

Old Paths

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. Jeremiah 6:16

The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant. Psalm 25:14

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Straight and Narrow

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Brother Cory McCain brought his witnessing tool, “The Beast,” to the 1889 HSDA Camp Meeting. Read more about it next month.



Fundamental Pillars — The Testimony of Jesus

By Allen Stump

(This is an extension in the series on the pillars of our faith as we study from the Bible their meaning and importance. We are excluding the writings of Ellen White, except for some footnotes, from these studies not because they do not support these truths but because we need to be able to give a thus saith the Lord when called into court for our faith or when discussing biblical subjects with those who do not accept Ellen White as a messenger of the Lord. However, for this study, there will be a few exceptions because of the nature of this study on the Testimony of Jesus.....Pastor Stump)

The Spirit of Prophecy defines seven pillars of our faith. They are:

- The Law and the Sabbath (*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, page 30.2)
- The Personalities of God and of Christ (*Ye Shall Receive Power*, page 235.4)
- The Faith of Jesus (*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, page 30.2)
- The Sanctuary (*The Great Controversy*, page 409.1)
- The Three Angels' Messages (*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, page 30.2)
- The Testimony of Jesus (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, page 300.1)
- The Nonimmortality of the Wicked (*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, page 30.2)

In our last issue, we studied the personality of God and of Christ. This study will be on the spirit of prophecy, or, as it is also described in Revelation 12:17, the testimony of Jesus.

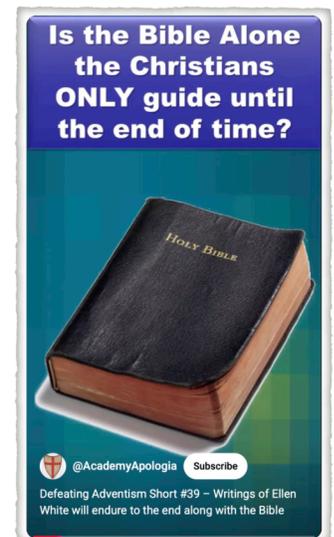
Recently I saw a presentation from a YouTube channel entitled "AcademyApologia." According to the channel's home page, the site is dedicated to:

... expose non-Christian religions by showcasing their teachings and demonstrating these religions which

largely claim some relationship to historical Christianity, to be non-Christian. These non-Christian religions include: Adventists, Christadelphians, Islam, Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses, etc. This channel has a focus on Seventh-Day Adventists because this non-Christian religion is not being adequately addressed by the Christian community. (<https://www.youtube.com/@AcademyApologia>; transcript from Channel Introduction Video)

This particular message concerned the lack of *sola scriptura* within the Seventh-day Adventist community because the writings of Ellen White were treated as a third canon of scripture.

In the presentation, we find a graphic with the question: "Is the Bible alone the Christian's ONLY guide until the end of all time?"



After agreeing with that statement, the author then quotes from a November 27, 1924, *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* article, from which he reads:

In her [Ellen White], the remnant church possesses the gift of prophecy. Many volumes were written by her, and these will continue to serve as a guide to the church to the end of time. [E. E. Andross, "A Sure Foundation"] (Ibid.)

The presenter of *AcademyApologia* then states:

I thought the Bible was our guide until the end of time, not if you're a Seventh-day Adventist.

See, if you're a Seventh-day Adventist, there's no such thing as *sola scriptura*, because you have two *sola*.

There's double.

You have to believe in Ellen White. You have to believe in the Bible, because both the Bible and Ellen White's writings are going to endure to the end of time.

Seventh-day Adventism is such a false religion.

What does the Bible say about it? Look with me here.

2 Timothy 3.16 [ESV] All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, correction, and for training in righteousness.

So what is profitable for us as Christians? The scripture. Not Ellen White.

But yet in Adventism, they claim she is inspired by God, and her writings will endure to the end of time.

They just gave her the status of the Word of God. They made it equal to the Bible.

Seventh-day Adventism is not a Christian religion. It's not a religion you should trust, nor should anybody trust it. And if you're an Adventist, you need to get out of this false religion now. (Ibid.)

That is a lot to unpack, but we will show the author is not correct in much of what he states.

Let us begin by seeing what is really being said, as well as what is not, in the article by Andross. Andross, indeed, did write that Ellen White's writings were to "continue to serve as a guide to the church . . ." What does it mean to be a guide? Does being a guide or giving guidance of itself mean that the guidance is to be on par, or on level, with the Scripture? By the implication of the author of *AcademyApologia*, it must be.

Interestingly, it is a truth that by his guidance and warning, the presenter of *AcademyApologia* wants to be a guide to help you. He wants to warn you of Ellen White and Seventh-day Adventism! He is certainly trying to guide your thoughts!

Martin Luther, who absolutely believed in *sola scriptura*, preached, taught, and wrote many things. He was certainly a guide to many early Protestants and still is today, but was he adding to the Bible? I know of few to none who would say so.

Now, what about this text from the Bible? How would *AcademyApologia* respond to this?

But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. (1 John 2:27)

If we were in tune with God as we could be, we would need no human teachers, but God in his mercy made provision for them.

We also know that the sermon of Peter at Pentecost was not the only sermon he ever gave in his life. Paul spent years preaching and teaching before his death, and hardly a fraction of his words are in the Bible. Those words in the Bible are a part of the canon for sure, but what about the other things he wrote, like his epistle to the church at Laodicea? Could we accuse him of trying to "guide" the church beyond *sola scriptura*?

Returning to Andross's article, on what basis did he make his statement? Was it on a *thus saith Ellen White*?

NO!!! He used the Bible as proof of spiritual gifts, and so will we, as we study about spiritual gifts and especially the testimony of Jesus.

Our Adventist pioneers believed in spiritual gifts not because Ellen White said so but, rather, because the Bible teaches these gifts. For the record, let me share with you two statements from Ellen White on this:

But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain *the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms*. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority—not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain "Thus saith the Lord" in its support. (Ellen White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 595.1; all emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted)

This statement from perhaps Ellen White's most known book, in a chapter entitled "The Scriptures a Safeguard," plainly states that she is in agreement with the Bible and the Bible alone to be the "standard of all doctrines" and even "the basis of all reforms." She also wrote:

God has been pleased to give you line upon line and precept upon precept. But there are not many of you that really know what is contained in the Testimonies. You are not familiar with the Scriptures. *If you had made God's word your study, with a desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection, you would not have needed the Testimonies*. It is because you have neglected

to acquaint yourselves with God's inspired Book that He has sought to reach you by simple, direct testimonies, calling your attention to the words of inspiration which you had neglected to obey, and urging you to fashion your lives in accordance with its pure and elevated teachings. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 605.1)

Her husband, Elder James White, also wrote:

The bible [*sic*] is a perfect, and complete revelation. It is our only rule of faith and practice. But this is no reason, why God may not show the past, present, and future fulfilment of his word, in these last days, by dreams and visions; according to Peter's testimony. True visions are given to lead us to God, and his written word; but those that are given for a new rule of faith and practice, separate from the bible, cannot be from God, and should be rejected. (James White, *A Word to the Little Flock*, p. 13.4)

So, what did our pioneers believe about spiritual gifts? From their 1889 statement of fundamental principles, we read:

XIX. That the Spirit of God was promised to manifest itself in the church through certain gifts, enumerated especially in 1 Cor. 12 and Eph. 4; that these gifts are not designed to supersede, or take the place of, the Bible, which is sufficient to make us wise unto salvation, any more than the Bible can take the place of the Holy Spirit; that, in specifying the various channels of its operation, that Spirit has simply made provision for its own existence and presence with the people of God to the end of time, to lead to an understanding of that word which it had inspired, to convince of sin, and to work a transformation in the heart and life; and that those who deny to the Spirit its place and operation, do plainly deny that part of the Bible which assigns to it this work and position.

III. That the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, contain a full revelation of his will to man, and are the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

The expression *spiritual gift(s)* is used four times in the KJV. The first place is in Romans, where Paul writes:

For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; (Romans 1:11)

Spiritual gifts were good, and Paul endeavored to share them with believers. The next place spiritual gifts are mentioned is in First Corinthians:

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. (1 Corinthians 12:1)

God does not wish for us to be uninformed about these matters, and God is a giver of good gifts.

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? (Matthew 7:11)

In the next place we read about spiritual gifts believers are told to desire them:

Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy. (1 Corinthians 14:1)

The last reference teaches that the believers were zealous to have spiritual gifts among themselves:

Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. (1 Corinthians 14:12)

There are various gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14, but especially do we see gifts mentioned in Ephesians 4, which deals with ministry and administration within the church and the reason for these gifts:

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: *Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man*, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we *henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine*, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; (Ephesians 4:11-14)

God wants a unity in the faith for the work of the ministry and that the believers be not tossed about with winds of false doctrine. But we ask, why did God give these gifts? Could not all the people have just read the Bible for their guidance and to be their guide? Maybe, but God in his mercy realizes that many believers would be weak but could be strengthened with extra help, and so it is a part of God's plan to use these and other spiritual gifts to guide his people in helping them to understand his word, the Bible.

Sufficiency of Scripture: *Sola Scriptura*

The Bible, itself, teaches its own sufficiency, in such texts as:

What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it. (Deuteronomy 12:32)

The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever. (Isaiah 40:6-8)

And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is

given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (2 Timothy 3:15–16)

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. (John 17:17)

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

Will the gifts be present till the end?

