

Winter 2002
Volume 7 Issue 1

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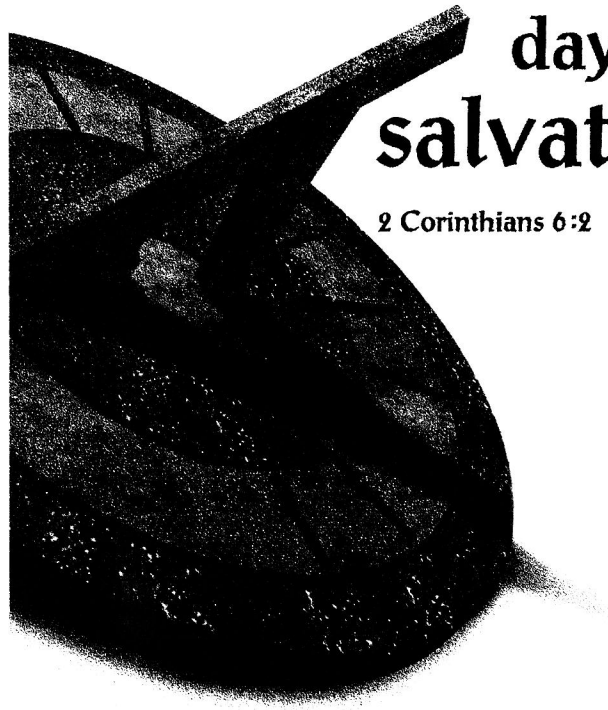
faith on the line

A Journal for Those Who Dare

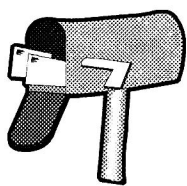
Behold, now is
the acceptable
time;

behold, now is the
day of
salvation.

2 Corinthians 6:2



From the Mailbox...



We welcome your comments and opinions. If something in our newsletter or material has impacted you, we'd like to hear from you. We can be contacted by fax, mail or email. Please see the last page for this information.

I have read your page on the subject "The Christian, The Bible, and Music" and found it very interesting. One thing that is seldom addressed is the use of music in the New Testament. We read about singing, e.g. after the last supper. There certainly is no reference to musical instruments. I think we should remember that Israel was a nation and we are apt to take everything they did and say it can be applied to the Church.

Yours in Christ,
H.A.

Mr. Veith is a horrible geologist. Who gave him a PhD? I'd like one too. His attempts to force geologic observations to fit his ill-conceived ideas on creationism are laughable!!!! Really, does he even fool himself? Your lies are unforgivable.

Anonymous

Dear Dr. Veith: First I would like to thank you for your presentations. We are viewing your tapes on prophecy in our church at present and have been greatly blessed and motivated to study. The ones we viewed on "Healing of the Wound" both spiritual and political really brought our present situation into focus!! ... God bless you in your ministry! It is greatly appreciated!
U.U.

Dear Friends:

Thank you so much for arranging the recent music seminar at Fountainview Academy. As a staff member, I found it Christ-centered and sobering.... God bless in your ministry.
J.R.

Dear Dr. Veith:

I am searching the internet in vain for any documented evidence of man-made pre-Noahic flood relics/fossils. I have read about a brass bell that was found in a coal seam, and about a hammer (I also saw the photograph in a book) that was embedded in a layer of rock. Unfortunately, I have not been able to find much other than hearsay. I am convinced that such relics must have been found in the past, and are probably being found from time to time in the rock strata today. But where are they? Man coexisted with dinosaurs. We find many dinosaur fossils and those findings are published. I wonder if man-made relics are also found, but not published - or rather suppressed. I'm sure that most evolutionists would probably not want such things being made public. However, I am sure that many of the finds must be made by people who are made of better stuff, and have enough integrity to let such finds be made known.... God bless you, and keep up the good work.

A.R.

Check out www.answersingenesis.org for more information on human relics.

Dear Brethren:

Thank you for the help you're giving to the church in your "discoveries". I want you to kindly send me more infor-

mation on the possibility of receiving your wonderful "discoveries". God bless you.
Pastor

I would like to express my appreciation to Brian Neumann for the fine seminar he presented recently in the St. Helena, California Church. It was spiritual and relevant. Thanks, Brian, for coming to the U.S. and sharing your experience with us.
G.K.

Chair, Religion Dept
Pacific Union College

Hello, I found your information on the antichrist. As a Seventh-day Adventist, your website is informative and very good.
M.K.K.

I am quite impressed with Dr. Veith and his wealth of information! Thanks,
G.R.

Hi: Your article mentioned that "frescoes have been found in Egyptian tombs depicting fat and thin cows, and inscriptions have been found referring to seven lean and seven opulent years, making this Biblical story more than just a myth." I found your writing very interesting....
J.L.

Professor Veith is on the right track. Tell him to keep on reading. One day he will have all wisdom. Until then, let him be careful with what he claims. His essays carry a heavy Bible study bias. Does everyone know that the Bible has been rewritten more often than the menu in my favorite restaurant? Toodloo!

Anonymous

Hello Dr. Veith:

I would just like to tell you that I enjoyed your talks and seminars at the South England Conference.... I'm glad I attended this year because of you and your great knowledge in creation / evolution and health. Thank you and God bless you and your family always. Your sister in Christ,

T.C.

Halting Between Two Opinions



The Lord has foretold that He would send an Elijah message before the coming of the great day of the Lord. In *Malachi 4:4,5* we read, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." The Spirit of Prophecy further elaborates on this point.

"Those who are to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ's first advent. The great subject of reform is to be agitated, and the public mind is to be stirred. Temperance in all things is to be connected with the message, to turn the people of God from their idolatry, their gluttony, and their extravagance in dress and other things." *Maranatha p. 118*

The prolonged period of physical drought in Elijah's time too truly typified the prolonged period of spiritual drought in Israel. The first words of Elijah as he addressed the anxious, expectant crowd

were, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him". But the people of Israel did not regard the message of Elijah as being applicable to them. They still regarded themselves as the favoured people of God. Their backsliding was so gradual that they did not realize how far they had drifted.

"Anciently, when Elijah was sent with a message from God to the people, they did not heed the warning. They thought him unnecessarily severe. They even thought that he must have lost his senses because he denounced them, the favoured people of God, as sinners and their crimes as so aggravated that the judgments of God would awaken against them." *3T 261*

Likewise, modern Israel has also had a prolonged period of spiritual drought. Yet few are aware of the seriousness of their situation.

"I am filled with sadness when I think of our condition as a people. The Lord has not closed heaven to us, but our own course of continual backsliding has separated us from God. Pride, covetousness, and love of the world have lived in the heart without fear of banishment or condemnation. Grievous and presumptuous sins have dwelt among us. And yet the general opinion is that the church is flourishing and that peace and spiritual prosperity are in all her borders." *5T 217*

Thus, the message of Elijah to make a choice as to whom we will follow needs to be heard in all our churches. "The term 'lukewarm' is applicable to this class. They profess to love the truth, yet are deficient in Christian fervor and devotion. They dare not give up wholly and run the risk of the unbeliever, yet they are unwilling to die to self and follow out closely the princi-

ples of their faith." *4T 87* The message to be given is, If you want to be a Seventh-day Adventist, then be one entirely. Don't try to mix it with the worship of Baal. "Brethren and Sisters, I appeal to you as Seventh-day Adventists to be all that this name signifies. There is danger of departing from the spirit of the message." *2SM 367*

"He that forsaketh not all that he hath," says Jesus, "cannot be My disciple." Whatever shall divert the affections from God must be given up.... We cannot be half the Lord's and half the world's. We are not God's people unless we are such entirely. Every weight, every sin, must be laid aside." *5T 83*

Too many professed believers view the truths of Adventism as a veritable cafeteria. As they move their trays along the track of truth, they choose that which suits their spiritual palates, and leave what they find distasteful. They help themselves freely to forgiveness and acceptance, but reject repentance and obedience. They load up on God's love but pass by their duty to Him. They relish mercy, but recoil from justice. They delight in God's grace, much more than in His law. They top their dessert with a 'heavenly dream' whip, but avoid the solemn truth that "we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ" first before we can partake of the dainties of heaven.

The Elijah message in our day is calling for a total commitment to the truths that God has given us, or abandon all connection with it. *Early Writings p. 188* tells us, "And as the disciples declared that

there is salvation in no other name under heaven, given among men, so also should the servants of God faithfully and fearlessly warn those who embrace but a part of the truths connected with

...Continued On Page 4

Halting Between Two Opinions

Continued From Page 3

the third message, that they must gladly receive all the messages as God has given them, or have no part in the matter."

One of the most important facets of the faith of Seventh-day Adventists is the abiding presence of the Spirit of Prophecy. This is our 'Moses' that God has sent to guide us safely through the perils of those last days as we approach the heavenly Canaan. It is impossible to be a true Seventh-day Adventist and yet knowingly reject or

ignore the counsels and instructions given therein. But there is a halting between two opinions on this issue. Everyone professing to be a Seventh-day Adventist must decide whether or not God has spoken through the writings of Ellen White. If He hasn't, then reject them and the whole of Adventism, as some have already done. But if we believe they are inspired of God, then let us follow all their counsels. Believe what the Spirit of Prophecy says about

the gospel, righteousness by faith and the conditions of salvation. Follow what it says about proper Sabbath keeping, music and reverence in the worship. Obey what it says about diet, dress, jewellery and entertainment. Many are ignoring the divine counsels on these matters at the peril of their souls. And it becomes increasingly perilous in these days of calamities and disasters, when life is more and more uncertain.

