks.” This is a most important point. It is something Jesus said we are to act unitedly to prevent. We read earlier that Satan and his doomed angels are trying to “shut Jesus from [our] view as the Comforter....” (RH Aug. 26, 1890) What is the “light of the life of Christ”? Notice in the following excerpts that “life of Christ” refers to the Holy Spirit. It is “life” to us.

“The impartation of the Spirit is the impartation of the *life of Christ*. It imbues the receiver with the attributes of Christ.” (ChS 254) The Holy Spirit is something we may receive: “...Those who receive the light of the *life of Christ*...” We need to be “guided by divine wisdom.” (MH 461) “The influence of the Holy Spirit is the *life of Christ* in the soul. We do not see Christ and speak to Him, but His Holy Spirit is just as near us in one place as in another. *It works in and through every one who receives Christ*. Those who know the *indwelling of the Spirit* reveal the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.” (Ms 41, 1897).

Without the true Holy Spirit, we are lost. It is the Holy Spirit, which is the life of Christ in us, along with His attributes, that those evil powers are seeking to remove from our lives through deceptive teachings. One such deceptive teaching is of a counterfeit third god called “God the Holy Spirit,” when Scripture and Spirit of prophecy plainly speak of only two divine Beings dwelling in each other and in us. What follows is a description of what may be ours. It is manifest why Satan tries to keep this from us, and why we should individually and unitedly seek for it.

“Those who at Pentecost were endued with power from on high, were not thereby freed from further temptation and trial. As they

witnessed for truth and righteousness, they were repeatedly assailed by the enemy of all truth, who sought to rob them of their Christian experience. They were compelled to strive with all their God-given powers to reach the measure of the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. Daily they prayed for fresh supplies of grace, that they might reach higher and still higher toward perfection. Under the Holy Spirit's working, even the weakest, by exercising faith in God, learned to improve their entrusted powers and to become sanctified, refined, and ennobled. *As in humility they submitted to the molding influence of the Holy Spirit, they received of the fullness of the Godhead and were fashioned in the likeness of the divine.*

“The lapse of time has wrought no change in Christ's parting promise to send the Holy Spirit as His representative. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If the fulfillment of the promise is not seen as it might be, it is because the promise is not appreciated as it should be. If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit. Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Whenever minor matters occupy the attention, the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in infinite plenitude.

“Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, and preach concerning it? The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who serve Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children. For the daily baptism of the Spirit every worker should offer his petition to God. Companies of Christian workers should gather to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to plan and execute wisely. Especially should they pray that God will baptize His chosen ambassadors in mission fields with a rich measure of His Spirit. The presence of the Spirit with God's



workers will give the proclamation of truth a power that not all the honor or glory of the world could give.

“With the consecrated worker for God, in whatever place he may be, the Holy Spirit abides. The words spoken to the disciples are spoken also to us. The Comforter is ours as well as theirs. The Spirit furnishes the strength that sustains striving, wrestling souls in every emergency, amidst the hatred of the world, and the realization of their own failures and mistakes. In sorrow and affliction, when the outlook seems dark and the future perplexing, and we feel helpless and alone,—these are the times when, in answer to the prayer of faith, the Holy Spirit brings comfort to the heart.” (AA 49-51)

#### **6. “The Holy Spirit, Who is as Much a Person as God is a Person”**

The full sentence reads, “We need to realize that *the Holy Spirit, who is as much a person as God is a person*, is walking through these grounds.” (Ms 66 1899; Ev 616)

First, let it be established again that I know of no Seventh-day Adventist, trinitarian or non-trinitarian, that does not accept that there are three persons of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit being one of them. Beyond that, there is disagreement—unnecessary disagreement, because solid study principles would remove it. As in all cases involving Scriptural interpretation, context provides valuable clues as to the “persons” being talked about in that passage above. Here is that same sentence in the full paragraph:

“The Lord says this because He knows it is for our good. He would build a wall around us, to keep us from transgression, so that His blessing and love may be bestowed on us in rich measure. This is the reason we have established a school here. The Lord instructed us that this was the place in which we should locate, and we have had every reason to think that we are in the right place. We have been brought together as a school, and we need to realize that the Holy Spirit, who is as much a person as God is a person, is walking through these grounds, unseen by human eyes; that the Lord God is our Keeper and Helper. He

hears every word we utter and knows every thought of the mind.” (2SAT 136-137;7MR 299)

Did you notice that it is “the Lord God” who is our Keeper and Helper, and not someone else? That He—not another alleged God—was “hearing” their every word? Mrs. White used “the Lord God” synonymously with “the Holy Spirit” in this quotation. There were not two divine personages there on the grounds, but one. It was the Lord Himself who was “unseen by human eyes” as he walked the campus of the school. Even though God was and is here on earth by His invisible Spirit, yet still He was and is as much a real person as if He were here in visible, physical form! In other words, *both the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy list three persons of the Godhead, all active for our salvation, but speak of one of those three as the Spirit of the other two.* As texts and quotations elsewhere in this book have shown, the Holy Spirit is a person, but not in the same sense as Father and Son—not a person “just like” them. Thus this passage under study is speaking about the “Lord God” in His divine omnipresence—His non-physical, or spiritual, form—walking through the grounds, listening as He went. After all, Mrs. White said He had an interest in the property and the work to be done there; it was He who told them to locate the school there.

Romans 8:9-11 presents the same understanding about the Holy Spirit. In those verses below, notice just who the apostle Paul says dwells in the believer. In order of mention, it’s “the” Spirit, “the Spirit of God,” “the Spirit of Christ,” “Christ ... in you,” “the Spirit of him that raised Jesus from the dead” [meaning the Father], “his” [meaning the Father’s] Spirit that dwelleth in you.” All of those mentions mean the same thing: the Spirit of God and/or the Spirit of Christ. Here’s Paul, from Romans 8:

“But ye are not in the flesh, but in *the Spirit*, if so be that the *Spirit of God* dwell in you. Now if any man have not the *Spirit of Christ*, he is none of his. And if *Christ be in you*, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the *Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead* dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from

the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by *his Spirit* that dwelleth in you.”

Six times Paul used the word “Spirit,” but nothing in that three-verse passage suggests a third-god holy spirit. No other God is mentioned besides God and Christ. And do not miss the additional point made in that biblical passage: If a person “have not the Spirit of Christ,” he is *not* Christ’s. Fearful condition! That is why knowledge of who the indwelling Spirit is, is so critical. We may believe in a different indwelling Spirit—one not named in those verses above—but that counterfeit spirit cannot save us. It is not “of God,” and has no power or authority from Him. It would be an “apostate spirit.” (4SP 320)

Getting back to the quotation we are studying, it is interesting to note that not only did “the Lord God” walk through the grounds “unseen by human eyes,” meaning He was there by His Spirit, but a similar thing was written about Christ:

“Christ walks unseen through our streets. With messages of mercy He comes to our homes. With all who are seeking to minister in His name, He waits to co-operate. He is in the midst of us, to heal and to bless, if we will receive Him.” (MH 107)

“Remember that Jesus is beside you wherever you go, noting your actions and listening to your words. Would you be ashamed to hear his voice speaking to you, and to know that he hears your conversation?” (YI February 4, 1897)

Who walks unseen in our streets? Who is it that listens to our words and hears our conversation? Why, it is Jesus! But how do we know He is always beside us, if we can’t see Him?

“That Christ should manifest Himself to them, and yet be invisible to the world, was a mystery to the disciples. They could not understand the words of Christ in their spiritual sense. They were thinking of the outward, visible manifestation. They could not take in the fact that they could have the presence of Christ with them, and yet He be unseen by

the world. They did not understand the meaning of a spiritual manifestation.” (SW September 13, 1898)

“By the Spirit the Father and the Son will come and make their abode with you.” (ST January 15, 1893)

“The Lord Jesus standing by the side of the canvasser, walking with them, is the chief worker. If we recognize Christ as the One who is with us to prepare the way, the Holy Spirit by our side will make impressions in just the lines needed.” (CM 107)

The last quotation makes it so plain. The canvasser doesn’t have two different people by his side. The Lord Jesus standing by the side of the canvasser and the Holy Spirit “by our side” are one and the same person.

In summary, with all of these inspired statements before us, we are justified in concluding that the Holy Spirit is the unseen, personal, but very real and precious presence of the Father and/or the Son.

## **7. “Holy Spirit is a Person”**

Non-trinitarians agree with Trinitarians that the Holy Spirit is a person, but they disagree with Trinitarians on *Who* that person is. Trinitarians believe the Holy Spirit is one of three self-existent Gods, but non-trinitarians know the Bible says otherwise. They believe the disagreement can easily be resolved, if words are permitted to have their true meaning. Here is the context for the clause under discussion:

“The *Holy Spirit is a person*, for He beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. When this witness is borne, it carries with it its own evidence. At such times we believe and are sure that we are the children of God....

“The Holy Spirit has a personality, else He could not bear witness to our spirits and with our spirits that we are the children of God. He must also be a divine person, else He could not search out the secrets which lie hidden in the mind of God. ‘For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.’” (20MR 69 [1906])

The quoted Bible verse in the second paragraph above (1 Corinthians 2:11) is the key to understanding the statement. According to Paul, man and his spirit are comparable to God and His Spirit. Just as man's spirit is not a different person from man, even so God's Spirit is not a different person from God. Just as man's spirit is his very own person, even so God's Spirit is His very own person. Simply put, the Holy Spirit is a person because God is a person; the Holy Spirit is the person of God. And the Spirit has a personality, of course—because God has a personality.

“In giving us His Spirit, God gives us Himself, making Himself a fountain of divine influences, to give health and life to the world.” (7T 273)

When God gives us Himself in Spirit, His Spirit is not devoid of personality. It is not just some impersonal force or essence. No, it is very personal and intimate. It is God's own person, having God's very own personality. The Spirit is also a divine person. This is because God is a divine person. You see, God is a Spirit, and yet a person.

“God is a Spirit; yet He is a personal Being; for so He has revealed Himself.” (MH 413)

“The greatness of God is to us incomprehensible. ‘... the Lord's throne is in heaven:’ (Psalm 11:4); yet by His Spirit He is everywhere present. He has an intimate knowledge of, and a personal interest in, all the works of His hand.” (Ed 132)

There is only one divine Spirit (Eph 4:4), so the Spirit is also the person of Christ. When Jesus was with His disciples for three and a half years, they were comforted by His presence. When He was to separate Himself from them on the physical plane, He promised them that the Father would send another comforter in His name. In John 14:18 He pledged Himself to come to them when He said, “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” The next quotation explains that His person would be divested of His humanity—His human form—so that He could manifest Himself in His followers by the person of His omnipresent Spirit.

“Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally; therefore it was altogether for their advantage that He should leave them, go to His father, and send the Holy Spirit to be His successor on earth. The Holy Spirit is Himself, divested of the personality of humanity and independent thereof. He would represent Himself as present in all places by His Holy Spirit, as the Omnipresent.” (PrT May 30, 1895; Lt119- Feb. 19, 1895)

According to that inspired passage, the Holy Spirit is the person who once had the personality of humanity, and who at a later point was divested of that humanity. Those qualifications refer to only one person: Jesus Christ. That is who the person of the Holy Spirit is.

These inspired statements and others like them use uncomplicated, straightforward language to express the exalted concepts they teach. They leave no reason for speculation that God’s nature is triune. Their clarity exposes as speculative any interpretations involving a new biblical hermeneutic, role-playing gods, and a counterfeit third god.

## **8. “Gave Themselves”**

“The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit *gave themselves* to the working out of the plan of redemption. In order to fully carry out this plan, it was decided that Christ, the only begotten Son of God, should give Himself an offering for sin. What line can measure the depth of this love?” (AUCR April 1, 1901; CH 222)

As earlier chapters have substantiated, the Holy Spirit is given for the working out of the plan of salvation designed by the Father and Son, who covenanted to give all the resources of heaven to save us, including the Holy Spirit. Despite that substantiation, some assume from the wording of the quotation above that the Holy Spirit was present as a third member in the formulation of the plan of salvation. Thus the statement is sometimes used to prove that the Holy Spirit is a third individual god-being—a being just as God the Father and Christ His Son are Beings. We already know that is not a trustworthy understanding supported by “line upon line.” A careful reading

and comparison using the divine key could easily clarify the matter. We would reasonably expect a consistent finding with earlier chapters, for they have shown that the Spirit is the invisible omnipresence/life/mind of the Father and Son. But because in this chapter we are looking at specific phrases used to bolster the Trinity doctrine, we will undertake a brief study on the topic again, approaching it from a different angle.

Two points should first be noted. Firstly, the Spirit of God is always a part of God Himself. Though on the throne of the universe, God can operate by that Spirit elsewhere in the universe. (Ed 132; 7T 273) Secondly, “working out the plan” means fulfilling the plan—carrying it out, not formulating it.

The first sentence of the quotation under discussion says, in part, “the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption.” In Webster’s 1828 dictionary, “work out” means “to effect [accomplish] by labor and exertion.” It does not mean to *devise* a plan of labor, but to carry out, or bring about, the accomplishment of the plan already formulated. A text given as a reference in the dictionary is Philippians 2:13. “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” We are not to devise our own plan, but to co-operate with God in working out *His* plan for our salvation.

With “working out” defined, let us now consider who has been doing the “working out.” For contextual clues, we’ll read the paragraphs that precede and follow the one in which “gave themselves” is found, as well as the one wherein it is located. We’ll read them in order, mining them for understanding. There is another point to be established by doing this. So here are the three paragraphs. Read slowly and thoughtfully, please:

“It is the glory of the gospel that it is founded upon the principle of restoring in the fallen race the divine image, by a constant manifestation of benevolence. This work began in the heavenly courts. There God decided to give human beings an unmistakable evidence of the love with which He regarded them. He ‘so loved the world that He gave His only

begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’

“The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption. In order to fully carry out this plan, it was decided that Christ, the only begotten Son of God, should give Himself an offering for sin. What line can measure the depth of this love?

“God would make it impossible for man to say that He could have done more. With Christ He gave all the resources of heaven, that nothing might be wanting in the plan for man’s uplifting.” (AUCR April 1, 1901)

In the first of the three-paragraph quotation above, we see that “God [the Father] decided” to give His Son. He was making up His plan. In the second paragraph, we see that during the devising stage, the Father and Son together decided that Christ would give Himself. Is that a contradiction? No. But didn’t the Father decide to give the Son? Yes, but according to the full passage and context, it was a mutual decision. God the Father would give His Son; Christ would give Himself.

Only Father and Son were involved in the devising of the plan. Remember, Christ is the only being who can enter into all the counsels and purposes of God (PP 34). There were only two Beings present in that counsel of peace: “... and the counsel of peace shall be between them *both*.” (Zech 6:13) There was no third being present in the formation of the plan of salvation.

“Before the foundations of the earth were laid, the Father and the Son had united in a covenant to redeem man if he should be overcome by Satan. They had clasped Their hands in a solemn pledge that Christ should become the surety for the human race.” (DA 834)

“Before the fall of man, the Son of God had united with his Father in laying the plan of salvation.” (RH September 13, 1906)

“A covenant has been entered into by the Father and by the Son to save the world through Christ.” ST October 10, 1892)



Then, in the second of those three paragraphs, regarding the carrying out of the plan, we read the “the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave themselves.” Three of them carried out the plan. But notice the third paragraph! There we read of God that “with Christ He gave all the resources of heaven.” There two of them fulfilled the plan.

Why wasn’t the Holy Spirit part of the counsel of peace? Why didn’t the third paragraph include the Holy Spirit in the giving, as the second paragraph did? Is there a contradiction there? No, again. Actually, the Holy Spirit is the most important part of “all the resources of heaven” given with Christ. While it is certainly true that the Holy Spirit is sent by God into the hearts of believers, it is not necessary for the Holy Spirit to be a third, independent God just like Father and Son in order for that to happen. As said before, there are two divine Beings—Father and Son—and their divine, omnipresent Spirit works for our salvation as verily as do Father and Son in heaven. We praise God for His divine Son and His divine Spirit!

“Christ the Word, the Only Begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father,—one in nature, in character, and in purpose,—the only being in all the universe that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God.” (PP 34) In that excerpt from Mrs. White’s writings, we read in what way God and Christ are “one.” It is not a numerical oneness, but a relational, spiritual oneness that is not said of the Holy Spirit. We also read what qualifies Christ to be the “only being” to enter into God’s counsels. It is because He is the “only begotten” of God. That, too, is never said of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is simply *not* like Father and Son in all respects, and it is because it is part of them, or, more specifically, They Themselves, omnipresent. (Mrs. White sometimes referred to the Spirit as “it” (see *Testimonies on Sabbath School Work*, 106.1, for example, or AA 50.2, but never did she do so regarding Father or Son.) The Holy Spirit is the Father and Son, without physical form. It can’t be expressed any plainer than the Bible has already expressed it in these possessive phrases: “The Spirit of God,” “the Spirit of Christ,” “the Spirit of His Son,” “His Spirit.”

To analyze the topic another way, we'll pose this dilemma: Either the Holy Spirit is a coequal god-being (Trinitarian view) who, for some reason, is not permitted to enter into the counsels of the other gods with whom He is allegedly equal (!)—OR—the Holy Spirit is *not* a coequal being like Father and Son, but is rather the life and character and mind and personal presence of both the Father and the Son (non-trinitarian view). In fact, when the Father and Son were in counsel, it was decided that the Spirit would be “*given* as a regenerating agency” for man, should he fall. (AA 52) So while we read that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit “gave themselves,” we must make that statement harmonize with other inspired statements wherein the Holy Spirit has been “sent” or “given.” It is subject to the will of those whose Spirit it is: the Spirit of God or the Spirit of Christ. You can read that for yourself in the following clarifying passage:

“...Christ declared that the divine influence of *His Spirit* was to be with His followers unto the end. From the Day of Pentecost to the present time, the Comforter *has been sent* to all who have yielded themselves fully to the Lord and to His service. To all who have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, the Holy Spirit has come as a counselor, sanctifier, guide, and witness....”

How very important to us is the gift of the Holy Spirit. If we cherish any hope of eternal face-to-face communion with our God and His dear Son (blissful thought!), we must have the help of the third agency of divinity. It is the Spirit that makes effective what Christ has done for us. It is the Spirit that directs us, as co-laborers with Christ, to hasten His return.

“The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that he could solicit from his Father for the exaltation of his people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail.” (RH November 19, 1908)

“We shall be judged according to the light we have had, according to the privileges we have been granted, according to the opportunity we have had to hear and understand the word of God. These privileges have

been given us through an infinite cost to the Father and the Son. The plan of redemption has been devised and carried out so far through the sacrifice of all heaven, and the gift of the Holy Spirit has been provided, that the divine may unite with the human, and man be elevated in moral and spiritual worth.” (YI June 15, 1893)

“That the Holy Spirit is to be the grand helper, is a wonderful promise. Of what avail would it have been to us that the only begotten Son of God had humbled Himself, endured the temptations of the wily foe, and wrestled with him during His entire life on earth, and died, the Just for the unjust, that humanity might not perish, if the Spirit had not been given as a constant, working, regenerating agent to make effectual in our cases what has been wrought out by the world’s Redeemer?” (3SM 137)

“As the divine endowment--the power of the Holy Spirit--was given to the disciples, so it will today be given to all who seek aright. This power alone is able to make us wise unto salvation and to fit us for the courts above. Christ wants to give us a blessing that will make us holy.... In giving us His Spirit, God gives us Himself, making Himself a fountain of divine influences, to give health and life to the world.” (7T 273)

“No truth is more clearly taught in the Bible than that God by His Holy Spirit especially directs His servants on earth in the great movements for the carrying forward of the work of salvation.” (GC 343)

In conclusion, with the identity of the Holy Spirit rightly understood, there is no inconsistency in saying there are only two divine Beings, but three heavenly agencies that have been working selflessly for our redemption. With the biblical confirmation of the true Father-Son relationship between God and Christ, there is no inconsistency in the understanding that “to us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things.” God is not mystically three-in-one, but literally one Being. He is truly the God and Father of His truly begotten Son. The “unity” of divinity is a spiritual unity, not a numerical one. Father and Son are “one” because by the Spirit, they are “in” one another. The wonderful gospel news is that Jesus wants that same spiritual “oneness” with us: “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they

also may be one in us.” (John 17:21) When we “take the Bible as it reads,” we are safe from the snares and ploys of Satan that would deceive us into accepting “another Jesus,” “another spirit,” and “another gospel.” (2 Cor 11:4) Let us praise God for His great gifts of His Son and His Spirit. “Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.”

A final comment regarding these and other Trinitarian No-Quotes: We are admonished to be like the Bereans, searching God’s Word to see if what we’ve read or been told is true. I would add, “Use your common sense, too.” Both searching and common sense are essential, for poor biblical scholarship is behind many, if not most, Trinitarian claims. A case in point is this: The apostle Paul’s benediction in 2 Corinthians 13:14 lists Father, Son and Holy Spirit. That simple listing of the three divine entities is used to support the doctrine of the Trinity. However, a simple listing neither provides nor implies any further information, and specifically, a simple listing is *not* supportive of a doctrine that teaches role-playing gods, three sovereigns of the universe, and metaphorical interpretations of certain passages of the Bible—passages that, if read literally, would disprove the Trinity doctrine. Those who present Paul’s benediction as proof of three coequal, coeternal Gods are dishonest in their claim and in their reasoning. If *one* benediction naming three gods is evidence for the Trinity doctrine, as they claim, then Paul’s *thirteen other* benedictions naming only *two* Gods is much stronger evidence *against* the Trinity view! That is nothing but fair, common-sense reasoning. Additionally, all but one of Paul’s fourteen salutations list only Father and Son; the lone exception simply says “grace.” Thus the weight of evidence is heavy in favor of the non-trinitarian (apostolic and pioneer) understanding of only two divine Beings who, with the added gift of the Holy Spirit, work to accomplish our redemption. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Note: Portions of the material covered in chapters 13 and 14 came from Nader Mansour’s *Putting the Pieces Together*, and was used with permission. The entire booklet can be read online or freely downloaded from [revelation1412.org](http://revelation1412.org); look under “literature.”

## Chapter 15A

### Does Matthew 28:19 Have Added Text?

(Note: This chapter was authored by Geoff Lohrere and was taken with permission in November 2017 from his website at [http://www.trinitytruth.org/matthew28\\_19addedtext.html](http://www.trinitytruth.org/matthew28_19addedtext.html).)

Below are many historical quotes from theologians and other writers that heavily indicate that Matthew 28:19 has been altered.

It must be remembered that we have no known manuscripts that were written in the first, second or third centuries. There is a gap of over three hundred years between when Matthew wrote his epistle and our earliest manuscript copies. *(It also took over three hundred years for the Catholic Church to evolve into what the “early church fathers” wanted it to become.)*

This is what my research revealed. Eusebius was the Bishop of Caesarea and is known as “the Father of Church History.” He wrote prolifically and his most celebrated work is his Ecclesiastical History, a history of the Church from the Apostolic period until his own time. Eusebius quotes many verses in his writings, including Matthew 28:19 several times. But he never quotes it as it appears in modern Bibles. He always finishes the verse with the words “in my name.”

#### Does Matthew 28:19 Have Added Text?

The following excerpts come from an unaltered book of Matthew that could have even been the original or the first copy of the original of Matthew. Thus, Eusebius informs us of the actual words Jesus spoke to his disciples in Matthew 28:19.

*“With one word and voice He said to His disciples: “Go, and make disciples of all nations in My Name, teaching them to observe all things*

*whatsoever I have commanded you,” — (Proof of the Gospel by Eusebius, Book III, ch 6, 132 (a), p. 152)*

*“But while the disciples of Jesus were most likely either saying thus, or thinking thus, the Master solved their difficulties, by the addition of one phrase, saying they should triumph “In MY NAME.” And the power of His name being so great, that the apostle says: “God has given him a name which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth,” He shewed the virtue of the power in His Name concealed from the crowd when He said to His disciples: “Go, and make disciples of all the nations in my Name.” He also most accurately forecasts the future when He says: “for this gospel must first be preached to all the world, for a witness to all nations.” — (Proof of the Gospel by Eusebius, Book III, ch 7, 136 (a-d), p. 157)*



*Eusebius was the Church historian and Bishop of Caesarea. On page 152 Eusebius quotes the early book of Matthew that he had in his library in Caesarea. According to this eyewitness of an unaltered Book of Matthew that could have been the original book or the first copy of the original of Matthew. Eusebius informs us of Jesus' actual words to his disciples in the original text of Matthew 28:19: "With one word and voice He said to His disciples: "Go, and make disciples of all nations in My Name, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."*

*That "Name" is Jesus.*

*The Demonstratio Evangelica" by Eusebius*

*“Who said to them; “Make disciples of all the nations in my Name.” — (Eusebius, Proof of the Gospel, Book III, Chapter 7, 138 (c), p. 159)*

In Book III of his History, Chapter 5, Section 2, which is about the Jewish persecution of early Christians, we read, *“relying upon the power of Christ, who had said to them, “Go ye and make disciples of all the nations in my name.”*

And in his Oration in Praise of Emperor Constantine, Chapter 16, Section 8, we read, “*Surely none save our only Savior has done this, when, after his victory over death, he spoke the word to his followers, and fulfilled it by the event, saying to them, “Go ye and make disciples of all nations in my name.”*”

Eusebius was present at the council of Nicea and was involved in the debates between Arias and the pagan view of Athanasius that became the trinity doctrine. If the manuscripts he had in front of him read “*in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*” he would never have quoted instead, “*in my name.*” So it appears that the earliest manuscripts read “*in my name,*” and the phrase was enlarged to reflect the orthodox position as Trinitarian influence spread.

Below is Matthew 28:19 from the King James Bible.

Matthew 28:19 “*Go you therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:*”

Trinitarians often claim this verse supports their belief. However, this verse in no way affirms the trinity doctrine which states that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three co-equal, co-eternal beings that make up one God. Nobody denies there is the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. This verse refers to three powers but never says they are one, and says nothing about their personality. It does not say they are three beings; it does not say they are three in one or one in three; it does not say these three are the Godhead; it does not say these three are a trinity; it does not say these three are co-equal or co-eternal beings; it does not say that these three are all God; and yet some draw the conclusion that this supports their belief in the trinity, which is clearly not so. They are concluding something from this verse that it just does not say.

One might also ask why the apparent disobedience of the Apostles if this verse were genuine, as there is not one who obeyed these supposed words of Jesus Christ from Matthew 28:19. Here are all the scriptures relating to baptism in the New Testament. New converts were all baptized into the name of Jesus Christ only.