Some theologians and preachers, like the late John MacArthur, are cessationists, holding the belief that the spiritual gifts, such as prophecy, were granted only for the Apostolic Age to authenticate the origin and truth of the scriptures, and that at the close of that time these gifts had served their purpose and ceased to be granted.¹ But is this what the Bible teaches?

Notice what Paul wrote to the Corinthians:

6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: 7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: 8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 1:6–8)

Paul writes that it was his desire for the believers to fall “behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” While many believers, such as the Thessalonians, had hopes that Christ would come soon, Paul would later write to them:

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; (2 Thessalonians 2:3)

Paul understood that there would be a delay, but he still expected spiritual gifts to be in the church until the coming of the Lord.

A very interesting text concerning especially prophets in the last days, is found in Revelation. During the outpouring of the third plague, we read:

4 And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. 5 And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. 6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. (Revelation 16:4–6)

¹ MacArthur did not believe Seventh-day Adventism was a Christian religion, in part due to the claimed gift of prophecy in the ministry of Ellen White.

The people upon whom this plagues falls are living in the last days, and they have shed the blood of not only the saints but prophets as well!

In fact, if you read the book of Revelation and look for the gifts of Ephesians 4, here is what you will see:

Apostles: Three references but none that speak of guidance for the people of God

Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers – No mention

Prophet(s): Twelve references! While three are for the false prophet, nine mention the prophetic gift.

This is not to imply that apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers are not important, but simply that the book of Revelation, especially a book for the last days, places a high emphasis upon the gift of prophecy.

In the pioneer position as stated in Fundamental Principle XIX on page 4 of this paper, we read that “those who deny to the Spirit its place and operation, do plainly deny that part of the Bible which assigns to it this work and position.” I have heard from some, “We don’t want pastors; Jesus is our Pastor,” but to deny pastors is to truly deny the Saviour who gifted pastors to the church. If we deny there can be gifts today, we are denying the Bible that speaks of the gifts.

The historic Adventist view

The historic Adventist view, the view of the pioneers who lived and worked with Ellen White, is clear and specific. The Bible is the rule of faith and doctrine. The Bible teaches that in the last days God will manifest himself to his people through the gift of prophecy not as a new revelation of truth but for their comfort, correction, and edification. The early Adventist pioneer leaders also emphasized that the visions must harmonize with the Bible to be valid as from God and not the personal view of the one claiming to have had the revelations. This is what the Bible teaches. Under inspiration, Moses proclaimed:

If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. (Deuteronomy 13:1–3)

The pioneer position is emphasized by George I. Butler, a former president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, when he wrote an article on Ellen White’s visions in 1883. He stated in part:

The *majority* of our people believe these visions [of Ellen White] to be a genuine manifestation of spiritual gifts, and as such to be entitled to respect. We do not hold



Ellen G. White

them to be superior to the Bible, or in one sense equal to it. The Scriptures are our rule to test everything by, the visions as well as all other things. That rule, therefore, is of the highest authority; the standard is higher than the thing tested by it. If the Bible should show the visions were not in harmony with it, the

Bible would stand, and the visions would be given up. This shows plainly that we hold the Bible the highest, our enemies to the contrary, notwithstanding. (George I. Butler, “The Visions: How They Are Held Among S. D. Adventists,” *Review and Herald Supplement*, August 14, 1883, p. 12)

It is of importance to note that during the life and times of Ellen White, her name was never mentioned in any fundamental principle nor was accepting her gift a test of fellowship within the church! To state that “the majority of our people believe these visions [of Ellen White] to be a genuine manifestation of spiritual gifts” implies there was a minority who did not. Believers certainly all acknowledged spiritual gifts, yet all were allowed to determine for themselves to whom these gifts might apply.

Relationship of non-canonical prophets to the Bible

The prophets whose writings are included in the Bible are sometimes called canonical prophets, meaning that they were added to the canon of Scripture. But the Bible also mentions prophets and even writings of prophets whose writings and/or sayings were not made a part of the canon of Scripture. For example:

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. (Acts 13:1–2)

Luke mentions five different prophets and teachers, but only Paul would become an author of Scripture.

We also read of Philip who had four daughters who were prophetesses. None of them wrote anything or said anything that was recorded for the Bible.

And the next day we that were of Paul’s company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him. And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. (Acts 21:8–9)

We also read of Agabus who even gave an inspired message for Paul, but he did not write anything for the Bible.

And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul’s girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. (Acts 21:10–11)

These verses mention various prophets and prophetesses, but we do not have a book of Agabus in the Bible, an epistle of Barnabas or Lucius, nor a book of the four daughters of Phillip. However, these prophets are mentioned in connection with one who wrote more of the books of the New Testament than any other single writer. Further, Agabus is given a message for Paul. Here we see the work of non-canonical prophets — their work is local with specific guidance for individuals and groups, meeting local conditions.

Special texts for consideration

Earlier we mentioned that the book of Revelation gives an emphasis to prophecy, and there is in it a special teaching about the gift of prophecy in connection with the remnant people of God. Chapter 12 finishes by stating:

And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which *keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.* (Revelation 12:17)

Here are mentioned two special characteristics of the remnant. Firstly, they keep the commandments of God, and they must certainly keep all of them (James 2:10). Secondly, they have what is called the testimony of Jesus, which is defined in Chapter 19:

And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: *for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.* (Revelation 19:10)

Here we are told that “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” This does not mean that having the testimony of Jesus is simply giving a testimony about Jesus or being a people who study prophecy. It is having the gift of being a prophet. We know this because the angel tells John that he is of his “brethren.” In Chapter 22 we learn the identity of these

brethren. As before, John was tempted to worship the angel, but the angel replies:

Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of *thy brethren the prophets*, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God. (Revelation 22:9)

The remnant people of God not only hear the voice of God in his law and respond by keeping his commandments, but they also have the continued voice of Jesus, which he promised to be in his household through the Spirit to the end of time. The spirit of prophecy is not simply a set of writings, but the coming of the Holy Spirit upon human instrumentalities with power to speak forth for Jesus his testimony.

The Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, teaches that God's people will be guided and helped by the prophetic gift in the end of time. Isaiah writes:

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. (Isaiah 11:11-12)

These verses speak of God recovering his people, his remnant people, from many places, which parallel Revelation 14:6, but Isaiah continues and writes:

And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt. (Isaiah 11:16)

Isaiah looked forward to the gathering of a remnant. This remnant will have a highway, or path, out of mystic Babylon like the children of Jacob came out of the land of Egypt. So, how does the Bible define this to have happened? Hosea tells us:

And by a prophet the LORD brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved. (Hosea 12:13)

In both the Old and New Testaments, and speaking of the final gathering of God's people on the earth, it is stated clearly that prophetic guidance will be restored to lead them in the final conflict of this earth's history.

Well would we consider the counsel of Jehoshaphat when Judah was being attacked by the combined armies of the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir. These were all relatives of Israel and when Israel came into the promised land, they were not allowed to attack them. However, they were now coming as a great army against Judah.

Jehoshaphat knew that without God's help Judah would be slaughtered. So, he laid out the matter before the LORD, and shortly thereafter a message was given to the prophet for Jehoshaphat:

And he said, Harken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's. To morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel. Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you. (2 Chronicles 20:15-17)

Jehoshaphat could have responded: "Sounds good, but there is no way God can or will do that for us." He might have said, "How can God do that for us?" Instead, Jehoshaphat believed the prophet and sent out singers to lead the army. Who does that? Only someone who believes the word of the LORD. So, "they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper." (2 Chronicles 20:20).

The same counsel is so valid today. If we believe in the LORD, we will be established, and as we believe his prophets we shall prosper. If one will examine the Seventh-day Adventist movement, everywhere they have followed the counsels of Ellen White they have prospered, and everywhere they have rejected those counsels they have failed.

Concerning the leading of the Lord, we have been told:

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 the Lord 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. (Ellen White, *Life Sketches*, p. 196.2)

Sadly the corporate church has failed to follow this counsel and for this reason, we see the corporate church has become a daughter of Babylon.

Today the 1889 HSDA Church is striving to follow the counsels in health, education, and ministry. Please pray that we will be open and honest with the counsels, and then we can know that if we do not "forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history" we may prosper.



Heavenward Bound, Upholding the Truth

2025 1889 HSDA Camp Meeting Keynote

Address

By Todd Brown

Good evening, brothers and sisters. Welcome to the Historic Seventh-day Adventist 2025 Camp Meeting at beautiful Fall Creek Falls State Park. We want to thank God for the opportunity to gather here together.

What is our camp meeting theme? Heavenward Bound, Upholding the Truth, and I believe God has something very special in store for all of us this week.

As I was pondering this subject, I was reminded of those days in school, the year before graduation, when as a class, we would come up with an aim and a motto, which was good because as graduates, we were transitioning from one period of life into the next. Focus and direction are very important at times like that, and I think that is the purpose here at this camp meeting—to help us get our focus and our direction clear.

Our theme is probably not something entirely new to most of us, but it never hurts to be reminded of being heavenward bound and of upholding the truth.

Opening prayer and Scripture

As we begin, let us pause for a word of prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, I want to thank you for each one who is here. I want to thank you for all that you have done to make this experience possible. Lord, right here at the very beginning, we are asking you to come be the guest of honor. I pray that your Spirit will be felt. I pray that each of us can experience you in a deeper and more meaningful way, a way that will help us in our journey heavenward, a way that will help us to uphold the truth, and a way that will give us the courage and strength that we need in the times we're living in, for, Lord, these are perilous times. We see a lot happening in the world that remind us Jesus' coming is very soon. Lord, we want to be ready, and we know that you can help us with this week's experiences. So, I pray that you will lead in every single meeting, and, I pray, especially right now, Lord, that it would not be me, but it would be you that is seen and heard here tonight.

