

Old Paths

Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. Jeremiah 6:16

The secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant. Psalm 25:14

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The Return of the Fourth Angel

By David Clayton

The Significance of 1888

Seventh-day Adventists have long recognized that God desired to do great things for and through them. After the disappointment of 1844, a small group of about fifty souls restudied the prophecies and began to share the truths that had been revealed to them. They dared to believe they had a message, that somehow, the entire world must hear. On the masthead of *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* was to be found a picture of a globe with the words, "The Field is the World" upon a banner circling the globe.



Today, God still wants to do great things for and with His people; far greater than we have ever dreamed of, or have attempted. Sadly, many of us do nothing but wait and hope because we fail to recognize God's purpose for us and fail to fully recognize the significance of the time in which we live. In the book of Revelation there is a passage that probably every Seventh-day Adventist is familiar with:

And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. (Revelation 18:1-4)

Adventists have believed for more than a hundred and fifty years that this refers to what we call "The Loud Cry," the "Latter Rain," the final warning message to go to the whole world. We have believed that one day the power of God will come upon His people as it did at Pentecost

Digital Video Tape Project

The next message in the series "The Good News About God," is ready for distribution. It is entitled, "The Return of the Fourth Angel." This powerful message is based on the lead article in this issue of *Old Paths*. This message was originally designed to be the last message in the series. However, we believe that we cannot wait till the other messages are finished to make it available.

This special message is designed for Seventh-day Adventists, and a non-Adventist version is not being produced.

This message, like all "The Good News About God" series, is available in NTSC or PAL format. All the messages contained on the videos are available in audio cassette format as well. The suggested donation is \$7.00 plus postage for videos, and \$2.00 plus postage for cassettes.

Editor

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and that when this happens, this passage will be fulfilled. This representation of a mighty angel coming down from heaven signifies a time when the power of God will come upon His people in Pentecostal measure and the final work of God upon earth will be accomplished. At that time all of God's people will finally be completely separated from all that is apostate and false.

There is a book written by Elder W. L. Brisbin entitled, *Are Seventh-day Adventists Doing God's Will?* This booklet contains a series of questions, with the answers consisting of quotations from Ellen White. On page ten of this booklet we find a striking statement. Some may question the authenticity of this statement because it is difficult to verify Elder Brisbin's original source. Nevertheless, I would like us to look at this statement because it states comprehensively, and in one place, what is said elsewhere in bits and pieces by Sister White.

In 1888 in the General Conference held at Minneapolis, Minn., the angel of Revelation 18 came down to his work, and was ridiculed, criticized, and rejected, and when the message he brings again will swell into a loud cry, it will again be ridiculed and spoken against, and rejected by the majority. (*Are Seventh-day Adventists Doing God's Will?*, p. 10)

I suppose the average denominational Seventh-day Adventist would not want to recognize a statement like this, because it is one of the clearest statements that we can find, which speaks of a clear apostasy which took place in 1888 and that will continue, and will intensify, and reach its peak in the last days. What was Ellen White talking about? Let us look briefly at the background to this 1888 General Conference session.

The Background to the Meetings

The General Conference session of 1888 was held in Minneapolis, Minnesota. It was a very different, and very special General Conference session. We know it was different because all the people who participated in it said that something unusual happened there. But of course the witness whose word carries the most weight was Ellen White herself, who attended this G.C. session in person. Something happened at this General Conference that made Ellen White believe that the loud cry, or the latter rain, had arrived and that the power of God had begun to be poured out upon His people. What was it that happened there?

First, it was a very controversial session. Two young ministers, Elders Alonzo Trevier Jones and Ellet James Waggoner, brought the main messages. They were relatively young men, 38 and 33 years old respectively. They were at that time co-editors of the

denominational paper, *The Signs of The Times*. From the very beginning there was friction between these two ministers and most of the delegates. A chief problem was that these two young men were presenting ideas that were in conflict with what the older ministers had been teaching for many years in certain areas of doctrine and prophetic interpretation.

One of the issues was Waggoner's interpretation of the law in the book of Galatians; the law which Paul says was our "schoolmaster to bring us to Christ," and which we are no longer under. Traditionally, Seventh-day Adventists had always taught that the law which Paul spoke about in the book of Galatians was actually the ceremonial law which passed away when Christ was crucified.



E. J. Waggoner

Elder Waggoner, however had studied the book of Galatians very carefully and had come to the conclusion, and had started teaching and publishing his conclusion in *The Signs of the Times*, that this law which Paul speaks about, actually included the **moral** law and was not merely referring to the ceremonial law alone. The older and more experienced ministers and workers took great exception to this interpretation of Waggoner's. The president of the General Conference himself, G. I. Butler, was not able to attend on account of being ill. However, he wrote a letter to one of the older men in which he commissioned him to "stand by the old landmarks."

When the delegates arrived at this G.C. session they were ready for battle, and in fact, when Waggoner arrived he found a blackboard set up on which was written, "*Resolved—That the Law in Galatians Is the Ceremonial Law.*" It was signed by Elder J.H. Morrison. On the other side of the board was written, "*Resolved—That the Law in Galatians Is the Moral Law.*" This resolution was waiting for Waggoner's signature. However, Waggoner refused to sign. He had not come to debate. He was interested only in the presentation of truth.

A.T. Jones, on the other hand, had dared to suggest that Uriah Smith's interpretation of the ten horns on the head of the beast in Daniel seven was not quite correct. Whereas Smith claimed that one of the horns represented the Huns, Jones' study had led him to the conclusion that it really represented the Alemanni.

Uriah Smith did not take kindly to having his interpretations challenged by a young minister who was barely wet behind the ears. With this kind of background it is not difficult to understand why there was a great deal of tension at these meetings, and why so many of the delegates were predisposed to oppose Elders Jones and Waggoner and to resist anything which they presented.

This, however, was not the whole reason for the opposition to the messages of Jones and Waggoner. When you read about 1888 today you will see that many people try to suggest that this was the root of the whole problem; that it was simply a matter of opposing personalities and conflict over relatively minor doctrinal differences. But there was something more fundamental than that.

Two years before this General Conference session Elder Waggoner had been attending a camp meeting when he had a remarkable experience. He described this experience as follows:

I was sitting a little apart from the body of the congregation in the large tent at a camp meeting in Healdsburg, one gloomy Sabbath afternoon. I have no idea what was the subject of the discourse. Not a text nor a word have I ever known. All that has remained with me was what I saw. Suddenly a light shone around me, and the tent was, for me, far more brilliantly lighted than if the noon-day sun had been shining, and I saw Christ hanging on the cross, **crucified for me**. In that moment I had my first positive knowledge, which came like an overwhelming flood, that God loved **me**, and that Christ died **for me**. God and I were the only beings I was conscious of in the universe. I knew then, by actual sight, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself; I was the whole world with all its sin. I am sure that Paul's experience on the way to Damascus was no more real than mine.

... I resolved at once that I would study the Bible in the light of that revelation, in order that I might help others to see the same truth. I have always believed that every part of the Bible must set forth, with more or less vividness, that glorious revelation [Christ crucified]. (*The Last Confession of Faith*, E. J. Waggoner – Emphasis here is Waggoner's. All emphasis in this article is supplied unless otherwise noted.)

