

DID PAUL MISUNDERSTAND JESUS? DALE RATZLAFF 14

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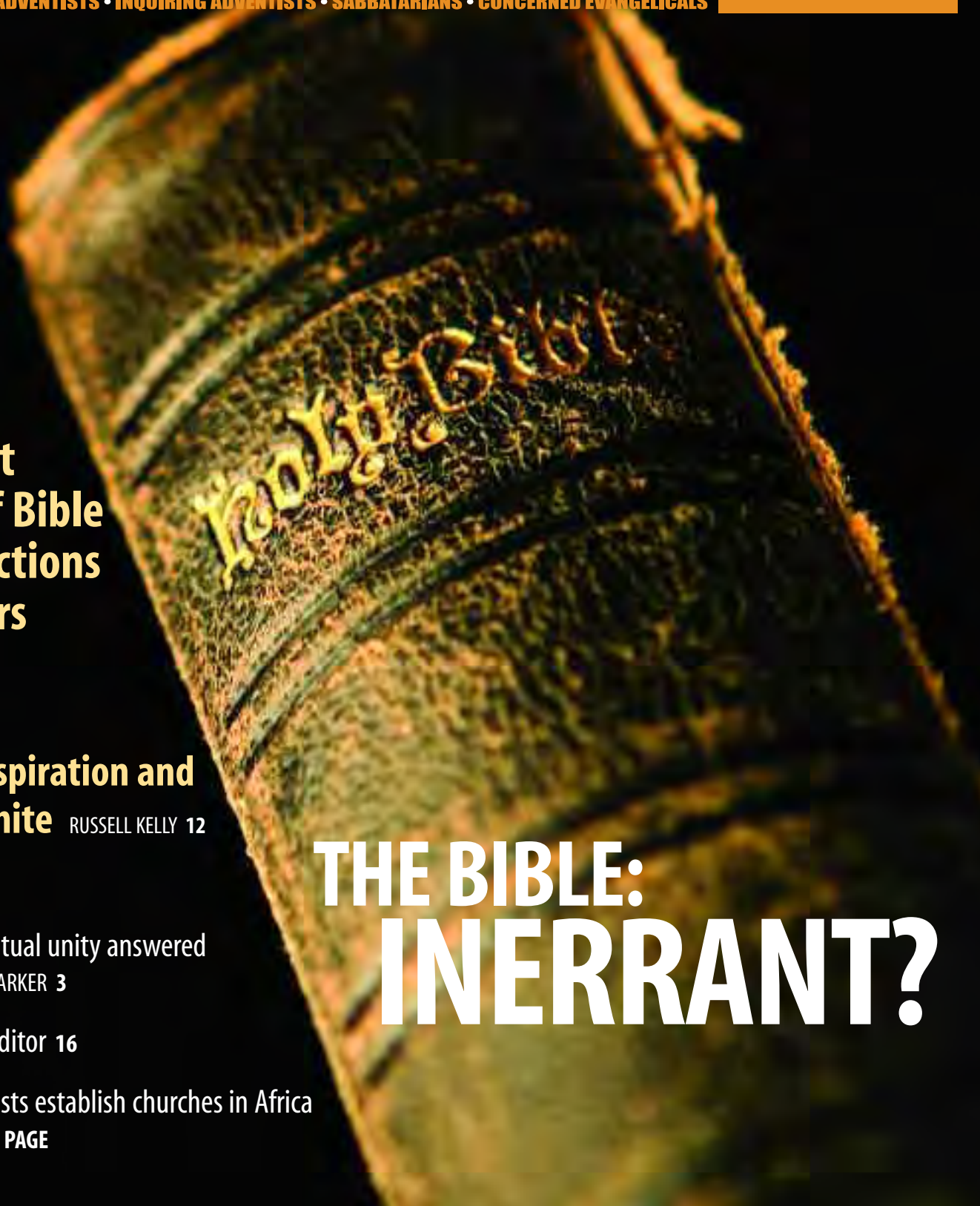
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THE BIBLE: INERRANT?



