God is truly doing a new thing in Africa! In March, Pastor Greg Taylor, Director of One Flock Ministries, visited some former Adventist pastors in Kenya and Uganda. There, Pastor Philemon Omwega has been instrumental in starting two New Covenant churches in Kenya. One of those churches meets in the courtyard of his home in Nakuru. The other is just starting in Nymache village near Kisii. Pastor Taylor had the privilege of visiting these start-up churches and encouraging the new believers. Their excitement over the truth of the New Covenant is hard to describe. This is the first time many of them have understood that they can have assurance of their salvation. In the Nymache village, the Chief saw how the message of the New Covenant breaks down barriers between believers and brings communities together in Christ. He was so moved by the message of the New Covenant that he donated land on which the interdenominational church can be built. Leaders from various denominations including former Seventh-day Adventists are excited about the new venture.

After spending two weeks in Kenya, Pastor Taylor and Pastor Philemon traveled with Pastor Moses Luswata to Uganda and worked with him in his church near Kajansi, Uganda. God has truly blessed his efforts there. Pastor Luswata has been teaching the New Covenant since 2003. In time, he planted a church (July, 2005), and Pastor Taylor had the opportunity to be there for the first service with the original four members. Now the church has grown to over 40 regular members and has a much larger attendance. On Sunday, March 19, over 230 people were present for the day of celebration. Their church baptized 11 people that day in Lake Victoria. The ministry has made significant inroads into the community, reaching out to high school students and to a handicapped school. The joy of the Lord is their strength.

Along with the preaching of the Gospel, the pastors in Kenya and Uganda are working with Alex Musoke, a local Christian businessman formerly with World Vision, in teaching their people how to use their land to start small businesses (e.g. raising chickens/produce) for the support of their families and for ministry to others. This wholistic approach to ministry is a balanced way to help people move out of poverty while learning the good news of the gospel.

During the visit in Kenya and Uganda, many interested pastors and leaders came to study and ask questions as they search out for themselves the implications of the Gospel for believers today. God is truly opening hearts and minds all over the world. There is a pressing need for children’s ministry materials, Bibles in the local languages, books on the New Covenant, and help with construction/equipment items. Plans are also being laid to take ministry teams to Africa for the purpose of strengthening the local churches and enabling them to plant more.

Following are the faith stories of Pastors Moses Luswata in Uganda and Philemon Omwega in Kenya.
I’ve come to understand that I was taught, subtly but powerfully, that human reason had to have the “last word” on whether or not the Bible was truly God’s Word to mankind.

We had been attending Trinity Church for close to two years. Nourished by the Bible teaching we received every week in church as well as in the Bible study classes we attended, I was astonished to find Scripture opening like a treasure chest before my eyes. The more I delved, the more consistent I found it. I began to realize that God Himself was the central value of the universe, not me and my happiness.

I believed I had jetisoned my indoctrination that Ellen White had been inspired exactly as the Bible writers had been. I saw that the Bible proved itself consistent, and I knew I couldn’t say the same for Ellen White. Even though I found the Bible to be increasingly trustworthy, however, I kept bumping into confusing presuppositions.

One evening I was talking to Dale Ratzlaff on the telephone. Someone had posed a question to me that stumped me, and I asked Dale for his understanding.

“We criticize Ellen White for quoting Bible texts out-of-context to prove her points,” I repeated to Dale. “Yet we accept the New Testament writers quoting Old Testament verses, claiming they were fulfilled by events in Jesus’ life and in the Redemptive church. Those Old Testament texts seem taken out-of-context, and no Jew would have seen their fulfillment the way the New Testament explains them. How is our criticism of Ellen White different from other people’s criticisms of the gospel writers’?”

Dale’s answer was concise and unequivocal: “God inspired the New Testament writers to show how the Old Testament texts were fulfilled.”

I accepted his answer. Gradually I realized that although I had memorized 2 Timothy 3:16 as a child—“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness” (NIV)—I had never believed that text to be proof of the Bible’s reliability. I reasoned that one couldn’t prove a book’s claims by its own words; such “blind” acceptance of its own claims as one couldn’t prove a book’s claims by its own words would be “unscientific”, circular, and gullible.

I’ve come to understand that I was taught, subtly but powerfully, that human reason had to have the “last word” on whether or not the Bible was truly God’s Word to mankind. While Adventists considered it to be “infallible,” that idea merely meant it wouldn’t misrepresent the essentials of salvation. We were free to question the exact words and concepts the Bible used. We believed God inspired prophets with ideas, but He allowed them to interpret those ideas and to use their own words to explain whatever it was they had understood. Hence, inconsistencies and culturally biased notions had crept into the Bible as a result of God “honoring” the prophets’ freedom to interpret His impressions to them. We, in our time, were free to re-interpret those biblical principles to fit our culture.

This approach to Biblical exegesis was identical to the way Adventists interpreted Ellen White. Learning to trust that our sovereign God had inspired not just the prophet’s thoughts but had overseen the words of Scripture has made the Bible more rich and internally consistent than I had ever imagined it to be.

During her class in Bible Study at the Former Adventist Weekend in February, Elizabeth Irving explained the Bible’s inspiration this way: just as Jesus is a hypostatic union of Divine and human, so the Bible is a union of the Divine and the human. Exactly how it “works” is a mystery, but it cannot be dissected.

In this issue Verle Streifling examines the arguments against inerrancy as presented in two books published by Seventh-day Adventist authors. Russell Kelly discusses the Adventist church’s view of Ellen White’s authority and inspiration, and Dale Ratzlaff explains why Paul cannot be dismissed as “difficult pretensions to them. We, in our time, were free to re-interpret whatever it was they had understood. Hence, inconsistencies and culturally biased notions had crept into the Bible as a result of God “honor- ing” the prophets’ freedom to interpret His impres- sions to them. We, in our time, were free to re-inter- pret those Biblical principles to fit our culture.

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The Lord has allowed me to experience the greater freedom that is possible when one is in a family that is united in the truth. The One Flock Ministry Family. Glory to His Holy Name forever!

A special burden for my family and friends in the Adventist church. Kenya has close to 1 million of the world’s over 14 million Adventists. Many of them have little or no assurance of their salvation. I sense the call to reach out to these dear people with the joy of the New Covenant. Please pray for me as I lead out in this effort in Kenya.

For more information about these fledgling churches and their needs, contact Greg Taylor at gregt@oneflockministries.org.
Faith story of Luswata Drake Moses

I am Luswata Drake Moses (shown with his wife Jane), Coordinator for One Food Ministries in Africa. I work with other pastors and leaders in Uganda as well as serving as a resource person for leaders in several other African countries.

I am the pastor of Grace Place Community Church, a non-denominational church near Kajansi, Uganda. It is founded on the NEW COVENANT GOSPEL. Elder Elly Mubiru lent the church a piece of land to use for the church and put up a temporary denominational church near Kajansi, Uganda. It is founded on the NEW COVENANT GOSPEL. Elder Elly Mubiru lent the church a piece of land to use for the church and put up a temporary denominational church near Kajansi, Uganda. It is founded on the NEW COVENANT GOSPEL. Elder Elly Mubiru lent the church a piece of land to use for the church and put up a temporary

I am forty years old with a Bachelor of Theology degree. My wife Jane and I have five children; Idah, Esther, Joshua, Margaret, and Juliana. I share with you my testimony. I was baptized in the Adventist church at the age of 15, and since then I served in many places of responsibility such as Sabbath school superintendent, church deacon, church Elder and as a pastor. After discovering that the church which I trusted and served for the last 23 years was built on Old Covenant teachings influenced by E.G. White, I decided to leave it. Things were not simple, but I thank God He found a way out for me.

Since 2003 when I left the Adventist church, we have faced many problems, but I thank God these troubles have helped me to grow in the Lord. The transition period has been a school for my spiritual life, and God Has taught me always to wait on Him and His right timing. In my life I had never experienced the work of the Holy Spirit; every Scripture I read today has a deeper meaning. I see the Word of God live in my life more than ever before. Even since I met Pastor Greg and he introduced me to the study of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life, I started experiencing changes in my life. The truth of the New Covenant Gospel has brought great joy to my life. It has freed me from the slavery of the law, most especially the SABBATH LAW, which kept me in fear and uncertainty of my salvation. I was always afraid I would not keep it properly. I thank God for people like Pastor Dale Ratlaff and his book, Sabbath in Christ, Pastor Clay Peck and his book, New Covenant Christians, Pastor Greg Taylor and his book, Disciples of the New Covenant. I am also grateful for many others who have helped me and my family and brought hope in our Christian life. I also thank God for the moral, financial and spiritual support these pastors and other lovers of the gospel have given me.

University in Uganda to train as a Minister in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I graduated two-and-a-half years ago with a Bachelor of Theology Degree.

However, the Adventist Church chose not to hire me because my theological position had changed so much since the second semester of my first year when I began to see some glaring inconsistencies in the teachings of Adventism. I sought the Lord for answers to my questions, and Christ Himself took me by hand and led me through this season of discovery. I discovered that, while Adventism has many good things to offer, it also separates itself from other Christians based on some faulty interpretations of Scripture — doctrines such as the investigative judgment (judgment of believers for salvation), the seventh-day Sabbath observance as a requirement, Sunday worship as the Mark of the Beast, soul sleep (the dead are in the grave, not in heaven or hell), Old Testament food laws still required, and the belief that Ellen White was a prophet of God and her writings authoritative. When I voiced my questions and concerns, the Adventist seminary suspended me. Even though I eventually was allowed to finish, they would not allow me to be a pastor in their system. I discovered that the doctrines were not in harmony with my system of faith and practice. I sought the Lord for answers to my questions, and Christ Himself took me by hand and led me through this season of discovery. I discovered that, while Adventism has many good things to offer, it also separates itself from other Christians based on some faulty interpretations of Scripture — doctrines such as the investigative judgment (judgment of believers for salvation), the seventh-day Sabbath observance as a requirement, Sunday worship as the Mark of the Beast, soul sleep (the dead are in the grave, not in heaven or hell), Old Testament food laws still required, and the belief that Ellen White was a prophet of God and her writings authoritative. When I voiced my questions and concerns, the Adventist seminary suspended me. Even though I eventually was allowed to finish, they would not allow me to be a pastor in their system. I discovered that the doctrines were not in harmony with my system of faith and practice.

I set on looking up every verse cited and was quickly pointing out every instance that the study misquoted or misapplied a Bible text. Sheryl was getting very frustrated at this challenge but didn’t have many answers. After this, we started studying with a couple of leaders from the local church. They were well-prepared for all of my questions, and with my limited knowledge of Scripture, I was no match. I determined that if I couldn’t prove Adventism wrong, then it must be correct, and I dove in enthusiastically. I was determined at that time to become a pastor.

