**They still leave: Letter from Uganda**

**Pastor Nsubuga Daniel**

Dear brothers and sisters, I have the pleasure to share with you my testimony for which I will never be sorry. If some will not finish my testimony, let me start with its conclusion and then go back to the beginning. Knowing Jesus Christ and His saving grace has been the greatest achievement in my life, which will never be taken away from me. Like Paul I can say, “I no longer live my own life...”

My Dad was converted to Adventism the year I was born, but my Mom was not, so my dad worked hard to ensure that my mom would join the SDA church, which efforts proved fruitless. As children we used to go with Mom to the Anglican Church and Dad could go alone. With time, my brother who follows me started going with Dad at church. You can imagine how my parents used to quarrel over the matter. When I was in primary five, a young Adventist boy in Primary Four invited me to Sabbath School. I did not want to go, but because Muwongoze was a good friend of mine and he also used to share with me the pancakes his mom used to pack for his lunch, I went. When I got to the SDA church I liked the music so much and I found that the people shared with me their joy and happiness. I then started attending the SDA church. I liked it and took in everything taught me as the Gospel truth. At home I could read the Scripture as the rest listened, then also read the so-called “Spirit of Prophecy.” Young as I was, I was introduced to the Ellen G. White books as well as give them what we used to call “news”—monitoring the pope’s movement, etc. My preaching was often threatening people and my best sermons were about the Judgment. I could recite from memory many of EGW’s comments like “Angels with terrible exactness scribe unfulfilled duty influence ...” GC and many others in that line. The station Director, Pr. Walugembe, attended one of my series of studies and suggested that I join the ministry which I did without an open hand. I was taken to Kireka for training in ministerial practice, then to a Junior SDA seminary then at Katikamu, and I was given six churches to pastor. I regret all my days as an Adventist pastor as they were often filled with dealing with the problems left by other pastors before me. The church gave me a list of pastors and how they behaved. Those who were there before me with evidences like children born out of wedlock and affairs with someone else’s wife. I remember how my senior pastor was imprisoned for using the house girl and the girl disclosed the matter. The church could reach out the hand of faith and accept its mistakes. However, I must leave this topic for it’s not the reason that led me to transition into the Adventist church. I joined the Adventist church because it was the church that I had been in. The gospel is simple in that even a child or unbeliever with no religious training can reach out the hand of faith and accept its truths. However, the gospel is also profoundly deep with insights that stretch our limited ability to understand the mysteries of God. Such is the study before us in John 3. As I write this article, I have no axe to grind. I come as a learner praying for fresh insights that may have eluded my attention the last time I studied this section. Would you, the reader, join with me in asking the Holy Spirit to bring us understanding and insight into the truths that God would have us grasp from this important section?

Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do such things that You do unless God is with him.” Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:1-3

The above text has one of the “divine musts”—you must be born again. It is not “ought” or “should,” but a non-negotiable must. Therefore our goal is to find out why one must be born again, what born-again means, and how it is accomplished. Sometimes a portion of Scripture is equally instructive in both outlining positive truths and, at the same time, revealing things that are incorrect.

A man of the Pharisees—not by law keeping

The Pharisees were strict observers of the law. Whether Nicodemus personally, perfectly, kept all 613 biblical commandments in the law we do not know. But we can assume that his life exemplified one seeking to be in harmony with God’s revealed law or he would not have held such a high position within Judaism. We note that Jesus did not tell Nicodemus, “Nicodemus, you have fallen short in ___ and you need to ask forgiveness for this breach of the law and then you will be...”

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LAM expands its ministry

At the recent annual LAM, Inc. board of directors’ meeting it was voted to start supporting five former Adventist pastors in the California area who have taken a stand for the simple faith once held by everyone. The pastors have taken a stand for the simple faith once held by everyone, and their remuneration amounted to about $310.00 US dollars per month.

We at LAM, Inc. after consideration and prayer have decided to support each of these five pastors and also provide the rent for a meeting place that will seat 800 people. We have also purchased for them a needed PA system. We have told these men that we will only be for one year and that they should work hard as good stewards of the gospel so that they can be self-supporting within that time.

As our readers know, we are dependent upon donations for the support of our ministry. God, through you, has met our needs to this point—often in direct answer to prayer, often at the very last moment. Would you join us in prayer that we will be able to meet our faith commitment to these five men?

As you read the testimony from Nubuga Daniel and from some of our other correspondents you will see that they are moving very rapidly in Uganda. There are now seven pastors who have taken a stand and we understand that there are several very high places who have privately said they are in agreement with them, who may join them soon. We may need to help these men with temporary financial aid. We believe that God will supply their financial needs.

We understand that there are yet other Adventists who are in agreement with them but have chosen to publish the” Proclamation” and collect the Adventist paycheck. We are also in contact with other Adventist pastors in Africa and in other countries of our ministry. There seems to be a crescendo of interest around the world to get back to the simple faith once delivered to the saints.

USA Adventist pastors/scholars write for Proclamation

We recently received several studies on the issues in Adventism from Adventist pastors. They have authorized us to print these articles as they feel truth can stand on its own and will triumph in the end. These men have studied and prayed for a long time and are now ready to stand for their own faiths.

As you read this issue of Proclamation, you will see that these Adventist pastors were hoping that the SDA church would move away from its historic stand on SDAs being the remnant church and the 1844 sanctu- ary investigatory judgment. Adventists were turned off at the church in session and the report of the General Conference President seem to dash all hopes that the church will remain with these unorthodox beliefs.

We, at their request, have published the session minutes and a portion of the official report. We trust these will be useful to our readers. We will receive articles which were written by these men. We have not printed their names as we want them to choose their own time and venue for their announcement about leaving Adventism.

We have also printed a letter from another Adventist pastor which supports the teachings of Adventism and denounces this ministry. I responded to this pastor by email and he, in turn, responded back.

I thought I was the only one

Early this year I visited my daughter and son-in-law in Fort Lauderdale, Florida and found your Proclamation magazine. I brought the magazine home with me to Canada and have continued to read it ever since. I am 73 years old and have been a member of the SDA church since I was 24 years old and for nearly 50 years certain things have bothered me within the church but I always believed a prayer to the Lord and asked Him to take away the spirit of doubt and set me free but the more I cry out, the more it bothered me, and the more I kept on searching the scriptures. You see, Mr. Ratzlaff all those years I thought I was the only one going through these feelings, that is, until I found your won- derful magazine that gave me hope in my heart that even though I’ve only one read of any magazines, a number of issues have been made available to me and you have answered my prayers. I was so encouraged and not ashamed to say that I felt, not ashamed of the Bible, and the more I read the Bible, I don’t feel anymore guilty. I cannot really afford to ask you to put my name on your mailing list. I mean I cannot pay you for it but can you please ask someone who receives Proclamation to send me all their used ones? I would be so grateful to you and I will pray that God richly bless all of you to continue doing such a great job. The articles in your magazine have helped to set my conscience free. I now rejoice in the Lord. Thank you—God bless you all.

Editor’s note: We sent this lady all the back issues we still have and gladly put her on our mailing list. We do not charge for Proclamation but this is possible as we are in a large donation to cover the needed costs. Now, with new faith commitments, we need your prayers even more. We seek to be as flexible as possible with the funds that come. We do not pay those who write for Proclamation. No one gets a salary Richard Ratzlaff has not made a bad investment. In any case it is impossible for them to admit they have made a bad investment. In any case “something” is better than nothing. “We shouldn’t rob SDA members of their “something” until we are sure they understand the Gospel of Grace.

Mail letters and donations to:

Life Assurance Ministries
PO Box 11587
Glendale, AZ 85318

Thank you! Thank You! to all who have so faithfully prayed and financially supported this ministry. On a num- ber of occasions I have bowed in awe at God’s provi- dence. Several times this last year I appeared we would not be able to publish the next issue. We would pray about it, placing it in God’s hands whether or not we would be able to publish it. I have received several thousand dol- lars in a large donation to cover the needed costs. Now, with new faith commitments, we need your prayers even more. We seek to be as flexible as possible with the funds that come. We do not pay those who write for Proclamation. No one gets a salary Richard Ratzlaff has not made a bad investment. In any case it is impossible for them to admit they have made a bad investment. In any case “something” is better than nothing. “We shouldn’t rob SDA members of their “something” until we are sure they understand the Gospel of Grace.

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Dale, When I first heard the Gospel of grace in its fullness three years ago “a peace that passeth understanding” I thought I was the only one. Now I have so many unanswered questions—Doctrines are debilitating, let scripture interpret scripture. No more proof-texting. It says what you say. It does not have to juggle any thing.

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I am so blessed by your magazine.

Dear Friends in Christ, I am so blessed by your magazine.

Now you tell this pastor that you believed and kept the Sabbath. What is to love the Adventist people, but your magazine preaches continual doses of hatred for Adventists. I cannot believe your double talk. Dale, you are not even close to being a conservative Bible scholar, you are so liberal you squeeze a quart of putty into a pint jar and call it a perfect fit. You have abandoned the Sabbath and apparently have even abandoned the truth on the state of the dead. You also published a ridiculous article, you called old call bad. I have written you several times regarding articles in your magazine that are in error, you as always, ignore these corrections. This pastor wrote you about discrepancies in your statements in your magazine. I propose that there is enough plausible evidence to place Ellen White’s prophetic designation as spurious and doubtful.

This article was submitted to Life Assurance Ministries, Inc. by a current Seventh-day Adventist pastor who authorized us to publish it in Proclamation. All emphasized text found in quotations has been added by the writer; unless otherwise noted.

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them to hold on to the faith, and the seventh month movement; and that our work was done for the nominal church and the world, and what remained to be done was for the household of faith."

It is very hard to defend the notion that this was merely a misguided belief or something that a few of them held to until corrected by vision years later. It was Ellen White's prophetic influence that gave impetus and divine approval of the teaching. The later apologetics on the shut-door issue are lacking in substance and very unsatisfying when looking at the content. The White Estate admits that, "Ellen misinterpreted this vision."

Bible declares that, "Above all you must understand, that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation."

The concept of personal perfection in order to live without a high priest in the sanctuary through the time of trouble. Those who receive the seal of the living God are protected in the time of trouble; but the rest of us must trust in God for our salvation.

