Living with the Spirit

...we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit. Romans 7:6

It was Tuesday evening, and the ladies had come to my home for our weekly Bible study. We were studying *To Live Is Christ—The Life and Ministry of Paul* by Beth Moore. That particular week we had studied Paul's first missionary journey. After we had opened with prayer, one of the women remarked how impacted she was by the fact that in Acts 14:21, Paul had gone back to the cities where he had been beaten and stoned to see how the brothers were doing. Even though he had experienced many difficulties, he was willing to risk again and go back.

Paul's return to the places that had been difficult for him encourages me as I look back at my journey out of Seventh-day Adventism. It began 37 years ago when I was a teenager. I was raised in a strict Seventh-day Adventist home and often felt like a prisoner to all the rules that the church taught. I knew that I was not measuring up to the standards that my mother and the church had believed that I would not be good enough to get to heaven. I lived my childhood and teen years in fear and frustration. In high school I met a girl who was a born-again Christian. I saw in this new friend a love for Jesus that I had not experienced as well as a freedom to love Him without all these rules. Initially I thought that I would show her that Sabbath-keeping was mandatory for Christians, but she instead explained to me with the aid of Scripture that Christ had fulfilled all of the old law at the cross. I made a decision to accept the gift of salvation that Christ offered me through grace.

Not an institution

CHRIS BADENHORST 5

I found the feast!

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Humility and foot washing

RICHARD GOYNE 13

Redeemed from the chains of legalism

SHIRLEY BURTON

But as I remembered things I had refused to think about for a long time, I could feel the Lord's presence with me, giving me the words to say and showing me what He had done for me. It was awesome.

Shirley Burton lives in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. She has been married for 33 years to her husband Dan and they have three children who are grown and on their own. She was raised in an Adventist home and often felt like a prisoner to all the rules that the church taught. She currently worships at Waverley Fellowship Baptist Church in Winnipeg. She loves to travel, spend time at their cottage, scrapbook and read.

Redeemed from the yoke of legalism

SHIRLEY BURTON BACK PAGE
The gates of hell have not Prevailed

In gratitude and awe I allowed myself to sit and cry as, moved by the ancient act of baptism, I saw myself for the first time connected by the unbroken life of the Holy Spirit to all those earliest Christ-followers, including the apostles themselves.

I had also learned that the church had become corrupted, that Martin Luther and the Reformation freed it from its papal pollution—but that neither Luther nor any other reformer had “all the light.” It remained for the Adventist Church to continue Luther’s reformation and restore to God’s church the true Sabbath and the knowledge of Jesus’ eminent return.

As I watched people declare their loyalty to Jesus that Sunday, I was overwhelmed realizing that the true church of the Lord Jesus had never disappeared. In spite of darkness and corruption, there have always been true Christ-followers keeping alive the apostolic teaching of Jesus and Him crucified, risen, and ascended to the Father.

The good news of Jesus’ completed atonement for our sin and of salvation by faith alone through grace alone in Christ alone has never disappeared. Had not Jesus Himself promised that the “gates of Hades will not overcome [His church]” (Matthew 16:18)? How could I have ever imagined that the true body of Christ had disappeared or was distinct from this miraculous birth begun at Pentecost and continued throughout the book of Acts?

In gratitude and awe I allowed myself to sit and cry as, moved by the ancient act of baptism, I saw myself for the first time connected by the unbroken life of the Holy Spirit to all those earliest Christ-followers, including the apostles themselves.

The gates of hell have not Prevailed

Colleen Tinker

Proclamation!
I had always felt so alone in my spiritual journey; I knew only one other person who had experienced the yoke of Adventism and had received Christ. Now I knew that I had brothers and sisters in Christ who understood. I was overwhelmed.

with this frustration and helplessness was to put it out of my mind. I was not yet ready to process my own experience in the church.

Approximately ten years ago I met a vocalist at a funeral home at which I worked. The first time we met she pulled out her Seventh-day Adventist hymnbook, and I reacted with some thoughts—here is another person who is bound by legalism and will not understand what I have experienced. She is an amazing vocalist, and that day we began a friendship that continues to this day. I believe she did not know initially that I was raised an Adventist, but it wasn’t long until she found out, and we started to have some discussions about faith. At one point she invited me to attend some Revelation meetings growing up, and they were stoned, but the Scriptures indicate that the Savior who loved me, who died for me and released me from the burden of legalism. I will never know this side of Glory sanctuary. I had felt enormous guilt at not following the call I felt pressing on my heart as I stayed hunkered down between my parents. Once I went forward, I felt an overwhelming sense of happiness because I knew that I would have a better chance of going to heaven now that I would soon be baptized into the Adventist church.

Ephesians 2:8-9 says, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of grace.” Proclamation!}

About 7 years ago, my family left the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Looking back, it is amazing to remember the proud feeling I had when I could tell someone that I was a Seventh-day Adventist. I was born Adventist. My parents were very involved in our church, from the tech team to children’s ministry. This involvement, of course, made me very involved as well. From a young age I was playing the piano for church, doing special music, volunteering at the Amazing Facts Crusade. I eagerly soaked up all of the material and knew all of the facts and could quote all of the prophecies and dates. I remember crying because I thought that my best friend, who was a non-denominational Christian, wouldn’t go to heaven because she attended church on Sunday and didn’t know the “Truth.”

At eleven years of age I was arguably a more devout Adventist than many in the church. I remember clearly the day I obeyed the altar call and went up to the front in our church
God—not by works, so that no one can boast.” In spite of all the Scripture memorization I did when I was a child, somehow I didn’t know what the Bible said about the Sabbath. I continued to struggle with legalism and false religion. My transformation did not happen overnight. My family started attending the comfortable Saturday night service at a nearby Adventist church. We definitely were not breaking the Sabbath—but were we succumbing to Sunday worship? One weekend, though, the church announced the completion of its new worship center—an event which would call for the abridgment of the church service schedule. From heaven, I obeyed all the Adventist laws and regulations. No matter how my friends pressed me, I ate only the crusts of bread at night, crying, afraid that if I died, I would not go to heaven. I prayed and asked Jesus to come into my heart on at least a weekly basis.
Proclamation!

SEPTEMBER
OCTOBER
2006

LETTERS

to the Editor

Adventist Pastor David Newman Writes

I refer to your answer to the letter headed "Immensely sad" in the May/June issue. I was immensely sad by your reply. It is always dan-
gerous when you make absolute statements as you did when you wrote, "In addition, they essentially keep their salvation by continuing to obey the Ten Commandments. If people were to abandon any of them—not most notably the fourth—they would lose their salvation.”

In logic fallacies this is called a hasty general-
ization. Have you surveyed every Adventist in the world to see if they believe this way? I cer-
tainly do not and I know many other pastors and church members who believe the same way I do.

Your answer at the beginning of your com-
ment was correct. Since right behavior is never the ground of our acceptance with God the other side of the equation must also be correct, wrong behavior cannot keep a person out of heaven. One is saved from first to last by the complete sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. One is not lost by not keeping the Sabbath or giving up the Sabbath! If a person is lost it is because they do not have a saving relationship with Jesus, trusting in Him completely through faith. One is saved because one chooses to enter into a saving relationship with Jesus. The only way to lose that salvation is if a person chooses to reject that saving relationship. Unfortunately, you have such a fixation against the Sabbath you cannot see that many people honor the seventh-day Sabbath for very different reasons from what you give.

I honor the Sabbath not as part of the ground of my acceptance but as the accepted symbol in Scripture for justification, for grace.

You see when I cease to work my ordinary work on the Sabbath I am reminded that I cannot work my way to heaven. Just as I trust God to provide for my physical needs by not working on that day so I trust God to provide for my spir-
itual needs, my salvation. Fifty-two times a year I am reminded in a wonderful object lesson that I trust God completely for my salvation through faith alone. The Sabbath is all about grace.

Please, unless you have surveyed ALL Adventists do not tar me with your brush. Use statements such as “some Adventists believe this way.”

Sincerely, J. David Newman, D.Min, Senior Pastor New Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church Fulton, Maryland.

In the four years that I have been at New Hope where grace is the premier doctrine and teaching we have grown from 250 in atten-
dance to 620 with an increase in membership from 368 to 538 persons. Grace is what wins people.