Weeks after we were married, I was enrolled as a theology major at Andrews University and remained in that capacity for a little over two years. I filled my schedule with every religion course I could take, putting off my general classes until later. Towards the end of those two years, I started uncovering a number of concerns about Ellen White, the idea of justification by faith, and the investigative judgment. I tried to explain all of these new things I was finding to Sheryl, but she wasn’t really interested in hearing about it.

Sheryl was not ready to face these issues and refused to listen to them. Since I automatically knew the Adventist church was the correct church, I believed it had to be doctrinally correct even if I didn’t understand every question raised about it. Therefore, since I figured the original Adventist teachings had to be correct, I imagined they reflected how legalistic and demanding God was. I decided I wanted nothing to do with it.

Rick was baptized into the Adventist church, married, and began studying undergraduate theology all within a six-month period in 1983. He graduated from Andrews University and obtained a Masters from University of Dayton. He currently teaches a weekly small group Bible study on Romans attended by Christians from a variety of backgrounds including current and former Adventists. Sheryl was a multigenerational Adventist. Sheryl graduated from Spring Valley Academy in 1982 and attended both Kettering College of Medical Arts and Andrews University. She left the Adventist church for Jesus in July, 2004.
I didn't agree with, and I focused my own teaching, preaching time, begged to do the offering appeal at church. Not in an earthly congregation. But now it was Sheryl's turn and I was able to teach Sabbath School rarely heard anything about Ellen White. We had plenty of kids. But fortunately God had placed a pastor at that church and told me I needed to read Greg Taylor's e-mail and I asked him, "Don't you think that's just a little too convenient to say only that 9 of the 10 commandments apply, just so you can get rid of the Sabbath?" He wrote back with a very nice e-mail and told me I needed to read Cultic Doctrine of Seventh-day Adventists and Sabbath in Christ by Dale Ratzlaff. I immediately ordered those books and read everything I could find on the internet about why committed Christians left the Adventist church. When the books arrived, I read them straight through and they made perfect sense. When I re-read the quotes where Ellen White said the churches who rejected William Miller's teaching were not in the New Covenant, I knew that I would never have become a Seventh-day Adventist back in that time! It was so obvious that God would never specifically lead His church through error to arrive at truth. As we started reading and talking together it really made both of us come face to face with the real reason Ellen White was a false prophet. For so long I had simply buried my head in the sand regarding her works, and now the issue stared me in the face.

We started realizing that Jesus established a New Covenant that replaced the Old Covenant. The only thing we're told to "remember" in the New Covenant is the sacrifice of Jesus by participating in Communion. At this point neither of us were Adventists any longer, and Sheryl's prayers about us having unity in our beliefs had taken an unexpected twist. The only question now was when and how we were going to announce that we were leaving. It took nearly a year before we had the courage to write a resignation letter.

Leaving the Adventist church has been a refreshingly honest experience for us. I can truly say about digging in the Bible to find out what it really says, earnestly praying for understanding, and following the leading of the Holy Spirit. I could freely discuss anything I wanted with other Adventists. Sheryl and I now began attending a church I know. Even though the gifts of the Spirit were suspect and the Spirit was always getting quenched out of people there, even the gifts of the Spirit were suspect and discouraged. I thought it was ironic and sad that they would want to pray for a Holy Spirit and then not recognize Him. I would try to imagine what it would feel like to be told He was to be up with all His powers and glory. By this time the Lord sent a woman I'll call Gail back to my Adventist church to team up with me. Through a series of interesting dreams and miraculous interpretations I was led with my second family right out of the Adventist church. I was just getting acquainted with the computer, and my husband found the former Adventist site for me, and I read some articles about Ellen White plagiarizing much of her work, and Gail thought I definitely needed specific proof of exactly what had happened. And from one night I woke up and could not sleep, so I decided to try to find some proof. At 2:00 in the morning, with my minimal computer skills, I found an article by Tim Sly that identified Ellen White as a plagiarist. I thought I was going to fall off my chair!

With the help of my 12-year-old son, I emailed the article to every member of my church that had an email address. After prayer, Gail and I sent more copies of articles through the mail as well. Greg Taylor's Open Letter and his book, Cultic Doctrine of Seventh-day Adventists, have been especially helpful in helping me understand especially the Sabbath being a non-issuer for Christians. Some of those books also contained a copy of an article proving a specific article on Ellen White's plagiarism was sent out with looking for a job. We started getting letters from Adventist pastors and friends with my resignation letter.

I love the church, but I love Jesus more. I am so grateful to God for how He has led me to peaceful place in my new church. It is a beautiful Spirit-filled church preaching the true Gospel of Jesus. It is nice to be a part of a church that is truly reaching people for Christ. When Jesus comes. He will separate the sheep from the goats, not the Sabbath keepers from the Sunday keepers. Jesus is the Sabbath is good now! Be "free indeed" Gail and I continue to love and pray for the Adventist people. I am trusting that His Word will not return to Him void. I pray that our efforts will make a difference in somebody's life.

Immensely sad

I feel immensely sad over those who find legalism and not Christ in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I am also profoundly puzzled, because the church they despise is not the church I love.

When Elder August Anderson conducted the baptismal class in our little church school in Steamburg, New York, he asked us if we could go to heaven if we kept the Ten Commandments. I said, "Yes," but he said, "No, because you can't keep the commandments. You can go to heaven only by believing in Jesus as your Savior." All through Union Springs Academy, Atlantic Union College, and the Seminary I heard that one message in a year or so?!

The day we were baptized in that church, we prayed that the Holy Spirit then helps them keep the Ten Commandments, rather than the Law of Christ. In addition, they essentially keep their salvation by continuing to obey the Ten Commandments. If people were to abandon any of them—most notably the fourth—they would lose their salvation.

FÃ©st Weekend

Thank you for the good article about the former Adventist weekend which I would have been there had you been here before. Hopefully you will have another in a year or so?

Blessing you and Richard as you render this "work load" unto the Lord. You are doing a great service for all of us."formen," and I knew a lot of prayers are going up for you for every day. "Unto the praise of the glory of His grace.

Editor's note: We are scheduled to have our second FÃ©st weekend on February 16-17, 2007. Watch for more details and registration information in future issues of this publication.

Dear ones in Christ,

Your magazine is truly a blessing to me. For many years my late husband and I were born-again Christians in a Pentecostal church. My husband carried a minister's license in that denomination.

One day we received a brochure in the mail. Some church leader had printed a study of Bible prophecy in a local motel. They didn't say what church they represented, just that it was interdenominational. We were already having feelings of discontent in our church, so we were sitting ducks! We ordered the study and read the first chapter. There was no headache in what turned out to be Adventist church, I cried and cried. Later when I gave my testimony on how I had received Jesus in my heart and life years earlier, I was told that I had been saved "emotionally." After my husband passed away into a retirement home. The managers here, a lovely Adventist couple, led me back out of the Adventist church. The article in January/February issue on "Unmasking the Cultic Spirit" is so true. Interdenominational—what was the study of Bible prophecy in a local motel? They didn't say what church they represented, just that it was interdenominational. We were already having feelings of discontent in our church, so we were sitting ducks! We ordered the study and read the first chapter. There was no headache in what turned out to be Adventist church, I cried and cried.

Mail letters and donations: Life Assurance Ministries P.O. Box 905 Redlands, CA 92373

LETTERS to the Editor

Proclamation!

Proclamation!

Proclamation!

Proclamation!

Proclamation!

Proclamation!
Proclamation!

To the Editor

the Bible is infallible, they create openly denied verbal inspiration (p.

Our young family left Adventism—and continue to have—a profound effect produced a lot of video “evangelistic” presentations.

I was wondering if your ministry was consider-

I just love your material and teaching videos

I was a newly born-again Christian when I was intro-

I read, the more trouble I got into.

I read much of Ellen White’s writing.

Sabbath Day by replacing it with Sunday. To

Sabbath issue was the most important issue for

The playing was beautiful and appro-

trolling members of the church for the way I

Teaching videos

Hello, I have just read the latest “special” edi-

My family has just returned from a weekend camping trip with some Adventist friends. It’s

A primary contention among Christians is the inerrancy of the Scriptures. The problem begins with presuppositions they bring to Scripture. Christ, the Apostles and the Old Testament taught Scripture’s inerrancy. We will give solutions, however, for this difficulty and several other apparent conflicts.

verve streifling

Part 1: Approaching the Bible objectively

seventh-day Adventists often claim that the Bible has contradictions and errors and that there are conflicts in the gospel accounts of the ministry of Christ. Thus, while publicly saying the Bible is infallible, they create doubt about its veracity. These doubts about the Bible’s reliability are necessary in order to sustain the church’s claims to Ellen White’s authority. Because her writings contain certain contradictions and because she taught that she was inspired in the same way the Bible writers were inspired, Adventists must also insist that the Bible writers made mistakes as well.


I felt as if the Holy magazine also showed that Adventist leaders denied verbal inspiration at all. The 1919 Bible conference. Questions such as “did 24,000 (Num 25:9) or 23,000 (1 Cor 10:8) die in the ancient plague?” arise as evidence to “prove” the un reliability of the Biblical text. We will give solutions, however, for this difficulty and several other apparent conflicts.

Objectivity: the valid approach to the Bible

Life Assurance Ministries, Inc

MISSION

To proclaim the good news of the New Covenant
gospel of grace in Christ and to combat the errors
de 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
these that they were inspired in the same way the Bible writers were inspired, Adventists must also insist that the Bible writers made mistakes as well.


Scripture’s inerrancy. We read, “I speak the truth; I declare what is right.” “God cannot lie.”

The White Truth, openly denied verbal inspiration (p.85).

Spectrum

The Bible: Inerrant?: Adventist claims of Bible contradictions and errors

Verle Streifling was raised in a devout Adventist family and graduated from Adventist school. At age 26 he was born again, and intensive Bible study and the Holy Spirit led him out of Adventism and into Evangelical Christianity. In 1984 he was ordained for ministry, and by 1999 he earned his Ph.D. Over the past 25 years he has written numerous tracts and articles, a number of books, and, by Bible Answers for Sabbath Questions is now being edited for publication. He and his wife plan to retire into full-time ministry in the Philippines next year.

FREED INDEED

I am in my fifties, and I was an Adventist for 25 years. I’ve been out for over two years. I was a

Someone who teaches or believes or publishes garbage material teaches or accepts that God’s Ten Commandments 

is forever too late.

I have already doubted about its veracity. These doubts about the Bible’s reliability are necessary in order to sustain the church’s claims to Ellen White’s authority. Because her writings contain certain contradictions and because she taught that she was inspired in the same way the Bible writers were inspired, Adventists must also insist that the Bible writers made mistakes as well.

Every Word of God is tried (pure, flawless); and “the sum of Thy word is truth.” The New Testament appeal, “It stands written,” repeatedly confirms both Testaments. Paul's writings are “the revelation of Jesus Christ,” and Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to “teach you all things.”

