



## **One God, One Lord** **The Biblical Basis** for a Doctrine of God

The Bible picture of God.  
The loving Father. The obedient Son. One in Spirit.

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## **The Seventh-day Adventist Doctrine of God** Part 3 The Omega

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### **1919 Bible Conference**

In 1984 the entire record totaling 2,494 typewritten pages was discovered in the General Conference Archives documenting a month long Bible Conference and Teachers Council. The 1919 meeting was attended by 65 chosen administrators, editors and teachers. Stenographers transcribed nearly every word spoken except a couple times when A.G. Daniells, General Conference President requested that they not record what was spoken.

Much has been said about the exclusive nature of the meetings and speculation as to the reason why the transcript of the proceedings was not then made public but, as Daniells put it, "sealed away in a vault." Most of the record has been preserved and is available to anyone at the Seventh-day Adventist Archives website. After downloading all 23 DeJaVu image files and reading all 1,226 available pages (there were two copies found in the archive), the topics of discussion can be summarized into just a few categories:

1. Morning devotionals by W.W.Prescott on the Person of Christ
2. The Daily of Daniel 8
3. The Interpretation of Daniel 11's King of the North
4. The Eastern Question
5. The Sanctuary Doctrine

A final discussion on the inspiration of Ellen White occupied the final two days of the Teacher's Council. While the bulk of attention was focused on prophetic interpretation in light of the recently ended WWI with considerable dispute over whether the papacy would ever again become a world power, there were a couple of days during Prescott's presentations that some differences of opinion were expressed in regards to the eternity of Christ and the proper terminology to use in describing it. On this we shall concentrate our efforts.

Prescott's second morning "bible study" on July 2 brought up the concept of Christ existing in both the eternity before and the eternity after the period of sin. Beginning on page 31 he reads Colossians 1:12-17

and refers to Revelation 3 in which are encountered two expressions: "the first born of all creation" and "the beginning of the creation of God." Commenting on this he says,

"Some have used that text to prove that Christ was a created being, trying to parry the force of the text by saying we should say beginning. No. 'He is before all things.' There would be no visible things except for his pre-existence, and when the only-begotten came into the world, all manifestations that have appeared since that time were potentially in him." pp. 32-33

He then discussed John 1:1 "In the beginning the Word was" (Revised Version).

"There is a great difference in the way you read that. We have to have the beginning of things. To us, there is a beginning; but when you strike that which to us was the beginning, you can look back and say the word was, with no time limit at all. It is because the Word was at that time that we call the beginning, that the beginning came, and that all things have come since the beginning, and that all things are now in our period of existence that we measure by time as finite beings must do." p. 35 (underlining emphasis in the original)

In the afternoon session for that day, Prescott entertained questions. The first was from W.E.Howell who asked if Professor Prescott would "enlarge" on the point of "beginning." Beginning on page 76 he responds:

W.W.Prescott: Taking the first chapter of John, the 3d verse: At a certain point where finite beings begin time, it does not mean that that is where the word began. When the scripture says, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God," it does not mean that when you get back to that point that we denominate the beginning, then looking back into eternity, you can point to the time when the word was.

H.C.Lacey: Can we go one step further and say that **the word was without beginning?**

W.W.Prescott: I was going to raise the question. Are we agreed in such a general statement as this, that the Son of God is **co-eternal with the Father?** Is that the view that is taught in our schools?

C.M.Sorenson: It is taught in the Bible.

[Sorenson does not elaborate on which texts would support a co-eternal Father and Son. Certainly, such propositions that "God alone hath immortality", "He who inhabits eternity", "from everlasting to everlasting thou art God" (accepting that everlasting equals eternal) combined with "I and my Father are one", "If you have seen me you have seen the Father" and that Father and Son are both God supports the concept that both have a shared experience within the realm of eternity. This is a general concept of co-eternal. Lacey will soon campaign for the position that they are "absolutely co-eternal."]

W.W.Prescott: Not to teach that is Arianism. Ought we to continue to circulate in a standard book a statement that the Son is not co-eternal, that the Son is not co-eval or co-eternal with the Father? That makes Him a finite being. **Any being whose beginning we can fix is a finite being.** We have been circulating for 40 years a standard book which says that the Son is not co-eternal

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with the Father. That is teaching Arianism. Do we want to go on teaching that?

[He is referring to Uriah Smiths "Daniel and the Revelation". But we as humans are not able to "fix" the Son's beginning, only to the extent that it is in "the days of eternity" Micah 5:2 margin. Arianism may be defined in various ways: Jesus in his pre-existence was a created being, created out of nothing; he was similar to "homoiousia" the Father not equal "homoousia" with the Father; there was a time when he was not. The latter is the definition to which Prescott appears to refer. He will later propose a literal begetting of the Son from the Father within eternity and not regard such a belief as Arian because it is not a creation, and he will regard all beings co-existing within the realm

**of eternity as co-eternal. Prescott also presents his own definition of what constitutes a finite being: a being with a beginning. Which scripture would corroborate this?]**

G.B.Thompson: "All things were created by him," Do you understand that to mean more than this earth?

W.W.Prescott: Yes, whether they be thrones or principalities or powers or things visible or things invisible, all were created by him. That is, all existences of every kind depend upon His pre-existence; and all present existences depend upon His present existence. Without Him there would be nothing in existence, and without Him that which is now in existence would fall out of existence.

C.P.Bollman: Isn't that usually applied to His having existed before the incarnation?

W.W.Prescott: I am using it as applying to His existence previous to the existence of anything else.

C.P.Bollman: I would like to ask, Do you think it is necessary, or even helpful in the defining of Christian doctrine, **to go outside of the New Testament for terms** to use in the definition?

**[he is objecting to the use of co-eternal, coeval...non-scriptural terms]**

W.W.Prescott: As to whether or not we shall accept dictionary terms?

C.P.Bollman: No, I do not mean that.

W.W. Prescott: Please illustrate what you mean.

C.P.Bollman: **The scripture says Christ is the only begotten of the Father.** Why should we go farther than that and say that He was co-eternal with the Father? And also say that to teach otherwise is Arianism?

W.W.Prescott: I do not find in the New Testament expressions

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as "co-eternal," but I find expressions that are equivalent to that, as I understand it.

C.P.Bollman: Give an example, please.

W.W.Prescott: I think the expression "I am" is the equivalent of eternity. I think these expressions, while they do not use the term co-eternal, are equivalent in their meaning. That brings up the whole question of the relation of the Son to the Father. There is a proper sense, as I view it, according to which **the Son is subordinate to the Father**, but that subordination is **not in the question of attributes** or of His existence. It is simply in the fact of **the derived existence**, as we read in John 5:26: "For as the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the Son also to have life in himself." Using terms as we use them, the Son is co-eternal with the Father. That does not prevent His being the only-begotten Son of God. We cannot go back into eternity and say where **this eternity commenced**, and where **that eternity commenced**. There is no contradiction to say that the Son is co-eternal with the Father, and yet **the Son is the only-begotten of the Father**.

**[Prescott seems to accept a quasi-co-eternal status for the Father-Son relationship by applying "one eternity" for the Son and "another eternity" for the Father, both "eternal," the Son is just "essentially" eternal, so that the Son can still be begotten and yet also eternal just not "exactly" eternal with the Father. He regards John 5:26 as evidence that the Son has a "derived" existence.]**

C.P.Bollman: I think we should hold to the Bible definitions.

W.W.Prescott: We take the expression co-eternal, and that is better.

## [We? Who is this? And why? Because that is Trinitarian language]

C.P.Bollman: My conception of the matter is this; that **at some point in eternity the Father separated a portion of Himself to be the Son**. As far as the substance is concerned, **He is just as eternal as the Father**, but did not have an eternal separate existence. I do not think that approaches any nearer to Arianism than the other does to \_\_\_\_\_ . (blank in original)

[We can only speculate as to what the blank word was, but "Trinitarianism" would be a very logical assumption. Bollman is presenting the standard, traditional Adventist position championed by James White, Waggoner, Uriah Smith, and even Prescott himself in his earlier years: the Son was "brought forth" (Prov 8:24-30), "came out from" (John 16:27, 28; 17:8, "proceeded forth and came from" (John 8:42; Matt 4:4), was "possessed/begat" by the LORD (Prov 8:24), "begotten by" (John 1:14,18;3:16; 1Jn 5:1,18; Heb 1:5) the Father "in the days of eternity" (Micah 5:2 Margin), on the "day" that he was "begotten" (Ps 2:7) "from the womb of the morning" (Ps 110:1-4, Isa 49:1-6). Coming out of the Father guarantees the Son's eternity just as the "stone cut out of the mountain without hands" in Daniel 2:45 is just as old as the mountain and of exactly the same substance.]

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W.W.Prescott: Suppose you say, there is **the point where He had His beginning**, and that back of that there was a time when the Father went forth in His Son. When you say a point, you conceive of it as **a definite place and bring it into finite terms**. (underline in original)

[This is very interesting. Prescott moves, without blushing or hesitation, from humanly unknowable infinite eternity to what he labels a "finite" point of time, even though it is still in eternity. Surprisingly, Bollman nor anyone else didn't challenge him on this. Just because finite humans can understand the concept of "a definite place" in time, "a point," we presume to claim understanding and ownership of that far distant point in time despite the undisputed fact that that "point in time" happens to be in eternity, an infinite amount of time in the past, in which we have no capability of understanding. The so-called "finite" point is admittedly "out of bounds" to human thinking-or at least it should be. We have to take off our mental shoes when we dare to delve into God's eternal territory.]

H.C.Lacey: May I say something on that point? Every year I am brought in touch with this from two points of view-one in the Greek class, and the other in Bible Doctrines. Twice a year, and sometimes more frequently, I am brought face to face with this. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." The eternity of the Word is emphasized in that. When you come to the study of the deity of Christ, **the fundamental attribute is eternity of existence**. If Jesus is divine, He must have that essential attribute, and so **I have dared to say that Christ is absolutely co-eternal with the Father**. You can not say that back in some point of duration the Son appeared, and prior to that He had not appeared. **I take it that God has no beginning**. The Greek does not read, "In the beginning," but "In beginning,"-any beginning, every beginning. There is no article to it. It means that **Christ antedated all beginning**. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit antedated all beginning.

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I am just stating what I teach. I want to know whether this is so. **That is what this council is for**. I say that God was always in existence. **Just as the light is always with the sun**; the light comes from the sun, and so **Jesus was always with God**, always reigning with him. I have explained the meaning of the son in this way. A son is always younger than his father. But if **we bring into this divine conception the thought of motherhood** and fatherhood as humanly understood, I think we are astray. It does not mean that Jesus had a mother, God is a Father. I am trying to explain what is meant by that expression that **Michael in his ante-human existence was the son of God**. I think those words are **human words**, used to express to us humanly speaking, the relation existing between the **first and second person of the deity**, and the **priority of rank** of the first person. The word is an expression of the relation of that second person to the first. He is as a son to the first. The Lord said of Israel, you are my first born. I will be a

father to Israel, for the love that existed between them. To the first and only begotten son was a specially tender feeling, and to indicate the wondrous love of the first person of the Deity to the second, this expression is used. Never to indicate that the son came into existence after the father. Let us say this represents the six thousand years. Now back of this eternity, without end, God the Father spans that eternity.

I think **we ought not to teach that there was a time** when

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He produced another being who is called the son. I want to know. The son is called eternal with the Father, another person living with him, a second intelligence in that Deity. The relationship between them is expressed by our human words father and son. The one was first in rank, the second, second, and the third third.

[Lacey reveals much in this extensive retort. He begins by ignoring Wilcox's Law of First Mention that was just discussed in the previous session. "In the beginning" is first introduced by Scripture in the context of the earth's creation. This is the time frame spoken of by Proverbs 8 ("before the hills") and Psalm 90 ("before the mountains"). John 1:1 should therefore pertain to the same beginning of the world. He disallows this, however, by observing that the Greek literally reads "in beginning" and equates this with "absolute" eternity. He then demands that the Son must possess the same eternity as the Father only on the basis that both are called God. He apparently is not satisfied with Prescott's relative co-eternal status but "dares" to insist on their "absolute" co-eternity.]