We thank you, we praise you, and it is in Jesus' name that we ask these things. Amen.

There are a couple of Scriptures that come to mind that, I think, uphold our theme.

The first one is Matthew 6:33:

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Another one that comes to mind is in John:

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (John 14:6)

The Waorani

I hope that we can look again at our theme and that we can use it as a context for our aim and motto in this life's journey. To begin, I want to share a story. It's a story that some of the older folks here may remember, for it actually happened in our lifetimes.

Imagine, if you will, the scene with me—a little yellow Piper Cub sitting on a narrow sandbar in the Amazon jungle. This location has affectionately been called Palm Beach. The air is thick and hot. There's the hum of insects, and five people are on the sandbar. Their names are Jim Elliot, Nate Saint, Ed McCully, Peter Fleming, and Roger Yoderian.

They had been reaching out and striving to make contact with the aggressive and dangerous Waorani people, a primitive Ecuadorian tribe known for fierce isolation and sharp spears. For days they had exchanged gifts. They had waved from a distance and had spoken friendly words and phrases, but on January 8, 1956, the silence of the jungle was broken not by songs of joy but by the cries of war.

Warriors burst from the jungle trees; spears were sent flying. The scene was ugly, and in the end, five men lay dead on the sandbar. The world called it a tragedy, but was it?

You see, these five missionaries had made a compact among themselves that they would do whatever it took to share the truth with these people. They would not retaliate nor fight back if they were attacked.

These men had their compass set on the truth of God's word, and they were determined to share it with others, especially with these people who knew nothing of God. They knew their destination, and they would not turn aside, even if the cost was life itself.

In Jim Elliot's journal, written not long before his death, he penned these words:

He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.

Brothers and sisters, I believe these men were heavenward bound and were doing all they could to uphold the truth.

In the end, these Waorani people were so amazed and touched at these missionaries' response to the attack that most of the tribe was converted to Christ.

The world called it a tragedy, but what a surprise those five missionaries will receive when in heaven they meet thousands of Waorani people who came to Christ because of

their sacrifices. I think they and we both would agree it was worth it.

Our destination

Brothers and sisters, tonight I want us to experience this same commitment. Heaven is our destination. God's word is our compass, and if we're going to reach that eternal shore, we must uphold the truth all the way. So, let us begin to break down and understand our destination.

John 14:2-3 tells us our Father's house has many mansions:

I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, there where I am, there ye may be also.

The apostle Paul also gives us this sentiment in Philippians 3:20:

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

I think these passages remind us of our ultimate destination. Again, we are heavenward bound, but please note, if we lose sight of the destination, we will drift off course, and if we drift off course, the perils are very dangerous.

The map

What can keep us on track? The map, and this takes us to our second point—the map, better known as God's word. How many of us have heard of the acronym B-I-B-L-E, Basic Instruction Before Leaving Earth?

Psalms 119:105 tells us:

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Isaiah tells us:

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever. (Isaiah 40:8)

The map is not outdated. The course is still as accurate as it ever has been. I heard one preacher put it this way—turn right, go straight. I think there is wisdom in that.

Jesus tells us:

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. (John 17:17)

How many of you remember the Underground Railroad? I'm not talking about underground train tunnels. Back in the days before the Civil War enslaved men and women escaping to freedom often traveled by night. They had no maps, no GPS's, and often they had no guide or any friend along the way to help them, but they knew they could follow the North Star. It was fixed and it was unchanging. As long as they kept that star in their sight, they could keep moving toward freedom. If they lost sight of it, they risked wander-

ing into danger or even back into captivity and possibly even to death.

God's word is our North Star. It does not shift with the culture, and it doesn't waver with emotion. If we keep it in sight, we will stay on course, heavenward bound, but if we take our eyes off of it, the dangers are there.

Reading the map

The next point is reading the map, understanding the nomenclature and keys. Back in the days before GPS and AI technology, what did we use? How many of you remember the old Rand McNally map atlases? I liked looking at them. In the corner usually there was a little box.

In looking at the top right corner map of Fall Creek Falls, we see the key where the nomenclatures are. It tells us all the symbols and all the information we need to understand the map. This information helps us make it to our destinations, and it's the same with God's word.

Having a Bible on a living room table or in the bookcase is not enough. We must do more than just possess a Bible. Even casual reading won't cut it. We must know it.

Second Timothy 2:15:

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

I always think of Pastor Martin Barlow when I think of this verse. It is one of his favorites, for good reason.

Secondly, we must live it:

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. (James 1:22)

And thirdly, we must defend it:

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: (Ephesians 4:15)

Time in speaking God's word is the key.

The fourth point is about the challenges, you know, the pitfalls, the falsehoods, the distractions that Satan puts in our path. Remember, if we take our eyes off of that star, we're in danger of losing our way, but if we can keep our focus, we know that the destination is sure.

But there are other things, too. How many of you remember giving your heart to the Lord and being on fire and zealous? Did you experience that big bullseye when the enemy really started hitting hard? When we make those commitments, those dedications, and those decisions to follow Jesus, Satan comes on stronger than ever, and, sadly, the devil is very effective in this way. I want to just read a few passages to help us remember the importance of keeping on track.

Second Timothy 4: 3–4:

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

It's a warning but, oh, so true a reality. It happens to far too many, and God forbid it should happen to us.

Keeping our eyes on that star

Galatians 1:6–8:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

First John 2:15–17:

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

One more, Hebrews 2:1:

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

These are different warnings targeting different angles that the enemy will come in. Brothers and sisters, the only safe course is to stay to that star, God's word. The devil has many ways; so, let's focus on the original, Jesus Christ.

Fifth and last point—walking faithfully in the journey.

Jesus tells us in Matthew 24:13:

But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

Second Timothy 4:7–8:

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not for me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

That's all of us, brothers and sisters.

Hebrews 12:1–2:

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run

with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Brothers and sisters, the race is not over until we cross that finish line, and that's when we're safe on our way back, headed for those pearly gates. So don't give up now. We're too close to the finish, and remember Jesus is right there to lead us all the way.

Another illustration

I want to share another illustration, and this one, too, is a contemporary of many of our lives. This took place in communist Romania, where there was a pastor named Richard Wurmbbrand. This is one of my heroes of modern times. Maybe some of you are familiar with him and his story, too. It's a powerful one. If you're not, I would suggest taking a look at it sometime.

In short, he did not go along with the communist agenda and did not pledge allegiance to their system, including their form of religion. Well, that didn't work well, and pretty soon he was arrested. He spent over fourteen years in prison, three of those in solitary confinement—no Bible, no fellowship, not even any sunlight. It was like thirty feet underground. The guards would wear felt on their shoes so he couldn't hear them. They tried to drive him crazy with silence. The guards would mock him. They would try anything they could to break him. He was beaten many times. His body suffered issues for the rest of his life from which he never recovered. He once made the statement we would preach, the guards would beat, and everyone was happy.

Stephen said that you would know when it was Sabbath because you could tell when they beat the Adventists for refusing to work at the concentration camps. Very tough times.

But in those times, especially when he was in solitary confinement down deep in that cold, damp cell, Wurmbbrand could still connect with God. He would close his eyes and quote scriptures from memory of which he memorized a lot. He would preach sermons to the bare cell walls, and he would sing hymns, softly, of course, in the dark because his hope was anchored in heaven. He later made the statement that our eyes were heavenward bound, for the guards could not reach that far.

It was a terrible experience, but he used it for God's glory, and as a result many, many men were won to Christ—fellow inmates, guards, and even some Soviet soldiers and leaders were won to Christ.

Richard Wurmbbrandt was heavenward bound while upholding and doing all he could to live out the truth.



Nate Saint

Jim Elliot

Peter Fleming

Roger Youderian

Ed McCully

Brothers and sisters, that's the same call for you and me—to keep our focus heavenward and to hold fast the truth, no matter the spear, the storm, or the prison. We must say, like the apostle Paul in Philippians 3.14: "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ."

As we wind down, I want to share a couple of passages from the pen of Mrs. White. Both of these come from *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9.

We are homeward bound. He who loved us so much as to die for us hath builded for us a city. The New Jerusalem is our place of rest. There will be no sadness in the city of God. No wail of sorrow, no dirge of crushed hopes and buried affections, will evermore be heard. Soon the garments of heaviness will be changed for the wedding garment. Soon we shall witness the coronation of our King. Those whose lives have been hidden with Christ, those who on this earth have fought the good fight of faith, will shine forth with the Redeemer's glory in the kingdom of God. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 287.1)

Brothers and sisters, heavenward bound.

In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention. (Ibid., p. 19.1)

Brothers and sisters, upholding the truth.

I hope we have seen this evening that to be heavenward bound is not just the hope of heaven someday. It's to live every day, today and every day, with eternity in view, and to uphold the truth is not merely to know about it, it's to stand for it, to speak it, to live it, and if need be, to suffer for it.

Jim Elliott gave us a life where his compass was set towards heaven. Do you remember his words?

He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.

Richard Wurmbrand endured prison, but his eyes were fixed above the cell walls to that celestial city. What about you and me? We're on the same road. The journey may look a little different for each one of us, but the destination and the calling are the same. The finish line is just ahead. Time is short. The truth still matters, and heaven is still real.

Tonight I want to ask you a very simple yet eternal question. Are you heavenward bound? Are you upholding the truth with your life, at home, at school, at work, at play? What about in the precincts of your private heart and time?