This experience led Waggoner to an intense study of the subject of Christ over the next two years. When he came to Minneapolis he was filled to overflowing with the subject of the Son of God and it came pouring out of him as he preached. The strange thing is, that the context in which he and Elder Jones presented Christ and His Righteousness seemed to arouse the

opposition of most of the delegates who were there. They set themselves against it so wholeheartedly that after the meetings some of the delegates would go back to their rooms and mock and mimic Elders Jones and Waggoner.

Ellen White, however, was in no doubt as to the importance of the message which these two men had brought. Concerning the message she wrote:

This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure. (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 92)

The time of test is just upon us, for ***the loud cry of the third angel*** has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. ***This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth.*** (*Review and Herald*, November 22, 1892)

In essence she said, "it has started, this message is it, and therefore I know that we have come to the end, for I have seen God's final work in this message!"

During, and after, this General Conference session, Ellen White made many statements relating to the experience that took place at Minneapolis and what God wanted to accomplish there. In fact there are four large volumes, which are entitled *The 1888 Materials*. These volumes contain 1,812 pages of material that Ellen White wrote concerning 1888, so you can tell she spoke a lot about this. She believed that God was trying to do something special for the church at that time. But it didn't happen and, because of that, Adventists have been dissecting 1888 for well over a century. Many books have been written on the subject, including the one written by General Conference president, A.G. Daniells, entitled, *Christ Our Righteousness*. There are many different perspectives as to what the real focus of the message was. Almost everyone who writes or speaks on the subject of the 1888 message seems to emphasize some different aspect of it, as he perceives it.

What was the message? What was its focus? These are the important questions that have fascinated and puzzled Adventists for over a century. Officially the Adventist church today says, "We did receive the message, the church did accept the message, and today we are basking in the glory of the truth about Christ and His righteousness." But strangely, we are not yet in the kingdom. Strangely, we don't yet see the latter rain. Strangely, we do not yet see this worldwide power of the Holy Spirit upon God's people. Whatever the claims men make, the facts speak louder than the boasts.

Three Perspectives

Let us examine the perspectives of three different witnesses. Of course, one of them is Ellen White. Another is one of the persons who actually brought the message, E. J. Waggoner himself.

Reasonably, logically, he must have known what he was talking about. In those days they did not have tape recorders, but shortly after the Conference Elder Waggoner wrote a little book called *Christ And His Righteousness*, and it is widely accepted that this book contains the essence of the messages Waggoner delivered at these meetings



Ellen White

in Minneapolis. The other witness we will examine is that of a man who was for many years regarded as the leading church historian in the Seventh-day Adventist denomination.

First, let us examine the understanding of Ellen White a little further. Here is a statement that gives us a good clue as to what one of the major issues was:

Now, it has been Satan's determined purpose to eclipse the view of Jesus and lead men to look to man, and trust to man, and be educated to expect help from man. **For years the church has been looking to man and expecting much from man, but not looking to Jesus, in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. Therefore God gave to His servants a testimony that presented the truth as it is in Jesus**, which is the third angel's message, in clear, distinct lines. (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 93)

On the basis of this statement we can clearly see that the Seventh day Adventist Church had become an institution in which men were taking the place of Jesus. Man worship was the critical problem that made it so necessary for God to send such a message at that time! People had been educated in the Adventist Church to worship men! (What would Ellen White have said about the situation as it exists today?)

You will notice that Ellen White states that this is the "third angel's message." This may at first be a puzzling thought. At first sight the third angel's message seems to be simply saying, "Beware of the beast. Beware of the Pope, the Jesuits, the Catholics and Sunday-worship!" It seems to be a call to "keep the Sabbath and don't keep Sunday." It seems to be a declaration that "The Sunday law is coming!" But here were people simply teaching men to look to Christ as their leader and source of help, and Ellen White said, "This is the

third angel's message!" In order to understand why she felt this way we need to look beneath the surface and examine a few principles"

The first angel's message begins by declaring, "Fear God." This declaration is made at a time when the world will fear and worship men. Today, the people of the world worship their ministers, their sports heroes, their political leaders, their movie stars, etc. The world worships men. They join themselves to groups, clubs, societies, political parties and they follow committees or individuals and, for the most part, do whatever the leader(s) say without bothering to think for themselves.

The receiving of the mark of the beast will simply be the ultimate consequence of a lifetime of practicing to worship men. Man will say to the world, "obey me instead of God," and the entire world will say, "Yes, we shall."

If, in the Christian church, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, your local congregation or fellowship, men train themselves to obey mindlessly the directives of the highest official, and to accept the judgment of an organization above their own convictions and common sense, how are they any different from the man who chooses Sunday above Sabbath because it is custom, or because he inherited the habit from his fore-parents? The issues may be different, but the principle is the same: Man is exalted above God!

Now when this situation began to prevail in the SDA Church, they could have kept the Sabbath as strictly, or even more strictly, than did the ancient Jews, but they were still opposed to the principle of the third angel's message. Their Sabbath keeping was in vain because they were worshiping men! So Ellen White says that God gave them a message so they could see Christ in a different light and turn away from the worship of men to the worship of God and His Son.

What is justification by faith? It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which it is not in his power to do for himself. (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 456)

This message was referred to as the message of "justification by faith," or "righteousness by faith." The purpose of this message was to "lay man's glory in the dust." If you are the kind of person who likes to be in the forefront, and likes to go by fine titles, and to sit in the "uppermost rooms at feasts" (Matthew 23:6), you are not going to like something that tells the people that their dependence ought to be upon Christ rather than upon you. A message which destroys your power and authority will not be something you appreciate. This gives us a clue as to one reason why this message was ridiculed, criticized and spoken against by the majority in 1888. Again, Ellen White says:

The righteousness of Christ by faith has been ignored by some; for **it is contrary to their spirit and their whole life experience. Rule, rule, has been their course of action.** Satan has had an opportunity of representing himself. (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 363)

Many do not realize that Ellen White spoke so clearly against the disease that afflicts so many in leadership positions; against the self-centeredness which makes men desire to be lords over their fellows. We have heard many statements where Ellen White cautioned against criticizing leadership, but there are also a great many places where she spoke out stridently against those who abuse their positions of leadership.

How can men who love to have the dominance, love to be in charge, love to have control of their fellow men, and love to lord it over others, love a message which says, "God's people have only one Lord and He is Christ." For papal-minded hierarchical organizations (such as the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Seventh-day Adventist Reform Movement), such a message is taboo, because it breaks the power of the organization to control and direct people's lives. It directs them to a Master whose claim on them, and whose authority in their lives, is far above that of any human being, or human organization. Such a message sets men free!

Men have the foolish idea that unless they maintain rigid control there will be confusion and disorganization, but this is not true. God is very organized, and when people recognize that Christ is their leader and truly surrender to Him, giving Him their allegiance above all that is human, there will be perfect harmony and cohesiveness in the work of God. In fact, this is the only way that the work can ever, realistically, be accomplished.