Word of man or, **Word of God** COLLEEN TINKER

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 jettisoned 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 fledgling 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 fact 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 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 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 to understand" when one finds his writings contradicting 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. **!**

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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Prayers for SPIRITUAL UNITY ...answered!

RICK AND SHERYL
BARKER



Rick: The story of how we left the Seventh-day Adventist church together is really two very different but intertwined stories. For instance, I married into Adventism, while Sheryl was born into it.

Sheryl: I grew up in a very conservative Adventist family. At our daily family worship, Ellen White's writings were read almost as regularly as the Bible; it seemed we had every book she'd ever written in our library. I was extremely proud of being born into the correct church. I also have to say at this point that one thing I am most grateful for in my strict Adventist upbringing is a desire for truth and integrity.

As I read the Bible for myself, I saw a major disconnect between the tone of Ellen White's writings and the Jesus the Bible portrayed. This was the beginning of things not adding up, and I shelved it to be figured out later.

During my senior year at the Adventist day academy, I met Rick through work orientation at the Adventist hospital. About a year later, when Rick asked me to marry him, I told him I would if he would promise me that he would at least take a serious look at what I believed. I was confident that if he just studied Adventism with an open mind, he would see how obvious the truth was and would become an Adventist.

Rick: We started with a prepared Bible

study that was recommended for just this purpose. I insisted 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: I 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 Him.

Rick Barker 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 Barker** was a multigenerational Adventist. She graduated from Spring Valley Academy (Dayton, Ohio) in 1982 and attended both Kettering College of Medical Arts and Andrews University. She left the Adventist church for Jesus in July, 2004.





Rick: This topic became taboo in our house around this time. I changed majors, since I could no longer consider becoming an Adventist pastor. I was confused, angry, and felt completely alone. I decided that all of my conclusions must be wrong; if I were just a holier and better person, I might understand better. But I also knew it was hopeless for me to be a better and holier person. I reached a point where I didn't want anything to do with God. I was in that condition for about seven years.

Sheryl: During my second pregnancy, my interest in God was rekindled. Shortly after our second daughter was born, I started going to the Adventist church and decided I'd concentrate on being a normal, mainstream Adventist; I'd read my Bible and completely ignore anything from church that didn't set right with me.

Rick: 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 preaching again. I quietly ignored anything that came up that I didn't agree with, and I focused my own teaching, preaching and studying on grace. I was asked several times about becoming an elder. I refused without telling people that the real reason was that I couldn't accept so many of the Adventist doctrines.

Sheryl: I felt blessed that we finally were worshiping together. At the same time, I felt like 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 fit together and explain everything to me, so that we would both be fully committed to Adventism without any doubts.

Rick: At this point I had settled into a comfortable routine at church. The members were very grace oriented, and we rarely heard anything about Ellen White. We had plenty of friends at church, and I was able to teach Sabbath School and preach fairly regularly. I had mentally set aside my doctrinal differences and just focused on worshiping with this group of people, knowing that my membership was in Jesus, not in an earthly congregation. But now it was Sheryl's turn to rock my world.

It all started when our youngest daughter, 8 years old at the time, begged to do the offering appeal at church.

Sheryl: That left me to figure out what she should say up there. I asked her if she knew what the tithe was for, and she said it was for missions. I told her that actually it gave the pastor a paycheck. She was absolutely shocked, and said "What!?!? You mean we give a special speech, march down the aisle with offering plates, say a prayer over it, just to give the pastor a pay-

check?? I thought the tithe was for God! What if he spends the whole thing on rubber duckies?"

I didn't know what to say! Integrity meant I had to find a real answer; I decided the best thing to do was look in the Bible to show her what tithe was for. When that wasn't so easy (because the tithe in the Bible is nothing like the Adventist system), I looked on the internet for some help and came across Pastor Greg Taylor's "Letter to Friends and Family."