If not, tonight is the night to get that compass back on focus. Maybe some of us have been drifting from the destination with the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and things of that nature.

Maybe we've been growing cold and weary and tired from the journey. It's grown long, but Christ's call still rings out: Follow me, the way, the truth, and the life.

Tonight as we close, I want to invite you, whether it's the first time or the hundredth and first time, to fix your eyes upon Jesus and to say, Lord, I want to follow you faithfully, truthfully, completely, all the way home. Amen?

If this is your desire, I would like to ask you to join me, and let's bow and close with a word of prayer.

Closing Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, we truly do want to be on that heavenbound course, and, Lord, we know your truth can uphold us all the way.

We're thankful that you've promised us such a beautiful destination, and we're thankful for that truth that will lead us there.

Lord, we're thankful for the courage we see in the lives of people like Jim Elliott, and Lord, we're thankful for the endurance that we see in the lives of people like Richard Wurmbrand. But Lord, what we really need to see is Jesus in a personal way, and so Lord, I pray again tonight that we will make that recommitment to you and that we'll make our calling and election sure.

Lord, if we're willing, we know you're able to lead us every step of the way, and so this is our prayer that we lift up in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen.



Health Matters

By Sheri Stump

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.
(Romans 12:1)

Trust in God

The eight principles for good health are fresh air, exercise, pure water, nutrition, rest, temperance, sunshine, and trust in God.

In this article we will look at the eighth health principle on our list—trust in God.

Temptations to the indulgence of appetite possess a power which can be overcome only by the help that God can impart. But with every temptation we have the promise of God that there shall be a way of escape. Why, then, are so many overcome? It is because they do not put their trust in God. They do not avail themselves of the means provided for their safety. The excuses offered for the gratification of perverted appetite are, therefore, of no weight with God. (Ellen White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 154.1)

Strictly temperate habits in eating and drinking, with firm trust in God, will improve your physical, mental, and moral health. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 214.2)

Our lives may seem void and unsatisfying. Our fast-paced lives may even lead to feelings of stress, negative pressure, pain, disappointment, and hopelessness. These kinds of feelings often lead to poor health.

Emotional stress can cause physical illness. Disappointment, bitterness and anger leave our bodies exhausted and weaken the immune system. God has promised to lift these burdens if we bring them to him.

Scripture instructs us to cast our cares on the Lord, and he will sustain us (Psalm 55:22).

Positive emotions like love, joy, faith, and trust lead to the production of protective substances in our bodies that strengthen the immune system. Our immune systems protect us from a vast array of disease. Peace of mind can have a vitalizing, invigorating influence on our health. The ultimate lifestyle includes spiritual growth and peace of mind.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. (Isaiah 26:3)

We have a great God! He is trustworthy. He will never let us down, forsake us, and nor will he ever leave us to face the trials of life alone.

To trust God we must know God. I encourage you to spend time in the word and in prayer daily.

They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. (Psalm 125:1)

Christ is here teaching a precious lesson in regard to His service. Whatever experiences may come to you, He says, serve God. Whatever inconveniences and hardships you may encounter, trust in the Lord. . . . “Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of,” the Saviour says. [Matthew 6:8.] If we would study the Word more faithfully, we would increase in faith. (Ellen White, *Letters and Manuscripts*, vol. 24, Manuscript 83, 1909, par. 7)

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matthew 11:28–30)

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. (Proverbs 3:5–6)

What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me. (Psalm 56:3–4)

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. (Jeremiah 29:11 ESV)

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2025 1889 HSDA –USA Camp Meeting

Due to the timing of the camp meeting and the publication date of *Old Paths*, the report for the camp meeting will be published in the October issue with several pictures and lots more information about Brother Cory McCain and “the beast” pictured on the front cover.

However, we are able to bring you printed versions of two presentations from the camp. The first is the keynote address “Heavenward Bound, Upholding the Truth” from Brother Todd Brown on page 8 and the stirring message, “Nicaea - Council · Credo · Crisis” by Ingo Sorke on page 14.

All of the regular presentations were recorded, and we hope to have them all uploaded by the end of September, so please check out our YouTube channel soon for them.

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Hid in My Heart

By Sheri Stump

The purpose of the Hid-in-My-Heart series is to meditate on and memorize scriptures that define the fundamentals of our faith so that we will be ready to give an answer for the faith that is in us. These Bible teachings are taken from the 1889 Fundamental Principles.

So far we have memorized or at least familiarized ourselves with scriptures that support the Father, the Son, the Holy Scripture, baptism, the new birth, prophecy, the fulfillment of prophecy, the truth about a temporal millennium, the prophetic correction of 1844, the prophetic ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, and the immutable Law of God. Today we will look at 1889 Fundamental Principle number twelve, which says:

XII – That the fourth commandment of this law requires that we devote the seventh day of each week, commonly called Saturday, to abstinence from our own labor, and to the performance of sacred and religious duties; that this is the only weekly Sabbath known to the Bible, being the day that was set apart before Paradise was lost (Gen. 2:2, 3), and which will be observed in Paradise restored (Isa. 66:22, 23); that the facts upon which the Sabbath institution is based confine it to the seventh day, as they are not true of any other day; and that the terms Jewish Sabbath, as applied to the seventh day, and Christian Sabbath, as applied to the first day of the week, are names of human invention, unscriptural in fact, and false in meaning.

In the following quote, we find further explanation of this important sabbath truth:

The Sabbath commandment is placed in the very bosom of the Decalogue, amid the unchangeable precepts of Jehovah. And yet from many pulpits of our land a contemptuous cry is raised against the Sabbath instituted by the Lord God of heaven, and it is stigmatized as “the old Jewish Sabbath.” Let all who are seeking for truth remember that the Sabbath was instituted in Eden before there was a Jew in existence, and that the Saviour said, “The Sabbath was made for man.” The fourth commandment was spoken with the other nine of God’s moral precepts, amid the thunders and grandeur of Mount Sinai, and in the holy of holies in the heavenly sanctuary above, is the ark of God. It is called the “ark of the testament,” and under its cover,—the mercy seat,—are the ten commandments that were written with the finger of God. (Ellen White, *Signs of the Times*, January 8, 1894, par. 2)

If you would like a complete biblical explanation on this Fundamental Principle, here is the link of a sermon Pastor Allen Stump gave on Fundamental Principle number twelve:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFL4OtGgKMQ&list=PLsE-5c918fZEdGxPn-qrO6mmkyPe708owA&index=15&p=iAQB>



Following are five verses for you to meditate upon. I have included the first letter of each word following each verse. Memorizing the verse with this help will assure that you do not miss a word while reciting it, and since each letter represents one word, it will be a help to prompt you on what the next word in the verse is.

But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: Exodus 20:10

BtsditsotLtG: iitsndaw, t, nts, ntd, ntm, ntm, ntc, ntstiwgt: E 20:10

For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. Exodus 20:11

FisdLmhae, tsaatiti, artsd: wtLbtsd, ahi. E 20:11

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. Ezekiel 20:12

MaIgtms, tbasbmat, ttmktlatLtst. E 20:12

Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings. Leviticus 23:3

Sdswbd: btsditsor, ahc; ysdnwt: iitsotLiayd. L 23:3

For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day. Matthew 12:8

FtSomiLeotsd. M 12:8

May God bless you as you meditate on these verses is my prayer for each of you!

Build a wall of scriptures around you, and you will see that the world cannot break it down. Commit the scriptures to memory, and then throw them right back upon Satan when he comes with his temptations, ‘it is written.’ This is the way that our Lord met the temptations of Satan, and resisted them. (Ellen White, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, April 10, 1888, par. 9)



Youth's Corner—On the Trail of the Colporteur Evangelist

(On the Trail of the Colporteur Evangelist was compiled by the General Conference Publishing Department of Seventh-day Adventists. This month's selection is Chapters 15 and 16.)

“A Page From a Colporteur's Diary”

Wednesday Morning.—Raining hard! Can't use my wheel today, so will have to cover as much ground on foot as possible. Impossible to get very far in this country district, when it is so muddy.

Wednesday Evening—Have taken only one order today, but found several people who were interested in Bible themes. Guess so much rain has discouraged the people. It has rained all day, and I am so wet and muddy that I hesitate to ask to spend the night with any one. But it is dark now, and I must stop somewhere. I see a house in the distance—there is a light in the window, and it looks like a “homey” place. Perhaps there is a good mother there who will make some place for me for the night. I will hurry on.

Thursday Morning, 7: 50— Good night's rest, and a good breakfast. Thank the Lord for the answer to my prayer. I dread to start out over these sticky roads. I will go to the three or four houses which I missed yesterday, and then go back to town.

Ten o'clock: No orders. I have never found a settlement where I could not get at least one order. I'll go into the woods and talk to the Lord about it.

Ten-thirty: Back on the road, headed for town.

“Say there, young man! wait a minute!” calls out a man from a store where I had canvassed the day before. “That man who was with me on the porch when you showed us that book said he wanted one. You will find him down at the little church around the corner—either there, or in the store by the church.” “Thank you,” I said, and turned to go in the direction indicated. As I came in sight of the place, the prospective customer saw me, and called out, “Hello there, mister! I want one of those books. What's the price of it?”

“Four dollars and a half, in this cloth binding,” I replied. “Just put my name down for that one, then. And now show those four beasts to these other men here. I want them to see that book. I laid awake all night thinking about it and wondering how I could find you.”