The private, exclusive nature of the 1919 Bible Conference is then explained: it was explicitly called, according to Lacey, for the express purpose of discussing Trinitarianism. He then plunges into overtly Trinitarian language: the Sun and sunlight explain and, apparently to Lacey, prove the essential co-eternal truth around which Trinitarian doctrine is anchored. This is the same example used by Tertullian and Boardman and denounced by Ellen White just 17 years earlier when dealing with Kellogg's foray into the Trinity. (see above in Part 2)

Lacey accuses Bollman (and Prescott?) of "bringing in...the thought of motherhood" when, in fact, it is he that introduces that language. Bollman clearly described an asexual fission of God's substance as was demonstrated by the Father and Son when they created man in their image by taking Eve out of Adam. This is not being discussed at all. Instead, Lacey unfairly charges him with imposing on God a human means of procreating a Son. Having effectively discredited such straw-man notions, he dismisses God's choice of terminology "Father, Son" as only "human terms" and replaces them with the more favored Trinitarian language: "first and second person of the Godhead." "Father and Son," he claims in presuming to explain God's true intentions, are only used to denote "priority of rank" between them and this is better expressed by using "first and second". But then he resorts to "father and son" because these terms are better at conveying "the love between them." He appeals to the symbolism that God used in calling "Israel my first born" and stating that God would be "a Father" to Israel. This is reverse logic employed with the intent to minimize the Real by maximizing the Type, which is tantamount to sweeping away the reality of Christ's crucifixion by stating that it was no more valid than the symbolic sacrificial offerings of the Old Testament. Then to clinch this argument he boldly states that God's use of "Father and Son" was "Never" meant to imply that God the Father existed before His Son. He implies, once again, that the terms "Father, Son" are merely human terms, used by human writers to convey a human relationship of filial love. Such is the marvelous superiority of the Trinitarian concepts of Divine Love.

Lacey's not through. He next proposes that if the Son was begotten it was just prior to "the beginning" of the world's creation, just a little over 6000 years ago. Then he demonstrates how unreasonable this is by comparing this essentially finite beginning with the Father's very infinite age. This embarrassing discrepancy should be rejected as untenable, he concludes in triumph. He thus rests his case on a series of straw man arguments.]

PRESCOTT: I think it well for us instead of attempting to reason out or to explain these things, to **read a scripture**. I think that will be a better plan than to spend a long time discussing themes, only that we may get the meaning of the scripture. Brother Lacey said eternity is an attribute of Deity. It is proof of the Deity. Now let us see how the scripture deals with it. Hebrews 1. The whole purpose of the chapter is to set forth the exalted character of the Son, and you will observe it is somewhat in harmony with what Brother Lacey has said. "God, having of old times spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom **he appointed heir of all things**, through whom also he made the worlds. (R.V.) **The article is not used**. It is the relationship that is emphasized. The chapter is to tell us of the Son. Here we find that expression, "whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds." "Who being **the affulgence of his glory**," or the **emanation** of his glory, **the raying forth** of his glory, and the very image of his substance, in person.

[Prescott should be commended for his appeal to scripture. He points out that God "appointed" His Son heir. This would be consistent with "appointing" roles, i.e., God appointed him His Son. Of course! The Son was not "born" as a human son. He "proceeded and came out from" God. The Son is the "outshining" of His glory. Just as Moses' face shown with the glory of God. But, obviously, Moses was not co-eternal with the source of that glory.]

This word person

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is one of the evidences of theological controversy that was attempted to be settled by translation. It is the idea of the fundamental. Going on: "Upholding all things by the word of his power." There we have the existence of all things being dependent upon him. Now it goes on in the fifth chapter, verse one, and proves that he is above angels. "Thou art my son. I will be to him a father." Eighth verse: "But of the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." In the tenth verse, "And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish, but **thou continuest**," -a much better word than "remainest." Him it was that continues. That is an eternal presence, simply, "Thou continuest." That is the **attribute of his being as God**. He is called God here in this very chapter. As a sort of evidence of the scriptural teaching that he is God, here is this expression, **Thou continuest, without regard to beginning or end**. In the thirteenth chapter of the same epistle: "He is **the same yesterday, today, and forever**." **When did yesterday commence? Simply yesterday, that's all**. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever." **I think that is parallel with the 90th Psalm**: "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations...**From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God**. I think those statements apply to the same being.

[Prescott introduces but does not pursue the concept of nature's dependence on the Son's existence. This will ultimately lead to the Trinitarian dictum that Christ could not have really died or even left the Father's presence during the incarnation. Prescott, however, features the proclamations by God of "Son" and "Father." Interestingly, he seizes on the word "continuest" as evidence for the Son's "eternal presence." This is admittedly true for continuation into the future after "the works" of his hands perish. But Prescott extends this to continuation into the past by appealing to Hebrews 13:8, observing that "yesterday" commenced "simply yesterday, that's all." Then making it parallel to Psalm 90's "From everlasting to everlasting" he implies that "from everlasting" may also have a relatively recent beginning.]

The same is true in the Book of Deuteronomy the 33rd chapter.

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Deut. 33:28: "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. **The eternal God is thy dwelling place and underneath are the everlasting arms**." There is no revelation of God except in the Son, and here where it says that the eternal God is thy dwelling place, it must be the Son. Underneath are the everlasting arms. The only support that we receive is from Christ, and in Christ. The only knowledge we have of God is through the Son, and the

only relationship we have to God is through the Son. Every revelation of him of every sort whatsoever is through the Son.

[The eternal God is the Father. The everlasting arms is the Son. Prescott seems determined to make the Son equal to rather than equal with the Father on the philosophical conviction that the Son is the only revelation of God. He concludes that since our dwelling place is in the eternal God, and we can only dwell in Christ, therefore Christ must be the eternal God. But just as the Father and the Son both ("we will come" John 16:28) make their abode in us, so we are to be "one in [them]" (John 17:21). He believes that somehow the perfect character revelation mandates an eternal substance equality. In a sense, as the "Rock cut out without hands," the Son is as eternal as the Father from whom he came.]

C.P.Bollman: Do you think that all those expressions there refer not to the Father but to the Son?

W.W.Prescott: They refer to both, but the only revelation of him we have is in the Son, and therefore the Son must be with the Father, co-eternal, and the same expression applies. The Jehovah. Take the word Jehovah. The Jehovah of the Old Testament is manifested in Jesus in the New Testament. It shows in the word itself, as well as in the general teaching. Jehovah-Jesus in Joshua, are the same. Joshua is simply the contraction for Jehovah. (number of root words mentioned) Jehovah manifested for salvation is Jesus, and the Jesus of the New Testament is manifestly a manifestation of the Jehovah of the Old Testament.

[Prescott takes the other extreme and insists that they must refer to both, therefore making both eternal and everlasting. He submits the name Jehovah supports this as it was claimed by both the Jehovah of the OT and Jesus in the NT]

J. Anderson: Did you state that **he derived life from the Father**?

[Referring to Prescott's earlier reading of John 5:26]

W.W.Prescott: No. Simply in the fact that equality with the Father is derived equality, but equality is the same.

[This is equally true for the Son who comes out from the Father. He inherently has the Father "in him." And what the Son "is" is also "in" the Father]

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J.Anderson: I thought you said that **he derived life from the Father**.

W.W.Prescott: No. I used the Scripture statement-John 5:26: "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." But the two expressions referred to must apply equally both to the Father and the Son.

[What is equal is the life. The same immortal, self-existent, eternal, everlasting, original, unborrowed, underived life that is in the Father was "given" by the Father to the Son. Both have the same life. In this, as well as in character, and divine substance they are equal. But not in individuality. They are separate, individual persons with different experiences.]

Question: Simply a difference in what respect-that of rank with the Father?

[This is referring back to Lacey's differences between the persons of the Godhead, which he maintains is only rank, not origin]

W.W.Prescott: He himself says that "**the Father is greater than I**. He also said "**I and my Father are one**." And both are true.

[The paradox of comparative difference and unity. This can only be true if the difference and the unity apply to different attributes. James White, Laughborough, Smith, Waggoner all maintained that the Father was "greater" than the Son in that He was first; whereas the Father and Son are "one" in that they have the same character, love, and purpose.]

J.Anderson: **If he is inferior** in any respect to the Father, **how can he be God?**

[Anderson assumes that "Greater" requires a corresponding "Lesser" which he equates with "inferior." This is not the case when Greater means Older. James the son of Alphaeus was also known as James the lesser or younger.]

W.W.Prescott: I do not think that I used that term "inferior"

J.Anderson: But others may use that word in some instances-that the Son was inferior to the Father, and my inquiry arises that if it were true that Jesus the Son was inferior to any respect-in age, or in nature, or attributes; if that be so, how could he be God?

W.W.Prescott: I would not say that he was. I do not think I used that expression.

H.C.Lacy: Is it not that he is only inferior to the Father in rank-**he is second in rank with the Father**, and in all other respects is equal?

[Anderson and Lacey both fixate on the word "inferior" even though Prescott denies using the term. While Anderson cannot accept anything less than perfect equality with God as qualification to be God, Lacey relaxes the criteria to accommodate an inequality in "rank"]

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W.W.Prescott: We must, of course, in our dealing with the question, take his own statement both ways. When he said, "The Father is greater than I," we deal with that, and when he said, "I and the Father are one," we deal with that. We must have a conception of each one that will allow his own statement, what he himself says, to be true.

Question: As to Christ's preexistence, and the fact that he "emptied" himself.

W.W.Prescott: He was still divine.

Question: The question which comes to my mind is, How could Jesus being God, still be inferior to God?

[They are still preoccupied with "inferior." If "greater than" and "less than" are understood in terms of age, and qualifications for being God recognize His person then there is no conflict. The Son, coming out of the Father has the same God nature, same divinity, but is lesser than the Father who is greater than the Son, being first. This is first in rank by age. Just what constitutes being divine, the definition of divinity is crucial in expressing correctly and understanding rightly the words of Scripture. If divinity is measured by God's primary quality: love-divine love, then the Son is just as much God as the Father if they both share the same infinite love, regardless of age. What texts in Scripture require equal age?]

W.W.Prescott: Yes, I think we must take that into account. I would not use the word contradictory to any expression of the Scripture. That shuts our minds to any understanding. Take the two statements referred to: "I and my Father are one," therefore they took up stones to stone him. What were they going to stone him for? "Because thou being man makest thyself God." He also said, "The Father is great than I," Now to say these are contradictory shuts up the mind to correct comprehension of the truth. We must not say that. We must not use such expressions. We must not ask, How do you reconcile these two? I do not like to hear that expression, because it implies something that needs explanation or is contradictory. The contradiction is not in the word. The only difficulty is in the ability of the finite mind to comprehend all of God. And we

shall always face difficulty. But I try to stay as closely as possible to the Scripture statement, and be careful in the use of words, and I do not try

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to apply to reasoning power that will enable me to explain any Biblical terms. That will be impossible. Rather, as the question rose, as we referred to it this morning, we will get light, not by questioning, but by saying it is so first, then waiting for more. That is the only way we can get it. **We know it is true. We know it is so. We know that what the Scripture says is so; there is no contradiction;** and now wait till we see further light in regard to it. But if we start with the thought that this is contradictory, the Spirit cannot bring light to bear upon it.

H.C.Lacey: Is not the thought, **second in rank**, preferable to the term "inferior"?

[Lacey introduced the term "inferior" and then argues against it! He is still lobbying for "second in rank," placing it in a "superior" position for the group's consideration by pitting it against his own pejorative term "inferior".]

W.W.Prescott: One with the Father, one in authority, in power, in love, in mercy, and all the attributes-equal with him and yet **second in nature**. I like the word "second" better than "inferior,"-**second in rank**.

[What scripture uses this term: "second"? Prescott nicely obscures the issue of age and eternity by hiding it in "all the attributes". He tosses out "second in nature", "inferior." He votes for "second in rank."]

C.P.Bollman: **Subject to the Father**-is not that the meaning of the word?

[He is referring to 1Cor 15:26]

W.W.Prescott: We might speak of many things beyond our comprehension.

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PRESCOTT: Would Brother Wilcox be willing on the last point to state what relation exists between our own view of interpreting scripture and what should be given to what others have taught or written, when we come to the study of Scripture.

[Prescott conveniently dodges Bollman's reference to 1Cor 15 by changing subjects and shifting the floor to Wilcox who shares his personal testimony.]

WILCOX: I would state, so far as my own personal experience is concerned, I have not accepted of any view easily. I was an infidel when this message reached me and did not believe anybody's view of things scriptural. Consequently it was hard for me to embrace the truth-it was hard at that time. But when I gave myself to God I made up my mind I would follow any way he led, and I have taken the statement of others who had gone before. I did not have the time to investigate when I heard the message. But I have found real satisfaction in later years as I have studied the Word for myself to find that my view coincided with theirs-that the view I had accepted was in harmony with the Word of God. I can say so far as I know myself I have never departed or tried to find one single new thing-that was contrary to this great message and movement with which I am connected; but that did come to me came because it seemed the only logical outcome there was from the Scripture itself. I would like to say again I have never found anything yet that I studied earnestly and sought

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God earnestly, and followed all the light I could get in every way-still holding to the Word, **as the early men of the message did**-that had taken me away from the message in any way or made me to look upon it with any less degree of devotion. In fact it has endeared it to me more and more, and I have seen more

and more in it and the men connected with the movement, that has increased my confidence in the message and in its triumph.