The Holy Spirit is able to lead God's people individually. The Papacy says No! "It must be through the Pope, through the church, through the Bishops, through the priests and, finally, through this human system the guidance of God will come to the people at the bottom of the hierarchy." The poor person at the foot of the ladder has no way of reaching God personally. He must go through a whole string of people. He has no way for God to speak to him, to show him the way, to direct him. He has no way to have a personal relationship with God, unless he comes through the organization!

People who have this kind of attitude do not appreciate a message which sets men free. So in 1888 when this message came which focused on Christ, Ellen White said they could not receive it because they loved to rule.

Some have been cultivating hatred against the men whom God has commissioned to bear a special message to the world. They began this satanic work at Minneapolis. Afterward, when they saw and felt the demonstration of the Holy Spirit testifying that the message was of God, **they hated it the more, because it was a testimony against them.** They would not humble their hearts to repent, to give God the glory, and vindicate the right. They went on in their own spirit, filled with envy, jealousy, and evil surmisings, as did the Jews. They opened their hearts to the enemy of God and man. Yet these men have been holding positions of trust, and have been molding the work after their own similitude, as far as they possibly could. (*Testimonies To Ministers*, pp. 79, 80)

The testimony of Jesus is not all about grace, love, goodwill and unity. Here we find that the truth, as it is in Jesus, is also a *testimony against people!* When we focus on the righteousness of Christ it becomes a testimony against a certain class of people; against those who love to rule and control.

In 1 Corinthians 1:30 Paul says that Christ is made unto us "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." In Colossians 1:10 he says, "ye are complete in Him." If we are complete in Christ why do we need to depend on an organization or a human leader for salvation? Do we need to be bound up with anything of earth in order to be saved? We are not here speaking against the gifts that God gives to His people. He does give men abilities, and place gifts and talents among His people. But we are speaking (as Ellen White did) against the worship and the dependency upon men and the slavish mentality that says, "without these I cannot survive. These are to me: God upon earth." People may not use these words, but they behave that way. People must know that they "are complete" in Christ! In Him dwells "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" and when you have Christ and you have the fullness of the godhead in Him, you need nothing more in order to be saved! Yet, the entire religious world, on the whole, is still bound by this misconception. And that is exactly the reason why the whole world shall worship the beast, including many who, today, believe they have become safe by virtue of Sabbath observance.

So, Ellen White said it was a testimony against them. The truth is that, as you look at the reason why these people rejected this particular message, you know that there will never be a time when an organization is set up the way these churches are set up, that will accept such a message. No organization that is hierarchical, that is organized in such a way that the power and authority filters downwards from the top, will ever relinquish that power to give the people

autonomy and authority to go to Christ for themselves. They never will! And that is why the churches, on the whole, have become a part of Babylon; because the principles of Babylon are the principles of self and man-worship, and that is what predominates in the churches today.

Another Important Element

However, as important as this focus on independence from man by depending on Christ was, it was not the only critical ingredient in the message. Interestingly there was another aspect of the message, equally important, which is also totally ignored by many of those who dissect, and call for acceptance of the message, as they perceive it.

One interesting, and extremely inaccurate perspective came from somebody who had very high credentials; this man was the “emeritus professor of history at Andrews University,” LeRoy Edwin Froom. We will examine Froom’s point of view because, inaccurate as it is, it serves to highlight the fact that this other critical factor of the message brought by Jones and Waggoner cannot be fairly ignored by the unbiased researcher. Froom wrote a book entitled, *Movement of Destiny*, and in this book he tries to go back and examine 1888. Of course he says that God was trying to do something special in the Adventist Church in 1888. But Froom is one of those who claim that God’s purposes **were fulfilled** in that meeting. Let us read what he says happened in 1888:



LeRoy Froom

1888 was not a point of defeat, but a turn in the tide for ultimate victory. It was the beginning of decades of clarification and advance – despite struggles and setbacks. It eventuated at last in a unified platform of “Fundamental Beliefs,” preparatory to the grand climax of the Movement, assuredly destined to come. **The Eternal Verities were coming into their rightful place.** God was definitely leading, despite the continuing stubbornness of “some.” That is the deeper significance of “1888.” (*Movement of Destiny*, p. 187)

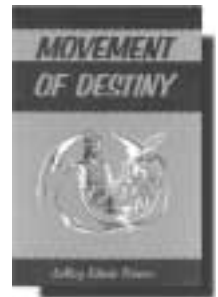
Froom says that something was coming in 1888, which he refers to as “The Eternal Verities.” He claims that although there were some stubborn people, the eternal verities were taking their rightful place. Earlier in the book Froom defined what he meant by the term, “Eternal Verities.” On pages 33, 34 he wrote:

DEFINITIVE MEANING OF “ETERNAL VERITIES.” – Inasmuch as the term “Eternal Verities” will be used periodically throughout this tracement, it is essential that its meaning be succinctly stated at the outset. This is because of its crucial importance, and to avoid liability of misunderstanding in its use.

Verity means “truth” – in conformance with fact and reality. *Eternal Verities* are simply eternal truths, but of a specific character.

The Eternal Verities embrace the basic principles and provisions for the salvation of man, as springing from and centering in the three persons of the Godhead, or Trinity. They are *eternal* because God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are eternal. (*Ibid.*, pp. 33, 34 – *Italic* emphasis is Froom’s, **bold** emphasis has been added.)

What Froom tried to say was that in 1888, God was bringing the doctrine of the Trinity into the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and this is why 1888 was so significant. He says we could not go forward because we did not believe in the Trinity. However, Froom claims that in 1888 God began to bring the doctrine of the Trinity into the Seventh-day Adventist Church, through Waggoner and Jones. Whether accurate or inaccurate, one positive thing must be said about Froom’s research into the events of 1888. He recognized that no reasonable analysis of 1888 could be made without acknowledging Waggoner’s very clear and forceful emphasis upon Jesus’ position in the godhead. E. J. Waggoner had a very definite understanding on this issue which he strongly emphasized as an integral part of his presentations at Minneapolis. Froom recognized that he could not ignore this, and in this respect he was more careful and honest than many of those who delve into the subject today.



Froom makes several references to Waggoner’s book, *Christ and His Righteousness*, in an attempt to prove his point. Maybe he thought nobody else would ever get hold of it. However, he does say some things that are true, and we’ll look at these first. He says:

The first six sections deal with the *transcendent nature and all-encompassing Deity of Christ*. As stated, to establish this foundational truth was Waggoner’s first concern. He felt impelled to take note of certain false concepts, as well as to present the positive truth of Christ’s complete Deity and eternal place in the Godhead, or Trinity, and His infinite attributes and prerogatives—so as really to comprehend the Christ whose righteousness we are to seek and to receive. (*Ibid.*, p. 192 – emphasis is Froom’s)

The first part of this statement is true. In the first six chapters of his book, Waggoner takes great pains to show that Christ is fully a divine being; in fact he uses the word “God,” many times with reference to Christ. However, Froom goes on to say that Waggoner’s intention was to present the idea that Christ was a part of the Trinity! He again says:

Waggoner expressly declares that Christ is “*part of the Godhead*” — the Second Person of the Trinity. He is set forth as the “*equal of the Father [or First Person] in all respects,*” not lacking “*one iota*” of equality with Him. (*Ibid.*, p. 274 - emphasis in original)

As seen in Waggoner’s concept, the term *Godhead* unquestionably stood for the constituent plurality of Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—working out the plan of redemption in complete unity and coordination. Waggoner was a scholar, well versed in theological terminology and widely read in theological literature.