Evangelicals presuppose these Bible claims of inerrancy are true. This objective presupposition stands in a court of law: the witness is not assumed to perjure himself until he can prove his testimony true. Liberal critics bring subjective presuppositions to the Bible. They argue that because God used human writers, the Bible can't be inerrant, and thus their claim of inerrancy must be proven true from textual and outside historic sources. Their logical non-sequitur that humans cannot do anything without error—even when inspired—is false! They would be the first to holler should they apply their norm to their own attempts to err or correct the Bible.

They charge the Scripture with contradictions. For example, two types of alleged contradictions illustrate this charge. First are those that are solved by understanding the original language. Second are those clarified by archaeology. For instance, one Gospel writer tells that Barabas was crucified before Jesus entered Jericho, another that it happened as He was leaving. Archaeology found there was an Old and a New Jericho at that time. The men were passing between the cities.

The miracles the Bible records also offend the critics who call them fictitious legends developed by the community after the 'real Jesus' left. They fail to answer: 1. Who would those accounts be martyred—as many were—for a fairy tale? 2. Why did many of the priests who condemned Jesus later believe in the risen Christ (Acts 6:5)?

Critics look for sources the Bible writers supposedly copied to evade the miracle of inspiration. They stretch Luke's prologue to cover the whole Bible, ignoring the fact that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit “to lead into all truth” (John 14:26; Gal. 1:11-17). Warfield, who wrote extensively on the subject of inspiration, shows that the “out-breathing of God” in 2 Tim 3:16 (inerrancy); and 2 Peter 1:1 says “Holy men of God spoke being impelled by the Holy Spirit.”

When considering the contention in Christendom regarding Bible inspiration and inerrancy, we should note:

- Claiming that there are Bible errors contradicts Christ, the Apostles, and the Bible.
- Those claiming Bible errors have no gauge whereby to “correct” these apart from their own natural intellect.
- Those who deny plenary-verbal inspiration fail to redefine adequately what inspiration is.
- If the very words of the Bible are not “God-breathed,” then their supposed careful study is only a meaningless sham; nothing can be proven from them, for they carry no authority.
- Matthew 23 shows Jesus did not allow popular, national, or cultural ideas to be confused with God’s will. Both He and His disciples mean for “truth” not “politi-cal correctness, sacrificed their lives!”
- Regarding literal Bible interpretation, there is still wisdom in the saying, “If the plain sense makes sense, seek no other sense, lest you get nonsense!” (J. Vernon McGee, Through the Bible).
- Evangelicals do study the Bible scientifically, but they approach it with valid objective presuppositions, using legitimate hermeneutics in its interpretation. They have excelled in research by showing the critic’s allegations of error to be faulty and are well able to defend their conservative position.
- When the Bible is preached with belief in its truthfulness, souls are saved, lives changed—sometimes radically—and Christianity becomes more than a society with a code or creed.

White Truth denies Biblical inerrancy except in areas of faith and practice. Adventism doesn’t tell its laymen the whole truth—when critics have alleged over 1,000 contradictions and errors against the Bible and literally hundreds of these are in areas of faith and practice; including the primary doctrines of the Holy Scriptures, the nature of God; the person and dual-nature of Jesus, the plan of salvation, and more. Instead, White Truth only devalues the Bible as much as Adventist leaders think their members will permit while maintaining Ellen White as equally inspired as the Bible writers!

The Lord told Ananias, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings, and the sons of Israel” (Acts 9:15).

Paul’s ministry and gospel were endorsed by the first church council recorded in Acts 15. The counsel concluded that the Apostles should not “put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke (law) which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear...All the people kept silent...and they were listening, Paul and as they were relating what things and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles” (Acts 15:12). It was made clear that Jews and Gentiles are saved the SAME way: “But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are” (Acts 15:11).

About Paul in Corinth we read, “And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision: ‘Do not be afraid any longer, but go on speaking and do not be silent; for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city’” (Acts 18:10-9). Acts 22 lists a number of times the Lord spoke to Paul including, “Go! For I will send you far away to the Gentiles” (Acts 22:21), and in Acts 23:11 we read, “On the night immediately following, the Lord stood at his side and said, ‘Take courage, for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also.’”

In Acts 26, Luke records Paul’s defense before Agrippa. As Paul recounts his conversion experience he says, “And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads. And I said, ‘Who are you Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But get up and stand on your feet; for your purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me’” (Acts 26:14-18).

In Paul’s shipwreck experience we read, “For this very night an angel of the God whom I serve stood before me, saying, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.’ Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe that we shall be safe from the European waters” (Acts 27:23-25).

Evangelicals presuppose these Bible claims of inerrancy are true. This objective presupposition stands in a court of law: the witness is not assumed to perjure himself until he can prove his testimony true. Liberal critics bring subjective presuppositions to the Bible.
Did Paul misunderstand Jesus?

Dale Ratzlaff

Periodically I encounter resistance against the authority of the Apostle Paul's epistles. This resistance comes primarily from educated people with college degrees—usually from Adventist schools. The context for this resistance is usually my quoting the clear passages on law in Paul's writings. For example, the books of Galatians, Colossians, and Romans explain that in the New Covenant, the law is no longer our standard of righteousness and practice. In order to avoid the implication that even Peter had problems with Paul's writings and quote, “in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort.” They conclude that because I use Paul's writings to explain that law ended with the inauguration of the New Covenant, I am one who is misunderstanding Paul and distorting the gospel. Several have even said they think Paul did not clearly understand the teachings of Christ, and his writings on law, therefore, cannot be taken at face value and are less reliable than the rest of the Bible.

What about these charges? Can the writings of Paul be trusted? I hope that this short study will fully answer these questions. First, let us look at what Peter said about Paul in context.

“Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction” (2 Peter 3:14-16).

Note three things here. First, Peter calls Paul “beloved.” Peter, the one who “presided” at Pentecost in Acts 2, who oversaw the Samaritans receiving the Holy Spirit in Acts 8, and who preached the gospel to Cornelius’ household and witnessed the first Gentiles receiving the Holy Spirit in Acts 11—this same Peter whom God appointed to “launch” the church and the first Gentiles receiving the Holy Spirit in Acts 11—this same Peter whom God appointed to “launch” the church and witnessed the first Gentile receiving the Holy Spirit in Acts 11—this same Peter who received the Holy Spirit in Acts 8—this same Peter whom God appointed to “launch” the church and first Gentiles receiving the Holy Spirit in Acts 11—this same Peter whom God appointed to “launch” the church. This church would not have called Paul “beloved” if he were teaching another or a distorted gospel. Second, Peter says that Paul wrote “according to the wisdom given him.” Peter clearly believed and stated that Paul received his wisdom from God. Again, Peter would not have endorsed Paul’s revealed wisdom if Paul were “off” in his teachings. Third, Peter says that some who are “untaught and unstable, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.” Peter includes Paul’s writings and lists them with “the rest of the Scriptures.” Furthermore, Peter ends this passage by saying that those who distort Paul’s writings as they distort the rest of Scripture do so “to their own destruction.” Far from diminishing the authority of Paul’s writings, this passage from 2 Peter, therefore, clearly endorses them as part of Scripture.

My wife Carolyn and I read a chapter of the Bible together every day. We recently finished Acts and are nearly through Romans. Our recent readings have reminded us of the divine intervention in the life of Paul and the clarity of his simple gospel message. Following are just a few references:

Other books, however, have offered plausible solutions. The book Inerrancy by Norman Geisler shows there are numerous copyist errors among the numbers and names in the Old Testament, but these don’t confute Bible inerrancy that certain to the autographs. Geisler didn’t guarantee that scribal corruptions wouldn’t occur in later Bible transmission. Haley’s Alleged Discrepancies shows how easily copyist errors occurred as well as presenting an adequate solution for the discrepancy between Numbers 25:10 and 1 Corinthians 10:8: Paul may have meant to include only those who “fell in one day.” Jamieson, Faussat and Brown concur in their commentary, yet offer a third possible solution: both writers may have been using round numbers or an approximation of an actual exact number that was between the two, but quite near the middle—so both are reasonable. Further, Moses may have included those who died by the execution of the Judges, while Paul may be speaking only of those who died by the plague itself.

Archers Encyclopaedia of Bible Difficulties makes a very important observation: “It’s wrong to place 1 Cor 10:8 against Num 25:9; “for 1 Cor 10:8 does not refer to Baal Peor at all; rather it refers to the plague of the apostasy of the golden calf. This is clear from the previous verse 7…since it is a direct quotation from Ex 33:6, the identification is beyond dispute.” His conclusion is upheld by careful Bible study. He also synthesizes 1 Cor 10:8 with Ex 32:8. Having studied 11 languages, including Biblical and classic studies, Archer strongly upholds Bible inerrancy and merits a hearing! How different from Ellen White, whose self-contradictions and contradictions of the Bible are in their original writings of modern English, and have no resolutions! It behooves the reader of White Truth to ask some vitally important questions:

Is it possible that the writers of that book didn’t know the solutions for their alleged “errors” in the Bible or that they didn’t know the context of the original Greek texts?

If they didn’t know these things, are they dependable teachers of the Word, and do they have a basis for their prejudice against the Biblical text?

Should we have the problem, instead of rejecting God’s and the Bible’s veracity?

If they did know these solutions, if they did know the contents of the Greek text, why didn’t they give the real truth instead of misrepresenting the Bible?

 Aren’t they misrepresenting God as well, suggesting by their assumption of Biblical error that He is not concerned about His own truthfulness?

 Aren’t they deliberately withholding information from their people to seduce them into believing in Ellen White as equally inspired with the Bible while knowing that her contradictions cannot be resolved?

Still another vein of thought should race through the Adventist reader’s mind at this point: God declared “every word” and “the sum of His Word” to be true—in other words, the whole word. The reader, therefore, needs to make some consistent decisions concerning these questions:

Is God’s claim that His Word is and was all truth actually a false claim?

If I cannot believe what He says about His Word, can I believe what He says about anything else?

Isn’t the doctrine of the Bible as True essential to the doctrine of God? And can the God of truth Who says, “I speak the truth; I lie not” give us His Word with errors, contradictions and falsities?

If God did this, wouldn’t He impugn His own immutability? How could I know what I can believe about Him if He claimed “truth” is error? I could believe nothing at all. So, I have to believe His promise to speak only the truth, and I must reject those who say otherwise.

Will I accept the unfounded claim that the Bible is accurate regarding “essential articles of faith” but inaccurate in the non-essentials, just so I can say the Bible has contradictions and can use this to excuse Ellen White? Doesn’t wanting to discredit God so I can hold a false prophet make that false prophet another god who I hold above my Creator and Redeemer, thereby breaking the first and greatest of commandments?

As God claims to speak only the truth, isn’t Biblical inerrancy the most essential article of my faith? Of necessity it must be!