"I was shown the conformity of some professed Sabbath-keepers to the world. Oh, I saw that it is a disgrace to their profession. They think they are not like the world, but they are so near like them in dress, in conversation, and actions, that there is no distinction. I saw them decorating their poor, mortal bodies, which are liable at any moment to be touched by the finger of God and laid upon a bed in anguish. Oh, then, as they approach their last chance, mortal anguish racks their frames, and the great inquiry is: "Am I prepared to die? Prepared to appear before God, they will tell you that if they could take back and live over the past, they would correct their lives, shun the follies of the world, its vanity and pride, and would adorn the body with modest apparel, and set an example to all around them. They would live to the glory of God." 1T 131

There are many youth leaders and pastors and parents who think that they can change Adventism and lower the standards to make it more palatable to the younger generation and keep them in the church. But their efforts in that direction will be as futile as was the efforts of the papacy of whom it is written that he would "think to change times and laws." God's law still remains, but those who thought to change it have divorced themselves from Him. Likewise, any effort to change the faith of Adventism will merely result in a 'nomi-

nal Adventism' which is divorced from God, even though it may retain its original name and trappings. It is impossible to keep a shell of Sabbath keeping and mix it with a hoopla of drama and contemporary music, accompanied with clapping and physical gyrations, and still have genuine Adventism. It has been prophesied that, in the closing days, there will come a strong movement in our church to change Adventism into something to make it more relevant to the rest of the world. Today we are seeing this push to establish "culturally relevant" Adventist churches in North America.

However, those who think that they have effectually gotten rid of the old Adventism will discover, all too late, that they have separated themselves from Adventism and that Adventism has become rid of them.

"Men will employ every means to make less prominent the difference between Seventh-day Adventists and observers of the first day of the week. A company was presented before me under the name Seventh-day Adventists, who were advising that the banner, or sign, which makes us a distinct people should not be held out so strikingly; for they claimed that this was not the best policy in order to secure success to our institutions. But this is not a time to haul down our colors, to be ashamed of our faith." 6T 144

However, those who think that they have effectually gotten rid of the old Adventism will discover, all too late, that they have separated themselves from Adventism and that Adventism has become rid of them.

Those who try to be half Seventh-day Adventist and half Baal worshippers will soon be forced to make up their mind which they want to be. God will bring about a situation where everyone will go one way or the other. "The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will not find it a hard matter to yield to the power that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. The contest is between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. In this time the gold will be separated from the dross in the church. True godliness will be clearly distinguished from the appearance and tinsel of it. Many a star that we have admired for its brilliancy will then go out in darkness. Chaff like a cloud will be borne away on the wind, even from places where we see only floors of rich wheat. All who assume the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ's righteousness, will appear in the shame of their own nakedness." 5T 81

When the Sunday law test comes, then true Adventism will be revealed as the remnant of Rev. 12:17 who "keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus." All those who have been compromising the faith of Adventism will be sifted out by the mighty sifting soon to take place. Only the genuine gold will remain. Their numbers will have been greatly lessened, but they will be an invincible 'Gideon's army' that will give to the world the last warning of the Three Angle's Mes-

sages. Their worst enemies will be those who have apostasized from the truth. These will become Satan's most efficient agents to hinder the word of the loud cry. Yet those who have remained true to the Third Angel's Message will have the privilege of gathering in all the honest in heart into the fold of safety in spite of the opposition from the worldwide confederacy of evil. This great final drama is vividly described in the following passage.

"Satan is a diligent Bible student. He knows that his time is short, and he seeks at every point to counterwork the work of the Lord upon this earth. It is impossible to give any idea of the experience of the people of God who shall live upon the earth when celestial glory and a repetition of the persecutions of the past are blended. They will walk in the light proceeding from the throne of God. By means of the angels there will be constant communication between heaven and earth. And Satan, surrounded by evil angels, and claiming to be God, will work miracles of all kinds, to deceive, if possible, the very elect.... Those who have broken their covenant with God will in that day be without God and without hope." 9T 16

If we want to be a part of this last, glorious movement foretold in prophecy, we need to heed the following pertinent counsel from the Lord's messenger.

"God leads His people on, step by step. He brings them up to different points calculated to manifest what is in the heart. Some endure at one point, but fall off at the next. At every advanced point the heart is tested and tried a little closer. If the professed people of God find their hearts opposed to this straight work, it should convince them that they have a work to do to overcome, if they would not be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord. Said the angel: "God will bring His work closer and closer to test and prove every one of His people." Some are willing to receive one point; but when God brings them to another testing point, they shrink from it and stand back, because they find that it strikes directly at some cherished idol. Here they have opportunity to see what is in their hearts that shuts out Jesus. They prize something higher than the truth, and their hearts are not prepared to receive Jesus. Individuals are tested and proved a length of time to see if they will sacrifice their idols and heed the counsel of the True Witness. If any will not be purified through obeying the truth, and overcome their selfishness, their pride, and evil passions, the angels of God have the charge: "They are joined to their idols, let them alone," and

At every advanced point the heart is tested and tried a little closer. If the professed people of God find their hearts opposed to this straight work, it should convince them that they have a work to do to overcome, if they would not be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord.

they pass on to their work, leaving these with their sinful traits unsubdued, to the control of evil angels. Those who come up to every pint, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation." 1T 187

Christ said that no man can serve two masters. He asks us to love Him with all the heart and mind and soul. He asks us to choose Him as first and best in all that we do. He would have us heed the last day Elijah message to cease from halting between two opinions. Our present peace and our eternal destiny depend on the choice we make now.

"A half service, loving the world, loving self, loving frivolous amusements, makes a timed, cowardly servant; he follows Christ a great way off. A hearty, willing service to Jesus produces a sunny religion. Those who follow Christ the most closely have not been gloomy. In Christ is light and peace and joy forevermore. We need more Christ and less worldliness, more Christ and less selfishness." AH 431

"Say unto them, as I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Ezekiel 33:11

- Author Unknown -

May God grant that when Jesus comes to bind the prince of this bottomless pit (Rev 20:1-3) in his own house (Matt 12:49), we shall be trophies of our Lord's redeeming love and be taken from the land of the enemy (Jer 31:15-17) to be honoured as citizens of the kingdom which is not part of this world (John 18:36). Our citizenship is in heaven and the church is enrolled in heaven (Phil 3:20, Heb 12:23). This is the Christian reminder and encouragement. May God bless you in 2002.



Walk Worthy

by Walter J. Veith



When sin came into the world, God did not forsake man. He chose to pay the price Himself, to come down and redeem us Himself. He placed into the hands of the people the Bible - our "roadmap to heaven", and through the ages, He spoke through His prophets, trying to bring the people onto the road that ultimately would lead to final redemption, so we can someday be where He is also.

But there was and still is an enemy that likes to cloud the issue and destroy that road, and so he has fragmented the church, and people all over the world. In fact, he tries to make so many roads that nobody knows which one is the highway to heaven. And everywhere in the world, we have religion upon religion. Christianity, which is the receptacle of God's grace, where Christ Himself - God in the flesh - revealed Himself, has been fragmented into over 2500 fragments, all of them claiming to have the truth, and, in fact, all of them *having* some truth. That's the tragedy of it. Once someone is hooked on the some

truth, they don't know what the total of the truth is anymore. Is it possible that there are so many truths? Ephesians says No: "There is one body and one spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." *Ephesians 4:4,5* There is only one true faith. Only if we walk in obedience and humble submission to God can we permit the Spirit of the Lord to lead us in such a way that we do not digress onto false roads.

Wouldn't you hate to find out one day that you've been deceived? How do we know we are on the right road? It is important that we as Adventists know why we are what we are today. When those great prophetic moments came around 1844 and the great celestial signs came ringing the bell and tolling the time for the end, with the dark day and showers of stars, and the Advent message was proclaimed to the world, the ministry of Christ was rediscovered, and God called for Himself a people. The amazing thing is that the truth as it unfolded before the

people was not acceptable to the majority. And it's been like that throughout the ages. We should not be surprised if the majority is not willing to accept what we are saying.

When the right time came, at exactly the right moment, as the truths were being established, God gathered His people together. He raised up the flame and the spirit that would fan the flame - the spirit of prophecy in our church.

When I became an Adventist, the one thing I hated most of all was the spirit of prophecy. But it was through a very painful experience that the Lord showed me that I needed this additional information, because the road map had become so distorted with different paths and drawings all over it, that it was difficult to discern which was the right one. Being a scientist and reading some of the statements in the spirit of the prophecy, I could hardly believe the statements she made. And then more and more as I studied and got back into the scientific sphere, I found places in the literature of science which told me that, after all, this was the right way. Statements that had been made more than 100 years ago, are found to be truth today and today only. And so I discovered, if we want to make sure we are on the right way, then it is essential that we accept the spirit of prophecy as it is.

The faith that we have stands on the twin pillars of faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to His law. That's the only faith that has been from the very beginning. The law and allegiance to Jesus Christ - how incredibly important are these two features. And if we look at the message of the sanctuary telling us that Jesus Christ is amongst His people, He says to us that

"Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant ...I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God and they shall be My people." *Hebrews 8:8,10*

The sanctuary represented the ministry of Jesus Christ. In that sanctuary, the law was in the Holy of Holies, and yet the Lord says "I will put my law into their hearts." The Bible tells us that we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. We are the receptacle of the Holy Spirit. "Do you not know that the Holy Spirit dwells within you?" *1 Cor 3:16,17*

The Shekinah glory was revealed in the Holy of Holies. The innermost soul temple of the human being is the heart - the center of our feelings and relationship to others - there we should have the law. And in this "Holy of Holies", nothing unclean should ever enter. This is the place where the Shekinah glory of God is revealed to us.