Sabbath observance is also actively taught in Adventist schools as well as from pulpits.

Further, the Sabbath is not the “premier symbol in Scripture for justification, for grace.” Actually, the books of Romans and Hebrews and Galatians and Colossians pres-
ent Jesus and His cross as the premier “sym-
bol” of justification and grace. The Sabbath with all other Sabbaths were “a mere shadow of what you give.

I honor the Sabbath not as part of the ground of my acceptance but as the accepted symbol in Scripture for justification, for grace.

Editor’s response

Thank you for your email. I understand what you are saying about the Sabbath. In fact, your letter illustrates a very real problem within Adventism today. If we were to survey a sampling of Adventists from around the world, they would believe many different things. Many would say that they actually do not believe one or more of the traditional Adventist “distinctives.”

The fact remains, nevertheless, that the Seventh-day Adventist church still maintains Sabbath-keeping as a necessary observance for those who have heard and understood the Sabbath doctrine. General Conference President Jan Paulson, in his “Theological” Landscape of 2002, said that he would stand to lose his salvation if he were to give up the Sabbath. The fact that one or thousands of Adventists may be convinced by logic in the Sabbath or in any other Adventist distinctive does not negate the church’s official require-
ments and teachings. In fact, Sabbath obser-
vance as the seal of God and Sunday “wor-
ship” as the mark of the beast are still taught in official Adventist evangelistic campaigns.

of what is to come, but the substance belongs to Christ” (Col 2:17).

While it is true that Romans 14:5 clarifies that any day may be honored or all may be considered alike, this allowance does not sug-
gest that Sabbath or any other day has a spe-
cial meaning in the New Covenant. I under-
stand your reasoning for keeping the Sabbath; I have used similar reasons in the past for my own Sabbath-keeping. The fact remains, however, that this reasoning is a

form of rationalizing that allows one to embrace publically the most visible Adventist doctrine while mentally distancing oneself from the untenable reality of the actual teachings of the church. It allows people to appear loyal while mentally disagreeing.

If you truly do not believe that the Sabbath is in any way connected to your sal-
vation, you are offering a confused message to your parishioners by representing the Adventist church. Since the church has a clear and present teaching about Sabbath sacred-
ness and its meaning, to be a pastor who does not believe this teaching puts one in the uncomfortable position of rationalizing and of living in deep cognitive dissonance. Unless one actually believes the church’s doctrines and official teachings, he is acting dishonestly if he officially represents that church as a loyal member.

Respectfully, I disagree that it would be more accurate to say “some Adventists believe this way.” Adventists DO believe in Sabbath sacredness. Those who do not are living with deep compromise.

In Jesus, Colleen Tinker, editor

The true church
Not an institution

Many Christian denominational creeds or statements of faith describe the nature of the Christian Church in the language of The Nicene Creed (AD 325) as the “one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.” These attrib-
utes, which constitute the true church, are biblical concepts. During the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, controversy arose over the identity of the true church. The Papacy contended that the Church of Rome was the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church. The Reformers, on the other hand, denied Rome’s claim, but how could one test the claims of divergent reli-
gious bodies to be the “true church”? The New Testament teaches that the attributes of the true church are soterio-
logical and not institutional. The church is one because the atonement that Christ made on the cross has “destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostil-
ity…His purpose was to create in union with himself one new man, thus making peace” (Eph. 2:14, 15). So, the barrier which separates fellow believers according to class, race and sex has been removed by Christ’s death on the cross. The risen Lord is therefore the exalted Head of “a new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17) which is His "one body” (Eph. 1:16, 19-23; 2:14).

The church is holy because by His death on the cross Christ purchased and set apart to be God’s chosen people all those who believe the Gospel. In biblical usage “holiness” or “sancification” refers to that which is set apart by God for His service—which includes preaching the Gospel of salvation, reconciliation and
peace. The community of believers in Christ is the fellowship of “those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy” (1 Cor. 1:2). So, the “saints” are those who have put their trust in Christ as Saviour, who have been born again by the Holy Spirit, who have been reconciled to God and to each other and whom God has separated from the world to be His people (2 Thess. 2:13; 14; 2 Tim. 1:9, 10).

The church is Catholic (i.e. universal) because Christ has made a universal (payment) on the cross for the sins of the whole world and because this good news is now being proclaimed to “every nation, tribe, language and people” (Rev. 14:6). So, the universal church of God consists of all believers in Christ throughout the world. These are they who have received forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ’s name (Acts 10:43) and who have been born again into the family and kingdom of God (John 1:12, 13; 3:1-8). Local congregations are but the local manifestations of the one universal church of Christ.

The church is apostolic because its faith and life are grounded solely on the testimony of the apostles whom Christ sovereignly appointed to witness and proclaim His saving work (Luke 6:13; Acts 1:2, 21, 22; John 14:26; 15:26; 17:20). The New Testament has preserved as well the implications of all these things for the life of the believing community—that it is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. Just as the church was founded upon the apostles’ witness, so is it nourished and grows by continuing in the apostles’ interpretation of the Gospel (1 Thess. 1:2-5; 2 Tim. 3:1-5). This commitment to the apostolic witness alone will safeguard the unity, holiness and catholicity of the church.

The Reformation

The Reformation denudes Rome’s claim that its organization constituted the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church because they had discovered a vital truth in the New Testament—that the attributes of the church are not institutional but sociological. Therefore, the nature of the church could not be correctly understood apart from the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus did they contend that the church’s real unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity are all rooted in God’s great saving act on Calvary. This Gospel alone would produce the attributes by which the true church can be known. They therefore stated that the true church could be identified by whether or not the faithful preaching of the Gospel and the proper administration of baptism and the Lord’s Supper (by which the Gospel is portrayed) were present in the community.

Therefore, according to the New Testament and the Reformers, Christ’s true church is the community of all who have put their trust in Him, and its attributes may be described as “one, holy, catholic and apostolic.” The marks by which we may know the true church are: it believes and faithfully proclaims the pure and unadulterated Gospel as recorded in the Scriptures by the Lord’s chosen apostles, and it faithfully administers baptism and the Lord’s Supper (by which the Gospel is portrayed). Thus, the marks of holiness, catholicity and apostolicity are therefore grounded upon the Gospel of Christ’s finished work of redemption on the cross.

Congregations are to maintain the traditions delivered to them by the apostles. The strongest condemnation rests upon anyone who would corrupt the purity of the apostolic Gospel. The apostles’ interpretation of the Gospel is the final norm of sound teaching.

Sectionary Claims

Certain religious institutions claim to be Christ’s only true church to the exclusion of other Christian groups, which are regarded as apostate Babylon. In attempts to find scriptural support for such self-justifying claims, appeal is made to certain proof-texts upon which dubious interpretations are imposed. For example, Roman Catholicism appeals to Matthew 16:18 “(And I tell you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church)” in an effort to establish its supremacy.

Thanks for sanctification article

I would like to thank Laila Maliy for her well written article (“Sanctification: It’s who you know,” Proclamation! July/August 2006). It is a wonderful testimony of her journey to grace. Her personal experiences touched my heart. In particular, “the...reluctance to trust God with my emotions” as well as the “...process of opening up our innermost hearts and emotions to the Holy Spirit” are, indeed a critical element in my own salvation.

As she stated, she did not understand this vulnerable necessity in her transformation. Lail, may the Lord continue to bless you on your walk with Him. Grace is a beautiful thing, and thank you for sharing it so well in your writing.

Beautiful!

The new Proclamation! look is beautiful! God bless you.

Please send subscription

I personally left the SDA church (over 10 years ago) when 2006 God revealed to me the true Gospel. What a relief! God’s grace has been. Anyway, I was in the process of writing several papers on much research I had done over the years regarding God’s White and the Adventist church’s teachings that are contrary to what Scripture teaches. Then I discovered (the Life Assurance) website and its resources which are clear, concise and better written than anything I could probably produce. I bought and read most of the books offered and now plan to share these with my family. I have been praying for God’s timing in this for a long time.

Thanks for your hard work in putting these magazines together. May God be glorified and his kingdom increased through you and your work.