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Bible declares that, "Above all you must understand, that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation."

The Scriptures are trustworthy as far as theological content is concerned, a point of distinction in comparing them with some of Ellen White's writings.

3. "I saw the state of the different churches since the second angel proclaimed their fall (in 1844). They have been growing more and more corrupt ... Satan has taken full possession of the churches as a body ... Their prayers and their exhortations are an abomination in the sight of the Lord ..."

One is tempted to dismiss this with a simple, "Well...ok." But is it really? Surely no time card is required to enter a City whose only light is supplied by the presence of Him for whom time is irrelevant (2 Pet. 3:8)? Surely no identification card is needed to appear we may appear with him in glory.

4. "I also saw that many do not realize what they must be in order to live in the sight of the Lord without a high priest in the sanctuary through the time of trouble. Those who receive the seal of the living God are protected in the time of trouble; but the rest of us must trust in God for our salvation."

5. "There is perfect order and harmony in the Holy City. All the angels that are commissioned to visit the earth hold a golden card, which they present to the angels at the gates of the city as they pass in and out."

One is tempted to dismiss this with a simple, "Well...ok." But is it really? Surely no time card is required to enter a City whose only light is supplied by the presence of Him for whom time is irrelevant (2 Pet. 3:8)? Surely no identification card is needed to gain audience with Him who knows the very hairs of our heads! Or is there sin in heaven? What other reason is there for guards, and patrol, of the Holy City? Against what is it being protect- ed? Could this be more a description of her imagination than a clear vision from God? Should this be taught as inspired teaching in our churches?

6. "If any among us are sick, let us not dishonor God by applying to earthly physicians, but apply to the God of Israel. If we follow his directions (James 5:14, 15) the sick will be healed. God's promise cannot fail. Have faith in God, and trust wholly in him, that when Christ who is our life shall appear we may appear with him in glory."

They still leave: Letter from Uganda

CONTINUED FROM BACK

The first angel's proclamation has already taken place (Babylon is fallen). Only later, when Christ didn't come as expected, did she rework her original intention and say that White “saw” that the second angel's proclamation has already taken place. As she claimed, a vision crossed from Adventist to Evangelical. Much that I thought was solid, sure, and steadfast, had two children and my wife was expecting our third. My third born child came at a time when survival was not easy. However by then I was in touch with Life Assurance Ministries. Bro. Dr. Kea was a real blessing. He gave me a lot of courage and Br. Dale sent me money to buy food and also to help the new born, we called him Tulina. God proved so close to us, more than before.

I managed to team up with four other pastors—all Adventist theologians who were stopped for the same thing—and we started preaching Christ. We studied the material sent to us from LAM. This included tapes both visual and audio and many books. Pr. Mark Martin also sent a lot and his tapes are heard by many people now in Uganda. Life Assurance Ministries started giving all of us the financial help to maintain our families as well as paying for the hall which serves as our church and people have started coming in numbers.

In the presence of the [SDA] ministerial secretary two more pastors crossed from Adventist to Evangelical. Much that I thought was the truth I now see to be a lie. To my brother pastors in Africa, I know what it means to transition and to do so without salary.

Choose today whom you will worship. Remember He will never leave you. In my life the greatest achievement is knowing Jesus. I thank LAM for their help. Anyone who would like to do missionary work, especially former SDA ministers, please think of Uganda first. Come and see what is happening here. This is just a little of the many shocking and amazing experiences we have undergone as well as the joy of seeing people come out boldly to Christ.
could be used by God to bring the simple message of the gospel to this dying man, and where God could teach me something about the new birth. It was God's way of moving me from the intellectual ivory tower of hermeneutics to the bedside of God's beloved child needed to hear the simple gospel. As I drove to the hospital I started to turn on the radio, thinking that the last game of the World Series might be on. "No," I said to myself, "you ought to spend this time praying." So I prayed that God would open the door for me to proclaim the simple gospel of Christ. I prayed that the doctors and nurses would not interrupt my visit and that I could be with Don alone. I entrusted the situation to God, asking Him to work things out according to His will. Arriving at Boswell Hospital, I inquired at the desk where room 242 was. The lady behind the desk rose, and said, "I will take you there, it is a long way from here." 

"You don't have to do that," I said, "just give me directions." But she insisted. It was a long way but she stayed with me until we arrived at room 242. There, I saw Don. His hand and heads we so swollen that I hardly recognized him. However, he was not alone, as I had requested. In the room with him were his wife, Marilyn, and two friends. Don could hardly talk, and when he did, I could hardly understand his feeble voice. After a few words of greeting, I was able to share with him the simple gospel of the new birth and how one must look to Jesus alone. I quoted to him a few simple key verses. I shared the simple gospel of the new birth and how one must look to Jesus alone. I quoted to him a few simple key verses. I shared them with him that Christ died for our sins and rose from the dead for our justification. I told him all we have to do is believe and trust in Christ. "He who believes has eternal life," I asked him. If he believed in Christ. He nodded his head and crossed himself—his way of expressing faith in Christ. He said in his weak voice, "I have entrusted the whole situation to God." His wife, a Lutheran, wiped her eyes as she recognized for the first time that Don, indeed had trusted his life to God. Don closed his eyes, and I left. Only God knows what took place there. Like the wind we do not discern the direction of the Holy Spirit yet I had the feeling that God had given Don eternal life in Christ who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. He had given me a fresh illustration of the simplicity and necessity of the new birth. After I left Don slipped into a coma and I believe went to be with the Lord.

Yes, there are two imperitive divine "musts": Christ must be lifted up. We must be born again. And the way we are born again is by the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit as we look away from ourselves and anything we can do, to Christ and what He has done for us. Yes, that is living the eternal kind of life.


7. The Lord would have His people bury political ques-

tions. On these themes silence is eloquence. Christ calls upon His followers to come into unity on the pure gospel principles which are plainly revealed in the word of God. We cannot afford to be prejudiced for political parties; we do not know whom we are voting for. We cannot safely take part in any political schemes...The people of God are not to vote to place such men in office; for when they do this, they stand with them of the sins which they commit while in office.

8. Regarding the slavery issue, Ellen White was definitely not proactive in helping to abolish slavery. “The Colored People ought to be equal with the white people.” In one breath John could say not only that, “He who believes has eternal life,” but also, of him who does not believe, “the wrath of God abides on him.” This teaching is basic and is not born again, that, “the wrath of God abides on him.” This teaching is basic and is not born again, that, “the wrath of God abides on him.” This teaching is basic and is not born again, that, “the wrath of God abides on him.”

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Frankly, I find Ellen White to be a mix of uplifting and confusing...inspiring and contradictory...Christ-centered clarity and grand speculations.

“If in our study we draw some conclusions from Mrs. White’s writings which make her appear to contradict Scripture, then either our understanding of the Bible or of Ellen G. White is not correct. Because she was a true prophet, inspired by the same Spirit as the biblical writers, her teachings will always be in harmony with the Scriptures.”

How do you examine the validity of a prophet, when it is so widely assumed by many within the church ahead of time that the prophet’s writings are always in harmony with scripture? Any contradictions or problems are merely apparent contradictions and problems. You can’t test a prophet who is assumed to be a prophet before testing, if anything bends, scripture bends. Any contradictions or problems are merely apparent contradictions...Christ-centered clarity and grand speculations.

I don’t believe that Adventism will ever be taken seriously by the Christian world at large unless it clears up it’s own inability to clarify, in theory and practice, the role of scripture as the sole source of authority for faith and practice.

Some conclusions...

I’ve read Ellen White’s own writings for almost two decades. I’ve spent hundreds of hours pouring over her material, comparing them to scripture, looking at historical and sociological set-

tings, and studying books and articles about her (pro and con). I’ve also spent numerous hours studying the methods and mechanics of inspiration.

Frankly, I find Ellen White to be a mix of uplifting and confusing...inspiring and contradictory...Christ-centered clarity and grand speculations. After years of honest inquiry and evaluation, I find her numerous contradictions to the Bible, unfilled prophesies, and ‘divinely inspired’ errors, lead me to believe that she mistook her role as a divinely inspired messenger. Was she a false prophet? Well, I’m convinced that Ellen White loved the Lord, and simply came to believe that her thoughts, impressions, and dreams on religious matters were from God. I place her in a similar category as many charismatics might place Oral Roberts and Benny Hinn, who have influenced the lives of millions to love the Lord, but who also came to believe that they receive frequent visions, impressions, and communication from God.

I agree with the sentiments of Ellen White’s cousin, who was quoted very early on in the Adventist movement (1847):

“I cannot endorse sister Ellen’s visions as being of divine inspi-

ration, as you and she think them to be; yet I do not suspect the least shade of dishonesty in either of you in this matter. I may perhaps, express to you my belief in the matter, without harm—it will, doubtless, result either in your good or mine. At the same time, I admit the possibility of my being mistaken. I think that what she and you regard as visions from the Lord, are only religious reveries, in which her imagination runs without control upon themes in which she is most deeply interested. While so absorbed in these reveries, she is lost to everything around her. Reveries are of two kinds, sinful and religious. Hers is the latter.

Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3

The word “again” in Greek can also be translated “from above”—receive the new life of God given by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit ‘he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.”’ The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.” Jn. 3:5–8

The new birth is outside the realm of physical attainment. It is a supernatural event that transforms us at the center of our being. It is regeneration to such a degree that we can be called “a new creation.”

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come. 2 Cor. 5:17

Jesus compares the new birth, or the person who has received the new birth, to the wind. We hear the sound and see its evidence but we do not know its source or the destination.

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Thus the person who has experienced the new birth is to be led by the Spirit sometimes even where he does not want or choose to go. Nicodemus seems to be utterly confused and asks, “How can these things be? Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. John 3:14, 15

Nicoldeus could now better understand the teaching of the new birth. He was familiar with the record of the serpent in the wilderness. He could now see its simplicity.

Then the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a standard; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bit-

ten, when he looks at it, he will live.” And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the standard; and it came about, that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked to the bronze serpent, he lived. Num. 21:8, 9

What, then, is the secret to the new birth? It is first recognizing that we have been bitten by the fiery serpent of sin. This does not take much insight! Just ask anyone who has been bitten by a venemous snake! I have heard that a snake bite is much worse than a bee sting!