People today have the notion that Jesus Christ came to make things easier - to pay the price and now everyone is safe. When I hear these gospels sometimes of cheap grace I cringe. There is no such thing as cheap grace. Grace is not cheap. It cost the life of the Son of God. It is the most expensive gift ever paid for mankind. Jesus didn't come to *lower* the stand-

ards. He came to *raise* the standards. "See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from him who speaks from Heaven." *Hebrews 12: 25*

I call this the more and more principle. We find it often in the writings of Paul, for example: Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound *more and more*, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God..." *1 Thess 4:1*

When on this earth, Jesus also expounded this principle. Jesus says, "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." *Matt 5:27,28* Jesus says that even that sideways glance, that up and down look is already adultery in the heart. Was He lowering the standards or raising them? The more and more principle is at work here. The standards have not been lowered. There is a certain way God wants us to walk when He calls us out of the world.

So how do we walk worthy before the Lord? What does it mean to us to be saved and to belong to God's church and to allow Christ to write the law in our hearts - to ratify that new covenant with us? If we don't want to be illegitimate children, we must take chastisement. The book of *Hebrews* tells us it works towards "righteousness". (*Hebrews 12: 4-11*)

The epistles of Paul tell us four ways to walk worthy, and I believe that the order in which they are presented in the Word of God is not by accident.

1) Walk Worthy of Your Calling - "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called..." *Ephesians 4:1* Every single one of us has been called, and have responded to that call, as evidence of our membership in the church. With all the turmoils of our lives before, possibly with baggage of the past still attached, with all our imperfections, God has called us into His church. He has cleaved us out of the world, and put us into His workshop so that His entire grace can go to work upon us. And now starts the process of change - putting us into the river of grace to be bumped and moulded.

God wants to make you worthy of your calling. Notice the path in which He leads us: "with all lowliness, gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace....that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about

with every wind of doctrine by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but speaking the truth in love, grow[ing] up in all things into Him who is the head...that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being

alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart, who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness....that you put off concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts and be renewed in the spirit of your mind and that you put on the new one which was created according to God in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore putting away lying...do not let the sun go down on your wrath...Let no corrupt word proceed

out of your mouth, and do not grieve the Holy spirit...Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another even as God in Christ forgave you." (*Ephesians 4:1,2,14,17-20,22-24,25,29-32*) When you are called, you have to change painfully. These are the things God wants us to do when we are called out into His workshop.

2) Walk Worthy of the Gospel of Christ - "Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ..." *Phil 1:27* Faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to His precepts are required before one is truly fitted to preach the gospel. When we have this there is no more fear (verse 28) and self becomes less and Christ becomes more. (*Phil 2:2*) "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant..." (*Phil 2:3-5*) At this point in our walk with God, we center our religion on Jesus Christ. Without Him we are nothing. We must learn obedience and "work out [our] own salvation with fear and trembling" (*Phil 2:12*), doing "all things without complaining and disputing." Once you know the gospel of Jesus Christ it becomes a joy to you. "Rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." (*Phil 3:3*) Then you will understand what it means to walk in submission to Him.

3) Walk Worthy of the Lord - "...that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God..." (*Colossians 1: 10*) God wants us to be "strengthened with all might,

Walk Worthy

Continued From Page 7

according to His glorious power for all patience and longsuffering with joy" (Col 1:12), becoming a partaker of His inheritance. Colossians is the Christ-centered epistle. (Col 1:13,16, 17, 18, 19, 21...) Once you understand the gospel, you become infatuated with Jesus Christ. Our entire lifestyle changes. "As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him." (Col 2:6) Let Him be your example. "When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory." (Col 3:4) "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another..." (Col 3:16)

Having understood what it means to know Jesus Christ and what it means to walk worthy of the Lord, then we will understand the fullness of God, since Jesus came to demonstrate to us what God is like.

And so, it is not surprising that we find the last of the four worthies to be:

4) **Walk Worthy of God** - "that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory." (1 Thess 2:12) "But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts." 1 Thess 2:4 Having been called, and changed, having understood the fullness of the gospel and Jesus Christ, then we will understand God Himself and the righteousness of His government.

In these four examples, Paul reminds us what it means to understand the fullness of the truth as revealed in Jesus Christ. Are you and I walking worthy before the Lord? Are we worthy of our calling as members of His church, and as Adventists? Are we living worthily of the precious truths with which we have been entrusted? Are we applying the more and more principle to our personal lives? Are we growing up in Christ Jesus - not lowering and downplaying the standards He set up, but applying them more and more closely to our lives? "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me. And lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm 139:23,24 That was the prayer of a truly converted man. May it be ours.

"Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess 5:23



-- transcribed and adapted from Dr. Veith's sermon--

"This is your Reasonable Service"

by Dr. Hilda S. Rainda

In the dictionary, "reasonable" can mean sensible, moderate and balanced. In all our walks of life God expects us to use our knowledge, experience and intelligence, and to act wisely, sensibly and not to be moved by fanaticism, haste, emotions or fear.

The evil one doesn't care if you are in the ditch of fanaticism on the right side, or in the left ditch of liberalism where everything goes, as long as you're not on the straight and narrow way with Jesus.

This applies not only to our spiritual life (which it certainly does) but also to our diet, exercise program, medicine, home remedies, and all our activities. God, in His mercy and wisdom, has given us specific instructions in His Word, and now in these last days, (because He knew we would need it especially in these days of extremes) in the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy by E.G. White.

Every new idea, practice, or principle needs to be put through the sieve of the Word of God and the counsel given to us in the Spirit of Prophecy.

Diet Extremes

First of all, let us look at the modern trend of extremes in diet. The ideal diet was chosen for us by our Creator: fruits, nuts, grains, legumes and vegetables. You can't improve on God's method. However, in some cases of sickness, this must be modified as to amounts, variety, exceptions etc. to suit the person and/or illness. For example, some people who are allergic or sensitive to gluten need to use grains without gluten. Some diabetics need to cut grains (even whole grains) to a minimum and concentrate on greens, legumes and nuts. But the variety is so great that a reasonable diet is possible. We do not need to resort to animal products, except in some extreme cases, or extreme climates, or extreme situations.

There have been many ditches in regards to diet. Take the 2-3 week fasts. Yes, Jesus fasted 40 days and so did Moses, but there have been a number of deaths of individuals who tried to do the same. We do well to fast a day or two, or a meal or two, but not more than 4-5 days. This is the instruction of E.G. White. (CDF p.185-191).

Another fad of our day is to go on a juice diet. Again, this is fine for a day or two, but the body needs fibre, and God gave us teeth to thoroughly masticate our food. This juice diet

can be devastating to diabetics as well as some individuals with other illnesses.

Again another fad is the raw diet. Raw foods are good. We all love salads and probably should eat more raw foods. In some disease cases, up to 60% raw foods is not harmful and can be helpful. Going on a raw diet for a few days is certainly fine. But this is not God's design outside the Garden of Eden. (Ex 16:23, 1 Kings 19:6-9, Ezek 4:9) In *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, there is a whole section on the blessings of Bread. Grains are to be thoroughly baked or cooked, and they constitute a staple in the diet. (CDF p.315-321)

It is true that eating raw fruits and vegetables in a meal is an aid to digestion, but some vegetables are better cooked, and some raw vegetables contain toxins that actually, under some circumstances and in large amounts, can cause harm. Take the sweet potato or yam, or taro. If eaten raw in large amounts, they can cause severe indigestion and especially in some cases a contributing factor to death. They contain an antitrypsin enzyme that inactivates trypsin in the gastric intestinal tract and this will cause putrefaction of protein, and gangrene can set in. Also some members of the bean family contain enzymes that if ingested raw can cause digestion problems. In both cases, cooking inactivates the toxic enzymes and these foods are excellent sources of nutrition.

Again the big issue is balance and following the examples and instruction God has given us.

Drugs as Medicine vs. Natural Herbs

When it comes to medicine and medical practices, so many of our dear people go to extremes. Yes, it is wise to use natural remedies where appropriate. We have a great deal of instruction in the Spirit of prophecy regarding natural remedies. But Mrs. White also instructed our church leaders to develop medical schools that were to be of the "highest order", the best in the country, to train highly qualified doctors, nurses and other health professionals. Just because a remedy or "medicine" is natural does not mean it's good. Tobacco, marijuana, cocaine, betel nut, magnetism, hypnosis, etc., are all quite natural by most standards, but they are certainly not of divine origin and are designed to destroy anyone who falls into the trap. Some folks are terribly against all drugs. Some say Mrs. White was against all drugs. Dr. Mervyn Harding has written a very comprehensive book regarding Ellen White's counsel on the use of drugs entitled "*Drugs, Herbs and Natural Remedies*". One might be surprised to discover that she used tea and coffee as a medicine. She had radiation therapy for facial cancer. She had her staff vaccinated against small pox. She advised the use of Quinine for malaria and many more examples of balance in medicine.

Most folks don't realize that about 70% of all medicines are of plant origin. All have been tested, purified, and

prepared in such a way that each pill is exactly as the next one. It is true that once the medicinal compound is chemically analyzed it is often cheaper to synthesize it rather than pay the labor costs of gathering the plant material.

In nature, one plant of the same species can be chemically different from another. Also many so-called medicines may not be pure, proven by scientific methods, or contain the same amount of the medicine as the next batch of pills.

I'm not against natural remedies. I endorse hydrotherapy, some herbs, and the eight natural remedies of *Ministry of Healing* (page 127) one hundred percent.