Thank you

I want to thank you for Proclamation! I have been receiving it for a few years now and have been blessed...I am now grounded in the Lord and in a great condemnation rest...The only thing I have a problem with is myself, I get mad that I spent 12 years as an Adventist, and that I sheltered my kids in the Adventist circle. Again thank you for your ministry.

Amazing

Thank you for your magazine. It is very relevant and encouraging to me, a former Adventist. It is amazing how threatened and angry some people can get when confronted with the evidence that their belief system might be wrong. Keep up the good work.

Need materials for classes

I read some copies of Proclamation! and am very interested in them. I am a devout, God-fearing Christian. Presently, I’m getting together a bunch of materials to give seminars and classes on cuts and false religions. I’m willing to send donations in exchange for a subscription to your magazine.

Missing the magazine

May the grace of God be with you now and forever.

October

Let us keep this discussion going.

The best way to meet this need is to get on board. This is a great magazine and has been for many years.

Thank you for your hard work in putting these magazines together. May God be glorified and his kingdom increased through you and your work.

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Open letter to Richard Tinker

Richard, don’t you have any decency? How could you have been receiving a check, month after month, for years from an organization dependent on and supported by the Church that you were trying to destroy?

Don’t you know that the Conferences of the Pacific Union allocate almost 25% of the tithe to our educational institutions?

Don’t you have any sense of ethical or moral conduct? Don’t you have any understanding of what “honest in all things” is all about?

Don’t you know what a “hypocrite” is? I don’t believe for a moment that you...prayed for years about leaving Loma Linda, but it seemed that God’s answer was “Wait.”

I can tell you that God was not the one telling you to wait; probably it was another spirit. God plainly says in His Word that the people who try to undermine and destroy His church are false brethren secreted away who came in by stealth to spy...”(Galatians 2:4.5) ...false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies...with deceptive words...”(2 Peter 2:1-3).

I only regret that I did not know that you were working in one of our institutions. I would have informed our administrators and lobbyed them, so you could have been fired a lot sooner.

Richard Tinker responds

I received a paycheck for performing my job to the best of my ability. That paycheck was not payment for my beliefs.

Loma Linda University has employees with a wide variety of religious beliefs. I have friends and acquaintances that teach or work on the staff at Loma Linda who are practicing Muslims, Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Roman Catholics, Buddhists, and agnostics as well as members of many protestant denominations.

I was never secretive about my beliefs or practices. As stated in my story (“Fired from Loma Linda,” Proclamation! July/August 2006), I informed my supervisor and also my dean when I left the Adventist church. They told me that my leaving would not be a problem. My work with Life Assurance Ministries was never hidden—administrators at Loma Linda University are on our mailing list.

God protected my position until my assignment at Loma Linda University was completed. I praised Him for His faithfulness and provision.

This is to inform you that I have not received my copy of Proclamation! for some time now and don’t want to miss it since the way you explain Grace and Law is so appreciated. So please put my name on the mailing list and let me receive my copy the next issue.

May God bless you and supply the means as you continue to proclaim the gospel truth.

Thank you very much.

God will take care of you

Just a short note this morning to encourage you to keep on working in your work with Life Assurance Ministries. God will take care of you, Richard. He will care for you in ways you don’t know.

We no longer attend an Adventist church. We feel so free. Last evening in my First Responders class, a fellow student told me how the pastor of the Adventist church they had been attending said this man’s wife could no longer help with the music because she had smoked. Now my conversation with her is not finished; there are more classes to come.

We pray for you daily.
The above claims by Adventism are also based on its unique interpretation of its cardinal text of Scripture—Daniel 8:14. Mrs. E.G. White, Adventism’s end-time prophetess, states: “The event referred to as ‘the cleansing of the sanctuary’ was first believed to refer to the second coming of Christ in glory to redeem the righteous and destroy the wicked by cleansing the earth with fire. Thus did they dogmatically set an exact date for the Lord’s return.”

But nothing can justify this date-setting, nothing at all, is against the explicit command of Holy Scripture and the lessons of history. When the Lord did not come as they predicted, the pioneers experienced what is referred to in Adventist history as the Great Disappointment. But instead of countering their senses and repenting for their apocalyptic foolishness, the pioneers re-interpreted Daniel 8:14 by linking it to “the cleansing of the sanctuary” on the Day of Atonement in ancient Israel. Based on this linkage they projected the entire Old Testament sanctuary ritual into heaven, making the heavenly ministration of Christ parallel to that of the earthly.

The implication of this teaching was clearly stated by the pioneer G.R.L. Crozer in his publishing treatise, On the Sanc- tuary in the Day-Star Extra of February 7, 1846. He explicitly declared that Christ makes the atonement in heaven. Therefore he concluded that Christ did not even begin his work of atonement until the last day of the 1844 circuit. In other words, according to the pioneers of Adventism, Christ did not make the atonement on the cross; He makes it in heaven from 1844 onwards. By this atonement the believer’s record of sins is blotted out, he receives justification “full and complete,” the irrevocable seal of God, and the latter rain.

This face-saving explanation of a two-apartment sanctuary in heaven as a result of the assumption that Christ went up to heaven in 1844, that Christ went from the first apartment to the second to com-
mence. His redemptive final atonement ministry became the foundation and central pillar of Adventism’s theology—the only original contribution it has made to Christian theology and the only legitimate reason for its existence as a religious body.

2. Adventism’s True Church and Remnant Claim

As stated above, Adventism claims to be the remnant which has survived the great Babylonian captivity (papal apostasy), which has come out of Babylon, and which is rebuilding the ruins by calling Christendom out of Babylon (denominationalism) to become part of God’s true church and end-time remnant—the Adventist denomination (see Joel 2:32, Rev. 12:17; 14:12).

The remnant motif first appears in the Old Testament in reference to the minority in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal (1 Kings 19:18). It later came to refer to those Jews who would survive the disaster of the Babylonian captivity. These survivors of Israel would be the faithful few (the remnant) who would return to rebuild the ruins of Jerusalem (Isa. 1:9-7; 10:20, 21; Amos 5:15).

But the New Testament apostles employed the remnant motif to describe the New Testament community. (Acts 15:14-19; Rom. 9:29-31; 11:5.) Thus did first-century Christians see themselves as the eschatological remnant by virtue of their faith-union with Christ. Dr. F. F. Bruce states it as follows: “When the crucial test came, the faithful remnant was reduced to one person, the Son of Man who entered death single-handed and rose again as his representative. With him the people of God died and rose again” (The New Testament Development of Old Testament Themes, p. 49). Surely then, to suggest that one could be “in Christ” though part of the end-time remnant is nonsensical. Therefore, in the light of the New Testament, the Christian Church or Body of Christ is the remnant since its inception on the day of Pentecost and will remain so until the last day when Christ will come again.

3. The Time of the End

The pioneers of Adventism developed their 1844 and end-time remnant doctrines on the assumption that the last days did not begin until 1798 (1844). James White, a prominent pioneer, said that the remnant of Joel 2:32 (meaning the Adventist remnant) did not appear until 1844. This led them to think that, as God’s remnant, they had to have a new message corresponding to the new era they had entered. Thus did they believe that their unique 1844 sanctuary doctrine was God’s end-time message entrusted to them as His remnant for Christendom and the world to prepare them for the coming of the Lord.

But the apostles declared that they were already living in the time of the end and that the Gospel they were preaching was God’s end-time message for the world. (Acts 2:17; Heb. 1:1-2; 9:26; 1 Pet. 2:10-20 Rev. 1:1.) “The proclamation of the Gospel is an eschatological event” (Gerhard Kittel, ed., Thesaurus of New Testament; and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, 2:729). This is clearly shown in the New Testament as follows:

1. The Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that Christ “has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (Heb. 9:26). Calvary is therefore an end-time event. Dr. F. F. Bruce states it thus: “It is not that the

Foot Washing and Humility

It is a practice in Adventist churches that the communion service is always preceded by the ordinance of foot washing. The practice of foot washing as a public expression of humility is not an innovation initiated by Adventists. It has been adopted by Anabaptists in the earliest years of the Protestant Reformation. It had continued in some of the churches which came into being at that time. Foot washing as an example of humility, had been practiced on various occasions through the centuries of the Christian era. The Kings of England had traditionally washed the feet of beggars at Christmas time until Queen Elizabeth I discontinued the custom.