On page 97 the questions were now being directed to W.C.Wilcox and his morning presentation on the rules for interpreting prophecy. In the midst of it a question is raised concerning the secondary fulfillment of Joel 2.

J.N.Anderson: I had one little thought in my mind in regard to Pentecost. Now it seems to me that that cannot be fulfilled a second time. I understand (I would like to be corrected if I am mistaken) that the Lord promised to send the Holy Spirit as a third person, coming ten days after the ascension of our Lord. And I understand that person has been in the world ever since that time. Now, that person can never be sent from heaven again, for He has never been withdrawn from the world, so that Pentecost can never be fulfilled again. We cannot say that half of the Holy Spirit came then, and the other half will come later, because the third person was sent then, and has been here ever since.

**[In spite of the fact that Psalm 139 is used by our fundamental beliefs to establish the omnipresence of God by His Spirit, Anderson limits the Spirit to a "person" who is stuck here in the world, hasn't been withdrawn, and so can't be sent again unless "he" returns to heaven to do so. This restrains the capabilities of the Spirit to essentially those of the incarnate Christ when he said that it was "expedient" that he leave, so he could send the Comforter. The original Adventist understanding of the Spirit is that it is not a person as the Father and Son are persons, but rather their personal presence. Thus it can be "poured out", "shed abroad", and sent to "anoint" the people of God on earth as God desires: when, how often, and to what degree He chooses.]**

July 6 afternoon question and answers again brought up the question of Christ's eternity on page 240.

WILCOX: We all believe the deity of Christ. It is not a question as to his deity or non-deity. In all this discussion there is no question regarding this.

FAKEHAM: Would you consider the denial of the co-eternity of the Father and Son was a denial of that deity?

PRESCOTT: That is the point I was going to raise: Can we believe in the deity of Christ without believing in the eternity of Christ?

BOLLMAN: I have done it for years.

PRESCOTT: That is my very point-that we have used terms in that accommodating sense that are not really in harmony with the Scriptural teaching. **We believed a long time that Christ was a created being**, in spite of what the Scripture says. I say this, that passing over the experience I have passed over myself in this matter-this accommodating use of terms which makes the Deity without eternity, is not my conception now of the gospel of Christ. I think it falls short of the whole idea expressed in the Scriptures, and leaves us not with the kind of a Saviour I believe in now, but a sort of human view-a semi-human being. As I view it, the deity involves eternity. The very expression involves it. You cannot read the Scripture and have the idea of **deity without eternity**.

**[Adventists never believed or taught that Christ was a created being. This was denied repeatedly in our publications from the earliest years. Bollman saw no conflict between a belief in the full deity of Christ and an eternal Christ who was begotten, brought forth, "from the days of eternity." Prescott labels this as an "accommodating use of terms." He is now disparaging what he had just advocated (on page 86)-that we accept each statement of Scripture individually.]**

KNOX: I believe all the statements that were made this morning by Elder Prescott concerning the promises that are

given to us through Jesus Christ-that is, the many Scriptures that were read; and I believe that are made sure to us because they are bound up in the Deity of Jesus Christ. I think that we are all agreed in the deity of the Son of God (Amens).

I think also that we ought to remember what Brother Daniells reminded us of this morning, that we cannot by searching find out God-that this is a matter-a subject that will be unfolding all through the days of eternity. And yet I do believe that the Lord has given us glimpses in his Word, which he has intentionally placed there, to draw our minds out into the contemplations of truths concerning God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost.

**["God the Father" is found within God's Word, but "God the Son," and "God the Holy Ghost" are not]**

Now I cannot but believe as Brother Prescott has said, the Deity must be eternal. But the difficulty with me is that I cannot believe that the deity of the Son as a separate existence is eternal. **I believe in the trinity of God**, and I believe that Jesus is God. It says, "Unto us **a son** is born?" and then you remember the names by which he is called-the Everlasting Father-the Prince of Peace-in Isaiah. The same Scripture speaks of him as the Son and as the Everlasting Father.

You remember the Word says that "in the beginning was the Word." Now that has been spoken a number of times, and by it we are carried back through eternity. But the same words are used exactly concerning the existence of matter. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now some time God called the things that we see out of the things that did not appear. I do not suppose there is one here that will contend the co-existence of matter without God. Matter has been called into existence by God; but it was called into existence

"in the beginning," and "in the beginning" was the Word. Now the Word was the agency God used to call matter into existence, for "by him were all things made that were made."

Now again **the servant of God speaks of the Son as the first created being**. I never saw that, and never believed that, but it speaks of him as having sprung from the bosom of the Father. Now the Word also speaks of Levi paying tithes while he was in the loins of Abraham. Now it would have been equally true if the Lord's Spirit had carried the acts of Levi back to the time where he was in the loins of Adam. **From God's viewpoint Levi had existed in the loins of his forefathers from the very beginning of time**, but he did not have a separate existence until he was born.

**[Who is the "servant of God"? Ellen White? She says that the Eternal Father "tore from His bosom" His Son (RH July 9, 1895). Knox then applies Paul's analogy of Levi's pre-existence to that of Christ (Heb 7:9,10)]**

And so Christ, with the Father, and of the Father-and the Father-**from eternity**; and **there came a time**-in a way we cannot comprehend nor the time that we cannot comprehend, when **by God's mysterious operation the Son sprung from the bosom of the Father** and had **a separate existence**.

**[This is almost verbatim to how Uriah Smith described Christ's begetting in Daniel and the Revelation]**

PRESCOTT: I would like to call Brother Knox's attention to this, and ask how on that basis he would deal with John 8:58 "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was born I am." What does "I am" as to our conception of time, mean?

KNOX: His personal existence. **I believe in the eternity of Jesus Christ**. I cannot grasp the eternity of his separate and distinct existence.

Then on July 7 in the morning study, Prescott touches on Proverbs chapter 8 beginning on page 269.

1 Cor. 1:30: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

PRESCOTT: He is made wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption: Then wisdom is a person. The wisdom we must deal with is a personality, and not mere intellectual keenness. The righteousness that we must deal with is a personality, and not a mere abstract idea about goodness. The sanctification that we must deal with is a personality. The redemption that we must deal with is a personality. He is made unto us redemption, He righteousness, He sanctification, He wisdom. It would have been impossible that we should have known such wisdom, such righteousness, such sanctification, such redemption, had not he who from eternity had been God's wisdom (read it in the 8th chapter of Proverbs, which sets Him forth as **wisdom from eternity**), if he had not taken the flesh, otherwise he could not be made to us in sinful flesh, wisdom, sanctification, righteousness, and redemption. If it were sufficient simply to have a treatise on this subject, he might have sent (underlining in original)

[Prescott appeals to Proverbs 8 as evidence that Christ is "from eternity" because as "the wisdom of God" he would have to have existed as long as God has! The personification of Wisdom and righteousness require that they must be eternal attributes of God and if they are identified with Christ, then Christ must be as eternal as God. This is certainly true. He has all the fullness of the Godhead bodily because He came out from God. He has, in that sense, always been with God. But as to his appearance as a separate person, the Agent of creation, the Son, in Proverbs 8, is simply said to be "before the mountains", "before the hills," "before ever the earth was". This suggests a sequential progression in the existence of the Christ: eternally God's Wisdom, then proceeded forth as the begotten and creative Word, the Son of God, who was made higher than the angels as Michael the archangel, finally "in these last days" the Word became flesh, "unto us a child" was born, the Son of man, who died as the Lamb of God, and now ministers as our High Priest after pouring out the gift of his Spirit into our hearts.]

On July 14, Prescott identified who the Holy Spirit was beginning on page 710.

PRESCOTT: Now shall we advance one step farther and call attention to this fact. Read John 15:26: "And when the Comforter is come whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father." This is the spirit of truth. **He is, and announces himself as, the spirit of truth. The spirit of truth is the spirit of Christ. The spirit in Jesus.**

Therefore we read as in Acts 16:6,7: (after this Spirit of truth had been given, speaking of the missionary work of Paul): "And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden of the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; and when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and **the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not.**" Here is the Spirit that guided them in their work, being **called the Spirit of Jesus.**

The whole book of Acts is a revelation "of the things which Jesus continued both to do and to teach." The Gospels are the record of the things he did and taught personally, individually in the body; and **the Book of Acts is the record of the things he continued to do in the person of his disciples who were endowed with his Spirit.**

Now let us turn to John 14:16-"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you forever (17 vs.) even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive." There is that same idea again: Give you another Comforter that he may abide with you forever. Jesus was about to take away from them his bodily presence. He says, "**He (that other Comforter) will abide with you forever.**"

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This is **fulfillment of his promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."** "Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive; because it beholdeth him not; neither knoweth him."

The world deals with visible things. We have to learn to deal with invisible things. These invisible things are clearly perceived in the things that are made. "Ye know him, for he abideth with you and shall be in you. **I will not leave you desolate, I come unto you.**" **The advent of the Spirit is the advent of the Spirit if Jesus Christ [is]-his personal presence.** The impartation of the Spirit is **the impartation of the life of Christ.** "Yet a little while, and the world beholdeth me no more; but ye behold me, because I live, ye shall live also. In that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in me, and **I in you.**"

Now the promise of the Spirit-the Comforter-in the 17th verse was that "**he shall be in you**" which was to be fulfilled "in that day when ye shall know that I am in you." That is the advent of the Comforter, **the advent of this person of Christ in the Spirit-divested now of his humanity to dwell with our humanity.** To get this clear we must take all the Scriptures: "**That Christ may dwell in your heart,**" "Crucified with Christ", "**Christ living in me.**" All these Scriptures that speak of **the indwelling Christ are fulfilled by the indwelling of the Comforter,** and we have just that measure of the indwelling Christ that we have of the indwelling of the Comforter.

But **now he ministers that Comforter, he ministers that life himself,** as found from the second chapter of Acts where it says "he is at the right hand of God, the minister of the true sanctuary of the Lord. He ministered that gift of the Comforter

[Amzaingly, no disagreement is expressed from the group on Prescott's teaching that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus, His personal presence, His life living in us. We should gain great confidence that the power that created the universe and holds the worlds in space is able to save to the uttermost, is able to do far exceedingly abundantly more than we can ask or think, for He who spoke and it stood fast-this same power also works in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. The three persons of the heavenly trio are thus identified: The Father, the Son, the Son's personal presence]

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PRESCOTT: The Bible is just as clear in the statement that God is present everywhere-Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, and whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I descend into hell, lo Thou art there, if I fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, Thou art there, etc. But there is a distinction. It also points out that there is a place where God is and he is not any place else. The Bible teaches both, but I cannot reason them out.

[God is bodily present on His throne as Sovereign Ruler of the Universe in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, but he sends forth His Spirit into all the earth-into all the earths!]

### **Eckenroth's Embarrassment**

The Battle over Begotten continued to be waged primarily in the centers of Adventist education over the following decades. As a new generation of young Adventist pastors were turned out, the history of this issue, its scriptural foundation and the evidence presented by the original leaders of the church was lost. This was certainly the case of young Melvin Eckenroth who experienced first hand the results of this doctrinal generation gap..

Smith's *Daniel and the Revelation* had enjoyed numerous reprintings, unchanged for nearly 70 years. It was being officially promoted by the General Conference as late as 1932.

"That in the operation of our field work we encourage colporteurs to use as far as consistent, the existing books which have formed the backbone of our work in previous years, such as "Great Controversy, "Patriarchs and Prophets", "Desire of Age", "Bible Readings," "Daniel and Revelation" and such medium priced books as are now available, or may be issued in harmony with these recommendations." General Conference Committee Minutes, October 20, 1932

But five years later in 1937 a young Adventist evangelist, Melvin Eckenroth, was publicly embarrassed by a Nazarene preacher in one of his meetings. Quoting from a 1926 edition of Uriah Smith's book, the

Nazarene pastor read in front of the entire audience, "...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..." The implication was that if "standard" Adventist literature was stating that Christ was not equal with the Father's "eternal existence" then we were also teaching that Christ was not equal with the Father's divinity. This was certainly not the case, but Eckenroth was surprised by the accusation and did not know how to defend it.