Waggoner spoke with studied care. He phrased his thoughts with exactness, and in full understanding of their import. He clearly believed in the Trinity of Persons comprising the Godhead. And in such a frame of reference he thus recognized the component First, Second, and Third Persons as coequal and consubstantial—in direct conflict with the contrary contentions of Arianism, which, in the early portion of his presentation, he was effectively confuting. (*Ibid.*, p. 279—emphasis in original)

When we say somebody “*expressly declares,*” what do we mean? We mean, “undoubtedly, unquestionably, specifically.” When you do something expressly, nobody can be mistaken about what you mean. Froom says that Waggoner *expressly* declares that Christ is part of the Godhead, the second person of the Trinity. This is a blatant lie, as we are going to prove in a moment. LeRoy Froom has been revered for years as one of the great historians in the church. His books are spoken of almost with reverence. However, our credentials do not matter to the King before whom we shall all one day stand. If you are a liar, you are just a liar, and it does not matter what hat you wear or what name men give to you and, in his assessment of Waggoner’s message, LeRoy Froom proved himself to be a distorter of the truth.

Froom claims that Waggoner was a person who spoke with studied care and I think those who have read any of Waggoner’s materials will have to agree with this. Waggoner used his words carefully and he knew exactly what he was trying to say. Froom goes on to make the claim that when Waggoner referred to the Godhead, he meant **three persons**, and he says that this is an unquestionable fact. He also claims that Waggoner believed that the Father, Son and Holy

Spirit were “*consubstantial!*” To say that Waggoner believed in a Trinity is bad enough, but to say he believed they were consubstantial, is saying that he believed in the Catholic Trinity, and this is an even bigger lie than the first one. Now let’s go to Waggoner’s book, because nobody should know what Waggoner believed better than Waggoner himself.

As stated before, it is true that Waggoner taught that Christ is fully divine. The following statements from his book, *Christ and His Righteousness*, bring out this fact very clearly:

Waggoner’s Perspective

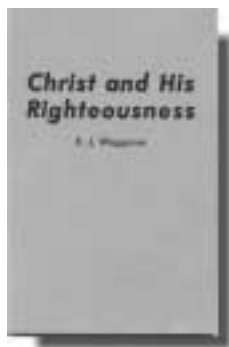
To Christ is committed the highest prerogative, that of judging. **He must receive the same honor that is due to God and for the reason that He is God.** The beloved disciple bears this witness, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” John 1:1. That this Divine Word is none other than Jesus Christ is shown by verse 14: “And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.” (*Christ and His Righteousness*, pp. 8, 9)

Indeed, the fact that Christ is a part of the Godhead, possessing all the attributes of Divinity, being the equal of the Father in all respects, as Creator and Lawgiver, is the only force there is in the atonement. It is this alone which makes redemption a possibility. Christ died “that he might bring us to God” (1 Peter 3:18), but if He lacked one iota of being equal to God, He could not bring us to Him. Divinity means having the attributes of Deity. If Christ were not Divine, then we should have only a human sacrifice. It matters not, even if it be granted that Christ was the highest created intelligence in the universe; in that case He would be a subject, owing allegiance to the law, without ability to do any more than His own duty. He could have no righteousness to impart to others. There is an infinite distance between the highest angel ever created and God; therefore, the highest angel could not lift fallen man up and make him partaker of the Divine nature. Angels can minister; God only can redeem. Thanks be to God that we are saved “through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,” in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and who is, therefore, able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. (*Ibid.*, pp. 43, 44)

This truth helps to a more perfect understanding of the reason why Christ is called the Word of God. He is the One through whom the Divine will and the Divine power are made known to men. **He is, so to speak, the mouth-piece of Divinity, the manifes-**

tation of the Godhead. He declares or makes God known to man. It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell; and therefore the Father is not relegated to a secondary position, as some imagine, when Christ is exalted as Creator and Lawgiver, for the glory of the Father shines through the Son. Since God is known only through Christ, it is evident that the Father cannot be honored as He ought to be honored, by those who do not exalt Christ. As Christ Himself said, "He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him." John 5:23. (*Ibid.*, pp. 44, 45)

In the first six chapters, the divinity of Christ is Waggoner's focus to a great extent. He is trying to prove that Jesus was not created; He was not a lesser being than God. The one who redeemed us is truly a divine being. That was his focus. He was trying to show man the great and exalted work that has been done on our behalf. It was not a lesser being that died for humanity, but One who was higher than anything that created intelligence can fathom. The price paid for us is infinitely great! Waggoner realized that people needed to understand who Christ was. They needed to have Christ exalted as He truly was, if they were ever to relate to Him in the right way. Notice how Ellen White agreed that this was what Waggoner tried to express to the people:



Messages bearing the divine credentials have been sent to God's people; the glory, the majesty, **the righteousness of Christ, full of goodness and truth, have been presented; the fullness of the Godhead in Jesus Christ has been set forth among us with beauty and loveliness**, to charm all whose hearts were not closed with prejudice. We know that God has wrought among us. We have seen souls turn from sin to righteousness. We have seen faith revived in the hearts of the contrite ones. (*Review and Herald*, May 27, 1890)

So Ellen White agreed that Waggoner's focus was Christ, with an emphasis on His deity. However, if we leave it there we would not have told the full truth. In the first four chapters of the book Waggoner emphasizes, just as much as he does the divinity of Christ, **the means by which Christ obtained His divinity.** This is something that Froom distorts and seeks to conceal in his book.

How is it that Christ is divine? The Catholics and people who embrace their theology say that Christ is divine, because He is God Himself. Their thinking is that God is

one substance, like Froom said, "*consubstantial.*" God is one substance, and there are three persons who "tap" into that substance or who exist within that substance. They have all existed forever, they are all one being, but in some mysterious, unfathomable, indefinable way, these three persons exist in this one substance. It is really a mystery, and we are not supposed to understand it, only to believe it. The claim is that Christ is God **because He is God.** Because He is God Himself, always was, always will be.

The other version, embraced by the present Seventh day Adventist church says that Christ is God because He is one of three Gods. He always was and always will be. There are these three Beings who just happened to be there from all eternity.