The efforts of Anabaptists and others to introduce the practice was an attempt on their part to replicate what they understood the procedures of the Christian church at the time of the apostles to be. Most Christian churches (Anglican, Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant) do not, and never have, included foot washing as a prelude to the communion service. It would seem appropriate to review what the Scripture tells us about this subject.

The synoptic gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke all give accounts of the Last Supper in which Jesus initiated the communion service (Mt. 26:20-30, Mk. 14:17-26; Lk. 22:14-20). All of these gospel records detail the events that occurred and the words and acts of Jesus in the sharing of the bread (this is my body) and the wine (this is my blood). These gospels, however, say nothing about foot washing. Only John’s gospel records the foot washing incident. According to John, after Passover meal was finished, Jesus got up from the table and, taking a basin of water and a towel, washed the feet of his disciples (Jn. 13:4-5).

In reading these gospel records, there are certain features that stand out. The gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke say nothing about Jesus washing the feet of the disciples. This indicates that the authors of these three gospels did not consider the foot washing to be related to the communal sharing of the bread and wine by which Jesus instituted the Christian communion service.

John’s gospel, which records the foot washing, makes no mention of Jesus serving the bread and the wine to his disciples at the Last Supper. There is nothing in John’s account that would lead his readers to associate the foot washing with the communion service. John’s gospel was written some sixty-five years after the Last Supper, and, as far as is known, there did not exist any other account of the foot washing incident during that time.

Nor is there any mention of foot washing in any of the New Testament epistles by which the early church leaders sought to guide and instruct their congregations. This is especially noteworthy in the case of Paul’s first letter to the church at Corinth, for that church was not observing the communion service in an orderly and respectful manner. Paul reproved them and plainly set forth the manner in which the service should be conducted (1 Cor. 12:23-26). Surely, if foot washing was intended to be part of the preparation, Paul would have made mention of it in his

Richard Goyne is a retired professional engineer, age 96. Since retiring, he has earned a Master of Arts degree in theology and a Master of Sacred Theology degree and has published the book Roots and Branches of Christian Belief. He now lives in Oxford, Maryland.
Proclamation!

Proclamation!

Proclamation!

By proclaiming the truth about Jesus to Jews and Gentiles, Peter was doing more than conducting evangelistic crusades! He was opening the door to the kingdom through the Church – to Jews first, then to half-breeds (the Samaritans whom he had learned to despise that descend- ed from the Israelites of the northern ten tribes who had intermarried with the Babylonians during the exile) and finally to the Gentiles (that group whose food he had intermarried with the Babylonians during the exile) and the church of the Gentile Cornelius and his family.

The rock of the church is Christ

Since my recent trip to the Middle East, I have thought about Peter, “the stone” Nothing in his behavior, particularly in his denial of Jesus, assumes that Peter is the “rock.” Everything in Peter’s words recorded in the book of Acts assumes the church will be built on His Lord Jesus—the One who forgave him for his betrayal! Peter’s Pentecost message fulfilled God’s plan for him; he used the “keys of the kingdom”—those eternal and penetrating truths about Christ, His person, and His substitution for man’s sin—to preach boldly in order to usher new believers into the Kingdom of God: first Jews, then Samaritans, and finally Gentiles.

Last spring as I stood in Caesarea Philippi, in Jerusalem, in the area near Samaria, and finally in Caesarea on the Mediterranean, I rejoiced! Christ Jesus has been building His church for 2,000 years. With 50 other Gentile believers from Redlands, California, I praised God that our names had been written in the Lamb’s book of Life. As we sang “The Church’s One foundation Is Jesus Christ Her Lord,” we stood as “living Gentile stones” (1 Peter 2:25). Each one of us had been individually placed by the Holy Spirit into the church of Christ—His own body—now 2,000 years old and growing!

Conclusion

In view of the above, what arrogance is manifested in Adventism’s claim to be the remnant church while not positing that which alone makes a person part of God’s remnant—the true Gospel of Christ as promulgated by the New Testament apostles. Faith alone in this Gospel made the Gentiles part of the end-time remnant. The Jews had the Ten Commandments, observed the Sabbath and boasted the pos- session of more than one prophet (outdoing Adventism on this point). Yet they were excluded as a nation from the remnant because they rejected the Gospel concerning Christ and His saving work. Therefore, when weighed in the balances of the apostolic witness of the Gospel as recorded in the New Testament, Adventism is found wanting. Not only does it have the true Gospel, the three divergent theological strands within Adventism constitute nothing less than Babylonian confusion. And then it has the audacity to label all other Christian denominations Babylon! Adventism does not therefore qualify as the “one, holy, catholic and apostolic church” as per the attributes stated in the Nicene Creed.

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Standing before the craggy cliffs, I stared at the rough face of the mountain. This was the moun-
tain at “Caesarea Philippi”, or Panion—the area Jesus and His disciples frequented (Mt. 6:13; Mk. 8:27) dur-
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Christian pilgrims who had come to walk the steps of Jesus in the Holy Land. Now here we were, looking up at the huge rock formation where Jesus had posed the most important question any human being will ever answer: “Whom do
men say the Son of Man is?” These mountains had wit-
tnessed the answers to this question as well as Jesus’
prophetic words about how He would build His church.
I tried to imagine what the disciples were thinking two
thousand years earlier when they heard Jesus’ question.
They saw what we saw outside the Israel of their day which
was a short sixty-four miles north of Jerusalem: rough,
rugged mountains once given over to the honor of the
pagan god Pan. They heard the sound of rushing water—
one source of the Jordan River. They also heard Jesus’ voice,
and they did not mistake His question. Matthew says they
answered quickly: “Some say you are John the Baptist, oth-
ers say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the
prophets.”
“But what about you?” He asked, “Who do you say I am?”
Peter spoke up. By this time, he was the leader of the
group, the most eager to share his opinion. He regularly
said what he was thinking. This day was no exception: “You
are the Christ, the Son of the living God!”
This was no politically correct word nor a shoe-polishing
statement designed to impress Jesus. It came from Peter’s
heart. And Peter was, as Jesus said, “Blessed for blurting it
out!” He had not gained this information from “flesh and
blood” or from his good Jewish family. No one could take
credit for teaching Peter Jesus’ eternal identity. The Father in
heaven alone had revealed it to Peter. As He had watched
this Man called Jesus, God the Father had opened the eyes
of Peter’s heart to the truth about Jesus’ true nature: “You
are the Christ, Messiah, Anointed One. You are the One
promised in the Old Testament, come to earth. You fill full
the shadows of the Law by living out in real and human
substance God’s promises to Israel and to the world. You are
God in human flesh, and You are about to establish a New
Community.”
Jesus’ promise/prophesy of the church
What Jesus says to Peter next is significant for all who
take the name “Christ-follower”. His words clarify the identity
of those made alive by the Spirit, those whom He immerses
into the body of Christ. Jesus’ prophetic words set Peter
apart as God’s primary Apostolic voice for the planting of
the church. Christ’s words that “…I will build my church…”
know their infant fulfillment after three singular events: first,
when Peter preaches in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost
and 3,000 Jews come to faith in Christ (Acts 2); second, when
he and John visit the Samaritans to confirm their faith in
Christ (Acts 8); and third, when Peter witnesses Cornelius and
his family receiving Jesus—the first Gentiles to come to faith
in Christ (Acts 10). Each group—Jew, half-breed and
Gentile—receives the Holy Spirit at Caesarea and so com-
pletes the birth of the church.

Remembering Jesus’ words as members of the body of
Christ two thousand years after He spoke them thrilled us:
“You are Peter (little stone—petros, which is Peter’s name,
no figure of speech intended) and on this rock (petra—the
word is used of Christ Himself—a fact Peter understood and
records in 1 Peter 2:4,5,6 and Acts 4:11, 12) I will build my
church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will
give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven—whatever you
bind on earth will be bound in heaven…whatever you
loose on earth will be loosed in heaven” (Matt. 16:17-19).
After standing at Caesarea Philippi where Peter received
Jesus’ prophetic commission, we followed Peter’s Pentecost
journey, remembering his marching orders to “preach the
gospel for the loosening (forgiveness) of sins” so the Christ
could build His church. Retracing the apostle’s ancient
steps, I praised God for Peter who obeyed His Savior despite
his momentary denial. Peter’s faithfulness to His Lord’s
promise to build His church caused him to proclaim the
truth of Christ in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. There,
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Peter and the Keys

E L I Z A B E T H  I N R I G

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Remembering Jesus’ words as members of the body of Christ two thousand years after He spoke them thrilled us: “You are Peter (little stone—petros, which is Peter’s name, no figure of speech intended) and on this rock (petra—the word is used of Christ Himself—a fact Peter understood and records in 1 Peter 2:4,5,6 and Acts 4:11, 12) I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven—whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven…whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven” (Matt. 16:17-19).

