

AND HIS TEACHING



*"We have nothing to fear
for the future,
except as we shall forget the way
the Lord has led us,
and His teaching
in our past history."*

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'Whom the heaven must receive until the times of **restitution** of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.'
Acts 3:21

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Restitution Ministries is run by Seventh-day Adventist believers who are committed to the proclamation of the Everlasting Gospel. 'Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak.' 2 Corinthians 4:1, 2, 13

GOD CALLS A PEOPLE

At the close of the 1260 years of Papal dominion, God began to prepare a small group of people to sound His final message to the world. This remnant was to be given all the truth that had been lost during the period of Rome's supremacy, for they must give the cry of the third angel.

Certainly some of those wonderful truths had been discovered by the Reformers during the latter part of the 1260 years, but the central doctrines were yet to be restored to the church.

The first angel's message was addressed to the Protestant churches, but as they were unwilling to surrender, God called men and women from these churches. At the sounding of the second angel's message, the remnant separated themselves from Babylon, and stood upon the truths that had been made plain during the time of William Miller.

As a result of the second disappointment, this Advent group split into two, and a mere handful continued to believe that God had led them through their miscalculations and disappointments. They were confident He would lead them into further light.

“Immediately after the great disappointment in 1844, the Scriptures were carefully searched, with prayer and earnest thought; and after a period of suspense, light poured into the darkness. Doubt and uncertainty were swept away and the truth made known”. *Life Sketches* p63.

As the little flock lived in various parts of the eastern states of America, they were unable to meet together as a full body, but little groups met to study and pray for light. Gradually they understood the fulfilment of the first two messages, and their relationship to themselves.

God was drawing His people together.

LEADING OF THE LORD

The Millerite preachers had grounded these Advent believers on the non-immortality of the soul, the fallacy of an ever-burning hell, and baptism by immersion. They were clear on the prophecies of Daniel 2, the four great beasts of Daniel 7, the 2300 days and the 70 weeks. Life Sketches p49.50.25.

Although they had divergent views on other Bible doctrines, they were united by the bond of three angels, and the soon-coming of Christ in glory.

In one part of the country, three brethren searched the Scriptures for the true understanding of the sanctuary, and in 1845, Owen Crosier published an article of their findings in the magazine 'Day Dawn'. Copies of this magazine came into the hands of Joseph Bates and James White, and its subject matter was readily accepted.

This magazine had a fairly wide circulation and it reached nearly all the pioneer leaders. Its subject exerted quite an influence, resulting in much Bible study among the various companies. Midnight Cry p79. SDA Encyclopedia p1281.

“The subject of the sanctuary was the key that unlocked the mystery of the disappointment in 1844. It opened to view a complete system of truth, connected and harmonious, showing that God’s hand had directed the great Advent movement. Light from the sanctuary illuminated the past, the present and the future. They knew that God had led them by His unerring providence.” The Great Controversy p423.

The Sabbath was another pillar that was given to the little flock during this time, through such men as Frederick Wheeler and Thomas Preble. Gradually the scattered groups accepted the Sabbath, but there were still many points of doctrine upon which they differed.

Some time during 1845, the leading men of the various groups began to study together as a unit. After severe mental conflict, they were brought to a knowledge of the truth, and God gave them the witness of the Spirit

through Ellen White, “until all the points of our faith were made clear”. (Ellen received the prophetic gift in December 1844)

Sister White said of those early years, “Many of our people do not realise how firmly the foundation of our faith has been laid. My husband, Elder Joseph Bates, Father Pierce, Elder Hiram Edson, and others who were keen, noble, and true, were among those who, after the passing of the time in 1844, searched for the truth as for hidden treasure.

I met with them, and we studied and prayed earnestly. Often we remained together until late at night, and sometimes through the entire night, praying for light and studying the Word. Again and again these brethren came together to study the Bible in order that they might know its meaning and be prepared to teach it with power.

When they came to the point in their study where they said, ‘We can do nothing more’, the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me. I would be taken off in vision, and a clear explanation of the passages we had been studying would be given me, with instruction as to how we were to labor and teach effectively.

Thus light was given that helped us to understand the Scriptures in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God, was made plain to me, and I gave to others the instruction that the Lord had given me.” 1 Selected Messages p206.207.

This was *the foundation* of our faith, a foundation that would remain until the coming of Christ.

Sister White wrote, “During this whole time I could not understand the reasoning of the brethren. My mind was locked, as it were, and I could not comprehend the meaning of the Scriptures we were studying.... I was in this condition of mind until all the principal points of our faith were made clear to our minds in harmony with the Word of God.” Ibid p207.

Take special note, the truth was given by divine Inspiration until ***all the principal points of our faith*** were made clear. This is important to remember.

“As a people, we are to stand on the platform of eternal truth that has withstood test and trial. We are to hold to the sure pillars of our faith. The principles of truth that God has revealed to us are our only true foundation. They have made us what we are. The lapse of time has not lessened their value.... We have a truth that admits of no compromise. Shall we not repudiate everything that is not in harmony with this truth?” Ibid p201.205.