Acts 2:38 *“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”*

Acts 8:12 *“But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”*

Acts 8:16 *“For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”*

Acts 10:48 *“And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.”*

Acts 19:5 *“When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”*

Acts 22:16 *“And now why tarriest you? arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”*

Romans 6:3 *“Know you not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?”*

1 Corinthians 1:13 *“Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were you baptized in the name of Paul?”* [Implied]

Galatians 3:27 *“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”*

So should Matthew 28:19 read *“baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”* or *“baptizing them in My name”*? And based on your conclusion, which of the following is correct?

Colossians 2:12 *“Buried with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in baptism, wherein also you are risen with them through the faith of the operation of God, who has raised them from the dead.”*

or



Colossians 2:12 *“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who has raised him from the dead.”*

In conclusion, Matthew 28:19 does not prove or disprove the trinity doctrine, and you will have to decide for yourself if this text belongs, as it cannot be proven conclusively one way or the other. But Scripture certainly strongly indicates that baptism should be in the name of Christ, as all examples reveal.

The reason we are baptized in the name of Christ is because we are baptized “into” Jesus Christ. Baptism is a symbol of His death, burial and resurrection. Even if the trinity doctrine was true, only Jesus Christ died, was buried and rose again. When we are baptized in the name of Christ, we become Christians. Paul argued this point in 1 Corinthians 1:13 when he said, *“Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?”* The obvious answer to this rhetorical question is, *“No. You were baptized in the name of Christ because He was crucified for you.”*

Consider also *“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;”* Mark 16:16

And whose name do we call on to be saved when we are baptized?

*“Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the NAME of the LORD.”* Acts 22:16

It does not say *“calling on the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit,”* now does it? And what is the ONLY name under heaven whereby we can be saved? We do NOT call on the name of the Father or Holy Spirit to be saved in baptism. These verses also reveal Matthew 28:19, as it appears, to be incorrect, and that it should have said in the name of the Lord only.

*“For there is NONE other NAME under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”* Acts 4:12

Whose name did Peter say we were to be baptized in?

*“Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the NAME of JESUS CHRIST” Acts 2:38*

We cannot prove this verse has been tampered with by the Catholic Church, but what we do know is:

- 1) The Catholic Church confesses to changing it.
- 2) Most theologians also agree that they did change it.
- 3) No one followed this supposed instruction and all were baptized in the name of Christ ONLY!
- 4) Other Scriptures say we are baptized and saved by calling on the name of the Lord ONLY.
- 5) Eusebius, who saw the earliest manuscripts when he quoted this verse, wrote that it said, “In His name.”

I think most will agree that the weight of evidence is overwhelming that Matthew 28:19 should have read “in My name.”

For Adventists: *“I saw that God had especially guarded the Bible; yet when copies of it were few, learned men had in some instances changed the words, thinking that they were making it more plain, when in reality they were mystifying that which was plain, by causing it to lean to their established views, which were governed by tradition.”* — (E.G. White, EW, 220.2, 1882)

### **Baptism in the Name of Christ Alone!**

In a book published in 1879 AD, a Baptist scholar wrote:

“Before his death in 560 AD Pope Pelagius said:

“There are many who say that they baptise in the name of Christ alone and by a single immersion.”

This tells us that the early practice of water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ as recorded in The Book Of The Acts Of Apostles was still very popular before 560 AD, and just think, this is after all the severe

persecution from Theodosius and his Trinitarian mentors who legislated mass persecution between 380 and 395 AD.

### **Catholic Catechism says Baptism in the Name of Christ**

In the Catholic Catechism, the Catholic Church declares that the baptismal formula was changed from the name of Jesus to the Trinitarian formula in the fourth century. Everyone in the Bible that was baptized, from the day of Pentecost to the Ephesian disciples (the last recorded baptism in the book of acts), was baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

So there is evidence that every Christian for the first 300 years was baptized in the name of Jesus!

### **In the Catholic Catechism we find the following paragraph:**

*“Into Christ. The Bible tells us that Christians were baptized into Christ (no. 6). They belong to Christ. The Acts of the Apostles (2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5) tells us of baptizing “in the name (person) of Jesus.” -- a better translation would be “into the name (person) of Jesus.” Only in the 4th Century did the formula “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” become customary.” — (Bible Catechism, Rev. John C Kersten, S.V.D., Catholic Book Publishing Co., N.Y., N.Y.; 1973, p. 164)*

### **Is This Guaranteed Proof?**

The following images [of the Hebrew and its translation—not included here from author Geoff Lohrere’s research due to poor image quality] are from Dr. G. Reckart, Apostolic Theological Bible College, who claims these are absolute proof of the change to Matthew 28:19. He states we now have absolute proof the Catholic Church fathers perverted the text in Matthew 28:19. We now have the Hebrew Matthew Gospel, a manuscript that was preserved by the Jews from the first century [Shem Tov’s Hebrew Matthew Gospel]. In this Shem Tov MSS, the text at Matthew 28:19 does not contain the trinitarian statement. Dr. Reckart states that he was the first to provide this evidence on the internet and wants the credit accordingly. Not sure that these images can be called guaranteed proof, though. [Verse 19,

**translated from this Shem Tov MSS, says only, “Go.” Verse 20 says, “and (teach) them to carry out all the things which I have commanded you forever.”—ed.]**

### **Matthew 28:19 and the Trinity**

In the video, at the URL below, Nader Mansour explores the words of Jesus in Matthew 28:19 dealing with the command to baptize. Does this verse support the Trinity? What does it actually mean?

<https://youtu.be/gOcY72ZFO8A> (Video is less than 10 minutes in length)

### **Historical Quotes on Matthew 28:19**

#### **Catholic Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger:**

He makes this confession as to the origin of the chief Trinity text of Matthew 28:19. *“The basic form of our (Matthew 28:19 Trinitarian) profession of faith took shape during the course of the second and third centuries in connection with the ceremony of baptism. So far as its place of origin is concerned, the text (Matthew 28:19) came from the city of Rome.”* — Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) Introduction to Christianity: 1968 edition, pp. 82, 83. The Trinity baptism and text of Matthew 28:19, therefore, did not originate from the original Church that started in Jerusalem around AD 33. It was rather, as the evidence proves, a later invention of Roman Catholicism completely fabricated. Very few know about these historical facts.

#### **Doctrine and Practice in the Early Church:**

By Dr. Stuart G. Hall 1992, pages 20 and 21. Professor Stuart G. Hall was the former Chair of Ecclesiastical History at King's College, London, England. Dr. Hall makes the factual statement that Catholic Trinitarian Baptism was not the original form of Christian Baptism, rather the original was Jesus' name baptism. *“In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” although those words were not used, as they later are, as a formula. Not all baptisms fitted this rule.”* Dr Hall further states: *“More common and perhaps more ancient was the simple, “In the name of the Lord Jesus, or, Jesus Christ.” This*

*practice was known among Marcionites and Orthodox; it is certainly the subject of controversy in Rome and Africa about 254, as the anonymous tract De rebaptismate ("On rebaptism") shows."*

**Edmund Schlink, The Doctrine of Baptism, page 28:**

*"The baptismal command in its Matthew 28:19 form cannot be the historical origin of Christian baptism. At the very least, it must be assumed that the text has been transmitted in a form expanded by the [Catholic] church.*

**Hastings Dictionary of the Bible, 1963, page 1015:**

*"The Trinity.-...is not demonstrable by logic or by Scriptural proofs,...The term Trias was first used by Theophilus of Antioch (c AD 180),...(The term Trinity) not found in Scripture..." "The chief Trinitarian text in the NT is the baptismal formula in Mt 28:19...This late post-resurrection saying, not found in any other Gospel or anywhere else in the NT, has been viewed by some scholars as an interpolation into Matthew. It has also been pointed out that the idea of making disciples is continued in teaching them, so that the intervening reference to baptism with its Trinitarian formula was perhaps a later insertion into the saying. Finally, Eusebius's form of the (ancient) text ("in my name" rather than in the name of the Trinity) has had certain advocates. (Although the Trinitarian formula is now found in the modern-day book of Matthew), this does not guarantee its source in the historical teaching of Jesus. It is doubtless better to view the (Trinitarian) formula as derived from early (Catholic) Christian, perhaps Syrian or Palestinian, baptismal usage (cf Didache 7:1-4), and as a brief summary of the (Catholic) Church's teaching about God, Christ, and the Spirit:..."*

**James Moffett's New Testament Translation:**

In a footnote on page 64 about Matthew 28:19, he makes this statement: *"It may be that this (Trinitarian) formula, so far as the fullness of its expression is concerned, is a reflection of the (Catholic) liturgical usage established later in the primitive (Catholic) community,*

*It will be remembered that Acts speaks of baptizing “in the name of Jesus, cf. Acts 1:5 +.”*

**New Revised Standard Version says this about Matthew 28:19:**

*“Modern critics claim this formula is falsely ascribed to Jesus and that it represents later (Catholic) church tradition, for nowhere in the book of Acts (or any other book of the Bible) is baptism performed with the name of the Trinity...”*

**Tom Harpur:**

Tom Harpur, former Religion Editor of the Toronto Star in his “For Christ's sake,” page 103, informs us of these facts: *“All but the most conservative scholars agree that at least the latter part of this command [Triune part of Matthew 28:19] was inserted later. The [Trinitarian] formula occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, and we know from the only evidence available [the rest of the New Testament] that the earliest Church did not baptize people using these words (“in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”) Baptism was “into” or “in” the name of Jesus alone. Thus it is argued that the verse originally read “baptizing them in My Name” and then was expanded [changed] to work in the [later Catholic Trinitarian] dogma. In fact, the first view put forward by German critical scholars, as well as the Unitarians in the nineteenth century, was stated as the accepted position of mainline scholarship as long ago as 1919, when Peake's commentary was first published: “The Church of the first days (AD 33) did not observe this world-wide (Trinitarian) commandment, even if they knew it. The command to baptize into the threefold [Trinity] name is a late doctrinal expansion.”*

**The Bible Commentary, 1919, page 723:**

Dr. Peake makes it clear that: *“The command to baptize into the threefold name is a late doctrinal expansion. Instead of the words baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost we should probably read simply- “into My Name.”*

**The Catholic Encyclopedia, II, page 263:**

*“The baptismal formula was changed from the name of Jesus Christ to the words Father, Son, and Holy Spirit by the Catholic Church in the second century.”*

**The Catholic University of America in Washington, D. C., 1923, New Testament Studies No. 5:**

The Lord's Command To Baptize: An Historical Critical Investigation. By Bernard Henry Cuneo, page 27. *“The passages in Acts and the Letters of St. Paul. These passages seem to point to the earliest form as baptism in the name of the Lord.”* Also we find, *“Is it possible to reconcile these facts with the belief that Christ commanded his disciples to baptize in the triune form? Had Christ given such a command, it is urged, the Apostolic Church would have followed him, and we should have some trace of this obedience in the New Testament. No such trace can be found. The only explanation of this silence, according to the anti-traditional view, is this the short christological (Jesus Name) formula was (the) original, and the longer triune formula was a later development.”*

**“The Demonstratio Evangelica” by Eusebius:**

Eusebius was the Church historian and Bishop of Caesarea. On page 152 Eusebius quotes the early book of Matthew that he had in his library in Caesarea. According to this eyewitness of an unaltered Book of Matthew that could have been the original book or the first copy of the original of Matthew, Eusebius informs us of Jesus' actual words to his disciples in the original text of Matthew 28:19: *“With one word and voice He said to His disciples: “Go, and make disciples of all nations in My Name, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”* That “Name” is Jesus.

**The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics:**

As to Matthew 28:19, it says: *“It is the central piece of evidence for the traditional (Trinitarian) view. If it were undisputed, this would, of course, be decisive, but its trustworthiness is impugned on grounds of textual criticism, literary criticism and historical criticism.”* The same

*Encyclopedia further states that: “The obvious explanation of the silence of the New Testament on the triune name, and the use of another (JESUS’ NAME) formula in Acts and Paul, is that this other formula was the earlier, and the triune formula is a later addition.”*

**The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Vol. 4, page 2637, Under “Baptism,” says:**

*“Matthew 28:19 in particular only canonizes a later ecclesiastical situation, that its universalism is contrary to the facts of early Christian history, and its Trinitarian formula (is) foreign to the mouth of Jesus.”*

**The Jerusalem Bible, a scholarly Catholic work, states:**

*“It may be that this formula, (Triune Matthew 28:19) so far as the fullness of its expression is concerned, is a reflection of the (Man-made) liturgical usage established later in the primitive (Catholic) community. It will be remembered that Acts speaks of baptizing “in the name of Jesus,” ...”*

**The Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge:**

*“Jesus, however, cannot have given His disciples this Trinitarian order of baptism after His resurrection; for the New Testament knows only one baptism in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:43; 19:5; Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3; 1 Cor. 1:13-15), which still occurs even in the second and third centuries, while the Trinitarian formula occurs only in Matt. 28:19, and then only again (in the) Didache 7:1 and Justin, Apol. 1:61...Finally, the distinctly liturgical character of the formula...is strange; it was not the way of Jesus to make such formulas... the formal authenticity of Matt. 28:19 must be disputed...” page 435.*

**The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, I, page 275:**

*“It is often affirmed that the words in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost are not the ipsissima verba [exact words] of Jesus, but...a later liturgical addition.”*

**Theology of the New Testament:**

By R. Bultmann, 1951, page 133 under Kerygma of the Hellenistic Church and the Sacraments. The historical fact that the verse Matthew



28:19 was altered is openly confessed to very plainly. *“As to the rite of baptism, it was normally consummated as a bath in which the one receiving baptism completely submerged, and if possible in flowing water as the allusions of Acts 8:36, Heb. 10:22, Barn. 11:11 permit us to gather, and as Did. 7:1-3 specifically says. According to the last passage, [the apocryphal Catholic Didache] suffices in case of the need if water is three times poured [false Catholic sprinkling doctrine] on the head. The one baptizing names over the one being baptized the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,” later expanded [changed] to the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.”*

**Wilhelm Bousset, Kyrrios Christianity, page 295:**

*“The testimony for the wide distribution of the simple baptismal formula [in the Name of Jesus] down into the second century is so overwhelming that even in Matthew 28:19, the Trinitarian formula was later inserted.”*

**A History of The Christian Church:**

1953, by Williston Walker, former Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Yale University. On page 95 we see the historical facts again declared. *“With the early disciples generally baptism was “in the name of Jesus Christ.” There is no mention of baptism in the name of the Trinity in the New Testament, except in the command attributed to Christ in Matthew 28:19. That text is early, (but not the original) however. It underlies the Apostles' Creed, and the practice recorded (\*or interpolated) in the Teaching, (or the Didache) and by Justin. The Christian leaders of the third century retained the recognition of the earlier form, and, in Rome at least, baptism in the name of Christ was deemed valid, if irregular, certainly from the time of Bishop Stephen (254-257).”*

On page 61 Professor and Church historian Walker reviles the true origin and purpose of Matthew 28:19. This text is the first man-made Roman Catholic Creed that was the prototype for the later Apocryphal Apostles' Creed. Matthew 28:19 was invented along with the Apocryphal Apostles' Creed to counter so-called heretics and Gnostics

that baptized in the name of Jesus Christ! Marcion, although somewhat mixed up in some of his doctrine, still baptized his converts the Biblical way in the name of Jesus Christ. Matthew 28:19 is the first non-Biblical Roman Catholic Creed! The spurious Catholic text of Matthew 28:19 was invented to support the newer triune, Trinity doctrine. Therefore, Matthew 28:19 is not the “Great Commission of Jesus Christ.” Matthew 28:19 is the great Catholic hoax! Acts 2:38, Luke 24:47, and 1 Corinthians 6:11 give us the ancient original words and teaching of Yeshua/Jesus! Is it not also strange that Matthew 28:19 is missing from the old manuscripts of Sinaiticus, Curetonianus and Bobiensis?

“While the power of the episcopate and the significance of churches of apostolical (Catholic) foundation was thus greatly enhanced, the Gnostic crisis saw a corresponding development of (man-made non-inspired spurious) creed, at least in the West. Some form of instruction before baptism was common by the middle of the second century. At Rome this developed, apparently, between 150 and 175, and probably in opposition to Marcionite Gnosticism, into an explication of the baptismal formula of Matthew 28:19 the earliest known form of the so-called Apostles Creed.”

### **The Beginnings of Christianity: The Acts of the Apostles, Volume 1, Prolegomena 1:**

The Jewish Gentile, and Christian Backgrounds by F. J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake, 1979 version, pages 335-337. “There is little doubt as to the sacramental nature of baptism by the middle of the first century in the circles represented by the Pauline Epistles, and it is indisputable in the second century. The problem is whether it can in this (Trinitarian) form be traced back to Jesus, and if not what light is thrown upon its history by the analysis of the synoptic Gospels and Acts.

“According to Catholic teaching, (traditional Trinitarian) baptism was instituted by Jesus. It is easy to see how necessary this was for the belief in sacramental regeneration. Mysteries, or sacraments, were always the institution of the Lord of the cult; by them, and by them only, were its supernatural benefits obtained by the faithful. Nevertheless, if

evidence counts for anything, few points in the problem of the Gospels are so clear as the improbability of this teaching.

“The reason for this assertion is the absence of any mention of Christian baptism in Mark, Q, or the third Gospel, and the suspicious nature of the account of its institution in Matthew 28:19: “Go ye into all the world, and make disciples of all Gentiles (nations), baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” It is not even certain whether this verse ought to be regarded as part of the genuine text of Matthew. No other text, indeed, is found in any extant manuscripts, in any language, but it is arguable that Justin Martyr, though he used the triune formula, did not find it in his text of the Gospels; Hermas seems to be unacquainted with it; the evidence of the Didache is ambiguous, and Eusebius habitually, though not invariably, quotes it in another form, “Go ye into all the world and make disciples of all the Gentiles in My Name.”

“No one acquainted with the facts of textual history and patristic evidence can doubt the tendency would have been to replace the Eusebian text (In My Name) by the ecclesiastical (Catholic Trinitarian) formula of baptism, so that transcriptional evidence” is certainly on the side of the text omitting baptism.

“But it is unnecessary to discuss this point at length, because even if the ordinary (modern Trinity) text of Matthew 28:19 be sound, it cannot represent historical fact.

“Would they have baptized, as Acts says that they did, and Paul seems to confirm the statement, in the name of the Lord Jesus if the Lord himself had commanded them to use the (Catholic Trinitarian) formula of the Church? On every point the evidence of Acts is convincing proof that the (Catholic) tradition embodied in Matthew 28:19 is a late (non-Scriptural Creed) and unhistorical.

“Neither in the third gospel nor in Acts is there any reference to the (Catholic Trinitarian) Matthaean tradition, nor any mention of the institution of (Catholic Trinitarian) Christian baptism. Nevertheless, a

little later in the narrative we find several references to baptism in water in the name of the Lord Jesus as part of recognized (early) Christian practice. Thus we are faced by the problem of a Christian rite, not directly ascribed to Jesus, but assumed to be a universal (and original) practice. That it was so is confirmed by the Epistles, but the facts of importance are all contained in Acts.”

Also in the same book on page 336 in the footnote number one, Professor Lake makes an astonishing discovery in the so-called Teaching or Didache. The Didache has an astonishing contradiction that is found in it. One passage refers to the necessity of baptism in the name of the Lord, which is Jesus. The other famous passage teaches a Trinitarian Baptism. Lake raises the probability that the apocryphal Didache or the early Catholic Church Manual may have also been edited or changed to promote the later Trinitarian doctrine. It is a historical fact that the Catholic Church at one time baptized its converts in the name of Jesus but later changed to Trinity baptism.

*“1. In the actual description of baptism in the Didache the triune (Trinity) formula is used; in the instructions for the Eucharist (communion) the condition for admission is baptism in the name of the Lord. It is obvious that in the case of an eleventh-century manuscript \*the triune formula was almost certain to be inserted in the description of baptism, while the less usual formula had a chance of escaping notice when it was only used incidentally.”*

### **Other Writers**

*“The historical riddle is not solved by Matthew 28:19, since, according to a wide scholarly consensus, it is not an authentic saying of Jesus, not even an elaboration of a Jesus-saying on baptism.” — (The Anchor Bible Dictionary, Vol. 1, 1992, p. 585)*

*“It has been customary to trace the institution of the practice (of baptism) to the words of Christ recorded in Matthew 28:19. But the authenticity of this passage has been challenged on historical as well as on textual grounds. It must be acknowledged that the formula of the*

*threefold name, which is here enjoined, does not appear to have been employed by the primitive Church, which, so far as our information goes, baptized 'in' or 'into the name of Jesus' (or 'Jesus Christ' or Lord Jesus': Acts 2:38, 8:16, 10:48, 19:5, 1 Cor. 1:13, 15)" — (The Dictionary of the Bible, 1947, p. 83)*

*Matthew 28:19, "the Church of the first days did not observe this world-wide command, even if they knew it. The command to baptize into the threefold name is a late doctrinal expansion. In place of the words "baptizing... Spirit" we should probably read simply "into my name," i.e. (turn the nations) to Christianity, "in my name," i.e. (teach the nations) in my spirit" — (Peake's Commentary on the Bible, 1929, p. 723)*

*"On the text, see Conybeare, Zeitsch. Fur die Neutest. Wissensch. 1901, 275 ff.; Hibbert Journal, October 1902; Lake, Inaugural Lecture; Riggenbach, Der Trinitarische Taufbefehl; Chase, Journal Theo. Stud. Vi. 481 ff. The evidence of Eusebius must be regarded as indecisive, in view of the fact that all Greek MSS. and all extant VSS., contain the clause (S1 and S2 are unhappily wanting). The Eusebian quotation: "Go disciple ye all the nations in my name," cannot be taken as decisive proof that the clause "Baptizing...Spirit" was lacking in copies known to Eusebius, because "in my name" may be Eusebius' way of abbreviating, for whatever reason, the following clause. On the other hand, Eusebius cites in this short form so often that it is easier to suppose that he is definitely quoting the words of the Gospel, than to invent possible reasons which may have caused him so frequently to have paraphrased it. And if we once suppose his short form to have been current in MSS. of the Gospel, there is much probability in the conjecture that it is the original text of the Gospel, and that in the later centuries the clause "baptizing...Spirit" supplanted the shorter "in my name." And insertion of this kind derived from liturgical use would very rapidly be adopted by copyists and translators. The Didache has ch. 7: "Baptizing in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit": but the passage need not be dependent on our canonical*

*Gospel, and the Didache elsewhere has a liturgical addition to the text of the Gospels in the doxology attached to the Lord's Prayer. But Irenaeus and Tertullian already have the longer clause.*” — (The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; S. Driver, A. Plummer, C. Briggs; A Critical & Exegetical Commentary of St. Matthew Third Edition, 1912, pp. 307, 308)

*“The disciples are further told to “baptize” (the second of the participles functioning as supplementary imperatives) new disciples. The command to baptize comes as somewhat of a surprise since baptism is referred to earlier only in chap. 3 (and 21:25) where only John's baptism is described (among the Gospels only in John 3:22; 4:1-2 do we read of Jesus' or his disciples' baptizing others). Matthew tells us nothing concerning his view of Christian baptism. Only Matthew records this command of Jesus, but the practice of the early church suggest its historicity. (cf. Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12, 38; 9:18; 10:48; 19:5; 22:16; etc.). The threefold name (at most only an incipient Trinitarianism) in which the baptism was to be performed, on the other hand, seems clearly to be a liturgical expansion of the evangelist consonant with the practice of his day (thus Hubbard; cf. Did. 7.1). There is a good possibility that in its original form, as witnessed by the ante-Nicene Eusebian form, the text read “make disciples in my name” (see Conybeare). This shorter reading preserves the symmetrical rhythm of the passage, whereas the triadic formula fits awkwardly into the structure as one might expect if it were an interpolation (see H. B. Green; cf. Howard; Hill [IBS 8 (1986) 54-63], on the other hand, argues for a concentric design with the triadic formula at its center). It is Kosmala, however, who has argued most effectively for the shorter reading, pointing to the central importance of “name of Jesus” in early Christian preaching, the practice of baptism in the name of Jesus, and the singular “in his name” with reference to the hope of the Gentiles in Isa. 42:4b, quoted by Matthew in 12:18-21. As Carson rightly notes of our passage: “There is no evidence we have Jesus' ipsissima verba here” (598). The narrative of Acts notes the use of the name only of*

*“Jesus Christ” in baptism (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; cf. Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27) or simply “the Lord Jesus” (Acts 8:16; 19:5)” — (Word Biblical Commentary, Vol 33B, Matthew 14-28; Donald A. Hagner, 1975, p. 887-888)*

*“It cannot be directly proved that Jesus instituted baptism, for Matthew 28:19 is not a saying of the Lord. The reasons for this assertion are: (1) It is only a later stage of the tradition that represents the risen Christ as delivering speeches and giving commandments. Paul knows nothing of it. (2) The Trinitarian formula is foreign to the mouth of Jesus and has not the authority of the Apostolic age which it must have had if it had descended from Jesus himself. On the other hand, Paul knows of no other way of receiving the Gentiles into the Christian communities than by baptism, and it is highly probable that in the time of Paul all Jewish Christians were also baptized. We may perhaps assume that the practice of baptism was continued in consequence of Jesus' recognition of John the Baptist and his baptism, even after John himself had been removed. According to John 4:2, Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples under his superintendence. It is possible only with the help of tradition to trace back to Jesus a “Sacrament of Baptism,” or an obligation to it *ex necessitate salutis*, through it is credible that tradition is correct here. Baptism in the Apostolic age was in the name of the Lord Jesus (1 Cor. 1:13; Acts 19:5). We cannot make out when the formula in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit emerged.” — (History of Dogma, Vol. 1, Adolph Harnack, 1958, p. 79)*