But Waggoner was teaching something else, and when he taught this something, Ellen White, preaching a sermon at Rome, New York, June 19, 1889 said:

When Brother Waggoner brought out these ideas in Minneapolis, it was the first clear teaching on this subject from any human lips I had heard, excepting the conversations between myself and my husband. I have said to myself, It is because God has presented it to me in vision that I see it so clearly, and they cannot see it because they have never had it presented to them as I have. And when another presented it, every fiber of my heart said, Amen. (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, p. 219)

That is Ellen White's testimony with respect to Waggoner's message. In four volumes, *The 1888 Materials*, you'll never find one word that Ellen White spoke against the *content* of the message. Never! Here is what she says again as recorded in *The 1888 Materials*,

I see the beauty of truth in the presentation of the righteousness of Christ in relation to the law as the doctor has placed it before us. You say, many of you, it is light and truth. Yet you have not presented it in this light heretofore. Is it not possible that through earnest, prayerful searching of the Scriptures he has seen still greater light on some points? **That which has been presented harmonizes perfectly with the light which God has been pleased to give me during all the years of my experience.** (*The 1888 Materials*, p. 164)

It is important to notice the word "perfect" here. It is a very hard word, for it doesn't leave any room for you to squeeze by. If I say something is perfect, and you find any fault with it, I am proven to be a liar. Ellen White says that the message that Waggoner preached harmonized "*perfectly*" with the light God had been pleased to give her during "*all the years*" of her experience. Now I would imagine that if Waggoner had a little fault in there, Ellen White might have said that most of

what he preached was the truth, and though there were flaws, the basis of it was correct. She could have left out the word “perfectly” and just said, “it harmonizes with the light God has been pleased to give me.” But why did she include the word “perfectly” if she was not trying to tell us something? Was she trying to deceive us? No! I think that whatever that message was, there was no flaw in it, just as she stated, and I want you to consider that as we read the quotes from Waggoner which Froom conveniently ignored in his assessment of the message. As you read these quotes you may judge for yourself whether or not Waggoner was trying to bring the doctrine of the Trinity into the SDA Church.

Waggoner’s Thoughts on Christ’s Divinity

All things proceed ultimately from God, the Father; even Christ Himself proceeded and came forth from the Father, but it has pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell, and that He should be the direct, immediate Agent in every act of creation. (*Christ and His Righteousness*, p. 19)

We know that Christ “proceeded forth and came from God” (John 8:42), but it was so far back in the ages of eternity as to be far beyond the grasp of the mind of man. (*Ibid.*)

This name [God] was not given to Christ in consequence of some great achievement, but it is *His by right of inheritance*. Speaking of the power and greatness of Christ, the writer to the Hebrews says that He is made so much better than the angels, because “He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.” Heb. 1:4. *A son always rightfully takes the name of the father; and Christ, as “the only begotten Son of God,”* has rightfully the same name. A son, also, is, to a greater or less degree, a reproduction of the father; he has to some extent the features and personal characteristics of his father; not perfectly, because there is no perfect reproduction among mankind. *But there is no imperfection in God, or in any of His works, and so Christ is the “express image” of the Father’s person. Heb. 1:3. As the Son of the self-existent God, He has by nature all the attributes of Deity. (Ibid., pp. 11, 12)*

It is true that there are many sons of God, but Christ is the “only begotten Son of God,” and therefore the Son of God in a sense in which no other being ever was or ever can be. The angels are sons of God, as was Adam (Job 38:7; Luke 3:38), by creation; Christians are the sons of God by adoption (Rom. 8:14, 15), but **Christ is the Son of God by birth**. The writer to the Hebrews further shows that *the position of the Son of God is not one to which Christ has been elevated but that it is one which He*

has by right. He says that Moses was faithful in all the house of God, as a servant, “but Christ as a Son over His own house.” Heb. 3:6. And he also states that Christ is the Builder of the house. Verse 3. It is He that builds the temple of the Lord and bears the glory. Zech. 6:12, 13. (*Ibid.*, pp. 12, 13)

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.* The prophet Micah tells us all that we can know about it in these words, “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity.” Micah 5:2, margin. *There was a time when Christ proceeded forth and came from God, from the bosom of the Father (John 8:42; 1:18), but that time was so far back in the days of eternity that to finite comprehension it is practically without beginning.*

But the point is that **Christ is a begotten Son and not a created subject. He has by inheritance a more excellent name than the angels;** He is “a Son over His own house.” Heb. 1:4; 3:6. **And since He is the only-begotten son of God, He is of the very substance and nature of God and possesses by birth all the attributes of God, for the Father was pleased that His Son should be the express image of His Person, the brightness of His glory, and filled with all the fullness of the Godhead.** So He has “life in Himself.” He possesses immortality in His own right and can confer immortality upon others. Life inheres in Him, so that it cannot be taken from Him, but having voluntarily laid it down, He can take it again. (*Ibid.*, pp. 21, 22)

This is what Waggoner was teaching. Waggoner had a reason to explain how Christ became God; He was God because He was the Son of God. Yet in spite of all these so-called “heretical” statements, Ellen White still says that it harmonized perfectly with the light God had given her during “all” the years of her experience!! What had God been showing to her? If Waggoner was teaching heresy, then God must have been showing Ellen White heresy during all the years of her experience!!

Waggoner’s belief, by today’s definition, is labeled, “semi-Arianism.” However, this is what Waggoner preached and this is what Ellen White says caused every fiber of her being to say “Amen.”

People claim that we put down Christ by saying He is not God Himself. But what greater honor can a person be given than to acknowledge that He and God

are of the very same nature, of the very essence, as God Almighty? This is something that the disciples tried to bring across to the minds of those Jews. They just couldn't believe that anybody could be on that same plane.

Jesus said, "I am the Son of God," and they took up stones to kill Him. They understood that when He said, "I am the Son of God," he was saying, "I have the same nature as God, I came from God." He didn't say, "I am God," but, "I am the Son of God," and they understood that He meant that He was of the same nature as God. Not that He was God, but that He was equal with God.

At every stage of the controversy, Satan's purpose has been to overthrow the truth that Jesus is the Son of God. In heaven, God said, "This is my beloved Son." Satan said, "He's nobody special, He and I are on the same level. If He is in the council, I should be in there too." He would not recognize that Christ was the Son of God, nor recognize the difference between himself and Christ. He opposed Christ's position because he thought he was equal with Christ. He would not recognize that Christ was the Son of God.

When Jesus came to earth, the very first thing Satan said to Him when He began His public ministry was, "If you are the Son of God ..." He tried to overthrow His faith that He was the Son of God and every time when here on earth He said "I am the Son of God," the Jews tried to kill Him. When He was on the cross they said, "If you are the Son of God, come down." After He went back to Heaven, everywhere the disciples went and said, "He is the Son of God," they tried to kill them. All they said was, "He is the Son of God," and that was enough to raise a storm of opposition against them. Satan surely hates this truth.

A few hundred years after the apostles died out Church leaders came together to settle the question of Jesus' role in the Godhead. At the Council of Nicea the foundation of the doctrine of the Trinity was established, and it was determined that Jesus was not the literal Son of God at all.

A few hundred years later, the religion of Islam was established. Islam was vastly different from Christianity in many respects. However, it did acknowledge Jesus as a prophet, in fact as a great prophet, but it, along with the Papacy, denied that Jesus was the literal Son of God.

A few more hundred years and the Protestant reformation began. Unfortunately, they quit reforming and quit protesting and, for the most part, never departed from the Trinity doctrine, and they too denied that Jesus is the literal Son of God.