Did our pioneers have the truth in those early days?

1. They were to stand on the platform of eternal truth
2. A truth that had withstood test and trial.
3. They were to hold to the sure pillars of their faith.
4. Principles of truth that God had revealed by inspiration.
5. These principles were the only true foundation.
6. The lapse of time had not lessened their value.
7. They had a truth that admitted no compromise

In 1848, the believers received an invitation from a brother in Connecticut to attend a conference in that state, from Thursday night until Sunday. Fifteen people attended the first meeting, but it quickly grew to fifty.

Brother Bates presented the commandments “in a clear light, and their importance was urged home by powerful testimonies”. Life Sketches p108.

After the message had been made clear from God’s Word, Ellen was taken into vision and the importance of the subject urged upon those who had not made a complete decision. These testimonies, along with the Word “had effect to establish those already in the truth, and to awaken those who were not fully decided”. Ibid.

Four months later, another Sabbath Conference was held in Volney, New York. About thirty five were present, but hardly two of the believers agreed, and each was strenuous for his views, making claim they were Biblical. All wanted the opportunity to preach, but were told the gathering together was to hear truth and not error.

Sr White fainted under the burden, and the brethren, fearing she was dying prayed over her. The Lord heard their prayers and she soon was lost to earthly things. 2 Spiritual Gifts p98. The meeting ended victoriously with all taking a stand for truth.

A little over a week later, the third conference was held, also in New York State, this time in Hiram Edson's barn. Again many were present who were opposed to truth, but the Lord wrought in power before the close of the meeting. Ibid.

Two more conferences were held in 1848, the last one in November that year. Again the Lord brought the believers into harmony through the testimony of the Spirit of Prophecy. It was at these Sabbath Conferences that the foundation doctrines of the 'seventh-day' Adventists were unified, and the distinctive truths were formed into one integral belief. Messenger to the Remnant p38. (Adventists who kept Sunday were known as 'first-day' Adventists, and we can assume they referred to the Sabbath keepers as 'seventh-day' Adventists)

Sister White said of the years prior to the conferences, "We had to search and await the opening of truth, receiving a ray of light here and a ray there, labouring and pleading for God to reveal truth to us. But now the truth is plain; its rays are brought together." Messenger to Remnant p39. Manuscript 3. 1854.

James confirmed this united stand when he said, "The truth is now made so plain that all can see it and embrace it if they will, but it needed much labor to get it out clear as it is, and **such hard labor will never have to be performed again to make the truth clear.**" Ibid p39. Ellen White letter. Record Book 1. p54.

That is, unless it was lost.

In March the following year, just four months after the last Sabbath Conference, Ellen wrote, “Our position looks very clear; **we know we have the truth**”. Manuscript Release p39. Letter March 1849. Record Book 1. p72. Ellen White.

When God built the foundation for the Advent people, did He build it upon sand? Of course not. Then we can safely assume that the pillars of the Adventist faith are solid, supporting the platform of eternal truth – a truth that can never change.

Only ten years later (1858), some began to question the faith, and once again it was necessary they see how firmly their foundation had been laid. God gave His servant a vision for this purpose.

Sister White said she “saw a company who stood well guarded and firm, giving no countenance to those who would unsettle the established faith of the body. God looked upon them with approbation....

I was shown three steps – the first, the second and the third angel’s messages. Said my accompanying angel, ‘*Woe to him who shall move a block or stir a pin of these messages*. The true understanding of these messages is of vital importance. The destiny of souls hangs upon the manner in which they are received’ ” Early Writings p258.

Sister White continues relating her vision, “I saw individuals approach the platform and examine the foundation. Some with rejoicing immediately stepped upon it. Others commenced to find fault with the foundation. They wished improvements made, and then the platform would be more perfect, and the people much happier. Some stepped off the platform to examine it and declared it had been laid wrong. But I saw that nearly all stood firm upon the foundation and exhorted those who had stepped off to cease their complaints, for God was the Master Builder, and they were fighting Him.” Ibid 258.

The prophet stated, “The leadings of the Lord were marked, and most wonderful were His revelations of what is truth. Point after

point was established by the Lord God of heaven. ***That which was truth then, is truth today.***” Ibid.

Statement after statement is given in the Spirit of Prophecy confirming the fact that the truth given to the ‘seventh-day’ Adventists between 1844 and 1848 was ‘the whole truth and nothing but the truth’. This does not mean that they had nothing more to learn, but that the truths given would stand until the coming of the Lord. Nothing would arise that contradicted them.

Sister White said of the truth they received, “When the power of God testifies as to what is truth, ***that truth is to stand forever as the truth.*** No after suppositions contrary to the light God has given are to be entertained.... The truth for this time God has given us as *a foundation for our faith.* He Himself has taught us what is truth.” 1 Selected Messages p161.

The prophet’s council is strong. “We are not to receive the words of those who come with a message that contradicts the special points of our faith. They gather together a mass of Scripture, and pile it as proof around their asserted theories. This has been done over and over again during *the past fifty years*... if such application moves one pillar from the foundation that God has sustained *these fifty years*, is a great mistake.” Ibid p161.