*“The very account which tells us that at the last, after his resurrection, he commissioned his apostles to go and baptize among all nations (Mt 28:19) betrayed itself by speaking in the Trinitarian language of the next century, and compels us to see in it the ecclesiastical editor, and not the evangelist, much less the founder himself. No historical trace appears of this baptismal formula earlier than the “Teaching of the Twelve Apostles” (ch. 7:1,3 The Oldest Church Manuel, ed. Philip Schaff, 1887), and the first Apology of Justin (Apol. i. 61.) about the middle of the second century: and more than a*

century later, Cyprian found it necessary to insist upon the use of it instead of the older phrase baptized “into Christ Jesus,” or into the “name of the Lord Jesus.” (Gal. 3:27; Acts 19:5; 10:48. Cyprian Ep. 73, 16-18, has to convert those who still use the shorter form.) Paul alone, of the apostles, was baptized, ere he was “filled with the Holy Ghost;” and he certainly was baptized simply “into Christ Jesus.” (Rom. 6:3) Yet the tri-personal form, unhistorical as it is, is actually insisted on as essential by almost every Church in Christendom, and, if you have not had it pronounced over you, the ecclesiastical authorities cast you out as a heathen man, and will accord to you neither Christian recognition in your life, nor Christian burial in your death. It is a rule which would condemn as invalid every recorded baptism performed by an apostle; for if the book of Acts may be trusted, the invariable usage was baptism “in the name of Christ Jesus,” (Acts 2:38) and not “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” And doubtless the author (Luke) is as good a witness for the usage of his own time (about 115 A.D.) as for that of the period whereof he treats.” — (The Seat of Authority in Religion, James Martineau, 1905, p. 568)

“It is clear, therefore, that of the MSS which Eusebius inherited from his predecessor, Pamphilus, at Caesarea in Palestine, some at least preserved the original reading, in which there was no mention either of Baptism or of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. It had been conjectured by Dr. Davidson, Dr. Martineau, by the present Dean of Westminster, and by Prof. Harnack (to mention but a few names out of many), that here the received text, could not contain the very words of Jesus? This long before anyone except Dr. Burgon, who kept the discovery to himself, had noticed the Eusebian form of the reading.” “It is satisfactory to notice that Dr. Eberhard Nestle, in his new edition of the New Testament in Latin and Greek, furnishes the Eusebian reading in his critical apparatus, and that Dr. Sanday seems to lean to its acceptance.” — (History of New Testament Criticism, Conybeare, 1910, pp. 98-102, 111-112)



*“It is doubted whether the explicit injunction of Matt. 28:19 can be accepted as uttered by Jesus. ...But the Trinitarian formula in the mouth of Jesus is certainly unexpected.” — (A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, J. Hastings, 1906, p. 170)*

*“Feine (PER3, XIX, 396 f) and Kattenbusch (Sch-Herz, I, 435 f. argue that the Trinitarian formula in Matthew 28:19 is spurious. No record of the use of the Trinitarian formula can be discovered in the Acts of the epistles of the apostles.” — (The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, James Orr, 1946, p. 398)*

*“Footnote to Matthew 28:19, It may be that this formula, so far as the fullness of its expression is concerned, is a reflection of the liturgical usage established later in the primitive community. It will be remembered that the Acts speak of baptizing “in the name of Jesus”, Acts 1:5 +. But whatever the variation on formula the underlying reality remains the same.” — (The Jerusalem Bible, 1966, p. 64)*

*Matthew 28:19 “... has been disputed on textual grounds, but in the opinion of many scholars the words may still be regarded as part of the true text of Matthew. There is, however, grave doubt whether they may be the ipsissima verba of Jesus. The evidence of Acts 2:38; 10:48 (cf. 8:16; 19:5), supported by Gal. 3:27; Rom 6:3, suggests that baptism in early Christianity was administered, not in the threefold name, but “in the name of Jesus Christ” or “in the name of the Lord Jesus.” This is difficult to reconcile with the specific instructions of the verse at the end of Matthew.” — (The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible, 1962, p. 351)*

*“Critical scholarship, on the whole, rejects the traditional attribution of the tripartite baptismal formula to Jesus and regards it as of later origin. Undoubtedly then the baptismal formula originally consisted of one part and it gradually developed into its tripartite form.” — (The Philosophy of the Church Fathers, Vol. 1, Harry Austryn Wolfson, 1964, p. 143)*

G.R. Beasley-Murray in his book, “Baptism in the New Testament” and a believer of the trinity doctrine, gives us some new insight on how the original text of Matthew 28:19 was structured:

*“A whole group of exegetes and critics have recognized that the opening declaration of Matt. 28:18 demands a Christological statement to follow it: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me” leads us to expect as a consequence, “Go and make disciples unto Me among all the nations, baptising them in My name, teaching them to observe all things I commanded you.” In fact, the first and third clauses have that significance: it looks as though the second clause has been modified from a Christological to a Trinitarian formula in the interests of the liturgical tradition.” — (G. R. Beasley-Murray, Baptism in the New Testament, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962, p. 83)*

### **Evidence Of Other Writers**

#### **APHRAATES**

*“There is one other witness whose testimony we must consider. He is Aphraates, the Syriac father who wrote between 337 and 345. He cites our text in a formal manner as follows:*

*'Make disciples of all nations, and they shall believe in me.'*

*“The last words appear to be a gloss on the Eusebius reading 'in my name.' But in any case they preclude the textus receptus with its injunction to baptise in the triune name. Were the reading of Aphraates an isolated fact, we might regard it as a loose citation, but in presence of the Eusebian and Justinian text this is impossible.” — (Conybeare (THJ) page 107)*

#### **AUTHOR OF DE REBAPTISMATE**

*“The anonymous author of De Rebaptismate in the third century so understood them, and dwells at length on 'the power of the name of Jesus invoked upon a man by Baptism.” — (De Rebaptismate 6.7 Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. i, p. 352)*

## CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA

*“In the pages of Clement of Alexandria a text somewhat similar to Matthew xxviii. 19 is once cited; but from a gnostic heretic named Theodotus, and not as from the canonical text, as follows: 'And to the apostles he gives the command. Going around preaching ye and baptize those who believe in the name of father and son and holy spirit.'” — (Excerpta, cap. 76, ed. Sylb. p. 987; --Conybeare)*

## EUNOMIUS

*“Exceptions are found which perhaps point to an old practice dying out. CYPRIAN (Ep.73) and the APOSTOLIC CANONS (no. 50) combat the shorter formula, thereby attesting its use in certain quarters. The ordinance of Canon Apostolic 50 runs:*

*'If any Bishop or presbyter fulfill not three baptisms 'of one initiation, but one baptism which is given (as) into the death of the Lord, let him be deposed.'*

*“This was the formula of the followers of Eunomius (Socr. 5.24) 'for they baptized not into the Trinity, but into the death of Christ.' They accordingly used single immersion only.” — Ency. Biblica (Art. Baptism)*

## JUSTIN MARTYR

*“Justin Martyr quotes a saying of Christ as a proof of the necessity of regeneration, but falls back upon the use of Isaiah and apostolic tradition to justify the practice of baptism and the use of the triune formula. This certainly suggests that Justin did not know the traditional text of Matthew 28:19.” — (Ency. Rel. and Ethics, p. 380)*

*“In Justin Martyr, who wrote between A.D. 130 and 140, there is a passage which has been regarded as a citation or echo of Matthew xxviii. 19 by various scholars, e.g. Resch in his Ausser canonische Parallelstellen, who sees in it an abridgement of the ordinary text. The passage is in Justin's dialogue with Trypho 39, p. 258: 'God hath not inflicted nor inflicts the judgment, as knowing of some that still even to-*

*day are being made disciples in the name of his Christ, and are abandoning the path of error, who also do receive gifts each as they be worthy, being illumined by the name of this Christ.' The objection hitherto to these words being recognized as a citation of our text was that they ignored the formula 'baptising them in the name of the Father and Son and holy Spirit.' But the discovery of the Eusebian form of text removes this difficulty; and Justin is seen to have had the same text as early as the year 140, which Eusebius regularly found in his manuscripts from 300-340."* — (--Conybeare (Hibbert Journal, p. 106)

### MACEDONIUS

*"We may infer that the text was not quite fixed when Tertullian was writing early in the third century. In the middle of that century Cyprian could insist on the use of the triple formula as essential in the baptism even of the orthodox. The pope Stephen answered him that the baptisms even of heretics were valid, if the name of Jesus alone was invoked" (However, this decision did not prevent the popes of the seventh century from excommunicating the entire Celtic Church for its adhesion to the old use of invoking the one name). In the last half of the fourth century the text "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Ghost" was used as a battle-cry by the orthodox against the adherents of Macedonius, who were called pneumao-machi or fighters against the Holy Spirit, because they declined to include the Spirit in a Trinity of persons as co-equal, consubstantial and co-eternal with the Father and Son. They also stoutly denied that any text of the N.T. authorized such a co-ordination of the Spirit with the Father and Son. Whence we infer that their texts agreed with that of Eusebius."* — (F. C. Conybeare (Hibbert Journal, p. 107)

### ORIGEN

*"In Origen's works as preserved in Greek, the first part of the verse is thrice adduced, but his citation always stops short at the words 'the nations;' and that in itself suggests that his text has been censured, and words which followed, 'in my name,' struck out."* — (Conybeare)

## How Biblical MSS Were Altered

The following quotations show the ease with which scribes freely altered the MSS of the New Testament, so unlike the scribes and custodians of the Old Testament Scriptures, who copied the holy Writings with reverence and strict accuracy. These quotations will also show the early start of the practice of triune immersion at the time when the doctrine of the Trinity was being formulated. They will also show how the New Testament writings were made to conform to traditional practice.

### CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA

*“The threefold immersion is unquestionably very ancient in the Church. ...Its object is, of course, to honor the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity in whose name it is conferred.” — (p. 262)*

### CONYBEARE

*“The exclusive survival of (3) in all MSS., both Greek and Latin, need not cause surprise. In the only codices which would be even likely to preserve an older reading, namely the Sinaitic Syriac and the oldest Latin MS., the pages are gone which contained the end of Matthew. But in any case the conversion of Eusebius to the longer text after the council of Nice indicates that it was at that time being introduced as a Shibboleth of orthodoxy into all codices. We have no codex older than the year 400, if so old; and long before that time the question of the inclusion of the holy Spirit on equal terms in the Trinity had been threshed out, and a text so invaluable to the dominate party could not but make its way into every codex, irrespectively of its textual affinities.” — (Hibbert Journal)*

*“In the case just examined (Matthew 28:19), it is to be noticed that not a single manuscript or ancient version has preserved to us the true reading. But that is not surprising for as Dr. C. R. Gregory, one of the greatest of our textual critics, reminds us, 'the Greek MSS of the text of the New Testament were often altered by scribes, who put into them the*

*readings which were familiar to them,' and which they held to be the right readings. Canon and Text of the NT, 1907, page 424."*

*"These facts speak for themselves. Our Greek texts, not only of the Gospels, but of the Epistles as well, have been revised and interpolated by orthodox copyist. We can trace their perversions of the text in a few cases, with the aid of patristic citations and ancient versions. But there must remain many passages which have not been so corrected, but where we cannot today expose the fraud. It was necessary to emphasis this point, because Drs. Westcott and Hort used to say that there is no evidence of merely doctrinal changes having been made in the text of the New Testament. This is just the opposite of the truth, and such distinguished scholars as Alfred Loisy, J. Wellhausen, Eberhard Nestle, Adolph Harnack, to mention only four names, do not scruple to recognize the fact."*

While this is perfectly true, nevertheless *"There are a number of reasons why we can feel confident about the general reliability of our translations."* — (Peter Watkins, 'Bridging the Gap' in The Christadelphian, January 1962, pp. 4-8)

## ENCYCLOPEDIA. RELIGION AND ETHICS

*"If it be thought as many critics think, that no MS represents more than comparatively late recessions of the text, it is necessary to set against the mass of manuscript evidence the influence of baptismal practice. It seems easier to believe that the traditional text was brought about by this influence working on the 'Eusebian' text, than that the latter arose out of the former in spite of it."* — (Art. Baptism)

## FRATERNAL VISITOR

*"Codex B. (Vaticanus) would be the best of all existing MSS if it were completely preserved, less damaged, (less) corrected, more easily legible, and not altered by a later hand in more than two thousand places. Eusebius, therefore, is not without grounds for accusing the adherents of Athanasius and of the newly-arisen doctrine of the Trinity*

*of falsifying the Bible more than once.*” — (Fraternal Visitor, in The Christadelphian Monatshefte, 1924, p. 148)

#### HAMMOND

*“There are two or three insertions in the NT which have been supposed to have their origin in the ecclesiastical usage. The words in question, being familiarly known in a particular connection, were perhaps noted in the margin of some copy, and thence became incorporated by the next transcriber; or a transcriber's own familiarity with the words might have led to his inserting them. This is the source to which Dr. Tregelles assigns the Doxology at the close of the Lord's Prayer in Matt. 6, which is wanting most of the best authorities. Perhaps also Acts 8:37, containing the baptismal profession of faith, which is entirely wanting in the best authorities, found its way into the Latin text in this manner.”* — (Hammond, Textual Criticism Applied to the NT, (1890) p. 23)

#### HASTINGS DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE

*“In the Eastern Churches, triune immersion is regarded as the only valid form of baptism.”* — (Vol. 1. p. 243 fn)

#### OXFORD DICTIONARY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

*“In the 'Two Ways' of the Didache, the principal duties of the candidates for Baptism and the method of administering it by triple immersion of infusion on the head are outlined. This triple immersion is also attested by Tertullian (Adversus Prax 26). ...The most elaborate form of the rite in modern Western usage is in the Roman Catholic Church.”* — (pp. 125, 126)

#### ROBERT ROBERTS

*“Athanasius... met Flaivan, the author of the Doxology, which has since been universal in Christendom: 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, etc.' This was composed in opposition to the Arian Doxology: 'Glory to the Father, by the Son, in the Holy Spirit.’”* — (Robert Roberts, Good Company, Vol. iii, p. 49)

## SMITH'S DICTIONARY OF CHRISTIAN ANTIQUITIES

*“While triune immersion was thus an all but universal practice, Eunomius (circ. 360) appears to have been the first to introduce simple immersion 'unto the death of Christ' ... This practice was condemned on pain of degradation, by the Canon Apost. 46 (al 50). But it comes before us again about a century later in Spain; but then, curiously enough, we find it regarded as a badge of orthodoxy in opposition to the practice of the Arians. These last kept to the use of the Triune immersion, but in such a way as to set forth their own doctrine of a gradation in the three Persons.” — (Art. Baptism Sec. 50)*

### WHISTON

*“The Eusebians... sometimes named the very time when, the place where, and the person whom they (i.e. forms of doxology) were first introduced... thus Philofoorgius, a writer of that very age, assures us in PHOTIUS'S EXTRACTS that A.D. 348 or thereabouts, Flavianus, Patriarche of Antioch, got a multitude of monks together, and did their first use this public doxology, 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.’” — (Second Letter concerning the Primitive Doxologies, 1719, p. 17)*

*“We certainly know of a greater number of interpolations and corruptions brought into the Scriptures... by Athanasius, and relating to the Doctrine of the Trinity, than in any other case whatsoever. While we have not, that I know of, any such interpolations and corruption, made in any one of them by either the Eusebians or Arians.” — (Second letter to the Bishop of London, 1719, p. 15)*



## Chapter 15B

### Was 1 John 5:7 Added to the Bible?

*(Note: This chapter was copied with permission in November 2017 from the website of Geoff Lohrere: [www.trinitytruth.org/was1john5\\_7addedtext.html](http://www.trinitytruth.org/was1john5_7addedtext.html).)*

The only verse in the entire Bible that can be genuinely interpreted as saying the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are a 3-in-1 being is 1 John 5:7.

1 John 5:7 KJV: “For there are three that bear record *in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.* 8 *And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.*”

This is the clear and decisive type of Scripture that you would expect to find in the Bible if the Godhead was literally a three-in-one god. However, it is slowly becoming universally recognized that this verse is a later insertion of the Church. So, what does that tell us?

All recent versions of the Bible and most others do not include the underlined text which also includes verse 8 and with very good reason. Here it is from the NIV. 1 John 5:7: “*For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.*”

#### ***Does 1 John 5:7, 8 Have Added Text?***

Some person or persons in centuries past were so zealous to find support for their belief in the trinity that they literally added it. There are numerous Scholars, in fact, that inform us that this passage has a spurious comment which has been added. The textual Scholar Bart Ehrman described this forgery as follows: “...*This represents the most obvious instance of a theologically motivated corruption in the entire manuscript tradition of the New Testament.*”

Thus, the scholarly consensus is that this passage is a Latin corruption that found its way into a Greek manuscript at an early date, while being absent from the THOUSANDS of other manuscripts. This addition is so famous and hence so well known that it has even been given its own name, and is called the “Comma Johanneum.” Comma means a short clause.

Modern Bible translations come from two manuscripts called the Codex Sinaiticus, which has more edits than any other manuscript in Biblical history (14800 edits), and the Codex Vaticanus, which comes from the Vatican. Neither of these two manuscripts contain the *Comma Johanneum*, and why this added text is not found in modern Bible translations other than the NKJV, where it was added only to match the KJV.

The King James New Testament, on the other hand, was compiled from over 5000 copies of copies of the original manuscripts which have long since perished. Now please take careful note that this added text was found in only ONE of the 5000-plus manuscripts. THAT MEANS ADDED! And so there is not one major theologian that does not acknowledge this fact. And yet considering all the irrefutable facts, it is amazing that there are still some who go into denial rather than acknowledge this well-known corruption that is so famous that it has even been given its own name!

The English King James Bible, translated in 1611 AD, retains this Trinitarian forgery, but none of our modern translations have it except the NKJV, where it was added to match the KJV. The *King James Version* reads as follows, “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. 8 And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.” 1 John 5:7-8

Thus. the words [underlined above] are found in the KJV, NKJV, but are missing from almost every other translation. Thomas Nelson and Sons Catholic Commentary, 1951, page 1186 states, “*It is now generally held that this passage, called the Coma Johanneum, is a gloss*

*that crept into the text of the Old Latin and Vulgate at an early date, but found its way into the Greek text only in the 15th and 16th centuries.”*

Here is how 1 John 5:7-8 reads from the NIV and most other Bible translations. “*For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.*”

### ***How did the Comma Johanneum first get added?***

It began with Desiderius Erasmus and his “*Novum Instrumentum omne*,” which was the first New Testament in Greek to be published. This Greek text is also referred to as the *Textus Receptus*. Erasmus did not include the infamous Comma Johanneum of 1 John 5:7-8 in either his 1516 or 1519 editions of his Greek New Testament with very good reason. But it made its way into his third edition in 1522 because of pressure from the Catholic Church. After his first edition appeared in 1516, there arose such a furor over the absence of the *Comma* that Erasmus needed to defend himself. He argued that he did not put in the *Comma* Trinitarian formula because he found no Greek manuscripts that included it. Once one was produced called the Codex 61, that was written by one Roy or Froy at Oxford in c. 1520, he reluctantly agreed to include it in his subsequent editions. Erasmus probably altered the text because of politico-theologico-economic concerns. He did not want his reputation ruined, nor his *Novum Instrumentum* to go unsold. Thus it passed into the Stephanus Greek New Testament in 1551 (first New Testament in verses), which came to be called the *Textus Receptus*, and became the basis for the Geneva Bible New Testament in 1557 and the Authorized King James Version in 1611.

Scripture translator Benjamin Wilson gave the following explanation in his “*Emphatic Diaglott*.” Mr. Wilson says, “*This text concerning the heavenly witness is not contained in any Greek manuscript which was written earlier than the fifteenth century. It is not cited by any of the ecclesiastical writers; not by any of early Latin fathers even when the subjects upon which they treated would naturally have lead them to appeal to its authority. It is therefore evidently spurious.*”

Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible. Adam Clarke, LL.D., F.S.A., (1715-1832) explains in more detail.

*It is wanting in every MS. of this epistle written before the invention of printing, one excepted, the Codex Montfortii, in Trinity College, Dublin: the others which omit this verse amount to one hundred and twelve.*

*It is wanting in both the Syriac, all the Arabic, Ethiopic, the Coptic, Sahidic, Armenian, Slavonian, etc., in a word, in all the ancient versions but the Vulgate; and even of this version many of the most ancient and correct MSS. have it not. It is wanting also in all the ancient Greek fathers; and in most even of the Latin.*

*The words, as they exist in all the Greek MSS. with the exception of the Codex Montfortii, are the following:*

*“1 John 5:6. This is he that came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness because the Spirit is truth.*

*1 John 5:7. For there are three that bear witness, the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one.*

*1 John 5:9. If we receive the witness of man, the witness of God is greater, etc.”*

*The words that are omitted by all the MSS., the above excepted, and all the versions, the Vulgate excepted, are these: -*

*[In heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one, and there are three which bear witness in earth].*

*To make the whole more clear, that every reader may see what has been added, I shall set down these verses, with the inserted words in brackets.*

*“1 John 5:6. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.*

*1 John 5:7. For there are three that bear record [in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. 1 John 5:8. And there are three that bear witness in earth], the Spirit, and the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one.*

*1 John 5:9. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater, etc.”*

*Any man may see, on examining the words, that if those included in brackets, which are wanting in the MSS. and versions, be omitted, there is no want of connection; and as to the sense, it is complete and perfect without them; and, indeed much more so than with them. I shall conclude this part of the note by observing, with Dr. Dodd, “that there are some internal and accidental marks which may render the passage suspected; for the sense is complete, and indeed, more clear and better preserved, without it. Besides, the Spirit is mentioned, both as a witness in heaven and on earth; so that the six witnesses are thereby reduced to five, and the equality of number, or antithesis between the witnesses in heaven and on earth, is quite taken away. Besides, what need of witnesses in heaven? No one there doubts that Jesus is the Messiah; and if it be said that Father, Son, and Spirit are witnesses on earth, then there are five witnesses on earth, and none in heaven; not to say that there is a little difficulty in interpreting how the Word or the Son can be a witness to himself.”*

So, Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible makes the issue very clear as to exactly what was added. The square brackets have been bolded to make them clearer and easier to see what was added.

### ***1 John 5:7 Bible Translation List***

One might ask why this text is missing from almost every single Bible translation apart from the KJV and the NKJV. And why did the NKJV translators use this added text anyway, since it is absent from the manuscripts that they translated from? Does the fact that the translators of the NKJV Bible being Trinitarian have anything to do with that?

(A Conservative Version) “*Because those who testify are three.*”

(Analytical-Literal Translation) *“Because three are the Ones testifying.”*

(An Understandable Version-The New Testament) *“For there are three who give their testimony [about Jesus].”*

(American Standard Version) *“And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth.”*

(Bible Basic English) *“And the Spirit is the witness, because the Spirit is true.”*

(Contemporary English Version) *“In fact, there are three who tell about it.”*

(The Complete Jewish Bible) *“There are three witnesses -”*

(Common Edition, New Testament) *“And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is the truth.”*

(Darby) *“For they that bear witness are three.”*

(English Majority Text Version) *“For there are three that bear witness.”*

(English Standard Version) *“For there are three that testify.”*

(Good News Bible) *“There are three witnesses.”*

(God's Word) *“There are three witnesses.”*

(Holman Christian Standard Bible) *“For there are three that testify.”*

(The Hebrew Names Version) *“For there are three who testify.”*

(International Standard Version) *“For there are three witnesses-”*

(Living Oracles New Testament) *“And it is the Spirit who testified; because the Spirit is the truth.”*

(The Message) *“A triple testimony.”*

(New American Standard Bible) *“For there are three that testify.”*

(New Century Version) *“So there are three witnesses that tell us about Jesus.”*

(NET Bible) *“For there are three that testify,”*

(New International Reader's Version) *“There are three that give witness about Jesus.”*

(New International Version) *“For there are three that testify.”*

(New Living Translation) *“So we have these three witnesses -”*

(New Revised Standard Version Bible) *“There are three that testify.”*

(Revised Standard Version) *“And the Spirit is the witness, because the Spirit is the truth.”*

(Revised Version) *“And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth.”*

(The Scriptures 1998) *“Because there are three who bear witness:”*

(Twentieth Century New Testament) *“It is a three-fold testimony--”*

(Updated Bible Version) *“For there are three who bear witness,”*

(World English Bible) *“For there are three who testify:”*

So, we can see in the above list that only the KJV and the NKJV Bible have included the added text.

### ***What Did Other Experts and Historians Say?***

Martin Luther kept out verse 7 from his German Bible (1545). But in 1574 the printer Feyerabend added it to later editions of Luther's translation.

Note the words of The New Bible Commentary: Revised, *“Notice that AV [the Authorized Version] includes additional material at this point. But the words are clearly a gloss [an added note] and are rightly excluded by RSV [the Revised Standard Version] even from its margins.”* — (1970, p. 1269)

Dr. Neil Lightfoot, a New Testament professor says the textual evidence is against 1 John 5:7. *“Of all the Greek manuscripts, only two contain it. These two manuscripts are of very late dates, one from the fourteenth or fifteenth century and the other from the sixteenth century. Two other manuscripts have this verse written in the margin. All four manuscripts show that this verse was apparently translated from a late form of the Latin Vulgate.”* — (How We Got the Bible, 2003, pp. 100, 101)

The Expositor's Bible Commentary also dismisses the King James and New King James Versions' additions as *“obviously a late gloss with no merit.”* — (Glenn Barker, Vol. 12, 1981, p. 353)

The famous Edward Gibbon explains the reason for the discarding of this verse from the Bible with the following words:

*“Of all the manuscripts now extant, above fourscore in number, some of which are more than 1200 years old, the orthodox copies of the Vatican, of the Complutensian editors, of Robert Stephens are becoming invisible; and the two manuscripts of Dublin and Berlin are unworthy to form an exception...In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the Bibles were corrected by LanFrank, Archbishop of Canterbury, and by Nicholas, a cardinal and librarian of the Roman church, secundum Orthodoxam fidem. Notwithstanding these corrections, the passage is still wanting in twenty-five Latin manuscripts, the oldest and fairest; two qualities seldom united, except in manuscripts....The three witnesses have been established in our Greek Testaments by the prudence of Erasmus; the honest bigotry of the Complutensian editors; the typographical fraud, or error, of Robert Stephens in the placing of a crotchet and the deliberate falsehood, or strange misapprehension, of Theodore Beza.” — (Decline and fall of the Roman Empire, IV, Gibbon, p. 418)*

Gibbon was defended in his findings by his contemporary, the brilliant British scholar Richard Porson, who also proceeded to publish conclusive proof that 1 John 5:7 was first added by the Church in 400 A.D. Regarding Porson's evidence, Gibbon later said, *“His structures are founded in argument, enriched with learning, and enlivened with wit, and his adversary neither deserves nor finds any quarter at his hands. The evidence of the three heavenly witnesses would now be rejected in any court of justice; but prejudice is blind, authority is deaf, and our vulgar Bibles will ever be polluted by this spurious text.”*

No modern Bible now contains the interpolation called the Comma Johanneum. However, just as Gibbon had predicted, the simple fact that the most learned scholars of Christianity now unanimously recognize this verse to be a later interpolation of the Church has not prevented the preservation of this fabricated text in our modern Bibles. To this day, the Bible in the hands of the majority of Christians, such as the KJV, still unhesitantly includes this verse as the inspired word of God without



so much as a footnote to inform the reader that all scholars of Christianity of note unanimously recognize it as a later fabrication.