The first thing I did was write Greg Taylor an e-mail and I asked him, "Don't you think that's just a little too convenient to say that only 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 message by saying, "No man knows the day or hour," didn't love Jesus and were lost, 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 question of whether 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.

Rick: 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. It was all 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 exactly what I believed. We could know assurance of salvation. And, for the first time in years, we could feel good about inviting someone to church with us.

Sheryl: I want to add that the inner turmoil that I've experienced most of my life over spiritual issues has completely disappeared and is replaced by the peace of Jesus. It's all just so incredibly awesome to me that Jesus truly is enough! Jesus is the end of the law, Jesus is the rest for our souls, and Jesus is Who God has spoken through in these last days. If you know the truth, you are free indeed!

The Bible: Inerrant?

Adventist claims of Bible contradictions and errors

VERLE 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 they teach 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.

In 1981, Adventist John Robertson's book, *The White Truth*, openly denied verbal inspiration (p.85). *Spectrum*

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 unreliability of the Biblical text. We will give solutions, however, for this difficulty and several other apparent conflicts.

Objectivity: 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 Streifling 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 1990 he earned his Ph.D. Over the past 25 years he has written numerous tracts and articles, a number of booklets and manuscripts, and his *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.

“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 “lead you into all truth.”

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 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 we 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 Bartimaeus 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 fairy tale? 2. Why did many of the priests who condemned Jesus later believe in the risen Christ (Acts 6:7)? 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 *theopneustos* means “the out-breathing of God” in 2 Tim 3:16 (*inerrancy*); and 2 Peter 1:21 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, more concerned for Truth than political 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.

While *White Truth* denies Biblical inerrancy except in areas of faith and practice, Adventism doesn’t tell its laymen the whole truth—that 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!

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.

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 pertains 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." *Jamiesson, 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, 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?
- Shouldn't they have researched 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 falsities?
- If God did this, wouldn't He impugn His own immutability? How could I know what I can believe about Him if His 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 commands?
- 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:

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 contexts 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 he's 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

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 instance, "after three days" equals "the third day." Plural spelling can be used for singular feast days, as in *sabbatwv* (Sabbaths) for a single Sabbath day or for a week. *Paraskue* for "passover" can be used for the day or the 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 "Jerubbaal," "Peter," "Cephas," "Simon" and "Simon Peter." Mount Sinai is also Mount Horeb. Some places are 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 copyist mistakes. Of course, mistakes in copying manuscripts don't affect Bible inerrancy pertaining to original autographs. A notorious example is in Beta and Aleph (that copied Beta). Beta left a large blank space where Mark 16:9-20 belonged, yet Aleph copied Beta without 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. Archer's *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties* lists the prominent copyist errors such as dittography, 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 prophets 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 critic's errors exposed. The Bible turns alleged objections into strong presumptions for its own favor.

Is one assumed 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.

...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

Part II: False logic to teach Bible errors

We should examine the false logic used by those who claim Bible errors. We will start by evaluating Adventism's *Is Your God Real?* by Timothy E. Crosby (Review & Herald pub, 1988). His chapter titled, "Inerrancy: Where the battle isn't" contests Dr. Harold Lindsell's *The Battle for the Bible* in which Lindsell defends the inerrancy of the Scriptures. He points to the lethal trap snaring those who first teach Biblical errors and then slide into other higher critical arenas. Crosby tries to further Adventism's case for Bible errors and contradictions to uphold Ellen White's writings. For the sake of the truth of God and His Word and His elect who may be misled, we must make some observations below, showing the fallacies of Crosby's logical web that snares the unlearned—including himself, into believing that the Bible is not really God's Word of truth.

He begins by saying, "Many Christians have been taught that the Bible is inerrant: free from any sort of contradiction or inaccuracy in the modern scientific sense." Here he uses a "straw man" tactic, as 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.