After standing at Caesarea Philippi where Peter received Jesus’ prophetic commission, we followed Peter’s Pentecost journey, remembering his marching orders to “preach the gospel for the loosening (forgiveness) of sins” so the Christ could build His church. Retracing the apostle’s ancient steps, I praised God for Peter who obeyed His Savior despite his momentary denial. Peter’s faithfulness to His Lord’s promise to build His church caused him to proclaim the truth of Christ in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. There, three thousand Jews believed, repented, and were baptized into the body of Christ. Later, in the area of Samaria, I mag-
ied how overjoyed the Spirit-birthed believers were as the door of the gospel was opened to them, and many came to faith. Finally, in concurrence with the Scripture, as we stood at the Roman Aqueduct (pictured) in Caesarea by the Sea, I remembered how Peter opened the door of the church and of the kingdom to the Gentile Cornelius and his family.

By proclaiming the truth about Jesus to Jews and Gentiles, Peter was doing more than conducting evangelistic crusades! He was opening the door to the kingdom through the Church—to Jews first, then to half-breeds (the Samaritans whom he had learned to despise that descended from the Israelites of the northern ten tribes who had intermarried with the Babylonians during the exile) and finally to the Gentiles (that group whose food he had loathed and whose table he had spurned). More than that, he was ushering in the grand program planned from before the foundation of the earth: the gathering in of the New Covenant Community prophesied in the Old Testament (Jer. 31:31-33) to include Jews and Gentiles (John 11:12).

Furthermore, by being present when each of these three people-groups received the Holy Spirit as God’s seal on them (Ephesians 2:13-14), Peter gave Apostolic oversight and authority to the validity of their conversions. If he had not been present, the apostles in Jerusalem would likely have disagreed that the previously “Unclean” Samaritans and Gentiles could be included as full-fledged members of God’s people, and the church would have been split from its inception. Jesus appointed Peter to oversee His establishment of the church so there would be no doubt about His including Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles equally on the basis of their faith in Him, their repentance, their birth by the Holy Spirit, and their willingness to be baptized as the sign of their commitment to Him.

The rock of the church is Christ

Since my recent trip to the Middle East, I have thought about Peter, “the stone”-Nothing in his behavior, particularly in his denial of Jesus, assumes that Peter is the “rock”. Everything in Peter’s words recorded in the book of Acts assumes the church will be built on His Lord Jesus—the One who forgave him for his betrayal! Peter’s Pentecost message fulfilled God’s plan for him; he used the “keys of the kingdom”—those eternal and penetrating truths about Christ, His person, and His substitutionary atonement for man’s sin—to preach boldly in order to usher new believers into the Kingdom of God: first Jews, then Samaritans, and finally Gentiles.

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Just as Christianity stands or falls on the resurrection event, so Adventism stands or falls on the “1844 event.” If there were no resurrection, there would be nothing salvagable in Christianity. If no event of redemptive significance occurred in heaven on October 22, 1844, there is nothing salvagable in Adventism.

Conclusion

In view of the above, what arrogance is manifested in Adventism’s claim to be the remnant church while not positing that which alone makes a person part of God’s remnant—the true Gospel of Christ as promulgated by the New Testament apostles. Faith alone in this Gospel made the Gentiles part of the end-time remnant. The Jews had the Ten Commandments, observed the Sabbath and boasted the possession of more than one prophet (outdoing Adventism on this point). Yet they were excluded as a nation from the remnant because they rejected the Gospel concerning Christ and His saving work. Therefore, when weighed in the balances of the apostolic witness of the Gospel as recorded in the New Testament, Adventism is found wanting. Not only does it not have the true Gospel, the three divergent theological strands within Adventism constitute nothing less than Babylonian confusion. And then it has the audacity to label all other Christian denominations Babylon! Adventism does not therefore qualify as the “one, holy, catholic and apostolic church” as per the attributes stated in the Nicene Creed.
An Evaluation:

1. Adventism’s 1844 theology

What can be said of Adventism’s 1844 theology? Just as Christianity stands or falls on the resurrection event (1 Cor. 15:1-4), so Adventism stands or falls on the “1844 event.” If there is no resurrection, there would be nothing salvageable in Christianity. If no event of redemptive significance occurred in heaven on October 22, 1844, there is nothing salvable in Adventism.

But the pioneers, Mrs. White, and Adventism have staked everything on the veracity of this interpretation of Daniel 8:14. Adventism is adamant that God had revealed the true meaning of Daniel 8:14 to its pioneers and Mrs. White and that He has entrusted it to the Adventist denomination as His end-time message to Christendom and the world. This is the basis of Adventism’s triumphant self-image: “a special people with a special message for a special time” (to quote a popular Adventist slogan).

Not only, however, is there no biblical data—a clear “Thus saith the Lord”—to support the 1844 date and Adventism’s theology. If no 1844 event occurred, this 1844 theology is contrary to the New Testament Gospel. Christ’s finite, bodily death and resurrection (Acts 2:24-27, 36) are foundational in Christianity. If no event of redemptive significance occurred in heaven on October 22, 1844, there is nothing salvable in Adventism.

The New Testament apocalypse and the end-time remnant doctrines on the assumption that the last days did not arrive until 1844 (see Joel 2:32; Rev. 12:17; 14:12). The remnant motif first appears in the Old Testament in reference to the minority in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal (1 Kings 19:18). It later came to refer to those Jews who would survive the disaster of the Babylonian captivity. These survivors of Israel would be the faithful few (the remnant) who would return to rebuild the ruins of Jerusalem (Isa. 19:7; 10:20, 21; Amos 5:15).

But the New Testament apocalypse employed the remnant motif to describe the New Testament community. (Acts 15:14-18; Rom. 9:29-27; 11:1-5). Thus did first-century Christians see themselves as the eschatological remnant by virtue of their faith-union with Christ. Dr. F. F. Bruce states it as follows: “When the crucial test came, the faithful remnant was reduced to one person, the Son of Man who entered death single-handed and rose again as his people’s representative. With him the people of God died and rose again” (The New Testament Development of Old Testament Themes, p. 49). Surely then, to suggest that one could be in Christ through faith for Christ to be part of the end-time remnant is nonsense! Therefore, in the light of the New Testament, the Christian Church or Body of Christ is the remnant since its inception on the day of Pentecost and will remain so until the last day when Christ will come again.

3. The Time of the End

The pioneers of Adventism developed their 1844 and end-time remnant doctrines on the assumption that the last days did not arrive until 1798 (1844 era). James White, a prominent pioneer, said that the remnant of Joel 2:32 (meaning the Adventist remnant) would not arrive until 1798 (1844 era). James White, a prominent pioneer, said that the remnant of Joel 2:32 (meaning the Adventist remnant) would not arrive until 1798 (1844 era). The remnant motif became part of the Adventist denomination (see Joel 2:32; Rev. 12:17; 14:12).

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Proclamation!

SEPTEMBER 2006

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had the power to save and desired to save me. I decided that I
admitting the truth of my teacher’s statement and desiring to
One of my friends protectively went to the teacher, saying,
ple who don’t give Jesus his due role as Savior in their religions.
year of high school, my whole family was attending church
our hands by becoming true Sunday worshipers! It took a little
It wasn’t until toward the end of that semester that I was
Today, at 21, I look back on my Adventist days wistfully, won-
meat-eating would arouse animal passions especially in children,
and where I would be now if not for the all-
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I strongly believe, however, that God brings each of us
that the communion service is thereby held much less fre-
There are surely some members of a congregation who benefit
that he was “not as other men are.” In contrast, the publican
that any denomination’s doctrine of
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2006

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The apostles’ interpretation of the Gospel is the final norm of sound teaching (2 Ti. 1:13-14; Tit. 1:3, 9). This is “the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints” (Jude 3), and inseparable as the Christian Church upholds the true Gospel as proclaimed by the apostles, it is “the pillar and foundation of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15). This commitment to the apostolic witness alone will safeguard the unity, holiness and catholicity of the church.