One o'clock: I have thirteen orders from that one canvass at the little church around the corner. Surely the Lord's hand

is not shortened nor His ear so heavy that He cannot hear the cry of His servants. This has taught me never to pass by stores without going in to give a canvass for the book. Well, I will proceed on my way back to where I left my wheel.

“Say, papa said he wanted to see you when you came by,” said a little boy as I passed down the road.

“All right, where is your papa?”

“He will be here in a minute.”

“Well, I hear you have been writing orders as fast as you could down there by the church,” said the father as he came near to where I was standing. “How many orders did you get, anyway?”

“Thirteen,” I said.

“All right! Just put my name down, and make it an even number, for I have decided that I would like to have the book, too.”

Four o'clock: The blues all gone, my prayer answered, and \$63 worth of orders. This makes me feel pretty good. I must stop here in the woods and thank the Lord for impressing those men to buy that good book, and ask Him to cause souls to be saved as the result of this day's experience.

Giving the Canvass Under Peculiar Difficulties

THE HARDEST CANVASS I EVER GAVE

“Starting out on foot to my territory, I was offered a ride on one of the many lumber trucks traveling on the road. There was no bed on the truck, and several men were seated on the front end of the truck, so I sat on the coupling pole, just back of them. Remembering that it is the colporteur's duty to canvass every individual to whom he has access, I pulled my prospectus out of my pocket and started in. That was the most difficult canvass I ever gave. Fancy me balanced on a four-inch coupling pole of a Ford truck, just over the exhaust pipe, and trying to make myself heard above all the racket.

“There were many interruptions, such as the killing of a snake which was crossing the road. I had no idea that I was making my business understood, or making any impression on the mind of any of the men on that truck. But suddenly we came to the fork in the road where I had to get off, in order to reach my territory, and then, to my surprise and joy,

one of the men called out: 'Bring me one of those books. My name is Joe, and I live in Tunnel City. I want the best binding!' Truly, 'wherever hearts are open to receive the truth, Christ is ready to instruct them,' as is stated in 'The Desire of Ages,' page 194."

RIDING ON THE FRONT END OF THE ENGINE

"Returning from a day's work in a logging camp, I was obliged to ride on the front of the engine pulling the logging train. I had canvassed about twenty families in the camp that day, and had not taken a single order. I was feeling rather discouraged as I sat there, hanging on to the little seat in front of the engine, and it seemed as though I ought to have at least one order before giving up for the day. I told the Lord all about it, and asked Him to direct me, before the day ended, to some one who was willing to receive the book. It was not long before the fireman came to me, out on the front of the engine, and asked me what I was doing. As I explained my work, he became interested and gave me his order for the book. Surely the Lord knew all about the experiences of that day and where I was at that very moment, and by His Spirit impressed the fireman on the train to come to me in that very unusual place for a canvass."

AN EFFECTIVE CANVASS WHILE ASLEEP

A colporteur secured a night's lodging in the home of a farmer, and was provided with a sleeping place in the room with the man's three sons. The colporteur was very tired when he reached the home in the evening, and went to bed early, without attempting to give the family a canvass for his book. The next morning, he took his prospectus out of his carrying case and slipped it into his pocket, intending to use it at the breakfast table, and give the canvass while the family were all together.

He managed to finish his breakfast a little ahead of the others, and then taking out his prospectus began to call their attention to the book he was selling. One of the boys quickly spoke up, saying, "You don't need to give us another canvass for your book this morning, as you have already canvassed us twice during the night!" Somewhat bewildered by this statement, and the amused look on the faces of the two brothers, the colporteur asked for an explanation, and this is the answer he received: "Last night you started to tell about your book in your sleep. When you were nearly through, we spoke to you, and you began right where you first started and went through it again. You need not make the third canvass. We will take a book in the best binding."

AN ECHO FROM THE FIELD

"I am still canvassing everywhere—in Fords, in stores, in barns, on railroad tracks, on lumber wagons, on scaffolds, in fields, swamps, and all manner of places, by daylight, lamp-light, moonlight. The Lord gives wisdom to know how to meet the people under every condition." 

God Tests Those Whom He Values

By Ellen White

The fact that we are called upon to endure trial proves that the Lord Jesus sees in us something very precious, which He desires to develop. If He saw in us nothing whereby He might glorify His name He would not spend time in refining us. We do not take special pains in pruning brambles. Christ does not cast worthless stones into His furnace. It is valuable ore that He tests.

To men whom God designs shall fill responsible positions, He in mercy reveals their hidden defects, that they may look within and examine critically the complicated emotions and exercises of their own hearts, and detect that which is wrong; thus they may modify their dispositions and refine their manners. The Lord in His providence brings men where He can test their moral powers and reveal their motives of action, that they may improve what is right in themselves and put away that which is wrong. God would have His servants become acquainted with the moral machinery of their own hearts. In order to bring this about, He often permits the fire of affliction to assail them that they may become purified. "But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Malachi 3:2, 3.

God leads His people on, step by step. He brings them up to different points calculated to manifest what is in the heart.

Some endure at one point, but fall off at the next. At every advanced point the heart is tested and tried a little closer. If the



professed people of God find their hearts opposed to this straight work, it should convince them that they have a work to do to overcome, if they would not be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord.

Just as soon as we realize our inability to do God's work and submit to be guided by His wisdom, the Lord can work with us. If we will empty the soul of self, He will supply all our necessities. (Ellen White, *Counsels for Church*, p. 55.2)

Nicaea - Council • Credo • Crisis

By Ingo Sorke

(The following is an edited transcript of Dr. Ingo Sorke's Saturday night talk at the recent 1889 HSDA camp meeting given at Fall Creek Falls State Park, Tennessee.Editor)

One thousand seven hundred years ago something happened, and it still affects us today—the Council of Nicaea, which occurred in the year AD 325. About 225 to 325 is a time period I call Council, Creed, and Crisis. *VaticanNews.va* says the Council of Nicaea is the Christian's personal ID card. It's like our driver's license. So, let's take a look at it, but first let's kneel and pray one more time.

Our Father, we thank you for this weekend. What a blessing—the challenges, the question and answer time, the unity question, the theology, the practical aspects, the fellowship, and a measure of revival of primitive godliness. For all of this we are thankful. Take us now away from the world and back to your word. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Not a recommendation, but I recently attended a non-denominational church to witness a baptism, and based on the music, it was what we would call a progressive church. In reality, it was a trap set. The pastor was in jeans and polo shirt. There was a coffee bar. It was your typical American non-denominational church, and I'm always curious about the theology of a church, so I started digging through their hymnal. They still had hymnals, surprisingly, even though everything happened on LED screens that were as big as this wall going to the other side [40+ feet]. There was no church bulletin, just a QR code.

As I was digging through their hymnal, I was startled by the fact, and I'm using the word *startled* on purpose, for the word *startled* has a history, but they had, with an explanation, adopted the Council of Nicaea AD 325 as their creed. They said it was too complicated to come up with a new statement, as there are too many opinions, too many theologies out there. So, they decided to go back to our roots, the farthest roots possible, to AD 325. I was amazed that what we would call a liberal, progressive, non-denominational church would pick that statement.

Now even more startling, Dr. George Reid of the Biblical Research Institute and a neighbor and friend of mine, stated in a brief introduction to Seventh-day Adventist beliefs:

A reading of the above statements will show that with respect to their doctrine of God Seventh-day Adventists are in harmony with the great creedal statements of Christendom, including the Apostles' Creed, (Nicea 325), and the additional definition of faith concerning the Holy Spirit as reached in Constantinople (381). (George W. Reid, "Seventh-day Adventists," <https://adventistbiblical-research.org/articles/seventh-day-adventists>)

I never went, but there was a time when promise keepers were prominent in the United States. They filled stadiums with men trying to get men back to morality, and Max Lucado, who pastored in the same city that I pastored, with a lot more attendance than I had, made a call at a rally and asked everybody, 40,000 men, to pronounce, to verbalize, their denomination.

There were Adventists there, Baptists, Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalians, Methodists, all the way down to the letter Z. It was total chaos with everybody saying their denomination. You couldn't hear what your neighbor said, 40,000 people of Babylonian confusion.

And then Max Lucado said: "Thank you very much. Now I want you to say the name, shout out, on the count of three, the name to whom you have entrusted your heart, your soul, your ministry, your hopes for this day, and your confidence concerning tomorrow." On the count of three, 40,000 men, in ecumenical unison, said "Jesus Christ." The point was to throw away denominational differences, doctrinal differences, and unite on Jesus. Sounds good, doesn't it? But it is dangerous, very dangerous.

Gerhard Hasel was a German professor at Andrews University. I met him just before his car accident in which he died in 1994. I was in archaeology class that summer when they announced Dr. Hasel had passed away. He had written a book on the theology of the Old Testament and on the different approaches by different theologians and about how one might sum up the entire Old Testament in one concept. The consensus was that there was no consensus. Theologians said *covenant, love, life and death, history, and salvation history, or heilsgeschichte* [a German term meaning salvation history].

My proposal is, if you are going to sum up the entire Old Testament in one word, it is *God*. I learned this when I was preparing a wedding devotional based on Genesis 1. I had not ever noticed before, but every verse, every turn of creation, has *Elohim* in it, and I have concluded that the Bible is about *God*.

Now let us consider the council and creed of Nicaea. Theologians and bishops got together, 318 of them. Do you know where the number 318 shows up in the Bible?

When Abraham went out to recapture Lot because Chedorlaomer had captured Lot during a great controversy, he sent out 318 mighty men to get his nephew back, and when they crafted the creed of Nicaea, they picked 318 to tell us that they were in a great controversy. They didn't know that term at the time, but be very careful because you're going to hear terminology that you will be tempted to say *amen* to.