Then in 1844 God raised up a movement, and He gave them the truth about Jesus. The pioneers of Adventism believed and taught that Jesus is the literal Son of God. Yet look at what happened, and at what

exists today. Nearly, ten million Seventh-day Adventists today embrace the belief that Jesus is not the Son of God!! This is the premier truth, the greatest truth in the Bible (John 3:16), yet the entire world of Christians declare, "He is not the Son of God!" Don't you see? There is a great apostasy that has swept the entire world!!

Yet this truth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God shook the world in apostolic times. The wonder of it transformed that early church, and the same power exists in that truth today. So this was one of the reasons why Ellen White saw that there was the potential for so much in this message.

Waggoner clearly answered the charges of those who claim that to say Jesus is the literal Son of God is a denial of His divinity. How could He become divine in any other way than by being born from divinity? My son came from me; I don't produce cat kind or dog kind. From humanity must come human kind. My son is human even if he looks like a worm, a dog, or a cat, because he is born from humanity. When Christ came to this earth and laid aside His divine glory, was He still divine? Yes, because He was born from divinity, and there was something in Him that no man had. He had that pure holy nature that no man ever had nor will ever have. In Himself, His was the perfect, pure spirit of the same being that had been with the Father from eternity. He laid aside His power, but He couldn't put His identity aside. He couldn't change *who* He was.

You might cut off a man's hands or feet, cut out his tongue so that he cannot speak, and he will still be human. Jesus could not be other than divine because He was born from the divine One. Those who confess that Jesus is the true, begotten Son of God, have a reason for believing that we have a divine Saviour. All that others can say is, "It is mystery." But it is only a mystery to those who will not accept the plain teaching of Scripture.

The World's Need for a Revelation of God's Character of Love

According to Ellen White, there is one other element in the last message to be given to the world:

It is the darkness of misapprehension of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His character. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. At this time a message from God is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. *His character is to be made known. Into the darkness of the world is to be shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy, and truth.*

Those who wait for the Bridegroom's coming are to say to the people, "Behold your God." *The last*

rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them. (Christ's Object Lessons, pp. 415, 416)

Misapprehension means misunderstanding! The darkness that enshrouds the world is not so much the new age movement, or the murders the rapes and the looting, and all the terrorism. Ellen White says the darkness that covers the world, the real darkness, is a misunderstanding of God's character. If men could understand who God is, light would break. She is talking about the last message. God's character is to go before the world, and that is the last message for humanity (Isaiah 60:1-3). So we might talk about the mark of the beast and the Sunday laws and all of this, but let's not forget that ultimately what the world will see, what they must see, is God's character of love. That is the message in its essence. We have got to know that whatever we are preaching, whatever little point of doctrine, it has to come wrapped in the package of God's character of love.

I learned about God's love one night when it was raining really hard and my house was leaking. We were still in the process of building though we were already living inside the house and, by that Friday night, the rain had been coming down for three days without ceasing. Finally it started coming through the wall. I took a cloth and I started to sop up the water, but the wall was waterlogged and it kept coming in. After I had been at that for about an hour, I realized that the water was coming in as fast as I could dry it up, and this Friday night, I would be sopping water all night, or else, if I stopped, the house would be flooded. At that moment the thought came, "your Father controls the rain." Could I pray for God to stop the rain? It was only a little thing, just a request to save me having to sop water all night, but I decided to talk to Him about it and so I prayed. I prayed and I sopped water for five more minutes, and then the pattering on the roof stopped. Five minutes, then a little bit of unbelief, ... I wonder if it will come back? But it was the first time the rain had stopped for three days! I put away my bucket and cloth, and it never sprinkled again for the night. It was over. I love Him because of that, He does things for all of us, and we can love Him because we see what He does. But, He doesn't ask us to recognize His love in these things so much. There is something greater, than all of this. Ellen White has written:

It is the glory of the gospel that it is founded upon the principle of restoring in the fallen race the divine image by a constant manifestation of benevolence. This work began in the heavenly courts. There God decided to give human beings unmistakable evi-

dence of the love with which He regarded them. He "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. ... The contemplation of this love will cleanse the soul from all selfishness. It will lead the disciple to deny self, take up the cross, and follow the Redeemer. (*Counsels on Health*, p. 222)

God plans to restore His image in you and me by continually showing us His goodness towards us. By seeing that goodness, we are going to be changed. If you can understand what He did when He gave His Son, it will cleanse your soul from all selfishness. The pastor, the leader, all of us, can preach until we turn blue: "Thou shalt not, thou shalt not," and still we go home and fight, and fail and fail. But when you contemplate the love of God in Jesus Christ, it will cleanse your soul from all selfishness and, therefore, this is the message that will do the work; this, and nothing else. When people go out and beat people over the head with the mark of the beast, this alone is not going to change them. Selfishness is a poor motive for overcoming sin. You can drive fear into men's hearts till they feel that they are standing on the very brink of hell and they will not truly change, because those principles, those motives of fear, do not change men's hearts. The only knowledge that can do this is the knowledge of the love of God, and this is fully and clearly manifested through the gift of His Son.

In giving His only-begotten Son to die for sinners, God has manifested to fallen man love that is without a parallel. We have full faith in the scripture that says, "God is love." (1 John 4:8)

The love of God as manifested in Jesus, will lead us to the true conception of the character of God. (*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 311)

All the paternal love which has come down from generation to generation through the channel of human hearts, all the springs of tenderness which have opened in the souls of men, are but as a tiny rill to the boundless ocean when compared with the infinite, exhaustless love of God. Tongue cannot utter it; pen cannot portray it. You may meditate upon it every day of your life; you may search the Scriptures diligently in order to understand it; you may summon every power and capability that God has given you, in the endeavor to comprehend the love and compassion of the heavenly Father; and yet there is an infinity beyond. You may study that love for ages; yet you can never fully comprehend the length and the breadth, the depth and the height, of the love of God in giving His Son to die for the world. Eternity itself can never fully reveal it. Yet as we study the Bible and meditate upon the life of Christ and the plan of

redemption, these great themes will open to our understanding more and more. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 740)

God has shown us a love that is without a parallel. You can't see anything like it anywhere else in the universe. You might hear about a mother giving up her life to save her child, yet nothing parallels the love that God showed in giving His Son to die for us. That is what she says, and you know in your heart even if Ellen White had not said it, that it is true.

What is it that the world needs to see? The world needs to see the character of God. It is the last message of mercy to be given to the world, but where is this character manifested? It is shown in the gift of His Son. Those who don't believe that Jesus is the Son of God can have no real appreciation of the character of God, and that is the truth. Only the truth sanctifies, and men who believe a lie will never become what God wants them to become. That is why the message we have must go to every man, woman and child upon the face of the planet. It was true in the disciples' time, it was true in 1844, it is true today, and the responsibility rests upon every one of us who knows this truth to do everything in our power face embarrassment, hardship, deprivation and a bad name to help people to know what we know. That's what God raised us up for, and we have to do everything in our power, far more than we have yet attempted, to try to get this message before the entire world. We are few and small, and strongly opposed, but truth and God are on our side.

