

<http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/guidelines/main-guide7.html>

## Guidelines for Engaging in Global Mission

NOTE: The following guidelines were developed by the Global Mission Issues Committee (ADCOM-S) and edited by the Biblical Research Institute. These are the first of a series of guidelines brought to the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Administrative Committee for approval in June and July, 2003. These guidelines are intended to be used, as appropriate, by church administrators, educators, and others when proclaiming the gospel in predominately non-Christian environments. As new guidelines are approved, they will be added in this section.

### 1. Use of the Bible in Mission Vis-à-vis "Sacred Writings"

In building bridges with non-Christians, the use of their "sacred writings" could be very useful in the initial contact in order to show sensitivity and to lead persons along paths which are somewhat familiar. They may contain elements of truth that find their fullest and richest significance in the way of life found in the Bible. These writings should be used in a deliberate attempt to introduce people to the Bible as the inspired Word of God and to help them transfer their allegiance to the biblical writings as their source of faith and practice. However, certain risks are involved in the use of these writings. The following guidelines will help to avoid those risks.

- a. The Bible should be recognized as the teaching instrument and source of authority to be used in leading a person to Christ and to a life of faith in a society where another religion is dominant.
- b. The Church should not use language that may give the impression that it recognizes or accepts the nature and authority assigned to the "sacred writings" by the followers of specific non-Christian religions.
- c. Those using "sacred writings" as outlined above should develop or create a plan indicating how the transfer of allegiance to the Bible will take place.
- d. The nurture and spiritual growth of new believers in non-Christian societies shall be accomplished on the basis of the Bible and its exclusive authority.

### 2. Transitional Organizational Structures

According to Matthew 28:18-20, the mission of the Church has three major inseparable components: 1) The mission should lead people to Jesus as their Saviour and Lord through conversion and baptism; 2) The mission is to incorporate a community of believers, the church, into an environment where they can grow in faith, knowledge, and the enjoyment of a universal fellowship of believers; and, 3) The mission is to nurture and train members as active disciples who recognize and utilize their spiritual gifts to assist in sharing the gospel. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has been founded and organized by the Lord to fulfill that gospel commission. The universal nature of the Church requires the existence of a basic and common organizational structure throughout the world that will facilitate the fulfillment of its mission.

Political and religious conditions in some countries could make it difficult or even impossible for the Church to function within its traditional organizational structure. A transitional organizational structure may be needed. In such cases the following guidelines should be employed to deal with the situation:

- a. The transitional organizational structure would be justifiable under one of the following conditions:
- 1) When new initiatives need to be tested in the mission of reaching resistant or previously unreached peoples;
  - 2) When regular church work and organization is not permitted due to local religious or political circumstances.
- b. Church leaders at the division/union/local field where the transitional organizational structures are being set up should determine the nature of the transitional organization and whether it is appropriate to choose local leadership. They should also define the management of tithe and offerings within the transitional organization.
- c. Workers who are providing leadership in the transitional organization should be personally committed to the doctrinal unity and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and to its worldwide ecclesiastical organization.
- d. New converts should, as soon as possible, be made aware of the fact that they belong to a particular worldwide ecclesiastical community—the Seventh-day Adventist Church—and that it has a particular message and mission to the world.
- e. As soon as it is feasible, the transitional organizational structure should be replaced by the regular church organizational system.

### **3. Fundamental Beliefs and Preparation for Baptism**

#### *Fundamental Beliefs and Non-Christians*

The Statement of Fundamental Beliefs is an expression of the Church's message in language that is meaningful to Christian communities. The challenge is to determine how to make this statement meaningful to societies where Christians are a minority or non-existent. The mission to non-Christians will raise new questions which are not addressed in the Fundamental Beliefs, and relevant biblical answers should be provided. The following suggestions could be of help when addressing this particular issue.

- a. The way the Fundamental Beliefs are presented and the language used to present them must be carefully studied and selected in order to facilitate the comprehension of the Church's message by non-Christians. The development of locally-prepared Bible studies and teaching instruments is to be encouraged.
- b. The task just described should be done at the religious study centers, with the assistance of front-line workers and in consultation with the church community, theologians, missiologists, and administrators.
- c. The religious study center directors should refer local questions and concerns not addressed in the fundamental beliefs to the Office of Global Mission of the General Conference for study.

### Baptismal Guidelines

In the preparation of new converts for baptism and membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, these sequential guidelines must be followed.

- a. A candidate must give clear evidence of a personal experience of salvation by faith in Christ and of a clear understanding of the Seventh-day Adventist message.
- b. A candidate must be guided by the local community of believers until the community can testify that the candidate has reached an adequate knowledge and experience of the Seventh-day Adventist faith.
- c. The Baptismal Vow, as set forth in the *Church Manual*, must be taken as summarizing the minimum required beliefs and experiences for baptism.

### 4. Forms of Worship

As the Seventh-day Adventist Church continues to come into contact with many different cultures in non-Christian countries, the topic of proper worship practices becomes very relevant. In those settings, deciding what is or is not acceptable in a Seventh-day Adventist worship service is important. Calling people to worship the only true God plays a significant role in the message and mission of the Church. In fact, in Adventist eschatology the central element in the closing controversy is the subject of worship and the true object of worship. We should be careful and prudent as we seek ways to contextualize Adventist worship around the world. In this task we should be constantly informed by the following aspects of Adventist worship.

- a. God is at the very center of worship as its supreme object. When we approach God in adoration we come in contact with the very source of life, our Creator, and with the One who in an act of grace redeemed us through the sacrificial death of His beloved Son. No human being should usurp that divine right.
- b. Corporate worship is God's people coming into His presence as the Body of Christ in reverence and humility to honor and give homage to Him through adoration, confession, prayer, thanksgiving, and singing. Believers come together to listen to the Word, for fellowship, for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, for service to all, and to be equipped for the proclamation of the gospel. Our faith invites wholehearted and highly participatory worship where the Word of God is central, prayer is fervent, music is heartfelt, and fellowship in faith is palpable. These elements of worship are indispensable in Adventist worship services around the world and should be part of any attempt to contextualize Adventist worship.
- c. We are complex creatures in which reason and emotions play a significant role. True worship expresses itself through our body, mind, spirit, and emotions. The Adventist Church calls for a proper balance of the involvement of these aspects of our personality in worship. It is important to keep in mind that any element of the worship service that tends to place humans at its center must be rejected. The extent to which the body participates in worship will vary from culture to culture, but whatever is done should be done under discipline and self-control, keeping in mind that the central aspect of the worship service is the proclamation of the Word and its call to serve God and others.

d. Adventist worship should draw on the treasure trove of Seventh-day Adventist theology to proclaim with exuberance and joy the communion and unity of believers in Christ and the grand theme of God's infinite love as seen in creation, the plan of redemption, the life of Christ, His high priestly work in the heavenly sanctuary, and His soon return in glory.

e. Music should be used to praise Him and not as a means to overstimulate emotions that will simply make individuals "feel good" about themselves. Through it worshippers should express their deepest feelings of gratitude and joy to the Lord in a spirit of holiness and reverence. Adventist worship is to celebrate God's creative and redemptive power.

If the need to contextualize the form of worship in a particular culture arises, the guidelines provided in the document entitled "Contextualization and Syncretism" should be followed.

## 5. Contextualization and Syncretism

Contextualization is defined in this document as the intentional and discriminating attempt to communicate the gospel message in a culturally meaningful way. Seventh-day Adventist contextualization is motivated by the serious responsibility of fulfilling the gospel commission in a very diverse world. It is based on the authority of the Scripture and the guidance of the Spirit and aims at communicating biblical truth in a culturally-relevant way. In that task contextualization must be faithful to the Scripture and meaningful to the new host culture, remembering that all cultures are judged by the gospel.

**Intentional contextualization of the way we communicate our faith and practice is biblical, legitimate, and necessary. Without it the Church faces the dangers of miscommunication and misunderstandings, loss of identity, and SYNCRETISM. HISTORICALLY, ADAPTATION HAS TAKEN PLACE AROUND THE WORLD AS A CRUCIAL PART OF SPREADING THE THREE ANGELS' MESSAGES TO EVERY KINDRED, NATION, TRIBE, AND PEOPLE. THIS WILL CONTINUE TO HAPPEN.**

**AS THE CHURCH ENTERS MORE NON-CHRISTIAN AREAS, THE QUESTION OF SYNCRETISM--THE BLENDING OF RELIGIOUS TRUTH AND ERROR--IS A CONSTANT CHALLENGE AND THREAT.** It affects all parts of the world and must be taken seriously as we explore the practice of contextualization. This topic is highlighted by the Seventh-day Adventist understanding of the great controversy between good and evil which explains Satan's mode of operation--distorting and compromising truth, not by denying it, but by mixing truth and error, thus robbing the gospel of its true impact and power. In this context of danger and potential distortion, critical contextualization is indispensable.