We now come to the second “must” of this incident. “The Son of Man must be lifted up.” Many differing theories of the atone-

ment have been presented explaining just why Christ had to die on a cross. One thing is certain, He had to do it! It was this work there on the cross the taking of the poison of sin upon himself, bearing the punishment of all who would look to Him for healing. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. 2 Cor. 5:21

That was Christ’s work and His alone. What was the result of Christ’s work? so that whoever believes will have eternal life. Jn. 3:15

The second thing we must do—and this is where most of us fail—is look away from self and the wound. There is no cutting or sucking out the poison of sin. We have all received a fatal dose and there is nothing we can do to neutralize its deadly power. No amount of law-keeping will do. No honored position, no advanced religious education (and not even correct theolo-

gy, alone) will suffice. We must look away from anything man-

centered. We must look and live. What does it mean to look? Looking is the same as believing. It is trusting Christ alone for salvation. When the bitten Israelite looked at the uplifted ser-

pent, he was depending on what God would do for him and not in what he could do for himself.

We now come to the most profound, simple and loved verse of Scripture.

“God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” Jn. 3:16

Our eternal life is rooted in God and the extent of his love—

How much did he love? He loved enough to give his only begotten Son! If Christ were not a member of the divine Trinity and fully God in his own right, the sacrifice of Christ would be barbaric. But when we realize that Christ was fully God then Christ’s death becomes one of the greatest evidences of God’s love for lost man.

God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the work of reconciliation. 2 Cor. 5:19

This infinite love is expressed to “whoevers believes.” Some want to define “whoever believes” as only the elect who were chosen by God before the foundation of the world. Others want to place meritorious weight on man’s act of believing. Regardless of one’s understanding of this profound mystery, let us simply make sure that we are trusting Christ alone for salva-

tion. Let us reach out the hand of faith and grasp the simple members are confused with how to deal with her. And many become indifferent toward her due to this confusion.

An Authoritative Voice?

The official statement of fundamental beliefs of the church describes Ellen White in fundamental belief #17. One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church (SDA) and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord’s messengers, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested.”36

Even though Christians are counseled not to deny prophets, but to test and examine them, it is virtually impossible in Adventist circles to do so. Why? Because Ellen White is seen as being as divine as scripture, before she is even tested.

What, then, is the secret to the new birth? It is first recognizing that we have been bitten by the fiery serpent of sin. This does not take much insight! Just ask anyone who has been bitten by a venomous snake! I have heard that a snake bite is much worse than a bee sting!

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You must be born again

The new birth—a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit in which a person is imbued with the divine seal and is reborn. In modern urban culture, this is often confused with the legalistic concept of the new birth, where one fulfills a set of requirements to be considered born again. This misunderstanding is often due to the failure to understand the supernatural nature of the new birth, which is a direct work of the Holy Spirit, not aworks of the Law. For this reason, you must be born again from the works of the Law to enter into God's kingdom.
Proclaimer!

Contend for the Faith?

But I fear that somehow you will be led away from your pure and simple devotion to Christ... 2 Cor 11:3 (NL T ).

SALIS

8

By a current SDA Pastor

Consider for a few moments a possible scenario...

Scene 1: A pastor stands up in the pulpit and announces that Jesus is coming in three weeks and that the Beast of Revelation is actually the Canadian government.

You'd likely object (especially if you're Canadian), leave, conclude that the pastor was not born again, and not be so uptight about social drinking. They should have a few beers now and then. Whatever you do, you'd be unlikely to say, “Yeah...ok, no problem.”

As most Christians agree, what we preach and teach, and how we live are important issues. It should never be normal for Christians to knowingly teach and live what is contrary to God's word. If I were to teach the worship of idols, that Jesus never existed, or that we should treat people differently based on skin color, I would hope that my church would object, rebuke, correct, and restore me—anything but consider it normal.

In short, I have preached, taught, and advocated the gospel within the Seventh-day Adventist church for over 15 years. I've discovered some troubling doctrines about 10 years ago that I patiently studied and prayed through. Honestly, I've come to emphasize the “once for all” gospel and focus on the positive aspects of Adventism. I sought to fill my preaching and teaching with Jesus and winning others to Him.

Again, you'd likely object, transfer membership, and not be so uptight about social drinking. This is obvious because in v. 17 He says, “Therefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature...” His “therefore” refers back to what he has been saying in previous verses, and his if clearly indicates that while some are in Christ, others may not be. For his part, John is addressing the infinite sufficiency of Christ’s atonement; it could cover every person, and certainly will include and cover some persons, not from the Jews only, but from every kindred.

No one would be led to “contend earnestly for the faith” that was once delivered to the saints. Jude 3 (NL T ).

Proclaimer!

DECEMBER

NOVEMBER

Scene 2: The youth leader teaches the kids (including you) during a bible study that they should have a few beers now and then and not be so uptight about social drinking. After all, he reasons, Jesus drank wine.

As we noted above, there are numerous web sites dealing with Universalism today, exposing in detail the faulty premises and doctrines which it teaches. Of course there are also some promoting it. There are also good evangelical books dealing with these issues, such as John Ankerberg’s Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions, Harvest House pub.)

Ultimately Unitarian Universalism leads to using one’s reason and emotionalism as being more authoritative as a rule of faith and practice than the Word of God itself. Indeed, it ends in one having a low view of the authority, inspiration, and inerrancy of the Scriptures, which leads to an equally low view of Jesus Christ Himself. In these areas especially, universalism holds to a ground that is diametrically opposed to evangelicalism, even while it seeks to appear evangelical.

No wonder we are exhorted to “contend earnestly for the faith” that was once delivered to the saints.” Jude 3 (NL T ) and Peter warned there would arise those who would even deny the Lord who bought them (2 Pet. 2:1). We must be ready to give every man an answer for the hope that lies within us!
Assessing the Faulty Premises

Verle Streifling

Universalism first appeared in Christianity in the late second century with Clement of Alexandria, whose student, Origen, (185–250 ad) systematically developed it. But it was condemned as heresy in church councils from 394 AD to the 5th Lateran Council of 649. In the Reformation some Anabaptist sects revived this and it was again condemned as heresy by the Lutherian and Reformed confessions. Since 1750 it has gained an ever-expanding foothold, especially since the rise of neo-evangelicalism in the 1960s, which has promoted the neo-liberal theology of Karl Barth in evangelical colleges and seminaries. They call this new liberal theology “evangelical,” while rejecting the teachings that evangelicals “evangelical,” while rejecting the teachings that evangelicals have historically held.

Benjamin Warfield exposed the errors of Universalism in his day, as in his Plan of Salvation. Today, God is raising others to carry the torch, as evangelical writers and a growing number of web sites deal with its heretical views. Many will not consider the number of points that tend to sound logical or even biblical. They have historically held.

But the gospel, is the Gospel, because Christ was God in the flesh, Who bore the wrath and punishment for sin that was ours, so that when we believe in Him and receive Him as our Savior, we may have the eternal life that is His. John 3:16, 36; Rev. 6:16, 17; Rev. 16, etc., tell us that God is not only a God of Love, but also a God of wrath and judgment and justice.

To evade the essential nurture of God's judgment of the wicked, Universalism urges man's innate goodness and the possibility of salvation, even in hell. Surely the idea of man's supposed innate goodness fell with the World Trade towers on 9-11, even for many who disregard scripture. But Romans 1 to 4 proves man's depravity conclusively, Ch. 3:10–18 says “there is none righteous—no not one and all have sinned”(2:3), and Isaiah said all our righteousness is as filthy rags (64:6). The truth is that the closer we get to God, the more “undenied” we see ourselves, and the more thankful we are for His marvelous “grace that is greater than all our sins”.

I believe that Adventism complicates and confuses the simplicity of the gospel message, and to continue to teach, preach, finance, support, and promote the gospel in the traditional Adventist framework is not healthy nor productive.

1. It’s normal within Adventism to endorse itself as God’s remnant church. As voted during a recent General Conference meeting, the Sacrament of Pacifism is a remnant church. It is only a part of the remnant—it is God’s remnant church on earth. This is a wide scale belief, endorsed through Ellen White, and will never subside as long as the church exists. It is normal to speak of “the remnant” in exclusive terms and declare other churches to be Babylon, “Apostate Protestants,” and “other sheep” that will need to be grafted into God’s last day church. This should not be normal. It is myopic, self-aggrandizing, and without solid scriptural backing.

2. The security and investigative judgment doctrine is without merit. It teaches that the atonement is a continuing event to be settled in the future instead of being finished on the cross. It’s a teaching that helped make the Great Disappointment (Oct 22, 1844) less bitter, but it is a theological mistake. It will never be accepted on exegetical grounds by non-Adventists, since the more a non-Adventist studies the doctrine in the original languages of scripture, the more they disbelieve it. The fact that scores of Adventist scholars disbelieve the doctrine does not deal with the truth that it is actively taught and propagated around the world. I believe this compromises the gospel, even distorts it. This should not be normal. Yet numerous pastors disagree in practice, but (I’ve met several) yet are afraid to give their true opinion on it. It encourages theological evasion, fear, and even dishonesty.

3. Ellen White is unreliable as a prophet and should not be made a test of faith. The church teaches that she is a “continuing and authoritative source of truth” in the fundamental beliefs. This should not be normal. It is normal in the church for people to use her with authority that only scripture should hold. This should never be normal, but will continue to be as long as the SDA church exists.

Ellen White advocated the unbiblical teaching of the shut-door (through divine inspiration). This was completely unbiblical and led the early Adventists through years of confusion and isolation. She led others to believe she was independent of others in her writings, while continuing to practice plagiarism. Though the church published guidelines about plagiarism as early as 1886, she continued the practice for years. To preach that Ellen White was not divinely inspired is heresy within the church. To preach Ellen White from the pulpit is normal worldwide. This stance alone has caused great confusion and distortion over the primacy of scripture for faith and practice in the church. I don’t believe Adventism will ever be “sola scriptura” in the truest sense—and that’s not ok.