Eckenroth fired off a letter to LeRoy Froom complaining that Uriah Smith's theology was detrimental to the Adventist cause in its ability to attract converts because the competition was exposing us as a "non-Christian cult." "This was a challenge for which I was totally unprepared," Eckenroth recounted. "My feeble response was, 'Sir, you must be mistaken.'" But when he checked his own copy of "D&R" Melvin was "Amazed, bewildered, and absolutely dumfounded" to read the very same words. (M. K. Eckenroth, letter, as quoted in LeRoy Froom's Movement of Destiny page 625).

Though educated at Emmanuel Missionary College and Andrews University, Eckenroth was amazingly unaware of the original teachings of pioneer Adventists on the begotten Sonship of Christ "from the days of eternity." This is truly astounding in view of the fact that the 1936 Sabbath School lessons were teaching the same thing.

"The direct statement of Jesus, "I came forth from the Father," reads literally, "I came out of the Father." Putting with this, His testimony in John 10:38, "The Father is in Me, and I in Him," we have His personal witness that He truly was "begotten of the Father," as John says in 1:14." SDA Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly, "The Deity of Christ" Lesson 4, October 24, 1936, page 12

"In the few passages we have studied here, we find that Christ was with the Father "before the world was," "from, the days of eternity," "before the foundation of the world," "before all things." He was therefore no part of creation, but was "begotten of the Father" in the days of eternity, and was very God Himself." Ibid, p. 13

These lessons were even approved by the General Conference.

"The outline at the close of each lesson will helpfully guide in the matter; and as the present lessons on doctrines are fully authenticated by the lesson committee of the General Conference Sabbath School Department, any one can know that what he teaches as he presents the lesson as a Bible reading or a sermon is correct." Review and Herald Dec 7, 1936

By the end of the 1930's the last remaining "old guard" pioneers had died and a new generation of Adventist leaders was coming into prominence. General Conference Session Minutes for January 16, 1940 recorded the discussion of editing of Uriah Smith's Daniel and the Revelation:

"The Chairman stated that the matter of the republication of the book 'Daniel and Revelation,' was brought up at the last Autumn Council, and in the discussion it was agreed that if the book were to be republished it should be a project undertaken by all the North American publishing houses, and that the book should be modernized."

But 9 months later nothing had yet been done.

"Consideration was given to the question of the revision and republication of the book "Daniel and Revelation," which was **allowed to go out of print** some years ago. It was reported that **there is a large demand from the field for its republication** in subscription book form." "While it was agreed that we ought to have a book for circulation at the present time on the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, **there was quite a difference of opinion** as to the advisability of attempting to revise this book. After discussion of the arguments offered **in favor of, and opposed to** the republication of the book, it was

VOTED, To refer the matter to the officers of the General Conference and the heads of the three publishing houses for further study." General Conference Session Minutes, October 23, 1940

Obviously there was a dispute over the use of Smith's book. It had long been a popular and profitable book and even yet there was "a large demand" for its continued availability. However, there was also significant opposition to its "republication," so much so that two years later progress on settling the matter was "still in committee"-now a subcommittee!

"The General Conference Committee at the time of the 1940 Autumn Council appointed a committee consisting of the managers of the "three publishing houses and the General Conference Officers, to give attention to the bringing out of a revised edition, which has in turn appointed a committee on the revision of the book. This committee is not yet ready to report." General Conference Committee Minutes, January 1, 1942

The committee came back two weeks later and reported that the original committee was nearly ready to present its recommendations on the production of a revised edition of Daniel and the Revelation. So it was

"VOTED, That we earnestly recommend to the Southern Publishing Association that their edition of "Daniel and Revelation" be withheld from circulation pending decision on the report of the committee appointed at the time of the Autumn Council of 1940." Ibid, January 19, 1942

When the subcommittee finally presented its report in April, it was recommended that

1. The republication of 'Daniel and the Revelation' as a subscription book in a revised Volume.
2. That a special book committee of eleven members on revision, be appointed with representation from the three publishing houses of North America, giving them power to act in revising and preparing the book for publication.
3. That the revised edition of 'Daniel and the Revelation' be published by the three publishing houses.
4. That the proposed revised edition of 'Daniel and the Revelation' take the place of all editions now published."

*General Conference Committee Minutes April 7, 1942*

Warren Eugene Howell, chairman of the committee assigned the task of editing Daniel and the Revelation, included in his report a brief history of the book, noting it had began its life as a series of articles in the 1862 Review and Herald. It was then recorded in the minutes,

"An agreement was entered into at the beginning of the work that in all matters touching doctrine or the rights and privileges of the author, no action would be recorded to be carried out until it could be made unanimous in the committee, and that resolution was carried through, there being unity and harmony throughout the work." Ibid, April 7, 1942.

The committee realized that "any revision of D&R was still a highly sensitive matter" (Movement of Destiny page 424). Nevertheless,

"The next logical and inevitable step in the implementing of our unified "Fundamental Beliefs" involved revision of certain standard works so as to eliminate statements that taught, and thus perpetuated, erroneous views on the Godhead." "The first and most conspicuous of these involved certain erroneous theological concepts that had long appeared in Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation by Uriah Smith, who had died in 1903." LeRoy Froom, Movement of Destiny, page 422-423, 1971

Froom admitted that Smith's book had been "accorded an honored place" in our Adventist history and even "recognized by Ellen White" but then quotes her as the authoritative rationale for removing objectionable content: "she also said that errors in our older literature 'call for careful study and correction.' E.G.White

Ms11, 1910; 1SM, p. 165)" Ibid. Once again, Froom selectively quotes Ellen White. Notice what he did not mention:

"In some of our important books that have been in print for years, and which have brought many to a knowledge of the truth, there may be found matters of minor importance that call for careful study and correction." Ellen White, Ms No. 10, 1910

Are the Godhead and Christ's begotten Sonship to be considered "matters of minor importance" ? It is obvious that LeRoy Froom did not. Nor did the members of the General Conference Committee that debated this issue for over two years. But Ellen White had more to say about these minor matters.

"Let such matters [of minor importance] be considered by those regularly appointed to have the oversight of our publications. Let not these brethren, nor our canvassers, nor our ministers magnify these matters in such a way as to lessen the influence of these good soul-saving books. Should we take up the work of discrediting our literature, we would place weapons in the hands of those who have departed from the faith and confuse the minds of those who have newly embraced the message. The less that is done unnecessarily to change our publications, the better it will be." Ibid. 1910.

While Ellen White's comments here originally pertained to the controversy over "the daily" of Daniel 8, Froom seized on the opportunity for "correction" that it afforded and applied it to the topic of God and His person. But Ellen White's wise advice was ignored.

Fierce debate continued. Froom admits that reaction to the proposed revisions was "rather vehement." Movement of Destiny, p. 424. At the Autumn Council Howell again reported.

"Apparently I did not make clear to all what I said as spokesman for our revision committee on the doctrine of the eternity of Christ. Let me say it more clearly. Our committee had no thought of making a pronouncement on the doctrine for the denomination. But knowing there are some differences of view among us, it was our judgment that it would be better to omit the subject altogether from the book, without comment, and leave the matter open for all to study without let or hindrance." Warren Howell to the Cincinnati Autumn Council of Seventh-day Adventists October 28, 1942

If the intention was truly to take a neutral position on the issue and neither encourage nor hinder "the matter" and leave it "open," then why remove anything? Why not just publish a new book with updated views. Why change what was now part of history? Warren Howell only had 8 months to continue to "make clear" what he had said. He died July 5, 1943. W.H.Branson, General Conference Vice President, took over and finally reported at the 1944 Spring General Conference Committee that it was decided to leave Uriah Smith's views on prophecy unchanged, but his theological views should be eliminated from the book because they were

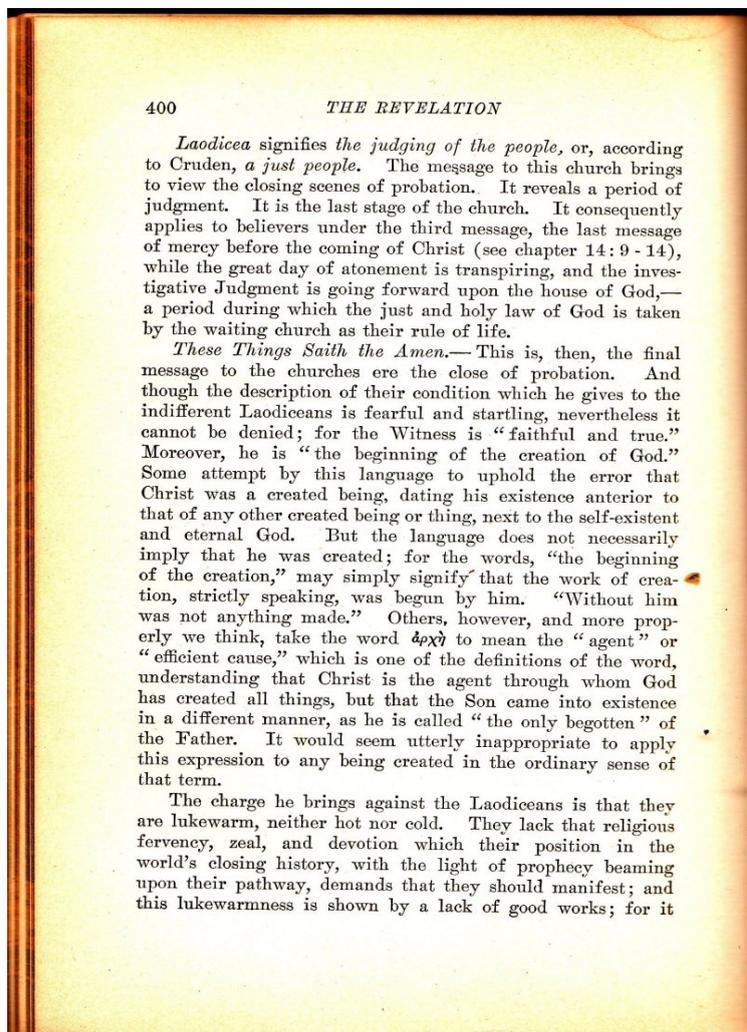
1. not an interpretation of prophecy
2. out of harmony with the fundamental beliefs of Seventh-day Adventism
3. out of harmony with statements from the Spirit of Prophecy

Froom justifies this last point. "These statements [of Ellen White] were all written in the decades following the writing of Smith's book-and especially in the decade after his death. He was therefore not acquainted with them." LeRoy Froom, Movement of Destiny, p. 424. Which statements would these be? Anything after 1903, the year of Smith's death. This would eliminate Desire of Ages and the epitome of expressions "original, unborrowed, underived" which first occurred under Ellen White's name in the 1896 Review and Herald.

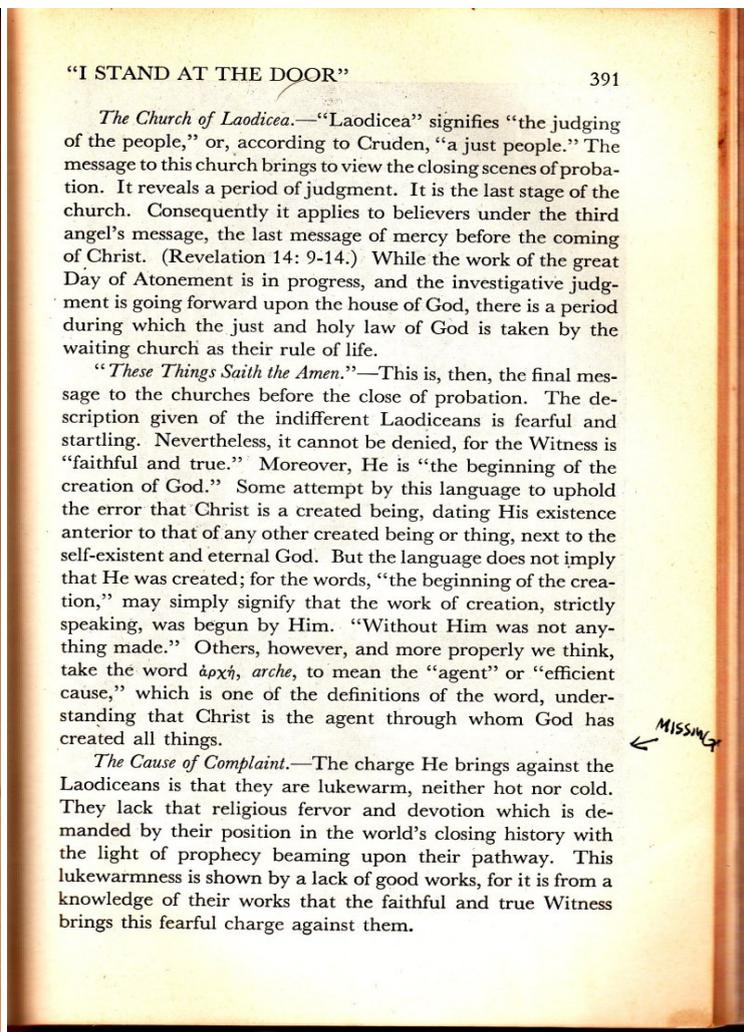
Froom's explanation ignores the continued endorsement of Uriah Smith and his books by Ellen White a decade after his death; it ignores the plea from Ellen White in 1905 that our fundamental beliefs that had

unified us as a people for "the past 50 years" specifically regarding the sanctuary and the personality of God not be abandoned.