It is vital we understand that the messenger of the Lord is stating categorically that the truths we were given approximately fifty years from that time will ***never*** be changed. No one is to move one pillar from that foundational platform.

In 1905, Sister White wrote of a crisis the Adventist Church was facing, where a man of high responsibility in the medical work (Dr John Harvey Kellogg) was “directing this man and that man to loosen the timbers supporting this platform”. Ellen White saw him and asked, ‘Where are the watchmen that ought to be standing on the walls of Zion?’

She was told, “This foundation was built by the Master Worker, and will stand storm and tempest.”

Of this same crisis our prophet declares, “Every truth which is essential for us to bring into our practical life, which concerns the salvation of the soul, is made very clear and positive.” 1 Selected Messages p162.163. 1895.

“The waymarks which have made us what we are, are to be preserved... God calls upon us to hold firmly, with the grip of faith, to ***the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority***.” 1 Selected Messages p208.

“The divine utterance
has
set its seal
to the *genuineness*
of the
truth proclaimed.”

3 Selected Messages p52.

PRESENT TRUTH -- SEALED

What did Ellen White and the pioneers believe regarding the Godhead?

THE FATHER

They believed in “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all”. Ephesians 4:6.

“... there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him....” 1 Corinthians 8:5.6.

The Yearbook stated, “that there is one God, a personal spiritual being, the creator of all things, omnipotent, omniscient and eternal, infinite in wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, truth, and mercy; unchangeable.” Yearbook Statement of Belief. 1889. Belief No.1.

THE SON

They believed in “.... one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.” 1 Corinthians 8:6.

And that “... God so loved the world that He gave *His only begotten Son*, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life”. John 3:16.

They believed “that there is one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father, the one by whom He created all things, the nature of the seed of Abraham for the redemption of our fallen race; that He dwelt among men, full of grace and truth, lived our example, died our sacrifice, was raised for our justification, ascended on high to be our only mediator in the sanctuary in heaven, where, through the merits of His shed blood, He secures the pardon and forgiveness of the sins of all those who penitently come to Him, and as the closing portion of His work as priest, before He takes His throne as king, He will make the great atonement for the sins of all such, and their sins will then be blotted out and borne away from the sanctuary, as shown in the service of the Levitical priesthood, which foreshadowed and prefigured the ministry of our Lord in heaven.” Yearbook Statement of Belief. 1889. Belief No.2.

They believed that Jesus Christ was the literal, *only begotten* Son of God, born to the Father at some time in eternity, and comparing Scripture with Scripture, they understood that Jesus was God's Son as He claimed to be, inheriting the divine nature of His Father in all its facets.

ELLEN G WHITE - 1895

Our prophet wrote, "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son – not a son by creation, as were the angels, nor a son by adoption, as is the forgiven sinner, but a Son begotten in the express image of the Father's person, and in all the brightness of His majesty and glory, one equal with God in authority, dignity, and divine perfection. In Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." *Signs of the Times*. May 30. 1895. Ellen G White.

"The Eternal Father, the unchangeable one, gave His only begotten Son, tore from His bosom Him who was made in the express image of His person, and sent Him down to earth to reveal how greatly He loved mankind." *Review & Herald*. Jul 9. 1895. Ellen White.

"The dedication of the first-born had its origin in the earliest times. God had promised to give the First-born of heaven to save the sinner". *The Desire of Ages* p51. Ellen White.

J M STEPHENSON - 1854

"To be the only begotten Son of God must be understood in a different sense than to be a Son by creation; for in that sense all the creatures He has made are sons.... He must therefore be understood as being the Son of God in a much higher sense than any other being. His being the only begotten of the Father supposes that none except Him were thus begotten; hence He is, in truth and verity the only begotten Son of God; and as such He must be Divine; that is, be a partaker of the Divine nature." *Review & Herald* Nov 14. 1854. J M Stephenson.

C W STONE - 1886

“We may believe that Christ came into existence in a manner different from that in which other beings first appeared; that He sprang from the Father’s being in a way not necessary for us to understand.” The Captain of our Salvation. p17. 1886 C W Stone.

J N ANDREWS - 1869

“And as to the Son of God... He had God for His Father, and did, at some point in the eternity of the past, have beginning of days.” Review & Herald. Sept 7. 1869. J N Andrews.

R F COTRELL - 1869

“Children inherit the name of their Father. The Son of God ‘hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than the angels’. That name is the name of His Father”. Review & Herald. Jun 1. 1869. R F Cottrell.

JOHN MATTESON - 1869

“Christ is the only literal son of God. ‘The only begotten of the Father’ John 1:14. He is God because He is the Son of God.” Review & Herald. Oct 12. 1869 p123. John Matteson.

JAMES WHITE - 1881

“The Father is the greatest in that He is first. The Son is next in authority because He has been given all things”. Review & Herald. Jan 4. 1881. James White, Ellen White’s husband.