He continues, "Those who believe in inerrancy reason something like this: 'God does not err. 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 must 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 writing the Bible was not! Rather, the writing of the Bible was the "Out-Breathing of God" (Gk. *theopneustos*) through man. "Holy men of God spoke as they were impelled by the Holy Spirit."

Because Christ is 100% divine as well as human, the Christian position is: "God cannot sin; Jesus was God in human flesh; thus Christ did not sin." So too, the Biblical and Christian position about His written word must be: "God only speaks truth without error; the Bible is God speaking through men. So the Bible is God's truth, spoken through men without error." "The Spirit of the Lord spoke through

me, and His Word was in my mouth," the Bible says.

But the doctrine of Bible inerrancy isn't just based on men's logic, as Crosby argues, but rather on what God's Word says about this question. We briefly quote Norman Geisler's *Inerrancy*, which shows God's view:

"...Peter informs us that the preaching of the Gospel (of which the Spirit of Christ testified in the Old Testament) by the New Testament apostles was performed by means of the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven (1 Peter 1:10-12). As with all genuine prophecy, this gospel proclamation did not come by will of men, but men spoke from God being carried by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21). In accord with the promise of Christ, 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 2:12-13), and the Spirit speaking in them directed both what was said and how it was said (cf Matt 10:19-20). 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 1:16; 3:24-25; 2 Cor 6:16). What the Scripture says is identified with what God says (eg. Gal 3:8; Rom 9:16). For that reason all theological arguments are settled decisively by the inherent authority it signified in the formula "It stands written" (literal translation). The same authority attaches to the writings of the Apostles (1 Cor 15:1-2; 2 Ths 2:15; 3:14), since these writings are placed on a par with the Old Testament Scriptures (2 Pet 3:15-16; Rev 1:3). Apostolic Scripture often has the formula "It stands written" applied to it (e.g. John 20:31). Therefore, the Old and New Testaments are presented in the Bible itself as the authoritative written Word of God.

"Because of their divine origin, the Scriptures are entirely trustworthy and sure (cf 1 Tim 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim 2:11; 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 Ths 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 28:16; John 19:35; 20:31; Rom 9:33; 1 Pet 2:6; 1 Jn 1:1-3). Their accuracy extends to every minute detail as our Lord said—to every "jot" and "tittle" (Matt 5:18)—in such a way that the indestructible 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 thy word is truth" (Ps 119:160) and the Wisdom literature

can counsel us, "Every word of God is tried (proven, flawless)" (Prov 30:5). If our doctrinal outlook is informed by the Word of God, then we must confess that Scripture is entirely truthful, or inerrant. The unchallengeable testimony of Jesus was, "Thy Word is Truth" (John 17:17)." (*Inerrancy*, pp. 151-153, Zondervan pub.)

In this brief quote, some 40 Scriptures attest to the Bible's inerrancy and verbal inspiration in its autographs. By contrast, the serpent denied the truthfulness of God's Word 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 inerrant 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 errs, as did Eve in Eden.

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 inconsistent in their teaching. First, they uphold Christ as perfect and sinless while simultaneously teaching he had a sinful or "fallen" human nature. Second, they insist that we, like Christ, can become perfectly sinless 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 "infallibility" of Ellen White, calling her "the only infallible interpreter of Bible principles" and "canonical insofar as doctrinal interpretation is concerned." (Irwin, 1911; Delafield, 1981).

Crosby makes a faulty comparison of Evangelicals with the Docetists of the first century. 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 or ignore that the Scripture is God speaking through man; rather, they affirm that just as Christ the Word incarnate was God living in clay and without sin, so too His Word written is God speaking through clay, and of necessity without error or contradiction.

But Crosby argues, "Such an untenable position will eventually 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 scholars have spent years in these studies and have recorded hundreds of sound solutions for these questions.