But just because some pills can and have caused disastrous results, one should not throw out all modern medicine. Herbs have also caused deaths and even more important is the fact that some of the so-called natural remedies can and may destroy your spiritual life.

So my last advice is: Pray for guidance; be like the Bereans of Acts 17:11, and search out every principle and practice in the word of God and the spirit of prophecy. God has promised to instruct and teach us. (Ps 32:8)



Hilda Scheffler Rainda B.A., M.D.

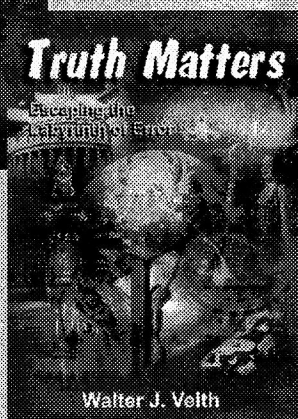
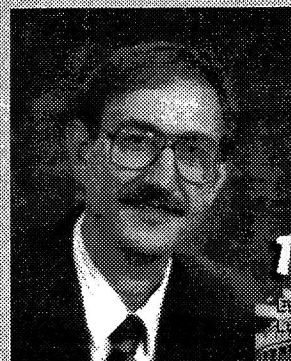
Dr. Rainda is a graduate of Loma Linda University School of Medicine, and has practiced family medicine for 41 years. During her life, she has been medical director of Sopas Adventist Hospital, Papua New Guinea and missionary for four years. Health Ministries Director for the South Pacific Division in Sydney, Australia for five years, founding member and board member of Pacific Health Education Center for 12 years, and Vice President for 5 years. Pacific Health Education Center is located in Bakersfield, CA and has trained over 150 health evangelists from over 40 countries.

Dr. Rainda answers our nutrition and health questions on our website. We thank her for her willingness to help.

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however faltering,
never a tear is shed,
however secret,
never a sincere desire after God is
cherished,
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TRUE UNITY AND COUNTERFEIT UNITY

By

© Samuel Koranteng-Pipim, Ph.D

Director, Public Campus Ministries, Michigan Conference

Author, *Must We Be Silent?*

"When to unite and when to divide, that is the question, and a right answer requires the wisdom of a Solomon. . . . To divide what should be divided and unite what should be united is the part of wisdom. Union of dissimilar elements is never good even where it is possible. Nor is the arbitrary division of elements that are alike; and this is as certainly true of things moral and religious as of things political or scientific." —A.W. Tozer

Ever since there was rebellion in heaven there has been division. And alongside this division have been conflicts, wars, and bloodshed. Recent events in the Middle East, Balkans, Africa, and other places testify to the urgent need for unity and harmony in the world.

The religion of the Bible is about restoring unity—unity between God and man, unity between husband and wife, unity between members of the church, and unity among members of the human family. Such a unity is based on truth, as revealed in the teaching of Scriptures.

But Satan also has his version of unity. His counterfeit unity is nothing more than theological pluralism, the peaceful coexistence of truth and error. Wherever this spurious doctrine has been introduced, it has created confusion in local churches, splitting others, and threatening our worldwide unity.

In this article I will attempt to explain what true biblical unity entails, contrasting it with the counterfeit unity being advocated in certain quarters of our church. The article may have implications for the ongoing debates within our church over such divisive issues as homosexuality, women's ordination, racism and racially separate conferences, liberal higher criticism, gospel gimmicks, contemporary worship styles, and the questionable Toronto General Conference decision on divorce and remarriage.

Unity: Christ's Last Prayer Request

John 17 records Christ's most sublime prayer for the church. It captures His last words of instruction to his apostles before His crucifixion. Within less than twenty-four hours, He would be killed. Thus, in this prayer Christ reveals His innermost thought. He prayed:

I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me. And the glory which thou hast given Me I have given them; that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me. *John 17:20-23*

Without doubt, Christ's chief concern in His last prayer request was for unity. At least five times He prayed for His followers that "they may be one, as we are" (v. 11), "that they all be one" (v. 21a), "that they also may be one in us" (v. 21b), "that they may be one, even as we are one" (v. 22), and "that they may be made perfect in one" (v.23). This unity that Christ prayed for in this John 17 passage is a unity grounded in the Word of God and forged by the Holy Spirit.

Grounded in the Word of God. The unity of the church for which Christ prayed was not primarily that we may be one with each other. It was not simply the integration or fellowship of believers from different ethnic groups. As one noted Evangelical scholar has observed, the unity for which Christ prayed is first a unity with the apostle's teaching. This is evident in verse 20 where He alludes to two groups of believers. The RSV designates them as "these" (i.e., the apostles) and "those" (i.e., all subsequent believers). "It seems beyond question that the 'all' of verse 21, whose unity Christ desires, are a combination of 'these' and 'those'" (John Stott, *Christ the Liberator*, p. 82).

In other words, the church unity Christ wants to see in His church is one that is in harmony with the teachings of Christ's inspired apostles. Like the apostolic church, believers in God's end-time church must "devote them[selves] to the apostles' teaching and fellowship" (Acts 2:42). But the teaching of racism is contrary to the Bible. To the extent that this is the case, racism is a barrier to Christ's prayer for unity. Any ideology—gay theology, feminist egalitarian theology, racism, higher criticism—that is not in harmony with God's teaching is a hindrance to Christ's prayer.

Forged by the Spirit. But in addition to the unity with the apostles, Christ also prayed "that they also may be one in us" (John 17:21b). This is a unity with the Father and the Son. It

ensures that at all times the church lives in harmony with the leading of the life-giving Spirit whom the Father and Christ will send (John 14:15, 26; 15:26; 16:7). Unity with the Father and Son means we shall accept the correction of the Spirit and His guidance into all truth (16:8-13). This includes the Spirit's leading through God's end-time gift of prophecy (Rev 12:17; 19:10).

Only as Christ followers are "in us" (i.e., with the Father and Son) can they truly "be one" among themselves (v. 21a). In other words, the horizontal unity (among Christ's followers) must be grounded in a vertical unity (oneness with Christ). We seek unity on this basis so that "the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (v. 21). Jesus declares: "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me" (v. 23).

In other words, a *visible unity* results when Christ's followers are in harmony with the apostles and with the Father and Son. This unity is readily evident to the world. It convinces the world of the truthfulness of the Christian message.

As we shall see in the next section, Seventh-day Adventists take very seriously Christ's final prayer request of John 17. Concerning this prayer, Ellen G. White wrote: "The Lord calls for men of genuine faith and sound minds, men who recognize the distinction between the true and the false. Each one should be on his guard, studying and practicing the lessons given in the seventeenth chapter of John, and preserving a living faith in the truth for this time" (*Testimonies for the Church*, 8:239).

Unity in the Remnant Church

As a global movement, comprising people from "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Rev 14:6), the Seventh-day Adventist church seeks to manifest this unity to an unbelieving world. Without the church's worldwide unity, this prophetic movement would disintegrate into a pattern of local options, weakness, and confusion. Moreover, our strength and credibility as a church depends, to a large extent, on our organized unity. For how else can we convince the world that we have a message that heals wounds of division if we ourselves choose to go in different directions?

Basis for Our Church Unity.

Throughout our history, three major factors have greatly contributed to our worldwide unity:

(1) *Our distinctive doctrine and lifestyle.* Despite obvious cultural differences, Adventists everywhere

...how else can we convince the world that we have a message that heals wounds of division if we ourselves choose to go in different directions?

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in the world have held the same doctrines and embraced the same lifestyle. As a group, they have manifested a distinctive personality. The near unanimity in belief and lifestyle practices has been possible because of our adherence to the teachings of God's Word.

(2) *Our sense of mission.* Accepting Christ's commission (Matt 28:18-20), we have always understood our reason for existence to be the clear and persuasive proclamation of God's Word within the context of the end-time (Rev 14:6-12). The sending forth of hundreds of missionaries around the world every year and the movement of our workers "from everywhere to everywhere" have been constant reminders to all that ours is worldwide and the mission of the church can only be accomplished by a united body of people from all nations of the world.

(3) *Our unique church polity (the form of organizational structure in the church).* Despite its limitations, the Adventist church's unique church structure—uniting local churches, conferences, and unions at the divisions of the General Conference—has not only maintained the stability of the church, but has also ensured doctrinal unity and purity, and has facilitated the equitable distribution of the resources of the church for the accomplishment of its mission.

These factors, together with the Lord's blessings, may explain why the Seventh-day Adventist church is enjoying an unprecedented growth around the world today.

Threats to Our Church Unity.

There are, however, disturbing indications that our unity as a people is being threatened. For example, as apathy and the spirit of Laodiceanism have crept into the church, there are tensions in some places about our distinctive doctrinal beliefs and practices. Also, as worldly gimmicks and entertainment are gaining inroads into our preaching and worship styles, we are slowly losing our

sense of mission. Still, in other places, liberal ideologies as well as conflicts like tribalism, racism, nationalism, and classism (economic, social, or educational), are testing the strength of our organizational unity.

As a result of these and other factors, we are witnessing the increased activities of dissident or offshoot movements. Inspired by both the "independent right" and the "liberal left," these movements are disrupting the unity within local congregations. As the offshoots of the left and right continue sowing seeds of discord, there is also a real danger of congregationalism (breakaway independent congregations) within the church's polity or form of organization. When the spirit of defiance or rebellion goes unchecked, and when they are cherished and encouraged at the conference, union, and division levels, there is the additional risk of fracturing our worldwide unity.