This writer strongly assures that the reader may restore his faith in the God of truth and His inerrant Word by researching some of the books listed at the end of this article. In them are answers Christianity has always had for the false claims leveled against the Bible throughout the ages. There have been charges of errors in the Bible since the beginning of the church age. Yet, for equally as long, there have been solutions for these allegations. Bishop Eusebius wrote two large volumes, Inconsistencies in the Gospels and Inquiries and Resolutions. In his day, he thoroughly answered many of these criticisms. Later, Jerome translated Eusebius’ work into Latin, and Victor of Antioch made an abridgment of it. Historically, the church has always had answers for the critics who wished to tear down God’s authority expressed in the Bible.

Paul said, “Nevertheless the Word of God stands secure,” and Jesus promised, “Heaven and earth may pass away, but My Words will never pass away!”

Causes for alleged Bible errors

In Alleged Discrepancies, Haley lists some causes of confusion in the Bible:

• Inconsistencies in the Gospels
• Alleged Discrepancies
• Alleged Inconsistencies
• Alleged Contradictions
• Alleged Errors
• Alleged Errors in Dates
• Alleged Errors in Numbers
• Alleged Errors in Geography
• Alleged Errors in Names
• Alleged Errors in Languages

The separate appendices on the following pages deal with these causes of apparent disagreement in the Bible. Hopefully, the reader will see that many of these alleged “errors” are really just matters of vocabulary and not of doctrine. In those cases in which the matter is of doctrine, there is an overriding fact that God declared, “every word” and “the sum of His Word.”

It behooves the reader of White Truth to ask a vitally important question: Is it possible that the writers of that book didn’t know the solutions for their alleged “errors” in the Bible or that they didn’t know the context of the original Greek texts? If they didn’t know these things, are they dependable teachers of the Word, and do they have a basis for their prejudice against the Biblical text? If they did know these solutions, if they did know the contents of the Greek text, why didn’t they give the real truth instead of misrepresenting the Bible? Aren’t they deliberately withholding information from their people to seduce them into believing in Ellen White as equally inspired with the Bible while knowing that her contradictions cannot be resolved?
A difference of dates in passages seeming discordant. Often texts seem contrary, for they address a different time frame or covenant setting.

A different writer. Proper apprehension of a writer’s vocabulary and how he defines his own words in their context is imperative. Paul’s “saving faith” “without works” is not contrary to James’ “faith without works is dead,” for Paul speaks of works of the law to gain salvation, while James speaks of the out-working of love for my neighbor, as the fruit of my faith in Christ.

Different point of view or object on the part of the writers. As an example, we say, “man is mortal,” speaking of his body yet we can say his immortal, if speaking of his soul (Matt 10:28).

A different method of arrangement. For example, Matthew sometimes deviates from historical order of events to use subject-matter arrangement, while Luke generally used historical order as did Mark. But Matthew’s “subject order” shouldn’t be held as contrary to Luke’s historic arrangement. Matthew does follow the larger historic sequence of the major parts in Jesus’ life.

Different modes of computing, particularly when reckoning time. In Jesus’ day there were two Jewish calendars, one sacred, the other secular, and also calendars of other nations. There was Roman time (midnight to midnight), Jewish secular time (sunrise to sunset), and Jewish sacred time (sunset to sunset). Sometimes they used “inclusive” time reckoning, but not always.

Peculiarities of Oriental idiom. Properly understanding the idioms and the use of metaphors and other figures of speech is imperative. For example, “the third day” plural spelling can be used for singular feast days, as in sahasvat (Sabbaths) for a single Sabbath day or for a week, Paraskue for “passover” can be used for the day or whole week of the passover. Different names for the same person, place, or thing. The Bible uses “Jacob” and “Israel” for the same person as well as the nation. It uses “Edom” and “Essa,” “Gideon” and “Jerubbaal” “Pete” “Cephas” “Simon” and “Simon Peter,” Mount Sinai is also Mount Horeb. Some places may be different names at different times in history.

Different meanings for the same word, especially with deponent verbs where the active use may be quite different from the passive. Different prefixes, suffixes or inflections can change the application of the same root word entirely. One must have a basic understanding of Greek grammar or use language tools to determine if a noun is used as the subject, direct object, indirect object, modifier, name, or the cause or means of an action, etc.

Transmission or copyright mistakes. Of course, mistakes in copying manuscripts don’t affect Bible inerrancy pertaining to original autographs. A notorious example is in Beta and Alpha (that copyists left a large blank space where Mark 16:9-20 belonged, yet Aleph copied Beta with the space, causing many today to assume this passage is not original. In this case we have many good manuscripts and a multitude of relatively reliable notes from the early church fathers who vindicate this passage. Anchor’s Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties lists the prominent copyist errors such as diatography, haplography, and more.

Imaginative discrepancies. Most alleged errors are from the critic’s imagination, influenced by his prejudice, such as the Mormon or Adventist need to show Biblical errors to maintain their pro-impostor as equal to or necessary to clarify the Bible. Some people wish to demean the Bible so they maintain their prophets as equal to or necessary to clarify the Bible. By holding this belief in the obsolescence of most of the ceremonial worship ordinances and the nation. It uses “Edom” and “Esau”, “Gideon” and “Jebusite” as well as the nation. It uses “Edom” and “Essa”, “Gideon” and “Jerubbaal” “Pete” “Cephas” “Simon” and “Simon Peter,” Mount Sinai is also Mount Horeb. Some places may be different names at different times in history.

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Proclamation!

by Timothy E. Crosby (Review & Herald pub, 1989)

"The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written word of God, given by divine inspiration through holy men of God and are 'the infallible revelation of His will to men, and are the only unerring rule of faith and practice." (Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual, 1976, page 12)

The Seventh-day Adventist church holds the writings of Ellen G. White in the highest regard as a source of doctrinal understanding. Some Adventists have inferred that in Dr. [Desmond] Ford's view Ellen White's authority does not extend to doctrinal issues. On this point the Seventh-day Adventist position is that a prophet's testimony is second only to that of the Scriptures. The official Second Adventist Statement said: "The above statement sounds like 2 Timothy 3:15-17 which states in part: All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness..."

The following quotations are from Ellen White's own words from her "Introduction to her book The Great Controversy: Read them and decide for yourself whether or not she considered herself on the same level with the prophets of God's Word."

"God's Word is the standard and norm for our lives. We must trust it and obey it in every detail."

"The Bible is the Word of God. Therefore the Bible cannot err. But is that a valid argument? Let's compare a similar syllogism: God does not sleep. Jesus was God. Therefore Jesus did not sleep. Obviously something is wrong: the fallacy in both arguments lies in the minor premise on the second line: Jesus was not merely the Son of God but was also the Son of man. Likewise, the Bible is not simply the Word of God, written by God's finger and dropped from heaven. It is also the words of man... Thus Crosby reasons that being also words from man, the Bible can have errors and contradictions."

The real error lies in Crosby's "similar syllogism." Comparing Christ sleeping with God's Word erring is not valid. First, "sleep" is not a moral issue, but erring—especially if error is found in God—is a serious moral issue. Second, sleep is something confined to humanity, while erring—especially if error is found in God—is a serious moral issue. Therefore, according to the Seventh-day Adventist position, the Bible is a trustworthy and sure revelation (cf 1 Tim 3:15; 3:16; 2 Tim 1:12-14; Tit 3:9)."
can count us, “Every word of God is tried (proven, flaw-
less)” (Prov 30:5). If our doctrinal outlook is informed by the
Word of God, then we must confess that Scripture is entirely
true, or infallient. The unchallengeable testimony of Jesus
was, “This is God Speaking!” (John 17:17).” (Inerrancy, pp. 151-
153, Zondervan pub.)

In this brief quote, some 40 Scriptures attest to the
Inerrancy’s biblical and veracity inspiration in its autographs.
By contrast, the Evangelicals’ claim that God’s Word is to
deceive Adam and Eve. Similarly, to lead their people to
uphold Ellen White as a reliable messenger of God,
Adventists deny God is truthful when he says His Word
is infallent and infallible. God, however, proved His Word
“truth” by resurrecting Christ and fulfilling the prophetic
utterances of His true prophets.

Evangelical Bible scholars, along with the great thinkers
of Christianity throughout the past 2,000 years, hold that
God speaks only the truth. They hold this view because it is
God’s view, and they won’t accept questioning God, much
less claiming God erms, as do Ede in Ede.

After reasoning that the Scriptures must have errors
because of their human origin, Crosby says “…that does
not mean it is partly divine and partly human. Rather, like Christ,
it is fully divine and fully human.” And that’s the very point
Evangelicals make. Because Christ was fully divine while
being human, He was without sin. So, too, the written Word
being fully divine, though flowing through humans, was
without error. Here, however, is where Adventists are incon-
sistent in their teaching. First, they uphold Christ as perfect
and sinless while simultaneously teaching he had a sinful or
“fallen” humanity. When they insist that, like Christ, we can
become perfect sinlessly though still in our fallen natures.
In contrast, they adamantly dispute Scripture’s inerrancy because it flowed through man. They fail to see that
if Christ lived above sin in the human state, it’s equally
possible for God to speak or write through the prophets
without error. Still more confusingly, they maintain the “infall-
ability” of Ellen White, calling her “the only infallible inter-
preter of Bible principles” and “canonized as infallible as doctrinal interpretation is concerned.” (Irvin, 1911; Delfafiel, 1981).

Crosby makes a faulty comparison of Evangelicals with the
prophets of old. For instance, Docetists reasoned that if
Christ had been human, then Rom 3:23 affirms He also
sinned. The Bible, however, says Christ “did not sin”, so
Docetists in turn rejected His humanity. Inerrantists do not
reject Christ’s humanity. They say He was God speaking through
man; rather, they affirm that just as Christ the Word incorra-
inated was God living in and without sin, so too His Word
written is God speaking through clay, and of necessity with-
out error or contradiction. But Crosby argues, “Such an untenable position will even-
tually lead an enlightened inquirer to lose faith in the Bible
because of problems that such a rigid concept of inspiration
can never be accounted for.” Here Crosby uses an “ad popu-

lum” argument by associating his low view of Scripture with
being “enlightened.” It is his own position, however, that leads
into darkness and away from the light. We have already seen
that the Bible’s difficulties can be resolved. Many Bible schol-
ars have spent years in these kinds and have recorded hun-
dreds of solutions for these questions.

Inerrancy and Authority of Scripture

Since God claims the Bible’s truthfulness, great church
thinkers including Augustine, Luther and the Reformers
who wrote the creeds, taught that the Bible’s truthfulness
was “true in all, false in one.” They taught that inerrancy
pertained to the autographs and used the Bible as its own
interpreters. We could not believe God in anything else if He
claimed His Word is reliable but it proved to contain all
kinds of mistakes.

Crosby shows shallowness when comparing the Bible to
his algebra text, assuming a mistake in his uninspired text-
books prove there are mistakes in the Bible. Paul told
Timothy, “Be diligent to yourself to show approved to God,
a worker who needs not be ashamed.” We who care to
study the difficult passages find they aren’t contrary; but
complementary.