4. Scripture tells us to “contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). Adventism has replaced the “once for all” message of the gospel with a new focus on three angel’s messages. This is unfortunate and causes scores of members to be confused with the simple message of the gospel. This too, should not be normal.

5. Adventism advocates a dual law theory which seeks to distinguish between moral and ceremonial (and civil) laws. However, the Bible doesn’t make such a clear demarcation. One simply cannot distinguish a category every time the word “law” or “commandment” appears. I believe scripture held a more holistic understanding of the law—that all of the laws were part of God’s...
plan and covenant with his people. The greatest commandments in the law were not quoted from the Decalogue (Matt 22:36-40), while there are many moral laws not found within the Decalogue (drunkenness, envy, partiality, witchcraft, etc.). The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself in love (Gal 5:6). The acts of the sinful nature are obvious (Gal 5:19) and are clearly given in the teachings of Jesus and the apostles.

6. The Sabbath is never commanded in the New Testament as a requirement of Christian duty. To assume that the entire Decalogue carries over into the new covenant disregards several scripture passages (2 Cor 3; Gal 3-5, Heb 7-10). The Bible declares that the old covenant (written on tablets of stone) has been replaced by an inward covenant of the heart, directed by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

The keeping of days is considered a private matter of conscience (Rom 14), not a point of distinction between God's true followers and those who reject him (as Ellen White taught). Scripture points out that the Sabbath rest for the Christian is “another day”—Today, and is observed by resting in Jesus Christ’s finished work (Heb 4:7-11). Hebrews 4 points out that the Sabbath-keeping in Jesus Christ’s finished work pervades the world church in print and sermon. It forms the drama of the Great Truths. Yet, “Sabbath” isn’t even mentioned in Revelation. It’s dangerous to build an entire eschatology on allusion, inference, or non-biblical grounds.

As you can imagine, I’ve wrestled through several years of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual conflict trying to reconcile my heritage with what I understand to be the essentials of the gospel. My own journal reflects the struggle since seminary. Yet, I’ve sought to stay within “the family” and seek answers while continuing to reach others for Christ. It has been a journey of many years. My initial questions have eventually solidified into personal convictions, and I believe the Holy Spirit is leading (Rom 14:12). Please reread the scripture passages at the top of page eight. They are key to understanding this point.

While I would currently classify myself as a non-denominational Christian, I will appreciate some of the Adventist beliefs. I appreciate the Seventh-day Adventist understanding of the holistic nature of apostles (2 Cor 1; Gal 3), the visible/audible/literal return of Jesus (Rev 20), the free will of the believer, the value of good health, quality education, and an emphasis on missions. It must be noted, however, that the above doctrines are held by scores of evangelical Christians in a variety of faith groups. I have no ill will towards my Adventist friends, family, students and colleagues. I value these relationships. While I don’t aim to burn bridges of friendship, I realize that some may choose to start the fires. I wish for all my friends and family a life full of Jesus Christ, a life of love, and a desire to “commend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.”

I encourage you to study these things for yourself. Look at the issues from both sides (both SDA and non-SDA). Read scripture prayerfully and follow what you read. “Watch your life and doctrine (teaching) carefully” (1 Timothy 4:16). Don’t let distortions and complications of the pure and simple gospel become normal.

This should never be normal.

Adventist president says no to changes
http://www.adventistreview.org/2002-152A/story1.html

From April 29 to May 8, 2002, about 45 church leaders gathered together in Europe to address the topic of “Theological Unity in a Growing Church.” General Conference President Jan Paulsen gave a keynote address that was printed in the June 13 (2002) issue of Adventist Review.

His remarks show a disturbing trend within Adventism.

“We shun the perception of being arrogant, and we don’t want to come across as being overly exclusive, but at the same time we believe that being Seventh-day Adventists has direct bearing on our salvation; that while a believer can be saved as a Catholic, I would risk my whole spiritual life and salvation were I to leave what I am now and join any other community.”

A further word needs to be said about our being “loyal to our heritage and to our identity.” Some would have us believe that there have been significant shifts in recent times in regard to doctrines that historically have been at the heart of Seventh-day Adventism.

Take specifically our understanding of judgment and Christ’s ministry in the heavenly sanctuary and the prophetic messages in which these teachings are contained. Some are suggesting that since the 1980 (Glasier View) meetings, the very teachings that the church affirmed that year at those meetings have been abandoned, and that the church has essentially moved to accept the very positions it rejected then. Such a claim is a distortion of reality, and nothing could be further from the truth. The historic sanctuary message, based on Scripture and supported by the writings of Ellen White, continues to be held by the majority of Seventh-day Adventists. And the inspired authorities on which these and other doctrines are based, namely the Bible supported by the writings of Ellen White, continue to be the hermeneutical foundation on which we as a church place all matters of faith and conduct. Let no one think that there has been a change of position in regard to this.

Adventists believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the remnant church, and we need to stand in that conviction.

JAMES ZACKRISON: Ms. Chairman, I am sorry, but I cannot resist the temptation of saying simply that my grandfather and grandmother were married by Uriah Smith at Battle Creek, Michigan. And for three generations, we have believed this is the remnant church and continue to believe that. Therefore, I am against this motion.

CALVIN B. ROCK: I think maybe we have heard enough statements against the amendment.

CALVIN B. ROCK: I have no ill will towards my Adventist friends, family, students and colleagues. I value these relationships. While I don’t aim to burn bridges of friendship, I realize that some may choose to start the fires. I wish for all my friends and family a life full of Jesus Christ, a life of love, and a desire to “commend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.”

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Hebrews 4 points out that the Sabbath-keeping distinction between God’s true followers and those who reject him (as Ellen White taught). Scripture passages on the subject. Scripture passages (2 Cor 3, Gal 3-5, Heb 7-10). The Hebrew covenant of the heart, directed by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

7. The other doctrines, such as unclean foods and jewelry, are also peripheral points of doctrine that are not based on all the relevant scripture passages on the subject. Health is very important, to be sure, but there is plenty of evidence that Jesus “declared all foods clean” (Mark 7:19), and that “no food is unclean in and of itself” (Rom 14:14).

8. Likewise, while I do believe that the pope fulfills some of the antichrist symbolism in scripture, I reject the Great Controversy motif on biblical grounds. Adventist eschatology makes the Sabbath the seal of God, and worship on Sunday the Mark of the Beast in the last day. It requires Protestant Christians, no matter how sincere, to unite with Catholics in oppression of Seventh-day Adventists. Adventists have made a clear separation in the church, and the Sabbath in the last day. It requires Protestant Christians, no matter how sincere, to unite with Catholics in oppression of Seventh-day Adventists. Adventists have made a clear separation in the church.

As you can imagine, I’ve wrestled through several years of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual conflict—trying to reconcile my heritage with what I understand to be the essentials of the gospel. My own journal reflects the struggle since seminary, yet, I’ve sought to stay within “the family” and seek answers while continuing to reach others for Christ. It has been a journey of many years. My initial questions have eventually solidified into personal convictions, and I believe the Holy Spirit is leading (Rom 14:12).

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While I would currently classify myself as a non-denominational Christian, I still appreciate some of the Adventist beliefs. I appreciate the Seventh-day Adventist understanding of the holistic nature of man (body, mind, spirit) and the need to be held to the law of God. And the inspired authorities on which these and other doctrines are based, namely the Bible supported by the writings of Ellen White, continue to be the hermeneutical foundation on which we as a church place all matters of faith and conduct. Let no one think that there has been a change of position in regard to this.

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“We shun the perception of being arrogant, and we don’t want to come across as being overly exclusive, but at the same time we believe that being Seventh-day Adventists has direct bearing on our salvation; that while a believer can be saved as a Protestant Christian, no matter how sincere, to unite with Catholics in oppression of Seventh-day Adventists. Adventists have made a clear separation in the church. The Sabbath in the last day. It requires Protestant Christians, no matter how sincere, to unite with Catholics in oppression of Seventh-day Adventists. Adventists have made a clear separation in the church. For this reason, I would like the sentence changed to read: “I accept and believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is part of the remnant church,”

CALVIN B. ROCK: You move to amend line 13 to read “I accept and believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is part of the remnant church of Bible prophecy?”

SIGRID SCHULZ: Yes.

CALVIN B. ROCK: The amendment is before us. We will discuss the amendment and then vote on it. Are there those who wish to comment?

DANIEL BELVEDERE: I do not believe we are part of the remnant. We are the remnant.

DENTON PHONE: I believe that if we vote this motion today, it will tend toward fragmenting the church. I believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the remnant church, and we need to stand in that tradition.

LASSEW RAELL Y: If we vote the amendment as stated, we are indeed going to be voting a rift in our understanding of Bible prophecy. So I speak against the amendment.

CALVIN B. ROCK: I request that we restrain ourselves from applauding. It is not really statesmanship, and if you would help us by restraining yourself we would appreciate it. Thank you.

JOHN FOWLER: Brother Chair man, I speak against the motion. Claiming the status of being the remnant church is not a theological arrogance, but rather a humble acceptance and an affirmation that we as a church have been called in these last days for a very specific purpose.

CALVIN B. ROCK: I think maybe we have heard enough statements against the amendment.

JAMES ZACKRISON: Mr. Chairman, I am sorry, but I cannot resist the temptation of saying simply that my grandfather and grand mother were married by Uriah Smith at Battle Creek, Michigan. And for three generations, we have believed this is the remnant church and continue to believe that. Therefore, I am against this motion.

ALFRED BIRCH: I believe that we need to consider whether it is appropriate to have this discussion. This is one of the fundamen
tals of the church.

CALVIN B. ROCK: You are correct, and I sense from the speech
es that have been made that it is fairly clear as to how the delega
tion feels. But let’s ask you to vote. [The amendment was defeat
ded.] Now that the main motion that Dr. Veloso brought is defeated, I would like the sentence changed to read: “I accept and believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the remnant church.”