Since God claims the Bible's truthfulness, great church thinkers including Augustine, Luther and the Reformers who wrote the Westminster Confession maintained the same, "false in one, false in all." They taught that inerrancy pertained to the autographs and used the Bible as its own interpreter. 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 textbook proves there are mistakes in the Bible. Paul told Timothy, "Be diligent to show yourself approved to God, a workman who needs not be ashamed." We who care to study the difficult passages find they aren't contrary, but complementary.

Crosby gives a fatal addition to Scripture by interpreting what it tells us instead of quoting it: "Scripture itself indicates that the gift of prophecy has limitations. 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 refers to knowledge that comes through inspired revelation as being partial and imperfect..." Here he misleads the reader. The Bible does not use the word "imperfect," 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 examination of the Greek 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 speaking 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 living, 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, "I did not baptize any of you," Paul is not making 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 contrary 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 somewhere else. So he 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 discrepancies 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 readers from the work of Biblical scholars like Archer who detail the resolutions for these discrepancies, Crosby calls these works "torturous sophistry."

Inerrancy and Adventism

Christians will uphold Bible inerrancy, for God says His word is Truth. God not only gave His Word without any "serious error 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.

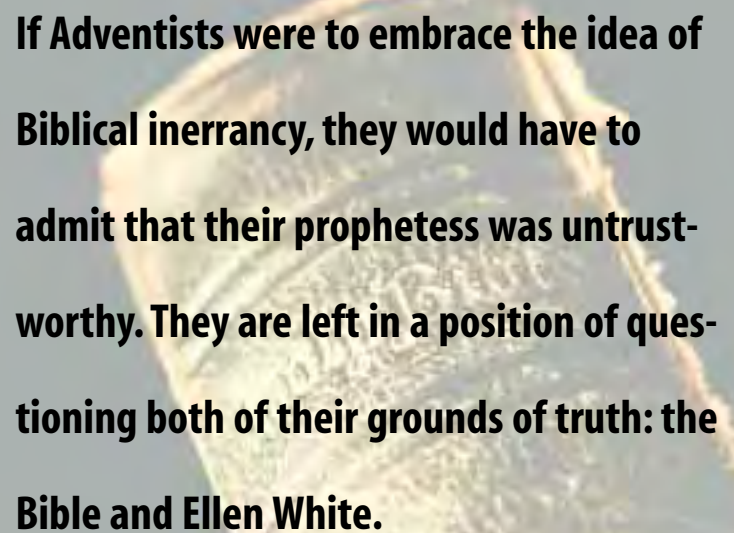
The Bible can be and is our infallible guide in more than merely areas of faith and morals as Crosby asserts. It is consistent with history and science. It has good theology and true prophecies. It gives good counsel in Christian ethics and practice; and it defines who God says are false prophets, false 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 accepted as an authoritative, infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the revealer of doctrines, the test of experience." (*Great Controversy*, p. vii) 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 they 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 the Bible writers also made mistakes, thus justifying Ellen White's mistakes.

If Adventists were to embrace the idea of Biblical inerrancy, they would have to admit that their prophetess was untrustworthy. They are left in a position of questioning



If Adventists were to embrace the idea of Biblical inerrancy, they would have to admit that their prophetess was untrustworthy. They are left in a position of questioning both of their grounds of truth: the Bible and Ellen White.

both of their grounds of truth: the Bible and Ellen White. Thus they 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. **!**

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, Here's Life pub, 1972, 1978; *More Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, Josh McDowell, Campus Crusade for Christ, 1979; *When Skeptics Ask*, Norman Geisler; *Harmony of the Gospels*, Thomas and Gundry, Moody Press, 1978; *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, Gleason Archer, Zondervan, 1982; *Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible*, Haley, Baker Book House, 1977; *The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture*, Rene Pache, Moody Press, 1980.

There are also invaluable linguistic guides as *Expositor's Greek New Testament*, *Linguistic Key to the New Testament* (2 vols), *Renaissance New Testament* (10 vols), *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (5 vols), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (2 vols), and other good commentaries as *Adam Clarke*, *Jamiesson*, *Faussett & Brown*, or *Matthew Henry's Commentary*.

