Walter Rea on Ellen White

Perhaps no other person, unless it would be Dr. Fred Vedder, has done more research on the writings of Ellen G. White than Walter Rea. In the 1980s, Walter Rea, a Seventh-day Adventist pastor and ardent supporter of Ellen White discovered that a large portion of her writings were plagiarized. Here is the report of his latest research. A cassette tape of his presentation on this subject may be obtained from the San Diego Adventist Forum by calling (619)561-2360.

The letter from Walter Rea dated May, 2003

Dear Friends: For over one hundred and fifty years many people of good character and some with high position in the S.D.A. Church questioned what was being promoted by the church concerning Ellen White and her claims of divine revelation.

Most, if not all, of the criticism was either dismissed as unfounded or the evidence of such criticism was covered from view. As late as a Bible Conference in 1919, many leaders including Bible teachers, ministers and conference officials were voicing their concerns over the way her written materials were being misrepresented.

The mythology promoted was that by her own admission Ellen White did not read other’s written materials, was not influenced in any way by human beings when she wrote, and God Himself was the only author of her material.

It was during the mid 1970’s that some of the secrecy and mythology that surrounded Ellen’s writings were exploded. For the first time in over a hundred years or more some of the mechanics used in her writings were revealed. Also, some of the names of those who helped in manufacturing her books became known.

The amount of human help emerged in the January meeting of 1980 where the committee reviewing past evidence of human involvement announced that such evidence was shocking. It was also declared that Glendale meeting that “if every paragraph in the book The Great Controversy was footnoted in reference to its original source, every paragraph would be footnoted.” Thus it would acknowledge that the book was of human ideas and not divine inspiration. During the last several years, seeking to verify or disprove that statement, I have spent hundreds of dollars and thousands of hours accumulating and studying many of the books that have now been admitted by the White Estate as having been used in the compilation and revisions of the book, The Great Controversy.

This material is now available to all in its three forms:

(a) A copy of the early 1897 edition where no credit of any kind was ever given to any human source. The footnotes—added in later editions—are included as well as some of the 1,100 Bible texts used.

(b) Having obtained many of the now admitted sources, we have photocopied the original materials from such authors as D’Aubigné, Wiley, Bliss, Welcome and others, some often paraphrased.

(c) Set three seeks to show the evolution of admission to plagiarism from the early editions to the most recent.

Many of these studies have been made available to the church and its educational institutions, wherefore it is now offered to the public through the internet and other means. As always the church refuses to dialogue and often turns from the issues to the one presenting them. It is very clear from the facts presented after one hundred and fifty years that whatever inspiration Mrs. White had, it did not come from God but from the sources she read and copied, though she denied copying to the end of her life.

Sincerely, Walter T. Rea

The evidence of Ellen White’s denials

1. “I did not read any works upon health until I had written Spiritual Gifts, Vol 3 & 4. Appeal to Mothers, and had sketched out most of my six articles in the six numbers of How to Live.” Review & Herald, Oct, 8, 1867.

2. “My views were written independent of books or of the opinions of others.” Manuscript 7, 1867.

3. “And here I would state that although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation.” Review & Herald, Oct, 8, 1867.

4. “You might say that this communication was only a letter. Yes, it was a letter, but prompted by the Spirit of God to bring before your minds things that had been shown me. 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.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

The issue to which Galatians was written was one of the first problems the new Christian church had to face.

When religion brings psychological trauma to the soul

Why do so many reject assurance of salvation?

A Biblical response to abortion, Part III

The Great Controversy Theme and the Gospel

Dale Ratzlaff

This is adapted from a presentation given at the recent X Convention in Kennewick, Washington.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13
The Great Controversy Theme and the Gospel

While at the X convention I also met Rodney Nelson with whom I had communicated previously by email and phone. He submitted to me his article analyzing the great controversy theme in Adventism that was printed by Good News Unlimited several years ago. I found it insightful, and I think it will help our readers understand the implications of some of our hermeneutical principles: (1) Where the Bible is clear, we can be certain. (2) Where the Bible is unclear, we must be tentative. (3) Our interpretation must be Christ centered. (4) Our interpretation must be gospel centered. (5) Our emphasis should be the same as the emphasis of Scripture.

Teaching the Gospel

As the last issue of Proclamation was filled with material from LAM’s Uganda mission we have kept it to a minimum in this issue. However, we can report that many good things are taking place there. Many are accepting the simple gospel of Christ. Our pastors are working hard, often under difficult circumstances. They have a real need for adequate transportation. The old car they were using has broken down. We want to raise $5,000 to purchase a good used car for them. To date we have about $1,170 raised for them. The pastors have started many new study groups as new doors open up for the gospel.

Thanks for your support of the Gospel!

With our faith commitment to the pastors in Uganda our monthly expenses have sharply increased. We have had calls from pastors in Kenya who are ready to start new work there yet we cannot make commitments to help them at this time. Continue to pray for the ministry of LAM that we will follow the leading of our Great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.
I look forward to each issue of Proclamation!

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The book is good and interesting. Even after being raised in the church and their schools from first-grade through college, I had no idea that it is very hard to leave when your family and your whole way of life is threatened. Fortunately for me, the Lord brought a wonderful man into my life whom I've been married for almost eight years who is not and never will be an SDA. I praise the Lord I have always questioned the authority of E.G. White, but now the more I learn, the more convinced I am of her books, and I am more determined than ever to support LAM in any way I can. I'm very interested in joining.

There are so many things which could not be raised…under the “old school” and not fear, from time to time to time, that you're a heretic and a sign of the end.

This ambivalence and confusion can become extremely intense as the personalities realize that many of their assumptions and beliefs they have been taught and have believed for years are not correct. There can be feelings of helplessness, disorientation and being overwhelmed which are also common experiences of those going through trauma. Depression, anxiety, rigidity, or impulsive behaviors may become evident. Anger, despair, shame, guilt, distrust, rage, fear, and irritation may be experienced. Nothing seems normal or secure anymore. Spiritual questioning may become an obsession. The upheaval can be horrific.
loss and grief

The loss that is associated with leaving a religious system or culture can be another aspect of the trauma. The tighter knit the subculture of the religious system and the greater the isolation from the wider society the greater the loss for all social networks and family members are in the old system, the isolation can create great relational and psychological strain. There is ample evidence of the importance of one’s social network for all areas of health, and when the social network and support are removed, the person is left in a very precarious position.

Important Considerations

The above has briefly and generally outlined how religious systems, which are destructive, can precipitate psychological trauma when a person attempts to move toward another religious orientation. The following are a few considerations for maintaining psychological health in the midst of such a traumatic experience:

• Stay focused on the gospel and a relationship with Christ. In Him we find our “specialness” and our purpose for endurance.

• Keep your passion but grieve over the loss of some of your friends. It will take time and may not have the same comfort level as the closeness you experienced with those you have known for years and who held a common belief system with you.

• Exercise and keep balance in your life. You cannot and should not study the issues all the time. You will need some diversion and healthy distractions.

• Be careful not to go to an extreme. Your anchor has been pulled up, and you will be adrift for a while. Moderation is a key to health.

• Keep your passion but grieve over the loss of some of your friends. It will take time and may not have the same comfort level as the closeness you experienced with those you have known for years and who held a common belief system with you.

• Refocus on the challenge of new ventures of faith and hope that your life can be an example of the continual renewal and reform that Christ calls us to in discipleship. Christ does not call us to the status quo.

• Be wise and careful with whom you share your newfound views. There is no merit in causing any more agitation and conflict than is necessary.

• Reembrace the idea that God is bigger and better than any religious system, and your salvation depends upon a relationship with Him, not with any organizational structure.

There is a myth in some destructive religious systems that a person who leaves the organization will not survive spiritually or psychologically. This myth makes it more difficult for some to leave oppressive religious systems. However, this myth is truly a myth. There are multitudes who are enjoying the freedom of newfound ways of serving and worshiping Christ in a spirit of freedom and who have overcome the psychological trauma of a toxic religious system.

At best Adventists teach that the “works” that result from salvation are “works of the law” with an emphasis on keeping the Sabbath, an old covenant ritual, as a evidence of salvation. At worst, Adventists teach that salvation is faith in Christ + works of the law and can lose the gift of the Sabbath. As long as Adventism teaches that the Sabbath is a salvation issue there will be a great similarity between those who were preaching “another gospel” in Galatia and Adventism. For Paul any compromise of the simple faith of faith in Christ met the strongest condemnation. Can we do less?

Let us pray for Adventist leaders. There are many Adventists who do not believe historic Adventist doctrine. Many in Adventism want to change but they are trying to do it without admitting past error. To admit error on these points undermines the whole structure of Adventism because Adventism stands on three legs: The authority of Ellen White, the Seventh-day Sabbath and their 1844 sanctuary theology. If they take out any one of these three legs, and are consistent in their reasoning and teaching, the others will fall away because they are not biblical doctrines. This is why most former Adventist pastors leave Adventism. They become converts and then they may feel like these three legs is broken (contrary to Bible teaching and in error) and soon see the whole structure of Adventism fall. I have had several Adventist pastors who do not believe that Ellen White is a source of authority, they do not believe that the Sabbath is the seventh, or they do not believe that Sunday worship will become the mark of the beast, they do not believe that the Adventist church is the remnant church of Bible prophecy. They do not believe in Adventism’s 1844 sanc-
tuary theology. Not only have I spoken with pastors, but also many members and Adventist scholars and administrators in which these issues are discussed.

Many hundreds of Adventist leaders know that historic Adventism teaches a number of unbiblical, false doctrines. Pray that there will be a reformation within Adventism to biblical truth. For Christ is the end of the law for all deliv-
ered to the saints.

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Endnotes

1 Ex. 12:48, Lev. 22:45; Deut. 14:1; 15:1; Deut. 17:15; Deut. 23:20; Deut. 29:22, etc.
2 Ex. 12:44, 21:12, 5:7, 26:17, 22:12, 21; Lev. 19:20; 20:11, 5; Dtt. 5:15, 18; 16:12, 15.
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Prayer: rather than simply reach out the hand of faith and grasp the free gift of faith given by our good God. Let God pro-
nounce you righteous based solely on the righteousness of Christ. Let the Holy Spirit regenerate you life on the inside so that the fruits of the Spirit will flow natu-
rcally from the center of your being.