Editors note: as a former SDA pastor who was taught to base his faith on the Word of God, I am saddened that in this motion and ensu
ing discussion there was no appeal to sincere Bible study, there was even no discussion of the (supposed) Bible texts which they claim to support this teaching. Rather, there appeared to be only concern that there be no rift in the church and “for three generations, we have believed this is the remnant church and continue to believe that.”
Assessing the Faulty Premises

Verle Streifling

Universality first appeared in Christianity in the late second century with Clement of Alexandria, whose student, Origen, (185–250 AD) systematically developed it. But it was condemned as heresy in church councils from 394 AD to the 5th Lateran Council of 469. In the Reformation some Anabaptist sects revived this and it was again condemned as heresy by the Lutheran and Reformed confessions.

Since 1750 it has gained an ever-expanding foothold, especially since the rise of neo-evangelicalism in the 1960s, which has promoted the neo-liberal theology of Karl Barth in evangelical colleges and seminaries. They call this new liberal theology “evangelical,” while rejecting the teachings that evangelicals have historically held.

Benjamin Warfield exposed the errors of Universalism in his day, as in his Plan of Salvation. Today, God is raising others to carry the torch, as evangelical writers and a growing number of points that tend to sound logical or even biblical.

Universalists have two conflicting assumptions: 1. that all who ever lived will be saved, including the devil and his angels. 2. The sanctuary and investigative judgment is eternal, or endless. Yet these same words are used to describe the eternal punishment of the wicked.

To evade the essential necessity of God’s judgment of the wicked, Universalism urges man’s innate goodness and the possibility of salvation, even in hell. Surely this idea of man’s supposed innate goodness fell with the World Trade towers on 9-11.

Being overcome by sin in his natural state, one’s rebirth could not be of his own will, the will of the flesh. All men being in the same state, neither could anyone’s rebirth be effected by others, by the will of man. No, the rebirth could only be of God (Jn. 1:13). So then, it does not depend on the man who wills, or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy (Rom. 9:16). God, in sovereign grace, intervenes and causes one to be born again (1 Cor. 1:30; 1 Pet. 1:3), granting him faith (Lk. 5:29; Acts 13:49; Phil. 1:29; Eph. 2:8) and repentance (Acts 11:18). This in no way violates the will of man, but changes it. Indeed it sets him free to believe God (Lk. 8:32; Rom. 6:17–18; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 5:1).

That all this is done in this life, not thereafter, is assuredly affirmed by scripture. There is no chance for salvation in hell. This was underlined by Christ in the story of the rich man and Lazarus. The Bible stresses that today is the day of salvation (2 Cor. 6:1–2; Heb. 3:14–4:10). And, Heb. 9:27 says “it is appointed unto man once to die, and after that the judgment. Those in Christ, like Paul, may confidently expect to be with the Lord immediately upon death (2 Cor. 5:1–10; Phil. 1:21–23). Those who do not believe in Christ, those not born again, Paul says are without hope (Eph. 2:12; 1 Thes. 4:13; 2 Thes. 1:5–10).

Word and nature

In discussing punishment, Universalists contend that the Hebrew word olam, and the Greek aion, and aionios, do not mean eternity, or endless. Yet these same words are used to describe the life we receive when believing in Christ as eternal, everlasting! And in Revelation, “into the ages of the ages,” the expression that describes the eternal punishment of the wicked is the very same expression used to speak of the eternity of God, and of the joys of the redeemed with Him.

Universalists have two conflicting assumptions: 1. that all men are now saved; and 2. that God’s grace will result in the ultimate salvation of all men. The second requires that the first is untrue. Revelation 19 & 20 show there will be many who will follow the beast, the false prophet, and the devil into eternal

the key pillars and core values are at odds with the essential gospel of scripture.

I believe with all sincerity, conviction, and love that what Adventism considers normal, in several areas of teaching and practice, shouldn’t be...and that it’s “not ok.” I believe that Adventism complicates and confuses the simplicity of the gospel message, and to continue to teach, preach, finance, support, and promote the gospel in the traditional Adventist framework is not healthy nor productive. The following points are official church doctrine that I don’t believe are acceptable, yet are actively preached, endorsed, published, and championed around the world.

1. It’s normal within Adventism to endorse itself as God’s remnant church. As voted during a recent General Conference meeting, the Seventh-day Adventist church is not merely a part of the remnant—it is God’s remnant church on earth. This is a wide scale belief, endorsed through Ellen White, and will never subside as long as the church exists. It is normal to speak of “the remnant” in exclusive terms and declare other churches to be Babylon, “Apostate Protestants,” and “other sheep” that will need to be grafted into God’s last day church. This should not be normal. It’s myopic, self-aggrandizing, and without solid scriptural backing.

2. The sanctuary and investigative judgment doctrine is without merit. It teaches that the atonement is a continuing event to be settled instead of being finished on the cross. It’s a teaching that helped make the Great Disappointment (Oct 12, 1844) less bitter, but is a theological mistake. It will never be accepted on exegetical grounds by non-Adventists, since the more a non-Adventist studies the doctrine in the original languages of scripture, the more they disbelieve it. The fact that scores of Adventist scholars disbelieve the doctrine doesn’t deal with the truth that it is actively taught and propagated around the world. I believe this compromises the gospel, even distorts it. This should not be normal.

4. Scripture tells us to “contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). Adventism has replaced the “once for all” message of the gospel with a new focus on three angel’s messages. This is unfortunate and causes scores of members to be confused with the simple message of the gospel. This too, should not be normal.

5. Adventism advocates a dual law theory which seeks to distinguish between moral and ceremonial (and civil) laws. However, the Bible doesn’t make such a clear demarcation. One simply cannot distinguish a category every time the word “law” or “commandment” appears. I believe scripture held a more holistic understanding of the law—that all of the laws were part of God’s
But I fear that somehow you will be led away from your pure and simple devotion to Christ... 2 Cor 11:3

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned! Gal 1:6–9

Contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. Jude 3

As most Christians agree, what we preach and teach, and how we live are important issues. It should never be normal for Christians to knowingly teach and live what is contrary to God’s word. If we were to teach the worship of idols, that Jesus never existed, or that we should treat people differently based on skin color, I would hope that my church would object, rebuke, correct, and restore me—anything but consider it normal. Christians should respond, with love of course, to teachings and practices that are contrary to the clear expressions of God’s will.

Consider for a few moments a possible scenario...

Scene 1: A pastor starts printing and delivering anti-Canadian pamphlets. The inquirer starts promoting it. There are also good evangelical books dealing with these issues, such as John Ankerberg’s Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions, (Harvest House pub.), or Death and the Afterlife, by Dr. Robert Morey, (Bethany House pub.). The inquirer has not far to go, before he realizes the very foundation of Universalism’s false theories is embedded in redefinition of the words of Scripture and selective citing of the Scripture as well as of the attributes of God’s character, or all of these fallacies and more.

Ultimately Unitarian Universalism leads to using one’s reason and emotionalism as being more authoritative as a rule of faith and practice than the Word of God itself. Indeed, it ends in one having a low view of the authority, inspiration, and inerrancy of the Scriptures, which leads to an equally low view of Jesus Christ Himself! In these areas especially, universalism holds to a ground that is diametrically opposed to evangelicalism, even while it seeks to appear evangelical.

No wonder we are exhorted to “contend earnestly for the faith that was once delivered to the saints,” (Jude 3) and Peter warned there would arise those who would even deny the Lord who bought them (2 Pet. 2:1). We must be ready to give every man an answer for the hope that lies within us!

For example, the same author, John, writes: “We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in wickedness,” (1 Jn. 5:19). Universalists dare not apply to the world word in this verse the same meaning they insist upon for ch. 2, v. 2. In that case, all believers would have to be included in the whole world, which lies in wickedness. This would result in the universal destruction of all, instead of the universal salvation of all. Fortunately, the truth in this case is that, as often in the Bible, the world is the antithesis of the children of God (the church), who alone are the heirs of salvation.

Consider again 2 Cor. 5:14–15 and 1 Jn. 2:2. Paul, in using the word all, is not contemplating every person to ever live. This is obvious because in v. 17 he says, “Therefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature....” His therefore refers back to what he has been saying in previous verses, and his if clearly indicates that while some are in Christ, others may not be. For his part, John is addressing the infinite sufficiency of Christ’s atonement; it could cover every person, and certainly will include and cover some persons, not from the Jews only, but from every kindred, tongue, and people on the earth, the whole world.

Nothing in any of this warrants denying the Scriptural requisites of repentance sin, and receiving Jesus in faith. As Peter stated at Pentecost, “Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you, and your descendants, and all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call” (Acts 2:38–39). John stressed, “As many as received Him, to them he gave the right (Gk., power, authority) to become the children of God...even to as many as call upon His name.” And again, “if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Paul said, “You hath He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1). Only after we receive Christ and are thus born again, do we pass “out of the kingdom of darkness and into the Kingdom of the Son of His love” (Col. 1:13). To those who have not born again, Christ will say in Judgment, “Depart from me you cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels....” (Matt. 25:41). Here these will go into ‘everlasting punishment: but the righteous into eternal life’ (v. 46). Certainly the eternity of the punishment will be the same as the “eternal life” that the righteous will have when they...“inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world” (v. 34). As we noted above, there are numerous web sites dealing with Universalism today, exposing in detail the faulty premises and doctrines which it teaches. Of course there are also some promoting it. There are also good evangelical books dealing with these issues, such as John Ankerberg’s Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions, (Harvest House pub.), or Death and the Afterlife, by Dr. Robert Morey, (Bethany House pub.). The inquirer has not far to go, before he realizes the very foundation of Universalism’s false theories is embedded in redefinition of the words of Scripture and selective citing of the Scripture as well as of the attributes of God’s character, or all of these fallacies and more.

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perfect before God.” No, nothing of the kind was even men- tioned, because righteous deeds form no basis for our salva-
tion.

He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. Tit. 3:5.

For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the law. Rom 3:28.

We read that we are not justified by works of the law (who have and keep the law), but also of the Gentiles (who do not have and do not keep the law). In other words, Paul’s teach-
ing on justification totally excludes association with law.

Not correct theology

While this is not as clearly developed as the foregoing points, it is nonetheless an important sub-point to recognize that there is a correct theology, as important as it is, will not save. We are told that the devil’s belief will yet be cast into the lake of fire. That perfectly correct theology is not necessary for salvation is seen numerous times in Scripture. In the next chapter of John, Jesus gives the “living water” to a woman of Samaria. Jesus reminded the Jews of His day of the many examples of people being saved outside of Judaism. Doubtless these people had many flaws in their theology.