Offshoots of the "Liberal Left" and "Independent Right"

In my earlier work, *Receiving the Word*, I explained that the Seventh-day Adventist church is caught in the middle of a cross-fire of attacks from the "liberal left" and the "independent right."

The liberals, often educated and influential, operate within the church structure; the independents, appearing spiritual and orthodox, operate from without by establishing organizations and structures of their own.

Both groups are critical of the church because they believe that today's Adventism is not what it should be. So both attempt to "rehabilitate" the church.

In order to make Adventism "relevant" for this generation, the liberals seek to "liberate" the church from its alleged

fundamentalist doctrines and nineteenth-century lifestyle. In their attempt to bring a "revival" to the church, the independents desire to "reform" the church from its ways of "apostasy." The liberals reinterpret Adventism's historic doctrines; the independents oppose any tampering with the Adventist pillars.

Regarding lifestyle or conduct, the liberals emphasize love, acceptance, and inclusiveness. The independents stress law, perfectionism, and uniqueness.

When the liberals on the left speak about the Adventist church, they often seem to see only the independents on the right; and when the independents discuss the church, one could almost believe that all members of the church are liberals.

The independent right is often perceived as siphoning off tithe from the church; the liberal left, which includes many church workers, is paid with tithe money while it often appears to be challenging, if not undermining, the beliefs and practices of the church.

The independent right destroys church unity by encour-

Ellen G. White stated that "we have far more to fear from within than from without" (Selected Messages, 1:122). If this applies to our current situation, then the mainstream Seventh-day Adventist church, caught in the crossfire, should be more concerned about the liberals within than about the independents without.

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gathered from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, & loyalty from their treason. T. L. S.

True Unity & Counterfeit Unity

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aging faithful members to separate from the church. The liberal left destroys the church's unity by remaining in the church and introducing its counterfeit unity doctrine, a doctrine that allows truth and error to coexist.

The activities of both groups are often encouraged by the silence and indifference of mainstream Adventism.

Although in recent times an effort has been made to inform church members (not always accurately) about the activities of the independent right, little has been done to alert unwary Adventists to the influence of the entrenched liberal left. Ellen G. White stated that "we have far more to fear from within than from without" (*Selected Messages*, 1:122). If this applies to our current situation, then the mainstream Seventh-day Adventist church, caught in the crossfire, should be more concerned about the liberals within than about the independents without.

Inasmuch as liberalism's spurious doctrine of unity is creating confusion and division in local congregations and threatening the worldwide unity of our church, the remainder of this article will contrast this doctrine with the biblical one.

Liberalism's Counterfeit Unity

Satan has a counterfeit for every truth in the Bible (miracles, angels, love, faith, Sabbath, etc.). He even counterfeits our Savior Himself (Mat 24:24). So it should not surprise us that, in his plan to deceive, Satan also offers a counterfeit unity as well. The counterfeit unity being promoted by theological liberalism adopts a two-fold strategy. First, liberalism teaches that God and all good men are for unity, while the devil and all bad people are for division. Second, it confuses true unity with the absence of conflict or the tolerance of error. Let me briefly respond.

...there will be confusion in the church if we attempt to unite truth and error, light and darkness. Unity achieved this way is not unity at all; it is compromise. It is sin. And it can be fatal to one's salvation.

Unity, Not Always Good. Those who followed the 2000 United States presidential election campaign may be familiar with the political slogan, "I am a uniter, not divider." Many interpret this slogan to mean unity is always good and division is always bad. Christians who have bought into this concept unknowingly extrapolate this campaign slogan into a belief that God is for unity and Satan is for division.

Those who have embraced this mistaken view of unity blindly support or promote any views or practices that are carried out in the name of unity. Such people will not raise a

voice against false ideologies like homosexuality, women's ordination, liberal higher criticism, questionable worship styles, divorce and remarriage, etc. because it is "divisive" to do so. And isn't division always bad?

But is this belief correct? Is unity always good and division always bad? Let's not forget that Satan's goal is always to deceive. If good people were all for union and bad folks are all for division, or vice versa, would it not make it very easy for people to detect error? If it could be shown that God always unites and the devil always divides would it not be easy to find our way around in this confused and confusing world?

Against this mistaken notion of unity, we must make three brief comments:

1. *God Is Sometimes a Divider.* The first divider was God who at the creation divided the light from the darkness. This division set the direction for all God's dealings in the natural and spiritual realms. Light and darkness are incompatible. If we try to have both in the same place at once, we attempt the impossible and end by having neither the one nor the other, but dimness rather, and obscurity.

2. *Satan Is Sometimes a Uniter.* Ever since Satan tempted our first parents to partake of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he has always sought to unite that which God Himself had divided. Thus, we read in the Scriptures about how the "sons of God" married the "daughters of men" (Gen 6: 1ff.). We also read how the priests of Judah "put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean" (Ezek 22:26).

3. *Unity Not Always Good, Division Not Always Bad.* Uniting things that should never be united in the first place is never good even where it is possible. Similarly, the arbitrary division of things that should be united is never right. This fact is not only true in the realm of nature and politics, but especially so in moral and religious realms. To divide what should be divided and unite what should be united require a clear knowledge of God's Word and the Holy Spirit's gift of discernment.

Much blood has been shed in tribal wars in Africa because attempts were made during the colonial era not only to divide peoples of the same tribes/nations, but also to forcibly unite tribes and nations that historically never got along. In the same way, there will be confusion in the church if we attempt to unite truth and error, light and darkness. Unity achieved this way is not unity at all; it is compromise. It is sin. And it can be fatal to one's salvation.

Let us be careful that in our quest for unity, we don't attempt to harmonize right and wrong. Writes the apostle Paul: "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor 6:14). Ellen White was emphatic: "Light and darkness cannot harmonize. Between truth and error there is an irrepressible con-

flict. To uphold and defend the one is to attack and overthrow the other" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 126).

Unity, Not the Same As Absence of Conflict. To counterfeit the biblical teaching of unity, Satan seeks to confuse it with peaceful coexistence of truth and error. Those who have embraced this mistaken view think that unity is putting aside theological differences and pretending they don't exist or don't matter. Thus, in some of our churches, there are different Sabbath School classes to allow for different theologies. Pluralism in beliefs and the desire to get along with everyone is confused with true unity.

Proponents and supporters of this counterfeit unity sometimes employ Christ's parables of the wheat and tares, and of the sheep and goats to teach that the church has no business in separating the true from the false. To such, anyone who challenges conflicting or erroneous theologies in the church is "divisive" or "intolerant."

Two brief comments are in order:

1. *Coexistence is not the same as unity.* It is true that in the church today, the wheat grows with the tares, the sheep and the goats coexist, and the farms of the just and the unjust lie side by side in the landscape. It is also true that the hour is coming when Christ Himself will divide the sheep from the goats and separate the tares from the wheat. But while a fruit of unity is harmony, co-existence is not the same as unity.

The question is not about coexistence, but of union and fellowship. The fact that the wheat grows in the same field with the tares does not mean the two should cross-pollinate. The fact that the sheep graze near the goats does not mean that the two should seek to interbreed. The unjust and the just enjoy the same rain and sunshine, but shall they forget their deep moral differences and intermarry? The prophet Amos asked: "Can two walk together except they be agreed" (Amos 3:3)?

2. *Absence of conflict is not the same as unity.* Counterfeit unity is popular because it argues that the absence of conflict is evidence of true unity. But this is not necessarily true. Sometimes, striving to uphold true unity, the unity founded on Christ's Word, inevitably results in conflict and persecution (2 Tim 3:12). We must not purchase unity at the expense of biblical fidelity. Loyalty to God and faithfulness to His truth are jewels more precious than gold or diamond. For these jewels, men and women have suffered the loss of property, imprisonment and even death.

In the last days of the world's history, an attempt will be made to enforce this counterfeit unity. Different religions and churches will be united on falsehood, and demand all to follow the path of disobedience. But God's true followers will not em-

brace this type of unity. They will choose to separate themselves from the path of disobedience (Rev 13 & 14). As someone observed, when confused sheep start over a cliff the individual sheep can save himself only by separating from the flock. For perfect unity at such a time can only mean total destruction.

The Bible's Teaching about Unity

The Bible rejects pluralism of belief and practice. It rejects the notion that conflicting or contradictory theological views are legitimate and must be allowed to cohabit in the church. In contrast to today's counterfeit unity, the Bible teaches that members of God's church should uphold a unity of faith and practice.

Unity of Faith. Doctrinal unity is the teaching that (1) all God's people should uphold a common faith, and that (2) any new teachings or interpretations purporting to come from God must be in

harmony with previous truth communicated to God's true prophets. In the Old Testament, the unity of doctrine was best captured by the prophet Isaiah when he challenged Israel: "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, the light is not in them" (Isa 8:20).

The apostles in the New Testament upheld this teaching when they constantly sought to establish their understanding of Christ's redemptive work by appealing

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to the Old Testament. The early believers also recognized that the unity which our Lord prayed for (in John 17) is one which is founded on "a common faith" (Titus 1:4; 2 Peter 1:1), "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3, KJV). In the New Testament church, this spirit of unity was conveyed in a number of ways.

Believers in the early church understood that they did not exist as independent congregations, each choosing to go their own separate ways, believing their own different doctrines, and caring only for their own local interests. Rather, they saw themselves as a God's special commonwealth, comprising Christians in every region of the Roman world.

Sometimes the spirit of unity was done through greetings from church to church (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:19; Phil. 4:22). The conveyance of greetings reminded local churches that they belonged to a global network of churches. This spirit of unity was also reflected in the letters of recommendation sent from one church to another or from well-known leaders, commending God-given teachers to other churches (Acts

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18:24-28; 2 Cor. 3:1; Rom. 16:1, 2; Col. 4:10).