Biblical Inspiration

AND ELLEN G. WHITE

RUSSELL KELLY

with Colleen Tinker

Changing statements concerning inspiration

1976

"That the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God, and contain an all-sufficient revelation of His will to men, and are the only unerring rule of faith and practice." (*Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, 1976, page 32)

1980

"The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written word of God, given by divine inspiration through holy men of God who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. In this Word God has committed to man the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are the infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the test of experience, the authoritative revelator of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God's acts in history." (#1 of the 28 Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists)

1989

"Seventh-day Adventists recognize in Ellen G. White an authority in doctrine and life that is second only to that of the Scriptures. . . . 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 authority cannot justifiably be limited in that way." (*Doctrine of the Sanctuary*, Biblical Research Committee, 1989, 223-224.)

The first two statements above would be accepted in almost any conservative Christian church. They appear to place Seventh-day Adventism securely within the boundary of orthodox Christianity and away from false religion.

When comparing the two statements, however, a not-so-subtle change has taken place. Adventists have deleted their older statement that the Scriptures are the "all-sufficient" revelation of God's will. They have also deleted their older statement that the Scriptures are "the only unerring rule of faith and practice." Next, they have added the statement that the Scriptures are given by "divine inspiration through holy men."

There is a reason for these changes: Ellen G. White, the prophetess of the Seventh-day Adventist Church who died in 1915. When Adventists state that the Scriptures were "given by divine inspiration through holy men of God" and are "the infallible revelation of His

will" (1980 statement), they indirectly include Ellen G. White because they hold her writings in the "highest regard as a source of doctrinal understanding" and because "a prophet's authority cannot justifiably be limited" to exclude doctrine (1989 statement). They regard her as a full-fledged prophet on equal standing with Biblical prophets.

The Biblical Research Committee which issued the 1989 statement is sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is located "at the world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States. Among its primary purposes is to promote the study and practice of Adventist theology and lifestyle as understood by the world church, as well as provide theological resources for the administration and departments of the world headquarters and the church as a whole."*

When it rebutted Dr. Ford's research in which he showed that the investigative judgment has no Biblical basis but was established instead on Ellen White's endorsement, the Committee was forced to admit that Ellen White's prophetic authority extended to doctrinal correctness.

Fundamental Belief #18

"One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord's messenger, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction and correction. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested" (#18 of the 28 Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists).

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 the "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:

GCx "At this time the special endowment of divine grace and power is not less needful to the church than in apostolic days."

GCx "Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the scenes of the long-continued conflict between good and evil have been opened to the writer of these pages. From time to time I have been permitted to behold. . . ."

GCxi "As the Spirit of God has opened to my mind the great truths

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 as to shed a light on the fast-approaching struggle of the future.”

GCxi“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 G. White carefully and slowly eased into her declaration that she is an essential last-day 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, since the Bible authorizes the continuing prophetic gift, especially in the last-day or “remnant” church, they added to their first 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, it is because there is no light in them.”(KJV)

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

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

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 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 obsolescence of most of the ceremonial and civil aspects of the Mosaic Law, however, they disqualify themselves as being subjects of this directive. Not only does Ellen White not speak according to the entire Mosaic Law, neither 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 obedience 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; 1 John 2:3-10; 3:22-24; 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 *entole*. This text in Revelation 12:17 uses the word *entole*.

Third: The phrase “testimony of Jesus” is also applied by Adventists as an unofficial title for Ellen G. White. Many of her writings 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 12:17 it is used as one of the two things true believers will not abandon. They will testify, 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 key element in false Christian religions is additional writings held 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 statements with Bible texts, and then follows the texts with confirmations and/or interpretations by Ellen G. White.

Because of their dependence upon Ellen G. White for their distinctive 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 gifting 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 everything 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.