Roman Catholicism
Rome interprets the attributes of the church in institutional terms. Unity means lockstep conformity and submission to the final norm of sound teaching. Holiness rests upon anyone who would corrupt the purity of the apostolic Gospel (Gal. 1:6-9). Catholicity and apostolicity are all rooted in God’s great saving act on Calvary. This Gospel alone would produce the attributes by which the true church can be known. They therefore stated that the true church could be identified by whether or not the faithful preaching of the Gospel and the proper administration of baptism and the Lord’s Supper (by which the Gospel is portrayed) were present in the community.

Therefore, according to the New Testament and the Reformers, Christ’s true church is the community of all who have put their trust in Him, and its attributes may be described as “one, holy, catholic and apostolic.” The marks by which we may know the true church are: it believes and faithfully proclaims the pure and unadulterated Gospel as recorded in the Scriptures by the Lord’s chosen apostles, and it faithfully administers baptism and the Lord’s Supper (by which the Gospel is portrayed). These attributes of holiness, catholicity and apostolicity are therefore grounded upon the Gospel of Christ’s finished work of redemption on the cross.

Sectionary Claims
Certain religious institutions claim to be Christ’s only true church to the exclusion of other Christian groups, which are regarded as apostate Babylon. In attempts to find scriptural support for such self-contradicting claims, appeal is made to certain proof-texts upon which dubious interpretations are imposed. For example, Roman Catholicism appeals to Matthew 16:18 (“And I tell you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church”) in an effort to establish its supremacy.

I have been praying for years regarding E.G. White and the Adventist Gospel. What a relief His grace has been. I have received forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ’s name and have been reconciled to God and to each other and whom God has separated from the world to be His people (2 Thess. 2:13, 14; 2 Tim. 1:9, 10).

The church is catholic (i.e. universal) because Christ has made atonement (payment) on the cross for the sins of the whole world and because this good news is now being proclaimed to “every nation, tribe, language and people” (Rev. 14:6). So the universal church of God consists of all believers in Christ throughout the world. These are they who have received forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ’s name (Acts 10:43) and who have been born again into the family and kingdom of God (John 1:12, 13; 3:1-8). Local congregations are but the local manifestations of the one universal church of Christ.

The church is apostolic because its faith and life are grounded solely on the testimony of the apostles whom Christ sovereignly appointed to witness and proclaim His saving work (Luke 6:13; Acts 1:2, 21, 22; John 14:26; 15:26; 17:20). The New Testament has preserved for the church the content of the apostles’ teaching concerning Christ, His redemptive work on the cross, His triumphant resurrection from the dead, and His ascension to heaven where He was exalted by the Father to sit at His right hand. The New Testament has preserved as well the implications of all these things for the life of the believing community—that is one, holy and catholic.

Just as the church was founded upon the apostles’ witness, so it is nourished and grows by continuing in the apostles’ teaching (Acts 2:42). Congregations are to maintain the traditions delivered to them by the apostles. The strongest condemnation rests upon anyone who would corrupt the purity of the apostolic Gospel (Gal. 1:6-9).

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Thanks for sanctification article
I would like to thank Lari Mobley for her well written article (“Sanctification: It’s who you know,” Proclamation! July/August 2006). It is a wonderful distillation of the history of the doctrine of sanctification. Her personal experiences touched my heart. In particular, the “…reluctance to trust God with my emotions” as well as the “…process of opening up my innermost hearts and emotions to the Holy Spirit” are, indeed a critical element in my own salvation.

As she stated, she did not understand this vulnerable necessity in her transformation. Lari, may the Lord continue to bless you on your walk with Him. Grace is a beautiful thing, and thank you for sharing it so well in your writing.

Beautiful
The new Proclamation! look is beautiful! God bless you.

Please send subscription
I personally left the SDA church (over 10 years) when God revealed to me the true Gospel. What a relief His grace has been. Anyway, I was in the process of writing several papers on much research I had done over the years regarding God’s Word and the Adventist church’s teachings that are contrary to what Scripture teaches. Then I discovered (the Life Assurance Ministries) and its resources which are clear, concise and better written than anything I could probably produce. I bought and read most of the books offered and now plan to share these with my family. I have been praying for God’s timing in this for a long time. Thanks for your hard work in putting these magazines together. May God be glorified and His kingdom increased through you and your work.

Thank you
I want to thank you for Proclamation! I have been receiving it for a few years now and have been blessed… I am now grounded in the Lord and in a great condemnation rest… The only thing I have a problem with is myself; I get mad that I spent 12 years as an Adventist, and that I sheltered my kids in the Adventist circle. Again thank you for your ministry.

Amazing
Thank you for your magazine. It is very relevant and encouraging to me, a former Adventist. It is amazing how threatened and angry some people are when confronted with the evidence that their belief system might be wrong. Keep up the good work.

Need materials for classes
I read some copies of Proclamation! and am very interested in them. I am a devout, God-fearing Christian. Presently, I’m getting together a bunch of materials to give seminars and classes on cults and false religions. I’m willing to send donations in exchange for a subscription to your magazine.

Missing the magazine
May the Grace of God be with you now and forever.

Open letter to Richard Tinker
Richard, don’t you have any decency? How could you have been receiving a check, month after month, for years from an organization dependent on and supported by the Church that you were trying to destroy?

Don’t you know that the Conferences of the Pacific Union allocate almost 25% of the tithe to our educational institutions?

Don’t you have any sense of ethical or moral conduct? Don’t you have any understanding of what “conflict of interests” is all about?

Don’t you know what a “hypocrite” is?

I don’t believe for a moment that you “…prayed for years about leaving Loma Linda, but it seemed that God’s answer was ‘Wait.’”

I can tell you that God was not the one telling you to wait; probably it was another spirit. God plainly says in His Word that the people who try to undermine and destroy His church are false brethren…”

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Loma Linda University has employees with a wide variety of religious beliefs. I have friends and acquaintances that teach or work on the staff at Loma Linda University who are practicing Muslims, Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Roman Catholics, Buddhists, and agnostics as well as members of many protestant denominations.

I was never secretive about my beliefs or practices. As stated in my story (“Dying to Live,” Proclamation! July/August 2006), I informed my supervisor and also my dean when I left the Adventist church. They told me that my leaving would not be a problem. My work with Life Assurance Ministries was never hidden—administrators at Loma Linda University are on our mailing list.

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Don’t you know that the Conferences of the Pacific Union allocate almost 25% of the tithe to our educational institutions?

I long regret that I did not know that you were working in one of our institutions. I would have informed our administrators and lobbyists them, so you could have been fired a lot sooner.

Richard Tinker responds
I received a paycheck for performing my job to the best of my ability. That paycheck was not pay- ment for my beliefs. Loma Linda University has employees with a wide variety of religious beliefs. I have friends and acquaintances that teach or work on the staff at Loma Linda University who are practicing Muslims, Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Roman Catholics, Buddhists, and agnostics as well as members of many protestant denominations.

I was never secretive about my beliefs or practices. As stated in my story (“Dying to Live,” Proclamation! July/August 2006), I informed my supervisor and also my dean when I left the Adventist church. They told me that my leaving would not be a problem. My work with Life Assurance Ministries was never hidden—administrators at Loma Linda University are on our mailing list.

God protected my position until my assignment at Loma Linda University was completed. I praised Him for His faithfulness and provision.

This is to inform you that I have not received my copy of Proclamation! for some time now and don’t want to miss it since the way you explain Grace and Law is so appreciated. So please put my name on the mailing list and let me receive my copy the next issue.

May God bless you and supply the means by which you continue to proclaim the gospel truth.

Thank you very much.

God will take care of you
Just a short note this morning to encourage you to keep on in your work with Life Assurance Ministries. God will take care of you, Richard. He will care for you in ways you don’t know.

We no longer attend an Adventist church. We feel so free. Last evening in my First Responders class, a fellow student told me how the pastor of the Adventist church they had been attending said this man’s wife couldn’t go to church because she smoked. How sad! My conversation with Nic now is not finished; there are more classes to come.