Crosby makes a fatal addition to Scripture by interpreting
what it tells us instead of quoting it: “Scripture itself indi-
cates that the gift of prophecy has limitations.” (1 Corinthians
13:8-12 refers to knowledge that comes through inspired
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fect,’ nor do Paul’s words imply that Scripture contains
errors, contradictions, or imperfections. The passage actually
reads, “but when the perfect is come, the partial will be
done away.” An example text confirms that Paul is speaking of the ‘perfect age’ when we’ll see and
know Christ completely instead of incompletely as we do
now, even with the benefit of spiritual gifts. He is not speak-
ing of Scripture nor implying that it contains errors or flaws.
Neither does the passage imply that the completed canon
was inadequate revelation for us to be entirely Saved.
The Bible is our complete, infallible and perfect guide, telling us
all we need to know for salvation, future events, moral liv-
ing, theology and Christian practice (2 Tim 3:15-17).”

We also refute Crosby’s assertion that, “When writing
under inspiration a prophet may suffer a lapse of memory,”
citing Paul, in 1 Cor 1:14-16, as an example. “Here Paul
makes a misstatement, modifies it, then confesses that he
simply cannot remember who he has baptized. In saying, ‘If I did not baptize any of you,’ Paul is not mak-
ing a misstatement, for ‘by you’ he means those in Corinth
to whom he is writing, at the time of his writing. His words,
“Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas,” are not
counter to the above, for 1 Cor 16:15 & 17 records that
Stephanus’ family had moved to Philippi. Yet, as freedom of
travel in the Roman Empire was normal, there may now
have been someone at Corinth whom Paul baptized some-
where else. So adds, “besides this I do not know of any other
whom I baptized of you.” He said, “I do not know” rather
than ‘I don’t remember’ (as the passage is wrongly
rendered in some paraphrases).

Crosby says Matthew and Mark forgot “who wrote what
in the Old Testament.” This assertion is shameful. Matthew
27:9-10 quotes both Zechariah and Jeremiah, and as
Jeremiah’s passage is most significant to Matthew’s gospel
he only cites him (Jer 32:6-9) while also including words
from Zechariah. Likewise, Mark 1:2 quotes both Malachi and
Isaiah, but he cites Isaiah’s reference since he fully quotes Isa
40:3.

Matthew and Mark didn’t forget who wrote what. Rather,
Crosby’s cynical argument is designed to excuse Ellen White
who cited Peter when quoting words from Paul. There is no
parallel between her and Bible writers.

Crosby affirms, “We find scores of such minor discrepan-
cies in the Scripture,” citing some 20 examples where either
names, times or numbers do not seem to harmonize. All
those he listed as well as many others are well synthesized
by the scholars listed in the following notes. To divert read-
ers from the work of Biblical scholars like Archer who detail
the resolutions for these discrepancies, Crosby calls these
works “torturous sophistry.”

Inerrancy and Authority of Scripture

Christians will uphold Bible inerrancy for God says His
word is Truth. God not only gave His Word without any “ser-
ious that would affect its reliability,” as Crosby states;
but He gave it without any error at all. An error would of
itself be “serious” since it would disprove God’s claim to
speak only the truth.

The Bible can be and is our infallible guide in more than
merely areas of faith and morals as Crosby asserts. It is con-
sistent with history and science. It has good theology and
true prophecies. It gives good counsel in Christian ethics
and practice; it defines who God says are false prophets and
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If Adventists were to embrace the idea of Biblical
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was untrustworthy. They are left in a position of question-
ing both of their grounds of truth: the Bible and Ellen White.

The reader wishing to become more established in his faith would
benefit from the following books: Inerrancy, ed Norman Geisler,
Zondervan pub, 1979; Evidence That Demands a Verdict, Josh McDowell,
Hence’s Pub, 1972, 1978; More Evidence That Demands a Verdict, Josh
McDowell, Campus Crusade for Christ, 1978; When Skeptics Ask, Norman
Vinyl Recordings of Bible Difficulties, Gleason Archer, Zondervan, 1982;
Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible, Halsey, Baker Book House, 1977, The
There are also invaluable linguistic guides as Evangelist’s Greek New
Testament, Linguistic Key to the New Testament (2 vols), Renaissance
Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament (2 vols), and other good
commentaries as Clarke, Jamieson, Fawcett & Brown, or
Matthew Henry’s Commentary.

Both of their grounds of truth: the Bible and Ellen White.
This thus pick and choose the parts of each that suit their
purposes, interpreting meanings in order to support their
beliefs and practices. They stand on shifting sand instead of
on solid rock.

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because of problems that such a rigid concept of inspiration nate was God living in clay and without sin, so too His Word reject or ignore that the Scripture is God speaking through the Docetists of the first century. Docetists reasoned that if interpretation is concerned.” (Irwin, 1911; Delafield, 1981).

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Inerrancy and Adventism

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true prophecies. It gives good counsel in Christian ethics 

and practice; and it defines who God says are false 

prophets, false shepherds and teachers (in Isaiah and 

Jeremiah). It is God’s view of the world for our lives and for 

eternal life in Him! Adventists denigrate the Bible’s inspiration in trying to save Ellen White. In fact, they say she was inspired in the same way the Bible writers were inspired. Ironically, however, 

she herself stated, “The Holy Scriptures are to be accept-

ed as an authoritative, inerrable revelation of His will. They 

are the only book left to us that contains the original test of experience.” (Great Controversy, p. vi) Adventists also hold: “The Holy Scriptures stand alone, the unique standard by which her (Ellen White) and all other writings must be 

judged, and to which we must be subject.” (Seventh-day Adventists Believe, p. 227, 1988).

Adventists are left with a dilemma. On the one hand, their prophetess endorses the Bible as the authoritative word of God yet her writings and prophecies disagree with the Bible in deep and fundamental ways. On the other hand, Adventists know that Ellen White made many mistakes which had to be explained or changed as time passed. Because they teach she was inspired the same way the Bible writers were inspired, they argue that no Bible writers also made mistakes, thus justifying Ellen White’s mistakes.

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tioning both of their grounds of truth: the Bible and Ellen White.
The following quotations are from Ellen White's own words from the "Introduction" to her book The Christian Simulator. In accord with the promise of the Spirit sent from heaven to inspire the preaching of the gospel guided the apostles into all truth (John 16:13). As the Spirit of truth, He would not generate error in the life-giving good news of Christ as publicized by the apostles; their message was inerrant. Furthermore, the apostles spoke words taught by the Spirit of God (1 Cor 12:13), and the Spirit speaking in them directed both what was said and how it was said (cf Matt 10:20-21). Therefore, according to the Scripture's own witness, the verbal form and content of the Apostolic publication of the gospel message should be deemed wholly true and without error. "Throughout its record the Bible presupposes its own authority. For instance, the Old Testament is often cited in the New Testament with such formulas as "God says" or "The Holy Spirit says" (as Acts 11:16). The Holy Spirit would not inspire the Bible to speak wrongly. Since the Bible is, by its own witness to itself, infallibly true. God's own Word says about this question. We briefly quote Norman Geisler's, which shows God's view:

"Because of their divine origin, the Scriptures are entirely trustworthy and sure (cf 1 Tim 1:15; 3:16; 4:9; 2 Tim 1:11; Tit 3:8; Heb 2:3; 2 Peter 1:19), so that by means of them we are able to discern between what is true and what is false (cf Thes 5:21; 1 Jn 4:1). The Scriptures are the standard of trustworthiness (Luke 1:1-4) and will never fail us or bring us embarrassment (Isa 28:6; John 19:35; 20:31; Rom 9:3, 9:3; 1 Pet 1:25). The accuracy of God's words can be seen in every minute detail as our Lord said—to every "jot" and "tittle" (Matt 5:18)—in such a way that the indescribable endurance of any minor part is co-extensive with that of the whole (cf Isa 40:8; Matt 24:35; 1 Pet 1:24-25). Every single word of the Bible is, by its own witness to itself, infallibly true. God's own declaration is "I, the Lord, speak the truth; I declare what is right" (Isa 45:19). Accordingly, the Psalmist can say, "The sum of the truth of my word" (Ps 119:160) and the Wisdom literature
...he misrepresents the doctrine of inerrancy which says nothing about *modern* scientific sense. Rather, inerrancy applies to the original autographs, and it conforms to the Bible’s own definitions and its own methods of computation, instead of to our definitions and modern reckoning methods.

arrangement. Matthew does follow the larger historic sequence of the major parts in Jesus’ life. Different modes of computing, particularly when reckoning time. In Jesus’ day there were two Jewish calendars, one sacred, the other secular, and also calendars of other nations. There was Roman time (midnight to midnight), Jewish secular time (sunrise to sunrise), and Jewish sacred time (sunset to sunset). Sometimes they used “inclusive” time reckoning, but not always!

**Peculiarities of Oriental idiom.** Properly understanding the idioms and the use of metaphors and other figures of speech is imperative. For example, “three days” and “third day.” Plural spelling can be used for singular feast days, as in sabbath(s) (Sabbaths) for a single Sabbath day or for a week. Parabole for “passover” can be used for the day or whole week.

Different names for the same person, place, or thing. The Bible uses “Jacob” and “Israel” for the same person as well as the nation. It uses “Edom” and “Esau,” “Gideon” and “Jebu’aab” or “Peter,” “Cephas” or “Simon” and “Simon Peter.” Mount Sinai is also Mount Horeb. Some places may be given different names at different times in history.

Different meanings for the same word, especially with deponent verbs where the active use may be quite different from the passive. Different prefixes, suffixes or inflections can change the application of the same root word entirely. One must have a basic understanding of Greek grammar or use language tools to determine if a noun is used as the subject, direct object, indirect object, modifier, name, or the cause or means of an action, etc.

Transmission or copying mistakes. Of course, mistakes in copying manuscripts don’t affect Bible inerrancy pertaining to original autographs. A notorious example is in Beta (that copied Aleph) and in that copy left a large blank space where Mark 16:9-20 belonged, yet Aleph copied Beta with the space, causing many today to assume this passage is not original. In this case we have many good manuscripts and a multitude of reliable quotes from the Early Church Fathers who vindicate this passage. Anchor’s Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties lists the prominent copyist errors such as diachotomy, haplography, and more.

Imaginative discrepancies. Most alleged errors are from the critic’s imagination, influenced by his prejudice, such as the Mormon or Adventist need to show Biblical errors to maintain their prophecies as equal to or necessary to clarify the Bible. Some people wish to demean the Bible so they can keep their lifestyle without being condemned by its “old cultural ideas.”

Careful study of apparent errors and their syntheses can only undergird and increase our faith! They neither unsettle the text nor impair its integrity. The moral influence and efficacy of the Bible is unaltered. God’s veracity is proven, and critical errors expose the falsity of the Bible critics and the objections into strong presumptions for its own favor.

Is one accused guilty ‘til he can prove his innocence in a court of law? No! Let’s keep the burden of proof on the plaintiff—not the defendant! The reasonable syntheses would be accepted by any fair and unprejudiced mind, unless these could be proven faulty. The syntheses that Evangelical scholars have offered for the allegations raised, however, have remained undisputed and unrefuted.

of his word, and the scenes of the past and the future, I have been bidden to make known to others that which has been revealed—to trace the history of the controversy in past ages, and especially so to present it to shed a light on the fast approaching struggle of the future.”

