
The Walter Rea Attack

What is this Walter Rea issue all about? Why is it being done? How should we respond to it?

Those who have read his book, "White Lie," or attended one of his meetings have found that either they must reject Walter Rea and his messages, or they must reject the Scriptures. And those who have attempted to keep to some "half-way point" between the two, report that they have seen their faith in the Bible and their interest in reading it gradually erode away, —until they have had to make their decision to cut loose from Bible study entirely, or cut loose from Walter Rea and the Rea Lie.

Here is the basic issue in the whole matter. If you grasp it and accept it you will be safe from the Rea Lie and enabled to keep your hold on the Inspired Word:

"Walter Rea inadvertently revealed the crux of the matter when he told his College Place audience on Saturday afternoon: 'Don't you do to the Bible what I am doing to the writings of Ellen White or you will destroy the Bible, too.' -Alden Thompson, quoted in The North Pacific Union Gleaner, February 1, 1982, p. 10.

And that is the basic error in the Rea Doctrine: Anytime a human being uses phrases similar to any that another had in print before his time, he is a plagiarist, and cannot at all be an inspired prophet of God. Many of those who listen to Rea's words or read his book are charmed by the devil to become fascinated with this subtle error. There is a bewitching power when we willingly stop to listen to the agents of Satan. A darkness enters our lives. And many are leaving God and His Inspired revelations as a result. Or they are having to retrace their steps and cry to God for help. For they find that they have tarried too long in considering questions and cavil in regard to the Word of God.

It is more important that you and I cling to the Scriptures than that we help Walter Rea in his personal fight against Adventists. If Walter Rea wants to lose his own soul, that will have to be his decision. We dare not crowd around him with interested ears—or we may be lost too.

Walter Rea has now traveled for well over a year holding paid lectures all over North America and overseas as well. A close acquaintance of his, personally told me that Rea is now taking in between \$7-10,000 per weekend. He is sponsored in this evil work of destroying men's confidence in Scripture, by the Association of Adventist Forums, publishers of "Spectrum" magazine. Without their help—and the fact that he is Seventh-day Adventist in good and regular standing (in the Central California Conference) -his lectures could not be widely presented to Adventist workers, laymen and students. *

*Adventist Forum meetings are frequently advertised as being officially sponsored 'by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. As one reads this on a sheet announcing a Forum meeting in his locality, he is more likely to attend because he thinks that historic Adventism will be upheld there. But that which he finds may implant a set of doubts that will eventually carry him away from the Bible, the Spirit of Prophecy and the Third Angel's Message. "God is displeased with us when we go to listen to error, without being obliged to go; for unless He sends us to those meetings where error is forced home to the people by the power of the will, He will not keep us. The angels cease their watchful care over us, and we are left to the buffetings of the enemy, to be darkened and weakened by him and the power of his evil angels; and the light around us becomes contaminated with the darkness." -Early Writings, 725.

Here is another quotation about a Rea lecture, this one held next to Atlantic Union College so that the students there could listen to his atheistic sentiments:

"Sunday, January 24, many AUC students and faculty members left their TV sets and the Super Bowl to attend an event which promised to be nearly as exciting—John Wood, Assistant Professor of Religion, facing Walter Rea, former Adventist pastor, and author of the forthcoming book 'The White Lie.' The confrontation, held at Lancaster Town Hall, and sponsored by the Association of Adventist Forums, attracted a fairly large audience. Rea spoke first, his talk being entitled 'The White Lie.'

An Adventist minister for 35 years before his dismissal in 1980, he still considers himself an Adventist, and is still officially a member. . [After a devastating attack on the Spirit of Prophecy, Inspiration, and several historic Adventist beliefs, he says:] We should trust our theologians [instead of the Inspired Word] -if we can't, 'why did we educate them in the first place?'. . Remember that 'God is bigger than Adventism, and heaven is bigger than the

Adventist ghetto. '

"[How did Elder John Wood, the religion teacher at the college, reply to Rea? —by attacking the Bible. This is what happens when you try to debate with an agent of Satan: you begin to use his ideas.] Elder Wood spoke on 'Prophets and Plagiarists,' centering his arguments on what he feels is the real issue—the nature of inspiration. He attacked the 'Fundamentalist heresy,'. . . He gave numerous examples where the Bible 'plagiarizes' from apocryphal and even pagan sources. Psalm 29, he said, is a Canaanite psalm describing an appearance of Baal to his people. . . The tabernacle and Solomon's temple were shown to be similar in design and decoration to pagan temples. . . [Wood then gave other reasons to help strengthen our doubts in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy].