Accept the simple gospel of faith in Christ plus nothing.

Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved (Rom. 10:13).

Then He believed in the Lord and He reckoned it to him as righteousness (Gen. 15:6).

Yes, the gospel is good news; it is not good advice. It is simple. It is the story of what God has done for us in Christ Jesus and it is worth defending with every fiber of our being.

1. Read Galatians through in one sitting and do it every day for 30 days. It will bring clarity to your thinking and peace to your life. Also read Romans and Ephesians. These books are like cool water—the living water—on a hot summer day. They lead you into the shade of the mighty Rock in a weary land where you will find true rest for your soul. “We who have believed enter that rest” (Heb. 4:3).

I appeal to you to humbly recognize that you cannot be good enough and you cannot keep the Sabbath perfectly enough for it to hold any place in your assurance of salvation. Rather, simply reach out the hand of faith and grasp the free gift of faith given by our good God. Let God pro-
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Adventists teach that one is saved by faith alone but in order to stay saved one must keep the law, especially the Sabbath.

Summary of the Galatian problem
The false teachers were saying that to be saved one had to have faith in Christ and keep the law, including the food laws, the rituals of circumcision, Sabbath, new moons, fixed festivals and sabbatical years. Paul said that this teaching was false and condemned this teaching in the strongest possible terms! Gal. 4:10, Col. 2:16, 17.

They teach that the Sabbath is the seal of God and that those who worship on Sunday will receive the Mark of the beast thus making the Sabbath a salvation issue.

In their official fundamentals of beliefs #17 we read: "One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. Prophecy is identifying the marking of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord’s messenger, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth…” Here are some of her authoritative statements of “truth”:

The name Seventh-day Adventist is a mark… EGW, Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 4, p. 54.

I found it instructive at the recent X Convention to learn that many modern-day false teachings had their origin from a communication from an “angel” Paul, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, must have foreseen this when he wrote:

But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, you are to be accursed! (Gal. 1:8)

Ellen White continues:
I saw that the Holy Sabbath is; and will be, the separating wall between the true Israel of God and unbelievers. EGW, Early Writings, p. 3.

All statements make it clear beyond a shadow of doubt that in Adventism the Sabbath is a salvation issue. However, the Sabbath is not a moral law; it is a ritual law. There is no clear distinction in the law (books of Moses) between ritual and moral. They are often, if not usually, all mixed up together. The Sabbath is mentioned two times with moral laws in Exodus 20 and in Deut 5 because it is the sign of the Sinaitic covenant between God and Israel (Ex. 31:16,17) and ancient Near East treaty documents always had the sign of the covenant in the center of the covenant document.” It is mentioned a dozen times with the ritual laws of the old covenant such as new moons, fixed festivals, etc.

Why do so many reject assurance of eternal life?

Several years ago a pastor in Pennsylvania, concerned for the salvation of the many Roman Catholics in his community, invited me to come up and teach a seminar. First he asked me to send some of our publications so he could become more familiar with our ministry. After reviewing our Gospel tracts, he called me to cancel the seminar because he discovered that I teach the assurance of salvation. I explained to him that assurance is what makes God’s plan of salvation “good news.” God promises to save forever those who come to Him through Jesus (Heb. 7:25). I asked him, “What good news do you have to share with Catholics if you preach eternal life is not ever-lasting but can be lost.” Catholics already adhere to a salvation that is dependent upon what they do, whereas faith in Jesus is a simple spiritual acceptance.

After many exchanges, this pastor was unwilling to believe God’s promise that everyone who has been saved by grace through faith shall be brought to glory.

Those who reject the doctrine of eternal security tend to place more emphasis on the subjective experiences of “professing” Christians than the objective truth of Scripture. They may not know someone who was baptized, repeated a prayer or responded to an altar call, then later rejected the faith or turned to a life of habitual sin. These experiences become their proof that salvation has no assurance. But is there any way to know if these people were born again? Judging someone’s spiritual condition is risky because no one can see a person’s heart. Opponents of assurance tend to focus on man’s opinions rather than on God’s divine power. Such misunderstandings can be overcome by discarding human reason and accepting divine revelation. Faith should not rest on the wisdom of man but on the power of God (1 Cor. 2:5).

Consider the Word “Eternal”

The “eternal” Gospel (Rev. 14:6) of our “eternal” God (Rom. 16:20) promises every believer “eternal” life (1 John 5:13) and “eternal” glory (1 Pet. 5:10) in His “eternal” kingdom (2 Pet. 1:11). The “eternal” King (1 Tim. 1:16) called salvation “eternal” (Mark 16:20) because He has given believers “eternal” comfort (2 Thes. 2:16) by obtaining “eternal” redemption through the “eternal” Spirit who guarantees an “eternal” inheritance (Heb. 9:12; 15:13; 1 Pet. 1:14). According to God’s “eternal” purpose (Eph. 3:11), every believer has been saved from “eternal” judgment (Heb. 6:2), “eternal” destruction (2 Thes. 1:9) and “eternal” punishment in the “eternal” fire (Mat. 25:41, 46).

Eternal life is not only an infinite quantity of time (people in hell will live forever) but an eternal quality of life. It is an intimate relationship with Jesus whereby His life and divine nature is placed in every believer and every believer is in Him (2 Pet. 1:4). John 5:20,21: “This life begins at the second birth when those who were dead in their sins are made alive in Christ (Eph. 2:4). Eternal life is ever-lasting because the very life of Christ (who can never die again) has been imparted to believers (Rom. 6). But this leads to a provocative question. Knowing that sin is what brings spiritual death to the soul, what keeps Christians from dying again when they sin after their conversion? Is it because God will not take into account sins committed after the believer has been reconciled to Christ (Rom. 4:8; 2 Cor. 5:21)? God is all loving and patient, past and future, on. Jesus (Isaiah 53:6). Our kinship redeemer “bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness” (1 Pet. 2:24). “With His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption” (Heb. 9:12). Everyone redeemed has bought with the precious blood of Jesus and now belongs to Him, Eternal redemption and eternal security are thus one and the same.

Those who reject eternal security must explain why they do not also reject everything else described as eternal, such as the eternal triune God and His punishment for unbelievers. They must also be able to answer, with Scripture, some other relevant questions. Can those who have been redeemed from under the curse of the law...
The Galatians were mixing faith and works. They were placing both faith in Christ and obedience to the law as the foundation of salvation.
Do Adventists preach another gospel?

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

The magnitude of the Galatian problem

If you compare the book of Galatians to Paul’s other books, it will become immediately evident that Paul considered the Galatian problem to be of greater magnitude than any other problem he addressed in any of his letters.

First, we note that there are no words of encomium. If one compares, for example, Paul’s letter to the Corinthians we find that he addresses the Corinthians as “sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling” (1 Cor. 1:2). Paul goes on to commend them, saying, “you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge” (1 Cor. 1:5).

“You are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 1:7, 8). However we know that the church in Corinth was not very “sandy” in their behavior. There were factions, with jealousy and strife (1 Cor. 4). There was ‘immorality of such a kind as does not even exist among the Gentiles, that someone has his father’s wife” (1 Cor. 5). The Corinthians were taking one another to court (1 Cor. 6). There was false teaching about marriage (1 Cor. 6) and the list goes on and on. Yet Paul could call them “saints in Christ Jesus!” Why? Because the problem of the Corinthians was one of behavior, immorality and misunderstanding and not a blatant compromise of the gospel. When writing to the Galatians, however, there are no words of assurance or of commendation. There is no mention of “saints” anywhere in the book of Galatians. There are terms of endearment in all of Paul’s other letters but not here. Why?—Because of the magnitude of the problem! We can justly conclude that for Paul the problem is Galata was much worse than the situation in Corinth. Paul comes right to the point and tells the Galatians that they are teaching a false gospel.

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. (Gal. 1:6,7)

The Greek makes it very clear that the “gospel” the Galatian false teachers were promoting was a gospel of a totally different kind from the true gospel of Christ. Paul goes on in the strongest language to condemn anyone who would teach this false gospel.

“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we received, he is to be accursed!” (Gal. 1:8, 9)

Paul, why such strong, condemning language? Why?—Because of the magnitude of the problem!

Next consider the public confrontation with Peter in Gal. 2:11–14. Do we expect that Paul would treat Peter more graciously than to condemn him in front of the gathered assembly. After all, was Peter not the head of the disciple band that walked and talked with Christ? Was it not Peter who was used so mightily on the day of Pentecost when 3,000people were converted?

“Was it not Peter to whom Cornelius was directed by the angel of God when the Gentiles received the gift of the Holy Spirit? Why did not Paul take Peter aside and admonish him in private? Why?—Because of the magnitude of the problem!”

Note the words Paul uses as he describes these false teachers.

You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? (Gal. 3:1)

Here Paul calls them “foolish” and “bewitched.” This is passionate language indeed. He did this to jolt them to the seriousness of their actions. Today, we might say something like this. “You stupid idiots, why did you leave the simple gospel of grace through faith in Christ the second half of the verse from which Paul chose to use it. “You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified!” (Gal. 3:1)

Paul goes even further. The Galatian heresy, says Paul, has caused them to be “Severed from Christ” and they had “fallen from grace” (Gal. 5:1-4). Wow! Paul, why are you so condemning? Why?—Because of the magnitude of the problem!

Then, as if his readers had not yet sensed the full enormity of the problem, Paul pulls out all of the stops.

I wish that those who are troubling you would even cut them-selves off (Gal. 5:12).

We begin to see the magnitude of the Galatian problem. It called forth from Paul the strongest confrontation. The reason the Galatian problem loomed so large in Paul’s mind was that the false teachers were promoting a false gospel which under-mined the basic foundation upon which Christianity is based.