Ellen White gave some critical characteristics of the final message that God will give to the world. Some of them we have looked at already, and we will just examine a few others:

Characteristics of the Message

☞ **It will arouse the fears of leaders who will oppose it.**

In the manifestation of that power which lightens the earth with the glory of God, they will see only something which ***in their blindness they think dangerous, something which will arouse their fears, and they will brace themselves to resist it.*** Because the Lord does not work according to their ideas and expectations, they will oppose the work. "Why," they say, "should not we know the Spirit of God, when we have been in the work so many years?" (*Review and Herald*, December 23, 1890)

☞ **It will be called a false light by those who fail to walk in its advancing glory.**

The third angel's message will not be comprehended, the light which will lighten the earth with its glory ***will be called a false light, by those who re-***

fuse to walk in its advancing glory. (*Review and Herald*, May 27, 1890)

☞ **It will be contrary to human planning, out of the common order.**

Unless those who can help in—are aroused to a sense of their duty, they will not recognize the work of God when the loud cry of the third angel shall be heard. When light goes forth to lighten the earth, instead of coming up to the help of the Lord, they will want to bind about His work to meet their narrow ideas. Let me tell you that ***the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning.*** ... The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness. (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 300)

☞ **God will take the reins into His own hands, out of the hands of those who want to control the work.**

There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world. God will use ***ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands.*** (*Ibid.*)

☞ **Man's binding rules will be cast off.**

God will move upon men in humble positions to declare the message of present truth..... Many, even among the uneducated, will proclaim the word of the Lord. Children will be impelled by the Holy Spirit to go forth to declare the message of heaven. The Spirit will be poured out upon those who yield to His promptings. ***Casting off man's binding rules and cautious movements, they will join the army of the Lord.*** (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, pp. 26, 27)

☞ **God will use humble instruments, qualified by the spirit, not literary institutions.**

Thus the message of the third angel will be proclaimed. As the time comes for it to be given with greatest power, ***the Lord will work through humble instruments, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to His service. The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions.*** Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them. (*The Great Controversy*, p. 606)

☞ **The inventions of men—human machinery will be swept away, man’s authority will be as broken reeds.**

Under the showers of the latter rain ***the inventions of man, the human machinery, will at times be swept away, the boundary of man’s authority will be as broken reeds***, and the Holy Spirit will speak through the living, human agent, with convincing power. No one then will watch to see if the sentences are well rounded off, if the grammar is faultless. The living water will flow in God’s own channels. (*Selected Messages*, book 2, pp. 58, 59)

When the angel of Revelation 18 comes back to do his work as Ellen White predicted, then we should expect to see the following characteristics accompanying his work:

- 1 A teaching that Christ is the literal Son of God, begotten before the ages as an individual Being, separate from the Father.
- 2 The teaching that Christ is fully a divine Being, God by nature, by virtue of inheritance.
- 3 The fullness of the Godhead, the righteousness of God is available to us as we partake of Christ Himself, because He Himself possesses these things.
- 4 A turning from men and human organizations to Christ.
- 5 A testimony against those who wish to rule and to dictate to people. It is a message that threatens their systems and their authority.
- 6 The message will be ridiculed, criticized and spoken against by the majority.
- 7 Leaders will think it dangerous, it will arouse their fears and they will brace themselves to resist it.
- 8 It will be called a false light by those who refuse to walk in its advancing glory.
- 9 It will be a revelation of God’s character of love.

I know of only one message which bears all the characteristics mentioned here. Those who embrace it are few, they are poor, and they are being assaulted on every side, but they believe that what they are doing is God’s work, because all the evidence is clear.

It is interesting that Ellen White says that leaders will think it dangerous, become afraid of it and brace themselves to resist it. Many new doctrines are floating around today, including teachings such as “God does not kill,” “Christians still need to keep the feast days,” and “God must be called by the holy name.” Many of the independent ministries, as well as the official

Seventh-day Adventist Church, are coming out against these teachings. But, interestingly, there is one belief that everybody is opposing above anything else. Here are some quotations taken from the publications of several of these ministries pointing out what this main point of attack is.

Braced to Resist the Truth

Bob Trefz: *Cherith Chronicle*

This great truth has been misunderstood and perverted by the so-called “anti-Trinitarians” who deny that Jesus is very God with life original, unborrowed, and undivided. They take Jesus’ statements regarding His incarnation, His humiliation, His voluntarily placing of Himself in our condition while on this earth, and seek to use those statements to deny the clearly taught position of Inspiration that Jesus is God. An understanding of the great plan of redemption is crucial to understanding Jesus’ various statements of His dependence upon His Father while He walked the dusty trails of this earth. (*Cherith Chronicle*, April-June 1999, article, “The Self-emptying of Christ”)

Kevin D. Paulson: *Our Firm Foundation*

Many of these same persons wish to revive the Arian (or semi-Arian) perspective on the divinity of Christ held by some of our Adventist pioneers.

Those who speak of the need to return to the teachings of the pioneers need to remember this. Only one pioneer was inspired, and her name was Ellen G. White. (*Our Firm Foundation*, December 1998, article, “In Defense of the Trinity”)

Colin & Russell Standish: *Remnant Herald*

Scripture reveals only two events at which Christ was begotten of the Father—at His birth “into the world” and at His resurrection. Neither of these events lends the least credence to the view that Christ was an emanation of the Father at some time in the past or that He was devoid of life from eternity. (*Remnant Herald*, April 1997, article, “Winds of Doctrine no.2, Christ Begotten”)

John Grosboll: *Landmarks*

A second point that we notice in Ellen White’s writings is that she speaks of one God. She does not teach that there are three Gods, but that there is one God. And yet, at the same time, as we will see, she teaches that this one God includes the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, which are three personalities mysteriously united as one. ...

So this ‘Eternal One’ must include both the Father and the Son. In this passage she is commenting on Ezekiel 1:4, 26, and 10:8. Notice there is One upon

the throne. There is one God, but this one God includes both Christ and the Father. (*Landmarks*, December 1996, article, "The Godhead")

Vance Farrell: *Pilgrim's Rest*

The Roman Catholic Church ultimately accepted, partially or entirely, the correct view of Christ's and the Holy Spirit's divinity and membership in the Godhead. (*The Godhead*, tract DH-201)

Ralph Larson: *Our Firm Foundation*

Why do the Scriptures refer to Christ as the "only begotten" Son of God?

Because He was conceived of the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary and began His life on earth by the normal birth process. (*Our Firm Foundation*, February 1994, article, "Water as A Flood")

William Grotheer: *Watchman what of the night?*

Jesus had a beginning at Bethlehem. (Note the name designation of "Jesus," the God-man, begins at Bethlehem). With God as a "given" factor, you have Two Beings—God and the Eternal Spirit - before Bethlehem, and Three Beings - God, the Eternal Spirit, and Jesus—after.

"The idea that Christ was 'begotten' by the Father at some time in eternity past is altogether foreign to the Scriptures." (See *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Vol. 5, p. 902) (*Watchman what of the night?*, Vol. XXXI-I)

Robert Sessler :*The Godhead, 1, 2, or 3 Gods?*

The Father, Son and the Holy Spirit are each one infinite and omniscient, and have their own personality and heavenly character! Thus the Godhead is made up of three distinct divine Persons, Beings, and God's [sic].