"[After the lecture was concluded, some of the students and one faculty member were asked what it had done to their thinking:] A senior theology major said, 'I was sitting there thinking, 'This ought to be on 'Real People!' " I've never seen anybody get so many words into such a short time period!' 'I was impressed,' said another student. 'I thought Rea was going to be a bitter person. He seemed more rational, logical, and sincere than I expected.' One person felt that 'Rea was impressed with Wood.' Dale Crandall commented, 'It was clear that if we were to reject Ellen White on the basis of Elder Rea's conclusions, we would also have to reject all the prophets of the Bible, because they also borrowed from their contemporaries.' Alwyn Fraser, History Department Chairman, said, 'The spirit was good. Rea wasn't being vitriolic.' "- "Rea vs. Wood at Town Hall," in The Lancastrian, the official Atlantic Union College weekly new paper, February 9, 1982, p. 7.

Do you want darkening doubts in your life? Do you want to be washed away from the Rock of Scripture to the sea where there is no help and no hope? Is this the kind of atheistic sentiments that you want your sons and daughters to have?

If you want a daily walk with God and the angels, then stay away from Walter Rea and Adventist Forum meetings when they are held in your area. And share this sheet of paper with everyone else that you want to warn against men who are subtly trying to destroy the faith of Seventh-day Adventists. If you will not fight these errors, they will take over your soul and the souls of your loved ones. Then fight them. Don't attend these lectures yourself and encourage your friends to stay away from them also.

Walter Rea likes comparisons. Here are a few that may help you see the truth about what we are dealing with here. First, here are some samplings from a mind that has become terribly twisted through imbibing for too many years the suggestions of Satan:

Here is what Walter Rea thinks about humble Adventists, such as yourself, who love God and want with all their hearts to go to heaven:

"Part of the Adventist theology is that the redeemed will some day, during the golden age of the millennium, sit on those pearly white thrones in the Far Beyond and help to judge the wicked. There all the juicy morsels of other's acts and sins will be finally revealed to them. That thought alone has helped many faithful go on to the end."—"White Lie," page 40-41.

His moral nature has become so darkened by the years he has fed on doubt that he has no confidence in the motives of those who sincerely love Jesus and desire only to be in His presence. Do you want to feed on the errors and Satanic suggestions of such a shrunken soul?

Here is what he says about how our Sanctuary Message began, as Hiram Edson recognized, for the first time, on that October morn that Jesus had entered the Second Apartment of the Heavenly Sanctuary:

"The poor man in the cornfield might have seen a scarecrow instead of a vision."—"White Lie," page 39.

In a recent national television broadcast, Rea said that he is a minister and a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and this is why he can speak and be heard by the non-Adventist world. Here is what he says about the Seventh-day Adventist Church, itself, and about Ellen White:

"In this odyssey that we take together, the super-salesmen will be the clergymen, the preachers, the reverends, the divines—who more than any professionals have been granted license. . . to peddle their wares to the unwary, to project their fears on the fearful, and to sell their guilt to the unremorseful. The patron saint will be Ellen

Gould White, the canonized leader of the Seventh-day Adventist Church."- "White lie," pages 25-26.

Here is what he says about her writings:

"With no thought of failure, the Adventists assigned this awesome task [of inventing doctrinal error] to [Ellen White] . . . Here was a ready-made opportunity. Religious history gives ample evidence that the 'true believer' is much more likely to accept the dictums of the simpleminded if these dictums can somehow be given a heavenly setting."- "White Lie," page 31.

Shallow and simpleminded is what he calls the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy. In contrast, he generously describes himself as a very capable individual that people should give attention to:

"If Ford's studies were disturbing, Rea's research was downright frightening. Word of it sent administrators racing to the computers with sweaty palms. . . The true believer is being sold the interpretation of the truth of Scripture through the super-salesmen of his system. . . Rea, on the other hand, was a guerilla fighter. He seemed to be aiming for the jugular. His studies were meant to . . . bypass the authority of the super-salesmen of the system."-"White Lie," pages 270-271.