But I say to you in truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut up three years and six months, when a great famine came over all the land; and yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. “And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleaned; but only Naaman the Syrian.” And all the people the prophet spoke to were filled with rage as they heard these things. Lk 4:25–28

The new birth—a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit

If law keeping, a respected position in society, a thorough religious education and correct theology will not suffice, then what will bring us the blessings of salvation? We come back to our text.

Nicodemus would have stressed the careful observation of the Law and the traditions of the elders. For the loyal Pharisee, this was the way of salvation. John uses this conversation to show that all such views are wide of the mark. Not a devout regard for the Law, not even a revised presentation of Judaism is required, but a radical rebirth. The demand is repeated three times… Nicodemus and all his tribe of law-doers are left with not the slightest doubt but that what is asked of a man is not more law, but the power of God within him to remake him com-
pletely. In its own way this chapter does away with “works of the law” every bit as thoroughly as anything in Paul.

A ruler of the Jews—not by position

Nicodemus was a ruler of the Jews and held a high position in society. Modern scholars think that Nicodemus was a leading voice in the Sanhedrin, the council representing the highest Jewish authority. Members of this body included the “chief priests,” scribes and lawyers—whose work consisted in inter-
preting the law. The Sanhedrin certainly had complete control of the religious affairs of the nation as the Mishnah indicates. The high court was the supreme authority in the interpretation of Mosaic law and, when it meditated in questions disputed in the lower courts, its ver-
dict was final. Beyond this, the Sanhedrin also governed civil affairs and tried certain criminal cases under the authority of Rome.

The aged Apostle, John, in carefully wording this incident, teaches us that position has no merit with God. One can be the senior pastor of a large church, a president of a growing denomination, a respected Christian author and have all the titles of respect but none of these take the place of the new birth that one must have if he/she is to be a real Christian.

The Teacher in Israel—not religious education

Later, Jesus referred to Nicodemus as “the teacher of Israel” and indicated that even one schooled in Old Testament law should no longer believe what the religious leaders tell him about Christianity, even if he is a Gentile and the Gentile new birth.

Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things”? Jn 3:10

The teacher” has the definite article, indicating that Nicodemus, if not the leading teacher in Israel, was at least one of the respected educators who had been entrusted with the religious instruction of the people. Here we learn that thorough religious education, degrees of learning and certificates of out-
standing performance are of no value when it comes to the new birth. In writing to the Corinthians Paul reminded them: “For your considering, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; 1 Cor. 1:26

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Roosevelt, a celebrated French infidel,1 were the former infidels his theme, and his revilers were infidels. Religion is her theme, and her revilers are religious. In either case, the senti-
ment is the same, the mark is obtained from previous teaching, or study. I do not by any means think her visions are like some from the devil.2

Two other quotes worth considering:

Dr. William Sadler, who was well acquainted with Ellen White wrote in 1912

“It is not uncommon for persons in a cataclysmic trance to imagine themselves taking trips to other worlds. In fact, the wonder-
dul accounts of their experiences, which they write out after these cataclysmic attacks are over, are so unique and marvelous as to serve as the basis for founding new sects, cults, and religions... It is an interesting study in psychology to note that these trances medium always see visions in harmony with their theo-
logical beliefs... Nearly all these victims of paradoxical catalepsy, sooner or later come to believe themselves to be mes-
sengers of God and prophets of Heaven: and no doubt most of them are sincere in this belief. Not understanding the physiology and psychology of their afflictions, they sincerely come to look upon their peculiar mental experiences as something supernatu-
ral, while their followers blindly believe anything they teach because of the supposed divine character of these so-called rev-
elations.”

Dr. Walter Martin spent thousands of hours researching the Seventh-day Adventist church and reading Ellen White’s writings in order to share his findings with evangelical Christians. He con-
cluded that Ellen White, though she prophetically falsified at times, was not a false prophet.

Mrs. White, in my opinion, made false statements. She mis-
represented the prophetic gift she had believed in. If a man is justified by faith apart from works of the law, a man is justified by faith alone. For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the law. Rom 3:28–29

In righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and the Holy Spirit. Tit. 3:5.

This last verse conveys more truth than is immediately seen.

For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the law. Rom 3:28–29

we do not have and do not keep the law. We read that we are not justified by works of the law. To expand upon this truth Paul states that God is not God only of the Jews (who have and keep the law), but also of the Gentiles (who do not have and do not keep the law).

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Her writings were not to be considered a test of fellowship according to some of the early Adventist literature. See Testimonies, vol. 1, pp. 317–318, 382–384; Welfare Ministry, p. 160; Revelation Ministry, p. 42; Evangelist, p. 172; and Selected Messages, vol. 1, pp. 259, 383–388.


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"If in our study we draw some conclusions from Mrs. White’s writings which make her appear to contradict Scripture, then either our understanding of the Bible or of Ellen G. White is not correct. Because she was a true prophet, inspired by the same Spirit as the biblical writers, her teachings will always be in harmony with the Scriptures."

How do you examine the validity of a prophet, when it is so widely assumed by many within the church ahead of time that the prophet’s writings are always in harmony with scripture? Any contradictions or problems are merely apparent contradictions. If anything bends, scripture bends to fit the viewpoints of the modern prophet. While not all within Adventism subscribe to this illogical position, many church administrators, theologians, and members do, and it creates a fuzzy view of inspiration and denigrates the role of scripture as the sole authority for faith and practice.

I’m not advocating sinless infallibility as a test for a prophet. But a true prophet must be reliable on theological grounds. I don’t expect scripture to be infallible in matters of chronology or even as a textbook to answer all questions of science, but I do expect what it tells me about God and the plan of salvation to be reliable. I see a difference between the overall reliability of Ellen White and that of the biblical prophets.

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:20–21

I don’t believe that Adventism will ever be taken seriously by the Christian world at large unless it clears up it’s own inability to clarify, in theory and practice, the role of scripture as the sole source of authority for faith and practice.

Some conclusions…

I’ve read Ellen White’s own writings for almost two decades. I’ve spent hundreds of hours pouring over her material, comparing them to scripture, looking at historical and sociological set-

lings, and studying books and articles about her (pro and con). I’ve also spent numerous hours studying the methods and mechanics of inspiration.

Frankly, I find Ellen White to be a mix of uplifting and confusing…inspiring and contradictory…Christ-centered clarity and grand speculation. After years of honest inquiry and evaluation, I find her numerous contradictions to the Bible, unfulfilled prophecies, and ‘divinely inspired’ errors, 4 lead me to believe that she mistook her role as a divinely inspired messenger.

Was she a false prophet? Well, I’m convinced that Ellen White loved the Lord, and simply came to believe that her thoughts, impressions, and dreams on religious matters were from God. I place her in a similar category as many charismatics might place Oral Roberts and Benny Hinn, who have influenced the lives of millions to love the Lord, but who also came to believe that they receive frequent visions, impressions, and communication from God.

I agree with the sentiments of Ellen Whites’ cousin, who was quoted very early on in the Adventist movement (1847):

“...it cannot endorse sister Ellen’s visions as being of divine inspi-

ration, as you and she think them to be; yet I do not suspect the least shade of dishonesty in either of you in this matter. I may perhaps, express to you my belief in the matter, without harm—it will, doubtless, result either in your good or mine. At the same time, I admit the possibility of my being mistaken. I think that what she and you regard as visions from the Lord, are only reli-

gious reveries, in which their imagination runs without control upon themes in which she is most deeply interested. While so absorbed in these reveries, she is lost to every thing around her. Reveries are of two kinds, sinful and religious. Hers is the latter.

Frankly, I find Ellen White to be a mix of uplifting and confusing…inspiring and contradictory…Christ-centered clarity and grand speculation.

The new birth is outside the realm of physical attainment. It is a supernatural event that transforms us at the center of our being. It is a supernatural event that transforms us at the center of our being.

Thus the person who has experienced the new birth is to be led by the Spirit sometimes even where he does not want or choose to go.

Nicolaido seems to be utterly confused and asks, “How can these things be?”

Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. John 3:14, 15

Nicolaideus could now better understand the teaching of the new birth. He was familiar with the record of the serpent in the wilderness. He could now see its simplicity.

Then the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a standard, and it shall come about, that everyone who is bit-

ten, when he looks at it, he will live.” And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the standard, and it came about, that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked to the bronze serpent, he lived. Num. 21:8, 9

That, then, is the secret to the new birth! It is first recognizing that we have been bitten by the fiery serpent of sin. This does not take much insight! Just ask anyone who has been bit-

ten by a venemous snake! I have heard that a snake bite is much worse than a bee sting!

We now come to the second “must” of this incident. “The Son of Man must be lifted up.” Many differing theories of the atone-

ment have been presented explaining just why Christ had to die on a cross. One thing is certain, He had to do it! It was work-

ing there on the cross the taking of the poison of sin upon himself, bearing the penalty for all who would look to Him for healing. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. 2 Cor. 5:21

That was Christ’s work and His alone. What was the result of Christ’s work?

so that whoever believes in Him will have eternal life. John 3:15

The second thing we must do—and this is where most of us fail—is look away from self and the wound. There is no cutting or sucking out the poison of sin. We have all received a fatal dose and there is nothing we can do to neutralize its deadly power. No amount of law-keeping will do. No honored position, no advanced religious education (and not even correct theolo-

gy, alone) will suffice. We must look away from anything man-

centered. We must look and live. What does it mean to look? Looking is the same as believing. It is trusting Christ alone for salvation. When the bitten Israelite looked at the uplifted ser-

pent, he was depending on what God would do for him and not in what he could do for himself.

We now come to the most profound, simple and loved verse of Scripture:

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him will shall not perish, but have eternal life. John 3:16

Our eternal life is rooted in God and the extent of his love—

He so loved! What did he love? He loved the world, that is, mankind—every tribe and race thereof—despite all our sin, degradation and evil independence. How much did he love? He loved enough to give his only begotten Son! If Christ were not a member of the divine Trinity and fully God in his own right, the sacrifice of Christ would be barbaric. But when we realize that Christ was fully God then Christ’s death was cross becomes one of the greatest evidences of God’s love for lost man.