Since the effects of sin and the need for salvation are common to all humanity, there are eternal truths that all cultures need to know, which in some cases can be communicated and experienced in different and yet equivalent ways. Contextualization aims to uphold all of the Fundamental Beliefs and to make them truly understood in their fullness.

In the search for the best way to contextualize, **WHILE AT THE SAME TIME REJECTING SYNCRETISM**, certain guidelines must be followed.

- a. Because uncritical contextualization is as dangerous as non-contextualization, it is not to be done at a distance, but within the specific cultural situation.
- b. Contextualization is a process that should involve world Church leaders, theologians, missiologists, local people, and ministers. These individuals should have a clear understanding of the core elements of the biblical worldview in order to be able to distinguish between truth and error.
- c. The examination of the specific cultural element would necessitate an especially careful analysis by cultural insiders of the significance of the particular cultural element in question.
- d. The examination of all the Scripture says about the issue or related issues is indispensable. The implications of scriptural teachings and principles should be carefully thought through and factored into proposed strategies.
- e. In the context of reflection and prayer, scriptural insights are normative and must be applied to the specific cultural element in question. The analysis could lead to one of the following results:
  - 1) The particular cultural element is *accepted*, because it is compatible with scriptural principles;
  - 2) The particular cultural element is *modified* to make it compatible with Christian principles;
  - 3) The particular cultural element is *rejected*, because it contradicts the principles of Scripture.
- f. The particular cultural element that was accepted or modified is carefully implemented.

**g. AFTER A PERIOD OF TRIAL IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO EVALUATE THE DECISION MADE AND DETERMINED WHETHER IT SHOULD BE DISCONTINUED, MODIFIED, OR RETAINED.**

In the end, all true contextualization must be subject to biblical truth and bear results for God's kingdom. The unity of the global Church requires regular exposure to each other, each other's culture, and each other's insights that "together with all the saints we may grasp the breadth, length, height, and depth of Christ's love." Eph 3:18



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12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904, USA 301-680-6000

## SYNCRETISM

### **Definition of SYNCRETISM - Webster**

- 1: the combination of different forms of belief or practice
- 2: the fusion of two or more originally different inflectional forms
  - **syn·cre·tist** *noun or adjective*
  - **syn·cre·tis·tic** *adjective*

### **Origin of SYNCRETISM**

New Latin *syncretismus*, from Greek *synkrētismos* federation of Cretan cities, from *syn-* + *Krēt-*, *Krēs* Cretan

First Known Use: 1618

### **From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia**

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For the linguistic term, see [syncretism \(linguistics\)](#).

**Syncretism** /'sɪŋkrətɪzəm/ is the combining of different, **OFTEN SEEMINGLY CONTRADICTORY BELIEFS**, while melding practices of various [schools of thought](#). Syncretism involves the merger and [analogizing](#) of several originally discrete [traditions](#), especially in the [theology](#) and [mythology](#) of [religion](#), **THUS ASSERTING AN UNDERLYING UNITY AND ALLOWING FOR AN INCLUSIVE APPROACH TO OTHER FAITHS**. Syncretism also occurs commonly in expressions of arts and culture (known as [eclecticism](#)) as well as politics ([syncretic politics](#)).

### **From Catholic Encyclopedia**

(1) Syncretism is sometimes used to designate the fusion of [pagan religions](#). In the East the intermixture of the civilizations of different nations began at a very early period. When the East was hellenized under Alexander the Great and the Diadochi in the fourth century B.C., the Grecian and Oriental civilizations were brought into contact, **AND A COMPROMISE TO A LARGE EXTENT EFFECTED**. The foreign [deities](#) were identified with the native (e.g. Serapis = Zeus, Dionysus) and a fusion of the cults succeeded. After the Romans had conquered the Greeks, the victors, as is known, succumbed to the culture of the vanquished, and the ancient Roman religion became completely hellenized. Later the Romans gradually received all the [religions](#) of the peoples whom they subdued, so that **ROME BECAME THE "TEMPLE OF THE WHOLE WORLD"**. Syncretism reached its culmination in the third century A.D. under the emperors [Caracalla](#), [Heliogabalus](#), and [Alexander Severus](#) (211-35). The countless cults of the Roman Empire were regarded as unessential forms of the same thing—a view which doubtless strengthened the tendency towards [Monotheism](#). [Heliogabalus](#) even sought to combine [Christianity](#) and [Judaism](#) with his religion, the cult of the sun-god. Julia Mamaea, the mother of [Alexander Severus](#), attended in Alexandria the lectures of [Origen](#), and Alexander placed in his *lararium* the images of Abraham and Christ.

(2) A modern tendency in the history of [religions](#) sees in the Biblical [revealed religion](#) a product of syncretism, the fusion of various religious forms and views. As regards the [Old Testament](#), the [Chanaanite](#) myth, the [Egyptian](#), Old [Babylonian](#), and Persian [religions](#) are regarded as the sources of

Israelitic religion, the latter itself having developed from Fetichism and Animism into Henotheism and Monotheism. It is sought to explain the origin of Christianity from the continuation and development of Jewish ideas and the influx of Brahmanistic, Buddhist, Græco-Roman, and Egyptian religious notions, and from the Stoic and Philonic philosophy; it is held to have received its development and explanation especially from the neo-Platonic philosophy. That Judaism and Christianity agree with other religions in many of their external forms and ideas, is true; many religious ideas are common to all mankind. The points of agreement between the Babylonian religions and the Jewish faith, which provoked a lively discussion some years ago after the appearance of Friedrich Delitzsch's "Babel und Bibel", maybe explained in so far as they exist (e.g.) as due to an original revelation, of which traces, albeit tainted with Polytheism, appear among the Babylonians. IN MANY CASES THE AGREEMENT CAN BE SHOWN TO BE MERELY IN FORM, NOT IN CONTENT; IN OTHERS IT IS DOUBTFUL WHICH RELIGION CONTAINED THE ORIGINAL AND WHICH BORROWED. AS TO THE SPECIAL DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE SEARCH HAS BEEN VAINLY MADE FOR SOURCES FROM WHICH THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN DERIVED. CATHOLIC THEOLOGY HOLDS FIRMLY TO REVELATION AND TO THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIANITY BY JESUS OF NAZARETH.

#### **The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald Articles (1879-1904)**

Another of the most zealous of the peacemakers was John Matthias a Swedish bishop, who with George Calixtus, attempted to carry on the work of Duraeus. But the opposition was so bitter that Matthias was obliged to resign his bishopric; **CALIXTUS WAS ACCUSED OF SYNCRETISM, AND TO HIS "CHARGE MANY OTHER THINGS WERE LAID, BESIDES THE CRIME OF ENDEAVORING TO UNITE THE DISCIPLES OF THE SAME MASTER IN THE AMIABLE BONDS OF CHARITY, CONCORD, AND MUTUAL FORBEARANCE."**—Id. par. 7. This "crime" was called syncretism. {June 24, 1884 ATJ, ARSH 403.5}

#### **The Origin and Growth of Sunday Observance in the Christian Church – Waggoner, Joseph Harvey (1820 – 1889)**

"At first Constantine, like his father, in the spirit of Neo-platonic syncretism of **DYING HEATHENDOM**, revered all the gods as mysterious powers, especially Apollo, the god of the sun, to whom, in the year 308, he presented munificent gifts. Nay, so late as the year 321, he enjoined the regular consultation of the soothsayers in public misfortunes, according to ancient heathen usage; even later, he placed his new residence, Byzantium, under the protection of the God of the martyrs and the heathen goddess of fortune; and down to the end of his life he retained the title and dignity of Pontifex Maximus, or high priest of the heathen hierarchy. **HIS COINS BORE ON THE ONE SIDE THE LETTERS OF THE NAME OF CHRIST, ON THE OTHER SIDE THE FIGURE OF THE SUN-GOD, AND THE INSCRIPTION, SOL INVICTUS.**" {1889 JHW, OGSO 26.4}