In *The Ministry of Healing* on page 143, we read how Jesus won the people's trust.

The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me." (Ellen White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143.3)

You would say amen to this, but be careful now. Would you say *amen* if a Catholic friend of yours said, based on Exodus 20 verses 8–11, to remember the sabbath day? Why wouldn't you say amen? *Because they mean something fundamentally different.* They mean Sunday.

So, listen to the Creed of Nicaea. On the surface, it does not sound bad:

We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible; And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten from the Father [doesn't sound bad, does it?], only-begotten, that is, from the substance of the Father, [watch the language] God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through Whom all things came into being, things in heaven and things on earth, Who because of us men and because of our salvation came down, and became incarnate and became man, and suffered, and rose again on the third day, and ascended to the heavens, and will come to judge the living and dead [and now comes something really curious], And in the Holy Spirit. But as for those who say, There was when He was not, and, Before being born He was not, and that He came into existence out of nothing, or who assert that the Son of God is of a different hypostasis or substance, or created, or is subject to alteration or change—these the Catholic and apostolic Church anathematizes.

In the Holy Spirit—It almost sounds, and I do not want to make fun of it, but it almost sounds like it is a church committee meeting, a business meeting, or a board meeting, and at 10 p.m. somebody said, "We forgot the Holy Spirit. Let's pencil that in." You have an entire paragraph on Jesus, and then it seems like, *Oh, by the way, we also believe in the Holy Spirit*, but it still doesn't sound bad, does it?

Well, I am going to explain some problems with this, but what is really striking for us now is this thought. If you do not believe in this creed, the way they mean it, consider there are those who speak about people who meet in Tennessee camp meetings and about people who travel to Ethiopia and Peru. There are those who speak about people who will not be silent—people who have websites, YouTube channels, and Facebook pages. They speak about those who have pamphlets, who gather in camp meetings, and who won't be quiet just because they say they should be quiet and say also what should happen to them if they don't stop speaking up and disagreeing.

It's going to take awhile to get to us Adventists, but listen to this next thought from the creed because it is big stuff, so be patient with me. The creed states that there are those who say there was a time when Christ was not, that before being born he was not, that he came into existence out of nothing, or that the Son of God is of a different *hypostasis*, or substance, or created, or subject to alteration or change, and that these the Catholic and Apostolic Church *anathematizes*. What does the word *anathematize* mean? *Cursed!* They are **not** saying *you are just of a different opinion and we need to have some forbearance amongst each other and a little bit of tolerance.* No, if you believe differently, you are cursed.

Now let me give you a little background to this credal statement which does not sound all that bad, at least until we come to this curse part. What do you notice about this statement? There is something missing.

There is no scripture quoted with this statement. Those who came together to form the creed met for a long time, 318 of them. Can you imagine trying to get unity and a consensus among 300 administrators and theologians?

They did not come together in a meeting and state, let's take a blank sheet of paper, let's take scripture, and let's kneel in prayer and then hammer out what the Bible says about God. That is not how they came together.

The Bible was not the origin, impetus, catalyst, or the facilitator of this creed. Instead, it was the idea of *let's craft a statement to curse people who do not believe like we do.* They got together to figure out what they could come up with as human beings to craft a statement against heretics, and I would like to give you a Bible verse right now because they do not have one.

The question came up in the Question & Answer time about what to say to Trinitarians, and I have a Bible verse for you—Acts 24 verse 14. It works best in King James because King James uses the actual Greek word.

But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: (Acts 24:14)

I'm standing here because of this [the Bible]. That's not in the Council of Nicaea. No scripture is used directly. Also interesting is who prompted this meeting of the theologians and the bishops. Constantine! It was church and state coming together. Always dangerous and always deadly, right? Church and state coming together kills. The motivation was political, ecumenical to unite the empire.

Arian became a catchphrase for anybody who did not believe like the Nicene Creed, and the semantics of begotten and created is very tricky because we do not have the writings of Arius directly. They were burned by the Catholic Church, and so he was misunderstood.

When those who believe the Nicene Creed are saying the word *God*, it is not the Father sitting upon his throne because to them God is invisible and immaterial and that practically erases the idea of a Father sitting on the throne with his Son. So, when they are saying in the creed only one God and you are thinking that is not bad, for that's our language and we understand, remember they are talking about a different God than we understand. That's theologians for you. Be cautious, for it can be very dangerous. Those, like the three uprooted powers of Daniel 7, were annihilated because of disagreeing with this.

But here comes something interesting you might not have known. In the Bach B minor mass BWV 232, Bach changed the two rhythm patterns to three rhythm patterns and harmonies in order to musicalize the trinity in his music, and he put *SDG* at the bottom of his music which is for the Latin *solely Deo Gloria*, meaning only to the glory of God. So, not all classical music is appropriate in a one-true-God movement meeting. Very few people know that there is a Trinitarian theology in Bach's music!

Hymn #73 in the 1985 Adventist hymnal is entitled "Holy, Holy, Holy." It was originally a Trinitarian hymn, but it was changed by James White to be non-trinitarian. Then it was changed back to being Trinitarian, and the tune is entitled "Nicaea." That ought to be a hint to us—*caution, danger*. We put a song in our hymnal that goes back to Nicaea, where the people who disagree with Nicaea are cursed. Yes. Hymn #2 in the 1985 hymnal was written by Francis of Assisi! And we have several more from such sources. We have Bernard of Clairvaux and other songs.

Here is how Ellen White understood the word *begotten*. *Signs of the Times*, May 30, 1895, paragraph 3, and I hope you are starting to develop a one-true-God repertoire of quotes. There are some key quotes that you ought to have ready to go. Here is the one from the *Signs* article:

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. (Ellen White, *Signs of the Times*, May 30, 1895, par. 3)

Then came 381 and the Council of Constantinople. Today Constantinople is Istanbul, Turkey.

That council became famous because of a word called *filioque*, which is Latin for *and the son*. Did the Holy Spirit come from the Father or from the Father and the Son? That debate over that little phrase, *filioque*, or *and the son*, was so huge that Christianity split in the year 1054 into Roman Catholic and Orthodox. I have a friend in this movement who wrote a Trinitarian pastor and stated that he believes in

the Father and the Son and *their* Spirit, and that word *their* got him kicked out of the church. One personal pronoun and you are cursed!

The Apostolic Creed that a lot of churches adopt was written in AD 390. It is very short. I'll read it to you to see how these creeds developed.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered . . .

And then it continues. Listen to this:

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins [through a priest], resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.

In contrast, there is the Adventist preamble of 1889. It reads as follows:

In presenting to the public this synopsis of our faith, we wish to have it distinctly understood that we have no articles of faith, creed, or discipline, aside from the Bible. We do not put forth this as having any authority with our people [hear, hear], nor is it designed to secure uniformity among them, as a system of faith, but is a brief statement of what is, and has been, with great unanimity [not complete unanimity], held by them.

And now I would like to show you my baptismal certificate from 1986. I was baptized May 31st, 1986, but by the hand of an angel, I believe, the church secretary, before I was baptized, was prompted to reach into the drawer and draw out an older statement that reads as follows. Now we have the 28 fundamental beliefs on the certificate. The trinity is not mentioned. No trinity, okay? But listen to the baptismal vow, number one: "I believe in God the Father, in his Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit." Amen, amen. No problem.

Baptismal Vow

1. I believe in God the Father, in His Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit.
2. I accept the death of Jesus Christ on Calvary as the atoning sacrifice for my sins, and believe that through faith in His shed blood I am saved from sin and its penalty.
3. I renounce the world and its sinful ways, and have accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour, and believe that God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven my sins and given me a new heart.

By divine guidance, on that May 31st, 1986, I got a birth certificate pre-corruption. Do you want to hear what the baptismal certificate says now?

The same number one statement says: "There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." The number one problem is

not what we are saying. The problem is what the church has formulated. That is the problem. It is in their court. It is not what I think about the *spirit* and *begotten* and *eternity* and *from eternity* and *throughout eternity*. The number one problem is this formulation. We have made God a composite of three gods—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit. Those three together supposedly make one God. That is the problem. That’s right, and the reason I make a big deal out of it is because I have friends who tell me, “Ingo, why don’t you just drop this and focus on the three angels’ messages?” I’m sorry, fear God, give glory to him and worship him is three times in a row Father, Son, one-true-God message. You can’t focus on the three angels’ messages and leave the truth about God alone.

Ellen White wrote in the *Testimonies*:

Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is always dangerous. truth. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 292.2)

Out of love for the people of the church, I am agitating, agitating, agitating!¹

Another gem is *Manuscript 45, 1905*, paragraph 6: “His church must be kept free from all false doctrine.”

And so now we have a false doctrine in the Adventist Church. It is a big deal, and in the book of Revelation we have grapes and then we have the wine of the wrath of Babylon. Wine is something that used to be good and got corrupted and now messes with your frontal lobe, and so one cannot understand the truth. So, if error has crept into the church and if error must be taken care of in the church, then this must be taken care of.

Why is this such a big problem? By the 5th/6th century, if you do not believe like the Catholic Church believes in God, as a Trinity, you are no longer saved. This is no longer a matter of opinion. Let me read the beginning of the Athanasian Creed, 5th/6th century: “Whosoever will be saved . . .” So, it is a salvational issue.