The Nature of the Galatian problem

What was this perversion of the gospel? In the Adventist church there is a lot of controversy over just what the Galatian preaching to you a gospel contrary to what we received, he is to be accursed! (Gal. 1:8, 9)

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women. Are we really motivated by compassion rather than expec- 
diency and self-interest? Then we must realize that all truly com-
passionate people are individually involved people. “And God is 
able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all suffi-
cency of everything, you will have an abundance for doing every 
good deed” (2 Corinthians 9:8). By God’s grace we have the 
resources to meet the medical, physical, financial and relational 
needs of every woman in crisis within our sphere of influence. 
Believing that God’s resources are adequate for the situations He 
gives us we can preserve and affirm life for everyone involved.

These women who sought abortion as an 
answer, and there are hundreds of them now 
beginning to speak out, live with the reality 
that they chose to destroy the only child they 
will ever carry.

In terms of the woman as abortion’s second victim, there is a 
growing body of medical literature that is somewhat begrudg-
ingly admitting the reoccurring negative physical and psycho-
logical consequences of abortion. These are reviewed in detail 
in Pam Koebel’s book Abortion. Second Victim. Let me mention 
just two aspects specifically. Perhaps as high as 100% of all 
women who abort their first child are involuntarily made inca-
bable of conceiving or carrying to term another child. These 
women who abort their first child are involuntarily made inca-
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Koebel cites a study of the emotional state of forty-six randomly selected post-abortion women responding to a questionnaire. In this study, 87% of the women reported an increase in feelings of guilt, 78% an increase in a sense of grief, 76% had 
depression and remorse, 67% experienced an increase in anger and 

tension, and 50% or more had a sense of shame and bitterness about their abortion decision. Recently I have had two single young 

couples come to me for help who were pregnant and determined to keep this child as a means of avoiding the ongoing 60%-90%-100% chance of a miscarriage or a 
sweeper. Another suffered from reoccurring nightmares of a 

baby girl crying and found herself illogically hoping, each time 
she saw a little girl from the back, that it would be the child she 
had aborted. Still another of my students wrote this letter before we 
talked:

“I am writing to explain the many times I was absent from your 

class in the month of March. I can’t really say the exact reason 
why I did not come because it is very, very personal. It is so personal, 
that my parents or friends do not even know what I have 
gone and am (sic) still going through. Rather, I can mention, 
for not coming is that some times I was just too (sic) depressed to be 
around people, and my problem too complicated to concentrate on anything 
else. Sometimes all I wanted to do was stay in bed. Things got so bad that I felt there was no hope any 
more—I now know what it feels like to cry for help within the depths of your soul... when you feel like you 
are in hell.”

Walter Rea on Ellen White

CONTINUED FROM BACK

before me in vision the precious rays of light shining from the 

throne.” Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 67

5. “McCullough stated in a large congregation that it was 

reported by one who knew that I picked up things written in 

books, and sent them out as something the Lord had shown me.” 
The Fannie Bolton Story, White Estate, 1990, p. 77

6. “I have not been in the habit of reading any doctrinal 

articles in the paper, that my mind should not have any understand-
ing of anyone’s ideas and views, and that not a mold of any man’s 
theories should have any connection with that which I write.” 
Ellen G. White Estate, 1887, vol. 1, p. 21

7. “Mrs. White has gathered the facts from a human mind in 

a single case she has in thousands of cases, and God has not 
shown her these things which she has written in these personal 


Assn., 1880, p. 328

In Summary

The gospel stands on its own and requires no additional rationale 
or detail. The gospel is the “good news” of what God has done 
and accomplished through Jesus Christ. None of these accomplishments 
required vindication of God’s character before His creation. The 
incident recorded in Job 1:6-12 is often cited to prove a GCT motif.

However, it does not focus on God’s justice or character, but upon 
protection of one man (Job). The controversy regards what 
Job would do should God’s protection be lifted with Satan allowed to 
have his way short of killing Job. Would Job deny God and prove 
faithless should God no longer protect him? The controversy cen-
tered on Job, not God. And in the end the test proved Satan flunked, 
not Job, and certainly not God. Likewise, when Jesus returns in His 
Father’s glory he will not return in triumphal vindication of His 
character, but in triumphal victory over His enemies who have attempt-

ed to destroy His people.

Christians would do well to uphold the belief that God’s sover-
eignty is preeminent in all matters and that He is in control. Because 
He is in control believers can rest assured that He is trustworthy 
and Relyless in character. The test resides in our belief about God, not 
God’s vindication of Himself.

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an assistant professor of Religious Studies and was a student 

at Liberty Christian High School in Richland. He has an MA in Religion from Northwest 

Christian College in Eugene, Oregon, and is currently pursuing a 
Master’s in Christian Education from Southwestern Baptist 
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Walter Rea writes from Patterson, California.
es on the reason for the controversy and how it will be resolved” (6). What is the controversy about? It is over whether God’s plan of obedience to Him and His Son is better than Satan’s plan of “individual self-sufficiency” (6). The scope of the controversy encompasses the universe (6). It centers on Satan’s charges that God is “unfair, unforgiving, and arbitrary” (6). Through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, God “revealed His character and trustworthiness” so that all inhabitants throughout the universe as well as on earth are able to make up their minds as to who has been right or wrong in the controversy” (6). As stated elsewhere, “Christ’s life vindicated God’s justice and goodness and demonstrated that God’s law and government were fair” (Seventh-day Adventists Believe, Review and Herald, 1988, pg. 105). It is to answer the question of whether Satan’s charges that God’s law is “impossible to obey” and that “law works against the best interests of created beings” (SDA’s Believe, pg. 102). Finally, Satan “attempts to overthrow God’s government and even God Himself” by “constant and insidious undermining of the law” (SDA’s Believe, pg. 102).

An Adventist Contribution

The GCT illustrates the plan of salvation, according to Douglass, by uniting the “separated components” of the redeeming work (7). Douglass qualifies this idea by stating that terminology conventionally used within traditional theological systems (Calvinist, Lutheran, Wesleyan Methodists) should not be read into the text. (7, footnote 1). In other words, she must be allowed to say what she says rather than imputing other meanings to her terminology and concepts. Given this qualification, the GCT (as explained by Ellen White) becomes a “distinctly Adventist” insight “compared to the partial insights of conventional theological systems” (7).

Therefore, the GCT provides a uniquely Adventist contribution to Christian understanding of salvation as “restoration.”

Affected Areas

Douglass lists thirteen areas where the GCT illustrates Christian understanding of theology, especially in our understanding of salvation (7). They range from the concept of law and gospel of God’s chosen and imparted righteousness, to faith and works, to God’s work and human work in the salvation process, etc. (7). Douglass believes all Adventist doctrine is informed by the GCT (7).

The Gospel Assessment

Is the theme of the Bible the plan of redemption whereby the image of God is restored to the human soul? How to restore mankind to a right relationship with God is certainly the pulsing heartbeat of scripture. However, Douglass asserts the gospel is contained within a larger issue. The central thesis of the GCT is that God is concerned with His reputation. It is loving, fair, just, and true (7). The central thesis of the GCT is that God is concerned with His reputation. It is loving, fair, just, and true (7).

The central thesis of the GCT is that God is concerned with His reputation. Is He loving, fair, just, or arbitrary? God on trial is the thesis of the GCT according to Douglass, by uniting the “separated components” of the redeeming work (7). Douglass qualifies this idea by stating that terminology conventionally used within traditional theological systems (Calvinist, Lutheran, Wesleyan Methodists) should not be read into the text. In other words, she must be allowed to say what she says rather than imputing other meanings to her terminology and concepts. Given this qualification, the GCT (as explained by Ellen White) becomes a “distinctly Adventist” insight “compared to the partial insights of conventional theological systems” (7). Therefore, the GCT provides a uniquely Adventist contribution to Christian understanding of salvation as “restoration.”

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are called to demonstrate Christ’s alternative within a decaying society:

“A new commandment I give to you, that you should love one another, even as I have loved you” (John 13:34). “For the Son of Man has come not to be served but to serve and to give Himself as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

Abortion in our culture (and church) is not only the killing of unborn children, but also the aborting of innocence (by making uninformed women both its partners and its victims), the denigrating of life (by denying the unborn’s personhood and promoting death), the aborting of truth (through the prevalence of deceit, propaganda, and euphemism), the aborting of love (by leading to infanticide, child abuse, and euthanasia), and finally, the aborting of humanity itself.”

Footnotes:
29 Pam Koebel, Abortion’s Second Victim, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1986), pp. 140-41. Here it is stressed that the SDA church must be rhetorically consistent with its actions. Certain religious organizations, supporting hundreds of local chapters, created solely to minister to damaged women and significant others suffering from post-abortion syndrome.
30 See Ministry, May, 1988, p. 12 and 16.

Suggested Guidelines for Crisis Pregnancies and Medical Protocols within Seventh-day Adventist Institutions

1. Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) medical institutions do not allow abortions to be performed for social or economic reasons. Such procedures, commonly referred to as “elective abortions,” are inconsistent with the Biblically derived belief that human life (including the life of the unborn child) is sacred, and of higher value than individual or corporate considerations of convenience, lifestyle preference or economic prosperity.

2. SDA medical institutions will allow an abortion to be performed only if:
   a.) it is required to save the physical life of the mother; or
   b.) in exceptional cases of aneuploidy, or equally rare cases of clearly diagnosed fatal congenital defects. In such situations the abortion will be performed only after professional consultation between the primary physician, two advising physicians and a hospital chaplain.

3. Individual SDA church congregations will be assisted in establishing a crisis pregnancy network to assist, as necessary, Adventist women and their families in a crisis pregnancy. Such assistance should include affordable pre- and post-natal medical care, support in helping students continue their education, financial planning and assistance, and spiritual and emotional nurture.

4. The SDA church requires at the elementary, academy level, (appropriate to the maturity level of each) Scripturally-based, values oriented seminars focused on Christian principles of sexual behavior and accountability stressing the significant consequences of all moral choices.