It was only the horrors of the great inquisitions which held back Sir Isaac Newton from openly revealing these facts to all. According to Newton, this verse first appeared for in the *third* edition of Erasmus's (1466-1536) New Testament.

Peake's Commentary on the Bible is very incisive as well, *"The famous interpolation after 'three witnesses' is not printed in RSV and rightly [so] . . . No respectable Greek [manuscript] contains it. Appearing first in a late 4th century Latin text, it entered the Vulgate [the 5th-century Latin version, which became the common medieval translation] and finally NT [New Testament] of Erasmus [who produced newly collated Greek texts and a new Latin version in the 16th century]."* — (p. 1038)

The Big Book of Bible Difficulties tells us, *"This verse has virtually no support among the early Greek manuscripts . . . Its appearance in late Greek manuscripts is based on the fact that Erasmus was placed under ecclesiastical pressure to include it in his Greek NT of 1522, having omitted it in his two earlier editions of 1516 and 1519 because he could not find any Greek manuscripts which contained it."* — (Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe, 2008, pp. 540, 541)

Theology professors Anthony and Richard Hanson, in their book *Reasonable Belief: A Survey of the Christian Faith*, explain the unwarranted addition to the text this way, *"It was added by some enterprising person or persons in the ancient Church who felt that the New Testament was sadly deficient in direct witness to the kind of doctrine of the Trinity which he favoured and who determined to remedy that defect . . . It is a waste of time to attempt to read Trinitarian doctrine directly off the pages of the New Testament."* — (1980, p. 171)

Thomas Nelson and Sons Catholic Commentary, 1951, page 1186, explains, *"It is now generally held that this passage, called the Gomma Johanneum, is a gloss that crept into the text of the Old Latin and*

*Vulgate at an early date, but found its way into the Greek text only in the 15th and 16th centuries.”*

A Commentary by Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown says, *“The only Greek manuscripts in any form which support the words, “in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one; and there are three that bear witness in earth,” are the Montfortianus of Dublin, copied evidently from the modern Latin Vulgate; the Ravianus, copied from the Complutensian Polyglot; a manuscript at Naples, with the words added in the Margin by a recent hand; Ottobonianus, 298, of the fifteenth century, the Greek of which is a mere translation of the accompanying Latin. All the old versions omit the words. The oldest manuscripts of the Vulgate omit them: the earliest Vulgate manuscript which has them being Wizanburgensis, 99, of the eighth century. ... Vigilius, at the end of the fifth century, is the first who quotes the disputed words as in the text; but no Greek manuscript earlier than the fifteenth is extant with them. The term “Trinity” occurs first in the third century in Tertullian.”*

*“Erasmus omitted the passage from the first printed Greek Testament of 1516, but undertook to introduce the words if a Greek manuscript containing them could be produced. He was faced with a late manuscript which did in fact contain the passage, and against his judgment kept his promise. So, by way of Erasmus' 1522 edition the interpolation invaded the text of the Greek New Testament. The action of the RV in cutting out the spurious words was tardy justice. We should treasure every word of the inspired record, but we want no invasion of that record by the addition of men, however sound the theology expressed.” — (F. M. Blaiklock, Commentary on the New Testament, p. 246)*

*“The Comma Johanneum (or Johannine Comma or Heavenly Witnesses) is a comma (a short clause) in the First Epistle of John, 1 John 5:7–8. The scholarly consensus is that that passage is a Latin corruption that entered the Greek manuscript tradition in subsequent copies.” — (Wikipedia, Comma Johanneum)*

“5:7 *tc* Before τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ καὶ τὸ αἶμα (to *pneuma* kai to *judwr* kai to *|aima*), the *Textus Receptus* (TR) reads ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὁ πατήρ, ὁ λόγος, καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἓν εἰσι. 5:8 καὶ τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῇ (“in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one. 5:8 And there are three that testify on earth”). This reading, the infamous *Comma Johanneum*, has been known in the English-speaking world through the King James translation. However, the evidence – both external and internal – is decidedly against its authenticity. For a detailed discussion, see TCGNT 647-49. Our discussion will briefly address the external evidence. This longer reading is found only in nine late mss, four of which have the words in a marginal note. Most of these mss (221 2318 [18th century] {2473 [dated 1634]} and [with minor variations] 61 88 429 629 636 918) originate from the 16th century; the earliest ms, codex 221 (10th century) includes the reading in a marginal note, added sometime after the original composition. The oldest ms with the *Comma* in its text is from the 14th century (629), but the wording here departs from all the other mss in several places. The next oldest mss on behalf of the *Comma*, 88 (12th century) 429 (14th) 636 (15th), also have the reading only as a marginal note (v.l.). The remaining mss are from the 16th to 18th centuries. Thus, there is no sure evidence of this reading in any Greek ms until the 14th century (629), and that ms deviates from all others in its wording; the wording that matches what is found in the TR was apparently composed after Erasmus’ Greek NT was published in 1516. Indeed, the *Comma* appears in no Greek witness of any kind (either ms, patristic, or Greek translation of some other version) until a.d. 1215 (in a Greek translation of the Acts of the Lateran Council, a work originally written in Latin). This is all the more significant since many a Greek Father would have loved such a reading, for it so succinctly affirms the doctrine of the Trinity. The reading seems to have arisen in a 4th century Latin homily in which the text was allegorized to refer to members of the Trinity. From there, it made its way into copies of the Latin Vulgate, the text used by the Roman Catholic Church. The Trinitarian formula (known as the *Comma Johanneum*) made its way

into the third edition of Erasmus' Greek NT (1522) because of pressure from the Catholic Church. After his first edition appeared, there arose such a furor over the absence of the Comma that Erasmus needed to defend himself. He argued that he did not put in the Comma because he found no Greek mss that included it. Once one was produced (codex 61, written in ca. 1520), Erasmus apparently felt obliged to include the reading. He became aware of this ms sometime between May of 1520 and September of 1521. In his annotations to his third edition he does not protest the rendering now in his text, as though it were made to order; but he does defend himself from the charge of indolence, noting that he had taken care to find whatever mss he could for the production of his text. In the final analysis, Erasmus probably altered the text because of politico-theologico-economic concerns: He did not want his reputation ruined, nor his *Novum Instrumentum* to go unsold. Modern advocates of the TR and KJV generally argue for the inclusion of the Comma Johanneum on the basis of heretical motivation by scribes who did not include it. But these same scribes elsewhere include thoroughly orthodox readings – even in places where the TR/Byzantine mss lack them. Further, these advocates argue theologically from the position of divine preservation: Since this verse is in the TR, it must be original. (Of course, this approach is circular, presupposing as it does that the TR = the original text.) In reality, the issue is history, not heresy: How can one argue that the Comma Johanneum goes back to the original text yet does not appear until the 14th century in any Greek mss (and that form is significantly different from what is printed in the TR; the wording of the TR is not found in any Greek mss until the 16th century)? Such a stance does not do justice to the gospel: Faith must be rooted in history. Significantly, the German translation of Luther was based on Erasmus' second edition (1519) and lacked the Comma. But the KJV translators, basing their work principally on Theodore Beza's 10th edition of the Greek NT (1598), a work which itself was fundamentally based on Erasmus' third and later editions (and Stephanus' editions), popularized the Comma for the English-speaking world. Thus, the Comma Johanneum has been a battleground for English-speaking

*Christians more than for others.*” — (NET Bible Commentary on 1 John 5:7-8)

Dr. Bruce M. Metzger wrote, “*After μαρτυροῦντες the Textus Receptus adds the following: ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὁ Πατήρ, ὁ Λόγος, καὶ τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα· καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἓν εἰσι. 8 καὶ τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῇ.* That these words are spurious and have no right to stand in the New Testament is certain in the light of the following considerations.

### **(A) External Evidence**

*(1) The passage is absent from every known Greek manuscript except eight, and these contain the passage in what appears to be a translation from a late recension of the Latin Vulgate. Four of the eight manuscripts contain the passage as a variant reading written in the margin as a later addition to the manuscript. The eight manuscripts are as follows:*

- 61: *codex Montfortianus, dating from the early sixteenth century.*
- 88: *a variant reading in a sixteenth century hand, added to the fourteenth-century codex Regius of Naples.*
- 221: *a variant reading added to a tenth-century manuscript in the Bodleian Library at Oxford.*
- 429: *a variant reading added to a sixteenth-century manuscript at Wolfenbüttel.*
- 629: *a fourteenth or fifteenth century manuscript in the Vatican.*
- 636: *a variant reading added to a sixteenth-century manuscript at Naples.*
- 918: *a sixteenth-century manuscript at the Escorial, Spain.*
- 2318: *an eighteenth-century manuscript, influenced by the Clementine Vulgate, at Bucharest, Rumania.*

*(2) The passage is quoted by none of the Greek Fathers, who, had they known it, would most certainly have employed it in the Trinitarian controversies (Sabellian and Arian). Its first appearance in Greek is in a Greek version of the (Latin) Acts of the Lateran Council in 1215.*

(3) *The passage is absent from the manuscripts of all ancient versions (Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Arabic, Slavonic), except the Latin; and it is not found (a) in the Old Latin in its early form (Tertullian Cyprian Augustine), or in the Vulgate (b) as issued by Jerome (codex Fuldensis [copied a.d. 541-46] and codex Amiatinus [copied before a.d. 716]) or (c) as revised by Alcuin (first hand of codex Vallicellianus [ninth century]).*

*The earliest instance of the passage being quoted as a part of the actual text of the Epistle is in a fourth century Latin treatise entitled Liber Apologeticus (chap. 4), attributed either to the Spanish heretic Priscillian (died about 385) or to his follower Bishop Instantius. Apparently the gloss arose when the original passage was understood to symbolize the Trinity (through the mention of three witnesses: the Spirit, the water, and the blood), an interpretation that may have been written first as a marginal note that afterwards found its way into the text. In the fifth century the gloss was quoted by Latin Fathers in North Africa and Italy as part of the text of the Epistle, and from the sixth century onwards it is found more and more frequently in manuscripts of the Old Latin and of the Vulgate. In these various witnesses the wording of the passage differs in several particulars. (For examples of other intrusions into the Latin text of 1 John, see 2.17; 4.3; 5.6, and 20.)*

### **(B) Internal Probabilities.**

(1) *As regards transcriptional probability, if the passage were original, no good reason can be found to account for its omission, either accidentally or intentionally, by copyists of hundreds of Greek manuscripts, and by translators of ancient versions.*

(2) *As regards intrinsic probability, the passage makes an awkward break in the sense.*

*For the story of how the spurious words came to be included in the Textus Receptus, see any critical commentary on 1 John, or Metzger, The Text of the New Testament, pp. 101 f.; cf. also Ezra Abbot, "1. John v. 7 and Luther's German Bible," in The Authorship of the Fourth Gospel and Other Critical Essays (Boston, 1888), pp. 458-463." — (Dr.*

Bruce M. Metzger on 1 John 5:7-8, from his book, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart, 1993)

One more for Seventh day Adventists.

*“The passage as given in the KJV is in no Greek MS earlier than the 15th and 16th centuries. The disputed words found their way into the KJV by way of the Greek text of Erasmus (see Vol. V, p. 141). It is said that Erasmus offered to include the disputed words in his Greek Testament if he were shown even one Greek MS that contained them. A library in Dublin produced such a MS (known as 34), and Erasmus included the passage in his text. It is now believed that the later editions of the Vulgate acquired the passage by the mistake of a scribe who included an exegetical marginal comment in the Bible text that he was copying. The disputed words have been widely used in support of the doctrine of the Trinity, but, in view of such overwhelming evidence against their authenticity, their support is valueless and should not be used. In spite of their appearance in the Vulgate A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture freely admits regarding these words: “It is now generally held that this passage, called the Comma Johanneum, is a gloss that crept into the text of the Old Latin and Vulgate at an early date, but found its way into the Greek text only in the 15th and 16th centuries” (Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1951, p. 1186).” — (The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 675)*

The Seventh-day Adventist Biblical Research Institute [BRI] also admits this text in 1 John 5:7 is added. So their final conclusion and advice to Seventh day Adventists was “...*you should not use this text.*” So, the SDA BRI and the SDA Bible Commentary both acknowledge this text is added and say it should not be used, and yet you constantly see Adventists and their key organizations using this verse anyway. So, Seventh-day Adventists are not following their own advice.

For Adventists: *“I saw that God had especially guarded the Bible; yet when copies of it were few, learned men had in some instances changed the words, thinking that they were making it more plain, when in reality they were mystifying that which was plain, by causing it to lean to their established views, which were governed by tradition. But I saw that the Word of God, as a whole, is a perfect chain, one portion*

*linking into and explaining another. True seekers for truth need not err; for not only is the Word of God plain and simple in declaring the way of life, but the Holy Spirit is given as a guide in understanding the way to life therein revealed.*” — (E.G. White, *EW*, 220.2, 1882)

#### SDA PIONEER D. W. HULL

*“The objector contends that Christ and his Father are one person, and in proof of his position quotes 1 John 5:7. ‘For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.’ This is claimed as very strong proof in support of the trinity. The three persons are spoken of as God, the Father, God, the Son, and God, the Holy Ghost. I believe I may safely say that, aside from scripture, no such license would be allowable. Men have been so used to perverting scripture, and taking advantage of terms, and pressing them into their service, that they do not realize the magnitude of the crime as they otherwise would. The same expression is frequently used about man and wife; yet no person doubts that a man and his wife are two separate persons, inasmuch as they may be separated by hundreds of miles. Dr. A. Clarke expressly says that this passage[1 John 5:7] is an interpolation. See his Commentary in loco.”* — (D. W. Hull, *Review and Herald* November 10, 1859)

#### SDA PIONEER J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH

*“The word Trinity nowhere occurs in the Scriptures. The principal text supposed to teach it is 1 John i, 7, which is an interpolation”* — (J. N. Loughborough, *Review and Herald* November 5, 1861)

#### SDA SABBATH SCHOOL QUARTERLY 2009

*“In some versions of the Bible the words ‘in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit’ and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth” appear in 1 John 5:7, 8 (NKJV). The only problem is they are a later addition, not found in the original manuscripts.*



*“Among biblical scholars there is agreement that this statement is not genuine and has been added, probably to support the doctrine of the Trinity...” — (Sabbath School Bible Study Guide: July – Sept 2009 pg 108)*

ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE: Question about 1 John 5:7

**Question:** *“Some years ago I had read some of your publications. At the time I seem to remember a discussion of the devinity of Christ. A refference to 1 John 5:7 was quoated but I can not find it...can you please tell me where this strong scriptual argument is used?*

*Thanking you in advance, dws”*

**Answer:** *“Thank you for contacting the Ellen G. White Estate. In answer to your question, though I have to tell you that I have not found any place in the published writings of Ellen G. White where she quotes this passage.*

*Perhaps that is just as well, because it may not be such a “strong scriptural argument” after all. The verse appears in no ancient Greek manuscript earlier than about the 13th century A.D. That is, despite its inclusion in the 1611 original of the King James Version translation into English, it is highly unlikely that it was in the \*original\* version of 1 John as John wrote it. No modern Bible translation that I am aware of includes it in the text except the New King James Version, and even this version carries a footnote about the text's absence from Greek manuscripts until relatively recent times. Apparently, it is some scribe's note to himself about the trinity, originally written in the margin of the manuscript he was copying, and later incorporated into the text by another scribe who may have been uncertain about whether or not it was a correction that belonged in the text; in any case, he opted to include it there.” — (<http://ellenwhite.org/content/file/did-ellen-g-white-believed-doctrine-trinity#document>)*

MINISTRY MAGAZINE: R. M. Johnston

*“The term ‘Trinity’ is nowhere to be found in the Bible. But the doctrine is there— this conclusion is inescapable. Nor need we be disturbed by the knowledge that certain words in 1 John 5:7, 8 are spurious additions that found their way into our King James Version from certain manuscripts of the Latin Vulgate, where they originated. For while it is true that no formal statement of the doctrine can be found in the most reliable Biblical manuscripts, nevertheless a comparison of Scripture with Scripture makes any contrary teaching untenable.” — (R. M. Johnston, Ministry, November 1964, *What can we know about the Holy Trinity?*)*

DENNIS FORTIN: Professor of Historical Theology

*“The New Testament does not have any explicit statement on the Trinity—apart from 1 John 5:7, which has been rejected as a medieval addition to the text...” — (Dennis Fortin, “God, the Trinity and Adventism”)*

When thirty-two Biblical scholars backed by fifty collaborating Christian denominations work together to compile the Revised Standard Version of the Bible based upon the most ancient Biblical manuscripts available to them today, there were some very extensive changes made. Among these was the unceremonious discarding of the verse of 1 John 5:7 as the fabricated insertion that it is, which never belonged in the inspired Word of God.

Even the added wording does not by itself proclaim the Trinity doctrine. The addition, illegitimate as it is, merely presents the Father, Word and Holy Spirit as witnesses. This says nothing about the personhood of all three since verse 7 shows inanimate water and blood serving as such.

And as seen on earlier pages, the word trinity did not come into common use as a religious term until after the Council of Nicea on May 20, 325 A.D. several centuries after the last books of the New Testament were complete, and is not a Biblical concept, but one that has been

proven to originate from pagan sun worship. See [the link/key words] the pagan origins of the trinity doctrine.

### ***Deception at its worst?***

For every truth, Satan always has a lie. But I could not believe that someone would actually try and claim that this text in 1 John 5:7-8 was removed from all the translations instead of it being added.

This person needs to understand the simple fact that if it was not in any of the original early manuscripts, but only appeared in the later manuscripts, then it has to be added. It does not take a genius to realize this, and yet someone who is trying to defend his belief in the trinity doctrine has gone down this path. You would think he would realize that a false teaching like this can be easily exposed as a lie by this simple fact. So it makes me wonder if this is deception at its worst or just a deliberate lie, but it is not for me to judge this person's heart from the remnantofgod website.

This person, while addressing Seventh-day Adventists, also claimed that the early Adventist pioneers recanted their stand as non-Trinitarians and the Holy Spirit not being a separate person. And yet there is no doubt that they did no such thing. Once again, it is easily proven from what they wrote, and many even to the year they died. Here is one example.

James White (husband of Ellen G. White) made numerous anti-Trinitarian statements and never changed his anti-Trinitarian stance, even in the year of his death in 1881, when he said, "*The Father was greater than the Son in that he was first.*" — (James White, *Review and Herald*, January 4, 1881, found in *EGW Review and Herald Articles*, vol. 1, p. 244)

Those who do the research will easily discover that what their web page [remnantofgod] and video states is incorrect, and will no doubt only make others realize that the trinity doctrine is not Biblical if dishonest techniques are needed to defend it. Sadly, this has also been

done by deliberately trying to discredit others who are honestly teaching what history and the Bible reveals.

The web page from this person starts by discussing Melchizedek and claims that a letter they have an image of says that Ellen G. White when asked, *'Who then is Melchizedek?'* She replied, *'I will tell you who Melchizedek was. He was the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, who took the form of humanity and represented the Lord Jesus to that generation.'*

I searched the internet for this phrase, and only two sites came up. One was his and the other was one that said that it is not *"accepted as an authentic statement from Sister White."* There are many web sites on Ellen White that contain all of her books and writings and this phrase does not appear on any of them, which also reveals it is not authentic.

A Seventh-day Adventist called LeRoy Froom was the man that searched the writings of Ellen White for anything that sounded Trinitarian, to try and change the Adventist Church to Trinitarian. Sadly, the quotes he used from Ellen White were successful. LeRoy Froom would have made this quote regarding Melchizedek one of his number one quotes if it were genuine, and yet no one has ever used it, as they all obviously know it is *"fake"* and cannot quote a legitimate source.

He also argued that since blasphemy against the Holy Spirit could not be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Son of God could, then the Holy Spirit must be a separate person. But by his own logic he has to exclude Jesus as being a person and fully divine. He concluded by saying, may God have mercy on the souls of anyone who did not agree with him. I have to say, may God have mercy on his soul if he is not genuinely deceived and knows he is teaching a lie!

## **Chapter 16**

### **The Shaking: What It Means and Its Cause**

“I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans....” (EW 270)

Jesus is that True Witness. That we are the Laodiceans cannot be doubted, nor have we Laodiceans reacted uniformly to the counsel of the True Witness, for we have not all humbly, gratefully received it, that we might be saved. Those who rise up against His counsel cause the shaking:

“...This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. [But] some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God’s people.

“I saw that the testimony of the True Witness has not been half heeded. The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded. This testimony must work deep repentance; all who truly receive it will obey it and be purified.” (Ibid.)

It is true that the testimony of Jesus has not been half heeded; indeed, it is lightly esteemed or entirely disregarded by many. Some actually rise up against it, to silence it. Because of all of that, the “destiny of the church hangs” in the balance. Our ability to proclaim the third angel’s message is also compromised.

#### **What is the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans?**

How can we know if we have accepted or rejected the straight testimony of the True Witness if we don’t know what it is? We need to

know now, for character is not developed in a crisis; it is revealed in a crisis. The preparation time is now.

Jesus is the “faithful and true witness” of Revelation 3:14-29. We know His warning about our condition of being “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” He counsels us to buy of Him “gold tried in the fire, that we may be rich,” and “white raiment, that we may be clothed, and that the shame of our nakedness not be revealed,” and “eye salve, that we may rightly see.” In love He chastens us, showing us the stark reality of our spiritually-impoverished condition and the remedies He offers us, if we will but consent and accept.

We have lost our first love and are lukewarm toward Him and toward those whom He would have us reach out to save. The self-sacrificing Philadelphia church that preceded Laodicea did not “deny His name.” It was the time of the “Great Awakening,” when interest in eternal matters was alive and widespread. But the Laodicean church, in their lukewarmness, misrepresents the character and purpose of God. They are so content, it’s as if they are almost asleep, in spite of the approaching crisis. Where is their deep interest in spiritual things? Where is their zeal for souls? Where is there a setting-aside of the world, a searching of God’s Word, and a living for Christ? The True Witness explicitly warns the church in our day, “So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.” By that warning He seeks to awake us to our danger. We may lose our crowns!

Ellen White wrote, relative to the True Witness’s wake-up call, “God calls for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation. Unless this takes place, those who are lukewarm will continue to grow more abhorrent to the Lord, until He will refuse to acknowledge them as His children.” (1SM 127)

## **Why a shaking now?**

We know that Ellen White believed the latter rain had begun to fall as a result of the 1888 message of righteousness by faith. Many received that understanding with joy; their religious experience became deep and transformational. Ellen White wrote in 1897 that “it is coming upon all who will recognize and appropriate the dew and showers of grace that fall upon us. When we gather up the fragments of light, when we appreciate the sure mercies of God, who loves to have us trust Him, then every promise will be fulfilled. (Isaiah 61:11 quoted.) The whole earth is to be filled with the glory of God.” (Letter 151, 1897; 7BC 984)

That beginning of the precious outpouring was coupled with the fact that Senator Blair’s proposed Sunday law was being heavily promoted at that time. This country was close to the establishment of a national religion and loss of religious liberty, which, for those who knew prophecy, was strong evidence that God was preparing to pour out His latter-rain Holy Spirit, and that the loud cry of the third angel was about to go forth with unparalleled power. Those only who entirely lived by faith in Christ’s righteousness would receive that outpouring, for only they would have a true, saving message to bear. We are to take eyes off self, and lift them heavenward, where our great Advocate faithfully pleads His blood for us.

God had sent that righteousness-by-faith message as a correction to His people, who had preached “the law, the law,” to the detriment of “the just shall live by faith.” He would strengthen them to be victorious in the upcoming severe battle for souls. Those who rejoiced and trusted fully in the truth of righteousness by faith could be trusted with the outpouring of His Spirit. But though the latter rain had begun to fall, it eventually stopped because so many in leadership rejected the message, and many of the laity were influenced to do the same. Many were thus left unprepared for Jesus’ return because of the pride and stubbornness of human hearts, so in mercy, the showers ceased.

God’s plan for our redemption has not been thwarted, though, and again the latter rain will fall. The truth for that time was the message of

righteousness by faith. By now, with opportunity to study the writings of the pioneers and of Ellen White related to that time, it should be accepted truth—reviving, transformational truth—but sadly, many are still unaware of that infinitely gracious gift.

When Ellen White wrote about the latter rain falling in her day, there was still unity among the pioneers regarding the Godhead. They were almost unanimous in their belief in one God and His one begotten Son. To them, the Holy Spirit was the indwelling power and presence of God and Christ. They knew in whom they believed. But Adventists are no longer united in their belief of who the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit really are. An alternate view of God and Christ and the Holy Spirit that was developed in the fourth and fifth centuries in a multitude of church councils of the apostate Christian church has been introduced and finally accepted into our own beliefs. J. N. Andrews wrote of the church's development of the Trinity doctrine, "The doctrine of the Trinity which was established in the church by the council of Nice, a. d. 325. This doctrine destroys the personality of God, and his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. The infamous measures by which it was forced upon the church, which appear upon the pages of ecclesiastical history, might well cause every believer in that doctrine to blush." (J. N. Andrews, *The Three Angels of Revelation* [1855], 54)

But God has not given up on us. I believe He is again bringing to the front a message intended to strengthen us for what is about to break upon His church and the world. To strengthen us, He is again correcting us, so that the message of truth we bear is one that we have come to trust in completely ourselves. Some will readily accept the correction; others will rise up against it. He can't pour out His Spirit on a divided people, but He can pour it out on one of the two groups into which His professed believers are being shaken. This is a most critical point. As will be discussed more thoroughly in the next chapter, it doesn't matter if we are faithful to keep the Sabbath holy, if the God we worship on that day is not the true Lord of the Sabbath—the One who created it in the first place. This is a salvational issue. There is a true and a counterfeit in this



matter, and we would be wise to investigate for ourselves. This matter was not an issue for the pioneers; they did not need correction in this area. But we do.

I am not claiming that the truth about the Godhead is the only truth being restored, in order to prepare us for an imminent and eventually ultimate test of faith. But I am claiming that it is a critically important truth to be restored—as critical to us now as was the understanding of righteousness by faith restored to God’s people in 1888 and onward. God’s people at that time were drifting into legalism, and a course correction was necessary. Brethren, I earnestly believe the Godhead truth is a most necessary truth that needs to be restored, and the sooner the better for God’s people and all with whom they come in contact. I believe when our people have their eyes opened to the fact that the Trinity doctrine violates the first commandment, they will be aroused out of their sleeping Laodicean self-satisfaction to seek the true Lord while He may be found. I know that it woke me up and changed my life greatly, and I hear the same from others whose eyes have been opened to it. Therefore, with God’s urging, I have written this book in an effort to reveal this wonderful, faith-building, saving truth to those who, in some way or another, have been kept from it. We must know whom we worship! Shall we receive the seal of the living God if He’s not the God we are worshipping?