GCI “Regarding them [her collection of history books] in the light of God’s word, and by the illumination of His Spirit, we may see unveiled...”

In this introduction Ellen White carefully and slowly eased into her declaration that she was a prophet. She wrote that God had illuminated her and opened her eyes with scenes of the past and future. God had instructed her to present the content of this book, The Great Controversy (with scores of quotations from non-Adventist historians).

Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White was inspired by God in exactly the same way that the Biblical prophets were inspired, and in practice, her writings are exactly as authoritative and unerring as those of God’s Word, functioning as both an interpreter of Scripture and as a doctrinal guide. In Adventists’ reasoning the Bible authorizes the continuing prophetic gift, especially in the last-day or “remnant” church, they added to their list fundamental belief that the Word was given by “divine inspiration through holy men [people].” However, they do not normally admit this dependence on Ellen G. White to new converts or to the inquisitive.

**Spirit of Prophecy**

Isaiah 8:20: “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, they have no light in them.” Revelation 12:17: “And the dragon was with the woman, and went to make with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Revelation 19:10: “And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not; I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; worship God: for the test-imonies [or prophecy] of Jesus Christ is the spirit of prophecy.”

Adventists call Ellen G. White’s writings “the Spirit of Prophecy.” They use the three texts above to prove that the last-day remnant church must also have last-day prophetic guidance. There are several problems, however, with the way they use these texts.

First: Isaiah 8:20 is a test for Old Covenant prophets. It requires a prophet to uphold all of the Mosaic Law, or Old Covenant. Adventists, however, hold in common with most Christians and the understanding that most of the ceremonial worship ordinances and the civil legal judgments of the Mosaic Covenant are no longer valid for their church. By holding this belief in the obsOLElence of most of the Mosaic Law, however, they implicitly disqualify themselves as being subjects of this directive. Not only does Ellen White not speak according to the entire Mosaic Law, nei-ther does she endorse the complete New Covenant fulfillment of the Mosaic Law, yet Adventists use this text as proof to demonstrate that Ellen White was a true prophet.

Second: “Keep the commandments” in Revelation 12:17 does not refer to the Ten Commandments. It refers, rather, to a person’s obedi-ence to what Jesus taught specifically for His New Covenant church. The Apostle John did not use “commandments” in the narrow sense of the “Ten Commandments” (compare John 14:21-23; 15:10-12; John 2:3-10; 32:24-2: John 6:5-6). When John referred to the Old Covenant law, he used the Greek word nomos; When he referred to the teachings of Jesus, however, he used the Greek word entele. This text in Revelation 12:17 uses the word entele.

Third: The phrase “testimony of Jesus” is also applied by Adventists as an unofficial title for Ellen G. White. Many of her writ-ings are called “testimonies.” The term “testimony of Jesus” in Revelation 12:17 and 19:10, however, refers to the testimony about Jesus and also the testimony that Jesus bore in John 12:17 as it is one of the two things true believers will not abandon. They will testi-fy or bear witness, to Jesus Christ. Revelation 19:10 further identifies the testimony of Jesus it is the declaration of the truth about Jesus, and this declaration is the spirit of prophecy.

A different method of arrangement. Most of the things written in Ellen G. White’s books are additions written on the same level with God’s Word. Either the Bible contains everything necessary for salvation, sanctification, and the growth of God’s church, or it does not. By their treatment of Ellen G. White, Seventh-day Adventists declare to the entire world that God’s Word is not enough. They defer to her interpretations of Scripture. Their in-house literature frequently makes statements, follows the state-ments with Bible texts, and then follows the texts with confirma-tions and/or interpretations by Ellen G. White.

Because of their dependence upon Ellen G. White for their dis-tractive doctrines and practices, Seventh-day Adventists denigrate the authority and reliability of Scripture and elevate the status of Ellen G. White. The “spirit of prophecy” is not a mortal man or woman claiming to speak for God. Rather, it is the spiritual gift with which the Holy Spirit equips Christ-followers to declare the truth about Jesus to a dark and needy world. This truth is found entirely in the Bible; no additional “light” or commentary is needed to find every-thing we need for lives of faith and godliness.

This article is excerpted from Russell Kelly’s book Exposing Seventh-day Adventism. Information for obtaining this book is cited in Kelly’s biographical sketch.

Russell Earl Kelly left the Baptist church and became an Adventist in 1972. He received a B. A. in Theology from Southern Missionary College cum laude in 1976, While an Adventist Russ served seven churches in Georgia, North Dakota, and South Carolina. Returning to the Baptist church, he still takes every opportunity to preach, teach and sing the gospel. After becoming legally blind in 1989, Russ complet-ed his education with a Th. M., Th. D., and final-ly a Ph.D. from Covington Theological Seminary in Ft. Oglethorpe, Georgia in 2000. Russ has written two books, Exposing Seventh-day Adventism and Should the Church Teach Tithing? A Theologian’s Conclusions about a Taboo Doctrine. Both can be purchased from most Internet book stores. His pri-mary web site is www.shouldthechurchteachtithing.com.
Other books, however, have offered plausible solutions. The book Inerrancy by Norman Geisler shows there are numerous copyist errors among the numbers and names in the Old Testament, but these don’t confute Bible inerrancy that certainly to the autographs. God didn’t guarantee that scribal corruptions wouldn’t occur in later Bible transmission. Haley’s Alleged Discrepancies shows how easily copyist errors occurred as well as presenting an adequate solution for the discrepancy between Numbers 25:9 and 1 Corinthians 10:8: Paul may have meant to include only those who “fell in one day.” Jamieson, Fausset and Brown concur in their commentary, yet offer a third possible solution: both writers may have been using round numbers or an approximation of an actual exact number that was between the two, but quite near the middle—so both are reasonable. Further, Moses may have included those who died by the execution of the Judges, while Paul may be speaking only of those who died by the plague itself.

Archer’s Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties makes a very important observation: It’s wrong to place 1 Cor 10:8 against Num 25:9, “for 1 Cor 10:8 does not refer to Baal-Peor at all; rather it refers to the plague of the apostasy of the golden calf. This is clear from the previous verse 7…since it is a direct quotation from Ex 23:6, the identification is beyond dispute.” His conclusion is upheld by careful Bible study. He also synthesizes 1 Cor 10:8 with Ex 32:8. Having studied 11 languages of Biblical and classic studies, Archer strongly upholds Bible inerrancy and merits a hearing. How different from Ellen White, whose self-contradictions and contradictions of the Bible are in her original writings of modern English, and have no resolutions! It behooves the reader of White Truth to ask some vitally important questions:

- Is it possible that the writers of that book didn’t know the solutions for their alleged “errors” in the Bible or that they didn’t know the context of the original Greek texts?
- If they didn’t know these things, are they dependable teachers of the Word, and do they have a basis for their prejudice against the Biblical text?
- Shouldn’t they have resolved the problem, instead of rejecting God’s and the Bible’s veracity?
- If they did know these solutions, if they did know the contents of the Greek text, why didn’t they give the real truth instead of misrepresenting the Bible?
- Aren’t they misrepresenting God as well, suggesting by their assumption of Biblical error that He is not concerned about His own truthfulness?
- Aren’t they deliberately withholding information from their people to seduce them into believing in Ellen White as equally inspired with the Bible while knowing that her contradictions cannot be resolved?

Still another vein of thought should race through the Adventist reader’s mind at this point: God declared “every word” and “the sum of His Word” to be true—in other words, the whole Word. The reader, therefore, needs to make some consistent decisions concerning these questions:

- Is God’s claim that His Word is and was all truth actually a false claim?
- If I cannot believe what He says about His Word, can I believe what He says about anything else?
- Isn’t the doctrine of the Bible as Truth essential to the doctrine of God? And can the God of truth Who says, “I speak the truth; I lie not” give us His Word with errors, contradictions and falsehoods?
- If God did this, wouldn’t He impugn His own immutability? How could I know what I can believe about Him if He claimed “truth” is error? I could believe nothing at all. So, I have to believe His promise to speak only the truth, and I must reject those who say otherwise.
- Will I accept the unfounded claim that the Bible is accurate regarding “essential articles of faith” but inaccurate in the non-essentials, just so I can say the Bible has contradictions and can use this to excuse Ellen White? Doesn’t wanting to discredit God so I can hold a false prophet make that false prophet another god who I hold above my Creator and Redeemer, thereby breaking the first and greatest of commandments?
- As God claims to speak only the truth, isn’t Biblical inerrancy the most essential article of my faith? Of necessity it must be!

This writer strongly assures that the reader may restore his faith in the God of truth and His invariant Word by researching some of the books listed at the end of this article. In them are answers Christendom has always had for the false claims leveled against the Bible throughout the ages. There have been charges of errors in the Bible since the beginning of the church age. Yet, for equally as long, there have been solutions for these allegations. Bishop Eusebius wrote two large volumes, Inconsistencies in the Gospels and Inquiries and Resolutions. In his day, he thoroughly answered many of these criticisms. Later, Jerome translated Eusebius’ work into Latin, and Victor of Antioch made an abridgment of it. Historically, the church has always had answers for the critics who wished to tear down God’s authority expressed in the Bible.

Paul said, “Nevertheless the Word of God stands secure,” and Jesus promised, “Heaven and earth may pass away, but My Words will never pass away!”

Causes for alleged Bible errors

In Alleged Discrepancies, Haley lists some causes of confusion in the Bible:

- My Words will never pass away
- Nevertheless the Word of God stands secure
- Heaven and earth may pass away, but My Words will never pass away
Evangelicals presuppose these Bible claims of inerrancy are true. This objective presupposition stands in a court of law: the witness is not assumed to perceive himself until he can prove his testimony true. Liberal critics bring subjective presuppositions to the Bible. They argue that because God used human writers, the Bible can't be inerrant, and thus its claim of inerrancy must be proven true from textual and outside historic sources. Their logical non-sequitur that humans cannot do anything without error—even when inspired—is false! They would be the first to holler should they apply their norm to their own attempts to emend or correct the Bible.

They charge the Scripture with contradictions. For example, two types of alleged contradictions illustrate this charge. First are those that are solved by understanding the original language. Second are those clarified by archaeology. For instance, one Gospel writer tells that Barimaeus was healed as Jesus entered Jericho, another that it happened as He was leaving. Archaeology found there was an Old and a New Jericho at that time. The men were passing between the cities. The miracles the Bible records also offend the critics who call them fictitious legends developed by the community after the ‘real Jesus’ left. They fail to answer: 1. Would those who wrote these accounts be martyred—as many were—for a faith tale? 2. Why did many of the priests who condemned Jesus later believe in the risen Christ (Acts 6:7)?