After the 1944 editing, Uriah Smith's material in the section of his book commenting on Revelation were reduced by two pages and 710 words. The two pages at the center of the crosshairs were pages 400 and 430 of the pre-1944 editions as shown above with their 1944 counterparts.



1897 Edition



1944 Edition

My grandfather, Joseph Gent, bought an 1897 edition of Uriah Smith's Daniel and the Revelation from a colporteur in the early 1900's. I have scanned the pages as shown here. The 1944 edition belonged to my mother.

The real Uriah Smith expressed his conviction that Christ was not a created being "but that the Son came into existence in a different manner." Of course, "coming into existence" implied a beginning and denied the absolutely eternal existence that was demanded by the teaching of the co-eternal triune God. The updated Uriah Smith of 1944 made no such comments. On the pretense of updating prophetic interpretation and correcting many unintentional plagiarizations, Uriah's "classic D&R" was completely altered (entire pages removed, others added) yet his name still remained on the republished work as if posthumously he had sanctioned the radical changes made by others. With a note of triumph, Froom concludes

**"The removal of the last standing vestige of Arianism in our standard literature was accomplished through the deletions from the classic D&R in 1944." Froom 'Movement of Destiny', page 465, chapter 'Changing the Impaired Image of Adventism', 1971**

Froom makes the mistake of many in hastily branding the foundation of the Christian gospel (that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God" Matt 16:16) as equivalent to the heresy of Arianism (that Jesus was a created being). Smith's belief in the begotten Son of God is not any more Arian than Ellen White's

conviction that Jesus was "the begotten of the Father, tore from His bosom," "brought forth before the mountains were formed or ever the earth was" "not a son created like the angels, or adopted like the sons of men, but a Son begotten."

And which is worse? Including additional words in a book that belong to someone else yet attributing them to the author, or removing words from a book that belong to the author himself? The first indicates that the author is in agreement with the added words; the second would suggest to the uninformed reader that the author denied his original convictions. Such is the result of censorship. It changes history and makes it say something quite different from reality. The prohibition that concludes the last book of Scripture should equally apply here as well: "if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life" Revelation 22:19. Tampering with the original intent of an author's message carries serious consequences.

Again, page 430 of the 1897 edition is largely missing on page 423 of the 1944 edition because here Uriah expands on his belief that Christ, while not a created being, was "begotten of the Father." But even more explicit here he now states that "as the Son he does not possess a co-eternity of past existence with the Father." His reasoning is clearly laid out. Scripture abundantly expresses the many gifts of the Father to the Son. The Father has "given to the Son to have life in himself", "given him a name which is above every name." He has given him authority, all power in heaven and earth, judgment, pre-eminence over all things. See section 1g "The Father has given him all things."

The following year Ministry magazine reported on the real reason for the revisions.

"It is a matter of record that Uriah Smith once believed that Christ was a created being. But later he revised his belief and teaching to the effect that Christ was begotten sometime back in eternity before the creation of the world." Merwin Thurber, 'Ministry' magazine, May 1945, article "'Revised D & R in Relation to Denominational Doctrine'"

A single instance followed by a life time of consistent unwavering conviction in the begotten Son of God. It is also a matter of record that Ellen White once believed in the eternal fires of hell, Sunday sacredness and immortality of the soul. She came out of the Methodist communion and through personal bible study discovered the same truths shared by the other Adventists of her day.

Uriah Smith first presented his belief in the original 1865 edition of *Thoughts on the Revelation*. Thirty years later Ellen White made much the same statement:

"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." Ellen White, *Review & Herald* July 9, 1895

Made? Now there's a word that could be improved. But it would seem that Ellen White already chose "made" as an improvement over a very similar statement she had penned in *Signs of the Times* just two months earlier:

"A complete offering has been made; for "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." Ellen White, *Signs of the Times*, May 30, 1895.

But it appears that Ellen was simply confirming essentially the same statement made by E.J.Waggoner in his book, *Christ and His Righteousness* of 1890:

"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."

Yet, that's not the end of the trail. Waggoner apparently adopted the words of John Gill (November 23, 1697 - October 14, 1771) English Baptist Calvinist who wrote a commentary on the New Testament. His comments on Hebrews 1:5 concerning the phrase "thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee" reads:



John Gill  
Nov 23, 1697 - Oct 14, 1771

"Christ is the Son of God, not by Creation, nor by adoption, nor by office, but by nature; he is the true, proper, natural, and eternal Son of God; and as such is owned and declared by Jehovah the Father, in these words"

There is little difference between "made," and "created" when discussing Christ's origins. But there is a big difference between "created" and "begotten."

Today, however, instead of the begotten "Son of God," Christ is termed "God the Son." He is no longer begotten but co-eternal with the First and Third Persons of the Godhead. Today we are told that many Adventist pioneers held "false doctrine" and "taught error."

"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. Only gradually did this false doctrine give way to the Biblical truth, and largely under the impact of Ellen Whites writings in statements such as "In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. (Desire of ages p 530)" William Johnson, Adventist Review January 6, 1994 Article 'Present Truth - Walking in God's Light', 1994

"Looking Unto Jesus was the last declaration, in book form, of the minority constricted-view concept of our Lord, who is in reality "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The appearance of The Desire of Ages, with recognized authority, is doubtless the reason why there were no further printings of Looking Unto Jesus in North America, and only one small issuance overseas in Australia." LeRoy Froom, Movement of Destiny, p. 323

"These two books ('The Desire of Ages' and 'Looking unto Jesus) both uplifted Christ but were diametrically opposed on the subject of the eternal deity of God the Son" Merlin D. Burt, 1996, Preface to 'Demise of Semi-Arianism and anti-trinitarianism in Adventist theology, 1888-1957

But this was not simply a private matter. They taught it, they preached it, they wrote extensively on it throughout their lifetimes and contemporaneously with Ellen White. She found no fault with Uriah Smith.

"God used the author of this book as a channel through which to communicate light to direct minds to the truth". Ellen White, *Manuscript Releases* Volume one No. 26, page 63, "Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation," MS 174 1899

### **Samuel Spear**

The year after the historic 1888 Minneapolis General Conference, Samuel Spear, pastor of the South Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, New York, wrote an article in the New York Independent which appeared in the religious journal's November 14, 1889 issue under the title "The Subordination of Christ." The article

was reprinted again with the same title in the Signs of the Times over two issues (December 7 and 14) in 1891 and then adapted with some modification and included in the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Students Library as tract No. 90 when it was published by Pacific Press in 1892. But as a pamphlet it bore the title "The Biblical Doctrine of the Trinity."

A superficial analysis by observing that this title included the word "Trinity" in an Adventist publication in 1892 has led many to conclude that Trinitarianism was a widely accepted belief among Adventists at this time.

"The most striking acknowledgment of Trinitarianism" Christy Mathewson Taylor, 1953

"...a Trinitarian article..." Erwin Gane, 1963

"Thus the truth of the Trinity was set forth in tract form..." LeRoy Froom, 1971

"The first positive reference to the term "trinity" in Adventist literature" Merlin Burt, 1996

"The first positive reference to the Trinity in Adventist literature" Gerhard Pfandl, 1999

"...corrected two prevailing misconceptions of the Trinity doctrine" Jerry Moon, 2002

Use of the word "Trinity," however, was common in both major Adventist publications (Review & Herald and Signs of the Times) during the 19th century. But it was routinely used in opposing the doctrine not in support of it. In fact, the Signs described the tract in a May 1894 issue.

"This tract of 16 pages is a reprint of an article in the New York Independent, by the late Samuel Spear, D.D. It presents the Bible view of the doctrine of the Trinity in the terms used in the Bible, and therefore avoids all philosophical discussion and foolish speculation." Signs of the Times, May 28, 1894, 'No.90, The Bible Doctrine of the Trinity'

When the Pacific Press first printed the tract in 1892 it ran this explanation:

"While there may be minor thoughts in this worthy number which we might wish to express differently, on the whole we believe that it sets forth the Bible doctrine of the trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit with a devout adherence to the words of Scripture, in the best brief way we ever saw it presented." Signs of the Times, April 4, 1892, Volume 18, No. 22, page 352

When the original article was run in 1891 it was introduced with the following:

"We call attention to the article entitled "The Subordination of Christ," by the late Samuel T. Spear, taken from the Independent. It was so long that we found it necessary to divide it. We trust that this candid setting forth of the Trinity will be read with care." Signs of the Times, December 7, 1891

The following week provided this endorsement:

"In this number is included Dr. Spear's article on the "Subordination of Christ". To this candid setting forth of the Trinity we believe that no Bible student will object. It is worthy of careful reading, not only for the subject matter it contains but for the way in which it presented." Signs of the Times, December 14, 1891)

Now, let's examine tract No. 90.

"The distinction thus revealed in the Bible is the basis of the doctrine of the tri-personal God.... This doctrine, as held and stated by those who adopt it, is not a system of tri-theism, or the doctrine of three Gods, but is the doctrine of one God subsisting and acting in three persons, with the qualification that the term "person," though perhaps the best that can be used, is not, when used in this relation, to be understood in any sense that would make it inconsistent with the unity of the Godhead, and hence not to be understood in the ordinary sense when applied to

men. Bible trinitarians are not tritheists. They simply seek to state, in the best way in which they can, what they regard the Bible as teaching."

Notice the ellipsis after the first sentence. The Adventist editors chose to not include a significant phrase which did appear in Spear's original 1889 article The Subordination of Christ: "or Tri-une God, which has so long been the faith of the Christian Church." A "Triune God" was not acceptable; it implied an indivisible being that they believed could not be supported by Scripture. Froom in Movement of Destiny p. 323 misquotes Spear as saying "Trinitarians are not tritheists" capitalizing the T to make it appear as if he is quoting the entire sentence.

Erwin Gane in his Masters Thesis for Andrews University, Gerhard Pfandle of the Biblical Research Institute in his 1999 research paper, "The Doctrine of the Trinity among Adventists" (reprinted in the Journal of the Adventist Theological Society, Spring 2006), and Jerry Moon in his 2002 book "The Trinity" also indulged in selectively quoting this paragraph. By not including the first and final two sentences, all reference to the Biblical basis of Spear's argument was conveniently concealed. Spear emphasized that any doctrine of a trinity must be limited to only what is "revealed in the Bible," what one finds "the Bible as teaching." Such individuals are "Bible trinitarians." Spear, however, contrasts and makes a distinction between Bible trinitarians who accept only what Scripture says and Trinitarians who go beyond the Bible to indulge in human speculation and philosophical conjecture.

**"The theory of the eternal generation of the Son by the Father, with the cognate theory of the eternal procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father, or from the Father and the Son, while difficult even to comprehend, and while at best a mystical speculation, is an effort to be wise, not only above what is written, but also beyond the possibilities of human knowledge."**

"It is only when men speculate outside of the Bible and beyond it, and seek to be wiser than they can be, that difficulties arise; and then they do arise as the rebuke of their own folly. A glorious doctrine then becomes their perplexity, and engulfs them in a confusion of their own creation. What they need is to believe more and speculate less."

The Bible, Spear said, reveals certain facts about God which must be harmonized

"These facts - namely, the absolute unity of the God head, excluding all multiplicity of gods, the absolute divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ and the subordination of Christ in some respect to God the Father - when taken together, have led Biblical scholars to consider the question which relates to the method of harmonizing them. What shall be said on this point?"