God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 2 Cor. 5:19

This infinite love is expressed to “whoever believes.” Some want to define “whoever believes” as only the elect who were chosen by God before the foundation of the world. Others want to place meritorious weight on man’s act of believing. Regardless of one’s understanding of this profound mystery, let us simply make sure that we are trusting Christ alone for salva-

tion. Let us reach out the hand of faith and grasp the simple
In one breath John could say not only that, “He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not trust in Christ.” (Jn. 3:36) This teaching is against universalism—the teaching that Don, indeed, had trusted his life to God. Don closed his voice, “I have entrusted the whole situation to God.” His wife, a voice, “I will take you there, it is a long way from here.”

After a few words of greeting, I was able to share with him the simple gospel of the new birth and how one must look to Jesus alone. I quoted to him a few simple key verses. I started with him that Christ died for our sins and rose from the dead for our justification. I told him all we have to do is believe and trust in Christ. “He who believes has eternal life.” I asked him if he believed in God by personal experience. God had touched his head and cross, because he is his own—his way of expressing faith in Christ. He said in his weak voice, “I have entrusted the whole situation to God.” His wife, a Lutheran, wiped her eyes as she recognized for the first time that Don, indeed had trusted his life to God. Don closed his eyes, he prayed with the group, and leaving several “Life Assurance” booklets with Marjory, I left. Only God knows what took place there. Like the wind we do not discern the direction of the Holy Spirit yet I had the feeling that God had given Don eternal life in Christ who is the Way, The Truth and the Life. He had also given me a fresh illustration of the simplicity and necessity of the new birth. I left Don slumped into a coma and I believe went to be with the Lord.

Yes, there are two imperitive divine “musts”: Christ must be lifted up. We must be born again. And the way we are born again is through the personal work of the Holy Spirit as we look away from ourselves and anything we can do, to Christ and what He has done for us. Yes, that is living the eternal kind of life.

Here we clearly see the divine purpose. God wants to save the world! How is one saved? In one sense自助! God who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God! This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. Jn. 3:18, 19

It is clear that our salvation or judgment has to do with our acceptance or rejection of Christ. He is the “testing truth.” I will never forget the joy that I had when the weight of the truth of the gospel was to me. I was born again. And the way we are born again is through the personal work of the Holy Spirit as we look away from ourselves and anything we can do, to Christ and what He has done for us. Yes, that is living the eternal kind of life.

In the simple gospel of the new birth and how one must look to Jesus alone. I quoted to him a few simple key verses. I started with him that Christ died for our sins and rose from the dead for our justification. I told him all we have to do is believe and trust in Christ. “He who believes has eternal life.” I asked him if he believed in God by personal experience. God had touched his head and cross, because he is his own—his way of expressing faith in Christ. He said in his weak voice, “I have entrusted the whole situation to God.” His wife, a Lutheran, wiped her eyes as she recognized for the first time that Don, indeed had trusted his life to God. Don closed his eyes, he prayed with the group, and leaving several “Life Assurance” booklets with Marjory, I left. Only God knows what took place there. Like the wind we do not discern the direction of the Holy Spirit yet I had the feeling that God had given Don eternal life in Christ who is the Way, The Truth and the Life. He had also given me a fresh illustration of the simplicity and necessity of the new birth. I left Don slumped into a coma and I believe went to be with the Lord.

Yes, there are two imperative divine “musts”: Christ must be lifted up. We must be born again. And the way we are born again is through the personal work of the Holy Spirit as we look away from ourselves and anything we can do, to Christ and what He has done for us. Yes, that is living the eternal kind of life.

7. “The Lord would have His people bury political questions. On these themes silence is eloquence. Christ calls upon His followers to come into unity on the pure gospel principles which are plainly revealed in the word of God. We cannot afford to vote for political parties for we do not know whom we are voting for. We cannot with safety take part in any political schemes… The people of God are not to vote to place such men in office; for when they do this, they are associating with them of the sins which they commit while in office.”

8. Regarding the slavery issue, Ellen White was definitely not proactive in helping to abolish slavery. “The Colored People should not urge that they be placed on an equality with White People.” On the same page, she also writes, “The work of proclaiming the truth for this time is not to be hindered by an effort to adjust the position of the Negro race.” It was good to evangelize colored people, but not seek to adjust their lot in life. Frankly, this is just another example of an unreliable prophetic voice.

9. While the church published clear guidelines against plagiarism in the 1864 (Sept 6) issue of the Adventist Review, Ellen White continued the practice for many years. Documentation on this is overwhelming, and I need not spend time reproducing it here.

10. “I am now conversant with borrowing, but deception. It’s not simply that she borrowed/researched/plagiarized it’s that she claimed divine vision and inspiration—even independence of thought, for the material. The church thinks it was appropri- ate, I think it reveals more.”

As even James White said, “If she borrowed from just one—she borrowed from everybody else. Who can trust her as a Christian woman if she says it came from God and it came from other sources.”

Adventist researcher Fred Veitlamer likewise wrote during his study on the Desire of Ages, “Implicitly or explicitly, Ellen White and others speaking on her behalf did not admit to and even denied literary dependency on her part… I must admit at the start that in my judgment this is the most serious problem to be faced in connection with Ellen White’s literary depend. In my judgment, it strikes at the heart of honest- ness, her integrity, and therefore her trustworthiness.”

Ellen White’s Own View

The blame of oversuing and misusing Ellen White’s authority as comparable to scripture does not reside simply with Adventist believers. She fostered such views herself, and thus our too common practice of using her writings in a pseudo-canonical manner. While some prefer her quotes about reliance on scripture, there are plenty of other statements where she gives her own writings divine authority.

She wrote, “To claim to be a prophetess is something I have never done. If others call me by that name, I have no controver-

sy with them.” In the same book, she writes, “My work includes much more than this name (prophetess) signifies. I regard myself as a messenger for His (God’s) people.”

Ellen White, herself, left no doubt about her writings (often calling herself a prophetess or apostle). “If you lose confidence in the Testimonies you will drift from Bible truth.”

“Apostles” (prophetesses) are not heeded, the Holy Spirit is shut away from the soul.

“When I send you a testimony of warning and reproof, many of you declare it to be merely the opinion of Sister White. You have thereby insulted the spirit of God.”

Those who are reproved by the Spirit of God should not rise up against the humble instrument. It is God, and not an erring mortal, who has spoken to them from ruin.” This is one of the strongest statements regarding the authority her writings carry in the life of seventh-day Adventist. If her writings thrust the bear stamp of God, they are truly canonical in the practical sense.

“The very last delegation of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God.”

In these letters which I write, in the testimonies I bear, I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me. I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision—the precious rays of light shining from the throne.”

“There is one straight train of truth, without heretical sentimen, in that which I have written.”

The testimonies “never contradict His Word.”

“Physically I have always been a broken vessel; yet in one of my letters, I have said that the Lord continued to move upon me by His Holy Spirit to write the most important books that have ever come before the churches and the world.” Quite a claim!”

“God will be the final arbiter of the testimonies.”

“The Holy Ghost is the author of the Scriptures and of the Spirit of Prophecy.”

“The power of God would come upon me, and I was enabled clearly to define what is truth and what is error.”

If the Holy Ghost really is the author of her writings, then every church member ought to study them, memorize them, learn them, meditate upon them, which is (which is) really would “function” with authority for doctrine and lifestyle, and to reject her harder statements would be unsafe in the last days.

Again, the belief that Ellen White’s writings are on an equal level of inspiration and authority as scripture does not derive from misconduct or the teachings of Ellen White herself. She fostered a view of her role that remains almost canonical in practice, though not necessarily in theory.

Anybody who influences the millions of people, and has made the kind of claims that Ellen White made, ought to be checked very carefully. Her claims of divine revelation should be examined, just as the claims of Joseph Smith (Mormonism), Mary Baker Eddy (Christian Science), Muhammad (Koran), and others should be.

I have found as an Adventist pastor and teacher that scores of
The White Estate admits that, “Ellen misinterpreted this vision.” While allowing room for morally fallible prophets, the Bible declares that, “Above all you must understand, that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation.” The Scriptures are trustworthy as far as theological deduction on your income tax. For further information call 800-355-7073 and webizes which means “we have a helper.” God proved so close to us, more than before. I managed to team up with four other pastors—all Adventist theologians who were stopped for the same thing—and we started preaching Christ. We studied the material sent to us from LAM. This included tapes both visual and audio and many books. P.M. Martin also sent a lot and his tapes are heard by many people now in Uganda. Life Assurance Ministries started giving all of us the financial help to maintain our families as well as paying for the hall which serves as our church and people have started coming in numbers. In the presence of the [SDA] ministerial secretary two more pastors crossed from Adventist to Evangelical. Much that I thought was the truth I now see to be a lie. To my brother pastors in Africa, I say, “I don’t have any more work for you in the ministry.” They told how she resigned four times from being White’s secretary. We have undergone many shocking and amazing experiences we have experienced as the joy of seeing people come out boldly to Christ.

Possible tax shelter
If you have appreciated assets such as stocks, bonds, real estate, etc. and you chose to donate these to the ministry of LAM, Inc. We may be able to give you a donation receipt for the current market value of these assets. In this way you can support LAM without paying capital gains on the growth of these assets and, at the same time, receive a deduction on your income tax. For further information call (800) 355-7073 and we will put you in touch with a qualified financial consultant.
I am so blessed by your magazine

Proclamation! magazine!

Proclamation!

Proclamation!

I am so blessed by your magazine spirit. May God richly bless your ministry and to people who sometimes are very rude and Holy Spirit give you words to keep answering feel the pain of those that are going through the Gospel does not need your so called attacks on you can’t even find a beginning or an end. The Gospel, but you prefer to cater to people who have left the church, most of whom have left, or have been deliberately blinded because of some changed sin, then turned against the church rather than admit to the flaws in their characters. You need to change your heart brother for the hour is late. Time is running out for you.