Paul's ministry and gospel were endorsed by the first church counsel recorded in Acts 15. The counsel concluded that the Apostles should not “put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke (law) which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear…all the people kept silent” (Acts 15:10). They were relating what things and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles (Acts 15:12). It was made clear that Jews and Gentiles are saved the SAME way: “But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are” (Acts 15:11).

About Paul in Corinth we read, “And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, Do not be afraid any longer, but go on speaking and do not be silent; for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city” (Acts 18:9-10).

Acts 22 lists a number of times the Lord spoke to Paul including, “Go! For I will send you far away to the Gentiles” (Acts 22:21), and in Acts 23:11 we read, “on the night immediately following, the Lord stood at his side and said, Take courage, for you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, and you must witness at Rome also.”

In Acts 26, Luke records Paul’s defense before Agrippa. As Paul recounts his conversion experience he says, “And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’ And I said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He replied, ‘I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting. But get up and stand on your feet; for your purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness of things you have seen, and of things that are to come, saying to Jerusalem, and to all the nations in which I will appear to you; rescuing you from the things to which you have been called to witness, and saving your life from the murderous hands of the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you; rescuing you from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you; to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me” (Acts 26:14-18).

In Paul’s shipwreck experience we read, “For this very night an angel of the God to whom I serve stood before me, saying, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.’ Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I know that I shall be brought safe to Rome; and I have seen the Holy Ghost with you all this journey” (Acts 27:23-25).

Evangelicals presuppose these Bible claims of inerrancy are true. This objective presupposition stands in a court of law: the witness is not assumed to perceive himself until he can prove his testimony true. Liberal critics bring subjective presuppositions to the Bible.

Dale RATZLAF is the founder of Life Assurance Ministries, Inc, and owns LAM Publishing LLC. He served as an Adventist pastor for 13 years, seven of which were at Monterey Bay Academy, where he taught Bible. He and his wife Carolyn left the Adventist church in the 80’s when he realized he could no longer teach the investigative judgment in good conscience. He has authored books on Christ and Catholic Doctrine of Seventh-day Adventists. They are available through his website, www.LifeAssuranceMinistries.com.

It is my settled conclusion that no honest student of Scripture can in any way diminish the Scriptural authority of Paul’s teachings. To do so one must discredit Luke’s accounts of God’s apostolic appointment of Paul in the book of Acts. Deductively, if one considers the book of Acts to be in question, then one must also discard the book of Luke written by the same author. As you think about the evidence of Paul’s inspiration, remember also that Peter, the leader of the disciples when Christ was on earth, endorsed Paul’s writings as written with the wisdom of God and saw his writings as part of Scripture.

In the formation of the Christian canon, the Gospels and Paul’s writings were the first documents to be included. Anyone who tries to undermine the authority of the writings of Paul, consequently, is on very shaky ground: they are going against the conclusions of Peter, Luke, and the early church.

Even more, a person who denies Paul’s scriptural and apostolic authority has no claim to the Protestant Reformation cry, “sola scriptura,” nor can such a person be included in the Christian Church. A person who denies Paul’s authority denies the evidence of recorded Scripture as outlined above. It not only clearly and repeatedly supports Paul’s writings, but the record includes numerous instances where our risen Lord directly commissioned Paul as His “chosen instrument” to take the Gospel to the Gentiles, kings, and the people of Israel and to offer salvation to those who accept the simple gospel of God’s grace through faith in Christ.

Those who doubt the teachings of Paul, as mentioned above, ought to recognize that they have replaced the writings of Paul with the writings of Ellen White in that they interpret Paul’s writings through the grid of their so-called “spirit of prophecy,” in so doing they are unable to take Paul’s statements at face value, and they are in danger of rejecting the Lord Himself who called Paul, appointed him to ministry, and revealed the gospel directly to him.

“For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For neither received it from man nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ,” Galatians 1:11-12.
Our young family left Adventism openly denied verbal inspiration (p.85). I was wondering if your ministry was considering producing any teaching videos (or DVDs) in the future—something that I could lend to Adventist friends. I know there is one available (The Spirit Behind the Church), but something that really gets to the heart of the Sabbath issue would be great.

Anyway, that is just something to think about. In the meantime, please keep up the very good work you are doing. You have my prayers and highest regard.

In Christ, Kevin from Australia.

Enjoy publication

We are thankful for your work. Also, we enjoy the publication very much. God bless you and your families.

Thank you

Thank you so much for your magazine. I look forward to each edition and find much encouragement and confirmation in them.

Life Assurance Ministries, 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
“By far you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God; not works, that no one should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

Such a contrast

You have no idea the warm spot you’ve created in our hearts when we received Proclamation! Our young family left Adventism a year and a half ago. We still receive Adventist material in the mail although we have request- ed our names be removed from their mailing lists. If we never cracked the cover, the pictures alone speak for themselves. The man praying at the cross is opposed to terrifying beasts, anti-Catholic hype and all the other cultic sensation- alism that goes with SDA literature creates SUCH A CONTRAST. Jesus came to give us life, and He’s keeping His promise.

We are struggling with the pain of disconnect, and your ministry including your web forum (www.FormerAdventist.com) has kept us afloat all these difficult months. Thank you for saying yes to the Lord as we’ve said yes to Him. In case you ever wonder if what you’re doing is making any difference, let me tell you, it is! May God bless you and empower you.

To all it may concern

After reading your magazine and talking to you on the phone, it is clear that you are not being led by God, but by the devil. Anyone who teaches or accepts that God’s Ten Command- ment law is done away with or is of no impor- tance is absolutely following Satan. Anyone who teaches or believes or publishes garbage material to say that Mrs. E. G. White is not a prophet of God or that her writings contradict—is truly deceived by Satan. Satan is using you and many, many others to make God’s law, especially to dishonor the Sabbath Day by replacing it with Sunday. To meet on Sunday, to worship on Sunday, to fel- lowship on Sunday, to acknowledge Sunday as a rest day or in any way other than being (mentally) the first day of the week—you are accepting the mark of the beast. God’s judg- ments will fall upon you. You will be the ones who will persecute and put to death the people who keep God’s Commandments. And this is “Christian” in the Spirit? Those who willfully disregard or mis- construe God’s Word, including His law, in any way—God is not with them. He does not hear or answer their prayers. “The multitudes do not want Bible truth because it interferes with the desires of the sin- ful, world-loving heart; and Satan supplies the deceptions which they love” (Spirit of Prophecy, Vol 4 p. 366).

For your salvation and that of others, repent to God and turn away from the path of decep- tion—before Satan leads you out too far and it is forever too late.

Free indeed

I am in my fifties, and I was an Adventist for 25 years. I’ve been out for over two years. I was a newly born again Christian when I was intro- duced to Adventism and fell for the deception “hook, line, and sinker.” I lost a husband, whom I loved two small children, and my home and most of my possessions. It was a sad existence. I mourned much over the loss of my family. I was afraid that my family and I would be lost. I did not follow the “truth” that the church taught. The Sabbath issue was the most important issue for me. I read much of Ellen White’s writings. The more I read, the more trouble I got into.

The church taught that my conscience was the Holy Spirit. I had a taskmaster conscience that was orchestrating everything I could or couldn’t do, set to the tunes of Ellen White. No sooner did I master one list of her do’s and don’t’s than another list would take its place. I seldom had any peace. Some of my dearest Adventist friends had legalistic struggles like mine. I prayed, “How could her writings be so beautiful at times and yet cause so much damage!”

Several times I prayed, “Come to me all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest?” This is some kind of joke, Lord. I never had so many burdens until I came through the doors of this church!

I was disturbed by the deadliness in the church compared to my friends’ churches who certainly had more joy and peace than the Adventists knew as a whole. I would think, “What until they find out they have to give up ice cream, Lord, then let’s see how much joy they have.”

I always thought there was something wrong with me. It didn’t really occur to me that there could be something wrong with the church; I later realized that my Christian friends Sunday School, doing special music and running a very successful youth ministry for a couple of years. I fre- quently quoted Bible stories in costume for the children during the Sabbath services. The real turning point for me was when some of my friends and I were starting a worship team, and I was getting in trouble with some of the con- trolling members of the church for the way I played the tambourine to the contemporary wor- ship music. The playing was beautiful and appro- priate, yet it did not please them. I felt these reac- tions were contrary to Scripture. I felt as if the Holy magazine also showed that Adventist leaders denied verbal inspiration at the 1919 Bible conference. Questions such as “did 24,000 (Num 25:9) or 23,000 (1 Cor 10:8) die in the ancient plague?” arise as evidence to “prove” the unreliabili- ty of the Biblical text. We will give solutions, however, for this difficulty and several other apparent conflicts.

Objective: the valid approach to the Bible

A primary contention among Christians is the inerrancy of the Scriptures. The problem begins with presuppositions they bring to Scripture. Christ, the Apostles and the Old Testament taught Scripture’s inerrancy. We read, “I speak the truth; I declare what is right.”” God cannot lie.”

Verle Streifing was raised in a devout Adventist family and graduated from Adventist schools. At age 26 he was born again, and intensive Bible study and the Holy Spirit led him out of Adventism and into Evangelical Christianity. In 1984 he was ordained for ministry, and by 1999 he earned his Ph.D. Over the past 25 years he has written numerous tracts and articles, a number of booklets and, and by Bible Answers for Sabbath Questions is now being edited for publication. He and his wife plan to retire into full-time ministry in the Philippines next year.
This topic became taboo in our house around this time. I changed majors, since I could no longer be bound becoming an Adventist pastor. I was confused, angry, and felt completely alone. I decided that all of my conclusions must be right, and I was just a holier and better person. I might be wrong; if I were just a holier and better person, I might set right with me. I decided that all of my conclusions must be right, and I was just a holier and better person. I might be wrong; if I were just a holier and better person, I might be right; if I were just a holier and better person, I might set right with me.

Richard: At first I only came back to set a good example for the kids. But fortunately God had placed a pastor at that church who spoke about a powerful, graceful, and personal God. My interest grew a little.

Through study and a series of events, we both came to understand grace better. I became more involved in our local church. The new pastor had been a college classmate and coerced me into teaching the youth and eventually into church. The new pastor had been a college classmate and coerced me into teaching the youth and eventually into church. The new pastor had been a college classmate and coerced me into teaching the youth and eventually into church. The new pastor had been a college classmate and coerced me into teaching the youth and eventually into church. The new pastor had been a college classmate and coerced me into teaching the youth and eventually into church. The new pastor had been a college classmate and coerced me into teaching the youth and eventually into church. The new pastor had been a college classmate and coerced me into teaching the youth and eventually into church. The new pastor had been a college classmate and coerced me into teaching the youth and eventually into church. The new pastor had been a college classmate and coerced me into teaching the youth and eventually into church. The new pastor had been a college classmate and coerced me into teaching the youth and eventually into church. The new pastor had been a college classmate and coerced me into teaching the youth and eventually into church. The new pastor had been a college classmate and coerced me into teaching the youth and eventually into church.