URIAH SMITH – 1882

“The Scriptures nowhere speak of Christ as a created being, but on the contrary plainly state that He was begotten of the Father... But while as the Son He does not possess a co-eternity of past existence with the Father, the beginning of His existence, as the begotten of the Father, antedates the entire work of creation, in relation to which He stands as joint Creator with God.” Thoughts on the Book of Daniel and the Revelation p430. 1882 Uriah Smith.

A T JONES - 1899

“He was born of the Holy Ghost. In other words, Jesus Christ was born again. He came from heaven, God’s first-born, to the earth, and was born again... He was born again, and was made partaker of the human nature, that we might be born again, and so made partakers of the divine nature.” Review & Herald. Aug 1. 1899. Lessons on Faith p154. 1899. A T Jones.

E J WAGGONER - 1890

“The Scriptures declare that Christ is “the only begotten Son of God”. He is begotten, not created. As to when He was begotten, it is not for us to inquire, nor could our minds grasp it if we were told... There was a time when Christ proceeded forth and came from God, from the bosom of the Father, but that time was so far back in the days of eternity that to finite comprehension, it is practically without beginning.” Christ and His Righteousness. p9. 1890. E J Waggoner.

W W PRESCOTT - 1896

“As Christ was twice born, once in eternity, the only begotten of the Father, and again here in the flesh, thus uniting the divine with the human in that second birth...” Review & Herald. April 14. p232. 1896. W W Prescott.

JAMES EDSON WHITE - 1909

“The angels, therefore, are created beings, necessarily of a lower order than their Creator. Christ is the only being begotten of the Father”. Past, Present, and Future p52 1909. James Edson White, Ellen White’s son.

We must understand that the beliefs of our pioneers are the same as those who opposed the Papacy for its stand on the Trinity at Nicea in AD325. If Ellen and James White, Waggoner, Jones, Haskell, and the other pioneers had been at the Nicene Council, they would have stood with the faithful five who refused to compromise their beliefs with the Papal party. (See book ‘Who do you Worship?’ for more details)

However, we can praise God that our pioneers did not have councils such as the Papacy conducted, where men debated and argued for centuries over the meaning of Greek words.

James White said of their conclusions, “The inexplicable Trinity that makes the Godhead three in one and one in three, is bad enough; but that ultra Unitarianism that makes Christ inferior to the Father is worse.” Review & Herald. Nov 29. 1877 p172.

Instead, our pioneers studied the Bible with much prayer and fasting, asking God for the guidance as He had promised in His Word. Then He sealed that truth with the testimony of His Spirit through the prophet of the Lord.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Our pioneers believed that God is “everywhere present by His representative, the Holy Spirit”. Last portion of No.1. 1889 Yearbook Fundamental Statement of Belief.

Our fundamental beliefs contained no separate paragraph for the Holy Spirit prior to the death of Sister White, as our founding fathers did not believe in a co-eternal, co-equal separate Being called the Holy Spirit.

Instead, they believed the holy Spirit was the presence of God and Christ *in Spirit*, not two Spirits, but one – the omnipresence of the Father and the Son.

“I beseech you... forbear one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and *one Spirit*, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.” Ephesians 4:2-4.

“And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you *another Comforter*, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him; for *He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you*. I will not leave you comfortless: *I will come to you*.” John 14:16-18.

“... I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” Matthew 28:20.

Our pioneers believed that in receiving the Spirit, they were receiving the actual presence of the Father and the Son in the Spirit, not an impersonal force, but the *very presence and personality of divinity*, able to convict, empower, guide, instruct and comfort.

Believing the Spirit to be the personal presence of God and Christ, our pioneers sometimes called the Spirit ‘He’, but because that same Spirit is not a bodily person as are Christ and the Father, they more often used the term ‘it’. Both are correct and appropriate.

And because the same Spirit is shared by the Father and the Son, our pioneers believed that when we receive the Spirit, we can say we have the Spirit of God the Father, or the Spirit of Christ. Both are true. (The Scriptures also show this interchange. Revelation 3:20. Galatians 2:20. 4:6. John 4:24. Matthew 10:20. Ephesians 3:14-20. Romans 8:9-11)

ELLEN WHITE – 1888 1896 1897 1908

“The Spirit is freely given us of God if we will appreciate and accept it. And what is it? The representative of Jesus Christ. It

is to be our constant helper. It is through the Spirit that Christ fulfills the promise, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.” 1888 Materials p1538. 1888. Ellen White. (The word ‘representative’ often confuses, but from other statements we can see that it means Christ’s *Spirit presence*, representing His *physical presence*. This understanding must be seen when reading similar statements, such as in ‘The Desire of Ages’ p669. Christ’s Spirit is unencumbered by a physical body and thus can be with everyone)

“O precious possibilities and encouragement! In the human heart cleansed from all moral impurity, dwells the precious Saviour, ennobling, sanctifying the whole nature and making the man a temple for the Holy Spirit. Christ therefore is a personal Saviour...