Compassion and repentance

On issues of this nature church discipline on a denominational level is a conundrum. No rule or set of rules deal with all possible situations adequately and redemptively. Within the individual congregation, disfellowshipping should be seriously considered against physicians who routinely perform elective abortions.

The woman in crisis who receives an abortion is a dramatically different situation. When a Christian woman in a moral or emotional crisis feels abortion is her only viable option, it signifies a failure on the part of her entire church community to create a redemptive atmosphere that allows acceptance, repentance and forgiveness to occur—and tangible support to be given. In such cases, deeper issues need to be addressed by everyone involved with a corporate attitude of compassion and repentance.

Footnotes:
33 This does not imply that social (including psychological and emotional) or economic considerations are trivial. Very few, if any, women consider an abortion for trivial reasons. But emotional and economic crises are best resolved with the Christian community, not by killing the unborn child, but by compassionate and tangible support for the mother.
34 Perhaps the toughest exception often discussed is the extremely rare request for abortion resulting from violent rape. The caution here should be the reality that it is not the unborn child who is a criminal or enemy. The child is an innocent; if anyone should die, a more logical argument would be in favor of the death penalty for the rapist, not the child. But in those very rare cases where a woman conceives due to a violent assault and rape and believes she cannot carry such a child to term, the protocol of each hospital should consider her needs seriously and compassionately. The Christian ideal remains the redemption of both the mother and the child.

The Great Controversy Theme and The Gospel

The Great Controversy Theme and Adventism

By Rodney Nelson

The Great Controversy Theme

Dr. Herbert Douglass, retired president of Weimar Institute, recently wrote an article in Ministry (December 2000) entitled “The Great Controversy Theme: What it means to Adventists” (pp. 5-7). In it Douglass develops the key arguments for the proposition that the Great Controversy Theme (GCT) is the “seminal, governing principle” (5) of Adventist theology and teaching. “For Seventh-day Adventists, the GCT is the core concept that brings coherence to all biblical subjects.” Dr. Douglass states dramatic and unique origins from this teaching. Using the GCT as the “core truth” of SDA theology, Douglass seeks to demonstrate how “Seventh-day Adventists have been given...a perspective which provides a ‘theory of everything’. It introduces us to the ‘mind of God’” (6).

The Hermeneutical Principle

Douglass maintains that GCT provides the matrix for understanding the “intent of biblical writers when they used words such as righteousness, salvation, gospel, etc.” as well as “working our way through centuries of theological confusion over the meaning of such realities as justification, sanctification, atonement, obedience, and works” (6). What the GCT provides is the hermeneutical principle for understanding all the diverse elements of Biblical revelation and uniting them into a coherent whole. “This ‘grand central thought’ provides unity, coherence, transcendence, and lasting relevance to all the pieces of information found in all the books of the Bible” (6). Clearly implied is that “all the pieces of information found in the books of the Bible” were not understood clearly prior to Adventism “receiving” (5,6) this theological key to understanding the Bible.

Without the GCT, all would remain divided over such subjects as the importance of the Old Testament sanctuary service and the New Testament view of Christ as our High Priest/Mediator, the meaning of faith and grace, the place of obedience in relation to legalism, why Jesus came first, why He came the way He did, and when He will return. (8) This is a big claim to make as with an indictment of historic Christianity. Certainly, it provides evidence that Adventism the reassurance they are specially called to reveal this “last day message” to the world in a way no one else can.

The “Grand Central Thought”

What is the central message of the GCT? Douglass, quoting Ellen White, identifies it as “redemption in restoring the ‘human soul’ to the ‘image of God’” (6). Quite a difference compared to how the GCT is often applied. Specifically, it means that merely preaching forgiveness or a renewed life will not bring about the redemption of the whole human being. Inherently, the GCT accounts for such realities as justification, sanctification, atonement, obedience, and works in a way that account for the whole human being.

Making a Difference

The GCT makes a difference in how one understands the whole Biblical message because it “focuses...”

Footnotes
(5,6) Douglass, quoting Ellen White, identifies it as “redemption of both the human soul and body”.
7. Clearly, the GCT provides a perspective which provides a ‘theory of everything’. It introduces us to the ‘mind of God’” (6). The GCT makes a difference in how one understands the whole Biblical message because it “focuses...”
are called to demonstrate Christ’s alternative within a decaying society:

“A new commandment I give to you, that you should love one another, even as I have loved you” (John 13:34).

1. Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) medical institutions do not allow abortions to be performed for social or economic reasons. Such procedures, commonly referred to as “abortive abortions,” are inconsistent with the Biblical derived belief that human life (including the life of the unborn child) is sacred, and of higher value than individual or corporate considerations of convenience, lifestyle preference or economic prosperity.

2. SDA medical institutions will allow an abortion to be performed only if:
   a) it is required to save the physical life of the mother; or
   b) in exceptional cases of anaplastic fetuses or equally rare cases of clearly diagnosed fetal congenital defects.31 In such situations the abortion will be performed after professional consultation between the primary physician, two advising physicians and a hospital chaplain.

3. Individual SDA church congregations will be assisted in establishing a crisis pregnancy network to assist, as necessary, Adventist women and their families in a crisis pregnancy. Such assistance should include affordable pre- and postnatal medical care, support in helping students continue their education, financial planning and assistance, and spiritual and emotional nurture.

4. The SDA church requires at the elementary, academy and college level, (appropriate to the maturity level of each) Scripturally-based, values oriented seminars focused on Christian principles of sexual behavior and accountability stressing the significant consequences of all moral choices.

Footnotes
29 Pam Koerbal, Abortion’s Second Victim, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1986), pp. 140-41. Here Koerbal managed to isolate the ‘rare’ cases of abortion and actually insert the idea of abortion as a function of society. It is stated in the bibliography that there are now four national women’s organizations, supporting hundreds of local chapters, created solely to minister to damaged women and significant others suffering from post-abortion syndrome.
30 See Ministry, May, 1988, p. 12 and 16.
31 William Willimon, “A Crisis of Identity,” Sojourners; (May, 1986); p. 27.

Suggested Guidelines for Crisis Pregnancies and Medical Protocol within Seventh-day Adventist Institutions

1. Compassion and repentance

On issues of this nature church discipline on a denominational level is a conundrum. No rule or set of rules deal with all possible situations adequately and redemptively. Within the individual congregation, disfellowshipping should be seriously considered against physicians who routinely perform elective abortions.

The woman in crisis who receives an abortion is a dramatically different situation. When a Christian woman in a moral or emotional crisis feels abortion is her only viable option, it signifies a failure on the part of her entire church community to create a redemptive atmosphere that allows acceptance, repentance and forgiveness to occur—and tangible support to be given. In such cases, deeper issues need to be addressed by everyone involved with a corporate attitude of compassion and repentance.

Footnotes
30 This does not imply that social (including psychological and emotional) or economic considerations are trivial. Very few, if any, women consider an abortion for trivial reasons. But emotional and economic crises are best resolved with the Christian ideal remains the carry such a child to term, the protocol committee of each hospital should consider her needs seriously and compassionately. The Christian ideal remains the redemption of both the mother and the child.

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Dr. Herbert Douglass, retired president of Weimar Institute, recently wrote an article in Ministry (December 2000) entitled “The Great Controversy Theme: What it means to Adventists” (pp. 5-7). In it Douglass develops the key arguments for the proposition that the Great Controversy Theme (GCT) is the “semenal, governing principle” (6) of Adventist theology and teaching. “For Seventh-day Adventists, the GCT is the core concept that brings coherence to all biblical subjects.” Dr. Douglass writes that the “advent of the GCT” in the 1880s resulted in a fragmented Christian Church (6). In it Douglass maintains that GCT provides the matrix for understanding the “intent of biblical writers when they used words such as righteousness, salvation, gospel, etc., as well as ‘working’ our way through centuries of theological confusion over the meaning of such realities as justification, sanctification, atonement, obedience, and works” (6). What the GCT pro-

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The “Grand Central Thought”

What is the central message of the GCT? Douglass, quoting Ellen White, identifies it as “redemption in restoring the ‘human soul’ to the image of God” (6; quoting from White, Education, 1903, pgs. 125, 126). What does this mean? Douglass explains it as “not just one concept among many” but as making “sense of all other biblical subjects or con-
cepts” (6). Without this “grand central thought,” Christianity has taught a “limited gospel” for 2,000 years resulting in a fragmented Christian Church (6). Specifically, it means that merely preaching forgiveness of sin has dam-
gaged everything that sin has damaged” (6). Making a Difference

The GCT makes a difference in how one under-
stands the whole Biblical message because it ‘focuses’...
es on the reason for the controversy and how it will be resolved” (6). What is the controversy about? It is over whether God’s plan of obedience to Him and His Son is better than Satan’s plan of “individual self-sufficiency” (6). The scope of the controversy encompasses the universe (6). It centers on Satan’s charges that God is “unfair, unforgiving, and arbitrary” (6). Through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, God “revealed the love of God” (6). The thesis of the GCT is that God is concerned with His love for all inhabitants throughout the universe as well as on earth are able to make up their minds as to who has been right or wrong in the controversy” (6). As stated elsewhere, “Christ’s life vindicated God’s justice and goodness and demonstrated that God’s law and government were fair” (Seventh-day Adventist Believe and Live, pg. 101). It is therefore apparent that Satan’s charges that God’s law is “impossible to obey” and that “law works against the best interests of created beings” (SDA’s Believe and Live, pg. 102). Finally, Satan “attempts to overthrow God’s government and even God Himself” by “constant and insidious undermining of the law” (SDA’s Believe and Live, pg. 102).