He then lists several observations the Biblical approach:

2. "So the matter stands in the word of God; and if Christians were to confine their thoughts to simply what that word says, they would never raise any serious questions in regard to the subject, which is, perhaps, on the whole, the best course to pursue"
3. "It is not necessary, for the practical purposes of godliness and salvation, to speculate on the point at all, or know what biblical scholars have thought and said in regards to it. It is enough to take the Bible just as it reads, to believe what it says, and stop where it stops."
4. "All the statements of the Bible must be accepted as true with whatever qualifications they mutually impose on one another. The whole truth lies in them all when taken collectively"
5. "The subordination of Christ, as revealed in the Bible, is not adequately explained by referring it simply to His human nature. It is true that, in that nature, He was a created and dependent being, and in this respect like the race whose nature He assumed; and yet the Bible statement of His subordination extends to His divine as well as his human nature." "There is, however, a sense in which the Christ of the Bible, while essentially divine, is, nevertheless, in some respects

distinct from and subordinate to God the Father. He is spoken of, and frequently speaks of Himself, as the Son of God, as the only-begotten of the Father, as being sent by God the Father into this world, and as doing the will of the Father. He is never confounded with the Father, and never takes His place."

Spear thus confirmed the Bible's presentation of a begotten Son of the Father. This was exactly what Adventists taught during the lifetime of Ellen White. Spear also concluded that the Son is a separate and distinct person "subordinate to God the Father."

"There is no difficulty in finding in His ministry abundant references to God the Father as in some respects distinct from and superior to Himself, and, hence, involving the idea of His own subordination."

"Paul tells us that God "created all things by Jesus Christ," and that He is the person, or agent," by whom also He [God] made the worlds." Eph. 3:9; Heb. 1:2. Neither of these statements can have any relation to the humanity of Christ, and yet in both God is represented as acting in and through Christ, and the latter represented as the medium of such action. So, also, God is described as sending forth His Son into the world, as giving "His only begotten Son" for human salvation, and as not sparing "His own Son" but delivering "him up for us all." Gal 4: 4; John 3:16; Rom 8:32."

"These statements imply that this Son who is none other than Christ Himself, existed prior to his incarnation, and that, as thus existing, He was sent forth, given, not spared, but delivered up, by God the Father. The act assigned to God the Father in thus devoting "His own Son" to the work of human redemption, relates to Him as he was before He assumed our nature in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, and supposes in the Father some kind of primacy in making this devotement."

"The Bible, while not giving a metaphysical definition of the spiritual unity of God, teaches His essential oneness in opposition to all forms of polytheism, and also assumes man's capacity to apprehend the idea sufficiently for all the purposes of worship and obedience."

"The same Bible as clearly teaches that the adorable Person therein known as Jesus Christ, when considered in his whole nature, is truly divine and truly God in the most absolute sense. John 1:1-18; 1 John 5:20; Rom. 1:3, 4; 9:5; Titus 2:13."

Merlin Burt honestly observed that Spear's article-made-tract, despite its new title, was not really Trinitarian.

"The title, Bible Doctrine of the Trinity, implied that the work would be sympathetic to the doctrine of the trinity. Upon reading the tract, one finds almost nothing which nineteenth-century Adventists would have found objectionable." Merlin Burt, 'Demise of Semi-Arianism and anti-trinitarianism in Adventist Theology, 1888-1957', pages 5-6, December 1996

Those who maintain that the majority of 19th century Adventists were Trinitarian understand that Spear was not "objectionable" because his message was in support of the Trinity. But Burt is actually saying that if the tract was sympathetic to the trinity, he would have expected to see 19th century Adventists object to it.

Those who maintain that 19th century Adventism was Arian use this designation to impose on them the belief that Christ was not divine, that the Son of God was created because He appeared at a point in time. But this is not what they believed. Arius strongly insisted that the Son was begotten of God, was a separate person not bound indivisibly with a single being of God. Adventists clearly knew this in 1894.

"To Alexander's opinion that there is but one Deity, who appears sometimes as the Father, and again as the Son, or as the Holy Ghost, or, if not exactly this, that three persons existed in one

God, distinct, and yet of the same substance and the same eternity, Arius rejoined that, although the Son was of the same or like substance, yet he was the off-spring of the Father, and had a beginning." L. E. Kimball, Signs of the Times, June 25, 1894, 'The Arian Controversy'

"But we say and believe, and have taught, and do teach, that the Son is not unbegotten, nor in any way part of the unbegotten; and that He does not derive His subsistence from any matter; but that by His own will and counsel He has subsisted before time, and before ages, as perfect God, only begotten and unchangeable, and that before He was begotten, or created, or purposed, or established, He was not. For He was not unbegotten." Arius quoted in The Ecclesiastical History of Theodoret, Book 1, Chapter 3, 'Letter of Arius to Eusebius of Nicomedia'

### **Judson Washburn**

George Butler's nephew was converted to Seventh-day Adventism by J.N.Andrews at the age of 11, baptized by James White the following year, and entered the ministry in 1884. Washburn was well acquainted with Ellen White, citing his interview with her at Ottawa, Kansas as the turning point of his life. He committed large portions of scripture to memory. By 1918 he could recite Revelation, Romans, James and Second Peter. By 1948 he had memorized the entire New Testament and was starting on Isaiah. In 1921 he wrote a letter to F.M.Wilcox decrying the event as a serious setback to the church.

"You were in that secret Bible Council which I believe was the most unfortunate thing our people ever did, and it seemed to me you were losing the simplicity of your faith." Washburn to F. M. Wilcox, letter July 3, 1921

He repeated the same thoughts in a letter to General Conference President A.G.Daniells the following year.

"Under the authority, and sanction or permission at least of this so called Bible Institute, teachers were undermining the confidence of our sons and daughters in the very fundamentals of our truth, while the parents were not allowed to inquire into the sacred secrets of this private council. . . . One of our most faithful workers said the holding of this Bible Institute was the most terrible thing that had ever happened in the history of this denomination." J. S. Washburn, "An Open Letter to Elder A. G. Daniells and an Appeal to the General Conference," 1922, pp. 28-29

But it was a sermon delivered by W.W.Prescott in 1940 that inspired him to send a lengthy letter to the General Conference directly denouncing the invasion of Trinitarian doctrine into the Adventist Church. Noting that "The doctrine of the Trinity is regarded as the supreme test of orthodoxy by the Roman Catholic Church", he proceeded to state why it should be rejected.

"The doctrine of the Trinity is a cruel heathen monstrosity, removing Jesus from his true position of Divine Savior and Mediator" as well as "Satan has taken some heathen conception of a three-headed monstrosity, and with deliberate intention to cast contempt upon divinity, has woven it into Romanism as our glorious God, an impossible, absurd invention. This monstrous doctrine transplanted from heathenism into the Roman Papal Church is seeking to intrude its evil presence into the teachings of the Third Angel's Message." Judson Washburn, The trinity, Letter to General Conference in 1940

Washburn's main concern was that the Trinity doctrine precluded the actual death of a fully divine Christ.

"Brought up from childhood as a Seventh-day Adventist I am startled, terrified to know that any man claiming to believe this great Truth should hold any doctrine whose logic would cause him to deny the death of the Son of God." Ibid1940

### **The 1947 Longacre Paper**

Charles Longacre was born in 1871. He was intimately acquainted with Ellen White, Uriah Smith and other Adventist pioneers. He was one of six pall bearers selected at Ellen White's funeral. He also attended the 1919 Bible Conference and was a member of the Bible Research Fellowship which was organized in 1940

by the North American Bible Teachers. Under the chairmanship of L.L.Caviness in 1944. He was offered the opportunity of presenting a paper at Pacific Union College on "The Deity of Christ." in January 1947. A sermon on the same subject was presented shortly thereafter at the Takoma Park Church in Washington, D.C.

Longacre began his discourse by presenting the various views of Christ's Godhood. After discussing the two extremes of both an only human Christ and a God the Father Christ, he continued,

"We now come to the third group which hold that Christ was the only begotten Son of God, the Father, and that He was such from the days of eternity and was the only one who proceeded directly from God, being begotten by the Father before all creation, before anything was created in an empty universe. This group hold that the Son of God is equal to the Father, is the express image of the Father, possesses the same substance as the Father, the same life as the Father, the same power and authority as the Father, but that all these attributes were given to the Son of God by the Father, when He was begotten by the Father."

"This group believe that the Son of God existed "in the bosom of the Father" from all eternity, just as Levi existed in the "loins of Abraham," as the apostle Paul said; "And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him." Heb. 7:9, 10." (Charles S. Longacre, The Deity of Christ, paper for the Bible Research Fellowship Angwin, California January 1947, page 3)

He read, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last" Rev 1:11, then commented.

"Not everything has a beginning nor does everything have an ending. God Himself never had a beginning and He will not have an ending. He is the self-existent One, who never had a beginning. Eternity itself never had a beginning and never will have an ending. Space has no beginning and no ending. Everything else had a beginning, but not all things that have a beginning are going to have an end." Ibid, page 4.

"Christ always existed in the bosom of the Father, even before He was Begotten as the Son of God, and God and His prophets counted 'things which are not,' as though they were even before they were manifested. Thus we read that Christ was 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,' and that 'Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot... was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times.' So Christ existed in the bosom of the Father from all eternity but was manifested when He was begotten by the Father as His Son, as the apostle Paul says, 'before all creation.'" Ibid, page 19.

"But Christ, the only Begotten of the Father, made in the "express image" of the Father in person. God not only appointed [Him] to be the Saviour of men, but He appointed Him "heir of all things," "being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said He (God) at any time, Thou art My son, This day have I begotten thee?" Heb. 1:2-5."

"Here we are told that the expression "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten thee," refers only to Christ and not to any of the angels. Then there must have been a time, a day, when the Son of God was begotten by the Father. On that day, the Father saith unto His only Begotten Son: "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever ... therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands." Heb. 1:8-10." Ibid, page 8.

"The Spirit of Prophecy says that there was and still is a difference in rank between God - the Father, and God's Son." We read in Vol. 1 of the old Spirit of Prophecy [p.17] thus: "Satan in Heaven, before his rebellion, was a high and exalted angel, next in honor to God's dear Son." The

implication is that God stands first in honor, His only begotten Son comes next, and Lucifer was next to the Son of God. If God and His Son were co-eternal, co-equal, and co-existent so that there was no difference between them then we should not say Lucifer was next to the Son of God but next to God as well." Ibid, page 9

"Of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, it is said in the Scriptures, "He is the only Begotten of the Father." The Son of God was not created like other creatures are brought into existence. He is not a created but a Begotten Being, enjoying all the attributes of His Father. Christ Himself explains His own relationship to the Father as follows: "As the Father had life in Himself," unborrowed, underived, original, independent, and immortal, "so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself. John 5:26" Ibid page 4.

"God "only hath immortality." He alone is the only self-existent God. But He gave His Son when He was Begotten the same life he had in Himself, therefore when Christ offered His life as a ransom for the sins of the world, He and He only could make an atonement for all the sins of all the world, because he made an "infinite sacrifice," and it required an Infinite sacrifice" to atone for all the sins of mankind and angels who had sinned, in order to satisfy the demands of the law of God and infinite justice."

"Christ had unconditional immortality bestowed upon Him when He was Begotten of the Father. Angels had conditional immortality bestowed upon them when they were created by Christ in the beginning. Angels are immortal but their immortality is conditional. Therefore angels do not die but live on after they sin just as Satan or Lucifer lives on in sin. But since Lucifer and the fallen angels only enjoy conditional immortality, God ultimately will destroy them and take from them the gift of immortality which Christ bestowed on them when He created them. Whatever God bestows he can take away whenever He sees fit." Ibid, page 7.

"What kind of life did the Father have in Himself? In God "is life original, unborrowed, underived," "immortal," "independent." "He is the source of life." Christ says, "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given" - the same life, original, unborrowed, underived life to the Son. It was "given" to Him by His Father. Christ was made the source of life just as the Father was the source of life. Christ had the same life the Father had in Himself in His own right. He did not have to derive or borrow it, it was now original with Christ just as it was with the Father. Christ's life was independent of the Father, hence not dependent, derived, or borrowed. He could bestow and give life and create just as the Father could, but the Father gave this life to His Son." Ibid, page 10.

"When this same life the Father had in Himself was given by the Father to His Son so He too had it "in Himself," we are not told. Nor does it make any difference how long it was before anything was created, the fact remains that the Son of God proceeded from the Father, that He was in the bosom of the Father, that His life, "underived, unborrowed" was "given" to Him by the Father, that the Father "ordained" His Son "should be equal with Himself;" that the Father "invested" His Son "with authority," and that the Son does "nothing of Himself alone." Ibid pages 10-11

"If it were impossible for the Son of God to make a mistake or commit a sin, then His coming into this world and subjecting Himself to temptations were all a farce and mere mockery. If it were possible for Him to yield to temptation and fall into sin, then He must have risked heaven and His very existence, and even all eternity. That is exactly what the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy say Christ, the Son of God did do when He came to work out for us a plan of salvation from the curse of sin." Ibid page 13.