Wherever we go, we bear the abiding presence of One so dear to us; for we abide in Christ by a living faith. We have the companionship of the divine Jesus, and as we realize His presence our thoughts are brought into captivity to Him. Our experience in divine things will be in proportion to the vividness of our sense of His companionship... Here again there is a realization of a personal, living influence dwelling in our hearts by faith.” Signs of the Times. Sep 3 1896. Ellen White.

The impartation of the Spirit is the impartation of the life of Christ.” The Desire of Ages p805. “The influence of the Holy Spirit is the life of Christ in the soul”. Review & Herald Oct 26. 1897.

“All who consecrate soul, body, and spirit to God, will be constantly receiving a new endowment of physical and mental power. The inexhaustible supplies of heaven are at their command. Christ gives them the breath of His own Spirit, the life of His own life. The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in heart and mind.” Review & Herald. Nov 19. 1908. Ellen G White. (Note John 20:21.22, Jesus breathed the Holy Ghost upon His disciples)

“The reason why the churches are weak and sickly and ready to die, is that the enemy has brought influences of a discouraging nature to bear upon trembling souls. He has sought to shut Jesus from their view as the Comforter, as one who reproveth, who

warns, who admonishes them saying, ‘this is the way, walk ye in it’. Review & Herald. Aug 26 1890. Ellen G White.

“The greatness of God is to us incomprehensible. ‘The Lord’s throne is in heaven’. (Psalm 11:4); yet by His Spirit He is everywhere present. He has an intimate knowledge of, and a personal interest in, all the works of His hand.” Education p132.

J H WAGGONER - 1877

“The Spirit of God is that awful and mysterious power which proceeds from the throne of the universe, and which is the efficient actor in the work of creation and of redemption”. The Spirit of God: its Offices and Manifestations. 1877. J H. Waggoner. (Father of E J Waggoner)

URIAH SMITH – 1890

“But respecting the Spirit, the Bible uses expressions which cannot be harmonized with the idea that it is a person like the Father and the Son. Rather it is shown to be a divine influence from them both, the medium which represents their presence and by which they have knowledge and power through all the universe, when not personally present.” Review & Herald. Oct 25. 1890. Uriah Smith.

M C WILCOX - 1898

“God is everywhere present by His Spirit... The presence of God is therefore His Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit is therefore the life of God.” Signs of the Times. Jun 2. 1898. M C Wilcox.

J N LOUGHBOROUGH - 1898

“When we speak of the Spirit of God we are really speaking of His presence and power.” Review & Herald. Sept 13. 1898. J N Loughborough.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES QUESTIONS – 1911

“The Holy Spirit is the mighty energy of the Godhead, the life and power of God flowing out from Him to all parts of the universe, and thus making a living connection between His throne and all creation... Thus the Spirit is personified in Christ and God, but never revealed as a separate person. Never are we told to pray to the Spirit; but to God for the Spirit.” Questions and Answers gathered from ‘The Question Corner Department’ of the Signs of the Times. Pacific Press p18-182. 1911. M C Wilcox.

What did our pioneers say about the Trinity?

ELLEN WHITE

In all her 25,000,000 written words, Ellen White never used the word ‘trinity’ once, so we are unable to quote any references attributed to her.

JAMES WHITE -- 1853

“To assert that the sayings of the Son and his apostles are the commandments of the Father, is as wide from the truth as the old trinitarian absurdity that Jesus Christ is the very and eternal God.” Review & Herald. Aug 5. 1852 p52.

Speaking of Brother Cottrell, James wrote that “He rejected the doctrine of the trinity, also the doctrine of man’s consciousness between death and the resurrection, and the punishment of the wicked in eternal consciousness.” Review & Herald. June 9. 1853 p12.

R.F.COTTRELL -- 1869

“This (the trinity) has been a popular doctrine and regarded as orthodox ever since the bishop of Rome was elevated to popedom on the strength of it; but each person is permitted to explain the doctrine in his own way.... My reasons for not adopting and defending it are:

1. Its name is unscriptural – the Trinity, or the triune God, is unknown to the Bible...
2. I have never felt called upon to adopt and explain that which is contrary to all the sense and reason that God has given me...

But to hold the doctrine of the trinity is not so much an evidence of evil intention as of intoxication from that wine of which all the nations have drunk...” Review & Herald. Jul 6. 1869.

JOSHUA V HIMES -- 1835

Speaking of the early Adventists who came from the various denominations he says, “At first they were generally Trinitarians; subsequently they have almost unanimously, rejected the Trinitarian doctrine as unscriptural.” Article by Joshua V Himes entitled ‘Christian Connection’ from Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge. Ed. T Newton Brown 1835 p382.

J.N. LOUGHBOROUGH -- 1861

Brother White was asked to send the following to Brother Loughborough for explanation by Brother W.W. Giles. (Toledo.Ohio)

Question. What serious objection is there to the doctrine of the Trinity?

Answer. There are many objections which we might urge, but on account of our limited space we shall reduce them to the three following:

1. It is contrary to common sense.
2. It is contrary to Scripture.

3. Its origin is pagan and fabulous.

These positions we will remark upon briefly in their order.