An Adventist Contribution

The GCT illuminates the plan of salvation, according to Douglass, by unifying the “separated components” (1998, pg. 107; footnote 1) in a way that does away with the “distinctive Adventist” insight “compared to the partial minology and concepts. Given this qualification, the Adventist contribution is the GCT’s” (7). Douglass fails to point out that all the varied descriptions of the gospel describe what was accomplished on the cross, rather than disparate components lacking an integrating theme. Justification, redemption, adoption, reconciliation, etc., are descriptions of what resulted from what Jesus did on the cross, not mere components of a yet to be revealed theme. No one term or metaphor could comprehend or capture the work of God through the death/resurrection of Jesus. Paul’s proclamation of the gospel declares what God has done for sinners, not Himself. Whatever description Paul or other Bible writers use to describe the gospel, all of them focus on one key facet, as is the Gospel the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes (Rom. 1:16). What does the gospel reveal? “For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed by faith from first to last, just as it is written: ‘The righteous will live by faith’” (Rom. 1:17). Prior to this revealing the gospel was a mystery (compare Matt. 13:11, Mark 4:11-12; Rom. 10:4; Eph. 3:2-6, 11:17-18). What is the mystery that has been revealed, notably to Paul? The mystery of the gospel is Christ, called the mystery of Christ (Col. 2:2-3, 4).

The gospel is the overarching theme of the Bible. It is the gospel that the Old Covenant held in prospect, and which the New Covenant possesses in fulfillment. The Gospel is about the power of God for salvation that is described by various terms in the New Testament epistles. The GCT is not the gospel, but the continuing assurance of God’s goodness and love (6:19; Col. 1:25-27; 2:2-3; 4:3). What is the mystery that has been revealed, notably to Paul? The mystery of the gospel is Christ, called the mystery of Christ (Col. 2:2-3, 4).

The Gospel Assessment

Is the theme of the Bible the plan of redemption whereby the image of God is restored to the human soul? How to restore mankind to a right relationship with God is certainly the pulsating heartbeat of scripture. However, Douglass asserts the gospel is concerned within a larger issue. The central thesis of the GCT is that God is concerned with His reputation. It is loving, fair, just, orderly, democratic, and perfect. The scheme of the controversy is that God’s law is “impossible to obey” and that “law works against the best interests of created beings” (SDA’s Believe and Live, pg. 102). Finally, Satan “attempts to overturn God’s government and even God Himself” by “constant and insidious undermining of the law” (SDA’s Believe and Live, pg. 102).

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In each case, the abortion only deepened the crisis and has-\n\n...in the 60% of women who abort their first child are involuntarily made inac-\n\n...in the women's residence hall, following a suction abor-\n\n...in feelings of guilt, 78% an increase in a sense of grief, 76% had\n\n...to do with the reality that they chose to destroy the only child they will ever carry.\n
These women who sought abortion as an answer, and there are hundreds of them now\nbeginning to speak out, live with the reality that they chose to destroy the only child they will ever carry.

In terms of the woman as abortion's second victim, there is a\n
...a woman who may lack the support and emotional strength she needs to face her pregnancy that she will find heal-\n...she should do regarding the quotations from historians and the ref-\n...tions. The salvation of man is, despite denials in some\n...about how he saves people? I would venture to say that if it is the\n...have his way short of killing Job. Would Job deny God and prove\n...God's vindication of Himself.\n
In Summary\n
The gospel stands on its own and requires no additional rationale or detail. The gospel is the “good news” of what God has done and accomplished through Jesus Christ. None of these accomplishments required vindication of God's character before His creation. The incident recorded in Job 1:12-16 is often cited to prove a GCT motif. However, it does not focus on God's justice or character, but upon His protection of a man (Job); the controversy regards what Job would do should God's protection be lifted with Satan allowed to have his way short of killing Job. Would Job deny God and prove faithless should God no longer protect him? The controversy cen-\ntered on Job, not God. And in the end the test proved Satan flanked, not Job, and certainly not God Likewise, when Jesus returns in His Father's glory he will not return in triumphal vindication of His char-\nacter, but in triumphal victory over His enemies who have attempt-\n\n...in preparing for the task of helping others learn how to live with the reality that they chose to destroy the only child they will ever carry.

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Do Adventists preach another gospel?

The magnitude of the Galatian problem

Should Adventists preach another gospel? The瘢痕与另一方面的瘢痕，we can find that Paul considered the Galatian problem to be of greater magnitude than any other problem he addressed in any of his letters. Paul goes even further. The Galatian heresy, says Paul, has caused them to be “severed from Christ” and they had fallen from grace (Gal. 5:1-4). Wow! Paul, why are you so condemning? Why?—Because of the magnitude of the problem! Here Paul calls them “foolish” and bewitched. This is passionate language indeed. He did this to jolt them to the seriousness of these actions. Today, we might say something like this. You stupid idiots, why did you leave the simple gospel of grace through faith in Christ for a false gospel? You dummies! Why did Paul use such passionate language? Why?—Because of the magnitude of the problem.

The Greek makes it very clear that the “gospel” the Galatian false teachers were promoting was a gospel of a totally different kind from the true gospel of Christ. Paul goes on in the strongest language to condemn anyone who would teach this false gospel. They are teaching a false gospel. Is it not Peter to whom Cornelius was directed by the angel of God when the Gentiles received the gift of the Holy Spirit? Why did Paul not take Peter aside and admonish him in private? Why?—Because of the magnitude of the problem! Note the words Paul uses as he describes these false teachers. You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? (Gal. 3:1)

Because of the magnitude of the problem! Does Adventists preach another gospel? should the Adventist Church take a stand against the practice of abortion? Yes, for many reasons. The most common argument against this step is a very legitimate desire to protect personal freedom of choice. But for us as a Christian community the crucial question is not whether or not God has given this freedom to His people. He certainly has. Rather, for us the question is whether our choices are just and moral.

Individuals are free to practice adultery or cruelty, but such choices are neither moral nor Christ like. Neither is the choice to kill an unborn child in an attempt to solve a present crisis. Our choices must be in line with God’s will for our lives.

Another roadblock to a biblically consistent Adventist position is a curious denial of ethical accountability because of eschatological speculations. What could happen is causing us to deny what is happening. Prominent speakers within our church have said those on the side of the sanctity of life are the vanguard of the religious right that would bring in legislation limiting our religious freedom. They conclude we must avoid being identified with these Christians in their struggle against abortion and infanticide. This is curious. Sad. Speculations about a future death decree should not make us actively participate in a present one. Surely for the unborn of America this is already a “time of trouble such as has never been.” Others said “It is a Catholic issue.” Is protecting innocent life the private domain of the Catholic Church? Proverbs 24:11-12

and a host of other warnings from God (in the minor prophets especially) call us to defend the weak, voiceless and oppressed. Of Josiah God said: “He pled the cause of the afflicted and the needy; then it was well not that it means to know Me?” declares the Lord. “But your eyes [apostate Israel] and heart are intent only upon your own dishonest gain, and on the shedding of innocent blood” (Jer 22:16, cf. Jer 5:26-29).

The Bottom Line of Agreement: Compassion Often those on both sides of this debate have seen themselves as the defenders of compassion, either compassion for the unborn child or the woman in crisis. Surely this is a divine impulse and it must be our common ground, our point of agreement as a church. A response which is truly and consistently compassionate to everyone involved in a crisis pregnancy must be our constant goal. This would require consensus on two points. First, there is a need to admit the increasingly obvious medical and psychological reality that abortion has a second victim: the woman. Abortion not only destroys a child, but damages and sometimes destroys the very person it is suggested it will help. Because of this, compassion for the woman (as well as the child) dictates alternate answers. The second point of consensus must be our individual commitment to offering sacrificial and redemptive support to these
be placed back under it? (Gal. 3:13-5). Can one, who has been born again of incorruptible seed, die again? (1 Pet. 1:23). Can a new creation return to what has passed away? (2 Cor. 5:17). Can one who has been perfected forever be made imperfect? (Heb. 10:14). Can those whom God delivered from the power of darkness be sent back? (Col. 1:13). Can those who have been made complete in Christ become incomplete? (Col. 2:10). Can those who were saved without merit or human effort be lost because of demerits or human failure? (Eph. 2:8-9). Does any man have the ability to undo a sovereign act of Almighty God? (Rom. 8:28-39).

Opponents of Assurance will say...that people can give back the gifts or throw them away. But there is no scriptural support for this. When God credits the righteousness of His Son to the believer's account, does man have access to His books to change His accounting?

Consider God's Chastening of His Sons

The Lord knows those who are His and everyone who names the name of Christ must depart from iniquity (2 Tim. 5:19). But what does God do with His children who persist in sinning? He chastens them, as a loving Father, so they will not be condemned along with the world (1 Cor. 1:31; 2:2). God's chastening has a purifying effect. His discipline will continue until there is repentance or until He calls them home. Those who never experience God's chastening when they fall into habitual sin or fall away were probably not真正 saved (Heb. 12:6; 9).

The Roman Catholic Catechism (CCC) teaches that Catholics lose their salvation when mortal sins are committed (CCC, para. 1035). Catholics must do works of penance and merit enough grace to regain their salvation (CCC, para. 1456, 2027). Needless to say, Catholics can never be sure about their eternal destiny because, whenever the man is involved in attaining and/or preserving his salvation, there can be never be assurance. However, when man forsakes all efforts to save himself and believes the soteriology of the truth of the Gospel, he will be more certain of living eternally in heaven than one more day on earth. Paul wrote,“For this reason it is by faith, that it might be in accordance with grace, in order that the promise may be certain to all” (Rom. 4:16).

John wrote his first epistle to those "who believe on the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know [Gk. oida] you have eternal life” (1 John 5:13). The Greek word ‘oida’ refers to a positive, absolute knowledge. True believers can rejoice in their salvation with absolute certainty and peace.

Consider the Father and Spirit’s Power

The Father has caused His children to be born again to a living hope. They are now protected by His power and will obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and reserved for them in heaven (1 Pet. 1:3, 5). This inheritance has been securely guaranteed by the sealing of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:11-14). The Father, who calls believers into fellowship with His Son, is faithful and will confirm them until the end (1 Cor. 1:8). God promises to glorify those He justifies (Rom. 8:30). God’s children have this assurance, “He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus” (Phil. 1:6). On that spectacular day, all believers will be revealed with Him in glory (Col. 3:4). Everyone who has trusted Christ can have the same confidence as Paul who wrote: "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim. 1:12).