How did Rea get into this frame of mind? What is the key to his motives for this violent attack on one who loved God with all her heart and who wrote so beautifully about Him? Walter does not leave us questioning as to the reasons. He tells us:

"Regardless of new evidence or lack of evidence, intelligent and reasonable people do not go along with Ellen. . . that a woman is more spiritual if she doesn't wear a wedding ring; . . . that in the matter of sex play by happily married couples (it having been pronounced a concession to the 'animal' nature, and perhaps a cause of disease), less is better;. . . that flesh food has a tendency to animalize the nature and to rob man of the sympathy he should feel for everyone," -"White Lie," page 271.

Of course, we can see here a twisting of Spirit of Prophecy concepts in the way Rea rephrases them. But beneath it all, we can also see the real reason why Walter Rea began his "Source Research," Personal justification was needed for lowered standards.

At this point, having viewed the wreckage that once was a strong warrior for Christ, let us now consider the individual that Walter Rea has dedicated so much of his time to speaking evil about.

One does not have to read very far into the writings of another before sensing the personality of the writer. What you say is as powerful a testimony to your personal characteristics as is the look on your face.

As you read a sampling of statements written by Ellen White, such as is given below, in thoughtful honesty ask yourself a few questions: Is this worth reading? Will it help me? Will it help my children and other of my loved ones? Should I share such as this with them? Will it bring souls to Christ? Does Satan want such statements shared with them? Does he want me to read them myself? Would he rather that I didn't read them?

What attitude should I take toward these writings? We know that Ellen White claimed to be guided by God in her selection of materials. Either she was a hardened liar, or hopelessly insane, or she was a kindly child of God and that which she claimed-she spoke truthfully.

You have just sampled Walter Rea—and Walter surely shone through his writings. Now sample writings that have helped hundreds of thousands to find God, to come back to Him, and to stay close by His side. Here is the Spirit of Prophecy:

"We are to look upon every duty, however humble, as sacred because it is a part of God's service. Our daily prayer should be, 'Lord, help me to do my best. Teach me how to do better work. Give me energy and cheerfulness. Help me to bring into my service the loving ministry of the Saviour.' "-The Ministry of Healing, page 474.

'When in faith we take hold of His strength, He will change, wonderfully change, the most hopeless, discouraging outlook. He will do this for the glory of His name.' -Prophets and Kings, page 620.

'We must individually hear Him speaking to the heart. When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. He bids us, 'Be still and know that I am God.' Psalm 46: 10. Here alone can true rest be found.' -The Desire of Ages, page 363.

"Make every opportunity to keep open the communion between Jesus and your own soul. Seek every opportunity to go where prayer is wont to be made." -Steps to Christ, page 98.

"Never a prayer is offered, however faltering, never a tear is shed, however secret, never a sincere desire after God is cherished, however feeble, but the Spirit of God goes forth to meet it." -Christ's Object Lessons, page 206.

"Nothing is apparently more helpless, yet really more invincible, than the soul that feels its nothingness and relies on the merits of the Saviour. By prayer, by the study of His Word, by faith in His abiding presence, the weakest of human beings may live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold them by a hand that will never let go." - The Ministry of Healing, page 182.

"We need to understand better than we do the mission of the angels. It would be well to remember that every true child of God has the co-operation of heavenly beings. Invisible armies of light and power attend the meek and lowly ones who believe and claim the promises of God." -The Acts of the Apostles, page 154. "Let your heart break for the longing it has for God, for the living God. The life of Christ has shown what humanity can do by being partaker of the divine nature. All that Christ received from God we too may have. Then ask and receive. With the persevering faith of Jacob, with the unyielding persistence of Elijah, claim for yourself all that God has promised." -Christ's Object Lessons, page 149.

"Above all things, parents should surround their children with an atmosphere of cheerfulness, courtesy, and love. A home where love dwells and where it finds expression in looks, in words, in acts, is a place where angels delight to dwell." -The Adventist Home, page 426.

'As a shield from temptation and an inspiration to purity and truth, no other influence can equal the sense of God's presence." -Education, page 255.

"If you will seek the Lord and be converted every day; if you will of your own spiritual choice be free and joyous in God; if with gladsome consent of heart to His gracious call you come wearing the yoke of Christ,—the yoke of obedience and service, all your murmurings will be stilled, all your difficulties will be removed, all the perplexing problems that now confront you will be solved," - The Mount of Blessing, page 101.