The false spiritualistic beliefs which are being taught about the Godhead are: that Jesus was literally birthed or born out of the person of the Father before creation, and that is how Jesus became the only begotten Son of God; that the Father is the only God or the only true God in the Godhead, and that there was a time in which the Father existed alone before giving birth to Christ; that the Holy Spirit is not a separate Being or Person other than the Father or the Son, and that He is not the third Being or Person of the Godhead, but is referred to as being the breath, or life, or light, or power, etc., of God, or the combination of Father and Son together. (*The Godhead, 1, 2, or 3 Gods?*, pp. 28. 29)

Bill Parks

Where in the world do you folks get ONE GOD ONLY? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God [1 God] and the Word was God

[that makes 2 Gods] - not just ONE. In Acts 5 the Holy Spirit is called God [no. 3 God]. . . . I JUST DO NOT ACCEPT THE ONLY ONE GOD DOCTRINE . (In an e-mail sent out to several persons.)

Kim Kjaer: *Amazing Facts*

A mousetrap is made up of several parts which work together to seize its unsuspecting prey as he happily nibbles on one of his favorite foods. Removing even a single component of the trap, such as the spring, renders its remaining parts completely ineffective. . . . God also is a combination of three entities and is manifested as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Were any one person of the Godhead removed, God would cease to be God. (*Amazing Facts Inside Report*, article, "The Trinity, Is It Biblical?")

J.R. Hoffmann: *Ministry*

The Father-Son relationship in the New Testament must always be understood in the light of the event of Bethlehem. The only child born into this world with a divine, rather than a human, father is Jesus. The title, "Son," refers to His entry into time and does not deny at all His eternal origin. There are references in the Old Testament to Sonship, but these are always in anticipation of the incarnation. (*Ministry*, June 1982)

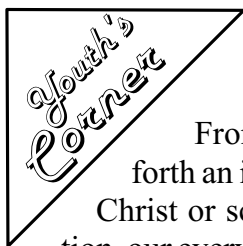
Gordon Jensen: *Adventist Review*

A plan of salvation was encompassed in the covenant made by the Three Persons of the Godhead, who possessed the attributes of Deity equally. In order to eradicate sin and rebellion from the universe and to restore harmony and peace, **one of the divine Beings accepted, and entered into, the role of the Father, another the role of the Son.** The remaining divine Being, the Holy Spirit, was also to participate in effecting the plan of salvation. All of this took place before sin and rebellion transpired in heaven.

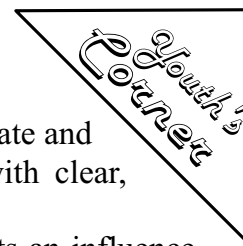
By accepting the roles that the plan entailed, the divine Beings lost none of the powers of Deity. With regard to their eternal existence and other attributes, they were one and equal. But with regard to the plan of salvation, there was, in a sense, a submission on the part of the Son to the Father. (*Adventist Review*, October 31, 1996, p. 12, Week of Prayer readings)

It is amazing, that the Bible says that Jesus is the Son of God, God's only begotten Son, and yet everybody comes up with all kinds of theories that do not even agree with each other, except in saying He was not the Son of God! It is difficult to believe. Among

Continued on page 16.



Our Influence



From every human being there goes forth an influence that either gathers with Christ or scatters from him. Our every action, our every word, exerts an influence either for good or for ill. This influence affects the eternal destiny of those with whom we associate. Influence and example, when viewed in the light of the cross and in their true relation to eternity, assume infinite importance. A word fitly spoken, an action rightly done, may save a soul from death. Day by day the example we set and the influence we exert are registered in the records going beforehand to judgment.

The child of God must never forget that he is only part of the whole. He is only a thread in the web of humanity. Everything he does makes an impression on his character, and influences others. The letters that are written sow the seeds either of tares or of wheat. Our thoughts, our words, the spirit in which we perform our daily duties,—all act their part in the formation of character.

The daily influence of purity and devotion, the observance of the courtesies of life, unbending integrity and steadfastness, will be to all around us a constant recommendation of our faith. But if those who profess the truth are light and trifling, reckless in their conversation and careless in their deportment, they deny Christ, and the world is made worse by their profession. With less of such advocacy the truth of God would stand higher in the estimation of unbelievers.

It is the duty of every Christian to show himself a true follower of Jesus, loving the truth for the truth's sake, hating every species of impurity, willingly denying self for Christ's sake. The poorest man in this world is rich as long as he preserves his integrity of character. The one who is victorious in life's battle is he who gives himself earnestly and unreservedly to God. The life of such a one is a constant confession of Christ. He who refuses to live for self-pleasing, who will not abate his efforts to live the truth, no matter what difficulties he may meet, walks the earth as a nobleman in his Master's sight. He is constantly doing and saying something to prepare himself and others for the future life. He has

the mind of Christ, and in private and public life his light shines with clear, steady rays.

Judicious conversation exerts an influence which is a power for good. But often those who talk much do little deep, earnest thinking, little real work for the Master. Often they neglect those who have little to make life happy, in order to talk about what should be done for the needy and unfortunate. They think that by talking they can make up for their deficiency. They talk, but they fail to show by their actions that they are directed by the Spirit of God. To such the angels of God would say, Not words, but deeds. The daily life tells much more than any number of words. A uniform cheerfulness, tender kindness, Christian benevolence, patience and love, will melt away prejudice, and open the heart to the reception of the truth. It is the doers of the word who are justified before God.

God requires us to put ourselves into his hands without reserve, to obey his directions implicitly. When we take the Lord as our counselor, when we follow him, placing body, soul, and spirit under his control, we can work as Christ worked. Those who make Christ a personal Saviour, seeking him most earnestly in prayer, are enabled by his grace to live true, noble lives. They work in a way which Heaven approves. By unselfish actions they reveal the character of Christ. They realize that they can not afford to lose sight of Christ; for by so doing they give unbelievers an occasion to cast reproach upon the truth.

We are to be courteous to all men, tender-hearted, and sympathetic; for this was the character manifested by Christ when he was upon this earth. The more closely we are united to Christ, the more tender and affectionate we shall be in dealing with one another. The redemption of the fallen race was planned in order that man might be a partaker of the divine nature. When by the grace of Christ we become partakers of this nature, our influence on those around us will be a savor of life unto life. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, we shall be a blessing to all with whom we come in contact. (Mrs. E. G. White, *Youth's Instructor*, August 2, 1900)

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“Return of the Fourth Angel,” Continued from page 14.

Christians, and everybody else, why is this doctrine hated so? Why do they think it dangerous and brace themselves to resist it? Satan is against the message because he knows the truth.

May God help us to recognize the implications of these things, because it is not just something to be listened to and be thought about, but it is something to change our lives and change our focus. Brothers and Sisters, if God is trying to do something, as long as we are alive, let us not be left out of it. Let us “stand like the brave” with our faces to the foe. Go to the front of the battle; do not lag at the rear. Let us see what we can do with all the strength that our Father gives us. Let us ask Him for guidance and go forward. No matter how small we are, how helpless, how limited our resources or our talents, God will use us to do something great because it is His cause; it is He who is promoting it.

May God bless you.



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