We pray for you daily.
Adventist Pastor David Newman Writes

I refer to your answer to the letter headed “Immensely sad” in the May/June issue. I was immensely sad by your reply. It is always dangerous when you make absolute statements as you did when you wrote, “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.”

In logic fallacies this is called a hasty generalization. Have you surveyed every Adventist in the world to see if they believe this way? I certainly do not and I know many other pastors and church members who believe the same way I do.

Your answer at the beginning of your comment was correct. Since right behavior is never the ground of our acceptance with God the other side of the equation must also be correct, wrong behavior cannot keep a person out of heaven. One is saved from first to last by the complete sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. One is not lost by not keeping the Sabbath or giving up the Sabbath! If a person is lost it is because they do not have a saving relationship with Jesus, trusting in Him completely through faith. One is saved because one chooses to enter into a saving relationship with Jesus. The only way to lose that salvation is if a person chooses to reject that saving relationship.

Unfortunately, you have such a fixation against the Sabbath you cannot see that many people honor the seventh-day Sabbath for very different reasons from what you give.

I honor the Sabbath not as part of the ground of my acceptance but as the preeminent symbol in Scripture for justification, for grace. Sabbath observance is also actively taught in Adventist schools as well as from pulpits. Further, the Sabbath is not the “preeminent symbol in Scripture for justification, for grace.” Actually, the books of Romans and Hebrews and Galatians and Colossians present Jesus and His cross as the premier symbol of justification and grace. The Sabbath with all other Sabbaths were “a mere shadow of the things to come” as the New Covenant states. It allows people to embrace publicly the most visible Adventist doctrine while mentally distancing oneself from the untenable reality of the actual teaching of the church. It allows people to appear loyal while mentally disagreeing. If you truly do not believe that the Sabbath is in any way connected to your salvation, you are offering a confused message to your parishioners by representing the Adventist church.

As the church has a clear and present teaching about Sabbath sacredness and its meaning, to be a pastor who does not believe this teaching puts one in the uncomfortable position of rationalizing and of living in deep cognitive dissonance. Unless one actually believes the church’s doctrines and official teachings, he is acting dishonestly if he officially represents that church as a loyal member and official teachings, he is acting dishonestly if he officially represents that church as a loyal member and leader.

Respectfully, I disagree that it would be more accurate to say “some Adventists believe this way.” Adventists DO believe in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church. These attributes, which constitute the true church, are biblical concepts. During the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century controversy arose over the identity of the true church. The Papacy contended that the Church of Rome was the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church. The Reformers, on the other hand, denied Rome’s claim but how could one test the claims of divergent religious bodies to be the “true church”? Of the many Christian denominational creeds or statements of faith describe the nature of the Christian Church in the language of The Nicene Creed (AD 325) as the “one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.” These attributes, which constitute the true church, are biblical concepts.

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God—not by works, so that no one can boast.” In spite of all the Scripture memorization I did when I was a child, somehow I couldn’t understand that caffeine was the devil’s drug. As far back as I can remember I did everything in my power to do what I thought God wanted me to do. I read Sabbath books on Saturdays, didn’t watch movies when at friends’ houses, and gave up playing sports and having sleepovers for that oh-so-inconvenient 24-hour Sabbath period. As for foregoing certain activities on Saturdays, I knew that I might be违背ing the rules, and this obedience gave me incredible strength.

My mom home-schooled me and did an excellent job of having me participate in acceptable activities. I hardly noticed that my involvement was modified. Piano competitions, swim meets, birthday parties—all inevitably fell on Saturdays, and I missed them all, except for the piano Hymn Festival. For some reason, I couldn’t participate in the Rock Festival, Banquet Festival, or any of the other events that fell on Saturdays, but the Hymn Festival was deemed permissible.

The catalyst

During my eighth grade year, our church underwent a crisis which caused members to take sides and the church to crumble. As a result of this confusion, my mom stopped attending. God was definitely doing something in her life, though; she had a quiet, joyful peace she could not explain. Even though my dad was becoming disenchanted with the church, however, his tie to it was still overwhelmingly strong.

Now 13, I was very educated about Adventist doctrines and was quite a rabid little legalist. I believed it was very wrong for my mom not to be attending church that went with my dad and brothers. As the church continued to disintegrate, however, my dad stopped attending as well. It was only at this point that I began to sense not only my parent’s dissatisfaction with Adventism but my own. During this time my mom explained the gospel to me clearly, and I began to notice the “scales fall from my eyes”. Nonetheless, I continued to be fearful about my salvation and continued praying to receive Christ almost every night.

During this time of upheaval, I learned the truth about Ellen White, and I started to doubt other doctrines of the Adventist church. The longer we stayed away from church, the more the Bible came alive to me on its own. I remember reading certain passages of Scripture in disbelief—“has this verse always said this?” I wondered.

My transformation did not happen overnight. My family started attending the comfortable Saturday night service at a nearby Bible church. We definitely were not breaking the Sabbath—or were we succumbing to Sunday worship! One weekend, though, the church announced the completion of its new worship center—an event which would call for the abridgment of the church service schedule. From heaven, I obeyed all the Adventist laws and regulations. No matter how my friends messed me up, I refused to eat meat or dairy products or to drink anything with caffeine in it. Looking back now, I am amazed at how devout and disciplined I was then.

When I say that I was devout, I mean it in the fullest sense of the word. I was a very zealous little Adventist. I knew all the dietary laws and berated others for not following them. Because of our strict diet, I ate only the crusts of pizza, declined ice cream, soft drinks and candy, and never ate meat until my family left the church. Honified, I listened as some of the older kids at church talked about eating hamburgers and even drinking Cokes—didn’t they know that caffeine was the devil’s drug?}

With love and prayers

My [close relative] died. I would like to receive your publication… Thank you again for your faithfulness! I really enjoy Proclamation!

Mother/daughter letter

My daughter wrote the following paragraph to me and it has been quite encouraging to me.

“Dear Mom,

I know that believing in Christ is the only way to Heaven. I know that in order to receive eternal life, we must believe and confess our sins to our Lord. I am thankful to know that Jesus Himself is the One for whom we left. Now we obey not the temporal law (Galatians 3:13-25) but the law of Christ summarized by Jesus’ new command to us: ‘As I have loved you, so must you love one another’ (John 13:34). Sacrificial love is not an option for us, it is a command from Jesus.

Many people ask questions after my dad’s death about our personal relationship with Jesus. As a spiritual leader in our church, I have faced questions about our salvation without ever wanting to lead someone to Christ under such a banner. Dale Ratzlaff’s two books, Cultic Christian and Sabbath in Christ, given to me by a friend, were the nails in the coffin that had been in the making for a couple of years. I think it would be very helpful to your readers to write a Life Assurance Ministries magazine. I am happy to protect the support the ministry. Thanks for all the hard work you put into this. I have been one of many who have benefited from it.

To order Dale Ratzlaff’s books, phone 800-355-7073 (orders only). For more information you may call 623-572-9549.

Back come to the truth

I feel you have given up the Sabbath and eternal life.

Please enter both our notes in your magazine. I pray for the hurts you have all experienced, but do not agree with the way you seek to heal them.

We appreciate your concern. As surprising as it may seem, however, most of us have not left the church because of hurts or bad experiences. Rather, we left because God opened our eyes to the gospel of grace and the pure Word of God. Jesus Himself is the One for whom we left. Now we obey not the temporal law (Galatians 3:13-25) but the law of Christ summarized by Jesus’ new command to us: ‘As I have loved you, so must you love one another’ (John 13:34). Sacrificial love is not an option for us, it is a command from Jesus.