*<http://news.adventist.org/data/2006/01/1138809705/index.html.en>

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 completed his education with a Th. M., Th. D., and finally 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 primary web site is www.shouldthechurchteachtithing.com.



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 of these statements of Paul's, people remind me 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 the 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 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 distort, 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:

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 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, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul 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 18:9-10).

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 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 the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But get up and stand on your feet; for this 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; rescuing 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 to whom I belong and 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 God that it will turn out exactly as I have been told" (Acts 27:23-25).

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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' group 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 I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ." Galatians 1:11-12. **!**



Teaching videos

Hello, I have just read the latest “special” edition of *Proclamation!* I just love your material and always feel so encouraged by its contents.

My family has just returned from a weekend camping trip with some Adventist friends. It’s always a little frustrating seeing them “open” the Sabbath and discussing their belief in the Sabbath with such conviction.

I have given different ones material to read, but I have noticed that they seem to be very influenced and motivated by their videos.

As you know, the Adventist church has produced a lot of video “evangelistic” presentations for their members. I believe these videos have had—and continue to have—a profound effect on the membership.

I was wondering if your ministry was considering producing any teaching videos (or DVD’s) 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.

Enjoys 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

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

Such a contrast

You have no idea the warm spot you’ve created in our hearts when we receive *Proclamation!* Our young family left Adventism a year and a half ago. We still receive Adventist material in the mail although we have requested 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 as opposed to terrifying beasts, anti-Catholic hype and all the other cultic sensationalism 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 Commandment law is done away with or is of no importance 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 void God’s law, especially to dishonor the Sabbath Day by replacing it with Sunday. To meet on Sunday, to worship on Sunday, to fellowship on Sunday, to acknowledge Sunday as a rest day or in any way other than being [merely] the first day of the week—you are accepting the mark of the beast. God’s judgments 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 misconstrue 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 sinful, 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 deception—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 introduced 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 if 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 writing. 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 would I master one list of her do’s and don’ts then 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?” Is this some kind of joke, Lord? I never had so many burdens until I came through the doors of this church!”

I also was disturbed by the deadness in the church compared to my friends’ churches who certainly had more joy and peace than the Adventists I knew as a whole. I would think, “Wait 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 had the true gospel of the Good News. My Adventist friends and I had the “alternate gospel” which is no gospel at all. (I now call it the “gospel of the good food”.) My “alternate gospel” had all been based on salvation by works, which is not what the Bible teaches, especially the New Testament.

In spite of my inner struggles with legalism, I was very active in the church and Sabbath School, doing special music and running a very successful teen ministry for a couple of years. I frequently acted out 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 controlling members of the church for the way I played the tambourine to the contemporary worship music. The playing was beautiful and appropriate, yet it did not please them. I felt these reactions were contrary to Scripture. I felt as if the Holy

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 pray for the Holy Spirit and then not recognize Him. I would try to imagine what it would be like if He were to show up with all His power and glory.

By this time the Lord sent a woman I'll call Gail back into the 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. Gail and I had read some articles about Ellen White plagiarizing much of her work, and Gail thought I definitely needed specific proof like exactly what EGW copied and from whom. One night I woke up and could not sleep, so I decided to try to find some proof. At 2 o'clock 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 praying, Gail and I sent more copies of articles through the mail as well. Greg Taylor's *Open Letter* and his book *Discovering the New Covenant* have been helping me understand especially the Sabbath being a non-issue for Christians. Some of those books along with a copy of an antique newspaper article on Ellen White's plagiarism were sent out with loving thought to the conference office and to 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 that

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. It is good now to 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 describe is not the church I know.

When Elder August Anderson conducted the baptismal class in our little church school in Steamburg, New York, he asked whether 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 on salvation through Christ. And it is the message I taught in New York, Southeast Asia, and Union College. May we glorify the name of Him who gave His life for us!

Editor's note: It is true that many Adventists do teach that people can only go to heaven by accepting Jesus. Along with that message, though, is the accompanying message that when they accept Jesus, 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.