How many times have you and I heard the truth about God is not a salvational issue? The Catholic Church and all who follow their teaching on God have made it a salvational issue, and, by the way, John 17 verse 3 makes it a salvational issue as well.

Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith. Which Faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. (Athanasian Creed, first part)

If you do not believe in the Trinity, you are lost, cursed, and condemned forever. That’s what’s at stake here.

¹ See Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 5, page 708.1.

And the Catholic Faith is this: That we worship [worship is an issue in the three angels’ messages] one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance. For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one, the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. . . . (Athanasian Creed)

Then, at the very end, the creed says:

And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil into everlasting fire. This is the Catholic Faith, which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved. (Ibid.)

Now that we are in the territory of creeds and their salvational issues, let’s consider our Fundamental Principles. John Loughborough said:

The first step of apostasy is to get up a creed, telling us what we shall believe. The second is, to make that creed a test of fellowship. The third is to try members by that creed. The fourth to denounce as heretics [now listen to this] those who do not believe that creed. (John Loughborough, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, October 8, 1861, p. 148)

Where does this language come from? That is the same language that they formulated in the creed that those who disagree are cursed. Loughborough is warning us that those who do not believe as the church does with the Trinity, they will be denounced as heretics, those who do not believe that creed. And Loughborough finishes his thoughts on a creed with his fifth point: “And, fifth, to commence persecution against such” (Ibid.).

Now the Adventist Church has broken its promise. Let me read to you in writing what Neil Wilson promised to the people in 1980. I live an hour outside of Dallas, Texas, and in 1980 Neil Wilson, the father of Ted Wilson, wrote the following. They had just introduced the Trinity doctrine to the Adventist Church and voted it at a General Conference in session for the first time in Adventist history. Then Ted Wilson’s father, Neil Wilson, said the following:

There are others who think they know why this is being done. They believe it is being prepared as a club to batter someone over the head, to try to get people into a narrow concept of theology, not leaving any opportunity for individual interpretation of prophecy, or any individual views with respect to theology or certain areas of doctrine. This also is unfortunate, because this never has been and is not the intention of any study that has been given to the Statement on Fundamental Beliefs. (Neil Wilson, “Seventh business meeting, Fifty-third General Conference session, April 21, 1980, 3:15 P.M.,” *Adventist Review*, April 23, 1980, p. 9)

There was some debate in the background about some theologians and administrators being uncomfortable with the Trinity coming into the Adventist Church. It should have been a huge debate worldwide among Adventists, but it got snuck in on a Friday while many delegates were out shopping before sundown.

Some academicians, theologians, and others have expressed the fear that this statement was being developed so that the church could confront them with a checklist to determine whether they should be disqualified from teaching in one of our institutions of higher education. It is very, very tragic when these kinds of rumors begin to develop. (Ibid.)

Neil Wilson has passed away now, but these rumors have become reality, and this promise by the General Conference president has been broken. We have open hunting season among theologians or pastors who disagree with the doctrine of the Trinity.

Now, what really got me was when Hope International, the Standish brothers, and Heartland were all at their height as independent ministries, the North American Division published a document entitled *ISSUES: The Seventh-day Adventist Church and Certain Private Ministries* and on page 39 stated:

The nonbinding, noncreedal status of the [1872] statement is of special interest. Even more significant, however, is the fact that the [1872] statement is distinctly non-Trinitarian.

They admit that our history is non-Trinitarian. “Are the modern defenders of so-called historic Adventism really prepared to return to a non-Trinitarian position” (Ibid.)?

What does the H stand for in HSDA? *Historic*. If you are an historic Seventh-day Adventist, you have to be non-trinitarian because that is our history.

It gets even better. Or worse. On page 50, they say that:

If Adventism is to meet the needs of all people around the world, the landmarks must remain simple and straightforward. The Bible will be our only creed. Complex theological definitions, the Trinity, for example, may serve the church well in general but cannot be imposed as a test for all Adventists everywhere. (Ibid.)

The church has broken this promise. They now make this the test.

In the ecumenical movement, it is okay that we have what is to them this weird 1844 doctrine, that we have a strange prophetess, Ellen White, that we are vegetarian, that we don't eat pork, and that we don't drink alcohol. What else? That we keep Sabbath, that there is a sanctuary in heaven. They are really uncomfortable with the investigative judgment, but they tolerate all of this, but not if we give up the doctrine of the Trinity.

Adventism can expect fresh insights into the truth, present truth, that will enhance the appreciation in such cases, but it cannot be the Trinity imposed on the church as a whole.

Remembering our non-trinitarian past as well as the simplicity of our landmarks, the North American Division should encourage a certain humility in the church and lead us to resist any attempt by one segment of the church to impose its views on the rest.

Let us read in *Review and Herald*, December 3, 1908. I always like to quote after 1900 because Ellen White supposedly became Trinitarian. She says:

Are we worshipers of Jehovah, or of Baal? of the living God, or of idols? No outward shrines may be visible, there may be no image for the eye to rest upon; yet we may be practising idolatry. It is as easy to make an idol of cherished ideas or objects as to fashion gods of wood or stone. [Listen to this.] Thousands have a false conception of God and his attributes. They are as verily serving a false god as were the servants of Baal. (Ellen White, “The Privileges and Duties of the Followers of Christ,” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, December 3, 1908, p. 8, par. 2)

A misconception of God is the equivalent of Baal worship. Now you wouldn't think of going out and bowing down in front of a rock or a statue, but if your theology of God is wrong, that is what it is.

And I never leave a camp meeting without sharing my favorite quote. It is my number one quote in this context, and the irony is that because I believe this quote, I can no longer practice it within the walls of Jerusalem, the Adventist corporate church.

Listen to this. You have to have this quote. It is the best one ever.

I feel my spirit stirred within me. I feel to the depth of my being that the truth must be borne to other countries and nations, and to all classes. (Ellen White, *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 886.3)

What does that sound like? That sounds like Revelation Chapter 14, verse 6. The three angels' messages need to go to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people, right?

The statement continues:

Let the missionaries of the cross proclaim that there is one God, [Amen] and one Mediator between God and man [1 Timothy 2:5], who is Jesus Christ the Son of the Infinite God. This needs to be proclaimed throughout every church in our land. (Ibid.)

She uses the word *this* near the end of the quotation. The word *this* is a masculine, singular, demonstrative pronoun that relies, or depends, on the immediate antecedent.

English is my second language, so I'm wondering if *you* understood that. When English says *this*, the *this* refers to a *that*. So what is the word *this* is referring to?

Listen again. Let us read it again, and then you will know what the *this* is.

Let the missionaries of the cross proclaim that *there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, who is Jesus Christ, the Son of the infinite God*. This needs to be proclaimed throughout every church in our land. (Ibid.)

And because I believe the quote, I cannot practice it in the Adventist Church. That is the ultimate irony in my life.

Just a few more quotes, and then I have a suggestion. I share these quotes that we may be strengthened and confirmed in the past experience that holds us to the essential points of truth which have made us what we are, Seventh-day Adventists, but people who hold on to those truths cannot legally even use the name *Seventh-day Adventists*. They have to abbreviate it, like HSDA, or they get sued by the church. I'm serious!

The past fifty years have not dimmed one jot or principle of our faith as we received the great and wonderful evidences that were made certain to us in 1844, after the passing of the time. (Ellen White, *The Upward Look*, p. 352.4)

God calls upon us to make known to all men the truths that have made us what we are—Seventh-day Adventists. (Ellen White, *Letters and Manuscripts*, vol. 22, Ms 125, 1907, par. 13)

In a special sense, Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and lightbearers, to them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 19.1)

I do not know if that is privilege or responsibility. This group has been given the task to reach the world, finish the job, and go home. To be done with it.

I put the picture of "Christ of the Narrow Way," from the first vision of Ellen White given in December 1844, on my website. The people of God are marching to New Jerusalem. I put that picture on my website as an ordained minister of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and was threatened with a lawsuit from the General Conference. I am serious! I had to take it down because I did not have the funds to fight a legal battle with them, and we are not supposed to fight like that anyway, but what I got from the General Conference was not a request. I was being informed.

Here is the continuation of the statement from *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, page 19.1, and I really love this one:

They [Seventh-day Adventists] have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other

work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention. (Ibid.)

And these quotations:

The past fifty years have not dimmed one jot or principle of our faith as we received the great and wonderful evidences that were made certain to us in 1844, after the passing of the time. . . . Not a word is changed or denied. That which the Holy Spirit testified to as truth after the passing of the time, in our great disappointment, is the solid foundation of truth. Pillars of truth were revealed, and we accepted the foundation principles that have made us what we are—Seventh-day Adventists, keeping the commandments of God and having the faith of Jesus. (Ellen White, *Letters and Manuscripts*, vol. 20, Ms 111, 1905, par. 4)

Bear in mind [that the] doctrines held by Seventh-day Adventists are the gospel that Christ said must go to all people, tongues, and nations. (Ellen White, *Letters and Manuscripts*, vol. 14, Ms 199, 1899, par. 10)

It is mind-boggling to me that if I hang on to these statements and to over 130 years of Adventism, I am called a heretic, and that implies our past history is nothing but heresy. Heresy means you are condemned to eternal death and that from our own church, not Catholics, not Baptists, not the ecumenical movement. From our own ranks.

I sometimes have to pinch myself and ask myself if this is real. Is this what I'm experiencing?