It was this last point that Longacre, like Washburn, saw as the critical factor under attack by the Trinity.

"Our life is finite - His is infinite. Ours is mortal - His is immortal. Our spirit is finite, His is infinite. We cannot take up our life after we lay it down. He could, so long as He did not commit sin. But if he had yielded to temptation and become guilty of sin, - and this was possible - His very existence, his eternal existence and heaven itself was possible of being forfeited. If it was not, then He never took a risk; and we are told He "risked all," even heaven itself, as "an eternal loss." This being so, then His corporeal body was not only put in jeopardy but His Deity. Because, if He could exist as a separate Deity, independent of His corporeal body, after He yielded up His life on Calvary, then He did not risk heaven nor would He have suffered "all" as "an eternal loss."

"Since His spirit did not go to heaven, but the Father committed Christ's spirit to the tomb and it slept with His body in the tomb, and "all that comprised the life and the intelligence of Jesus remained with His body in the sepulchre," we must conclude that if Christ had sinned all that ever belonged to Christ would have forever remained in the tomb and Christ would have suffered the "loss" of His eternal existence. Then God would have taken back to Himself what He gave to His son, namely, the same life He gave His only Begotten Son when He proceeded from the bosom of the Father in the beginning when He became "the First-born before all creation," as Paul puts it." Ibid, page 15.

Longacre was the last proponent of the original Adventist understanding and belief in the begotten Son of God. With his death, the way was made clear to proceed with advancing the orthodox Trinitarian doctrine of one God composed of three separate but equal, co-eternal persons, unbegotten, unproceeding, and unbiblical.

### **Holy, holy, holy**

Ellen White very wisely never used the word Trinity. It has different meanings to different people. To these early Adventists, the Trinity conjured up an amalgamation of three persons in one being. Others, desiring to preserve distinct personages, still used the term but were left with "three Gods." The hymn, "Holy, holy, holy" which was hymn 327 in the Christ in Song hymn book published by the Review and Herald in 1908, ended the first of three verses with "God over all who rules eternity." When the General Conference produced the Church Hymnal in 1941 it included, unchanged, this favorite as hymn number 73. After 44 years, the new 1985 revision, "The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal," still positions "Holy, holy, holy" in the hymn 73 position.

But despite its promise on page 7 that "With great caution, the text committee replaced archaic and exclusive language whenever this could be done without disturbing familiar phrases, straining fond attachments, or doing violence to historical appropriateness," the text committee dramatically changed the wording of number 73. Though the hymn retained its familiar location in the number 73 slot, it received an extreme makeover.

An additional verse was added (which essentially and unnecessarily repeated the first verse) and the ending lines of the first and last verses now contained the starkly unfamiliar wording: "God in three persons, blessed Trinity." Instead of retaining the familiar and original phrase in at least one of these two copycat stanzas, the three-personed Trinity is duplicated for blatant emphasis.

Credit for this apparently intentional insult to over 70 years of Adventist familiarity actually goes to Reginald Heber, bishop of the Church of England, who penned these words in 1826 especially for use on Trinity Sunday of that year. The General Conference text committee favored the use of Heber's original wording and all four of his verses except in verse two.

Heber's original lyrics read: "Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee." From the earliest use of this hymn, Adventists have also modified this verse into the more theologically preferred "Angels adore Thee."

It is lamentable that the ambiguous term Trinity is being so freely used within our literature and hymnals. No damage or insult would have resulted from retaining the original 1908 wording for both verses one and four. "God over all who rules eternity" is true and undisputed by all Bible believing Seventh-day Adventists; it is

not demeaning to Trinitarians, it is not provocative to non-trinitarians. But the "new theology" proponents finally achieved enough support by 1980 after the "Trinity" was officially incorporated into the church's Fundamental Beliefs, that in 1985 it made it into the new hymnal as well. This decision was made in contradiction to Ellen White's advice and example. She cautioned that we should not enter into controversy over the "personality of God." There is no need to say more than what Scripture states.

### **Dallas Doctrine**

In 1980 the General Conference voted to officially adopt an orthodox belief in the Trinity.

"There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three co-eternal Persons."

The Church has spoken. None dare deny its authority. Like the great ecclesiastical powers of ages past, the Advent Movement has solidified its beliefs in rigid dictum, proclaiming to all its adherents the final results of its own erudite investigation.

"The Roman Church reserves to the clergy the right to interpret the Scriptures. On the ground that ecclesiastics alone are competent to explain God's word, it is withheld from the common people. Though the Reformation gave the Scriptures to all, yet the selfsame principle which was maintained by Rome prevents multitudes in Protestant churches from searching the Bible for themselves." Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, page 596, 'The Scriptures a safeguard'

John Wycliff died the last day of 1384. Forty years later his bones were dug up and burned as a final insult to the first translator of the English Bible. Uriah Smith died in 1903. Forty years later his writings were desecrated by those who knew better than he what was best for the Church.

There is a startling parallel between the early Apostolic and early Adventist beliefs. We maintain that, like the original apostles, the pioneer Adventist students of the Bible discovered the same respect for God's immutable moral law, for His holy Seventh-day Sabbath as a memorial of His great creative power, and for the vindication of His character in raising the dead who sleep until the resurrection and letting go of the lost to suffer eternal separation from Him, the only source of life. Both confessed that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Both trusted in the indwelling of his Spirit to give them power to overcome sin and cleanse them from all unrighteousness. Both anticipated this same Jesus who would come in like manner as he went into heaven. Both dared to come boldly through the veil into the sanctuary not made with hands.

While the Advent Movement has championed the restoration of forgotten Biblical truths long obscured by an apostate universal church of the Middle Ages, it should be of paramount concern to church historians in reviewing the development of a radically incompatible doctrine that cannot enhance but must eliminate our original faith in the Son of God. While we are quick to remind the Christian world that they have forgotten the only commandment that begins with "Remember," we now readily embrace their mysterious doctrine of a three-in-one "Blessed Trinity" wishing that the original Adventist belief in the Son begotten be forgotten.

The parallel thus persists between the subsequent development of Trinitarian dogma in both systems of belief. As the apostolic purity of faith eventually succumbed to the doctrines of men under pressure to conform to the majority opinion, so too has the Advent message about God allowed itself to diverge from what it once held in "unanimity" in order to find harmony with the mainstream orthodox masses.

Today, the past history of the early Advent movement and its belief in the begotten Son of God is regarded "like an encapsulated cancer, gross but confined" (LeRoy Froom, *Movement of Destiny* in Biblical Research Institute, *The Sanctuary and the Atonement*, p. 530). "Begotten" is condemned as a bad translation to be shunned and disparaged, rather to be replaced liberally with the much preferred renderings of "unique" and "one of a kind." The Son of God is denied his true divine Sonship and in exchange is offered an honorary title of merely human significance with which to grace his divine "role."

Ellen White had predicted as much. In 1904 she wrote:

"The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error. A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced." *Special Testimonies*, Series B, no. 2, p. 54

### **Modern Adventist Modalists**

Even within Adventism today the modalism of Sabellius is resurfacing. Willing to sacrifice the relationship for the sake of preserving absolute oneness this teaching postulates a single God who simply changes roles as needed:

"In OT revelation, as Yahweh Christ was the Father. In the NT He who was first called 'Father' fulfilled another role in which He is called the "Son." In biblical testimony the same Jesus is both Father and Son, but at different times...The Father and Son do not exist as separate beings, they coexist as one God." V. R. Christensen, *The Trinity Debate*, Part One.

The final battle of Earth will be over worship.

The first angel of Revelation 14 begins with the loud cry to "Fear God!" and "worship Him."

The Son of God is worthy of worship because He is our Creator.

But an usurper is at work to steal away the allegiance of creatures to himself.

He is more subtle than any other creature which God made. Gen 3:1

He is able to transform himself into an angel of light. 2Cor 11:14

He is the god of this world and he has blinded the minds of unbelievers. 2Cor 4:4

His final deception will deceive if possible the very elect. Matt 24:24

He will appear as a lamb (Rev 13:11) and perform many of the same miracles of Jesus. vs. 13,14

He will even resurrect the dead. vs. 15

He will ultimately send for his own spirits to work even more miracles. Rev 16:13,14

The world will be divided. "Orthodox" tradition affirms the majority creed. A small remnant will keep the testimony of Jesus, the Word of God.

"But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority-not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain "Thus saith the Lord" in its support." *Great Controversy*, p. 595.

### **Worshiping the Wrong Spirit**

"The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the beginning of the early, or former, rain, and glorious was the result." "But near the close of earth's harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain; and it is for this added power that Christians are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest 'in the time of the latter rain.' In response, 'the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain.' 'He will cause to come down . . . the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain,' Zechariah 10:1; Joel 2:23." AA p. 54-55

"Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth, there will be, among the people of the Lord, such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon his children. ...The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work; and before the time for such a movement shall come, he will endeavor to

prevent it, by introducing a counterfeit. ...he will make it appear that God's special blessing is poured out; there will be manifest what is thought to be great religious interest. Multitudes will exult that God is working marvelously for them, when the work is that of another spirit. Under a religious guise, Satan will seek to extend his influence over the Christian world.." GC 464; *The Faith I Live By* p. 326

"Spiritualism is now changing its form, and...is assuming a Christian guise... Even in its present form, ...it is really a more dangerous, ...more subtle deception. While it formerly denounced Christ and the Bible, it now professes to accept both. But the Bible is interpreted in a manner that is pleasing to the unrenewed heart, while its solemn and vital truths are made of no effect. Love is dwelt upon as the chief attribute of God, but it is degraded to a weak sentimentalism making little distinction between good and evil. God's justice, his denunciations of sin, the requirements of his holy law, are all kept out of sight." GC p. 558

"Modern spiritualism, resting upon the same foundation, is but a revival in a new form of the witchcraft and demon worship that God condemned and prohibited of old.... Peter, describing the dangers to which the church was to be exposed in the last days, says that as there were false prophets who led Israel into sin, so there will be false teachers, "who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them.... And many shall follow their pernicious ways." 2 Peter 2:1, 2. Here the apostle has pointed out one of the marked characteristics of spiritualist teachers. They refuse to acknowledge Christ as the Son of God. Concerning such teachers the beloved John declares: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father." 1 John 2:22, 23. Spiritualism, by denying Christ, denies both the Father and the Son, and the Bible pronounces it the manifestation of antichrist." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 686.

"There is an emotional excitement, a mingling of the true with the false, that is well adapted to mislead. Yet none need be deceived. ...Wherever men neglect the testimony of the Bible, turning away from those plain, soul-testing truths which require self-denial and renunciation of the world, there we may be sure that God's blessing is not bestowed." *Great Controversy* p. 464

"Counterfeit holiness, spurious sanctification, is still doing its work of deception. ...leading men to follow their own feelings and impressions rather than to yield obedience to the law of God. This is one of Satan's most successful devices to cast reproach upon purity and truth." *Great Controversy* p. 193

"Little by little he [Satan] has prepared the way for his master-piece of deception in the development of Spiritualism. 'I saw three unclean spirits like frogs; . . . they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.' [REV. 16:13, 14.] Except those who are kept by the power of God, through faith in his Word, the whole world will be swept into the ranks of this delusion." *Great Controversy* p. 562

*Early Writings*, page 54:

"Then I saw an exceeding bright light come from the Father to the Son, and from the Son it waved over the people before the throne. But few would receive this great light. Many came out from under it and immediately resisted it; others were careless and did not cherish the light, and it moved off from them. Some cherished it, and went and bowed down with the little praying company. This company all received the light and rejoiced in it, and their countenances shone with its glory."

"I saw the Father rise from the throne and in a flaming chariot go into the holy of holies within the veil, and sit down. Then Jesus rose up from the throne, and the most of those who were

bowed down arose with Him. I did not see one ray of light pass from Jesus to the careless multitude after He arose, and they were left in perfect darkness ... Then a cloudy chariot, with wheels like flaming fire, surrounded by angels, came to where Jesus was. He stepped into the chariot and was borne to the holiest, where the Father sat. . . . Those who rose up with Jesus would send up their faith to Him in the holiest, and pray, "My Father, give us Thy Spirit." Then Jesus would breathe upon them the Holy Ghost. In that breath was light, power, and much love, joy, and peace."

"I turned to look at the company who were still bowed before the throne; they did not know that Jesus had left it. Satan appeared to be by the throne, trying to carry on the work of God. I saw them look up to the throne, and pray, "Father, give us Thy Spirit." Satan would then breathe upon them an unholy influence; in it there was light and much power, but no sweet love, joy, and peace."