1. It is not very consonant with common sense to talk of three being one, and one being three. Or as some express it, calling God 'The Triune God', or 'the three-in-one-God'. If Father, Son and Holy Ghost are each God, it would be three Gods; for three times one is not one, but three. There is a sense in which they are one, but not one person, as claimed by Trinitarians...

2. It is contrary to Scripture. Almost any portion of the New Testament we may open which has occasion to speak of the Father and the Son, represents them as two distinct persons. The seventeenth chapter of John is alone sufficient to refute the doctrine of the Trinity...

3. Its origin is pagan and fabulous. Instead of pointing us to Scripture for proof of the trinity, we are pointed to the trident of the Persians, with the assertion that "by this they designed to teach the idea of a trinity, and if they had the doctrine of the trinity, they must have received it by tradition from the people of God". But this is all assumed, for it is certain that the Jewish church held to no such doctrine...

This doctrine of the trinity was brought into the church about the same time with image worship, and keeping the day of the sun, and is but Persian doctrine remodeled. It occupied about three hundred years from its introduction to bring the doctrine to what it is now." Review & Herald. November 5. 1861.

A.J. DENNIS -- 1879

"What a contradiction of terms is found in the language of a trinitarian creed: 'In unity of this Godhead are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost'.

There are many things that are mysterious, written in the word of God, but we may safely presume the Lord never calls upon us to believe impossibilities. But creeds often do". Signs of the Times. May 22. 1879.

D.W. HULL -- 1859

"The inconsistent position held by many in regard to the Trinity, as it is termed, has, no doubt, been the prime cause of many other errors. Erroneous views of the divinity of Christ are apt to lead us into error in regard to the nature of the atonement... As we can trace this doctrine no farther back than the origin of the 'Man of Sin', and as we find this dogma at that time established rather by force than otherwise, we claim the right to investigate the matter, and ascertain the bearing of Scripture on this subject." Review & Herald. Nov 10. 1859.

MERRITT E CORNELL -- 1858

"Protestants and Catholics are so nearly united in sentiment, that it is not difficult to conceive how Protestants may make an image to the Beast. The mass of Protestants believe with Catholics in the Trinity, immortality of the soul... and the Papal Sunday for the Sabbath; all of which is contrary to the spirit and letter of the new testament." Facts for the Times. p76. 1858.

JOSEPH BATES -- 1868

"My parents were members of long-standing in the Congregational Church, with all of their converted children thus far, and anxiously hoped that we would also unite with them. But they embraced some points which I could not understand. I will name two only: their mode of baptism, and doctrine of the trinity. My father, who had been a deacon of long-standing with them, labored to convince me that they were right in points of doctrine... Respecting the trinity, I concluded that it was an impossibility for me to believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father,

was also the Almighty God, the Father, one and the same being...
.” Autobiography of Joseph Bates 1868. (Obviously the Congregational Church believed the Modalism view of the Trinity, see book ‘Who do you Worship?’)

D.M. CANRIGHT – 1878

“At the time when the Bible was written, nearly the whole world had adopted either Polytheism or Pantheism. Polytheism taught that there were many gods. Rome had its gods. Greece had its gods. Egypt had its gods... Moses and the prophets set forth the grand fact that this doctrine of many gods was a lie, and that there was but one God, Jehovah the living God...

Says the great apostle, “There is none other God but one”, and there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things”...

How the doctrine of the trinity, of three Gods, can be reconciled with these positive statements, I do not know.... The Bible never uses the phrases ‘trinity’, ‘triune God’, ‘three in one’, ‘the holy three’, ‘God the Holy Ghost’, but it does emphatically say there is only one God, the Father...” Review & Herald. Aug 29. 1878. (This was while D.M. Canright was still a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, before his apostasy. After he left, he became a Trinitarian)

J.N. ANDREWS -- 1855

“The doctrine of the Trinity was established in the church by the council of Nice AD325. This doctrine destroys the personality of God, and His Son Jesus Christ our Lord. The infamous measures by which it was forced upon the church which appear upon the pages of ecclesiastical history might well cause every believer in that doctrine to blush.” Review & Herald. Mar 6. 1855.

URIAH SMITH – 1856

“The doctrine called the Trinity, claiming that God is without form or parts; that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the three are one person, is another.... Christ is the express image of His Father’s

person.” Review & Herald. Jul 10. 1856. (The Church of England says the Trinity has no form or parts. See book ‘Who is the Spirit?’)

J.H.WAGGONER -- 1878

“Who can distinguish between this form of expression (Tri-theism), and that put forth by the council of Constantinople in AD 381. wherein the true faith is declared to be that of “an uncreated and consubstantial and co-eternal Trinity”? The truth is that we find the same idea which is here described by Bingham running through much of the orthodox literature of the second and third centuries....

We leave it with the good judgment of every unprejudiced reader that three baptisms are more consistent with the idea of “three collateral, co-ordinate, and self-ordinated beings”, than with the idea of baptism into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and in the likeness of the Saviour’s death and resurrection.”.