### **Why the opposition?**

There are some who have “risen up against” the truth about Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They like things just as they are, or they think to defend the church against those who reject her teachings. It isn’t that non-trinitarians are against the church; it is because we love it that we seek to see it purified from false doctrines. And some of her members—those who haven’t immediately risen up against the truth—have embraced it. The majority seem to be those who “lightly esteem” or “disregard” this knowledge, content to let the leadership tell them what is truth. I pray that this book will convict them of their need to reevaluate their beliefs in this matter. “... *If the pillars of our faith will not stand*

*the test of investigation, it is time that we knew it....”* (TM 107) But there are those who are waking up to the long-obscured truths about the Godhead that are presented in this book. Others deeply regret their past stand on the Trinity; they feel it was time wasted, when they could have drunk more deeply from the fountain of life. They are now joyfully obedient to these truths and are being purified by the Spirit of truth. They have been galvanized into action in one sphere or another; they are no longer lukewarm and inactive.

It should be obvious by now that what the pioneers believed and taught about the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is not what our contemporary church believes and teaches. But many are not willing to believe that either they or their church could possibly be wrong. Either pride or blind trust in leadership prevents them from even considering what their brethren want them to investigate, but that reaction is contrary to the counsel of the Holy Spirit through Ellen White.

“Truth is eternal, and conflict with error will only make manifest its strength. We should never refuse to examine the Scriptures with those who, we have reason to believe, desire to know what is truth. Suppose a brother held a view that differed from yours, and he should come to you, proposing that you sit down with him and make an investigation of that point in the Scriptures; should you rise up, filled with prejudice, and condemn his ideas, while refusing to give him a candid hearing? The only right way would be to sit down as Christians and investigate the position presented in the light of God’s word, which will reveal truth and unmask error. To ridicule his ideas would not weaken his position in the least if it were false, or strengthen your position if it were true. If the pillars of our faith will not stand the test of investigation, it is time that we knew it. There must be no spirit of Pharisaism cherished among us.” (TM 107)

Many of those who have long believed or preached about the Godhead contrary to what is literally revealed in God’s Word and His Spirit of prophecy, when presented with irrefutable evidence, do not want to backtrack and admit that they are the ones who have erred in

their preaching and teaching of the erroneous view. It will require a humbling experience with deep repentance to right past wrongs, since many have published books or produced CDs and DVDs or YouTube videos, by which many have been misinformed. Fortunately, some will endure that humbling willingly, for the sake of souls, their own included—but most will resist. I used to be one of those who resisted, as I originally rose up against the so-called “pioneer movement” with anger. I had taught the erroneous view and defended it. Years later, though, and with a dear friend’s urgings, I decided to research the writings of the pioneers in detail—including those of Ellen White. I thank God that I did. I am a changed man, and as a result, with God’s leading, I have written this book to help my resisting brethren and those inquiring for the first time to see what has been hidden from us for much too long.

### **Shaken into one of two camps**

The truth(s) that brings on the shaking will be one or more truths that affect the whole church, and not a group here or there. The health message doesn’t cause the shaking, as many less-interested SDAs don’t rise up against it; they just silently disregard it. Any message causing a shaking will be one that makes a normally humble, quiet person, become extremely agitated. That could be said for the women’s ordination issue currently dividing our church, but this book is not about that, nor are members being disfellowshipped for advocating a position contrary to the world church’s decision against ordaining women. When it comes to the issue of the Godhead, though, almost every church, and certainly pastors and evangelists and leaders from the local level to as high as you can go, are being confronted with this very relevant issue. Sadly, many are rising up against it. The Trinity doctrine is dividing our church, and that very agitation—and more—is what I personally experienced when I was a Trinitarian. I know whereof I speak on this topic. I got angry and defensive because I knew—but wouldn’t admit and couldn’t explain why—how weak and defenseless the Trinitarian position was. Now I know of the evidence that strongly supports the

pioneers' non-trinitarian position. As a non-trinitarian, I observe others getting agitated and very angry the way I used to, and want to help them.

According to Trinitarian Jerry Moon, one of the Andrews University co-authors of the book *The Trinity*, our denominational shift from non-trinitarianism to Trinitarianism was never complete in the first place. He wrote, "I had heard about important teachers and denominational leaders who had lived into the 1950s and 1960s while holding strongly anti-Trinitarian views." Interest in the topic in general waned after those individuals died, but then the "present revival of interest in the subject of the Godhead is the convergence of Ellen White's counsel to reprint and study the words of the early Adventist pioneers and their availability on CD-ROMs. The explosion of electronic technology has empowered laypersons (with little investment of time or money) to have immediate access to all the early pioneer statements by simply typing in appropriate words or phrases. To put it quite simply, we now have a renewed awareness of the wide-ranging anti-Trinitarian views of the pioneers of the Advent movement." (Whidden, Moon and Reeve, *The Trinity* (Hagerstown: RH, 2002), 8-9)

In recent decades, the number of serious-minded Adventists who have devoted considerable time to research our beginnings as a movement and how our beliefs were established has grown considerably. High-level meetings are being held to determine how this doctrinal reform movement can be stopped, and possibly reversed, since it runs contrary to the current official position of the church—which itself runs contrary to the original view of the church on this topic when the Spirit of prophecy was active in their midst. In those places where the Fundamental Beliefs are held as a creed determining membership, members have been disfellowshipped for not conforming their beliefs to the new view of the Godhead. Some older members of our denomination who have been members for fifty years or more are quite dismayed at what has happened in their church.

No other issue has shaken the Seventh-day Adventist Church to its core like the division between Trinitarian and non-trinitarian members.

No other topic has resulted in disfellowshipping or censuring or prevention of office-holding, as has this one—not even women’s ordination. Worldwide, church members have been shaken into one of two camps on the specific issue of who God is—i.e., whether or not it is true that God is three gods in one. In actuality, there is even a more fundamental issue than that. It boils down to whether God’s inspired holy Word can be accepted as it literally reads, except when symbolic language is used (which is how the writings of Ellen White instruct us to read it), or whether its true meaning can be gained only when a hermeneutic of metaphor is employed for certain passages. But the very selectivity regarding when the metaphor is deemed necessary tells us of the real issue in this matter. The metaphor is called into use to reinterpret the true relationship between Father and Son, as explicitly revealed in Scripture, to be a temporary, metaphorical relationship. Thus, it becomes obvious that the core issue is not the authority of the church in world session, nor even the literal truth of God’s Word, though both are involved. The critical, pivotal, foundational issue that one doesn’t discover unless one searches for the true cause of the division ... is the *Sonship of Jesus*.

It was in heaven that Satan’s jealousy of the Son of God developed into hatred, and then into outright war against the government of God. That hatred has continued ever since; the New Testament contains abundant evidence of Satan’s attempt to destroy humanity’s belief in Jesus’ Sonship, which means everything to us. Jesus Himself was challenged repeatedly, “*If thou be the Son of God...*” The Spirit of prophecy tells us that Satan and his evil cohorts “would obscure,” if they could, the “fact” that “Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God.” (TDG 128) You’d think with all the writings of the Spirit of prophecy that God has so graciously given us, with all the explanations of the Bible therein, we would not be taken in by Satan’s attempt to hide this from us, but it seems that his subtle, sophisticated ploy has been successful in our beloved denomination, for we officially believe Jesus is not really the Son of God. Adventists are assured—without inspired evidence—that Jesus can’t be both God *and* Son, so ... His true Sonship

has been denied while His divinity has been emphasized. His Sonship has been reinterpreted to be only metaphorical and only temporary. But God has not left us in that error; He has aroused many to this dangerous teaching in our midst, which has been shaking this church into two groups or camps, as stated earlier.

Camp #1, of course, would at present be the majority of the church, and that would be those who believe in the Trinity teachings. This camp is not united except in its rejection of the literal word of God. The camp is otherwise divided, since it holds two different main views and any number of private understandings.

One main view is in harmony with Roman Catholicism's teaching of one God with three different manifestations. The other view in the Camp #1 trinitarian position claims three separate, self-existent gods who are said to be an inseparable "unity" called "God." These three are said to be co-equal and co-eternal, supposedly role-playing "Father" and "Son" and "Holy Spirit" in the divine plan for our salvation. No one of the three is to have preceded or come after the other two. As in the Catholic view, so in this view: there can be no true Father-Son relationship. This time it is because they are co-eternal. Only in the metaphor are two of the three coeternal gods called "Father" and "Son," and then only temporarily. Thus are true Father and true Son "made non-entities," as Sister White warned. Some who claim to be historic Adventists and who believe that this was the position of the pioneers need to re-evaluate the evidence that can be found in the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy.

A subset of this second Trinitarian view is the theological conception that rejects Adventism's official "three-in-one" concept of God, yet nonetheless retains the notion of three coeternal, self-existent, sovereign gods. This view is tritheism, and it not only denies the apostolic affirmation that "to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things" (1 Cor 8:6), but it also rejects the words of Jesus Himself, in His calling the Father "the only true God," the One "greater than" Himself. (John 17:3; John 10:29; 17:28) This view also denies the

sovereignty of the Father over all, it denies the divine Sonship of Jesus Christ, and it changes the identity of the Holy Spirit.

Camp #2 would be those who take the non-trinitarian position, avowing belief in the only true, eternal God the Father, His only begotten Son Jesus, and the omnipresent Spirit of both the Father and His Son, called the Holy Spirit. That view is based on a literal reading of God's Word. The non-trinitarian position is that, far back in eternity, Jesus came forth from the Father, i.e., was begotten in the obvious, millennia-old meaning of the word that involves parentage. His personality, or His personhood, had its beginning then. How the Father replicated Himself or birthed the Son, we have no information, other than what was revealed. The Son is of the same substance as the Father (7C 437), and non-trinitarians believe that, through inheritance, the Father gave His Son all of His divine attributes, such as omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. (ST Nov. 27, 1893; Heb 1:4) This was the pioneers' position, established and confirmed by the Holy Spirit's repeated involvement as they studied to settle on the permanent beliefs of our faith. Ellen White wrote that God Himself, through His Spirit, gave them "a line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God...." (3MR 412) It is an absolute insult to God to challenge what was established by His own Spirit in the critical period of 1844 to 1846.

### **The Nature of God**

The nature of God, our *Fundamental Beliefs* tell us, is triune, i.e., three divine individuals who are somehow one divine individual. Beyond the truly nonsensical and mystical aspect of that theology, there is a larger issue of obedience. We are not to delve into the nature of God; it is impossible for us to know His nature—other than it is divine—since it has not been revealed to us. Anything we may say beyond what is *explicitly revealed* is pure speculation. It would mean we have trusted in our own human ability to "read between the lines," to extract from God's Word what He has not said, but may have implied. We trust in "clues," rejecting plain statements that disagree with the preconceptions

we bring to our study of the Bible. The truth is, there is nothing is God's Word or the Spirit of prophecy to tell us He is a three-in-one God—or that there are three sovereign Gods instead of one—so to claim those things are true is to disobey the command of God through His holy Spirit: "...The revelation of Himself that God has given in His word is for our study. This we may seek to understand. But *beyond this we are not to penetrate*. The highest intellect may tax itself until it is wearied out in conjectures regarding the nature of God, but the effort will be fruitless. *This problem has not been given us to solve*. No human mind can comprehend God...." (MH 429)

To proclaim as truth something that cannot be sustained by God's Word is to bear false witness—a violation of the ninth commandment. In other words, a person is guilty if he passes on a falsehood, for he has opportunity to verify what he says before speaking. God will forgive, if repentance is forthcoming. We are counseled to do what we can to undo any damage we may have caused by our ill-informed words. The principle referring to material things applies alike to some spiritual things: "This work of making things right as far as human power could, was in the order of God." (1888 *Materials*, 62)

### **Has our church really speculated regarding His nature?**

Despite the inspired warning not to penetrate beyond what God has revealed about Himself, it appears that Adventism's Biblical Research Institute has indeed entered into speculation concerning God's nature. In its publication *God in Three Persons—in Theology* (2015), it is admitted that "no text of Scripture specifically says that God is three Persons." (p. 20) Despite that admission, it is also stated that the second fundamental belief, "which deals directly with the Trinity, has only this to say about the being of God: 'There is one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, a unity of three co-eternal Persons.' The statement seems to deliberately attempt to state only the basic facts about God's nature...." (p. 18)

Where is the support for those "facts about God's nature," since "no text of Scripture specifically says that God is three Persons"? Frankly,



to say that God is a unity of three co-eternal Persons is speculation, is it not? What else can it be, since it has not been revealed to us in Scripture? And have we not been warned specifically not to “indulge in speculation regarding His nature”? (MH 429)

We must be careful not to be drawn into error. “If men would use their reason, and take the Bible as it reads, they would see the absurdity of their positions. The plain ‘Thus saith the Lord,’ would dispel their errors, as the mist is dispelled by the glories of the rising sun.” (ST Aug. 5, 1886)

“Christ came to represent the Father to man. He revealed the nature of God to the world....” (RH April 30, 1889) Did He somehow convey God as a “unity” of three Persons? Was that in His teaching at all, or in the teaching of His apostles? No. He and they revealed God’s nature of love.

### **God’s Word vs man’s word**

The words that begin the *Fundamental Beliefs* regarding the Son and the Holy Spirit are not found in the Bible, nor are they found in the Spirit of prophecy. They are the deliberate choice of men. Therefore, the concepts of “God the eternal Son” and “God the eternal Spirit” reflect man’s concept of Son and Holy Spirit, as opposed to the biblical revelation of them. It doesn’t take much wisdom to see that the Bible’s literal “Son of God” doesn’t support the *Fundamental Beliefs* emphasis on “God the Son’s” divinity. That emphasis on divinity reflects the Trinitarian claim that Jesus can’t be both God and Son, which then presumes to cast doubt on His literal Sonship. However, in Scripture, the Father Himself refers to Jesus as both God and Son.

Division arises concerning the human-originated term “God the eternal Spirit,” too. That term supports the Trinitarian or tritheistic concept of three gods, but in the Bible, the term for the Holy Spirit is the possessive phrase “Spirit of God” or “Spirit of Christ” or even “His Spirit.” Thus it seems that in 1980, the proposed Fundamental Beliefs concerning the Trinity were written for the consideration of the General Conference session delegates with such wording as to seem to honor

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which would naturally encourage a favorable vote for the new doctrine. In fact, though, once the details of the doctrine are known, it can be seen that they dishonor, diminish, and/or deny Them. Our present *Fundamental Beliefs* changed the Godhead into something that has brought Adventism doctrinal harmony with the worldly churches, but internal doctrinal discord.

“Why is it, then, that persecution seems in a great degree to slumber? The only reason is that the church has conformed to the world’s standard, and therefore awakens no opposition. *The religion which is current in our day is not of the pure and holy character that marked the Christian faith in the days of Christ and His apostles.* It is only because of the spirit of compromise with sin, because the great truths of the Word of God are so indifferently regarded, because there is so little vital godliness in the church, that Christianity is apparently so popular with the world. Let there be a revival of faith and power of the early church, and the spirit of persecution will be revived, and the fires of persecution will be rekindled.” (GC 48; ChS 159)

Persecution for Adventists slumbers because our church, as a whole, has fallen for Satan’s false teaching concerning the God and the Son of God that he hates. We have forgotten the vitalizing, motivating truth about who He is, and who His Son is. They are real divine Persons, not metaphors. They personally come to us. Our sovereign Creator and the Lamb of God, who takes away our sins, come to dwell in us, to guide and sanctify us. It’s not yet too late, so God, in mercy, is shaking His church again.

“God’s people will be tested and proved. The plain and pointed testimony must act a prominent part in this work. In these days of darkness and peril, who is able to stand and speak the whole truth? Multitudes of teachers prophesy smooth things. They see no special cause of alarm in the present condition of the professed people of God. The people are asleep, and the teachers are asleep. They cry, Peace, peace, and the multitude that hear believe their report and are at ease. This makes the necessity greater for faithful teachers to bear the pointed,

faithful testimony. The present is a time of scouring and purifying, a time of warfare and trial. The house of Israel is being sifted, even as corn is sifted in a sieve. The chaff must be removed, and it will require close work to separate the chaff from the kernels of grain. God's discerning eye will detect the smallest particle of chaff, and yet he will not cause to fall upon the ground the least kernel of grain." (RH Nov. 26, 1861)

Who is responsible for this condition of our church, and who can remedy it, so souls aren't lost? "Whatever may be their profession, it is only those who are world servers at heart that act from policy rather than principle in religious things. We should choose the right because it is right, and leave consequences with God. To men of principle, faith, and daring, the world is indebted for its great reforms. By such men the work of reform for this time must be carried forward." (GC 460) "The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall." (Ed 57)

### **"Rising up" against the Straight Testimony**

The Trinitarian position is pure deception, and the non-trinitarian position is solid, verifiable truth. I believe the reason some get so upset with non-trinitarians is that they really don't understand the Trinity doctrine in the first place. I say that because I once was where they still are. I taught it and defended it, but could never really understand it. I rose up against the truth regarding the Holy Spirit when some non-trinitarians told me that the Holy Spirit is not a third god-being. This is why non-trinitarians have compassion for these deceived ones, just as Sabbath-keepers have compassion for those who keep Sunday.

After I became a non-trinitarian, I experienced this "rising up against" behavior against myself when I was a guest speaker on a popular New York telephone ministry, where thousands would be on the line at the same time, listening. In the course of my topic for that day, I made mention of the fact that

Jesus was begotten way back in eternity. Recordings of that day's presentation were not made available, as was the customary procedure. That evening two of the moderators called me. Brother D. told me that if I wished to continue, I must change the subject matter. The usually calm and placid Pastor B. was extremely angry with me, which surprised me. I told both men that I could but give the message that God had given me to present. I was disinvented to speak and was quickly replaced. Brothers and sisters around the world are experiencing similar rough and cold treatment. In fact, when churches do not want non-trinitarian influences in their churches, they sometimes move to disfellowship such members, or in other ways to blunt their influence.

We read this important counsel for those who may become discouraged by those who rise up against the truth about the Godhead: "I beseech those who are laboring for God *not to accept the spurious for the genuine*. Let not human reason be placed where divine, sanctifying truth should be. Christ is waiting to kindle faith and love in the hearts of His people. Let not erroneous theories receive countenance from the people who ought to be standing firm on the platform of eternal truth. God calls upon us to hold firmly to the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority." (CCh 326)

This one tell us to "hold the line": "No line of truth that has made the Seventh-day Adventist people what they are, is to be weakened. We have the old landmarks of truth, experience, and duty, and we are to stand firmly in defense of our principles, in full view of the world." (6T 17; CW 52)

We know on which side of the issue Sister White and the pioneers stood, and where a growing number of Adventists around the world have taken their stand, but where will you take your stand? Will you permit yourself to be shaken into or out of God's truth? I appeal to you to make a decision for life eternal. The seal of the living God is for those who truly know Him and love Him as God's Word plainly, literally reveals Him to be—the one God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our God and Father, too.

## Chapter 17

### **“The Seal” and “the Mark:” The Correct Version**

When Adventists talk about the subject of the seal and the mark, most will state that they know that the seal of God is the Sabbath and the mark of the beast is Satan’s counterfeit sabbath, which is Sunday. Unfortunately, the way these terms are currently taught has produced a dangerous condition among Adventists. We feel safe and secure in our knowledge of what prophecy has told us is soon to happen concerning Sunday exaltation and enforcement. Surely, *we* would not transgress by honoring the false sabbath.

However, we may be under a false understanding as to what the seal and the mark really are, which is what Satan would want for us. It’s time to re-examine what we do believe, in case there is something we may have missed that might be causing us to fall short of the knowledge and will of God our Father.

I must emphatically state right now that the issue is a lot greater than on what day we worship. In this chapter, I will explain, point by point.

Revelation 7:2-3 says this: “And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.”

Now back to verse 2: “And I saw another angel ascending from the east, *having the seal of the living God*....” The seal belongs to someone. Who is the owner of this seal? The living God. A lot of people pass right over this, but it is important.

Who is the living God? Matthew 16:15-16 records Jesus speaking to the disciples: “He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the *living God*.” From this verse we learn that God the Father would be the *owner of the seal*, and Christ is His Son.

1 Thessalonians 1:9-10: “For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the *living and true God*; And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.” So, in summary, the Father is the owner of the seal. He is the living and true God, and He has a Son. In the illustration, the Son is named in parentheses with the Father, because “no man cometh unto the Father, except by [Him].” (John 14:6)

Now get this next point: The seal does not belong to a group or a committee. It belongs to only one person, and that person is God the Father. This biblical fact is very important and often overlooked. Understanding this point will help us better understand the mark; on the other hand, if we *misunderstand* something about the seal, then we will likely miss something about the mark.

Revelation 14:1: “And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his *Father’s name* written in their foreheads.” The 144,000 have the *seal* of the living God in their foreheads, which is the *Father’s name*. The forehead represents the mind, where individual decisions are made; the Father’s name there represents God’s character, developed in the transformed believer by the “renewing of [his or her] mind” (Rom 12:2), and thus God claims them as His, sealing them with His own sacred name.

Matthew 22:37: “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with *all thy mind*.” The biblical term “heart” is equivalent to today’s word “mind.” The verse speaks of a total, intelligent commitment to God. What happens in the

heart/mind? That's where the motive for an act of worship originates; it's where the Father's name is written. We are His, body and mind, and He claims us as His own. Thus, to love God involves every aspect of our being, including our understanding.

When Jesus was talking to the woman at the well, He told her, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." (John 4:23) In these last days true worshippers are worshipping whom? The Father. And they are sealed with the seal of the living God, who is the Father. They have the Father's name in their foreheads/hearts/minds; they are His. They have come to think as He does.

So, what about the Sabbath? In talking about the seal of God, I am not minimizing the importance of the Sabbath. We read in Ezekiel 20:12, "Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, *to be a sign* between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them." Now, who is "the LORD" spoken of here? When you see "LORD" spelled in all capitals, it is Jehovah, in English, or *Yahweh*, in Hebrew. It is God the Father alone. He alone sanctifies us—something we can never do for ourselves. Now the **sign**, which is the Sabbath, has never been our destination; it's not even the primary focus for our obedience. "Remembering to keep holy the Sabbath day" was to be an outward or visible sign that the true and living God the Father was dwelling in His people by His Spirit, but it is His presence that makes us holy and sanctifies us. That is a critical distinction to be made here. The shocking fact is, it is possible to keep the outward, visible sign but *not have the Father's presence* within us. How can that be? As we will learn in this chapter, in the beliefs of so many, the promised presence of the Father is set aside in favor of some other being.

### **More than the fourth commandment**

Too many Adventists think they are safe from risk of eternal loss. Because they choose to honor God's Sabbath at present and intend to do so in the future, they believe they have God's seal in their frontal

lobes, which belief leads them to think they will never get the mark of the beast. But are they really safe? Not necessarily. Keeping the Sabbath (sign) does not mean you have the promised reality (the Father's presence). It would be one of the greatest tragedies to go into the time of trouble, committed to obedience to the desecrated fourth commandment, and then end up on the wrong side.

This is all about worship. As our sure guide, God's fourth commandment tells us WHEN and WHY and HOW we are to worship. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.... In it thou shalt do no work...." Why? Because the Sabbath is the day of rest God initiated for man after His work of Creation, that each week we may acknowledge and honor our Creator by obediently resting then. But notice that the fourth commandment comes after three others that also deal with worship. The first tells us unmistakably WHO we are to worship—the sovereign Ruler of the universe, the source of all things: "I am the LORD thy God.... Thou shalt have no other gods before me." The second tells us WHAT we worship. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image...." God is a living Being that cannot be represented by inanimate things. Further, man has no ability to represent the holiness and perfection of God, and in his weakness may be tempted to worship a physical image rather than the infinitely-superior, invisible reality. The third tells us HOW we are to worship: "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain...." We are not to take the privileged name of "Christian" lightly; nor bring dishonor upon that name by our words and actions. Nor are we ever to speak the name of Jehovah without due reverence. The first four commandments contain even more instruction than is noted here. The point is, God has not left it to us fallen beings to figure out who, how, when, why, and what to worship. He has given us divine guidance, so our worship is redemptive, and not "in vain."

All four of these commandments will be involved in the final conflict, but Adventists have isolated the fourth commandment as the all-important one for the last days, to the exclusion of the other three.



That is simplistic and shallow biblical exegesis, but that is what we have done in our time. Doing so is not unprecedented, as the Jews did a similar thing in the time of Christ. Look at John 8:42: “Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.” You see, the Jews claimed that God was their Father, but they rejected His Son, in spite of all the evidence in Scripture and what they had witnessed of Jesus’ works and teachings. They were stringent Sabbath-keepers, but could not bring themselves to accept that Jesus was the Son of God.

A little while later, in John 12:44, “Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on *him that sent me*.” Now the Jews, in rejecting Christ, were really rejecting whom? The Father. But the Jews believed that they *had* the Father and to prove that, they were excellent Sabbath-keepers. They were keeping the law, at least outwardly—the “letter” of it, though not the “spirit” of it. Doing so gave them a sense of safety and security, a belief that they had the approval of God, even while they were rejecting the Lord of the Sabbath! So, what did Sabbath-keeping do for them? Absolutely nothing—because they failed to acknowledge the Son of the God of the first commandment. In rejecting the Son, they rejected the Father who sent Him.

In AD 70, over one million Jews were destroyed in Jerusalem ... while they were keeping the Sabbath. This example has a parallel with another group of people in the last days who also keep the Sabbath.