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Redeemed from the chains of legalism

I had always felt so alone in my spiritual journey; I knew only one other person who had experienced the yoke of Adventism and had received Christ. Now I knew that I had brothers and sisters in Christ who understood. I was overwhelmed.

with this frustration and helplessness was to put it out of my mind. I was not yet ready to process my own experience in the church. Approximately ten years ago I met a vocalist at a funeral home at which I worked. The first time we met she pulled out her Seventh-day Adventist hymnbook, and I reacted with those same thoughts—here is another person who is bound by legalism and will not understand what I have experienced. She is an amazing vocalist, and that day we began a friendship that continues to this day. I believe she did not know initially that I was raised an Adventist, but it wasn’t long until she found out, and we started to have some discussions about faith. At one point she invited me to attend some Sabbath. I politely thanked her but said no. I remembered about faith. At one point she invited me to attend some Adventists. I spent two wonderful weekends fellowshipping with Former Adventists who had found Christ—it was incredible! Once again I walked back into that time that I had wanted to forget, but this time it wasn’t just I who was walking. The Lord and I were hand-in-hand as I walked with my new brothers and sisters into shared memories, fears, and surpassing praise to God for His deliverance through the blood of Jesus!

A few months ago God gave me a special blessing—a trip to Palm Springs, California, which is 45 minutes away from Trinity Evangelical Free Church and a group of Former Adventists. I spent two wonderful weekends fellowshipping with Former Adventists who had found Christ—it was incredible! Once again I walked back into that time that I had wanted to forget, but this time it wasn’t just I who was walking. The Lord and I were hand-in-hand as I walked with my new brothers and sisters into shared memories, fears, and surpassing praise to God for His deliverance through the blood of Jesus!

I have many memories of a time that was bound with legalism and frustration, but I have far more memories of a time that was bound with the burden of legalism. I will never forget, but this time it wasn’t just I who was walking. The Lord and I were hand-in-hand as I walked with my new brothers and sisters into shared memories, fears, and surpassing praise to God for His deliverance through the blood of Jesus!

About 7 years ago, my family left the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Looking back, it is amazing to remember the proud feeling I had when I could tell someone that I was a Seventh-day Adventist. I was born Adventist. My parents were very involved in our church, from the youth team to children’s ministry. This involvement, of course, made me very involved as well. From a young age I was playing the piano for church, doing special music, volunteering at the Amazing Facts Crusade. I eagerly soaked up all of the material and knew all of the facts and could quote all of the prophecies and dates. I remember crying because I thought that my best friend, who was a non-denominational Christian, wouldn’t go to heaven because she attended church on Sunday and didn’t know the “Truth.”

At eleven years of age I was arguably more devout Adventist than many in the church. I remember clearly the day I obeyed the altar call and went up to the front in our church sanctuary. I had felt enormous guilt at not following the call I felt pressing on my heart as I stayed hunkered down between my parents. Once I went forward, I felt an overwhelming sense of happiness because I knew that I would have a better chance of going to heaven now that I would soon be baptized into the Adventist church.

Ephesians 2:8-9 says, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of grace.” I was saved through grace—Praise His Name. AERIN TOUSSAINT

Aerin Toussaint graduated from Texas A&M in May of 2006, majoring in English and minoring in communications. The summer after graduation, she went to Zambia, Africa, for a month to work with orphans and underprivileged children there (see picture). When she returned to the states, she began a one-year full-time internship at her college church, Grace Bible Church, in College Station, Texas. She believes that God is leading her to pursue a future in ministry of some kind, and although she does not currently know what that future will look like, she knows that He has a plan for her life, and she is eager to see what that is!
The gates of hell have not Prevailed

Proclamation!

Editor’s COMMENTS

The gates of hell have not Prevailed

In gratitude and awe I allowed myself to sit and cry as, moved by the ancient act of baptism, I saw myself for the first time connected by the unbroken life of the Holy Spirit to all those earliest Christ-followers, including the apostles themselves.

The gates of hell have not Prevailed

but that neither Luther nor any other reformer had “all the light.” It remained for the Adventist Church to continue Luther’s reformation and restore to God’s church the true Sabbath and the knowledge of Jesus’ eminent return.

As I watched people declare their loyalty to Jesus that Sunday, I was overwhelmed realizing that the true church of the Lord Jesus had never disappeared. In spite of darkness and corruption, there have always been true Christ-followers keeping alive the apostolic teaching of Jesus and Him crucified, risen, and ascended to the Father.

The good news of Jesus’ completed atonement for our sin and of salvation by faith alone through grace alone in Christ alone has never disappeared. Had not Jesus Himself promised that the “gates of Hades will not overcome [His church]” (Matthew 16:18)? How could I have ever imagined that the true body of Christ had disappeared or was distinct from this miraculous birth begun at Pentecost and continued throughout the book of Acts?

In gratitude and awe I allowed myself to sit and cry as, moved by the ancient act of baptism, I saw myself for the first time connected by the unbroken life of the Holy Spirit to all those earliest Christ-followers, including the apostles themselves.

In these pages Chris Badenhorst examines the true nature of Christ’s body and contrasts that with the Adventist belief in its status as the “remnant church of Bible prophecy.” Elizabeth Inrig explains the birth of the church, and Richard Goyne discusses the Adventist tradition of adding foot-washing to the communion service. Recent college graduate Aein Tousant tells her story of finding Jesus as her Savior and of subsequently finding the church.

All of us, like sheep, strayed far from our Shepherd, wandering in deception and despair. He knew where we were, however, and He found us, rescued us and carried us to His fold. Now that we are safe, we notice that we are surrounded by a whole body of sheep that belong to the Shepherd.

Join us for a weekend of celebrating that we belong to the Good Shepherd. As His sheep, we have the awesome privilege of knowing Him and of learning to function in His flock. Enjoy presentations and small group breakout sessions in which we will learn how to live, grow, and participate in the true body of Christ.

“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.” 1 Peter 2:24-25, NIV

SCHEDULE

• Friday, February 16, 2007, 6:00 to 7:00 PM • Arrival and registration
• Meetings and breakout sessions Friday through Saturday evening
• Worship service on Sunday morning

TO REGISTER (SPACE LIMITED TO THE FIRST 200)

• $75 per person (on or before January 31, 2007)
• $75 per person (on or before January 19, 2007)

• You must register by January 19, 2007 so that we can make meal plans.
• Make check payable to “LAM” and return in enclosed envelope.
• Fee includes cost of sessions, handouts, three meals, and snacks.
• You must make your own lodging/transportation arrangements.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PHONE 909-794-9804

Editor's Comments

The gates of hell have not Prevailed

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...we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit. Romans 7:6

Redeemed from the chains of legalism

Shirley Burton

It was Tuesday evening, and the ladies had come to my home for our weekly Bible study. We were studying To Live Is Christ—The Life and Ministry of Paul by Beth Moore. That particular week we had studied Paul’s first missionary journey. After we had opened with prayer, one of the women remarked how impacted she was by the fact that in Acts 14:21, Paul had gone back to the cities where he had been beaten and stoned to see how the brothers were doing. Even though he had experienced many difficulties, he was willing to risk again and go back.

Paul’s return to the places that had been difficult for him encourages me as I look back at my journey out of Seventh-day Adventism. It began 37 years ago when I was a teenager. I was raised in a strict Seventh-day Adventist home and often felt like a prisoner to all the rules that the church taught. I knew that I was not measuring up to the standards that my mother and the church had believed that I would not be good enough to get to heaven. I lived my childhood and teen years in fear and frustration. In high school I met a girl who was a born-again Christian. I saw in this new friend a love for Jesus that I had not experienced as well as a freedom to love Him without all these rules. Initially I thought that I would show her that Sabbath-keeping was mandatory for Christians, but she instead explained to me with the aid of Scripture that Christ had fulfilled all of the old law at the cross. I made a decision to accept the gift of salvation that Christ offered me through grace and became a born-again believer. For many years after that I had minimal contact with Adventists other than my mother who remains a member to this day. When I thought of those who still remained in the Adventist church, I pictured people walking with very heavy loads of legalistic rule strapped to their feet. With that scene in my head came frustration and at times anger with a church that taught such crippling doctrines. Further, I was so excited about my new relationship with Christ I wanted the Adventist people also to experience this relationship with Him. I had tried sharing my newfound faith with a

Shirley Burton lives in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. She has been married for 33 years to her husband Dan and they have three children who are grown and on their own. She was raised in an Adventist home and became a born-again Christian at the age of 18 through the influence of a godly Christian friend that she met in high school. She currently worships at Waverley Fellowship Baptist Church in Winnipeg. She loves to travel, spend time at their cottage, scrapbook and read.

But as I remembered things I had refused to think about for a long time, I could feel the Lord’s presence with me, giving me the words to say and showing me what He had done for me. It was awesome.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18