On this point in regard to Constantine's Christianity after he professed it, the "Religious Encyclopedia" says:- {1889 JHW, OGSO 26.5}. **"THE NOTION OF CONVERSION IN THE SENSE OF A REAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE NEW RELIGION AND A THOROUGH REJECTION OF THE OLD, IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE HESITATING ATTITUDE IN WHICH HE STOOD TOWARD BOTH.** Much of this may indeed be due to motives of political expediency, but there is a good deal that cannot be so explained. Paganism must still have been an operative belief with the man who, almost down to the close of his life, retained so many pagan superstitions. He was at best only half heathen, half Christian, who could seek to combine the worship of Christ with the worship of Apollo, having the name of the one and the figure of the other impressed upon his coins, and ordaining the observance of Sunday under the name of dies solis in his

celebrated decree of March, 321, though such, a combination was far from uncommon in the first Christian centuries. Perhaps the most significant illustration of the ambiguity of his religious position is furnished by the fact that in the same year in which he issued his Sunday decree, he gave orders that if lightning struck the imperial palace, or any public building, the haruspices, according to ancient usage, should be consulted as to what it might signify, and a careful report of the answer should be drawn up for his use." {1889 JHW, OGSO 26.6}

### **In defense of the Faith – Branson, William Henry (1887 – 1961)**

"Sun worship, however, became increasingly popular at Rome in the second and third centuries A. D. The sun god of Emesa in Syria-Deus Sol invictus Elagabalus-was exalted above the older gods of Rome by the emperor Marcus Aurelius, A. D. 217, taking the name Elagabalus]. Who, as his priest, was identified with the object of his worship. **IN SPITE OF THE DISGUST INSPIRED BY THE EXCESSES OF THE BOY PRIEST, AN IMPULSE WAS GIVEN TO THE SPREAD OF A KIND OF 'SOLAR PANTHEISM,' WHICH EMBRACED BY A PROCESS OF SYNCRETISM THE VARIOUS ORIENTAL RELIGIONS AND WAS MADE THE CHIEF WORSHIP OF THE STATE BY AURELIAN.**"-Stuart Jones, Companion to Roman History, p. 302. {1933 WHB, DOF 176.1}

### **The Conditionalist Faith of Our Forefathers, Volume I**

#### **2. STRANGE MEDLEY OF BORROWED ELEMENTS**

**THE GNOSTIC MOVEMENT WAS A SYNCRETISM, A COMPOSITE OF VARIOUS BORROWED ELEMENTS.** It drew its concepts from pagan philosophies and Oriental mythologies, as well as Jewish cabalistic sources, and, as mentioned, finally drafted upon certain Christian terms and teachings. It combined the esoteric philosophy of Egypt with the deadly Dualism common to Zoroastrianism, old Babylonianism, Platonism, and even the Jewish cabala. And it drafted upon the Brahmic concept of successive emanations from the Absolute Being -- **THESE EMANATIONS BEING THE WORKINGS OF THE ETERNAL ONE, SUPPOSEDLY OVERFLOWING FROM THE CENTRAL BEING, WITHOUT DECREASING THE REALITY OR THE FULLNESS OF THAT SOURCE.** {1966 LEF, CFF1 855.2}

#### **1. ORIGIN, CHARACTERISTICS, AND AMAZING SPREAD**

The early phenomenal spread of true Christianity awakened the opposition of all pagan religions from the Indus to the Euphrates. But when Gnostic Christianity was introduced into Persia, Zoroastrianism was on the decline. MANES, or Mani (c. A.D. 216-276), was born in Persia. **PERCEIVING POINTS OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN MITHRAISM, PARSIISM, BUDDHISM, AND GNOSTIC CHRISTIANITY, HE CONCEIVED THE IDEA OF BLENDING ORIENTAL PAGAN DUALISM, THE CHIEF TEACHINGS OF PARSIISM, OR MAGISM AS REFORMED BY ZOROASTER, WITH THESE NEW GNOSTIC-CHRISTIAN ELEMENTS.** Christianity must first be freed from alleged Jewish corruptions, for he believed the Jews were worshiping darkness instead of light. **THEN THIS SYNCRETISM WOULD BE CLOTHED IN BIBLICAL PHRASEOLOGY, THUS TO PRODUCE THE PERFECT UNIVERSAL RELIGION.** 15 It was a grandiose scheme. {1966 LEF, CFF1 867.5} Manes began the public teaching of his views in the Persian court about A.D. 240, but Zoroastrianism soon forced him into exile. Reaching Western China, he went from there down into India, where he became better acquainted with Buddhism and decided to incorporate its best points in his expanding syncretism. **THE "CHRISTIAN" ELEMENT WAS BY NOW REDUCED TO A HOLLOW SHELL, STRIPPED OF ALL REALITY AND DIVESTED OF ALL TRUE INTENT, SIMPLY RETAINING CERTAIN CHRISTIAN TERMS. IT WAS A CRUDE, UNHOLY ALLIANCE, BUT MANES PROPAGATED IT FAR AND**

**WIDE.** And Manes, it should be stated, was finally put to death by being flayed alive. {1966 LEF, CFF1 868.1}

**THE WILMETTE TEMPLE IS A COMBINATION OF MOSQUE, CATHEDRAL, AND SYNAGOGUE.** It is nonagonal in form, its structural number being nine-having nine piers, nine pillars (symbolizing the nine living religions of the world), and nine arches. It is situated in a park with nine sides, nine avenues, nine gateways, and nine fountains. 38 **It is designed to visualize the "oneness" of the great religions of the world, and of mankind, merged through Bahd'ism. It holds that all are of God.** By entering any one door of the temple and walking straight forward, one meets at the center under a great dome all others who enter by the other doors. **BAHA'ISM IS THUS A SYNCRETISM ASSERTING THE "UNITY OF ALL RELIGIONS."** Moreover, on two of the nine sides of the temple the words are inscribed, "The earth is but one country; and mankind its citizens-I have made Death a Messenger-of-joy, wherefore doest thou grieve." 39 That affords an inkling of its emphasis. {1965 LEF, CFF2 1226.2}

#### **How the Spirit of Prophecy Met a Crisis – Spicer, William Ambrose (1865 – 1952)**

"Prophecies are being fulfilled, and stormy times are before us. Old controversies which have apparently been hushed for a long time will be revealed, and new controversies will spring up; new and old will commingle, and this will take place right early.... {1934 WiAS, HSPMC 6.1}

"Intensity is taking possession of every earthly element . While a new life is being diffused and is springing up from beneath and taking fast hold of all Satan's agencies, preparatory to the last great conflict and struggle, a new light and life and power is descending from on high, and taking possession of God's people who are not dead, as many now are, in trespasses and sins."-Special Testimonies for Our Ministers, No. 1 (of a series of envelope-size booklets.) {1934 WiAS, HSPMC 6.2}

Older workers will well remember the awakening influence of this instruction in those early nineties. But we little realized than how near to us was this revival of "old controversies," and this commingling of "new and old." Nor did we foresee the nature of the peril. **TRUE, THE PHRASES SUGGESTED JUST SUCH CONTROVERSIES AS DISTURBED THE ANCIENT CHURCH IN NEW TESTAMENT DAYS. WE CATCH THE EARNEST NOTE OF ANXIOUS WARNING AGAINST SUCH COMMINGLING OF NEW AND OLD IN THE APOSTLE PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.** (In fact in later messages to us from the Spirit of prophecy we were urged: "Read Paul's exhortation to the Colossians.") {1934 WiAS, HSPMC 6.3}

The history of the early church makes very clear what that subtle philosophy was that tried to fasten itself upon the church of apostolic times. These very Colossians, warned by Paul, were face to face with this deceptive commingling of old and new. One historian says: {1934 WiAS, HSPMC 6.4}

**"WE HAVE IN COLOSSAE THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF THAT SYNCRETISM [COMMINGLING] OF ORIENTAL THEOSOPHY AND CHRISTIAN FAITH WHICH IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER CHARACTERIZED ALL THE GНОSTIC SYSTEMS OF THE SECOND CENTURY. IT WAS NOT A MERE FORM OF JEWISH CHRISTIANITY WHICH PAUL ATTACKED IN HIS EPISTLE, BUT A SUPERIMPOSITION OF JEWISH AND HEATHEN ELEMENTS...UPON THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND LIFE."**-History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age, p. 369, McGiffert. {1934 WiAS, HSPMC 6.5}