FAF Weekend

Thank you for the good article about the Former Adventist weekend. I would have loved to have been there. Hopefully you will have another in a year or so?!

Blessings to you and Richard as you render this "work load" unto the Lord. You are doing a great service for all of us "formers," and I know a lot of prayers are going up for you every day.

"Unto the praise of the glory of His grace."

Editor's note: We are scheduled to have our second FAF 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 was having 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!

The day we were baptized in that [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 I moved into a retirement home. The managers here, a lovely Christian couple, led me back out of the Adventist church.

The article in January/February issue on "Unmasking the Cultic Spirit" is so true. Interdenominational—Ha! It was such a relief to be out from under the burden of "trying" to keep the 10 Commandments. If we could keep them, Jesus would not have had to die for us.

Thanks again for your magazine.

Dale Ratzlaff writes his story in *Adventist to Christian*

Dale Ratzlaff has recounted his journey from being a fourth-generation Seventh-day Adventist pastor to becoming a Christian in his latest book entitled **Adventist to Christian**. It includes many details he has never before told, including events he experienced in what he calls the "Adventist underground." For the sake of history, he will share specific names and places that figured in his journey. He also reflects on his exploration and growth in religious thought and truth after leaving Adventism. In conclusion he explains his present understanding of truth.

This book is currently only available as an audio CD. Visit the LAM Publishing website at www.LifeAssuranceMinistries.com for more details.

Please note that the above website with .com at the end is the website for purchasing books and printed materials from LAM Publishing LLC. The website www.LifeAssuranceMinistries.org (note the .org at the end) is the site for Life Assurance Ministries, Inc., the ministry which publishes *Proclamation!*

To receive Dale's online newsletter with updates from LAM Publishing, email him at www.dale@ratzlaf.com.

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Former Adventists establish churches in Africa CONTINUED FROM BACK PAGE

Faith story of Luswata Drake Moses



I am **Luswata Drake Moses** (shown with his wife Jane), Coordinator for One Flock 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 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, he 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, disfellowshipped, 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 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. Ever since I met Pastor Greg and he introduced to me 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 *Discovering 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.

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 Nyanza, 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 Seventh-day Adventist Church at an early age (while I was doing P6). Adventism is the dominant religion in the Kisii part of Kenya where I was born. In 1978 (while doing form II in secondary education), I was baptized into the Adventist church. I served the Church as a member unswervingly until the year 2000 when I joined Bugema Adventist

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 harmo-

ny with the New Testament teachings of the Bible. I began to see how they caused the church to separate itself from all other Christians. I sensed God's desire for His church to be united, not divided over such things.

Even though I was rejected for my beliefs, Christ never left me. I am a free son of God saved by the grace of God which came to me through Jesus Christ my Savior. Praise is to His Holy Name forever! The Lord has allowed me to experience the greater freedom that comes from being led by the Spirit! Since leaving the University, where he led me to follow my convictions, true to His Holy character, He had a family ready for me: The One Flock Ministry Family. Whatever He starts is what He has already accomplished. Hallelujah! God brought Greg Taylor, Dale Ratzlaff, and others to

encourage me and let me know that I was not alone. God has met all my spiritual needs, and I am at home in my new family. Glory to His Holy Name! Through One Flock Ministry, God has given me a new responsibility in Kenya: I now spearhead efforts to reach out to my brethren in sectarian systems and beyond with His saving power! I have 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.



A group of new believers after they were baptised in Lake Victoria, Uganda.



A Sunday morning church service in Uganda.



Here a group of followers of Jesus worship in Nakuru, Uganda.



A gathering of Christians worshipping in Kisii, Kenya.

Former Adventists establish churches in Africa GREG TAYLOR

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



Greg Taylor with Village Chief Nelson in Nymache.



Pastor Luswata's Church - Grace Place Community Church - Kajjansi Uganda

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 business man formerly with World Vision, in teaching their people how to use their land to start small businesses (ie. 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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