Thoughts on Baptism. J H Waggoner 1878. (Father of E J Waggoner) (The Trinity was first set forth at Nicea, but the debate continued through the councils)

A.T. JONES – 1884. 1891

“The difficulty was that each disputant (in the trinitarian controversy) required that all the others should not only believe what he believed, but that they should believe this precisely as he believed it, whereas just how he believed it, he himself could not define. And that which made them so determined in this respect was that “the contest was now not merely for a superiority over a few scattered and obscure communities, it was agitated on a far vaster theater – that of the Roman world”. The Two Republics. A T Jones. 1891 p 336.

“Another, and most notable opponent, was Servetus who had opposed the Catholic doctrine of the trinity, and also infant baptism.” Review & Herald. A T Jones. June 17.1884.

Many articles were printed in the 'Review and Herald' that showed clearly the attitude of the early Advent pioneers to the Trinity. Below is a sample of these articles, beginning at a point appropriate to our subject.

PAGAN DOCTRINES -- 1857

“This is the first instance we find in the pages of history of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul being taught. It was the first god that was deified after they had laid aside the doctrine of Noah, who was a teacher of righteousness. From this point we can trace this corrupt doctrine that fills the church. The immortality of the soul – the transmigration of the soul – and the trio of gods – God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost; and that of the spirits of holy men coming and dwelling in men in the millennial state, to convert the world. It is all Paganism from beginning to end.” Review & Herald. Mark E Green. January 29. 1857.

A CATHOLIC CHALLENGE -- 1859

Question. Have you any other proofs that they (Protestants) are not guided by the Scriptures?

Answer. Yes; so many that we cannot admit more than a mere specimen into this small work. They reject much that is clearly contained in Scripture, and profess more that is nowhere discoverable in that Divine Book.

Question. Give some examples of both?

Answer. They should, if the Scripture were their only rule, wash the feet of one another.... they should keep, not the Sunday, but the Saturday, according to the commandment....

Question. Have you any other way of providing that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept?

Answer. Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her: she could not

have substituted the observance of Sunday.... for the seventh... a change for which there is no Scriptural authority.

Question. Do you observe other necessary truths as taught by the Church, not clearly laid down in Scripture?

Answer. The doctrine of the Trinity, a doctrine the knowledge of which is certainly necessary to salvation, is not explicitly and evidently laid down in Scripture, in the Protestant sense of private interpretation.” Review & Herald. Feb 24. 1859. (You will probably recognise the quotations relating to the Sabbath, but not many would have seen the answer regarding the Trinity. These questions and answers are in Stephen Keenan’s ‘A Doctrinal Catechism’. Question 1 & 2 are on p101, Question 3 is on p174, and Question 4 is on 351 of the catechism)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR -- 1856

“After contending against the Trinitarian doctrine and all sectarian disciplines for about sixteen years, and against the doctrine of the soul’s immortality eight years, and for the seventh-day Sabbath three years, it is truly refreshing to find in your paper the same views proved by Scripture. I therefore enclose...” Review & Herald Mar 13. 1856. Daniel Baker from Tioga Co.

The following are quotations from a variety of more modern church leaders and historians verifying the fact that the early Adventist pioneers were definitely not Trinitarian.

Please take note. Being anti-trinitarian does not mean a belief that Christ was not divine, or that He was a create being. It means Christ was begotten of the Father in eternity. Nor does it mean a belief that the Holy Spirit is simply a force, or even that it does not exist, but that it is the personal Presence of the Father and the Son. This is not understood today.

Some have referred to our pioneers as Arians, however, because those who say this generally believe Arius had a similar belief to Jehovah’s Witnesses – that Jesus was “the first of Jehovah God’s creation” – it

is not a good term to use. Let God be True p35. (Most historians believe Arius was maligned by the Papal Church, and that he actually believed Jesus was begotten by God in eternity) Others know our pioneers did not believe as do Jehovah's Witnesses, and so they call them semi-Arians.

Certainly our pioneers should never be called Unitarians as these people believe Jesus should be regarded as "a man and teacher and not as a God to be worshipped." Aberdeen Unitarian Church. Internet. It is "a religious movement in which all are free to follow their own reason". Ibid.

H. COTTRELL -- 1931

"Dear Brother Froom, From my personal knowledge the doctrine of the 'Trinity-Godhead', was not taught by Seventh-day Adventists during the early days of my ministry." Letter from H Cottrell to L E Froom. Oct 16. 1931.

B.G.WILKINSON -- 1936

"Replying to your letter of October 13 regarding the doctrine of the Trinity, I will say that Seventh-day Adventists do not and never have accepted the dark, mysterious Catholic doctrine of the Trinity". Letter from B G Wilkinson to Dr D S Teters. November 3. 1936. Brother Wilkinson was the President of Washington Missionary College. (Obviously Wilkinson did not believe in the Trinity in 1936, although some say he adopted it later, but this is not definite)

A W SPALDING – 1947

"I undersand that some of our leading men in the beginning were opposed to the doctrine of the Trinity, at least as expressed by certain Trinitarians." Letter from A W Spalding to H C Lacey. June 2 1947.