This early attack upon the Christian movement was, says another writer, "Christianity perverted by learning and speculation."-Early Church History, p. 73, Gwatkin. {1934 WiAS, HSPMC 6.6} The perversion of the terms of Christianity itself in the systems of error that sought to take over the control and teaching in the church made the attack the more dangerous . The very phrases and truths of the gospel

were perverted, and that, too, in the name of Christianity. To quote only one more writer on this period: {1934 WiAS, HSPMC 7.1}

"If indeed the tumult in men's minds had been of a nature wholly hostile to the Gospel, they might perhaps have allowed it to exhaust itself by its own struggles; but that which rendered it peculiarly dangerous was the false appearance it assumed of relationship to the Christian movement. Christian truth was imperiled by the inability of many minds to distinguish the radical difference in the two currents of ideas." -History of Christian Theology in the Apostolic Age, Vol. 1, P.326, Reuss. {1934 WiAS, HSPMC 7.2}

**THIS WAS THE MIXTURE OF SPIRITUALISTIC HEATHEN PHILOSOPHY WITH CHRISTIAN TRUTH THAT SOUGHT TO CAPTURE A DOMINATING PLACE IN THE EARLY APOSTOLIC CHURCH. AND NOW TO OUR OWN CHURCH OF THE NINETIES, THERE CAME THESE EARNEST WARNINGS THAT OLD, OLD CONTROVERSIES, LONG SILENT, WOULD BE REVIVED, NEW CONTROVERSIES WERE TO SPRING UP; "NEW AND OLD WILL COMMINGLE, AND THIS WILL TAKE PLACE RIGHT EARLY."** {1934 WiAS, HSPMC 7.3}

What face this revival of old controversies would present we knew not. We could only pray that while new life and power were springing up from beneath, we might be sharers in the "new light and life and power" descending from on high to prepare God's people for the times before us. There was an awakening power in these messages to ministers and people and to General Conference leaders in those years. As one of the young men at headquarters-as secretary of the Mission Board-I well remember how the leading brethren of that time called us to consecration and earnest preparation for a time of crisis that was drawing near for the advent movement. {1934 WiAS, HSPMC 7.4}

In those same years also-the message was read to us in the Battle Creek tabernacle, in 1893-earnest instruction came from over sea, saying that the Lord was in earnest about the repeated counsels that had been given concerning so many believers moving in about the general headquarters. This tendency to gather in centers was contrary to the gospel plan of diffusing the light. No more Jerusalem centers did the Lord want on earth we were told, but a devoted people living the truth in many places where the light was needed. We were told that the presence of so many not needed at the institutions there was imperiling the very institutions; and if it continued, the Lord would allow the institutions themselves to be laid in ruins. {1934 WiAS, HSPMC 7.5}

So, in the early nineties, came very earnest and definite counsels from over the sea. We were to see the meaning of these cautions in the years to come. We were to see our two largest institutions in ruins, and round that same time, also, we found ourselves involved in conflict with old controversies revived. {1934 WiAS, HSPMC 8.1}

## MUSIC AND MUSIC SABBATH

### Vatican 2 Main Agenda: Opening Remarks

“ What is needed at the present time is a new enthusiasm, a new joy and serenity of mind in the unreserved acceptance by all of the entire Christian faith, without forfeiting that accuracy and precision in its presentation which characterized the proceedings of the Council of Trent and the First Vatican Council. What is needed, and what everyone imbued with a truly Christian, Catholic and apostolic spirit craves today, is that this doctrine shall be more widely known, more deeply understood, and more penetrating in its effects on ”

men's moral lives. What is needed is that this certain and immutable doctrine, to which the faithful owe obedience, be studied afresh and reformulated in contemporary terms. For this deposit of faith, or truths which are contained in our time-honored teaching is one thing; the manner in which these truths are set forth (with their meaning preserved intact) is something else. -Blessed Pope John XXIII (Opening address to the Council)

THE THREE ANGELS MESSAGE PART: MUSIC AND MUSIC SABBATH: The third angel's message: COME OUT OF HER THAT YOU MAY NOT RECEIVHER HER MARK. Many have asked the part of music in the 3 Angels Message. If you look what liberals call music in the church of Laodicea is not music at all but imitation of the world inside the Church. We have taken what is outside and brought inside in the name of not loosing members (youths). While we know rhythm denoted movement, the movement that we should have is the movement of God which is revealed in the character of God. When we do that, a melody which emanates from the word of God is put in our heart and what it produces is Spiritual Music. Ephesians 5:18-20. Colossians 3:15-17. Now, according to Paul the melody (Spirit/Word of God) should fill your heart and while meditating upon the Spiritual things it creates music in your heart. I wonder how you can be filled with Spirit in dancing and bedlam of noises that were at Mount Camel and still think you are worshiping the Lord. In fact the music we have apart from what our pioneers had is music that draws rebellion instead of bringing harmony in what we have learnt as Adventists. What the Israelites had learnt from Egypt (world) was what they were exercising and when Moses came from the Mount the Bible records Ex 32:18-19: "And he said, It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome: but the noise of them that sing do I hear. And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount". So Moses calls their music NOISE and the next thing he sees is DANCING. That was enough to make him break the tablets. Friends another thing that will confuse us in the end-times is music. Either your melody (walking) is guided by God which produces reverence of worship before God or it's guided by the Adversary which produces sensation and amusement and entertainments instead of reverence in the House of God. Instead of SDA's copying what is in the world, we should come back to purity of reverence in worship. The Catholic Church under Pope John XXIII (Latin: Ioannes PP. XXIII; Italian: Giovanni XXIII), born Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli (25 November 1881 – 3 June 1963), headed the Catholic Church and ruled Vatican City from 1958 until his death. He sat down and thought a way of getting the SDA's in the world and they didn't get one but they came up with what we call celebrations. In a precise language this is what we can call Music Sabbath and they slid it in the SDA church unnoticed and it has taken root in that it's on that day that you can get members in church till sunset while the churches are fully parked. Now this is the what the Bible records Number 25:1-3 "And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices (music and dancing) of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel." What seduced the children of Israel at Shittim was Moabites music which was contrary to the music Israel had been taught. The chief sinners! Zimri (Musical) and Cozbi (Deceitful), an Israelite and a Moabite both from chief families; in this place DECEITFUL MUSIC was combined to draw the Children of God into whoredom. Now do you know where Shittim was!!!!!! Just some miles to Canaan and the children of Israel got lost and were made to wonder in the desert. Brothers and Sisters we are at a spiritual Shittim

(last steps) just about to a Spiritual Canaan (Heaven). The Music Sabbath was a creation of man thought to be founded on Biblical principles on how the 12 tribes could meet together for Special Sabbaths to revive a sense of togetherness and unity. But we have to ask ourselves, when did it start and how has been its impact on the church. For even 21 years after the reorganization of church, before the death of the prophetess, they did not exist. The many funny things we see in SDA will make pioneers roll in the grave and they started after Vatican 2 1929 after the wound of the beast started healing to pull down adventism. God warned Israelites about copying from other nations. Things may be brought in with good intentions in fact with good men but in the end it will just prove hazardous, take example of "Women Ministry" which has now turned into "Women in Ministry" and now the church has been driven to conflict of ordaining women. It has resulted in split with the Northern Division and from the result, we have lost innocent souls which may never be recovered just because the church took upon something from the world which was not studied carefully its aftermath. Who predicted such a thing! Let's hear what the servant of the Lord says:

### **Excerpts from NL - A New Life [Revival and Beyond] (1972)**

#### **Drums, dancing, and noise**

The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, [NOTE: REFERENCE IS HERE MADE TO THE "HOLY FLESH" MOVEMENT OF 1900-1901. SEE SELECTED MESSAGES, BOOK 2, PAGES 31-39.--WHITE TRUSTEES.] The Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit. {NL 50.4} The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, in such a bedlam of noise. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time. A bedlam of noise shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright might be a blessing. The powers of Satanic agencies blend with the din and noise, to have a carnival, and this is termed the Holy Spirit's working. Those participating in the supposed revival receive impressions which lead them adrift. They cannot tell what they formerly knew regarding Bible principles. {NL 51.1}