Consider the Nature of God’s Gifts

A belief in eternal security is based upon obedience to the law. God’s gifts and calling are irrevocable (Rom. 11:29). The precious gifts God graciously gives to repentant sinners include eternal life (Rom. 6:23), the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:32), and salvation (Rom. 5:17). Those who have received these divine gifts will never again be separated from God and never come into judgment for their sins. Opponents of assurance will say that people can give back the gifts or throw them away. But there is no scriptural support for this. When God credits the righteousness of His Son to the believer’s account, does man have access to His books to change His accounting?

If you have any questions, please refer to Galatians 3:28, 29. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendants, heirs according to promise.

This avowal that the new covenant makes no distinction between Jew and Greek, slave nor free, male nor female is a statement of grand proportions to anyone versed in the old covenant law. It cuts through the very heart of old covenant law. There are many laws in the old covenant that separated the Jew from the Gentile, 1 slave from free, 2 male and female. 3 These verses completely invalidate the old covenant laws that deal with clean and unclean foods, circumcision, Sabbath, new moons, fixed festivals and all the laws that separated the Jew from the Gentile.

Paul shows that this new covenant Christian is linked directly to the promise of Righteousness by faith that was given to Abraham, completely bypassing all Sinaitic law.

5. Paul is relentless in driving home this point about the reign of law. In Galatians 4:3-5, Paul states that the Jews were slaves held in the bondage under the law until Christ came to redeem those who were under the Law.

So also we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world. But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law. He did not come to nullify the Law, but to fulfill the Law (Gal. 4:4). Paul says he wanted to find out from you if you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith (Gal. 3:2).

Then he says, For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the Law” (Gal. 3:10). He who practices them shall live by them (Gal. 3:12, 10). Paul makes it very clear that the reign of law was from Moses to Christ. He says that a number of times in different ways. 1. The Law came 430 years after Abraham (Gal. 3:17). 2. He says the law was “added” until the seed (Christ) would come (Gal. 3:19). When one adds something, it means that it was not there before. The word “until” means that what was added was then taken away. 3. The law was a tutor to lead to Christ (Gal. 3:24, 25). But now that faith has come we are no longer under a tutor or under the law (Gal. 3:25).
You observe days and months and seasons and years: I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain. Gal 4:9-11

There are some who will go to any length to get out from under the clear teaching of this verse. They will try to bring in some new idea to Paul’s discussion of the old covenant law and say that the activities outlined here deal with some ancient pagan festivals. However, it is clear that Paul uses “elemental things” for old covenant law in several places and it is definitely in view here. Therefore, we must conclude that the above text has reference to the law of the appointed times of Sabbath days, new moons, the seven seasonal feasts and sabbatical years. In Colossians 2:16, 17 Paul clearly stated that these things (as a group) were a mere shadow but the substance is Christ. Galatians 5:18 states very clearly, “But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.”

Summary of the Galatian problem

The false teachers were saying that to be saved one had to have faith in Christ and keep the law, including the food laws, the rituals of circumcision, Sabbath, new moons, fixed festivals and sabbatical years. Paul said that this teaching was a false gospel which drew people from him the strongest condemnation. 

Your teaching was a false gospel which drew people from you. Christ. Gal. 4:10, Col. 2:16, 17. The Adventist problem is that perhaps I have labored over you in vain. Gal. 4:9–11

There are two formulas for salvation that have been promoted:

1. Faith + the works of the law = Salvation
   Our obedience is a necessary component for salvation, or
   2. Faith = Salvation + the fruits of the Spirit.
   Our obedience is not a necessary component of salvation but only an imperfect evidences of it.

Here is a most important statement. The acts of obedience that spring from salvation are not works of law and do not include any rituals from old covenant law such as clean and unclean, circumcision, Sabbath, new moon celebrations, seasonal feasts or sabbatical years. Mk. 7:14–23; Rom. 14:5, 14; Heb. 10:1, Gal. 4:10, Gal. 2:16, 17.

The Galatians wanted to be under old covenant law. They were promoting old covenant rituals. Paul said that this was a false gospel and condemned this teaching in the strongest possible terms!

The Adventist Problem

Adventists, too, want to be under law and vigorously promote the law. They too, enforce the old covenant ritual of Sabbath and the laws of clean and unclean foods. The Adventist problem is much like the Galatian problem. Adventists teach that one is saved by faith alone but in order to stay saved one must keep the law, especially the Sabbath.

They teach that the Sabbath is the seal of God and that those who worship on Sunday will receive the Mark of the beast thus making the Sabbath a salvation issue.

In their official fundamentals of beliefs #17 we read “One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This is a sign indicating the marking of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord’s messenger, her writings are a continuous and authoritative source of truth…” Here are some of her authoritative statements of truth:

The name Seventh-day Adventist is a standing rebuke to the Protestant world. Here is the line of distinction between the worshippers of God and those who worship the beast and receive his mark… EGW, Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 4, p. 54. Then I was shown a company who were howling in agony. On their garments was written in large characters, “Thou art weighted in the balance, and found wanting.” I asked who this company were. The angel said, “Those are they who have once kept the Sabbath and have given it up… EGW Early Writings, p. 37.

I found it instructive at the recent X Convention to learn that many modern-day false teachings had their origin from a communication from an angel. Paul, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, must have foreseen this when he wrote:

But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! (Gal. 1:8)

Ellen White continues:

I saw that the Holy Sabbath is, and will be, the separating wall between the true Israel of God and unbelievers. EGW, Early Writings, p. 3.

These statements make it clear beyond a shadow of doubt that in Adventism the Sabbath is a salvation issue. However, the Sabbath is not a moral law; it is a ritual law. There is no clear distinction in the law (books of Moses) between ritual and moral. They are often, if not usually, all mixed up together. The Sabbath is mentioned two times with moral laws in Exodus 20 and in Deut 5 because it is the sign of the Sinaitic covenant between God and Israel (Ex. 31:16, 17) and ancient Near East treaty documents always had the sign of the covenant in the center of the covenant document. It is mentioned a dozen times with the ritual laws of the old covenant such as new moons, fixed festivals, etc.

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Why do so many reject assurance of eternal life?

Several years ago a pastor in Pennsylvania, concerned for the salvation of the many Roman Catholics in his community, invited me to come up and teach a seminar. First he asked me to send some of our publications so he could become more familiar with our ministry. After reviewing our Gospel tracts, he called me to cancel the seminar because he discovered that I teach the assurance of salvation. I explained to him that assurance is what makes God’s plan of salvation “good news.” God promises to save forever those who come to Him through Jesus (Heb. 7:25). I asked him, “What good news do you have to share with Catholics if you preach eternal life is not ever-lasting but can be lost.” Catholics already adhere to a salvation that is dependent upon what they do. I told the pastor about the Sabbath and the Mark of the Beast prophecy. After many exchanges, this pastor was unwilling to believe God’s promise that everyone who has been saved by grace through faith shall be brought to glory.

Those who reject the doctrine of eternal security tend to place more emphasis on the subjective experiences of “professing” Christians than the objective truth of Scripture. They may know someone who was baptized, repeated a prayer or responded to an altar call, then later rejected the faith or turned to a life of habitual sin. These experiences become their proof that salvation has no assurance. But is there any way to know if these people were born again? Judging someone’s spiritual condition is risky because no one can see a person’s heart. Opponents of assurance tend to focus on man’s opinions rather than on God’s divine power. Such misunderstandings can be overcome bydiscounting human reason and accepting divine revelation. Faith should not rest on the wisdom of man but on the power of God (1 Cor. 2:5).

Consider the Word “Eternal”

The “eternal” Gospel (Rev. 14:6) of our “eternal” God (Rom. 16:26) promises every believer “eternal life” (1 John 5:13) and “eternal glory” (1 Pet. 5:10) in His “eternal” kingdom (2 Pet. 1:11). The “eternal” King (1 Tim. 1:16) called salvation “eternal” (Mark 16:20) because He has given believers “eternal” comfort (2 Thes. 2:16) by obtaining “eternal” redemption through the “eternal” Spirit who guarantees an “eternal” inheritance (Heb. 9:15; Jude 1:3). According to God’s “eternal” purpose (Eph. 3:11), everyone has been saved from “eternal” judgment (Heb. 6:2), “eternal” destruction (2 Thes. 1:9) and “eternal” punishment in the “eternal” fire (Mat. 25:41, 46).

Eternal life is not only an infinite quantity of time (people in hell will live forever) but an eternal quality of life. It is an intimate relationship with Jesus whereby His life and divine nature is placed in every believer and every believer is in Him (2 Pet. 1:4). John 5:20: “The life begins at the second birth when those who were dead in their sins are made alive in Christ (Eph. 2:4). Eternal life is everlasting because the very life of Christ (who cannot die again) has been imparted to believers (Rom. 6:9). But this leads to a provocative question. Knowing that sin is what brings spiritual death to the soul, what keeps Christians from dying again when they sin after salvation? It is because God will not take into account any sins committed after the believer has been reconciled to Christ (Rom. 4:8; 2 Cor. 5:21). God all the same past and future, on. Jesus (Isaiah 53:6). Our kinship redeemer “bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness” (1 Pet. 2:24). “With His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption” (Heb. 9:12). Everyone redeemed has bought with the precious blood of Jesus and now belongs to Him. Eternal redemption and eternal security are thus one and the same.