Jesus taught in John 5:23 “that all men should *honour the Son*, even as they *honour the Father*. He that honoureth *not the Son* honoureth *not the Father* which hath *sent him*.” And this is what the Jews did when they rejected Him, failing to recognize Him *as the Son of God*. This is so important! We do not want to fail to recognize Jesus as the *literal* Son of God and the wonderful fact that the Father sent His Son to redeem us. We are in trouble if we miss that point. Today, unfortunately, we as a denominated people fail to give the “Lord of the Sabbath day”—the Son, as well as the Father—the honor due them on the Sabbath. We

think more about the “how” and “when” of Sabbath than we do the “who” and “why” of the Sabbath. We have idolized the Sabbath and magnified Sabbath-keeping to the point where we have made it our Savior. In other words, our trust and our confidence is in the fact that we keep the Sabbath. We have a sense of pride in our understanding of Bible prophecy; we know what God’s Word says about final events on earth not long before Jesus’ return. We reason, “Those poor Christians that go to church on Sunday. They don’t want to hear about the true Sabbath.” But the fact is, most SDAs do not understand all the issues, either. If things do not change, we will find ourselves totally unprepared for the time of trouble. This is serious. And it’s difficult to remedy. You know the Sabbath-keeping Jews condemned Jesus, the Son of God and Lord of the Sabbath, for Sabbath-breaking. There is a similar problem today, because when a person tries to highlight Jesus as the *literal* begotten Son of God, he or she is told that that topic is an irrelevant side issue—that the upcoming test of loyalty is all about the Sabbath. But we know what happened to the Jews who kept the Sabbath but rejected the Lord of the Sabbath. Therefore, we need to wake up, because the Jews at that time are a picture of us today, and God wants us to see that. “Christians have condemned the Jewish nation for rejecting the Saviour; but many who profess to be followers of Christ are doing even worse than did the Jews, for they are rejecting greater light in despising the truth for this time.” RH Nov. 5, 1889

The wise man said, “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.” (Ecclesiastes 1:9) Accordingly, God’s prophet wrote this: “Satan is working that the history of the Jewish nation may be *repeated* in the experience of those who claim to believe present truth. The Jews had the Old Testament Scriptures, and supposed themselves conversant with them. But they made a woeful mistake. The prophecies that refer to the glorious second appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven they regarded as referring to His first coming. Because He did not come according to their expectations, they turned away from

Him. Satan knew just how to take these men in his net, and deceive and destroy them.” (17MR 13)

The Jews had believed they understood the Scriptures; they had a certain expectation of what was going to happen. When it didn’t happen according to their understanding, they rejected what did happen and ended up being lost. “...Because of unbelief they were broken off.... For if God spared not the natural branches....” (Rom 11:20-21)

### **Right day, yes, but right God?**

We believe we have all we need to know about the seal and the mark; we have all our charts and studies. But what if we have missed something *very* significant? There could be something very important in the Scriptures that we’ve overlooked or forgotten, but by the time it is realized and accepted by the majority, it could be too late of a wake-up call for a lot of people. There are people whose salvation will depend on how they respond to *present truth*. Let’s consider that thought more deeply:

“Those who would have the seal of God in their foreheads must keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.” (7BC 970; LDE 220) Now this makes it clear that God’s last-day people must keep the Sabbath, which is an outward sign, in order to have the inward seal in their foreheads.

“True observance of the Sabbath is the sign of loyalty to God.” (7BC 981) But! Here is present truth: If you have the right sign, but you don’t have the right god, you will be in a state of fatal deception. You will be practicing loyalty to another god—as if there really were another. The biblical truth is that there is “no God beside” the “only true God,” the “God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Isa 45:5; John 17:3; Eph 1:3) Any other god is a false god, which invites idolatry.

“Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads--it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved--just as soon as God’s people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come.

Indeed, it has begun already.” (4BC 1161; LDE 219) So the sealing is a settling into the what? The truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so God’s people cannot be moved from that truth.

Question: What is the first thing we think of when we hear “the seal”? Most people would answer “the Sabbath.” But it is the owner of the Sabbath that should be the first answer from our mouths, because it is the seal of the “living God.” The truth of the living God, and the settling into that truth, is part of the seal. The seal is not settling into error, especially when that error has to do with the living God. Most SDAs, in their acceptance of a different god, have settled into error. The seal of God is given to whom only? “The servants of our God.” It is put “upon the foreheads [only] of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.” (Rev 7:3; Ezek 9:4) Now let me ask you a question. What is more important: *When* you worship, or *whom* you worship? *Whom*, of course! And God stated that as His very first commandment.

Jesus said in John 12:26, “If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.” The servants of God will be following Jesus and will be sealed, because they will have settled into what is called *present truth*.

Switching topics somewhat, what is the first thing we think of when we say the “mark of the beast”? We say, “Sunday.” It’s what we have been taught. But please note, the seal and the mark have parallel characteristics. Worshipping on Sunday, according to the beast’s decree, is an outward “sign of allegiance to Rome,—‘the mark of the beast.’” (GC 449) “The change of the Sabbath is a sign or mark of the authority of the Romish Church. [It is] the papal sabbath, which has been accepted by the world in the place of the day of God’s appointment.” (ST Nov. 8, 1899) But Sunday worship, by itself, is not the main issue, for there is something additional regarding that day, as there is with the seventh-day Sabbath—something more important than the choice of days. The whole matter of the day of worship is about

whether we will worship the God of the Sabbath or the god of Sunday. One can do many outward Sabbath- or Sunday-related actions, but it is the heart that God sees. Who has our heart? What is our conception of the God we claim to love and serve?

Revelation 13:16, 17: “And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the *mark*, or the *name* of the beast, or the number of his name.” What does this tell us about the beast? Simply that he has a *mark*, he has a *name*, and there is a number of his name. Read carefully: If you have any one of these three things, you’re on the wrong side.

What is his name? Revelation 13:1: “And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.” The *name of blasphemy*. What is “blasphemy”? Blasphemy is to make a mortal person God, which he is not, or for a man to claim the prerogatives of God, which do not belong to any mortal. That is blasphemy. And, of course, the Pharisees accused Jesus of blasphemy on two occasions. One time was when they said that He was a man claiming to be God, and another time was when He, being a man, claimed to forgive sins. We know that, as the Son of God, He committed no blasphemy. Think about this for a moment: the name the beast carries on its heads is blasphemy against God. God’s true people have the name of the God they worship in their foreheads: the true and living God. When people obey the beast, knowing from God’s Word that it carries the name of blasphemy on its historical heads—or when they could have known that, had they cared to read God’s Word to learn His will—then they accept as their spiritual leader a heaven-despising, God-defying earthly power that does not transform them, nor can it save them from their sins. They will have chosen death.

There’s more to this satanic deception of substituting Sunday for the true Sabbath of God’s fourth commandment. This is from the Vatican archives, from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #234: “The

mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith and life. It is the mystery of God in himself. It is therefore the *source of all the other mysteries* of faith, the light that enlightens them. It is *the most fundamental and essential teaching* in the ‘hierarchy of the truths of faith.’”

([http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc\\_css/archive/catechism/pls2c1p2.htm](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/pls2c1p2.htm))

Look at this quotation from the *Handbook for Today's Catholic*, page 16: “The mystery of the *Trinity* is the *central doctrine* of the Catholic Faith. It is the mystery of God in himself. Upon it are based *all the other teachings* of the Church.”

That statement indicates even Sunday worship is based on the Trinity. And as a matter of fact, that is precisely what Rome declares is the reason for keeping Sunday. “Because it is a day dedicated by the apostles to the honor of the Most Holy Trinity.” (*The Douay Catechism of 1649*, “An Abridgment of the Christian Doctrine,” pp. 57-58, sourced in Dec. 2017 at <http://biblelight.net/sunday.htm>)

However, the witness is untrustworthy. The Trinity is not the reason set forth in this Roman Catholic Catechism entitled *The Catholic Christian Instructed*, in chapter XXIII, question 6, nor did the apostles supposedly have anything to do with the change. Instead of giving a biblical reason for a biblically-enjoined duty, only Rome’s reason for Rome’s custom is provided. And thus does the man of sin “opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God.” (2 Thes. 2:4)

“Q.—Why was the weekly Sabbath changed from Saturday to Sunday?

“Ans.—Because our Lord fully accomplished the work of redemption by rising from the dead on a Sunday, and by sending down the Holy Ghost on a Sunday; as therefore the work of redemption was greater than that of creation, so the primitive church thought the day on which this work was completely finished was more worthy her religious observation than that on which God rested from creation, and should be

properly called the Lord's day." (A. T. Jones, Signs of the Times, Dec. 2, 1886, 727)

Setting aside the variableness found in Rome's justification for her change to Sunday worship, I can assure you the apostles did *not* "dedicate the day to the honor of the Most Holy Trinity." The Bible verifies that they continued to worship on the seventh day. However, as early as AD 325 at the Council of Nicaea, discussions began on topics that gradually, during a series of contentious church councils and doctrinal compromises, developed into the official "central doctrine" of the Catholic Church, which we know as the concept of a triune god—a radical departure from the apostolic belief in the primacy of the sovereign "one God, the Father, of whom are all things." (1 Cor 8:6)

Reasoning from the basis of her "central doctrine," the Catholic Church considers that it is more important *whom* you worship than *when* you worship. Her "most fundamental" teaching is not worship on the sun god's day, but "the Trinity," which is the name of the triune god they worship on that day. Adventists worship on God's appointed day, but that is less of a matter to the Roman church than is their approval of our worship of a variation of her conception of God. It is that which brings us into unity with her. It is a fact, though, that the Trinity doctrine has its origin in paganism; it dates back to ancient Babylon. It is one of the many pagan customs and teachings that the early Roman church adopted in its effort to unite pagans and Christians; it has proved a deadly compromise.

The whole Roman Catholic system is corrupted by pagan concepts and practices and teachings that are unknown in God's Word, or else forthrightly revealed as offensive to God. Paul warned the early Christian church of the coming apostasy in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4: "... And that *man of sin* be revealed, the *son of perdition*; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that *he as God sitteth* in the temple of God, showing himself that *he is God*." Paul wrote that "the mystery of iniquity doth already work" in his day (verse 7), and the fourth century saw major steps taken toward

the fulfillment of Paul's prophecy regarding this man of sin, who declares himself to be God on earth.

Emperor Constantine in AD 321 intervened in religious matters for political reasons by decreeing a change from the seventh-day Sabbath to the pagan day of sun worship. "It was the emperor's policy to unite the conflicting interests of heathenism and Christianity. He was urged to do this by the bishops of the church, who, inspired by ambition and thirst for power, perceived that if the same day was observed by both Christians and heathen, it would promote the nominal acceptance of Christianity by pagans and thus advance the power and glory of the church." (GC 53) Pagans came into the church in huge numbers, bringing many of their pagan rituals and traditions with them. In the ensuing centuries, the papal church increased in her blasphemous boasts and in the extent of her religious power. Then, also, did the trinity doctrine evolve into the central doctrine of the fully compromised church.

Worship of the Trinity doctrine's triune God is not limited to the Roman Catholic Church and modern Seventh-day Adventists. Unfortunately, the Protestants that separated themselves from the church at Rome in the Dark Ages because of her unbiblical traditions and oppressive policies never dispensed with some of her errors, namely, the Trinity, along with the counterfeit Sabbath. Our own Seventh-day Adventist Protestant denomination, raised up by God's amazing providences after Rome lost her power in 1798, began free of those two errors, but unfortunately has now officially embraced the triune god of the harlot of Revelation 17—not in the same concept of one god with three different manifestations, but in the tritheistic concept of three separate and distinct co-eternal, co-equal gods comprising one god. Either view is disturbing, because of the eternal consequences of believing in a false god in the presence of plain Scriptural testimony of one true God and His only begotten Son. What is the point of worship on the day named in the fourth commandment, if the God who chose and sanctified that day is not the one worshipped then? What is the point



of worship on *any* day if the God being worshipped is a false god? The seal of the living God is given to those who love and obey *Him*. He says of Himself, “I am the LORD, and there is none else” (Isa 45:6), but those honor a false concept of God after being made aware of the true God tragically receive the “mark of the beast.”

There is good news, though. The truth about God, His Son and His Spirit is spreading rapidly as God’s shaking of the church intensifies.

### **Whom will you worship?**

Now let’s look again at Satan’s parallel to the seal of God, which is the mark of the beast. Sunday is the popular, but corrupt, parallel for the true Sabbath of the fourth commandment. The Trinity is Satan’s insulting parallel for our holy, majestic God. Now the question is, have men been diligent to avoid the spurious for the true? Sadly, no, and they are in danger because of it. “Men have honored Satan’s principles above the principles that rule in the heavens. They have accepted the spurious sabbath, which Satan has exalted as the sign of his authority. But God has set His seal upon His royal requirement. Each sabbath institution bears the name of its author, an ineffaceable mark that shows the authority of each.... It is of vital consequence whether they bear the mark of God’s kingdom or the mark of the kingdom of rebellion, for they acknowledge themselves subjects of the kingdom whose mark they bear....

“Those who fear God cannot accept an institution that violates a precept of the Decalogue. On this battlefield comes the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error. And we are not left in doubt as to the issue....” (CCh 334-5)

Indeed, the issue is worship. Those who fear God will choose according to His expressed will, because love for the “one true God” leads to worship on His day. But what if knowledge of who that God is has been kept from those who would obey, if only they knew? Revealing that true God is one of the purposes of this book. Reader, whom you will worship, and when you will worship? Your choices are either the Father, the true and living God, or the beast “full of names of

blasphemy” (Rev. 17:3), and either God’s seventh-day Sabbath of His fourth commandment, or the day the beast has dedicated to the Trinity god.

Revelation 17:3: “So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.” In verse five the Bible says the harlot woman/church has this written on her forehead: “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” All of her daughters have the same character; they are all harlots. That is the testimony of God’s Word. If, knowing of the true God and His holy day, you choose to obey the blasphemous beast that requires worship of a triune god, then whichever version of that god you choose, you’re in the group that has the mark of the beast. Remember that in Ezekiel 8 and 9, there is a list of abominations that exist among God’s professed people. All the abominations listed in chapter 8 have to do with whom they worship. Chapter 8 ends with the leadership worshipping the sun. Sister White told us that these Scriptures apply to God’s church of the last days, and she encouraged us to study them. (18MR 236.2; LTR 106, 1909) Truth is progressive, and God is unfolding new truth concerning false worship for us today.

Look what Mrs. White wrote for our understanding: “The light we have received upon the third angel’s message is the true light. The mark of the beast is exactly what it has been proclaimed to be. *Not all in regard to this matter is yet understood, nor will it be understood until the unrolling of the scroll*; but a most solemn work is to be accomplished in our world. The Lord’s command to His servants is: ‘Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.’ Isaiah 58:1.” (6T 17)

In Mrs. White’s statement above, regarding the mark of the beast, she said, “Not all in regard to this matter is yet understood, nor will it be understood until the unrolling of the scroll.” She wrote this over 100 years ago, and truth has been unfolding since then. What more was

there to be known, concerning the mark of the beast? It needs to be understood that the “mark of the beast” (Sunday-keeping) is not the only thing to avoid. Revelation 13:17 warns us of three things: “And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” Some disloyal to God accept the “name” of the beast, or the “number of his name.” Earlier in this chapter, we discussed what that name is. It comes from Revelation 13:1; the name on the beast’s heads is “blasphemy.” It has to do with the development of the omega, which is the outgrowth of the satanic, mystical, unbiblical conception of God Kellogg introduced into the Adventist church. The other so-called Christian churches had already adopted it, but for over 100 years, Adventism resisted it; its members alone stood for Jehovah. But then the same apostasy entered the Adventist church, and the dumb dogs did not bark. (Isa 56:10) The spiritualistic deception of the omega is more subtle, more sophisticated than the deception at Baal-peor, but the failure to resist idol worship is the same. These are strong words, but they are true. This is a most serious matter. The issue with the beast has as much to do with *who* is worshipped as *when* worship is given. It is death to receive either the mark or the name of the beast. When a false god is worshipped when knowledge of the true God is readily available, there is a consequence from heaven. God offers salvation to “His people” who “come out of her,” but no such promise is made to His people who go into her, to worship her god instead of Him. Satan knows that those who worship that idol of man’s perverse conception, after they have heard of the true God, are lost, just as the Jews were lost—by rejecting God and His begotten Son. That is the deceptiveness of Satan’s Trinity god. There is no neutral ground in this battle for souls.

### **Three summary questions for you**

Let me ask you this question: Is it possible that a Sunday worshipper could be worshipping the true and living God? In Revelation 18:4, God says to such people, “Come out of her, *My people*.” So, the answer would be Yes. However, notice that God’s command to them is to “come out”—out of the groups and organizations that worship the false

God, and out of worshipping on the beast's day. His reason is strong motivation: "That ye partake not of her sins, nor receive not of her plagues."

Now let me ask you another question: Is it possible that a Sabbath-keeper can be ignorantly worshipping the god of Rome while dutifully keeping the Sabbath? Yes, he can be doing so, and most are. But God is shaking His church and bringing this matter to the forefront, in order to make manifest where each individual's loyalty lies. It is not too late to change your allegiance when you realize you have been deceived. God loves you and wants to save you. He gives you enough evidence on which to base your faith in Him as your God. In His first commandment, He has given no doubt as to His commitment to us: "*I am the Lord thy God.*"

Here's a third question—perhaps the most serious question anyone's ever asked you: If you're keeping the right day but have the wrong God, do you think you will receive the seal of the right God—the "living God" of the Scriptures? Said another way, do you think He will give you His seal if you're not even worshipping Him?

This quotation comes from the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*: "The third angel's message has been sent forth to the world, warning men against receiving the mark of the beast or of his image in their foreheads or in their hands. *To receive this mark means to come to the same decision as the beast has done, and to advocate the same ideas*, in direct opposition to the Word of God." (7BC 979; also RH July 13, 1897)

Now think about that. Those who receive the mark will be advocating the same unbiblical ideas as the blasphemous beast. That beast has told us in official statements what its most important truth is; the Trinity concept of God is the basis of all their teachings. It pertains to worship, and they strongly advocate it "in direct opposition to the Word of God." So, if we advocate the same God as the Roman Catholic

Church does, what are we promoting, according to that inspired statement in the previous paragraph? The mark of the beast.

### **Who will receive the seal of the living God?**

There was a lady by the name of Mrs. Hastings who was dearly loved by everyone who knew her. Shortly after Mrs. Hastings' untimely death, Sister White had a vision and wrote these words of comfort to her grieving husband and children: "I saw that she [Mrs. Hastings] was sealed and would come up at the voice of God and stand upon the earth, and would be with the 144,000. I saw we need not mourn for her; she would rest in the time of trouble, and all that we could mourn for was our loss in being deprived of her company. I saw her death would result in good." (Ltr 10, 1850; 1SM 263)

That was written in 1850, when almost every Adventist was a non-trinitarian. It is obvious from this statement that there were those among our pioneers that went to their graves *sealed*. That means that they were not only Sabbath-keepers, but that they were *not* "advocating the same ideas" as the beast. Thus, they had, at that time, a true concept of the Lord of the Sabbath *and* His chosen day for worship. Had they been "coming to the same decision as the beast has done" about God, His Son and His Spirit, meaning had they accepted the Trinity doctrine, they would not have received the seal of God, even if they worshipped on the seventh day. They would have been worshipping a false god that has no seal, no Son, and no power to offer eternal life.

### **A somber thought**

Is it possible our denomination has been misled? We are forced to consider that possibility, or else we have to believe that the very ones with whom God worked to establish this denomination in the mid-1800s had the wrong conception of the very God Ellen White said was directing them! Yet you've read earlier in this book the prophetic statements of absolute confidence in the biblical understandings settled upon then. Thus there is a somber point to consider in the observation included in the book *The Trinity*, written by three Andrews University professors: Woodrow Whidden, Jerry Moon and John W. Reeve. We

find this quotation on page 190: “That most of the leading pioneers were *non-Trinitarian* in their theology has become *accepted Adventist history*.... More recently, a further question has arisen with increasing urgency: was the pioneers’ belief about the Godhead right or wrong? As one line of reasoning goes, either the pioneers were wrong, and the present church is right, or the pioneers were right and the present Seventh-day Adventist church has apostatized from biblical truth.”

James White was a very vocal non-trinitarian, remaining so till his death at age sixty. Sister White never said he was wrong. The pioneer position was that there were two divine Beings in the Godhead; that their shared omnipresent Holy Spirit, called in Scripture the “Spirit of God” or the “Spirit of Christ,” is the third person of the Godhead; that God the Father is the eternal Father; and that His literal Son was somehow “begotten” at some point in eternity. That’s what Mrs. Hastings believed, and Sister White says she was sealed.

For our salvation's sake, we had better not miss what God has been revealing to His people in these last days. How can we today expect to be sealed like Mrs. Hastings, if we have a different god than the pioneers had, a god with the name of “Trinity”? Among the 144,000 there will not be different groups with different views on what or who composes the Godhead. The correct understanding was given to our early pioneers by unquestionable divine authority. All who are sealed worship the true and living God and have the Father’s name in their foreheads.

It is a correct understanding, a settling into biblical truth about Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that will constitute the Father’s name in the foreheads of those with the seal of the living God. Jesus Himself taught, “He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.” (John 5:23) True worshippers will know Jesus Christ to be the only begotten Son of God; they will know the true identity of the Holy Spirit and the Father. In contrast, the beast’s blasphemous Trinity will be accepted by those who receive the mark of the beast. They will exalt a concept of god that denies both Father and Son—that makes them “non-entities,” as Sister White phrased it. By accepting the “same

ideas” of the beast, in this case the Trinitarian conception of divinity, a seventh-day Sabbath-keeper can end up with the mark of the beast, just as the Jews in Christ’s time were dutiful Sabbath-keepers and rejected the Son of God then. In rejecting the Son, they rejected the Father who sent Him.

This is the correct view of the seal and the mark. My prayer is that this has made you more aware of the deeper issues pertaining to the seal and the mark, and in particular, the issue of whom we worship. Remember that Satan is at war with God’s remnant people. His greatest all-time deception has been embraced by the very people who think they know how to survive the coming test of the Sunday law. His strategy from Sister White’s death through the following decades was to deceive Adventists into changing gods, which they officially did in 1980. And yet, we may be found in the “very small remnant” loyal to God (Isa 1:9)—a remnant that is growing as the deception is revealed for what it is.

“Do not think that if you take your position for the Bible truth you will lose your position [or man’s good opinion of you]. You had better lose your position [and man’s approval] than lose Jesus. You had better be partakers of the self-denial and self-sacrifice of the Lord than to go in your own way seeking to gather to yourself the treasures of this life. You cannot carry any of it into the grave. You will come up from the grave without anything, but if you have Jesus, you will have everything. He is all that you will require to stand the test of the day of God, and is not this enough for you?” Ms 20, 1894.

Note: The website [www.revelation1412.org](http://www.revelation1412.org) has a video by Nader Mansour titled *The Seal and the Mark*, from which much of the information for this chapter was derived, with his permission.





## Chapter 18

### Come, Let Us Reason Together

*(Note: The following has been excerpted and adapted with permission from an unpublished manuscript by Jean Handwerk.)*

A literal understanding of God’s Word, when we “take it as it reads, except when symbolic language is used” (GC 598), is consistent and conclusive. The Spirit of prophecy complements biblical truths, and never contradicts them. And it is *because* God’s Word is consistent and conclusive that the Trinity doctrine is revealed to be a doctrine that *competes against God’s Word*.

#### **The burden of proof**

You may have heard or read Trinitarian speakers and writers explain their understandings of the Trinity view, but what they don’t explain is what is wrong with the literal understanding of the Bible. That explanation is needed, because without it, what justification is there for our denomination’s doctrinal switch from our pioneers’ literal understanding to the new metaphorical interpretation? In other words, why has our Seventh-day Adventist Church officially adopted a doctrine radically different from what our pioneers believed, when no error has been pointed out in what the pioneers believed? Did truth suddenly become error? You know better. Simply put, the *burden of proof* regarding the need to change from the literal interpretation to a metaphorical interpretation of the Bible lies squarely in the lap of advocates of the Trinity doctrine, but that burden has not been borne. Trinity proponents do not attempt to prove God’s literally-understood Word wrong because they are unable to do so. Therefore, what they present as the Trinity doctrine is simply their alternate interpretation of God’s Word—their replacement of God’s literal, biblical truth about Himself and His Son and Spirit with their own view. As different as the

two views are, they both cannot be correct, hence my statement that the Trinity doctrine competes against the literal understanding of the Bible. It is a most serious matter, because in doing so, it competes against God Himself, the author of His Word.

### **Confusion in the camp**

In his book *The Trinity: What God Has Revealed*, author Glyn Parfitt, himself a Trinitarian, admits on page 19 that “the word ‘Trinity’ means different things to different people and there are some statements made by Trinitarians with which I could not agree.” Although in his book Parfitt does not explain much of how he understands the Trinity, it’s obvious that what he believes about the Trinity is opposed in some way(s) to what it means to others, and vice versa. So whose interpretation is correct? (A review of Parfitt’s book can be found at <https://www.scribd.com/document/14140730/Review-of-The-Trinity-What-Has-God-Revealed-by-Glyn-Parfitt>.)

The more important question is this: Is the Bible so indefinite, so vague, that a clear doctrine cannot be defined and commonly held? The pioneers did not find the Bible so confusing; they enjoyed near-unanimity on doctrines.

When fundamental beliefs 2 through 5 are discussed in detail, some self-described Trinitarians will say about one point or another, “I believe this, but I don’t believe that.” They have their own unique Trinitarian understandings that usually accept the surface theory of three coeternal gods while rejecting consequent related teachings not mentioned in the published *Fundamental Beliefs*. Especially is that so when the details about metaphorical role-playing are brought up (no true Father or Son), or when it is asked how the atonement so crucial to our salvation could be achieved by someone just acting a part in the great controversy, or when it’s pointed out that we now have three sovereign Gods of the universe, not just one “great Source of all,” one “ancient of days.” Thus, the theory does appear to some Trinitarians to be speculative biblical reinterpretation, at least in part. They sense it and back away from it—but not entirely, for they cannot bring themselves

to believe our church has voted error into our beliefs. No Adventist wants to believe that, but when reality stares us in the face, we would be wise to adjust our thinking. Moreover, each weakness in the theory calls forth more speculative explanations, such as the unsubstantiated claim that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are inseparable.<sup>2</sup> This assertion is not found in the literal biblical narrative of a divine Father selflessly giving up His dear Son to suffer and die on a sin-stricken planet for the sake of a helpless, hopeless race. Father and Son were “sundered” then. (Ms 93, 1899)

To add to the confusion, if those three gods of trinitarianism and tritheism are coequal and coeternal—all self-existent and sovereign in their own right—than what is one to think of Adventism’s published fundamental belief #3? It’s the one about “God the eternal Father.” In the current fundamental beliefs about Father, Son and Holy Spirit, only God the Father is said to be “sovereign of all creation.” Only God the Father is said to be “the source of all love and life.” Only God the Father is “the Creator, Source, Sustainer ... of all creation.” These things are not said, nor can they be said, of His Son (FB#4) or His Spirit (FB#5). Read for yourself! These descriptors of the Father portray Him as supreme—“the source of ALL LIFE”—and yet, elsewhere we read Father, Son and Holy Spirit are coequal! The contradictions in the *Fundamental Beliefs* are impossible to ignore.