#### **Bodies out of control**

No encouragement should be given to this kind of worship. The same kind of influence came in after the passing of the time in 1844. The same kind of representations were made. Men became excited, and were worked by a power thought to be the power of God. They turned their bodies over and over, like a carriage wheel, claiming that they could not do this except by supernatural power. There was a belief that the dead were raised and had ascended to heaven. The Lord gave me a message for this fanaticism; for the beautiful principles of Bible truth were being eclipsed. {NL 51.2}

#### **Nudity**

Men and women, supposed to be guided by the Holy Spirit, held meetings in a state of nudity. They talked about holy flesh. They said they were beyond the power of temptation, and they sang, and shouted, and made all manner of noisy demonstrations. These men and women were not bad, but they were deceived and deluded. Satan was moulding the work, and sensuality was the result. The cause of God was dishonored. Truth, sacred truth, was leveled in the dust by human agencies. {NL 51.3} The authorities of the land interfered, and several of the ring leaders were incarcerated within prison walls. By those who were confined in prison this interference was termed persecution for the truth's sake, and

thus truth was clothed with garments spotted with the flesh. . . . I presented the reproof of the Lord regarding this kind of work, showing that its influence was making the truth objectionable and disgusting to the community. . . . {NL 52.1} I bore my testimony, declaring that these fanatical movements, this din and noise, were inspired by the spirit of Satan, who was working miracles to deceive if possible the very elect. [LETTER 132, 1900. (PORTIONS IN SELECTED MESSAGES, BOOK 2, PP. 36, 37.)] {NL 52.2}

### **Confusion**

We need to be on our guard, to maintain a close connection with Christ, that we be not deceived by Satan's devices. The Lord desires to have in His service order and discipline, not excitement and confusion. [SELECTED MESSAGES, BOOK 2, P. 35.] {NL 52.3} Wild, clamorous "cries" and exercises are no evidence that the Spirit of God is at work. [REVIEW AND HERALD, MARCH 5, 1889.] {NL 52.4}

### **Order versus impressions and feelings**

There are many restless spirits who will not submit to discipline, system, and order. They think that their liberties would be abridged were they to lay aside their own judgment and submit to the judgment of those of experience. The work of God will not progress unless there is a disposition to submit to order and expel the reckless, disorderly spirit of fanaticism from their meetings. {NL 52.5} Impressions and feelings are no sure evidence that a person is led by the Lord. Satan will, if he is unsuspected, give feelings and impressions. These are not safe guides. All should thoroughly acquaint themselves with the evidences of our faith, and the great study should be how they can adorn their profession and bear fruit to the glory of God. [TESTIMONIES, VOL. 1, P. 413.] {NL 53.1}. Simple advise "Come out of her my people, touch no unclean thing, and i will receive you. I will be a Father unto you and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord of all Hosts, the Almighty God". Fear God and give Him glory for the hour of His judgment is come, not its coming. Something is so wrong and someone need to stand in the gap.

### **Call instrumental music to your aid**

Music can be a great power for good; yet we do not make the most of this branch of worship. The singing is generally done from impulse or to meet special cases, and at other times those who sing are left to blunder along, and the music loses its proper effect upon the minds of those present. Music should have beauty, pathos, and power. Let the voices be lifted in songs of praise and devotion. Call to your aid, if practicable, instrumental music, and let the glorious harmony ascend to God, an acceptable offering.--Ev 505. {PaM 179.2} THERE IS SOMETHING PECULIARLY SACRED IN THE HUMAN VOICE. IT'S HARMONY AND ITS SUBDUED AND HEAVEN-INSPIRED PATHOS EXCEEDS EVERY MUSICAL INSTRUMENT. VOCAL MUSIC IS ONE OF GOD'S GIFTS TO MEN, AN INSTRUMENT THAT CANNOT BE SURPASSED OR EQUALED WHEN GOD'S LOVE ABOUNDS IN THE SOUL. SINGING WITH THE SPIRIT AND THE UNDERSTANDING ALSO IS A GREAT ADDITION TO DEVOTIONAL SERVICES IN THE HOUSE OF GOD. {VSS 425.1}

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There are many in the church who at heart belong to the world, but God calls upon those who claim to believe the advanced truth, to rise above the present attitude of the popular churches of today. Where is the self-denial, where is the cross-bearing that Christ has said should characterize His followers? The reason we have had so little influence upon unbelieving relatives and associates is that we have manifested little decided difference in our practices from those of the world. Parents need to awake,

and purify their souls by practicing the truth in their home life. When we reach the standard that the Lord would have us reach, worldlings will regard Seventh-day Adventists as odd, singular, strait-laced extremists. "We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." {FE 289.1}

## THE PATHFINDERS CAMPOREE, FLAG-RAISING AND MARCHING



### ***Pathfinder Beginnings***

Who started Pathfinders? The short answer is that no one person did, but rather that a diverse group of youth-focused, God-loving, ministry-minded individuals in various locations created "Pathfinder-like" clubs in various locations that eventually grew into the ministry we now know as Pathfinders.

The [Seventh-day Adventist Church](#) affiliated [Pathfinders](#) organisation was created as the **MISSIONARY VOLUNTEER SOCIETY** in 1907. It was known as MV, JMV and AJY over the next few years, before adopting the name Pathfinders for the first time in 1927. Although it may appear to be focused on camps, its history also has the concept of service and self-achievement as features.

The first Pathfinder Club of record was in Anaheim, California directed by John McKim and Willa Steen. This club began in the late 1920's and ran through the 1930's. In 1944 McKim died and the Steens had moved. In 1930 Lester and Ione Martin with co-directors Theron & Ethel Johnston began a club in Santa Ana, California.

Both of these first clubs were in the Southeastern California Conference and encouraged by Youth Director Elder Guy Mann and his associate Laurance A. Skinner. For several years there were no clubs of record.

In 1946 John H. Hancock, then the youth director for Southeastern California Conference got a club going in Riverside, California. John designed the Pathfinder triangle emblem and got a ministerial student, Francis Hunt to direct the club. Both John and his wife Helen Hancock taught honors.

By 1947-48 Southern California Conference began having Pathfinder clubs - the first at Glendale, with Lawrence Paulson as director. About that same time, the Central California Conference, under the direction of Youth Director Henry T. Bergh, began their Pathfinder program -- starting 23 clubs that first year.

Beginning with the God-directed program, called Pathfinder Clubs, in California, the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist church adopted the program. It thus, in 1950, became an official worldwide organization of the Adventist church, and grew rapidly.

Pathfinders is now a global ministry affecting thousands (if not millions) of young people worldwide.

**Aim:** The Advent Message to All the World in My Generation

*Explanation: My relationship to Jesus Christ is of such a nature that it compels me to share with any who will receive it, the gospel—the good news of His soon return.*

**Motto:** The Love of Christ Compels Me

*Explanation: I am drawn to Him by His exemplary life, the symbolic act of His crucifixion, His conquering resurrection, and His promise of an earth made new in the pattern of the original creation. The closer I find myself to Him, the closer I find myself identifying with the needs of my fellow human beings.*

**ACTIVITIES INCLUDE COMMUNITY SERVICE, CAMPING, CRAFTS, CLASSWORK, MARCHING, BIBLE STUDY, SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH HISTORY, AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING.**

### **Timeline**

Main article: [Pathfinders \(Historical Timeline\)](#)

- 1907 - Missionary Volunteer (MV) Society (forerunner of the Adventist Youth) was founded
- 1928 - At Southern California's first youth camp in San Gabriel Canyon, Arthur Spalding first challenged youth to be "Pathfinders" like John C. Fremont, early California explorer, and like David Livingston, missionary to Africa.
- 1928 - "Pathfinder" first used as name of a summer youth camp, near Julian, in Southeastern California
- 1946 - The first conference-sponsored Pathfinder Club, in Riverside, California
- 1946 - Pathfinder Club emblem designed by John H. Hancock
- 1949 - Henry T. Bergh composed the Pathfinder song

# Women Ministry or Women in Ministry

## Prove All Things: A Response to Women In Ministry

### Chapter 14 *Great Flying Leaps* (Part 2):

#### The Use of Ellen G. White's Writings in Women in Ministry

Larry Kirkpatrick

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#### Equality, Headship, and Submission in the Writings of Ellen G. White

Turning our attention to another chapter, we now consider "Equality, Headship, and Submission in the Writings of Ellen G. White." The contributors to Women in Ministry offer sometimes contradictory solutions in their attempt to solve the considerable problem of getting Ellen White to "fit" their theology of women's ordination. One example of this is the issue of headship before the Fall. In one solution, the book proposes that Adam and Eve "fully shared" in headship before the Fall.<sup>32</sup> This novel position could be called "initial co-headship." Other contributors to the book suggest that Ellen White understood that before the Fall there was no explicit headship.<sup>33</sup> But do either of these solutions mesh with the writings of Mrs. White?