Sheryl: I felt blessed that we finally were worshiping together as a young couple. I felt we were one giant step from complete spiritual unity. Rick and I disagreed on many doctrines. For nearly three years, I prayed earnestly for spiritual unity between us. I truly thought that God would somehow help Rick figure out how Adventism totally fits together and explain everything to me, so that we would both be fully committed to Adventism without any doubts.

Rick: At this point neither of us were Adventists any longer, and Sheryl's prayers about us having unity in our beliefs had taken an unexpected twist. The only question now was where and how were we going to announce that we were leaving.

Dale Ratzlaff writes his story in Leaving the Adventist Church, a new audio CD from Life Assurance Ministries. The website www.LifeAssuranceMinistries.com for more details. To receive Dale's online newsletter with updates from LAM Publishing, email him at www.dale@ratzlaf.com.
Faith story of Philemon Omwega

My name is Philemon Omwega (shown with his wife Margaret). I am married to my wife Margaret and have two daughters, Esther and Sarah. I was born 43 years ago in Nyanya, Kenya. I attended public schools from primary through to University. There ensued a period of about ten years during which I felt frustrated in life, but God gathered me up graciously into an Adventist seminary for training as a minister of the gospel in the year 2000. Both of my parents were not Christians, but my sisters had introduced me to the NEW COVENANT GOSPEL. Elder Ellys Mubiru lent the church a piece of land to use for the church and put up a temporary structure. We are praying for provision to buy our own land where we can build permanent buildings. When Pastor Greg Taylor came back to Uganda in June, 2005, I participated in the official planting of Grace Place Community Church on 2nd July, 2005. (See photo) The church’s vision is to reach out to people who are oppressed, discouraged, disbelieved, and also who leave Adventism. We want to establish a place where people can come and be freed from the bondage of sin and are certain of their salvation.

I am forty years old with a Bachelor of Theology degree. My wife Jane and I have five children; Idah, Esther, Joshua, Florence, and Juliana. I share with you my testimony. I was baptized in the Adventist church at the age of 15, and since then I served in many places of responsibility such as Sabbath school superintendent, church deacon, church Elder, and as a pastor. After discovering that the church which I trusted and served for the last 23 years was built on Old Covenant teachings influenced by E.G. White, I decided to leave it. Things were not simple, but I thank God I found a way out for me. Since 2003 when I left the Adventist church, we have faced many problems, but I thank God these troubles have helped me to grow in the Lord. The transition period has been a school for my spiritual life, and God has taught me always to wait on Him and His right timing. In my life I had never experienced the work of the Holy Spirit; every Scripture I read today has a deeper meaning. I see the Word of God live in my life more than ever before. Even since I met Pastor Greg and he introduced me to the study of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life, I started experiencing changes in my life. The truth of the New Covenant Gospel has brought great joy to my life. It has freed me from the slavery of the law, most especially the SABBATH LAW, which kept me in fear and uncertainty of my salvation. I was always afraid I would not keep it properly. I thank God for people like Pastor Dale Ratzlaff and his book, Sabbath in Christ, Pastor Clay Peck and his book, New Covenant Christians, Pastor Greg Taylor and his book. Disciples of the New Covenant. I am also grateful for many others who have helped me and my family and brought hope in our Christian life. I also thank God for the moral, financial and spiritual support these pastors and other lovers of the gospel have given me.

I graduated two-and-a-half years ago with a Bachelor of Theology Degree. However, the Adventist Church chose not to hire me because my theological position had changed so much since the second semester of my first year when I began to see some glaring inconsistencies in the teachings of Adventism. I sought the Lord for answers to my questions, and Christ Himself took me by hand and led me through this season of discovery I discovered that, while Adventism has many good things to offer, it also separates itself from other Christians based on some faulty interpretations of Scripture — doctrines such as the investigative judgment (judgment of believers for salvation), the seventh-day Sabbath observance as a requirement, Sunday worship as the Mark of the Beast, soul sleep (the dead are in the grave, not in heaven or hell, Old Testament food laws still required, and the belief that Ellen White was a prophet of God and her writings authoritative. When I voiced my questions and concerns, the Adventist seminary suspended me. Even though I eventually was allowed to finish, they would not allow me to be a pastor in their system. I discovered that the doctrines were not in harmo-
Word of man or, Word of God

Colleen Tinker

I've come to understand that I was taught, subtly but powerfully, that human reason had to have the “last word” on whether or not the Bible was truly God's Word to mankind.

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e had been attending Trinity Church for close to two years. Nourished by the Bible teaching we received every week in church as well as in the Bible study classes we attended, I was astonished to find scripture opening like a treasure chest before my eyes. The more I delved, the more consistent I found it. I began to realize that God Himself was the central value of the universe, not me and my happiness.

I believed I hadjet-
tisoned my indoctri-
antion that Ellen White had been inspired exactly as the Bible writers had been, I saw that the Bible proved itself consistent, and I knew I couldn’t say the same for Ellen White. Even though I found the Bible to be increasingly trustworthy, however, I kept bumping into confusing presuppositions.

One evening I was talking to Dale Ratzlaff on the telephone. Someone had posed a question to me that stumped me, and I asked Dale for his understand-
ing. “We criticize Ellen White for quoting Bible texts out-of-context to prove her points,” I repeated to Dale. “Yet we accept the New Testament writers quoting Old Testament verses, claiming they were fulfilled by events in Jesus’ life and in the redemptive church. Those Old Testament texts seem taken out-of-context, and no Jew would have seen their fulfill-
ment the way the New Testament explains them. How is our criticism of Ellen White different from other people’s criticisms of the gospel writers?”

Dale’s answer was concise and unequivocal: “God inspired the New Testament writers to show how the Old Testament texts were fulfilled.” I accepted his answer. Gradually I realized that although I had memorized 2 Timothy 3:16 as a child—“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness” (NIV)—I had never believed that text to be proof of the Bible’s reliability. I reasoned that one couldn’t prove a book’s claims by its own words; such “blind” acceptance of its own claims as fact would be “unscientific”, circular, and gullible.

But I accepted Dale’s answer. I had never believed that God’s Word could be proven by its own words, but upon careful study I have come to realize that God’s Word is inerrant in every jot and tittle. Having been assured of the Bible’s authority and inspired by the Holy Spirit, I have come to believe that it is the only trustworthy guide for life, for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.

E ven though I had memorized 2 Timothy 3:16 as a child—“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in right-eousness” (NIV)—I had never believed that text to be proof of the Bible’s reliability. I reasoned that one couldn’t prove a book’s claims by its own words; such “blind” acceptance of its own claims as fact would be “unscientific”, circular, and gullible. I came to understand that I was taught, subtly but powerfully, that human reason had to have the “last word” on whether or not the Bible was truly God’s Word to mankind. While Adventists considered it to be an “infallible” idea that wouldn’t misrepresent the essentials of salvation.

We were free to question the exact words and con-
cepts the Bible used. We believed God inspired prophets with ideas, but He allowed them to inter-
pret those ideas and to use their own words to explain whatever it was they had understood. Hence, inconsistencies and culturally biased notions had crept into the Bible as a result of God “honoring” the prophets’ freedom to interpret His impres-
sions to them. We, in our time, were free to re-inter-
pret those Biblical principles to fit our culture.

This approach to Biblical exegesis was identical to the way Adventists interpreted Ellen White. Learning to trust that our sovereign God had inspired not just the prophet’s thoughts but had overseen the words of Scripture has made the Bible more rich and internally consistent than I had ever imagined it to be. I had come to realize that God’s Word was trustworthy and dependable.

During her class in Bible Study at the Former Adventist Weekend in February, Elizabeth Inrig explained the Bible’s inspiration this way: “just as Jesus is a hypostatic union of Divine and human, so the Bible is a union of the Divine and the human. Exactly how it “works” is a mystery, but it cannot be dissected. In this issue Verle Streifling examines the argu-
ments against inerrancy as presented in two books published by Seventh-day Adventist authors. Russell Kelly discusses the Adventist church’s view of Ellen White’s authority and inspiration, and Dale Ratzlaff explains why Paul cannot be dismissed as “difficult to understand” when one finds his writings contra-
dicting one’s beliefs. Rick and Cheryl Barker share their story of how God led them into spiritual unity, and Greg Taylor reports on his latest visit to Africa. Two former Adventist pastors, one from Uganda and one from Kenya, share their faith stories as well.

The Word in flesh demonstrated His own dependence upon God’s eternal Word when he confronted Satan: “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God’” (Matthew 4:4 quoting Deuteronomy 8:3). Correct understanding of the Bible’s authority is crucial for our understanding of reality. In the Word of God we find the truth about Jesus, and in Him we find the source of life itself.
God is truly doing a new thing in Africa! In March, Pastor Greg Taylor, Director of One Flock Ministries, visited some former Adventist pastors in Kenya and Uganda. There, Pastor Philemon Omwega has been instrumental in starting two New Covenant churches in Kenya. One of these churches meets in the courtyard of his home in Nakuru. The other is just starting in Nymache village near Kisii. Pastor Taylor had the privilege of visiting these start-up churches and encouraging the new believers. Their excitement over the truth of the New Covenant is hard to describe. This is the first time many of them have understood that they can have assurance of their salvation. In the Nymache village, the Chief saw how the message of the New Covenant breaks down barriers between believers and brings communities together in Christ. He was so moved by the message of the New Covenant that he donated land on which the interdenominational church can be built. Leaders from various denominations including former Seventh-day Adventists are excited about the new venture.

After spending two weeks in Kenya, Pastor Taylor and Pastor Philemon traveled with Pastor Moses Luswata to Uganda and worked with him in his church near Kajansi, Uganda. God has truly blessed his efforts there. Pastor Luswata has been teaching the New Covenant since 2003. In time, he planted a church (July, 2005), and Pastor Taylor had the opportunity to be there for the first service with the original four members. Now the church has grown to over 40 regular members and has a much larger attendance. On Sunday, March 19, over 230 people were present for the day of celebration. Their church baptized 11 people that day in Lake Victoria. The ministry has made significant inroads into the community, reaching out to high school students and to a handicapped school. The joy of the Lord is their strength.

Along with the preaching of the Gospel, the pastors in Kenya and Uganda are working with Alex Musoke, a local Christian businessman formerly with World Vision, in teaching their people how to use their land to start small businesses (i.e., raising chickens/produce) for the support of their families and for ministry to others. This holistic approach to ministry is a balanced way to help people move out of poverty while learning the good news of the gospel.

During the visit in Kenya and Uganda, many interested pastors and leaders came to study and ask questions as they search out for themselves the implications of the Gospel for believers today. God is truly opening hearts and minds all over the world. There is a pressing need for children’s ministry materials, Bibles in the local languages, books on the New Covenant, and help with construction/equipment items. Plans are also being laid to take ministry teams to Africa for the purpose of strengthening the local churches and enabling them to plant more.

Following are the faith stories of Pastors Moses Luswata in Uganda and Philemon Omwega in Kenya.

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