In *The Great Controversy* on page 595.1 we read that God will have a people upon the earth. Notice she's saying future at the time of writing:

But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. (Ellen White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 595)

As a hospice chaplain, one day I was in a trailer park. I do not know what marijuana smells like, but I think what I smelled must have been that, but thirty minutes later another smell came to me that must have been other drugs of some sort. Thirty minutes after that I was at a gated community with security guards and in a million dollar mansion. Both people are dying. Do you know at the end of life we are all the same? There is no longer rich, poor. We are just humans, and I asked this lady if she had a favorite Bible verse because I told her I don't do funerals. I only do her funeral. Did you notice the difference? Personalize, personalize, personalize. So, I asked what her favorite Bible verse was, and I will never forget what she told me. She was not an Adventist. I dealt with non-Adventists 99% of the time. She said, "I like the whole book." Amen, sister, amen.

I tried to reduce the 28 fundamental beliefs into 10 points one time. Do you know what I noticed? Every time I went back to the computer, I changed something. I added a verse,

I took out a verse. I felt bad for deleting something. I gave the document to friends, and they changed something.

I could not reduce 2,000 pages of Holy Writ to a statement made by humans, send it to a committee, and then you have to sign it or you get kicked out. That's not how the Bible works, right? Love the whole book? Yes.

The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority—not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain “Thus saith the Lord” in its support. (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 595.1)

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. None are to indulge in speculation regarding His nature. Here silence is eloquence. The Omniscient One is above discussion. (Ellen White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 429.3)

What he has revealed we can discuss, but the moment we say, *I think God*, or *I don't think God*, and we're talking about a time frame before creation, and we are now 6,000 years into the curse, I take my shoes off, and I'm a little cautious when I talk about God.

All the while, I have 5 million Texans around me, in the Dallas area alone, who are potentially lost. So I back off a little, and I don't need to figure out everything about God while these people don't have the gospel, let alone the three angels' messages, which is gospel at the core.

Now check this one out, *Testimonies*, volume 7, page 71.1, one sentence. I love this. This is laminated on the fridge. I want it on the heart, on the mind, on the frontal lobe:

A misconception of God is the equivalent of Baal worship. Now you wouldn't think of going out and bowing down in front of a rock or a statue, but if your theology of God is wrong, that is what it is.

One sentence of Scripture is of more value than ten thousand of man's ideas or arguments.

I have had to deal with watching the bear in the swimming pool on YouTube because those five minutes are five minutes that are not in the word. It is *not bad* that a bear goes in a swimming pool and swims around. It is cute, and I love little bear cubs, but I need to be in the *best* condition, not just in a *good* condition.

God's word is best, so let us make a commitment here that from this day forward, for better and not for worse, at all cost, we will prioritize the word of God again in our lives, and that usually means that we need to cut out something with a screen and requires a download, an upgrade, and a battery.

In Letter 214 on October 9, 1903, to P. T. Magan and Sutherland, Ellen White wrote:

Let the Scriptures be read in simple faith, and let each one form his conceptions of God from His inspired Word. (Ellen White, *Letters and Manuscripts*, vol. 18, Letter 214, 1903, par. 9)

And that is why I stand here not as Dr. Sorke but as Ingo because I cook with water and I'm one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread.

Do you know what the early Adventists had as their Bible motto in the *Adventist Review and Herald*? They had a Bible statement: Keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Revelation 14:12. Amen.

Now I want to close with a question and a Bible verse, and we will pray together before we part company, and it's sobering, isn't it? We will never ever gather like this in this group again. If we meet again next year, it will be a different group. There will be different people. There will be people missing. There will be people who have passed away. Will Jesus have come? We're going home and be done with this, but we will never see each other like this again.

But I have a question. We are trying to hammer out how can we unify, and I appreciate that. We are spending years and resources and camp meetings. How can we unify?

My question is about the Muslim on the street who saw the beast of Daniel 7 that was made as an evangelistic tool. He does not know about 1844, HSDA, the Sabbath, or anything. He is a total outsider with no knowledge of scripture and in the dark. What do we need to require from him to believe?

We can spend the next fifty years trying to figure out a statement that we can all agree on, and I think the 1889 statement is a good base. No problem with that, but I'm asking myself: What do we need to ask of Muhammad and Khalil and Raj and Mustafa and Fatima? What do they need to believe in order to belong, to be saved?

Moving Mountains

By Debra Cushing

I think we might be able to solve our problem of belonging amongst each other, if we can figure out how to get the five million people out there to believe and belong. Then we quit constantly looking at each other. When we look at each other long enough, we find fault.

When we look long enough into the world without being of the world, then we will need to get together on our knees out of necessity to reach these five million people in Dallas, Texas, as well as in Houston, Austin, San Francisco, Timbuktu, Mali. We still need to reach the entire world with the truth. So, how are we going to do it?

Here's my starting point. It is my new ministry motto. I used to have Acts 15:17, as I told you, "that the residue of men might seek after the Lord." Then I had John 17:6 and "they have kept thy word." This is Jesus in prayer saying all his disciples have kept his word. A group of people keeping his word. Now my new favorite is Jeremiah 15:16, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them." It sounds a bit odd, but check this out.

Second Timothy is possibly Paul's last letter. He knows he is going to die. He is paying for his faith. Let me close with this.

The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments. (2 Timothy 4:13)

He is freezing. He is cold. He needs his coat, and then he says something in the face of death: "And the books, but especially the parchments." Bring me the Bible. That is what I need, especially in the face of death. So, I say it like this. Brothers and Sisters, Church, I commend unto you this book.



Dr. Ingo Sorke

Monday through Friday I am part of a study group studying the life of Christ. We read related verses in the gospels on a particular aspect of Christ's life and then read the corresponding chapter in the beautiful book, *The Desire of Ages*. Then we discuss what we have read. Recently we read about the faith of a grain of mustard seed and about moving mountains, and the question was asked: Can we expect to literally move mountains?

My husband, Peter, works at a large box store but had a huge problem keeping his job when they realized he has neuropathy in his feet and hands from diabetes type 2. They told him: You must stop working for three months. That meant no pay, no vacation, no earned time off. We would have been evicted, lost our two vehicles, had no medical or car insurance, no food, and more.

Pete and I prayed, and he went to work anyway. He was on the night shift, and they put him in maintenance. He had to mop in water and work outside. We live in New England with snow, sleet, and rain.

We prayed again. Pete went to see the store manager and said, "I have had this note in my file for two years and have had no issues with neuropathy. Why are you bringing it up now?" After further discussion, he was told AI would be putting him in a department and that he would receive a phone text about it. So, he came home, and we prayed again and asked God to move. This problem felt as big as a mountain to us.

The next Monday he was called in at 6:45 a.m. and was told he would be working the day shift stocking shelves in Pharmacy and Health and Beauty. It was less pay, but he was offered overtime to help make up for some of what he would lose.

God answered our fervent prayers. Pete is working inside. His eyes have improved because all the lights are on during the day, not like at night. No loud private music is played, as is at night. It has been ninety days, and Pete feels better. He sleeps better. His sugar is more stabilized.

I hope this helps you see we have to wait sometimes as God does things in his own time, but he always does it better and has his reasons. It allows us to grow and to trust him and never give up. I pray that whatever your mountain is that you will trust and pray without ceasing and that your lives will be much improved also.



Marriage Morsel

Few have correct views of the marriage relation. Many seem to think that it is the attainment of perfect bliss; but if they could know one quarter of the heartaches of men and women that are bound by the marriage vow in chains that they cannot and dare not break, they would not be surprised that I trace these lines. Marriage, in a majority of cases, is a most galling yoke. There are thousands that are mated but not matched. The books of heaven are burdened with the woes, the wickedness, and the abuse that lie hidden under the marriage mantle. This is why I would warn the young who are of a marriageable age to make haste slowly in the choice of a companion. The path of married life may appear beautiful and full of happiness; but why may not you be disappointed as thousands of others have been? (Ellen White, *The Adventist Home*, p. 44.1)



The best way to focus on a good marriage is to focus on God first.

Parenting Principles

There is a time for training children and a time for educating youth; and it is essential that in school both of these be combined in a great degree. Children may be trained for the service of sin or for the service of righteousness. The early education of youth shapes their characters both in their secular and in their religious life. Solomon says, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” This language is positive. The training which Solomon enjoins is to direct, educate, and develop. In order for parents and teachers to do this work, they must themselves understand “the way” the child should go. This embraces more than merely having a knowledge of books. It takes in everything that is good, virtuous, righteous, and holy. It comprehends the practice of temperance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love to God and to one another. In order to attain this object, the physical, mental, moral, and religious education of children must have attention. (Ellen White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p.15.2)

The young should not be left to think and act independently of the judgment of their parents and teachers. Children should be taught to respect experienced judgment, and to be guided by their parents and teachers. They should be so educated that their minds will be united with the minds of their parents and teachers, and so instructed that they can see the propriety of heeding their counsel. Then when they go forth from the guiding hand of their parents and teachers, their characters will not be like the reed trembling in the wind.

The severe training of youth, without properly directing them to think and act for themselves as their own capacity and turn of mind will allow, that by this means they may have growth of thought, feelings of self-respect, and confidence in their own ability to perform, will ever produce a class who are weak in mental and moral power. And when they stand in the world to act for themselves, they will reveal the fact that they are trained, like the animals, and not educated. Their wills, instead of being guided, were forced into subjection by the harsh discipline of parents and teachers. (Ibid., p. 17.1, .2)



Fathers and mothers who make God first in their households, who teach their children that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, glorify God before angels and before men by presenting to the world a well-ordered, well-disciplined family—a family that love and obey God instead of rebelling against Him. (Ellen White, *The Adventist Home*, p. 27.3)

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