The evidence presented in support of the initial co-headship view is that Adam and Eve were created equal, of the same nature, and that they were to "have no interest independent of each other," and were made so that "in all things she should be his equal."<sup>34</sup> Another evidence suggested is that God initially gave dominion to Adam and Eve together, and that this dominion was shared.<sup>35</sup> But this solution is too clever. The author has introduced a substantial distortion of the new human social structure, before sin had even entered into the world.

This strange proposal leaves the first human family with two heads and no body. If both were heads, then who or what were they head over? The animals? No, the Bible says they were to exercise dominion over the animals. To exercise headship over the animals would logically include animals in the body; yet animals are not made in God's image, only people are. The author does not discuss animals in relation to headship. But a head that is connected to no body has no headship. This theory leaves the reader in a logical trap. Paul would ask, "And if they were all one member, where were the body?" (1 Cor 12:19).

Eve was made "of the same nature"<sup>36</sup> as Adam. She was made to be Adam's equal "in all things." Yet

sameness of nature and equality in all things does not require uniformity in roles. The very fact of their complementary individuality is strong evidence that heaven designed that they fill specialized roles. Indeed, the same document from which the author draws the quotation that "in all things she should be his equal" repeatedly points the reader back to Eve's misguided aspirations from before the Fall, in order to warn modern Eves against receiving the same temptation.<sup>37</sup> If God wanted absolute sameness He could have simply photocopied Adam on the spot.

As we already noted, another contributor to the book holds that there simply was no headship before the Fall. One of the main Ellen White statements applying directly to the results of the Fall is presented as if proving that headship only came at the point of the Fall.<sup>38</sup> Using this quotation, the author affirms that the husband's rule over his wife "grows out of the results of sin."<sup>39</sup> But this is incorrect. As we will note below, the pre-Fall gender-differentiated role of "protector" assigned uniquely to the male of that holy pair has been ignored. In contrast to the mutually exclusive theories presented in Women in Ministry, Ellen White holds a third view that cannot be harmonized with either.

That the divine plan from before the Fall included unique roles for each one of the Edenic pair is clear in the writings of Ellen G. White. She wrote plainly that Eve was to be loved by Adam "and protected by him."<sup>40</sup> The husbandly role of "protector" repeatedly recurs when Mrs. White writes regarding marital relations.<sup>41</sup> James White saw himself in this role.<sup>42</sup> Adam is presented not only as "protector," but also as "the father and representative of the whole human family"<sup>43</sup> Had Ellen White meant that this applied to Eve as well, she could easily have said so. We needn't force the idea of role interchangeability into the statement that Eve "was his second self."<sup>44</sup> The "second self" statement occurs when Ellen White points out that Eve was "a part of man, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh,"<sup>45</sup> a truth both before and after the Fall. Adam's role as "protector," emanating from the period before the Fall, is echoed in similar statements.

Not only was Adam to function as Eve's protector, but he was "to maintain the principles of the heavenly family."<sup>46</sup> The maintenance of God's arrangement as it was before the Fall "would have brought peace and happiness. But the law that none `liveth to himself' (Romans 14:7) Satan was determined to oppose. He desired to live for self. He sought to make himself a center of influence. It was this that had incited rebellion in heaven, and it was man's acceptance of this principle that brought sin on earth."<sup>47</sup>

It was while Eve was operating independently from her husband that disaster entered. Ellen White points out that Eve was at fault in not staying with her husband.<sup>48</sup> She also points out that when Eve approached Adam, he immediately understood that the situation was a ploy of the enemy about whom they had been warned.<sup>49</sup> Adam was saddened because he had not adequately maintained his protective headship role.<sup>50</sup> Had they been together, the ensuing 6000 years likely would have been altogether different for humankind.

When had the male been designated head of the human family structure? "In the beginning, the head of each family was considered ruler and priest of his own household. Afterward, as the race multiplied upon the earth, men of divine appointment performed this solemn worship of sacrifice for the people."<sup>51</sup> What was Ellen White's understanding? Not that Adam and Eve shared initial co-headship, nor that neither was head before the Fall, but simply that Adam was the head of his family.

It seems apparent that the authors of Women in Ministry are driven to solutions that require great flying

leaps of logic that leave them scattered all over the board. It is no cutting-edge hermeneutical system that takes them to their conclusions but instead a subset of fragmentary and sometimes mutually exclusive notions.

## Ellen White and Women's Rights

In "Ellen White and Women's Rights," another writer addresses herself to a significant statement by Ellen White in which she wrote that "those who feel called out to join the movement in favor of woman's rights and the so-called dress reform might as well sever all connection with the third angel's message."<sup>52</sup> The author's conclusion?

In the end, the woman's movement was secular, driven by political activities, and continually searching for ways to capture the support of public opinion. The focus of Ellen White was spiritual, driven by holy living and reform that advanced personal and corporate holiness. She wanted a religious, not political, reform movement.<sup>53</sup>

With this we agree. But the author's conclusion that "it seems likely she [Mrs. White] would support women's ordination"<sup>54</sup> appears strained. How does she get there? On the basis of a great flying leap.<sup>55</sup>

The author takes up the passage and works through it phrase by phrase in an endeavor to derive "principles" from her study. But has she blended in any biases of her own? Although Ellen White insisted that "the spirit which attends the one [women's rights movement] cannot be in harmony with the other [the third angel's message],"<sup>56</sup> the author contends that "because today's ordination issue is not associated with secular, political, religious, or social reform movements such as those in the nineteenth century, this principle does not relate as it did when Ellen White wrote."<sup>57</sup> Instead, she has turned Mrs. White's statement around to its opposite meaning, to the point that she can assert "it seems likely she would support women's ordination."<sup>58</sup> How could Mrs. White support women's ordination unless the spirit which attends the one were indeed in harmony with the other?

Today's ordination issue is very much associated with secular, political, religious, and social reform agendas. Its first field of battle was the secular and the political turmoil of the nineteen seventies. It entered Christendom through denominations and religious structures that, a century and a half earlier, had willfully rejected the third angel's message. These bodies have continued to experience biblical disorientation. A certain element within contemporary Christendom has now absorbed these old issues and taken them up as their own cause. Where have we gotten the bug as a church? Not even from the world, but as an echo from the interest in women's ordination that is current in the fallen churches.

Another plank in the author's discussion is Ellen White's statement that "the Scriptures are plain upon the relations and rights of men and women."<sup>59</sup> The author follows with a detailed search of the Ellen G. White CD-ROM for the word "rights." While the results are interesting, she has inadvertently sidestepped a number of significant statements by Ellen White showing instances of Mrs. White's actual understanding of what she considered to be the plain teaching of Scripture. Let's consider some of Ellen White's own applications of the fact that "the Scriptures are plain upon the relations and rights of men and women":

In early times the father was the ruler and priest of his own family, and he exercised authority over his children, even after they had families of their own. His descendants were taught to look up to him as

their head, in both religious and secular matters. This patriarchal system of government Abraham endeavored to perpetuate, as it tended to preserve the knowledge of God.<sup>60</sup>

This reference makes plain the headship function of the male. This headship was not restricted merely to the immediate family, or just to the secular sphere, but encompassed also the religious sphere. Furthermore, this "patriarchal system of government" tended to preserve the knowledge of God.

The Lord has constituted the husband the head of the wife to be her protector; he is the house-band of the family, binding the members together, even as Christ is the head of the church and the Saviour of the mystical body. Let every husband who claims to love God carefully study the requirements of God in his position.<sup>61</sup>

Here headship is again linked with protection. When the male fulfills the headship role, he acts as a family binder. He is carefully to study the requirements of God in his position. Immediately after this statement, Mrs. White observed that "Christ's authority is exercised in wisdom, in all kindness and gentleness; so let the husband exercise his power and imitate the great Head of the church."<sup>62</sup>

The husband is the head of the family, as Christ is the head of the church; and any course which the wife may pursue to lessen his influence and lead him to come down from that dignified, responsible position, is displeasing to God. It is the duty of the wife to yield her wishes and will to her husband. Both should be yielding, but the Word of God gives preference to the judgment of the husband. And it will not detract from the dignity of the wife to yield to him whom she has chosen to be her counselor, adviser, and protector. The husband should maintain his position in his family with all meekness, yet with decision.<sup>63</sup>

Here once more we find the husband in the headship role, the partner uniquely foremost in filling the "protector" role. A careful balancing act is evident here between the wife's duty to yield and a husband's filling his role with meekness yet decision. A relationship is indicated in which "both should be yielding," and there is a beautiful sharing between the married couple. No indignity is incurred by a wife who yields to the one whom she has chosen to fill the husbandly role.