Those who reject eternal security must explain why they do not also reject everything else described as eternal, such as the eternal triune God and His punishment for unbelievers. They must also be able to answer, with Scripture, some other relevant questions. Can those who have been redeemed from under the curse of the law?
Psychological Danger Zone
As one client told me, "My faith has been shaken to the core." When one's assumptions and beliefs fail and fall, it creates a psychological danger zone. Dangers can include the following:

- the danger of going back to the old belief structure, not because it is any longer valid, but for a security and safety that actually ends up being false
- the danger of believing that everything spiritual or religious has to be thrown away—"throwing the baby out with the bathwater"
- the danger of going to extremes of living such as substance abuse or other addictive behaviors to numb out the pain or to self-medicate
- the danger of the denial of any new concepts and an attempt to shut out any thinking that brings inner conflict
- the danger of accommodating and reworking any new truths to the extent that it compromises integrity
- the danger of treating those who do not grasp the new-found theological perspectives in a non-Christ-like manner
- the danger of getting so hung up on theological hair splitting that a relationship with Christ and the central teachings such of grace, gospel freedom and love are neglected

Many who go on to become more balanced may move toward some of these dangers for a temporary time. However, these are very real dangers and they can lead to destruction, especially if continued for too long. At times they result in great compromise of the psyche and soul as persons shut down important parts of themselves and exist as mechanical robots so that the pain can be suppressed. It is important, of course, not to sit in judgment as to the basic manner or how fast a person should be progressing in their struggle with change. This can be a highly individual matter and may depend to some extent on the amount of indoctrination one had as a child into the religious structure one is attempting to leave.

Loss and Grief
The loss that is associated with leaving a religious system or culture can be another aspect of the trauma. The tighter knit the subculture of the religious system and the greater the isolation from the wider society the greater the loss to the individual. Important Considerations

The above has briefly and generally outlined how religious systems, which are destructive, can precipitate psychological trauma when a person attempts to move toward another religious orientation. The following are a few considerations for maintaining psychological health in the midst of such a traumatic experience:

- Stay focused on the gospel and a relationship with Christ. In Him we find our “specialness” and our purpose for endurance.
- Move at your own speed; let no one else dictate when you need to change a belief or leave a church. You are the one who has to live with your decision.
- Seek the counsel of trusted persons and possibly a pastoral counselor. Many pastoral counselors can understand many of your struggles to some degree or another. Such struggles happen in many religious systems.
- Immediately to broaden your social network if you are isolated. It will take time and may not have the same comfort level as the closeness you experienced with those you have known for years and who held a common belief system with you.
- Exercise and keep balance in your life. You cannot and should not study the issues all the time. You will need some diversion and healthy distractions.
- Be careful to go to an extreme. Your anchor has been pulled up, and you will be adrift for a while. Moderation is a key to health.
- Keep your passion but grieve over the loss of some of your identity. The pain of loss can be magnified.
- Reorient the focus of new ventures of faith and how your life can be an example of the continual renewal and reformation that Christ calls us to in discipleship. Christ does not call us to the status quo.
- Be wise and careful with whom you share your newfound views. There is no merit in causing any more agitation and conflict than is necessary.
- Reorient the wider God is bigger and better than any religious system, and your salvation depends upon a relation-ship with Him, not with any organizational structure.

There is a myth in some destructive religious systems that leaves the organization will not survive spiritually or psychologically. This myth makes it more difficult for some to leave oppressive religious systems. However, this myth is truly a myth. There are multitudes who are enjoying the freedom of new found ways of serving and worshipping Christ in a spirit of freedom and who have overcome the psychological trauma of a toxic religious system.

As long as Adventism teaches that the Sabbath is a salvation issue there will be a great similarity between those who were preaching “another gospel” in Galatia and Adventism. At best Adventists teach that the “works” that result from salvation are “works of the law” with an emphasis on keeping the Sabbath, an old covenant ritual, as a evidence of salvation. At worst, Adventists teach that salvation is faith in Christ + works of the law through which the law and the works of the Sabbath. As long as Adventism teaches that the Sabbath is a salvation issue there will be a great similarity between those who were preaching “another gospel” in Galatia and Adventism. For Paul any compromise of the simple gospel of faith in Christ met the strongest condemnation. Can we do less?

Let us pray for Adventist leaders. There are many Adventists who do not believe historic Adventist doctrine. Many in Adventism want to change but they are trying to do it without admitting past error. To admit error on these points undermines the whole structure of Adventism because Adventism stands on three legs: The authority of Ellen White, the Seventh-day Sabbath and their 1844 sanctuary theology. If they take out any one of these three, and are consistent in their reasoning and teaching, the others will fall away because they are not biblical doctrines. This is why most former Adventist pastors leave Adventism because they cannot control these three legs is broken (contrary to Bible teaching and in error) and soon see the whole structure of Adventism fall.

I have known many Adventist pastors who do not believe that Ellen White is a source of authority, they do not believe that the Sabbath is the right day, that Adventism stands on three legs, that Sunday worship will become the mark of the best, they do not believe that the Adventist church is the remnant church of Bible prophecy. They do not believe in Adventists’ 1844 sanctuary theology. Not only have I spoken with pastors, but also many members and Adventist scholars and administrators who in a similar manner.

Many hundreds of Adventist leaders know that historic Adventism teaches a number of ungrounded, false doctrines. Pray that there will be a reformation within Adventism to biblical truth that the writings of Ellen White are “a contin-uing and authoritative source of truth.” We will find it impossible to follow all of her restrictive Sabbath-keeping rules which are legion. Remember Scripture is clear: if you are under law, you must keep all the law. “Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law to perform them” (Gal. 3:10).

Read Galatians through in one sitting and do it every day for 30 days. It will bring clarity to your thinking and peace to your life. Also read Romans and Ephesians. These books are like cool water—the living water—on a hot summer day. They lead you into the shade of the mighty Rock in a weary land where you will find true rest for your soul. “We who have believed enter that rest” (Heb. 4:3).

I appeal to you to humbly recognize that you cannot be good enough and you cannot keep the Sabbath perfectly for it is to hold any place in your assurance of salvation. Rather, simply reach out the hand of faith and grasp the free gift of forgiveness given by our good God. Let God pro- nounce you righteous based solely on the righteousness of Christ. Let the Holy Spirit regenerate you life on the inside so that the fruits of the Spirit will flow natur-ally from the center of your being. Accept the simple gospel of faith in Christ plus nothing.

He who believes has eternal life (Jn. 6:40).

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes (Rom. 10:4).

If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved (Rom. 10:9).

Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved (Rom. 10:13).

Then He believed in the Lord and He reckoned it to him as righteousness (Gen. 15:6).

Yes, the gospel is good news; it is good advice. It is simple. It is the story of what God has done for us in Christ Jesus and it is worth defending with every fiber of our being.

Endnotes
1 Ex. 12:43; Lev. 22:5; Deut. 14:21; Deut. 15:3; Deut. 17:15; Deut. 23:20; Deut. 29:22; etc.
2 Ex. 12:44; 21:23,26,27; 26:7,32; 23:12; Lev. 19:20, 21; Deut. 51:15, 18; 16:12, 15.
3 Lev. 6:29; 7:6; 12:5,7; 7:6; 7:23-7
4 Gal. 3:29; Eph. 4:15-16.
5 Compare Gal. 4:3,10; Heb. 5:12.
7 Sabbath in Christ, p. 103; 101-106, 131-335 for more documentation on this point.
I found fellowship in what you wrote
First let me thank you for your two books! They are so timely right now! Here I am supposed to be working hard on my sermon for this week, and I can’t put your books down! Made it through more than 200 pages of the book on the Sabbath, and then wanted to taste the other book, and read over a hundred pages today in between what I had to do! Found fellowship in what you wrote because we have shared experiences within Adventism and ministry. I found myself saying “Amen!” so many times it wasn’t funny! Your book on the Sabbath is so Christ centered and such a revelation of Jesus Christ that every Christian should read it to understand the depth of our Lord’s love and ministry to the religious of His day! God certainly has blessed you in your scholarship! It is so well put! I mean it is mind-blowing and absolutely incredible! How could anyone not see how whackadoodle Miller’s scholarship was and still stick a straight face when they read EGW’s endorsement? Also the ever changing meaning of the three angels is also pretty incredible, as was the shut door judgment of other Christians. I wonder if anyone has ever done a side by side comparison of EGW’s ministry as opposed to D.L. Moody? I don’t think she supported him in the least, and yet one of the biographies of his life was a life changing book for me. Well still keep me in your prayers! I am not out of the woods yet, but I can see the forest a lot better than I used to. So thankful I have such an understanding and open hearted spouse who also is not afraid to look at what is the TRUTH.

I am reading my way out of SDA
Dale, I just want to thank you for the copy of Cultric Doctrine—the book is good and interesting. There are so many things which could not break the code of Adventism in me, but the book is not resistible. As I told you in my past commu-
nication, I am reading my way out of SDA. I doubt I would be so far gone in his books had I not come to the “religious experience” of years past, I can’t stand the thought of years past, I can’t stand the thought of me being overwhelmed which are also common experiences of those going through trauma. Depression, anxiety, rigidity, or impulsive behaviors may become evident. Anger, despair, shame, guilt, distrust, rage, fear, and irritation may be experienced. Nothing seems normal or can be normal. Spiritual questioning may become an obsession. The upheaval can be horrific.

What religion brings psychological trauma to the soul

J. Lebron McBride, PhD

Healthy religion has great potential for good, but corrupted religion can bring great unrest to the soul. In fact, there are many spiritual causalities and traumatic injuries of the psyche that occur on the Sabbath. This article will look at some of the ways bad religion results in psychological trauma even for those who flee from its consuming grip.

In the last few decades we have come to appreciate the impact of traumatic experiences upon persons who experiences them. We even have a psychological disorder that is recognized as resulting from horrific trauma: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. While I cer-
tainly do not wish to minimize in any way either the experiences that many have with various forms of abuse, violence, and war; I have found that there are some less intense parallels found in those who experience the trauma of destructive religion. I have also dis-
covered that a purely theological approach to the church and book, while vital, is not as helpful as a holistic approach that includes the psychological and relational aspects as well.

The Awakening Persons reach the exit of a religious system by various pathways. Often there is a gradual awakening or real-
ization that, without some awkward maneuvering or sidestep-
ning, the pieces of the theological structure simply no longer fit for them. For those who have been “true believers” this awaken-
ing can become a disorganizing confusion and an uncomfortable psychological state because things no longer fit in a neat pack-
age. Such a psychological state has been called cognitive disso-
nance because of the internal conflicts it presents.