I proposed that there is enough plausible evidence to place Ellen White’s prophetic designation as spurious and doubtful. While the Seventh-day Adventists cannot understand her formative and continuing influence, they can revise their long held teachings about her role—teachings that mislead scores of members to utilize her works as another form of scripture. Consider the following statements and ideas from her own pen.

1. “I saw that God was in the proclamation of the time of 1843.” Also, “I saw the people of God joyful in expectation, looking for their Lord, but God designed to prove them. His hand covered a mistake in the proclaiming of the prophetic periods... God designed that His people should meet with a disappointment.”

2. “For a time after the disappointment in 1844, I did hold, in common with the advent body, that the door of mercy was then forever closed to the world. This position was taken before my first vision was given me. It was the light given me of God that corrected our error, and enabled us to see the true position.”

This is plainly misleading. It was her divinely inspired visions that endorsed the shut door heresy among the early Adventists. The shut door belief led early Adventists to believe that God had closed the door of salvation to the world, except for believers of the Millenite movement.

James White wrote of Ellen that, “When she received her first vision, Dec. 1844, she and all the band in Portland, Maine [where her parents then resided] had given up the midnight cry, and shut door, as being in the past. It was then that the Lord shew her parents then resided] had given up the midnight cry, and shut door, as being in the past. It was then that the Lord shew her vision, the error into which she and the band in Portland had fallen. She then related her vision to the band, and about sixty confessed their error, and acknowledged their seventh month experience to be the work of God.”

Ellen herself wrote, “While in Eexter, Maine, in meeting with Israel Dammon, James, and many others, many of them did not believe in a shut door. I suffered much at the commencement of the meeting. Unbelief seemed to be on every hand... When I came out of vision, my ears were saluted with Sister Durben’s singing and shouting with a loud voice. Most of them received the vision, and were settled upon the shut door.”

Fellow Adventist and friend of the Whites Otis Nichols wrote to William Miller (who also briefly believed in a shut door). In a letter (April 20, 1846) Nichols wrote, “Her message was always attended with the Holy Ghost, and wherever it was received as from the Lord it broke down and melted hearts like little children, fed, comforted, strengthened the weak, and encouraged one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!” Galatians 1:8

A quart of putty into a pint jar! Dale: Read your latest Proclamation. I was espe-
cially interested in the letter you printed in response to a letter from one of our pastors and I must say it was with the usual mix of dou-
bletalk that I find in your publication. I was espe-
cially amused by your statements about being a con-
servative Bible scholar and believing that the Bible is about the “Great 

Editor’s response

I still am at a loss to know where you received the idea that taught things in which I did not believe. I have never done that. True, I remained an SDA pastor for some months after I realized the error of 1844 as I worked through the issues. To my knowledge there are many SDA pastors who do not believe in 1844 or EGW who are still working in the church... I understand your desire to safeguard the truth for Seventh-day Adventist teachings, I was once where you are now. It is my prayer that we will each follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit as He speaks to us through the inspired Word of God. Dale Ratzlaff

Pastor Bob Hoyt writes again

Dale: I do not believe you were ever there. I studied my way into the church and I was in the Adventist church now, 40 years. You were at least a second or third generation Adventist and you never understood it correctly or you would not be attacking it. There are at least 10 different angles that support and corroborate 1844. I don’t care that you taught it, you were teaching it wrong, because if you were teaching it right there is no error in it. I know that prophecy backward and forward and you will not trip me up on it. You again are doing what you will stand in the judgment for with your vendetta against Adventists. I shudder to think of your fate, Dale, even if you are right in one or two things, and you could be, but you don’t have to see any truth in anything you teach. As far as you teaching what you did not believe, I distinctly remember you saying that to either me or Sam Bacchiochi. I will go back as I have saved much of what you said to him and find it. You explained that you were a pastor and taught some-

Dale Ratzlaff
LAM expands its ministry
At the recent annual LAM, Inc. board of directors’ meeting it was voted to start supporting five former Adventists in Uganda, Verle Steedling and I have been in communication with these men by e-mail for many months. They have taken a stand for the simple gospel of Jesus Christ and for everyone to know them to be Adventist ministers. This, in turn, has caused their families to undergo severe financial difficulty. Several of us at LAM have taken it upon ourselves to write letters to help these men. We have sent them many boxes of books, tapes, and other study materials for which they have expressed deep appreciation. We have also sent them money from time to time. It is our understanding that when they were employed by the SDA church their remuneration amounted to about $3,100.00 US dollars per month.

We at LAM, Inc. after consideration and prayer have stepped out in faith and plan to support each of these five pastors and also provide the rent for a meeting place that will seat 800 people. We have also purchased for them a needed PA system. We have told these men that we will only be for one year and that they ought to work hard as good stewards of the gospel so that they can be self-supporting within that time.

As our readers know, we are dependent upon donations made by members of our ministry, God, through you, has met our needs to this point—often in direct answer to prayer, prayer, often at the very last moment. Would you put in your prayer that we will be able to meet our faith commitment to these five men?

As you read the testimony from Nubuga Daniel and with those who have told how they are moving very rapidly in Uganda. There are now seven pastors who have taken a stand and we understand that there are many others in high places who have privately said they are in agreement with them, who may join them soon. We may need to help these men with temporary financial aid as well. Please pray that God will provide these men with truth and that God will supply their financial needs. We understand that there are yet other Adventists who have withdrawn from the SDA church in Africa, and we join in prayer for them that they may be saved very rapidly in Uganda.

We are also in contact with other Adventist pastors in Africa who have stepped out in faith. There seems to be a crescendo of interest around the world to get back to the simple faith once delivered to the saints.

USA Adventist pastors/scholars write for Proclamation
We recently received several studies on the issues in Adventism from Adventist pastors. They have authorized us to print these articles as they feel truth can stand on its own and will triumph in the end. These men have studied and prayed for a long time and are not new converts to Jesus’ Gospel. Many of them have written to Jesus’ friends commenting on this issue. As you read this issue of Proclamation, you will see that these Adventist pastors were hoping that the SDA church would move away from its historic stand on SDAs being the remnant church and the 1844 sanctu- ary, investigated just recently by the General Conference Committee. We have presented the church in session and the report of the General Conference President seem to dash all hopes that the church will take any of these unhesitant steps.

We, at their request, have published the session minutes and a portion of the official report. We trust these will be useful to our readers. We have provided two articles written by the men. We have not printed their names as we want them to choose their own time and venue for their announcement about leaving Adventism.

We have also printed a letter from another Adventist pastor who is not a member of the teachings of Advenstism and denounces this ministry. I responded to this pastor by email and he, in turn, responded back.

Thank you to all who have so faithfully prayed and financially supported this ministry. On a num- ber of occasions I have bowed in awe at God’s provi- sion. Several times this last year it appeared we would not be able to publish the next issue. We would pray about it, placing it in God’s hands whether or not we would be able to publish. I have received several thousand dol- lars in a large donation to cover the needed costs. Now, with new faith commitments, we need your prayers and your continued support so that we may keep on publishing Proclamation.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you to all who have so faithfully prayed and financially supported this ministry.

Donation receipts:
As most of you know, we send donation receipts for each donation showing the total to date for the year. In December we will send a special receipt listing all your contributions for 2002 for tax purposes.

Appalled that you would attack God’s Remnant Church
Dear Dale, Your magazine the Proclamation came the other day and I read it and I was appalled that you would attack God’s Remnant Church with such vicious lies. Read Rev. 12:17, Rev 14:12… The first text I want to discuss is Col. 2:16 by the way you misquoted Col. 2:16; its Sabbath days not Sabbath day… No wonder so many are leaving the SDA Church, because we were taught all the do’s and don’ts of the law and not the love of the law... The Day of Atonement was a special festival that pointed to what Jesus would do for us after He died and went back to heaven Heb. 7, 8, 9, & 10. Since all these things were misunderstood by the disciples and the new testament church, unbelievers had special significance to our heart that even though I’ve only read one of your magazines, a number of issues have been mailed to me. I know you won’t have a prayer of recovery—any- more—not ashamed to say that I felt not adapted to your standards. I do not feel guilty anymore. I cannot afford to ask you to put my name on your mailing list. I mean I cannot pay you for it but can you please ask someone who receives Proclamation to send me all their used ones? I would be so grateful to you and I will pray that God richly bless you of all you to continue doing such a great job. The articles in your magazine have helped to set my conscience free. I now rejoice in the Lord. Thank you—God bless you all.

“a peace that passeth understanding”
Dear Dale, When I first heard the Gospel of grace in its fullness three years ago a “peace that passeth understanding” filled my soul. I heard the good news articulated by Smuts Von Schlegell in his first habitation, and I then asked you speak when we visited Monterey Bay 25 years ago. It took courage for you to follow your conscience. You could have winked at the fallacies of Adventism and you’d now qualify for a nice sustenance pension. All of us tend to be legalistic and idolatrous by nature. Dale, your conscience had so many unanswered questions—Doctrines are debilitating, let scripture inter- pret scripture. No more proof-texting. It says you do not have to juggle any thing.

Sometimes you would be so legalistic and idolatrous by nature. Dale, your conscience had so many unanswered questions—Doctrines are debilitating, let scripture interpret scripture. No more proof-texting. It says you don’t have to juggle anything...
A study of John 3:1-3

It Life Assurance Ministries we often speak of the “simple gospel of Jesus Christ.” It is simple in that even a child or unbeliever with no religious training can reach out the hand of faith and accept its treasures. However, the gospel is also profoundly deep with insights that stretch our limited ability to understand the mysteries of God. Such is the study before us in John 3. As I write this article, I have no axe to grind. I come as a learner praying for fresh insights that may have eluded my attention the last time I studied this section. Would you, the reader, join with me in asking the Holy Spirit to bring us understanding and insight into the truths that God would have us grasp from this important section?

Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher, for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.” Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Jn. 3:1-3

Sometimes a portion of Scripture is equally instructive in both outlining positive truths and, at the same time, revealing things that are incorrect.

CONTEND FOR THE ADVENTIST FAITH?

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

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

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

CONTRIBUTORS:

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2. Pastor Nsubuga Daniel
3. Ellen White: Unreliable as a Prophet
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