How can husband and wife divide the interests of their home life and still keep a loving, firm hold upon each other? They should have a united interest in all that concerns their homemaking, and the wife, if a Christian, will have her interest with her husband as his companion; for the husband is to stand as the head of the household.<sup>64</sup>

When Mrs. White mentions that "the wife, if a Christian, will have her interest with her husband," she reminds us that being a wedded couple is not about each party's seeking their rights. Instead, each party will have his or her interest with the spouse. There is to be a "united interest" in all that concerns "their" homemaking. Homemaking is not an exclusively feminine task. The male, in filling his headship role, also contributes to homemaking. After all, "he is the house-band of the family, binding the members together."<sup>65</sup>

The husband and father is the head of the household.<sup>66</sup>

In the above and many of the other citations that we have considered, Ellen White frequently links

fatherhood with headship. An examination shows that often Ellen White has mentioned the children of the household in connection with the father's role. It seems that Mrs. White had no problem applying her understanding that "the Scriptures are plain upon the relations and rights of men and women."

Two letters to a pastor's wife over the space of some years further demonstrate Ellen White's specific application of the scriptural principles we have been considering. John and Mary Loughborough worked steadily to advance the third angel's message through the years. Even so, the household was occasionally the scene of domestic imperfections. Unfortunately, the manner in which Mary related to her husband was becoming a matter of comment, and Mrs. White wrote to her to suggest a personal adjustment:

You have sought to please your friends altogether too much, and if you would have eternal life you must cut loose from relatives and acquaintances and not seek to please them, but have your eye single to the glory of God, and serve Him with your whole heart. This will not wean you from your husband at all, but will draw you closer to him, and cause you to leave father, mother, sisters and brothers and friends and cleave to your husband, and love him better than anyone on earth, and make his wishes your wishes. And you can live in harmony and happiness. . . . God has given the man the preference, he is the head, and the wife is to obey the husband, and the husband is not to be bitter against the wife, but love her as his own body. Dear sister, I saw that you were not half given up to God, not half consecrated to Him. Your will was not swallowed up in the will of God. And you must get ready, fitted and prepared for Christ's coming, or you will come short, be weighed in the balance and found wanting. You must be more devoted to God, more in earnest about your soul's salvation and eternal interest. I saw that if you would labor with your husband for God, you would not lose your reward. That is, labor to have him free and not lay a feather in his way, but cheer, encourage, and hold him up by your prayers.<sup>67</sup>

Seven years later, we again find counsel in this vein offered to Mary:

Dear Mary, let your influence tell for God. You must take a position to exert an influence over others to bring them up in spirituality. You must guard yourself against following the influence of those around you. If others are light and trifling, be grave yourself. And, Mary, suffer me a little upon this point.

I wish in all sisterly and motherly kindness to kindly warn you upon another point. I have often noticed before others a manner you have in speaking to John in rather a dictating manner, the tone of your voice sounding impatient. Mary, others notice this and have spoken of it to me. It hurts your influence.

We women must remember that God has placed us subject to the husband. He is the head and our judgment and views and reasonings must agree with his if possible. If not, the preference in God's Word is given to the husband where it is not a matter of conscience. We must yield to the head. I have said more perhaps upon this point than necessary. Please watch this point.

I am not reproving you, remember, but merely cautioning you. Never talk to John as though he were a little boy. You reverence him and others will take an elevated position, Mary, and you will elevate others.

Seek to be spiritually minded. We are doing work for eternity. Mary, be an example. We love you as

one of our children and I wish so much that you and John may prosper. Be of good courage. Trust in the Lord at all times. He will be your stronghold and your deliverer.<sup>68</sup>

These personal letters give clear insight into Ellen White's perception of how the "rights and relations" between men and women, presented so plainly to her in Scripture, were to be applied. One senses here no preoccupation with rights but with the simple translation of Scriptural principles into practical godliness.

In contrast to Ellen White, the author devotes fully a third of her chapter to the issue of "rights."<sup>69</sup> Could it be that her intense focus upon this aspect has led to a misguided analysis? Ellen White seems more concerned about humility than rights:

A study of women's work in connection with the cause of God in Old Testament times will teach us lessons that will enable us to meet emergencies in the work today. We may not be brought into such a critical and prominent place as were the people of God in the time of Esther; but often converted women can act an important part in more humble positions.<sup>70</sup>

Clearly, the end-time emphasis of God's people will not be upon women's rights, but upon the third angel's message.

The author later adds that "the women's rights movement as a movement, not the favoring of women's rights, was the problem."<sup>71</sup> Of course, Ellen White was not against the legitimate rights of women, but she was focused upon giving the last message of mercy to the world. The very idea of Mrs. White's following in the wake of a disoriented secular movement seems far-fetched. A Mrs. Graves once approached Ellen White, insisting that she enter into the issue of woman's suffrage.<sup>72</sup> But in a letter to her husband James, Mrs. White wrote that her work "was of another character."<sup>73</sup> Indeed it was.

The conclusions<sup>74</sup> presented in "Ellen White and Women's Rights" are, unfortunately, an example of the logical leaps made in Women in Ministry. Although much of the information in the author's article is accurate and helpful, her theories appear to be overly imaginative.

Is women's ordination truly, as it has been painted in this book and in "Ellen White and Women's Rights," a matter of "rights" and "hierarchy?"<sup>75</sup> No. It is a matter of what God says is right in a divinely ordered system of perpetual equality between men and women with pre-Fall role differentiation.

Will failure to ordain women in our contemporary western culture reduce our influence in soul-winning as the author contends?<sup>76</sup> No. Rather, a failure to adhere to heaven's plan as revealed in Scripture would reduce our influence. It would make evident that we had effectively discarded the emphasis on the authority of the Bible that has characterized the Advent movement since its inception.

Would women's ordination somehow cause us to reach more people than we are reaching now?<sup>77</sup> No. Instead, when women take advantage of their innately heightened effectiveness in certain specialized ministries, we will see this potentiality realized.

Would the ordination of women provide more workers for the field?<sup>78</sup> No. Ordination neither adds nor subtracts workers from the field.

The relentless push for women's ordination only brings increased polarization within the church. It would be well to ponder how deep this polarization caused by forcing women's ordination upon the church can become before the pain becomes unbearable for some members. The "thinking" of Adventism is much more than the sum of its institutional centers, or of a certain class of "theological elites" to whom we are persistently being encouraged to turn for guidance. Too often, it is they who are out of touch with the thinking of Adventism as a whole.

The pro-women's-ordination subculture within the church says that, not they, but we need to be reeducated in Bible interpretation. In this they are simply wrong; wrong in making women's ordination a litmus test of Adventist political correctness; wrong in using the reputation of the Seminary or the Adventist Review for propaganda purposes; wrong for making a bold attempt to replace the sound hermeneutic that this church is founded upon. Fortunately, we can turn to the Bible and to the writings of Ellen G. White and find very sound inspired guidance. Let us draw close to the documents that heaven has provided and step back from revisionism and imaginative speculation.

Reading through the reasoning presented by many of the contributors to Women in Ministry is like watching a theological train wreck occur in slow motion. As inevitably as night follows day, surrendering to the subjective reorientation of Scripture presented in Women in Ministry would leave us without any substantial foundation for presenting the third angel's message to a world already awash in its own philosophical emptiness.

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## The New Hermeneutic

Before closing this chapter, it may be helpful to take a moment to distill the methods of interpretation used in Women in Ministry into the readily graspable core of its hermeneutical system. For although the hermeneutical method of the book is really more of a subjective quagmire than a minutely defined system, there is a shape that can be seen moving under the dark waters.