H C LACEY -- 1947

“Most assuredly our people were anti-Trinitarians when we (the Lacey family) accepted the ‘truth’ in 1888.” Letter from H C Lacey to A W Spalding. June 5. 1947.

ARTHUR L WHITE - 1955

“Dear Brother Froom, Mrs Soper calls to our attention the fact that you are seeking information as to the positions held by our early workers concerning the Trinity, the personality of the Holy Spirit, and the pre-existence of Christ as this may be revealed in their writings. I think we will have to concede that our early workers were not Trinitarians”. Letter from Arthur L White to L E Froom. Dec 7. 1955.

NESTOR ALBERRO 1983

“As shown in chapter 111, Seventh-day Adventist pioneers held generally an anti-Trinitarian position. Although it can be argued that ‘this was largely a matter of words’, we have proven that it also was a matter of doctrine.

Nevertheless, what cannot be contested is that in the first four or five decades of the Seventh-day Adventist movement there was in its ranks a widespread rejection of the term ‘Trinity’. And whenever an Adventist writer declared on the name of God, the declaration was anti-Trinitarian”. Report on Ellen G White and the term ‘Trinity’. by Nestor Alberro AU MA. 1983 p60.61.

‘ISSUES’ 1983

“According to the Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, James White and Uriah Smith were the two leading anti-Trinitarians, ‘though Joseph Bates, J H Waggoner, E J Waggoner, and W W Prescott were also so inclined... The non-binding, non-credal status of the statement (1872 Statement of Beliefs) is of special interest.

Even more significant, however, is the fact that the statement is distinctly non-Trinitarian... Are the modern defenders of so-called historic Adventism really prepared to return to a non-Trinitarian position?" Issues p39.

‘MINISTRY’ 1993

“Most of the founders of Seventh-day Adventism would not be able to join the church today if they had to subscribe to the denomination’s Fundamental Beliefs.

Most specifically, most would not be able to agree to belief number 2, which deals with the doctrine of the Trinity. For Joseph Bates the Trinity was an unscriptural doctrine, for James White it was that ‘old Trinitarian absurdity’, and for M E Cornell it was a fruit of the great apostasy, along with such false doctrines as Sunday-keeping and the immortality of the soul”. Ministry magazine. October 1993 p10. Article by George Knight, professor of church history at Andrews University.

‘ADVENTIST REVIEW’ 1994

“Some Adventists today think that our beliefs remained unchanged over the years, or they seek to turn back the clock to some point when we had everything just right. But all attempts to recover such ‘historic Adventism’ fail in view of the facts of our heritage.

Adventist beliefs have changed over the years under the impact of ‘present truth’. Most startling is the teaching regarding Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. Many of the pioneers, including James White, J N Andrews, Uriah Smith, and J H Waggoner, held to an Arian or semi-Arian view – that is, the Son at some point in time before the Creation of our world was generated by the Father.

Likewise, the Trinitarian understanding of God, now part of our fundamental beliefs, was not generally held by the early Adventists.” Adventist Review. Jan 6. 1994 p10.11. Article by William Johnsson..

This admission is quite amazing. What many do not realise is that the changes were not ordained of God. This means that the denomination has stepped off the platform of truth.

If we make a decision to stand on the foundation of the pioneers, we will be regarded as belonging to a cult. Many are already experiencing this as they share truth with others.

According to the National and World Council of Churches, “A sure red light when discussing theology is the denial of the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity... More than any other doctrine, the doctrine of the Trinity is a clear measure of cultic theology.” Twisting the Truth. Bruce Tucker p59.79.80.197.

The decision to adopt the teachings of the pioneers on the subject of the doctrine of God may well be a very difficult decision. For one independent leader, it was impossible. He stated, “I know its truth, but I would have to change my whole platform. I’m sorry....”

Yes, for those of us who have stood on the doctrine of the Trinity all our Christian lives, it means stepping off *that* platform, and going over to the one built by God the Master Builder.

But where would you rather be in the end?

Only God’s foundation will remain. The tempest storms will beat upon it, but it will stand. Sadly, the one on sand will be washed away.

We now have a choice.

Will you make your decision for God?

FURTHER LITERATURE

(Donation basis)

‘And His Teaching’ Book 1

‘Except As We Forget’ Book 2

‘Nothing To Fear’ Book 3

‘Who Says God Has No Son’

‘The Father and the Son’

‘Who is the Holy Spirit?’

‘The Trinity Confusion’

‘Who do you worship?’

‘Is Jesus God?’

‘The Covenant of Redemption’

‘His own Representative’

‘Oh My Father’

‘Truly this Man is the Son of God’

‘Counterfeits’

"In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history. We are debtors to God to use every advantage He has entrusted to us to beautify the truth by holiness of character, and to send the messages of warning, and of comfort, of hope and love, to those who are in the darkness of error and sin."

{Life Sketches, 196}