Fundamental Belief #18 testifies to “one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit”—the “gift of prophecy” as “manifested in the ministry of Ellen White.... Her writings speak with prophetic authority....” Reader, she

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<sup>2</sup> “...Each person of the Godhead is inseparably connected to the other two.” Ekkehardt Mueller, Biblical Research Institute, *Reflections* newsletter, July 2008, pg. 8, “Scripture Applied: A Bible Study.”

Regarding “interchangeability,” the authors of *The Trinity* wrote, “...Only a member of the Godhead (Jesus was chosen) could offer a fully effectual, saving sacrifice for sin....” Whidden, Moon and Reeve, *The Trinity* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2002). p. 249.

wrote authoritatively that the Father is “the great Source of all” (DA 21)—“all,” including His Son and all life anywhere and everywhere.

In his book, Parfitt doesn’t suggest a resolution to the underlying problem of confusion in Trinitarian ranks. If a doctrine is true, it will be supported so clearly by Scripture that there will not be a multitude of versions. There will be “one body, and one Spirit, ... one Lord, *one faith*, one baptism, *one God* and Father of all....” (Eph 4:4-6) That was the united belief of our pioneers as the Lord led them in the restoration of biblical truths that had long been hidden from view. But since Kellogg’s apostasy, our denomination has been struggling with division in our ranks on this issue. Kellogg’s corrupt teachings have surprisingly taken root in our church. This book has been a labor of love, an earnest attempt to provide enough sound reasoning and supportive statements from the Bible and Spirit of prophecy to end the division and unite us once more on the fundamental principles held by our pioneers. In the preamble of their published *Fundamental Principles*, it was stated that the pioneers had “great unanimity” in their beliefs—something that escapes our people at the moment, but which is not impossible for humble hearts to achieve, if we surrender preconceived ideas and desire truth at all cost.

### **Religious liberty in the church**

Despite the crisis of credibility within Trinitarianism due to the multitude of versions propounded, there is an increasing call from within the Seventh-day Adventist Church that those members who honestly can find no biblical or Spirit of prophecy support for the Trinity doctrine adopted by the church in 1980 must either conform their beliefs to the church or else leave it—either voluntarily or by removal from membership. In support of that call, Ellen White’s counsel is cited from a letter to Brother A:

“...But when the judgment of the General Conference, which is the highest authority that God has upon the earth, is exercised, private independence and private judgment must not be maintained, but be surrendered. Your error was in

persistently maintaining your private judgment of your duty against the voice of the highest authority the Lord has upon the earth....”

However, the doctrinal position taken by non-trinitarians today is the same as that of the apostles as recorded in Scripture. Thus while it is true that the General Conference in world session is the “highest authority” of our denomination, for which we have great respect, we dare not assume our human organization is infallible in its doctrinal decisions. There is other counsel from Ellen White that fits the present situation better than the quotation above. She wrote of the stand taken by the German princes at the Diet at Spire. The emperor’s decree restricted religious liberty by prohibiting the dissemination of the reformed doctrines. The Reformers were ordered not to share the light from the Scriptures that God had revealed amid the papal oppression of the 1260 years. If they would remain silent, there would be superficial peace.

What was their decision? “Let us reject this decree. In matters of conscience the majority has no power.” Merle d’Aubigne, *History of the Reformation*, bk. 13, ch. 5.

Mrs. White wrote explicitly in reference to the princes’ spiritual discernment:

“This principle we in our day are firmly to maintain. The banner of truth and religious liberty held aloft by the founders of the gospel church and by God’s witnesses during the centuries that have passed since then, has, in this last conflict, been committed to our hands. The responsibility for this great gift rests with those whom God has blessed with a knowledge of His word. We are to receive this word as *supreme authority*....” (AA 68)

So while the church is the “highest authority that God has on earth,” His Word is the “supreme authority.” Ellen White’s writing continues:

“We are to recognize human government [including human church governance] as an ordinance of divine appointment, and teach obedience to it as a sacred duty, within its legitimate sphere. But when its claims conflict with the claims of God, we must obey God rather than men. God’s word must be recognized as above all human legislation. A ‘Thus saith the Lord’ is not to be set aside for a ‘Thus saith the church’ or a ‘Thus saith the state.’ The crown of Christ is to be lifted above the diadems of earthly potentates.” (AA 68-69)

The truths advocated today by those holding non-trinitarian understandings of God’s Word are not new; they are the same truths taught by the writers of Scripture. The book *The Great Controversy* includes this next principle, penned by Martin Luther:

“But it is contrary to the will of God, that man should be subject to man in that which pertains to eternal life. Subjection in spirituals is a real worship, and should be rendered only to the Creator.” (GC88 167)

Under inspiration, Ellen White included in her book Luther’s words as he finished his defense before the Diet at Worms:

“If, then, I am not convinced by proof from Holy Scripture or by cogent reasons; if I am not satisfied by the very texts that I have cited; and if my judgment is not in this way brought into subjection to God’s word, I neither can nor will retract anything, for it cannot be right for a Christian to speak against his conscience.” ST August 30, 1883

Again, the burden of proof regarding the alleged “error” of taking the Bible as it reads lies squarely in the lap of those who would substitute another interpretation of God’s Word. Until that burden is borne and the flaws of a literal biblical reading are demonstrated for all to see, how can there be moral integrity or moral authority in the eyes of God attached to the call that non-trinitarians come “into compliance” with the doctrinal decisions of the church, or leave it?

## The weight of evidence

Even when a Trinitarian speaker or writer presents what appears to be solid biblical reasoning in support of the doctrine, that reasoning, to be trusted and believed, must be consistent with all other evidence on the same topic. Mrs. White commended William Miller's *Rules of Interpretation*; his fourth rule reads thus: "To understand doctrine, bring all the scriptures together on the subject you wish to know; then let every word have its proper influence; and if you can form your theory without a contradiction, you cannot be in error." So far in this book, you have seen many explicit statements from the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy that directly contradict the teachings of the Trinity doctrine, and there are far more than what are included in this book. What about them? Unless those contrary passages are dealt with openly by Trinitarian speakers or writers, they have not done due diligence, nor have they been transparent before the church body in the formulation of the doctrines they advocate. "Everything that Christians do should be as transparent as the sunlight." (MB 68) In other words, unless biblical and Spirit of prophecy passages opposing Trinitarian teachings are openly considered and shown to be erroneous, they will not have done honest or even sufficient research. They will have neglected to justify their own study results, and therefore the conclusions they will have reached cannot be trusted. Consequently, there can be, and will be, no resolution of the doctrinal division in our midst; they themselves will have prevented it. They will have prevented the very "unity" for which they call.

Given the wealth of evidence in the literal reading of God's Word and in the writings of Ellen White in support of the apostolic/pioneer understanding, when compared to the relatively few verses or passages that can possibly be interpreted to support the Trinity doctrine, one can hardly ignore the *sheer weight of evidence* in favor of God being the Father, Jesus Christ being His true Son, and the Holy Spirit being the Spirit of God and of Christ.

## Based on the Bible?

The lack of consensus within the Trinitarian camp becomes obvious when some Trinitarian writers or speakers think to prove the doctrine true from the Bible. And yet, as you read earlier in this book, even the theologians at Seventh-day Adventism's Biblical Research Institute admit that there is no explicit Bible evidence for the Trinity doctrine, and they are not alone in that admission. So... can the doctrine be proved from the Scriptures or not? History has already given us the answer.

Briefly, the development of the doctrine most notably began at Niceae in the fourth century, in the contention between Arius and Athanasius. This proves that the apostles, in their biblical writings, had not defined the Trinity doctrine, so it had to be “developed” by men in a series of church councils at a time when the apostatizing church had already undertaken its adoption of pagan customs, rituals, and teachings. (A tripartite or triune god is one of those pagan teachings). We would be naive to assume that those church councils were immune to more error. Ellen White wrote this brief history of that time:

“Little by little, at first in stealth and silence, and then more openly as it increased in strength and gained control of the minds of men, ‘the mystery of iniquity’ carried forward its deceptive and blasphemous work. Almost imperceptibly the customs of heathenism found their way into the Christian church. The spirit of compromise and conformity was restrained for a time by the fierce persecutions which the church endured under paganism. But as persecution ceased, and Christianity entered the courts and palaces of kings, she laid aside the humble simplicity of Christ and His apostles for the pomp and pride of pagan priests and rulers; and in place of the requirements of God, she substituted *human theories and traditions*. The nominal conversion of Constantine, in the early part of the fourth century, caused great rejoicing; and the world, cloaked with a form of righteousness, walked into the church. Now the work of



corruption rapidly progressed. *Paganism*, while appearing to be vanquished, became the conqueror. *Her spirit* controlled the church. *Her doctrines*, ceremonies, and superstitions were incorporated into the faith and worship of the professed followers of Christ.” (GC 49)

“Human theories and traditions.” Pagan “doctrines, ceremonies and superstitions”—all incorporated into the faith and worship ... of whom? “*Professed* followers of God.” Not true worshippers, of whom God has preserved a remnant in every age. Shall Seventh-day Adventists adopt the “human theories and traditions” and the pagan “doctrines” that the corrupted church incorporated in those early centuries after Christ? A church controlled by the spirit of paganism? Reread the last three sentences above, if you doubt this depiction. As J. N. Andrews said of such proceedings,

“The doctrine of the Trinity which was established in the church by the council of Nice, a. d. 325. This doctrine destroys the personality of God, and his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. The *infamous measures by which it was forced upon the church*, which appear upon the pages of ecclesiastical history, might well cause every believer in that doctrine to blush.” (J. N. Andrews, *The Three Angels of Revelation 14:6-12* [1855], 54)

Can there possibly be a correct or “biblical” view of a doctrine that has its origin in such dubious circumstances centuries after the biblical canon closed? Is it really possible to “Christianize” a pagan doctrine, as the apostate church claims she has done with pagan statues, prayer beads, incense and candles, processions, priestly class, sunrise services, repetitive prayers, etc.? Shall we now unite with the apostate church in accepting the pagan tradition of a triune god?

### **Jesus’ Sonship still rejected**

“‘I know you,’ Christ declared to the Pharisees, ‘that ye have not the love of God in you.’ He spoke to them thus plainly because they could not discern His divinity under the veil of humanity. He was God in human flesh, and He could not but

work the works of God. Unbelief, prejudice, and jealousy beat about Him, and if His humanity had not been united with divinity, He would have failed and become discouraged. At times His divinity flashed through humanity, and *He stood forth as the Son of God*, His veil of flesh too transparent to hide His majesty. But the men who claimed to be the expositors of the prophecies refused to believe that He was the Christ. Satan had control of their minds, and they utterly refused to acknowledge the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth.” (RH March 26, 1901)

According to Scripture and the Spirit of prophecy, they refused to acknowledge Him as the Son of God. But how else could He “work the works of God”? How could they deny the divinity that sometimes flashed through His veil of humanity? Even when He openly admitted being the Son of God in response to Caiaphas’ demand, His admission was rejected as rank blasphemy worthy of death. So, too, in the present age, Jesus’ Sonship, which is the true reason He is divine, is rejected still—most astoundingly, by a people who once held a true understanding of His Sonship. In Adventism’s *28 Fundamental Beliefs*, Jesus’ divinity is exalted, but because it is now claimed that He cannot be both divine and true Son—can’t be both God and Son—His Sonship is denied—despite the plain history revealed in Holy Writ. The Spirit of prophecy quotation above continues with these words of warning, given in divine mercy:

“Since Christ was treated thus, can we be surprised when those to whom He has given His message are rejected and scorned by men whose resistance of light is even less excusable than was the resistance of the Jews?” Ibid.

#### **Four assumptions: a foundation built on sand**

Tritheism and Trinitarianism, such as are found in Seventh-day Adventism today, find a foothold only when at least four assumptions are blindly accepted as fact. The **first assumption** is that Jesus gave up His omnipresence forever when He incarnated. Where is *any* inspired evidence for that claim? We have every right to demand proof—even

an obligation to demand it—and a responsibility to object to the promotion of such a limitation of Jesus’ divinity without explicit inspired support for all to see for themselves. There is no excuse for speculation in this matter. In fact, the claim that He forfeited forever His omnipresence denies the explicit words of Jesus Himself in John 14 and elsewhere in both Scripture and the Spirit of prophecy, as can be read earlier in this book. Yet the false claim serves the Trinity doctrine well, in that, due to Jesus’ alleged forfeiture of omnipresence, He can’t come back to believers on earth in spiritual presence, so He needs another God called “God the Holy Spirit” to represent Him to us. That is how the deceptive pagan theory of a triune God is rationalized in Seventh-day Adventism and other Christian denominations.

The **second assumption** is that Jesus can’t be both God and begotten Son. In other words, it is claimed that true divinity can’t have a beginning, so thus true Sonship is impossible for Jesus. This claim also has no support whatsoever; it has man’s speculative reasoning alone as its basis. Man would set limitations on what an omnipotent God can do and has done. Why do we quibble at the inspired record of God bringing forth a Son of His own substance, with His same divine attributes (Pr 8:24, 25; John 3:16; ST Nov. 27, 1893)—a Son to whom the Scripture record says He gave life? (John 5:26) But again, the presumption serves to support the Trinitarian theory of three independently self-existent, coeternal gods. It does so by acknowledging Jesus’ divinity but denying His true Sonship.

Since Jesus spoke often of His Father, clearly implying His own divine Sonship, and since the gospels tell of God the Father speaking from heaven, identifying Jesus as His Son, there had to be a way to explain these Scriptures to make them fit the Trinity teaching that opposes Jesus’ literal Sonship. Thus the second assumption requires an alternate reading of God’s sacred Word. No longer can the Bible be trusted to mean what it literally says about the Father and the Son. Now, according to man’s opinion, the inspired historical record of the great controversy must be interpreted metaphorically when it speaks of Them.

We say to God, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path,” but have the hubris to add, “but only if that light is filtered through our new hermeneutic.” The creature sets his wisdom above his Creator’s wisdom and explicit Word.

When the Andrews University authors Whidden, Moon and Reeve wrote their book *The Trinity: Understanding God’s love, His plan of salvation, and Christian relationship*, they assumed (**third assumption**) that “Arian” or “semi-Arian” believers (i.e., non-trinitarians) believe that Jesus is a “semi-god” or a “lesser god,” as they put it. That assumption was based on the prior false assumption that Jesus can’t be both God and Son. Therefore, they assumed further that those who accept Jesus’ true Sonship must think of Jesus as not fully, truly God—as somehow partially divine—a “semi-god.” But their assumption is not correct; there are no degrees of divinity. One either is or is not divine. Because of those unverified and erroneous assumptions, their book includes two chapters defending the full divinity of Christ—which actually is not doubted by non-trinitarians! After all, the Scriptures plainly refer to Jesus Christ as both “God” and “Son.” We wish those authors had defended Jesus’ Sonship as vigorously.

It is not overstatement to call these assumptions about Jesus’ omnipresence and Jesus’ Sonship lies, because that is what all speculative claims, taught as if they were truths, really are. They have no “it is written” to sustain them, but they are repeated, nonetheless, as if they were true, and thus they are deceitful. Promoting assumptions as truth is essentially breaking God’s ninth commandment, which is not to bear false witness. The word “lie” communicates the seriousness of the false teachings about our sovereign Creator God, and the eternal consequences devolving upon those who teach or believe the lies without having investigated for themselves the reasons for their faith. God’s Word gives ample evidence contrary to those lies, as you have read in this book, so we are without excuse before Him. Our sublime and holy God is truly debased and dishonored by these teachings. He is despised in the persons of those who believe Him to be the biblical “one

God the Father,” the “only true God.” As they are despised, He is despised. Meanwhile, Satan exults that his scheme is so successful—that his counterfeit god has been so readily accepted. In large part, he has succeeded, despite Ellen White’s specific warnings about his “shutting Jesus from our view as the Comforter” (RH Aug. 26, 1890), and in “obscuring the fact” that “Christ was the only begotten Son of God” (TDG 128). Shall we remain ignorant of his devices? Shall we not raise the alarm? Shall we not humble ourselves before our God, confess our inexcusable unbelief, and seek His pardon and His salvation? Shall we not avail ourselves of this wonderful promise:

“Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.” 1 John 4:15

But there is a **fourth assumption** that needs to be pointed out, as well. It is that in order for there to be love, there has to be someone or something to love. Without someone or something to love, it is reasoned with human logic, love can’t exist! The reasoning continues, addressing the statement in 1 John 4:8 and 16 that “God is love.” The assumption or reasoning is that since God is love and love can’t exist unless there is someone or something to love, Jesus and the Holy Spirit must have existed contemporaneously—coeternally—with God the Father. Thus this thinking serves to support the concept of a triune God (Trinitarianism), or three gods (tritheism). But let’s think this through.

The SDA Bible Commentary, in volume 7, explains the apostle John’s words “God is love.”

“The Greek construction does not make “God” and “love” identical as the English translation may appear to do. Rather, love is set forth as an essential quality or attribute of God.... His nature never changes ...; love has been His dominant quality in the past and will continue to be in the future....”

“Love,” then, is a “quality” or an “attribute” of God. He is also “light.” 1 John 1:5

Ty Gibson, in his book *The Sonship of Christ: Exploring the covenant identity of God and man*, wrote with the same reasoning above—that God can’t be love if He didn’t always have someone to love—in order to rationalize or make sense of the concept of three coequal, coeternal gods:

“A conscious being is, by definition, self-conscious. One conscious being occupying existence alone could only experience self-consciousness....”

“We can logically deduce, then, that a perfectly unselfish love can only occur with three or more individuals. It is self-evident that three persons compose the minimum relational dynamic within which pure other-centeredness is conceivable.

“...And this minimal unit of three is defined in the creation account of Genesis as the ‘image’ of God (Genesis 1:26-28).<sup>3</sup>

In other words, unless there are “three or more individuals” interacting with one another, there cannot be “perfectly unselfish love”—even with God, it is clearly implied. Frankly, what Gibson wrote may pertain to humans (though we have ample reason to challenge that thinking), but it is presumption to apply such reasoning to God.

“Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?” Job 11:7

God Himself instructs us not to think of Him as we do of humans:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” Isa 55:8-9

Because how God exists and thinks is beyond what He has revealed about Himself, and certainly beyond our human experience, it cannot

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<sup>3</sup> Ty Gibson, *The Sonship of Christ: Exploring the covenant identity of God and man* (thesonshipofchrist.com). p. 199-201.

be implied or stated with any certainty that God, to be unselfish and loving, had to have had someone—two more beings, actually—to truly, unselfishly love. Ty Gibson actually admitted that when he wrote,

“Quite simply, because God is God, God transcends all that is not God. That is, in God’s essential nature, God exceeds, surpasses, and exists without equivalency to, all creation.”<sup>4</sup>

In those words, Gibson indirectly admitted that what he wrote about God needing to be a “minimal unit of three” is only conjecture—speculation. What we know about God’s love—that precious aspect of His transcendent divine character—we learn from Scripture and from the life and teachings of Christ. That is the only safe source of knowledge of Him. We humans can know and hopefully understand that which has been revealed to us, but beyond that, we cannot with any confidence go. To claim that God could not “be love” unless He had someone to love is to impose human characteristics and limitations upon a transcendent God. And it is no justification for the trinity doctrine.

### **The Spirit of prophecy**

As one considers the teachings in the Trinity doctrine compared to those in the Bible and the writings of Ellen White, it becomes obvious that to accept the four fundamental beliefs dealing with the Trinity (#2-5), one has to reject #18, which deals with the authenticity of the gift of the Spirit of prophecy in Ellen White. Jesus gave gifts to His church after He ascended, among which was the gift of that Spirit. So long as His church exists, the promise of the gift remains. It is a legitimate and trustworthy divine source that gives salvational understanding. But often today, when a person insists, “The Bible and the Bible only,” what is really meant is, “No Ellen White,” because her writings cut across the carnal heart. Yet if she was a true prophet of God, which we believe there is irrefutable evidence that she was, then why are her written words not regarded as from God every bit as much as Isaiah’s or Daniel’s written words? Are there degrees of the prophetic gift? Do we

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 187.

not enter dangerous ground when we hold our opinions or interpretations higher than the inspired statements from her pen that you've read throughout this book? We say that because as late as 1904, Mrs. White wrote of her full support of the biblical understandings established in the years between 1844-1846. She said God Himself revealed those "principles of truth" to the pioneers:

"As a people we are to stand firm on the platform of eternal truth that has withstood test and trial. We are to hold to the sure pillars of our faith. The principles of truth that *God has revealed to us* are our only true foundation. They have made us what we are. The lapse of time had not lessened their value." (SpTB2 51 [1904])

Two years later, in 1906, she again affirmed under inspiration that truth doesn't change:

"I do not wish to ignore or drop one link in the chain of evidence that was formed as, after the passing of the time in 1844, little companies of seekers after truth met together to study the Bible and to ask God for light and guidance.... The truth, point by point, was fastened in our minds so firmly that we could not doubt.... The evidence given in our early experience has the same force that it had then. The truth is the same as it ever has been, and not a pin or a pillar can be moved from the structure of truth. That which was sought for out of the Word in 1844, 1845, and 1846 remains the truth today in every particular." (Ltr 38, 1906)

Unless we are willing to call her a false prophet, her words soundly challenge the validity of the Trinity doctrine. Acceptance of it involves a rejection of the counsel given her by the Holy Spirit. Do we dare set our opinions above the wisdom of God's Spirit?

### **Did Ellen White become Trinitarian?**

For some Trinitarian writers or speakers, the only plausible reason they can come up with for the doctrinal paradigm shift is their claim that



Ellen White became a Trinitarian. They correctly reason that many SDAs will not forsake the pioneers' literal understanding of God's Word unless they were convinced Mrs. White was inspired by the Holy Spirit to do so. But the claim that she endorsed the Trinity doctrine is easily shown to be false by the two quotations above, which were written several years *after* she supposedly had become Trinitarian—and there are more. Please watch the video *Ellen G. White and the Trinity* by Imad Awde (<https://youtu.be/rfOBg39tv2M>) and you will see for yourself.

Further, though it is claimed that a statement in *Desire of Ages*, published in 1898, revealed her theological transition, the honest scholar will admit that other statements in that very same book, as well as statements made in her writings for years after 1898, plainly evidence that Mrs. White never embraced Trinitarianism of any ilk—not three gods making up one god, nor one god with three different manifestations, nor any other variation. She believed just as the apostle Paul did: “But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.” (1 Cor 8:6) Not only that, but as late as 1911, her published inspired counsel was still to “take the Bible as it reads.”

*“The truths most plainly revealed in the Bible have been involved in doubt and darkness by learned men, who, with a pretense of great wisdom, teach that the Scriptures have a mystical, a secret, spiritual meaning not apparent in the language employed. These men are false teachers. It was to such a class that Jesus declared: ‘Ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God.’ Mark 12:24. The language of the Bible should be explained according to its obvious meaning, unless a symbol or figure is employed. Christ has given the promise: ‘If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine.’ John 7:17. If men would but take the Bible as it reads, if there were no false teachers to mislead and confuse their minds, a work would be accomplished that would make angels glad and that would bring*

into the fold of Christ thousands upon thousands who are now wandering in error.” GC (1911) 598

### **Making non-entities of God and Christ**

When Ellen White wrote of “learned men” teaching “mystical” or “spiritual” meanings not obvious in the Bible language, and of “false teachers” misleading and confusing minds, she may have had Kellogg and his followers in mind, but the problems didn’t stop with Kellogg’s death. It is applicable even today, because not everyone heeded Mrs. White’s counsel against Kellogg’s teachings. In fact, some leading men accepted and themselves promoted the teachings Kellogg developed under satanic influence. Ellen White’s charge that the mystical alpha made “non-entities of God and of Christ” is true of the “mystical” or “spiritualized” trinitarian three-in-one God that also makes non-entities of God and Christ. Is that not the case in the trinitarian claim that the biblical God the Father and His only begotten Son are but temporary roles played in the great controversy, and that in supposed reality, they are but two of three unnamed, interchangeable, coequal Gods making up a three-in-one God? Where is any of that mentioned in God’s sacred Word? Does it not make a “non-entity” of Christ to claim that He is not a true Son of God, but a metaphorical one only? And what about the Trinitarian claim that Paul’s declaration of faith “to us there is but one God, the Father” is not really true, because allegedly, there are three sovereign gods, just as are named in our *Fundamental Beliefs*? Does that not shamefully diminish our sovereign, holy “Ancient of days” and His Christ and their agonizing self-sacrifice for us? What about the Trinitarian restriction of Jesus in the totally unsupported claim that Jesus can’t be both God and Son—in spite of the explicit witness of Scripture that He is both? How can we be “made in the image of God” if God is a “unity” of three Persons? How can we be sons and daughters of God if there is no true heavenly Father? Does the death of a metaphor satisfy the demands of a literal law? These legitimate challenges to the Trinity doctrine are non-issues when the Word of God is “taken as it reads.”