There seems to be a consistent pattern of:

- A. Using inspired writings selectively.
- B. Building interpretive constructs above plain Scripture.
- C. Introducing subjective systems of interpretation, which tend toward enshrining a subset of the scholarly elite as the final arbiters of truth.
- D. Using interpretations of selected passages as canon-within-a-canonical controls (similar to but different from A).
- E. Permitting the current wave of group-think to act as a correcting override.

If we accept the principles of interpretation that are showcased in [Women in Ministry](#), we may not be quoting either Scripture or Ellen White thirty years from now. Instead, we will have turned our

attention "to bishops, to pastors, to professors of theology"<sup>79</sup> as our guides. What this book, which some hope will function "determinatively" in the future of this discussion,<sup>80</sup> effectively does is to provide an implicit system by which the authoritative use of Scripture is replaced with an amorphous machine. This machine is actually a subjective philosophical black-box designed to generate whatever outcome is desired by its user, while characterizing the results as being conservative and biblical. It works as follows:

Consider various texts one by one, often providing reasonably sound explanations. Here, one can create the illusion of being "conservative," "scriptural," "biblical," etc. Texts are introduced and may provide the appearance of authoritative biblical justification for the teaching to be presented.

When these texts are compiled, and the impression is given that the outcome is "biblical," they may then be used to construct an overarching idea that is one step removed from Scripture and is outside of it. Several of these ideas may be layered together. This is the "black box." Its legs are not the Scriptures that have been considered, but the "principles" represented as having been "derived" from them. In the end, Scripture need not be used authoritatively and reason can be the truly determinative element.

Next, an assertion may be made, based upon the "principles" or "ideas" previously derived. This is the arbitrary output of the system. Yet what comes out needn't sound arbitrary if a very reasonable or scriptural-sounding representation can be made. If presented well, the outcome can shift the foundation from Scripture to what human reason has said about Scripture. In this way, the system can affirm whatever is desired. Surround the discussion with Scriptures, leap the ideological chasm from A to B, and if no one catches on, the mental transaction has been made.

Finish by reemphasizing Scripture, thus solidifying the impression that the whole production has been the product of a diligent and scholarly study of the Bible.

This system can be reused at will. It may be made to support an almost infinite number of ideas either scriptural or unscriptural, because by means of "interpretation," it makes an end-run around the authority of Scripture. It is a shortcut on a long road that leads to places where the Seventh-day Adventist movement must not go.

It may be asked, just how does this differ from the use of Scripture among our pioneer Adventists? This indeed is the right question to ask. The documents of our history are still available for all to study for themselves. The answer is not hard to come by. The Adventist pioneers interpreted Scripture by Scripture. They saw nothing to gain by lingering in this world and proceeding from a stance of hearing God's Word only selectively. They treated the Bible as it was and is in reality: the voice of God to the soul.<sup>81</sup> Perhaps this is why we are told that "The most humble and devoted in the churches were usually the first to receive the message. Those who studied the Bible for themselves could not but see the unscriptural character of the popular views of prophecy; and wherever the people were not controlled by the influence of the clergy, wherever they would search the word of God for themselves, the advent doctrine needed only to be compared with the Scriptures to establish its divine authority."<sup>82</sup>

But what about us? What if we permit the meaning of our faith to be reworked in an unduly imaginative manner by theological experts?<sup>83</sup> Will our Bible-based Adventist heritage of Seventh-day Adventism be placed in jeopardy? Do we realize that the Bible could effectively be removed from the common member in the pew? that there could come a time when little meaningful difference exists

between a theologian and a magician? Instead of casting a spell, the theologian may invoke an arcane, private knowledge as his final appeal. This is where reliance upon theological finesse and academic panache risks taking us. It means the use of a philosophical system effectively (a) to negate the need to respond in conformity to God's will through real life change, and (b) to negate the past experience of God's people. If present trends continue to prevail, we could become such a different people from the early Adventists that our real links to that past are severed, and we could flounder as every other movement eventually has. It must not happen.

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## Conclusion

The manner in which the contributors in Women in Ministry generally have used the writings of Ellen G. White is hermeneutically unsound. Quotations and references have been gathered up and "principles" supposedly consistent with them have been constructed which in some cases exactly contradict Mrs. White. Unfortunately, all of the good intentions of the authors cannot change the misguided nature of their conclusions.

This brings us back to the attitudes expressed by my fellow ministers at the beginning of this chapter. Are great flying leaps the theological solution that the church has really been waiting for? Is Women in Ministry a triumph for God's people, providing at long last "help from the seminary?" Or is it more a case of self-disclosure to the church? Have a group of well-meaning but misguided scholars disclosed much more than they had intended? Is it safe to adopt their methods of interpretation? Finally, can we hear the concern of our brothers and sisters around the world who tremble to see how far we in North America have departed from the spirit and interpretive methods of the original Advent movement?

The church today stands upon the verge of a great flying leap.

Don't jump.

[End]

Did you read [Part 1](#)?

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Endnotes (for Part 2)

32. Peter van Bemmelen, "Equality, Headship, and Submission in the Writings of Ellen G. White," Women in Ministry, p. 298.
33. Richard Davidson, "Headship, Submission, and Equality in Scripture," Women in Ministry, pp. 264, 267.
34. van Bemmelen, p. 298.
35. Ibid.

36. Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 46.
37. "She was perfectly happy in her Eden home by her husband's side; but, like restless modern Eves, she was flattered that there was a higher sphere than that which God had assigned her. But, in attempting to climb higher than her original position, she fell far below it." Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 3:483. "A neglect on the part of woman to follow God's plan in her creation, an effort to reach for important positions which He has not qualified her to fill, leaves vacant the position that she could fill to acceptance. In getting out of her sphere, she loses true womanly dignity and nobility." Ibid., p. 484.
38. Davidson, pp. 267-268 quoting Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 58-59.
39. Davidson, p. 269.
40. Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 46.
41. See Ellen G. White's Testimonies for the Church, 1:105, 307-308; Testimonies on Sexual Behavior and Divorce, p. 117; Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, p. 64; Review and Herald, December 10, 1908; Manuscript Releases, 4:217; 13:83, etc.
42. See Arthur L. White, Ellen G. White: The Early Years, Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1981), pp. 110-111.
43. Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 48.
44. van Bemmelen, p. 298.
45. Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 46.
46. Ellen G. White, Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and students, p. 33.
47. Ibid.
48. "The angels had cautioned Eve to beware of separating herself from her husband while occupied in their daily labor in the garden; with him she would be in less danger from temptation than if she were alone." Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 53.
49. Ibid., p. 56.
50. "He mourned that he had permitted Eve to wander from his side." Ibid.
51. Ellen G. White, The Spirit of Prophecy, 1:53-54.
52. Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 1:421.
53. Alicia Worley, Women in Ministry, p. 372.
54. Ibid., p. 369.
55. This section discusses Alicia Worley's "Ellen White and Women's Rights," in Women in Ministry, pp. 355-376.
56. Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, p. 421.
57. Worley, p. 368.
58. Ibid., p. 369.
59. Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 1:421.
60. Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 141.
61. Ellen G. White, The Adventist Home, p. 215.
62. Ibid.
63. Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 1:307-308.
64. Ellen G. White, The Adventist Home, p. 119.
65. Ibid., p. 215.
66. Ibid., p. 211.
67. Ellen G. White, Letter 6, 1854. In Manuscript Releases, 10:20.
68. Ellen G. White, Letter 5, 1861. In Manuscript Releases, 6:126.
69. Worley, pp. 359-365.

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70. Ellen G. White, Special testimonies, Series B, p. 2. Also in Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, 3:1140.
71. Worley, p. 371.
72. Ibid., p. 372, citing Manuscript Releases, 10:69.
73. Ellen G. White, Letter 40a, 1874. In Manuscript Releases, 10:69.
74. Worley, pp. 370-372.
75. Ibid., p. 355.
76. Ibid., p. 370.
77. Ibid.
78. Ibid.
79. Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 595.
80. Calvin Rock, "Review of Women in Ministry" in Adventist Review, April 15, 1999, p. 29.
81. "Study God's word prayerfully. That word presents before you, in the law of God and the life of Christ, the great principles of holiness, without which 'no man shall see the Lord.' Hebrews 12:14. It convinces of sin; it plainly reveals the way of salvation. Give heed to it as the voice of God speaking to your soul." Ellen G. White, Steps to Christ, p. 35.
82. Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 372.
83. Nancy Vhymeister, "Prologue," in Women in Ministry, p. 5, prepares the way for the book's "use of sanctified judgment and imagination to resolve questions and issues."