When, on one occasion, the Corinthians cherished a spirit of independence, the apostle Paul wrote that he had sent Timothy to remind them of "my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church" (1 Cor. 4:17). He also reprimanded them for their independent attitude: "Did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only people it has reached?" (1 Cor. 14:36, NIV).

In order to preserve the "unity of the faith" (Eph 4:13), the apostles urged believers to uphold sound teaching (1 Tim 6:20; 2 Tim 1:13) and counteract false teaching and false teachers (1 Tim 1:3; 4:1, 6; Titus 1:9-11). They occasionally exposed the false teachings of certain individuals (1 Tim 1:20; 2 Tim 2:17; 4:19; cf. Phil 4:2-3). Even John, the apostle of love, and Jude, the brother of our Lord Jesus Christ, also found it necessary to call attention to those who were departing from the teachings of the apostles (3 John 9-10; Jude). The Christians in Berea were commended for constantly subjecting the teachings of the apostle Paul to the scrutiny of Scripture (Acts 17:11).

It is, therefore, evident that the New Testament believers embraced a unity of doctrine. If they lived in our day, they would reject any proposals for theological pluralism. The apostle Paul was emphatic when he said, "though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal 1:8).

The above understanding of unity is the theological basis for the church's requirement that all Seventh-day Adventists—including our pastors, church leaders, teachers in our institutions, publishers and editors of our church publications—must adhere to all our 27 Fundamental Beliefs. Wherever the biblical teachings summarized in our Fundamental Beliefs are questioned or challenged, the result is always pluralism in beliefs and congregationalism or offshootism in church polity.

Unity of Practice. The New Testament also teaches that unity of doctrine should not remain at the intellectual level. It also extends to practice as well as in cooperative actions. This is indicated in a number of ways.

For example, the apostle Paul repeatedly pointed the churches to what was going on in other parts of the Roman empire. He reminded the believers of the common gospel that brought them together (Col. 1:6, 23; 1 Tim. 3:16). In the same way, Corinthian believers were to see themselves united "with

all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ," who is both "their Lord and ours" (1 Cor. 1:2).

The apostles taught that what happened in other congregations or parts of the world must have their full interest (cf. 2 Cor. 9:2-5; Col. 4:16). They exhorted the believers to participate in all that was being done elsewhere and to accept the guidelines that were offered for all the churches (1 Cor. 16:1-4; 11:16). "This is the rule I lay down in all the churches," writes Paul to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 7:17, NIV), adding that "God is not a God of confusion, but of peace" (1 Cor. 14:33).

Basing themselves on the above theological understanding, Seventh-day Adventists have sought to uphold their worldwide unity through a number ways: reading the same mission stories and reports, giving mission offerings to finance specific projects, and respecting the *Church Manual* and other church policies that have been agreed upon to govern the operation of the church at its different levels. Churches that ignore these practices tend to lack a global vision, tend to be inward looking, and tend to be suspicious or disrespectful of our unique system of church governance. The result is always the same: rebellion and a gravitation towards offshootism of either the independent right or the liberal left.

Conclusion

Because unity is a biblical teaching, and because unity among believers is the most powerful witness we can give about Christ, it is not surprising that Satan also has manufactured his own version of unity to confuse and deceive God's people. It attempts to unite that which God has divided, and divide that which God has united. Advocated by liberals within the church, this counterfeit unity poses the greatest threat to the church. For it undermines our doctrinal beliefs and lifestyle practices, our sense of mission, and our unique form of church organization.

This is why Bible-believing Adventists should be concerned about the biblically questionable ideas and practices that are creating confusion in local churches, splitting others, and threatening our worldwide unity. I am speaking specifically about: (1) the gospel gimmicks—e.g., gospel rock, gospel clowns, gospel cafés, gospel magicians, etc.—that are being introduced in some of our churches; (2) the controversial divorce and remarriage decision that was voted into the *Church Manual* at the 2000 Toronto General Conference session; (3) the unbiblical and rebellious ordinations of women that have taken place in some North American churches; and (4) some of the contemporary worship styles being pushed in certain quarters of our church.

...Continued on Page 24

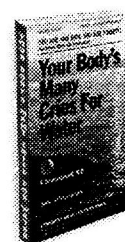
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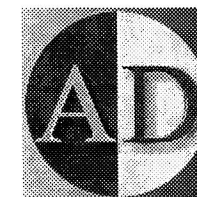
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It is now our deep desire to forge ahead under the Lord's leading proclaiming the three angels' messages and the everlasting gospel to the world, and showing the harmony between science and the Bible, enabling those who seek to avoid the deceptions of the last days. We solicit your fervent prayers for the success of this work and pray that intellectuals, atheists, and the secular will be reached in increasing numbers, enlisting on the side of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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An exciting venture we are planning is the live transmission of the entire series by Professor Walter Veith in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Check our website for further details as they become available.

We solicit your prayers that God will use this website to further the message of His redeeming grace and bring many souls into the kingdom.



A Broader Life

Nothing will so arouse a self-sacrificing zeal and broaden and strengthen the character as to engage in work for others. Many professed Christians, in seeking church relationship, think only of themselves. They wish to enjoy church fellowship and pastoral care. They become members of large and prosperous churches, and are content to do little for others. In this way they are robbing themselves of the most precious blessings. Many would be greatly benefited by sacrificing their pleasant, ease-conducting associations. They need to go where their energies will be called out in Christian work and they can learn to bear responsibilities.

Trees that are crowded closely together do not grow healthfully and sturdily. The gardener transplants them that they may have room to develop. A similar work would benefit many of the members of large churches. They need to be placed where their energies will be called forth in active Christian effort. They are losing their spiritual life, becoming dwarfed and inefficient, for want of self-sacrificing labor for others. Transplanted to some missionary field, they would grow strong and vigorous.

A Work for You To Do

But none need wait until called to some distant field before beginning to help others. Doors of service are open everywhere. All around us are those who need our help. The widow, the orphan, the sick and the dying, the heart-sick, the discouraged, the ignorant, and the outcast are on every hand.

We should feel it our special duty to work for those living in our neighborhood. Study how you can best help those who take no interest in religious things. As you visit your friends and neighbors, show an interest in their spiritual as well as in their temporal welfare. Speak to them of Christ as a sin-pardoning Saviour. Invite your neighbors to your home, and read with them from the precious Bible and from books that explain its truths. Invite them to unite with you in song and prayer. In these little gatherings, Christ Himself will be present, as He has promised, and hearts will be touched by His grace.

Church members should educate themselves to do this work. This is just as essential as to save the benighted souls in foreign countries. While some feel the burden for souls afar off, let the many who are at home feel the burden

of precious souls who are around them, and work just as diligently for their salvation.

Many regret that they are living a narrow life. They themselves can make their life broad and influential if they will. Those who love Jesus with heart and mind and soul, and their neighbor as themselves, have a wide field in which to use their ability and influence.



Ministry of Healing, p. 151-153
Ellen G. White



Dear Friends:

"I call upon my brethren and sisters to bring an offering to the Lord, that His work may go forward with power. Bring a large offering if you can. But if your offering must be small, remember that the Lord will richly bless you in doing your best."

RH Nov 26, 1901

It is now more than ever, that while the closing stages of this earth's history transpire before our very eyes, that we be found not sleeping, but working for the Master in giving the last message of hope and mercy to a dying world. Wherever there may be a soul that hasn't heard that message, or who may be longing for some answers to the confusion around him, we need to be available to answer the questions and offer a better way.

We at Amazing Discoveries want to do our part in giving hope of a better life to others in North America. In April/May 2002, Amazing Discoveries will be holding a evolution/creation seminar in Tulsa, Oklahoma to be followed by an intense Bible study series covering the three angel's messages revealing the deceptions of our day in regards to life after death, the Sabbath rest, last day events, the millennium of peace, and the devil's deceptions to lure away if possible, the very elect. This seminar will be broadcast LIVE, so that not only the 600 people in the hall, but potentially thousands around the world, will be able to view this evangelistic seminar and join the ranks of God's people, pledging their allegiance to the Creator God who has redeemed them and will return to rescue them from the grief and trouble of this life.

We cherish your prayers on behalf of this upcoming

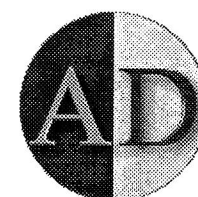
series. It is only through prayer that there will be any measure of success, and we dare not advance unless God goes before us, and we are assured of the prayers of the many around North America that desire to see the gospel spread in their own country and continent. Please write, email, or telephone us to let us know you are willing to support this evangelistic seminar with your prayers.

And if you would like to contribute in any amount financially to the huge expenses that will be incurred as a result of this series, we would treasure your support and thank you for your zeal for the gospel commission and your love for those around you who haven't yet heard the life-saving message of God's truth. It is only with the support of people like you that we are enabled in any way to continue and expand our evangelistic efforts and to continue bringing quality speakers to North America. Please note that all contributions no matter the size are eligible for a tax-deductible receipt from Amazing Discoveries.

We thank you for your interest in the work of Amazing Discoveries and Professor Walter J. Veith. May God bless you as you continue to further God's work through your prayers and contributions. We will know only in heaven, how God multiplied each of our efforts, both small and great, to reap an abundant harvest for His kingdom. May we all be there to see that glorious day.