### **“One substance,” “one life” and the atonement**

“Though sin had produced a gulf between man and his God, a divine benevolence provided a plan to bridge that gulf. And what material did He use? A part of Himself.” (OHC 12) That “part of” God that He used to reconnect heaven and earth is identified in this statement: “...It seemed that divinity flashed through humanity as Jesus said, ‘I and My Father are One.’ The words of Christ were full of deep meaning as he put forth the claim that he and the Father were *of one substance, possessing the same attributes*.” (ST Nov. 27, 1893) In the universe, only the begotten Son of God can make that claim; created sons of God cannot. Christ alone was “set up” and “brought forth” *by* the Father *from* the Father Himself. (Prov 8:23-24) Only a Son with God the Father’s own substance and nature has the right to consider Himself equal with God. Jesus Christ is “truly God in infinity but not in personality.” (UL 367)

Their substance and attributes are not the only “oneness” Father and Son share. “Christ declares, ‘I live by the Father,’ *my life and his being one*.” (HM June 1, 1897) “He [Christ] declared he had no existence separate from the Father.” (RH Jan. 7, 1890) “Our Father in heaven is the source of life, of wisdom and of joy.” (SC 9) It is the Father “of whom are all things.” (1 Cor 8:6) These statements inform us that Jesus and the Father share one life—the Father’s life—for there is but “one Way, one Truth, and *one Life*.” (2MR 124) Father and Son are “two, yet little short of being identical; two in individuality, yet one in spirit, and heart, and character.” (YI Dec. 16, 1897)

Amazingly, we may receive that same “one life”—the Father’s life. “God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.” (1 John 5:11) “For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.” (John 5:26) “All things Christ received from God, but He took to give. So in the heavenly courts, in His ministry for all created beings: *through the beloved Son, the Father’s life flows out to all....*” (DA 21) Therefore, “he that hath the Son hath life, and he that

hath not the Son of God hath not life.” (1 John 5:12) How may we have the Son? By faith. By believing in Christ. “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” We also know that “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” (2 Cor 5:19) So, too, we may have the Spirit of God and of Christ within us. “...Bible sanctification. This work can be accomplished only through faith in Christ, by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God.” (GC 469)

That Christ is self-existent, we cannot deny, for then we would deny His divinity/deity/Godhood. But He is not *independently* self-existent; the eternal life that He has is the Father’s eternal life, for there is only “one life.” Therefore, we cannot deny His divine Sonship any more than we can deny His divinity! Why would we, when the Spirit of prophecy tells us that even before open rebellion arose in heaven, the angels knew Jesus to be the Son of God, and that the Father declared Him so in their presence? “To dispute the supremacy of the Son of God, thus impeaching the wisdom and love of the Creator, had become the purpose of [Lucifer].... The King of the universe summoned the heavenly hosts before Him, that in their presence He might set forth the true position of His Son.... Before the assembled inhabitants of heaven the King declared that none but Christ, the Only Begotten of God, could fully enter into His purposes, and to Him it was committed to execute the mighty counsels of His will. The Son of God had wrought the Father’s will in the creation of all the hosts of heaven; and to Him, as well as to God, their homage and allegiance were due.... The angels joyfully acknowledged the supremacy of Christ....” (PP 36)

If we believe Christ is an *independently self-existent* God, having His own substance and His own life in Himself, and not receiving substance or life from His Father, then there would be *two* divine lives! If that is so, then all the related quotations and verses under this subheading are lies, and Ellen White is a false prophet! And if we believe the Holy Spirit is a third *independently self-existent* God, each

“God” having His own substance and divine life, each with no relationship with the other two, then there are *three* divine lives in our universe! This is undeniable tritheism: three gods, three beings having their own “original, unborrowed, underived” lives! Questions are inevitable. Which one of those three is “the great Source of all”? (DA 21) Which is the biblical “Ancient of days”? And there’s even more confusion, for even Trinitarians admit there is no credible, logical, or biblical way to justify the assertion that those three gods are only one god.

The truth exposes error further: If Christ does not share the Father’s life and substance, then how could He, as an independently self-existent God, die on the Cross? How does independently self-existent divine eternal life die? It can’t!

The only way the Trinity doctrine can explain how “Christ died for us” (Rom 5:8) is to have Jesus’ humanity die. But that brings up two insurmountable doctrinal problems. First, humanity alone could not atone for God’s broken law; not even an angel’s life could. (EW 150) Thus in the Trinity teaching, we would not have atonement for our sins. And the doctrine’s fatal flaw can’t be sidestepped by claiming “It’s a mystery.” Not when the non-trinitarian understanding is so clear.

Secondly, we know the merging of the divine and human in Christ was “never to be broken.” (DA 25) “Christ’s humanity was united with divinity; He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling Holy Spirit.” (DA 123) “In Christ were united the divine and the human—the Creator and the creature. The nature of God, whose law had been transgressed, and the nature of Adam, the transgressor, meet in Jesus—the Son of God, and the Son of man.” (Ms 141, 1901) “Christ’s humanity could not be separated from His divinity.” (ST April 14, 1898) That is good news for us, for “it is in this union that we find the hope of our fallen race.” (ST July 30, 1896) But it is bad news for the veracity of the Trinity doctrine.

And as a result of all this, we have been brought to the point in the history of our denomination where no Adventist can believe all of our

published fundamental beliefs. You have seen for yourself the disconnect between the writings of Ellen White and the teachings of the Trinity. That disconnect means either Ellen White is a false prophet, or the Trinity doctrine is a false doctrine. Either fundamental belief #18 about the gift of prophecy given to Mrs. White is not true, or else fundamental beliefs #2 through #5 about three independently-existent, coeternal gods being a “unity” of one god are not true. To accept belief #18 is to reject beliefs #2-5, and to accept #2-5 is to reject #18. There is no third option, and every Adventist must choose—even if it’s done by default, by letting others make the choice for him or her. Each one of us is unavoidably out of compliance with the church’s official positions, whether we are aware of it or not. Ignorance does not excuse us from this doctrinal dilemma any more than indolence does, for we have the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy by which to test every doctrine.

### **Christ “gave up His life”**

So how *did* the divine-human Christ die on the cross? The truth is so glorious! Divine life—the one life of the Father—makes Christ self-existent, or else He could not be divine. Christ is self-existent because “as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in Himself.” What life did the Father give Him, through inheritance? (Heb 1:4) The Father’s own “life, original, unborrowed, underived.” (DA530) No beings possess this divine life yet except the Father and His begotten Son. Christ’s life is fully His own, yet we know that it is the Father’s immortal life in Him that has made Him self-existent. Scripture says that the Father’s life—a life without beginning or end—was given to Christ by the Father, and it can be given to us. We read above that “through the beloved Son, the Father’s life flows out to all.” (DA 21) Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life.” (John 10:27-28) But in the greatest, noblest, most heart-melting act of eternity, Christ on Calvary surrendered His life back to God. Amazing grace! Unsurpassed love! The cross “is the great center of attraction; for on it *Christ gave up His life* for the human race.” (6BC 1113) He chose to experience what He thought would be eternal separation from His Father, so the

human race could have a second probation, in order for them to choose between the “last Adam’s” inheritance of life, not the first Adam’s inheritance of death.

“All who gain the precious boon of immortality will follow the example of Christ, who went about doing good, who cheerfully *gave up his life* to ransom those ready to perish.” (YI Oct. 25, 1900) “Our precious Saviour considered them [human souls] of such value that He did not withhold Himself, but *gave up His life* in order that they might have a provision, a trial, a time when they should consider the things of eternal interest.” (1SAT 61) “If we gain the eternal reward, we must follow the example of Christ, our Pattern, who did good and only good with the Lord’s entrusted talents. He cheerfully *gave up His life* to ransom a wicked, apostate race.” (UL 234)

Right before the divine-human Christ died, He said, “Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit.” (Luke 23:46) “Commend” in that verse, according to *Strong’s* #3908 in the context of Christ’s imminent loss of life, means “*to deposit as a trust, or for protection; to commit the keeping of*” (from *Accordance*, Bible software for Mac computers). He surrendered His life into His Father’s keeping, to be kept in trust and returned to Him if and when the Father so judged, and then He died. There was no life left in Him at all. That understanding is consistent with the statements from the Spirit of prophecy above, but there’s more evidence.

Jesus said in John 10:18, concerning His life, “No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again....” The noun “power” is *Strong’s* #1849; the short definition is “power, authority, weight.” The HELPS Word-study gives us this added understanding: “...authority, conferred power, delegated empowerment....” ([biblehub.com/greek/1849.htm](http://biblehub.com/greek/1849.htm)) That Jesus’ power or authority was conferred or delegated is an important point; it can prevent the misconception that Jesus had “life in Himself” when He was dead, giving Him inherent power to raise Himself three days later. That makes no sense, because if He had life in Himself, He

wasn't really dead—which is a denial of Scripture! The fact is, Jesus said plainly in John 10:18 that He would “lay down” His life. He wouldn't retain it; He would “commend” or “deposit” it into the Father's hands.

“I have power to take it again.” The verb “take” (*Strong's* #2983) can mean to acquire for oneself (as in “take the lead”) or receive for oneself (as in “accept the offered gift”). Letting the context guide us, the most sensible and likely meaning from *Strong's* referring to the dead Christ “taking” his life again is “to accept,” “obtain,” “receive.” He could not restore life to Himself; He was truly dead. That is the clear testimony of Scripture: “Christ died for us.” Christ's “taking it again” means life was returned to Him by the One who gave it in the first place—the same One to whom Christ surrendered it right before His death. Christ received it again because, as the only Son of God that had been begotten, He had been given power to do so.

The surrender of His divine life to His Father was a supreme act of love, visibly acknowledged by the Father for all to see, though most did not yet understand. Ellen White wrote, “Suddenly the gloom lifted from the cross, and in clear, trumpet-like tones that seemed to resound throughout creation, Jesus cried, ‘It is finished.’ ‘Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.’ A light encircled the cross, and the face of the Saviour shone with a glory like the sun. He then bowed His head upon His breast, and died.” (DA 756) By His own choice, Christ *gave up His life* for us. “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.” (John 10:17-18)

Scripture tells us over twenty times that the Father raised the Son to life again. The Father is “him [he] that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.” (Rom 4:24) “He who died for the sins of the world was to remain in the tomb the allotted time. He was in that stony prison house as a prisoner of divine justice. He was responsible to the Judge of the



universe. He was bearing the sins of the world, and His Father only could release Him.” (5BC 1114) “...Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead...” (Acts 4:10) To be raised from the dead means to be given life again. The Father gave His Son the Father’s own life a second time. “Christ was invested [by the Father] with the right to give immortality. The life which He had laid down in humanity, He again took up and gave to humanity.” (YI Aug, 4, 1898) The eternal life that He was given by the Father (John 5:26), He “laid down.” The life the Father gave back to Him, Jesus “again took up.” All praise to our heavenly Father for the precious hope that we, too, might receive life everlasting.

### **Surrendering our own lives**

For the sake of others, that others might come to know Christ, we are called upon to surrender our lives to God—not in the same sense as the divine Son of God could do and did do, for our lives are yet temporal, but nonetheless, to fully surrender: “But to him who has entirely surrendered his life to God, the assurance is given that the Holy Spirit will be his helper.” (RH June 16, 1896) “If we surrender our lives to His service, we can never be placed in a position for which God has not made provision.” (GW 263) We are to die to self. “The greatest work that can be done in our world is to glorify God by living the character of Christ. *God will make perfect only those who will die to self.* Those who are willing to do this can say, ‘I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.’” (Ms 16, 1900; 6BC 1109)

If we choose to die to sin and self, we will be given the Holy Spirit: “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” (Rom 8:11) “And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.” (Rom 8:10) “The influence of the Holy Spirit is the life of Christ in the soul.” (TMK 57) “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom 6:11) “Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive

from the dead.” (Rom 6:13) What kind of life are we given when we die to self and sin? “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” (1 John 5:13)

I am compelled by this love to say, “Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit. Make it wholly thine.”

## Conclusion

If you have read the eighteen chapters of this book, and if you have considered yourself a Seventh-day Adventist Trinitarian, then surely, between the Scriptures and Spirit of prophecy evidence presented in these chapters, God has spoken to your heart. I certainly and earnestly pray so.

### Satan's familiar method

What you have read in these pages is the “straight testimony” that has been “called forth” from my heart and the hearts of others “by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans.” We cannot keep silent in the face of such danger. The fact that it is the truth causes “some to rise up against it,” and that is the “meaning of the shaking” our church is experiencing regarding the true identities of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (RH Dec. 31, 1857) It is part of Satan's war against the remnant:

Revelation 12:17 gives the warning, “**And the dragon (Satan) was wroth with the woman, (God's pure church) and went to make war (to annihilate through any conceivable method) with the remnant (God's church in the end time) of her seed, which keep the commandments of God (all ten, and especially the first), and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (the Spirit of prophecy).**”

Satan has always used the passage of time, as well as men he can manipulate, to turn God's truth into error. Here in what we hope is the final generation, he has most of the Christian world giving reverence to the counterfeit Sabbath. He is well aware that if you break one commandment, it's as if you have broken them all (James 2:10), and certainly that is no way to have your probation end—as a law-breaker. But notice in Revelation 12:17 quoted above, the target of his final attack is the remnant movement that God raised up, to which He gave true doctrinal understanding, and which truths He confirmed through His prophet. Revelation 14:12 says the remnant keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

Satan can do nothing to change the remnant's understanding of the fourth commandment. It is too explicit to understand otherwise. This has frustrated his goal to deceive the whole world, so he's had to think of another, more subtle yet effective ploy. He must have reasoned within himself that something that worked for him in the time of Christ would work again with the end-time church. The parallels are obvious. Satan couldn't get the Jews to break the fourth commandment. They kept the seventh-day Sabbath with religious fervor—but they did so with hearts that were void of love for God. Rather, it was all outward show and trust in one's own works, a deadly belief that keeping the ten commandments and the law of Moses would earn them a right to heaven. At the same time, they rejected the Son of God, largely because He was not the Messiah they were looking for. They wanted a Messiah more to their liking. It was on that point—the Sonship of Jesus—that the Jewish nation lost its privileged role as keeper of the oracles of God. That nation was replaced by the church that Christ instituted, based on the “rock” of belief that He is, as Peter and the other apostles recognized, the “Son of the living God.” (Matt 16:16-18) Ever since then, Satan has been on the attack against the church. As he had done with the Jews, he would labor to cause the remnant church to become self-confident Sabbath-keepers who reject the Son of God.

### **The Son of God rejected again**

Could Satan, over a period of time—say, about sixty-five years after the prophet's death—actually get this remnant people to reject the Son of God and embrace a first-commandment-breaking doctrine the pioneers solidly rejected? All while they were dutifully keeping the fourth commandment? Well, he has engineered his plan into reality. Adventism's doctrinal paradigm shift happened in 1980, sixty-five years after the death of Ellen White. In that year, the three-gods-in-one Trinity god was voted into Adventist beliefs, replacing Adventism's long-standing belief in one supreme God and His literal only begotten Son. In 1981 our *Fundamental Beliefs* boasted three co-equal, co-eternal Gods. That belief eliminates any possibility of a true, precedent Father and His consequent begotten Son; it has required a

reinterpretation of the inspired Word of God—after almost two millennia after Christ. Satan has been successful; the Son of God has been rejected, and in His place a counterfeit god called “God the Son” is accepted. This God, it is claimed without biblical support, cannot be both God and Son, so His *true* Sonship had to be—and was—removed from our beliefs.

Adventists today reject the Son of God as having been birthed in eternity. Instead, they claim that “God the Son” is a role-playing Son who is co-eternal with the Father. Therefore, there is no true Father-Son relationship, and thus Jesus’ Sonship is taught to be only metaphorical and only temporary. So, while the Adventists are dutifully keeping the seventh-day Sabbath, they reject the literal, biblical Son of God, just as the Jews did. Moreover, they embrace a third god to worship—even though God the Father said, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me”—“before” meaning “instead of” or “in addition to” me. Without realizing what they are doing, by accepting the Trinity doctrine as true, Adventists break the first commandment.

These—and more—are details many Seventh-day Adventists don’t know about. The *Fundamental Beliefs* dealing with the Trinity sound good, as written. It is when one hears the details not mentioned in the *Fundamental Beliefs* that alarm bells go off.

### **Satan’s plan overruled**

Something that the arch-deceiver did not plan on, though, has become a thorn in his side. If “my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6), the converse is also true: “Get wisdom, get understanding: ...Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.” (Prov 4:5-6) The much-welcomed release of the writings of Ellen White and the pioneers, as well as the entire Bible, in easily-accessed CD-ROM format, resulted in Adventists all around the world finally being able to investigate thoroughly for themselves what the pioneers actually believed and taught, as well as what the Bible has to say, “precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little.” A mystical, confusing three-in-one god just didn’t make sense

to many. They learned literal biblical truths that were clearly expressed, and which thrilled their souls. Unable to keep silent, they shared their knowledge, and a movement began that has been bringing back to our beloved church the foundational doctrines and fundamental principles that were established by divine authority in our early years. That small movement has grown to a considerable number of Seventh-day Adventists worldwide. They are more than happy to willingly share the information that helped them step out of the darkness of deception into the marvelous light of the real truth about the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This God-directed movement is causing a shaking in Adventism.

### **An awakening**

One experiences different emotions in this journey to wonderful, salvational truth. First, there's an exhilarating feeling for having the fog lift and the truth seen in crystal-clearness. Then comes some anger for having been taught a Satan-inspired lie about our wonderful, sovereign God. Then follows joy for the truth that sets you free. I know from personal experience. I first became an Adventist in 1960, at the age of twenty-one. In 2013, I became a non-trinitarian, and after the first feeling of exhilaration subsided, I then experienced feelings of betrayal and anger toward those who had taught me the false trinitarian doctrine. But then I stopped blaming those who taught me the error, because they had bought into Satan's deceptions, too—just as I had done. After all, I had been preaching it, teaching it, and defending it for a number of years, just like they had been doing.

What I've found is that a non-trinitarian settles into a peaceful, confident joy in this pure understanding and in the holy, loving God revealed in it. He or she develops a great burden for the deceived Adventists around the world who have a counterfeit oil in their lamps that will not burn to light their way to "old paths, where is the good way." (Jer. 6:16) What I see happening is that God is raising up many voices who are using every form of communication to reach souls in the

church who have no concept of the spiritual danger associated with the Trinity doctrine.

Our Trinitarian brothers and sisters around the globe need to know the truth. When they decide to study the issue without prejudice or bias, God will give them precious understanding. The light will dawn and the biblical truth will become apparent. As has happened so many times, they will want to learn all they possibly can as soon as they can, and the truth will set them free.

### **Yet some still sleep**

Ten sleeping virgins represent God's remnant church. The wise virgins have the necessary oil, which represents the true Holy Spirit, which comes from a correct understanding of the Godhead. The foolish virgins represent those who embrace the false trinity doctrine that involves another spirit. They have no Holy Spirit oil in their lamps, but they refuse to believe the church leadership could be mistaken. Too late they will want what they could have had. Too late they will realize that leadership has failed them, for leaders are not immune to Satan's deceptions. They are but mortals like the rest of us, and some, being deceived themselves, have become deceivers. It is now, in the tarrying time, that each one of us must get this issue right, or we personally will never give the third angel's message with power. We will have disqualified ourselves. Our good works will not save us. Our eternal destinies could well be jeopardized by our choice of which side of the issue we will hold as truth. Will we be among those who rely on man's questionable reasoning, or among those who accept the Word of God just as it reads?

Will we learn from the Jews' tragic experience, or will we again be misled by Satan's lies? The Spirit of prophecy leaves no room for doubt about his intentions against us: "This fact the [fallen] angels would obscure, that Christ was the only begotten Son of God." (TDG 128, brackets original) But we have the privilege of taking God at His Word: "God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God. To Christ has

been given an exalted position. He has been made equal with the Father. All the counsels of God are opened to His Son.” (CCh 76)

“...Clear light has been permitted to shine upon all; but when Satan’s sophistries are heeded, when men and women reject light and evidence, gradually they become converted to the theories that Satan offers. Too late, too late they will see that angels of God are in the warfare against all who have departed from the faith.” (Ms11 [1909] 23)

### **The true cause of the division, and the remedy**

It seems incredible that a literal reading of “the truths most plainly revealed in the Bible” is now called error, though none have shown us why. A competing view has been presented, full of speculation, as has been noted in this book. Enough time has passed since the new view’s adoption into Adventist beliefs that those who “earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints” are seen as troublers of the people, disloyal to the church, purveyors of heresies, when, in fact, Adventist history reveals that the trouble arose when a mystical counterfeit of God was introduced into our denomination by Dr. John Harvey Kellogg and spread by those equally deceived. Adventism’s adoption of the equally mystical Trinity doctrine has brought division into our ranks. As Satan’s greatest all-time deception has been exposed in these pages, you have seen it for yourself. No other logical conclusion pertaining to God, His Son and His Spirit can be reached. The only honest way to end the division on this topic is to reverse course and eliminate the cause of the division. It is neither just nor honest to blame, ignore, deny office-holding to, or remove from membership those who object to the divisive doctrine. Those who contend for the faith are those who love the church and want to see her purified from all dross. Silencing objections does not purify her, but makes her condition all the more intractable.

### **Something final to ponder**

Spiritually, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has left the “old paths, where is the good way,” and joined the ecumenical Babylonish crowd on the broad way that leads to destruction. The church may not *be* Babylon, but she has certainly reached across the gulf to befriend



Babylon, and at times our church has even invited Babylon into her midst—even into General Conference sessions. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has signally proved her good will toward corrupt Babylon by giving up her biblically-based understanding of the Godhead in order to adopt Babylon’s fundamental and profoundly anti-Christ—*anti-Son of God*—doctrine of a triune god.

There is a time when God winks at our ignorance, but as this topic is agitated more and more, ignorance in this matter becomes a matter of choice, not deception. God wants to save every person whose heart is still beating, but He won’t make their choices for them. All will be saved or lost based on their own decisions, not His. Each of us chooses his or her own destiny. So long as the door of probation is still open, God calls to those enjoying doctrinal or spiritual unity with Babylon to “come out of her, My people, lest you partake of her sins and receive of her plagues.” (Rev 18:4) Both warning and promise are in these words: “Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” (2 Cor 6:17-18)

Salvation is conditional, and God’s conditions are made clear. His mercy and grace are extended to all, but grace does not do away with obedience. “God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God. To Christ has been given an exalted position. He has been made equal with the Father.” (8T 268) Whoever accepts a counterfeit triplicate god instead of that plain biblical truth breaks the true God’s first commandment. That is serious enough, but there’s more. The Holy Spirit—the transforming presence, eternal life, and infinite power of Christ—is given only to those who obey God with and through His only begotten Son. If your concept of God is not the literal one presented in the Bible, then the Spirit of prophecy warns you of idolatry, which again is transgression of the first commandment. “Multitudes have a wrong concept of God and are as truly serving a false god as were the worshipers of Baal.” (RR 63)

God told Solomon, “If ye shall at all turn from following me, but go and serve other gods, and worship them; then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them.” (1SOP 394) That divine principle and message is for His church today, too. How clearly a similar warning was sounded in more recent times, in urgent tones: “The religion of Jesus is endangered. It is being mingled with worldliness. Worldly policy is taking the place of the true piety and wisdom that comes from above, and God will remove His prospering hand from the conference. Shall the ark of the Covenant be removed from this people? Shall idols be smuggled in? Shall false principles and false precepts be brought into the sanctuary? *Shall antichrist be respected?* Shall the true doctrines and principles given to us by God, which have made us what we are, be ignored? Shall God’s instrumentality, the publishing house, become a mere political, worldly institution? This is directly where the enemy, through blinded, unconsecrated men, is leading us.” (Ms 29a, Nov. 21, 1890)

Did repentance and reformation follow this warning? Sadly, no. “Antichrist has been respected” to the point of Adventism’s adoption of antichrist’s central doctrine of the Trinity. The most foundational “true doctrines and principles given us by God” have indeed been ignored. Idols have indeed been smuggled in, right under our noses. Ironically, in the organized Seventh-day Adventist Church, there have been calls for “revival and reformation,” but not for “repentance and reformation.” However, unless there is repentance and confession, there can be no effective reformation. And so, here we are—still wandering in the wilderness all these years because of unbelief and rebellion.

Brethren and sisters, if it is your hearts’ desire to be sons and daughters of the Most High, then “now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.... Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh....” (Rom 13:11-14)

## **The burden and the hope**

My burden is great for our church and all Christian brethren, and that is the primary reason I have written this book—to help as many searching Christians as possible discard the false Babylonian doctrine of a triune god. Another goal of mine was to create a website or two where this book can be purchased or read online, or where chapters or the entire book can be downloaded in pdf format. That goal is a reality. One can purchase the book at [www.satgd.org](http://www.satgd.org) and read or download it at [www.victorysdachurch.org](http://www.victorysdachurch.org).

For further study, I recommend the website [www.revelation1412.org](http://www.revelation1412.org) as an excellent resource for many videos and other materials that explain the Godhead subject well. Some of the material in this book comes from that website and is used with permission.

I am now in my 80s, by God's grace, and while we may not meet in this life, my hope is to meet you where there will be an abundant life of eternal joy. May you continue to grow in the Spirit of the Father and His only truly begotten Son as you learn and share what Satan would happily extinguish if he could. Praise God that he can't, though, because our eternal Father is ever in control.

Richard C. Vaughn



## **Afterthought**

Although we know Satan's personation of Christ will be his ultimate deception, until that day comes, the trinitarian doctrine, bringing down God's remnant church, continues to be Satan's all-time greatest deception.



## Key to Abbreviations

AA	Acts of the Apostles,
AG	The God's Amazing Grace
AUCR	[Australasian] Union Conference Record
1BC	Bible Commentary, The SDA, Vol. 1 (2BC for Vol. 2)
BEcho	Bible Echo
BTS	Bible Training School
CC	Conflict and Courage
CCh	Counsels for the Church
CET	Christian Experience and Teachings of EGW
CG	Child Guidance
CH	Counsels on Health
CS	Christian Service
CM	Colporteur Ministry
COL	Christ's Object Lessons
CW	Counsels to Writers and Editors
DA	Desire of Ages,
DG	The Daughters of God
Ed	Education
Ev	Evangelism
EW	Early Writings
FLB	Faith I Live By,
GC	The Great Controversy,
GCB	The General Conference Bulletin
GCDB	General Conference Daily Bulletin
GW	Gospel Workers
HP	In Heavenly Places
LDE	Last Day Events
LHU	Lift Him Up
LLM	Loma Linda Messages
Ltr	Letter
Mar	Maranatha: the Lord is Coming
1MCP	Mind, Character and Personality, Vol. 1 (2 vol.)
MH	Ministry of Healing,
MM	The Medical Ministry
MR	Manuscript Releases
Ms	Manuscript by E. G. White

MYP	Messages to Young People
1NB	Notebook Leaflets, Vol. 1 (2NL for Vol. 2)
OHC	Our High Calling
PP	Patriarchs and Prophets
RH	Review and Herald
1SAT	Sermons and Talks, Vol. 1 (2SAT for Vol.2)
SC	Steps to Christ
SDG	Sons and Daughters of God
1SG	Spiritual Gifts, Vols. 1 (2 SG for Vol.2, 3SG for Vols. 3)
1SM	Selected Messages, Book One (2SM for Book 2, etc.)
1SP	Spirit of Prophecy, The, Vol. 1 (2SP for Book 2, etc.)
SpM	Spalding Magan
SpTA	Special Testimonies, Series A (1-12)
SpTB	Special Testimonies, Series B (1-19)
SR	Story of Redemption
ST	Signs of the Times
SSW	Sabbath School Worker
SW	Southern Work
SW	Southern Watchman (if with date)
1T	Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 1 (2T for Vol. 2, etc. (1-9)
TDG	This Day with God
TMK	That I May Know Him
YI	Youth's Instructor
YRP	Ye Shall Receive Power