Ambivalence and Confusion

Most will experience a back and forth struggle or ambivalence in struggling with what they have always been taught and what they are beginning to understand. An example of this is the per-
son who wrote the following: I must admit that there are times when I’m not sure what is going on in my head. All I know is that when I think of going back to the “religious experience” of years past, I can’t stand the thought, I’ve found a freedom and joy that I’ve never known before! I feel a lot better than I used to. So thank you for the better I feel about it. Yet, I can’t be raised…under the “old school” and not fear, from time to time, that you’re a heretic and a “sign of the end.”

This ambivalence and confusion can become extremely intense as the personalizes that many of our assumptions and beliefs they have been taught and have believed for years are not correct. There can be feelings of helplessness, disorientation and being overwhelmed which are also common experiences of those going through trauma. Depression, anxiety, rigidity, or impulsive behaviors may become evident. Anger, despair, shame, guilt, distrust, rage, fear, and irritation may be experienced. Nothing seems normal or can be normal. Spiritual questioning may become an obsession. The upheaval can be horrific.
The Freedom, Power and Meaning to Life

Thank you very much. I am looking forward to reading your book… I rejoice daily in all the blessings the Lord has given me. The freedom, peace, joy and meaning to life that comes from marking our lives in Christ cannot be described in words. Your books helped me find this new life! Praise God for his love and grace. May God continue to bless you.

Interesting and informative articles

I had written last year to be put on the mailing list to receive Proclamation! My mother, a Twenty-five-year SDA member, thinks Ellen White has taken the place of Jesus. I needed some good information to be able to challenge and prove the false teachings of the SDAs. You provided me with several issues of Proclamation! I have found not only very good articles to challenge the SDAs beliefs, but interesting and informative articles for the average Christian to read to enhance his studies. I have been incarcerated now for over a year waiting for trial for a crime I did not commit. God will deliver me soon. I have not been able to contribute to your much needed cause but as God leads I want to raise $5,000 to purchase a good used car for them. To date we have about 51,170 raised for this project. Please pray that God will provide the needed funds. The pastors there have started many new study groups as new doors open up for the gospel.

Thanks for your support of the Gospel!

With our faith commitment to the pastors in Uganda our monthly expenses have sharply increased. We have had calls from pastors in Kenya who are ready to start new work there yet we cannot make commitments to help them at this time. Continue to pray for the ministry of LAM that we will follow the leading of our Great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I will be 85 tomorrow

I have been much happier since I have gotten out of Adventism… I will be 85 tomorrow and still active, but can’t get over the fact that I just wouldn’t read anything unless E. G. W. wrote it. I believed in it all so deeply that when my dear friend happened to run across what Grant Shuffit (Carrington’s book on EGW) had put in the computer and everything has changed. Now I received Proclamation which I enjoy keep up the good work.

I was a former member of Worldwide COG

Hello Dale, I just finished reading your new book Sabbath In Christ. What an absolutely wonderful book! Perhaps you will remember me, you called me to make sure the book got shipped to me, and I mentioned to you I was a former member of Worldwide COG, you also told me at that time that you had just spoken to Joseph Tschac (and perhaps Michael Fessel). Anyway, I had found the New Covenant and Jesus through a different source a few years ago. But your book is absolute dynamite… However I still have a few lingering issues, one of which I will tell you of now (there are a few others too) and it is passed over in your book on page 218 in the middle of the page, starting with the words: “On that Friday afternoon when our Covenant Keeper was dying on the cross…” And this is where I get totally lost. The Bible says: “as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale so would Jesus be three days in the tomb” and in the NT it also says he was in the grave for three days and nights. So counting from Friday afternoon (probably late) how does one get to early Sunday morning when he was discovered missing? That time period only looks like perhaps 1 1/2 days. So what is wrong here? Please reply.

Editor’s Note: The term, three days and three nights, as I understand it, was often used for three days in Bible times. Any part of the day was considered a whole day. For example, John 20:26 says “as night the Sabbath day” which was 24 hours. It is often mean on the 9th day. However, you will note that most Bible scholars say “a week later” It means as I understand it, on the same day a week later. This is my understanding. However—and here is the important part—whether Jesus died on Friday or Wednesday, the fact that he died for our sins is the important thing!

It has surely changed my life and focus

Dale, thank you for your update and I will pray at all times for the ministry, problems, responsibilities and decisions that must be made on a constant basis. I will pray that God will speak His words through you at all times and again thanks for your book Sabbath in Christ—it has surely changed my life and focus. I am sharing it with others and I do intend to order the book Circumcision, Sabbath & Tithe: God’s blessing and I will pray for all those who are having medical problems. God hears and answers prayers.

It is a great place to work

First of all I want to thank you for your ministry. I enjoy your Proclamation magazine and I read it from cover to cover. As you might remember, I work at __ Adventist Hospital. It is a great place to work as they treat their employees better than anywhere else I have worked. The hardest thing for me is seeing all their literature around the patients waiting areas and seeing the many ads for false teachers. .

Give him ideas for sermons

Dear Dale, I thoroughly enjoy your Proclamation magazine. I am a member of the Mason City Worldwide Church of God. You certainly know what we have recently gone through. Your book Sabbath In Crisis has been a great help to me. I would like to receive your new book Sabbath In Christ. I have been a member of the Worldwide Church of God since 1968. A Deacon since 1979. I have given many sermons before the congregation. I was giving New Covenant sermons while my minister still followed with Mr. Armstrong’s teaching. My minister didn’t say anything to me about it. It was the truth from headquarters He finally left the church. Our new young minister tells the congregation that he gives ideas for sermons. Some of those ideas are triggered by articles in your book and the Proclamation… May God continue to bless you in your work.

I treasure all the information you have sent

Hello Dale, I just want to say, “Keep up the work you are doing.” I treasure all the information you have sent. The book Sabbath in Crisis really helped a great lot. I am an elder of the Worldwide Church of God. You probably know of the changes we have made. It wasn’t hard to see with the Holy Spirit’s guidance that Saturday was no longer a necessary thing. We know our rest is in Christ. Most of our people hold to the change a few don’t. We pray for SDAs and our members who do not understand yet. I would like to receive the book Sabbath in Christ.

Please use this small donation where needed

Hi Dale, I have read Proclamation! and now am reading Sabbath in Christ and thank God for this book. I encourage others to purchase the book. Please use the small donation where needed in the ministry.

Mail letters and donations to:
Life Assurance Ministries
PO Box 11587
Glendale, AZ 85318
Life Assurance Ministries, Inc.

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MOTTO:

Do Adventists preach another gospel?

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Do Adventists preach another gospel?

There are two extremes that the Church must continue to face: either of which could prove fatal. Like driving down a road while punching in phone numbers on a cell phone it is easy to lose one’s concentration and veer off the center of the road. I almost hit the curb the other day doing that very thing.

The first extreme is for churches to start criticizing one another. There is no perfect church...

Life Assurance Ministries (LAM), Inc.

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

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

Walter Rea on Ellen White

Perhaps no other person, unless it would be Dr. Fred Veitman, has done more research on the writings of Ellen G. White than Walter Rea. In the 1980s, Walter Rea, a Seventh-day Adventist pastor and ardent supporter of Ellen White discovered that a large portion of her writings were plagiarized. Here is the report of his latest research. A cassette tape of his presentation on this subject may be obtained from the San Diego Adventist Forum by calling (619)561-2360.

The letter from Walter Rea dated May, 2003

Dear Friends: For over one hundred and fifty years many people of good character and some with high position in the S.D.A. Church questioned what was being promoted by the church concerning Ellen White and her claims of divine revelation.

Most, if not all, of the criticism was either dismissed as unfounded or the evidence of such criticism was covered from view. As late as a Bible Conference in 1919, many leaders including Bible teachers, ministers and conference officials were voicing their concerns over the way her written materials were being misrepresented.

The mythology promoted was that by her own admission Ellen White did not read other’s written materials, was not influenced in any way by human beings when she wrote, and God Himself was the only author of her material!

It was during the mid 1970’s that some of the secrecy and mythology that surrounded Ellen’s writings were exploded. For the first time in over a hundred years or more some of the mechanics in her writings were revealed. Also, some of the names of those who helped in manufacturing her books became known.

The amount of human help emerged in the January meeting of 1980 where the committee reviewing past evidence of human involvement announced that such evidence was shocking. It was also declared that Glendale meeting that ‘if every paragraph in the book The Great Controversy was footnoted in reference to its original source, every paragraph would be footnoted.” Thus it would be acknowledged that the book was of human ideas and not divine inspiration. During the last several years, seeking to verify or disprove that statement, I have spent hundreds of dollars and thousands of hours accumulating and studying many of the books that have now been admitted by the White Estate as having been used in the compilation and revisions of the book, The Great Controversy.

This material is now available to all in its three forms:

(a) A copy of the early 1887 edition where no credit of any kind was ever given to any human source. The footnotes—added in later editions—are included as well as some of the 1,100 Bible texts used.

(b) Having obtained many of the now admitted sources, we have photocopied the original materials from such authors as D’Aubigny, Wiley, Bliss, Welcomate and others, some often paraphrased.

(c) Set three seeks to show the evolution of admission to plagiarism from the early editions to the most recent.

Many of these studies have been made available to the church and its educational institutions, wherefore it is now offered to the public through the internet and other means. As always the church refuses to dialogue and often turns from the issues to the one presenting them. It is very clear from the facts presented after one hundred and fifty years that whatever inspiration Mrs. White had, it did not come from God but from the sources she read and copied, though she denied copying to the end of her life.

Sincerely, Walter T. Rea

The evidence of Ellen White’s denials

1. “I did not read any works upon health until I had written Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 3 & 4, Appeal to Mothers, and had sketched out most of my six articles in the six numbers of How to Live.” Review & Herald, Oct. 8, 1867.

2. “My views were written independent of books or of the opinions of others.” Manuscript 7, 1867.

3. “And here I would state that although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation.” Review & Herald, Oct. 8, 1867.

4. “You might say that this communication was only a letter. Yes, it was a letter, but prompted by the Spirit of God to bring before your minds things that had been shown me. 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 in me.”