Depending on Christ,

Wendy Penner
President



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2. To show the harmony between science and the Bible with special reference to our Creator God
3. To share the Health Message (the right arm of the Third Angel's Message)
4. To place the message in the context of our day with special emphasis on the deceptions which would detract from these messages
5. To reach out to intellectuals, atheists, and the secular world as well as strengthening and confirming the church in the pillars of our faith and certainty of the prophetic Word
6. To introduce people to the remnant church of God who keep the commandments of God and who hold to the testimony of Jesus Christ.

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Changing Our Religion Unleashing the Omega

by Brian S. Neumann

Part 1

This article, written by Brian Neumann, is part of a larger document which was shared during his series in N. America in 2001. Over the course of the next few issues, we will make this document available in its entirety in our newsletter for the many who requested a copy but do not have a computer from which to access the information.

As I sit down to write this document, I am painfully aware that my life is in need of desperate change. After giving my life and service to the Lord and His cause I did not become an overnight saint — far from it. I realize, constantly, that if it were not for the precious blood of Jesus, His amazing grace, and deep love, I would be nothing. I see my Christian walk — looking back — as a road strewn with the rubble of failures and the all too apparent marks of a defective character and spirit. As I look forward, I have hope, trusting in our Lord, that He will supply the strength I need to overcome and will cover me with His beautiful robe of righteousness, lest the ugliness of my sins condemn me to eternal loss.

I have trembled, had painful nights and agonizing hours as I have contemplated what I feel compelled to do. Who am I? Who gives me the right to put pen to paper and speak in such a fashion as I am about to? I have to cry, along with the publican, 'Lord have mercy on me, a sinner'. A sinner I am, and as a sinner, I will continue to struggle, pleading with God to give me the strength to stay on the straight and narrow road till Christ returns.

I love the truth that this remnant church of God has to give to the world. Sometimes I am even overzealous for it (if that were at all possible). I love Jesus and I love my brothers and sisters in Christ, millions that I have not seen or met, and many, that during my travels, I have had wonderful fellowship with in the Lord. I dare not, regardless of the criticism that I am bound to receive, remain silent. If it were only my blood that would be on my hands, then, perhaps, I would shrink from the task — my fear is already great. But it is not just my blood that I will have to give account of. I have family (those of my blood and those of the greater church) that may not hear the warning if I do not lift up my voice. I would rather die than see them lost.

We are living in perilous times. Every truth that God has given us is being perverted or changed. Every clear, balanced doctrine of light has been given a twist and slant. Slowly the people of God are becoming perplexed and unsure. Voices, voices from every side, one crying this, another whispering that. Books, articles, videos, sermons, swirling like a cluttered hurricane inside our brains. Who can discern?

As the contradictions play themselves out around us, none represent the heart and soul of our peril more clearly than the sin of misrepresenting the character of God. The perversion of this teaching gets to the very core of all the symptomatic manifestations that we have to deal with today in our religion. While the love, mercy and grace of God are being heralded as the supreme aspects of His Divine character, His characteristics of justice and law are being slopped into the garbage can of Old Testament culture.

Like in the parable of the wheat and tares, false doctrine and soppy sentimentalism, falsely representing the person of God, are being sown like proverbial wild oats in the wheat field of God's golden truths, giving birth to the bastard offspring of the Babylonish prostitute.

Dare we root out these individuals practicing exegetical heresy, expose their anaemic forms to the UV rays of God's guiding lights — the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy? Should we drag them, quivering and naked, into the colosseum of biblical vengeance and feed them to the hungry lions of 'conservative fanaticism' and exterminate them with extreme prejudice?

I can almost hear some cry, 'root out the tares, burn them in the fire! Cleanse the temple, turn over the tables and whip the money-changers and greedy priests till they flee the presence of the holy!'

Who is holy? Who dares cast the first stone? Is there any without sin? Do we have the right to persecute and kill the false prophets in the camp of Israel? Has the Lord assigned us as judge, jury and executioner? May God help us not to misunderstand our duty. May he reveal to us the Achans in our own hearts, lest we become infected with the killer virus of spiritual egotism. Let us search with longsuffering and doctrine and see what the Lord requires of us. But, let us not be silent. We cannot, while the thief steals into the house, be like dumb dogs that do not bark. We have no right to judge the motive and character but, we do, according to the clear commission of God's word, have the right to reveal any visible, public sin or error that will infect the dwellers in the house with the deadly disease of Babylonian doctrine, spreading in pandemic proportions around the Adventist world.

God is a God of Love. He is a God full of mercy and grace, ready to receive the repentant surrendering sinner into His open arms. He is also a God of Justice, His divine law reflecting His Holy character, and He calls for the members of His household to 'test the spirits to see if they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world' (1 John 4:1).

This God of love, mercy and justice has revealed to us the pristine truth about His character — the truth about how we, as His representatives, should deal with sins that threaten to destroy and pervert that truth.

In every generation God has sent his servants to rebuke sin, both in the world and in the church. But the people desire smooth things spoken to them, and the pure, unvarnished truth is not acceptable. Many reformers, in entering upon their work, determined to exercise great prudence in attacking

the sins of the church and the nation. They hoped, by the example of a pure Christian life, to lead the people back to the doctrines of the Bible. But the Spirit of God came upon them as it came upon Elijah, moving him to rebuke the sins of a wicked king and an apostate people; they could not refrain from preaching the plain utterances of the Bible,—doctrines which they had been reluctant to present. They were impelled to zealously declare the truth, and the danger which threatened souls. The words which the Lord gave them they uttered, fearless of consequences, and the people were compelled to hear the warning. 88 GC 606

There are times when the truth must be spoken. Times when the trumpet must give a certain sound, when the voice must be lifted up like a trumpet and the house of Jacob be made aware of her sins.

Living the life of truth is our first responsibility. This is the fruit, the proof, of a surrendered, converted heart. But, we dare not consent to listen to the perversion of truth without raising the alarm.

No longer consent to listen without protest to the perversion of truth. . . . Every one is now to stand on his guard. God calls upon men and women to take their stand under the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel. I have been instructed to warn our people; for many are in danger of receiving theories and sophistries that undermine the foundation pillars of the faith. 1 Selected Messages. p. 196

Everyone, according to Ellen White is to be on guard. When men and women are led to believe that God will tolerate the sin of false doctrine and unholy practices, because He is a

We cannot, while the thief steals into the house, be like dumb dogs that do not bark.

God of love and mercy, who lets the wheat and tares grow up together without a word of rebuke, then we may be sure that there is no more a ruler in Israel. Our God has been turned into a weak sentimental parent.

Would any self-respecting earthly, Christian parent let the tares of rebellion grow up within their home without a word of warning and admonition, and, at times the chastisement of the rod of discipline? Yet, we are told that in the family of God sin and open rebellion should be tolerated in 'reverent' silence. Sadly, many that are preaching this error are doing so out of ignorance and because they have not spent enough time with the greater and lesser lights (the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy). This would enlighten minds far more clearly with the truth than reading the thousands of authors selling their literary wares in the 'sanctuary' of Seventh-day Adventist bookstores worldwide, each one, with his or her own peculiar slant to the simple gospel truth.

If we are to reflect the character of God to the world, then we must be taught the whole, balanced truth about His character. When we only concentrate on the love and mercy of God and give people the impression (wittingly or unwittingly), that sin can go by unnoticed, then we will have a church full of members who believe, rightfully, that virtue is better than vice/force, but, having one aspect of God's character hidden from their sight, they will assume and teach others, by their actions and words, that sin may exist in freedom alongside truth. To the extent that some may falsely gain the impression that you may do what you want because God is a God of Love. Unfortunately, this is a teaching that lies at the heart of satanic doctrine. The 'Satanic Bible', teaches: 'Do what thou wilt, is the whole of the law — under love'.

There are others that only care to emphasize the law, God's justice and perfect obedience to every requirement of God. True, Ellen White did say that, 'God requires at this time just what He required of the holy pair in Eden, perfect obedience to His requirements' (6 Bible Commentary, p. 1073). But, when the gospel finds life in the mind through the avenues of perfection and law alone, then it is a gospel of life unto death.

To trivialize or play down any aspect of God's love or justice is to sell only half the gospel. Much like buying a car that looks sparkling and attractive on the outside but, when you lift the hood to see the motor, there is nothing inside — a gospel of just Love and grace, may sound attractive, but it will simply not give you a full understanding of God or His desire for you. Likewise, if you went to purchase a car and all they gave you was the motor, you would not be able to take it anywhere either. It would simply be a burden. You need the body, the seats and the wheels, to compliment the engine, so that you can 'experience the full assurance' that you are in a car that has 'body and soul' — one that will effectively take you to where you need to go.

It is now, at this critical time, that Satan will try every means possible to keep us from a clear understanding of the

character of God. And right now, he is emphasizing the cheap, 'easy come easy go' religion of new Adventist theology. He knows that this will lead to a 'form of godliness without the power' - to a 'wet-blanket' religion, limp and dripping - willing to tolerate sin in an effort to keep peace and unity. Appearing to supply the necessary covering of grace and righteousness of Christ when, in reality, it is heavy, wet and stifling, giving rise to inner coldness and spiritual declension. It is as a result of this condition that our enemies - Satan and his hosts - triumph.

As the contradictions play themselves out around us, none represent the heart and soul of our peril more clearly than the sin of misrepresenting the character of God.