Notice that Satan, standing in the temple next to the throne, impersonates not only the Father but the Spirit as well. He responds to the prayers of the people, who think they are praying to God the Father. They ask for God's Spirit, and while they receive "light and much power" it is really Satan's "unholy influence."

Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they might know the Father and Jesus Christ." But, because the Trinity Doctrine creates such a mysterious, incomprehensible concept about the Godhead, Christians have simply quit trying to understand the God they worship. Jesus told the woman at the well, "You worship, you know not what." And because people do not know God, they unwittingly end up worshipping the devil.

This is exactly what Satan has aspired to accomplish. And he seeks to do so by creating a Trinity.

**But, God the Father is Almighty God, the Sovereign of the universe.**

"The Son of God was next in authority to the great Lawgiver." SP vol. 2, p. 9.

"Satan's position in heaven had been next to the Son of God." 1SM p. 341.

"Satan...was next in honor to Christ" Review & Herald Feb 24, 1874.

"He was envious of the position that was held by Christ and the Father." RH Oct 22, 1895.

He wants to be worshipped as God. He wants to "exalt his throne above the stars of God" to be "like the most High" Isaiah 14:13,14. He offered to give the kingdoms of the world to Christ if He would but "fall down and worship me" Matt 4:9. He wants to "exalt himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" 2 Thes 5:4. And he looks forward to the time when "all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him". Rev 13:8

Worshippers of the Trinity doctrine charge those who reject it as blasphemers of the Holy Spirit. But denying a third person of the Godhead is not denying the existence of the Spirit, only its identity. What greater blasphemy is there than to divert homage and worship away from God the Father to another person if there isn't another? Satan is fully prepared to take advantage of those who worship they know not what.

"I saw that Satan was working through agents in a number of ways. He was at work through ministers who have rejected the truth and are given over to strong delusions to believe a lie that they might be damned. While they were preaching or praying, some would fall prostrate and helpless, not by the power of the Holy Ghost, but by the power of Satan breathed upon these agents, and through them to the people... and the people would rejoice in this influence, for they thought it was the Holy Ghost. Some even that used it were so far in the darkness and deception of the devil that they thought it was the power of God, given them to exercise. They had made God altogether such a one as themselves and had valued His power as a thing of nought." *Early Writings* page 44.

1Jn 4:1 Believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits whether they are of God

1Jn 2:22 He is antichrist, that denies the Father and the Son

1Jn 4:3 Every spirit that doesn't confess Jesus...is the spirit of antichrist

## Strange Fire

God speaks of a false fire, a counterfeit that looks like the real thing, but isn't.

- Leviticus 10:1 Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's sons, "offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not"
- vs 2 "And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them.
- Eze 22:26 A conspiracy of prophets...put no difference between the holy and the profane, the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from God's sabbaths.
- vs 30 God sought for a man among them that would make up the hedge and stand in the gap... but He found none. God warns us of the dangers of false worship.

And when the real fire of God, His Holy Spirit is manifest in His Children, the conspiracy of prophets not only rejects it, but attempts to exterminate it.

Acts 7:55 But he [Stephen] being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.

1. Stephen had the Holy Spirit within him on earth
  2. God the Father was seen in heaven
  3. Jesus was seen standing at God's right hand in heaven
- Stephen on earth was united with the Son and Father in heaven by their indwelling Spirit  
The Spirit is God's communication-power connection, His presence at a distance.

- vs 57 Then they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears.
- Rom 10:9 Stephen had just confessed that Jesus is the Son of God and they refused to hear it.
- Acts 7:57 And they ran at him with one accord. The Pharisees and Sadducees were united.

The first time they were united, they succeeded in crucifying Christ.  
This is the second time they are united, and Stephen is stoned.

vs 58 And they cast him out of the city and stoned him.

When God and the Son are in one Accord, Great things happen.  
When God's people are in one Accord, God can do great things thru them for the betterment of all.  
When Satan's people are in one Accord, then someone or something is going to be destroyed.

The medieval Church burned many believers in the Son of God who refused to confess the mystic Trinity.

## Protestant Sola Scriptura vs Catholic Tradition

The Protestant Reformation was based on the belief that the Bible and the Bible only was the rule of faith and practice. This was expressed by the Latin phrase "Sola Scriptura".

The Roman Catholic Church maintained that in addition to Scripture, Church Tradition was vitally important and, because it represented the continued revelation of God's truth, actually had authority over the Bible.

"Because the Trinity is such an important part of later Christian doctrine, it is striking that the term does not appear in the NT. Likewise the developed concept of three coequal partners in the Godhead found in later creedal formulations cannot be clearly detected within the confines of the canon" Oxford Companion to the Bible, ed. Bruce Metzger, OUP, 1993, p. 782.

"The word Trinity is not found in the Bible.... It did not find a place formally in the theology of the church until the fourth century" *Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Intervarsity Press, Tyndale House Publishers, 1980, part 3, p. 1.

Catholic doctrine still claims credit for the development of the Trinity:

"Our opponents sometimes claim that no belief should be held dogmatically which is not explicitly stated in Scripture... But the Protestant Churches have themselves accepted such dogmas as the Trinity for which there is no such precise authority in the Gospels." Graham Greene, "The Assumption of Mary," *Life Magazine*, Oct. 30, 1950, p. 51.

Sadly, we "people of the Book" are fully accepted today by the Mother Church as respectable Christians.

In the early 1950's, evangelical authors Barnhouse and Martin were preparing to publish their book, "Kingdom of the Cults", and interviewed Adventist leaders on their position regarding the Trinity. Faced with the threat of being labeled a "cult", the Seventh-day Adventist Church quickly produced the famous "Questions on Doctrines" in 1958. This book repudiated the anti-Trinitarian stance of the Adventist pioneers and confessed full acceptance of orthodox Trinity doctrine.

About 15 years later another book was published featuring the close doctrinal similarities between the SDA Church and the World Council of Churches entitled, "So much in Common." This acknowledged bond of unity centered on a common acceptance of the Trinity.

"The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit." *So much in Common*, (co-authored in by Bert Beverly Beach, secretary of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and Lukas Vischer, Secretary of the World Council of Churches, published by the WCC in Geneva 1973), p 33.

Four years later, in 1977, Bert Beach was President of the Northern Europe/West Africa Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. At the same time Beach was also serving as Secretary of the World Confessional Families, the theological branch of the World Council of Churches. That same year, on May 18 as Secretary of the World Confessional Families, and meeting in Rome, Italy, Beach presented a medallion to Pope Paul VI. (See Religious News Service (RNS), Foreign Service, May 19, 1977; W.D. Eva, *Adventist Review*, "Book, Medallion Presented to Pope," August 11, 1977, page 23).

Twenty years later, Bert Beach, still a member of the WCC Faith and Order Commission, participated with ten other churches in constructing a common statement on when Easter should be observed. [Item 3](#) of the final document cited "the recovery of the meaning of Sunday" as one of its primary ecumenical concerns.

Actually, B.B.Beach had previously introduced the General Conference "as a world confessional body or church" to the 1969 meeting of the WCC Central Committee in Canterbury, England. His paper, "The World Council of Churches/Seventh-day Adventist conversations and their significance" led to the adoption of a resolution by the General Conference Executive Committee "to place emphasis on the noncontroversial truths shared in common with all Christianity." *Review and Herald*, December 18, 1969, p 16-20.

The WCC includes, but is not limited to: Anglican; Armenian; Assemblies of God; Baptist; Brethren; Christian; Church of God; Disciples; Episcopal; Evangelical Congregational; Evangelical Reformed; Free Evangelical; Free Methodist; Friends (Quakers); Holiness; Independent Baptist; Independent Pentecostal; Lutheran; Lutheran Evangelical; Mennonite; Methodist; Moravian; Nazarene; Old Catholic; Orthodox (Eastern, Oriental); Presbyterian; Protestant Episcopal; Reformed; Roman Catholic; Salvation Army; Seventh-day Adventist; Seventh-day Baptist; Southern Baptist; United Church of Christ; United Methodist; United Missionary; United Presbyterian; Wesleyan Methodist.

The 2002 WCC Central Committee meeting in Geneva, Switzerland published its ["Final Report of the Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the WCC"](#) at the close of the session in September. Appendix A item 35 states that "at WCC gatherings, the revealed and biblical names for God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit - should be used when naming God in common prayer. This trinitarian formulation is central

to the WCC Basis and is therefore commonly held in all member churches." More explicitly, Appendix C section I paragraph 3 details the criteria for WCC membership:

"Churches applying to join the World Council of Churches ("applicant churches") are required first to express agreement with **the Basis** on which the Council is founded and confirm their commitment to the Purposes and Functions of the Council as defined in Articles I and III of the Constitution. The Basis states: "The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of **the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**" (emphasis supplied)

Then in subsection a. item 4 of the same appendix, the WCC Final Report notes:

"The church recognizes the presence and activity of Christ and the Holy Spirit outside its own boundaries and prays for the wisdom of all in the awareness that **other member churches also believe in the Holy Trinity...**" (emphasis supplied)

So it appears that while the WCC requires a confession of "the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit" it does not necessarily proscribe the designation of "Holy Trinity" only a recognition that some of the member churches use this term.

The current [WCC website page](#) for Seventh-day Adventists states that "The Seventh-day Adventist Church is not a member of the World Council of Churches." "They do, however, in many cases have observer, consultant, or advisor status." "Seventh-day Adventists accept the Bible as the inspired word of God. In essence, the Bible is their only creed, though they do have a statement of 28 Fundamental Beliefs... These beliefs include the Trinity, believers' baptism, spiritual gifts, death as an unconscious state until the resurrection, and the New Earth as the home of the redeemed after the millennium." Notice, however, that the Trinity is prominently positioned first in the list.

In 1981, SDA General Conference President, Neal C. Wilson, announced to the General Conference meeting in Dallas, Texas, that the Church had officially adopted the Trinity doctrine, which was now #2 in the Church's "27 Fundamental Beliefs." Wilson said, "There is another universal and truly catholic organization, the Seventh-day Adventist Church," (*Adventist Review*, March 5, 1981, p. 3). The new 28 Fundamental Beliefs in Statement #14 UNITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST says that "This unity has its source in the oneness of the triune God, who has adopted us as His children." Of course, Wilson's use of "catholic" made reference to the "universal" presence of the Seventh-day Adventist church in its world-wide outreach. But the effect of all this conformity to conventional confession has been exactly what the Church so much desired: acceptance.

"Seventh-Day Adventists agree with many Catholic doctrines, including the Trinity...By virtue of their ...belief ...in the doctrine of the Trinity, Seventh-Day Adventists are both ontologically and theologically Christians." Robert H. Brom, Bishop of San Diego, August 10, 2004

The same trinitarian illustrations once used by Boardman in the 1870's are today employed by the Seventh-day Adventist Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly authors:

"What analogies—such as a triangle or a three-pronged fork — can help someone understand the idea of how one God can be composed of three equal Persons?" (The Seventh-day Adventist Lesson quarterly, 2nd quarter 2006 Sunday March 26th page 7)

We have been reduced to comparing the divine Godhead to a "three-pronged fork." This is precisely the denigrating comparisons to earthly things that Ellen White once condemned. "God cannot be compared with the things His hands have made." Evangelism p. 614.

Now we, too, confess the same lack of scriptural support as Rome does in accepting the Trinity doctrine:

"While no single scriptural passage states formally the doctrine of the Trinity, it is assumed as a fact by Bible writers and mentioned several times. Only by faith can we accept the existence of the Trinity." *Adventist Review*, Vol. 158, No. 31, p. 4.

While the existence of the Trinity can only be accepted by faith because there is no single scriptural statement to support it, we make no such allowance for our other fundamental beliefs. Rather than simply accept by faith we defend on the basis of extensive scriptural support our belief in the seventh day Sabbath, the pre-advent investigative judgment, the state of the dead, the inspiration of scripture, baptism by immersion, the literal eminent second coming of Christ, respect for the physical body as a temple for God's Spirit, Tithing, the sanctity of marriage, the perpetuity of God's Eternal Law, etc, etc.

"To hold to the doctrine of the Trinity is not so much an evidence of evil intention as of intoxication from that wine of which all nations have drunk. The fact that it was one of the leading doctrines, if not the very chief, upon which the bishop of Rome was exalted to the papedom, does not say much in its favor... This should cause men to investigate it for themselves, as when the spirits of devils working miracles undertake the advocacy of the immortality of the soul." P.S. Cottrell, *Review & Herald*, July 6, 1869.