When the church is in difficulty, when coldness and spiritual declension exist, giving occasion for the enemies of God to triumph, then, instead of folding their hands and lamenting their unhappy state, let its members inquire if there is not an Achan in the camp. With humiliation and searching of heart, let each seek to discover the hidden sins that shut out God's presence. Those who refuse to hear the admonitions and warnings given by God's faithful messengers are not to be retained in the church. They are to be disfellowshipped; for they will be as Achan in the camp of Israel—deceived and deceiving. Who, after reading the record of Achan's sin and punishment, can think it according to the will of God that those who do wickedly, refusing to repent, are to be retained in the church? To retain them would be an insult to the God of heaven. (*Letter 215, 1902*). 5 *SDA Bible Commentary*, p. 1096

'With humiliation and searching of heart', we need to seek out the 'hidden sins that shut out God's presence'. We will never receive the latter rain if we refuse to follow the example of the disciples and confess our sins in prayer and humbleness of attitude. Yes, sadly, there may be times, after following the clear biblical template for dealing with sin in the congregation (1 Timothy 5:19-21), that the unrepentant sinner will have to be disfellowshipped from the church, but, this is the instruction that the Lord has given.

When there is a sin that clearly effects the church, in a public manner, - such as false doctrine being taught and distributed throughout the body of Christ - then we are to rebuke, even an elder/leader, before all (1 Timothy 5:20). As Ellen White so clearly put it, 'No longer consent to listen without protest

to the perversion of truth' (1 Selected Messages, p. 196). She further admonished that 'all' must be on their guard.

The sin of Achan was the sin of *coveting a wedge of gold* and a *Babylonish garment* - objects that came from the accursed city of Jericho. Today, we are committing the same sin. We covet the golden cup that is full of Babylonian doctrine. Instead of covering ourselves with the true garment of Christ's righteousness, we scratch in the rubble of spiritual Jericho and steal the attractive/'goodly' Babylonish garment, sneaking it into the camp of Israel for our own use. A garment that cannot truly cover, for if it was fully exposed - removed from its hiding place in Achan's tent - it would clearly be recognized as a counterfeit garment.

The unbelief and sins of ancient Israel were presented before me, and I saw that similar wrongs and iniquity exist among modern Israel. *The pen of inspiration recorded their crimes for the benefit of those who live in these last days, that we might shun their evil example.* Achan coveted and *secreted a wedge of gold* and a *goodly Babylonish garment* that were taken as spoil from the enemy. But the Lord had pronounced the city of Jericho accursed and had commanded the people not to take of the spoil of their enemies for their own use. 4 *Testimonies* p. 491

Today, we have become just as blind as ancient Israel. We allow error to be mixed with our own 'stuff'/truth. Like Joshua, we are lying with our faces to the ground, like a dumb ostrich that believes, while his face is in the sand, he cannot be hurt - *what I cannot see cannot hurt me, ignorance is bliss, out of sight, out of mind.*

The answer of the Lord to Joshua was: "Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff." 4 *Testimonies* 492

God said to Joshua (in the case of Achan's sins), "Neither will I be with you any more except ye destroy the accursed from among you." How does this instance compare with the course pursued by those who will not raise their voice against sin and wrong; but whose sympathies are ever found with those who trouble the camp of Israel with their sins? Said God to Joshua,

"Thou canst not stand before thine enemies until ye take away the accursed thing from among you." He pronounced the punishment which should follow the transgression of his covenant. *Review and Herald, September 23, 1873*

The words of the Lord's servant reveal that we cannot expect the blessing of the Lord - in our efforts to win souls for the kingdom and our warfare against the enemy - unless we remove the accursed thing from our midst.

The entire congregation of Israel was affected by Achan's sin. Because of it God could not help them, and when they went out to battle they were beaten by their enemies. 2 *SAT* 160

To speak out against the sin of false teachings, that affect the whole body, is not, by any stretch of the imagination, rooting up the wheat with the tares. Paul's practice, as recorded in his letters to the Corinthians, was to warn them of the dangers and reprove them for their sins. This is how Ellen White writes about this experience:

After the departure of Paul, however, unfavourable conditions arose; tares that had been sown by the enemy appeared among the wheat, and ere long these began to bring forth their evil fruit. This was a time of severe trial to the Corinthian church . . . As this picture was presented before him, Paul saw that his worst fears were more than realized. But he did not because of this give way to the thought that his work had been a failure. With "anguish of heart" and with "many tears" he sought counsel from God . . . With remarkable clearness he proceeded to answer the various questions brought forward by the church, and to lay down general principles, which, if heeded, would lead them to a higher spiritual plane. They were in peril, and he could not bear the thought of failing at this critical time to reach their hearts. Faithfully he warned them of their dangers and reprov'd them for their sins. *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 300, 301

Paul did not judge the character or motive, but, he clearly and concisely (refer to 1 & 2 Corinthians), dealt with the sin. He instructed Timothy to rightly divide the word of truth (2

Timothy 2:15). He charged Timothy, 'reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine', and warned that a time would come when they will not endure sound doctrine but, because of their own lusts they will rather turn their ears from the truth and listen to fables (2 *Timothy* 4:1-4).

As Christ's followers become grieved with the sin they see in the church, they should follow the instruction of Christ. Ellen White explains Christ's teaching on the tares and wheat:

Christ's servants are grieved as they see true and false believers mingled in the church. They long to do something to cleanse the church. Like the servants of the householder, they are ready to uproot the tares. But Christ says to them, "Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest." Christ has plainly taught that those who persist in open sin must be separated from the church, but He has not committed to us the work of judging character and motive. *Christ Object Lessons*, p. 71

Open sin, which has a direct influence on the body, should be dealt with in unequivocal terms. To remain silent when the truth is being perverted is, according to the light given earlier by Mrs. White, a sin. To pervert the character of God, and only present one aspect of his personality, is likewise, a sin - a spurious teaching that will lead to a spurious experience.

We are told that the people of these countries will be pleased with our discourses if we dwell on the love of Jesus. Of this they never tire, but we are in danger of losing our congregations if we dwell on the sterner questions of duty and the law of God. There is a spurious experience prevailing everywhere . . . Many are continually saying, "All that we have to do is to believe in Christ." They claim that faith is all we need. In its fullest sense, this is true; but they do not take it in the fullest sense. *Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of Seventh-day Adventists*, p. 188

Theologians, professors, doctors, teachers, pastors, elders or lay-people, no one is above the truth. We all, as God's faithful watchmen and members of His royal priesthood, have the right - not just the right, but the commission - to speak out against the perversion of truth.

In every sermon the law and God's justice must be preached in union with His righteousness, grace and love. If we divorce the two and over emphasize one aspect more than the

Changing Religions ...Continued From Page 23

other, we will feed the people with a dichotomized gospel.

Many have lost very much in that they have not opened the eyes of their understanding to discern the wondrous things in the law of God. On the one hand, religionists generally have divorced the law and the gospel, while we have, on the other hand, almost done the same from another standpoint. We have not held up before the people the righteousness of Christ and the full significance of His great plan of redemption. We have left out Christ and His matchless love, brought in theories and reasonings, and preached argumentative discourses. *Evangelism, p. 231*

We need to clearly guard against destructive criticism and a spirit of accusation — questioning the motives and character of others. But, equally, we need to guard against soft peddling the gospel and allowing false teaching to go by unrebuked. It makes no difference who is preaching or teaching the spurious doctrine. Theologians, professors, doctors, teachers, pastors, elders or laypeople, no one is above the truth. We all, as God's faithful watchmen and members of His royal priesthood, have the right — not just the right, but the commission — to speak out against the perversion of truth.

We are living in the most critical time of this church's history. Satan is trying to bring in every form of deception that he can. This is not the time to be a coward, not the time to roll over and go to sleep, hoping that it will all have gone away when you wake up. Now is the time for the warning to be given, for the Elijahs to stand up and rebuke the sins of a wicked apostate king. Whether

it is in the area of false teaching, wrong methods of evangelism, false music and worship or dangerous practices in psychology and spiritualism, all need to be clearly condemned, without delay. The alpha of heresies has passed. We are now in the midst of the omega. We have been blind for too long. It is time for us to see and to act, before it is too late.



True Unity... ...Continued From Page 16

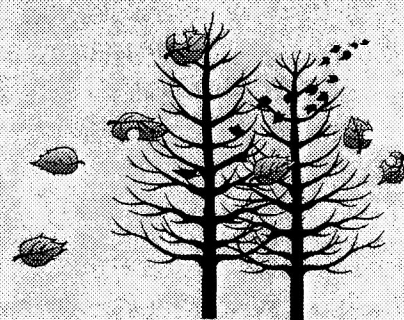
Those who are pushing these liberal agenda are actually dividing our church and threatening our worldwide unity. Yet, based on the doctrine of counterfeit unity, they often accuse anyone opposing the unbiblical practices as being divisive. Can we afford to remain silent when error is being taught and practiced, and when truth is being undermined?

Let's remember that when powerful secular ideologies undermine the biblical faith, indifference and inaction with respect to the cause of God is viewed by Him as a crime. This was the sin of Meroz, an Israelite town in Naphtali: "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; *because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty*" (Judges 5:23).

Ellen White makes it more plain when she wrote: "If God abhors one sin above another, of which His people are guilty, it is doing nothing in case of an emergency. Indifference and neutrality in a religious crisis is regarded of God as a grievous crime and equal to the very worst type of hostility against God" (*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 281).



[Editor's Note: This article is adapted from Dr. Pipim's latest book *Must We Be Silent?* Excerpts from the book and comments from readers are available at the Berean Books website: <http://www.bereanbooks.org>]



Faith On the Line is the official quarterly publication of Amazing Discoveries Charitable Foundation, a Seventh-day Adventist based non-profit organization, addressing theological, political, economic, and scientific issues from a Biblical perspective. Copies are sent to all who request them. Requests should be sent to the address below. A suggested minimum donation of \$12 CDN or \$10 US would be appreciated.

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