

EXPLORING THE TRUE GOD

REGAN LEADER

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It is as easy to make an idol of false doctrines and theories as to fashion an idol of wood or stone.

By misrepresenting the attributes of God, Satan leads men to conceive of Him in a false character.

With many, a philosophical idol is enthroned in the place of Jehovah; while the living God, as He is revealed in His word, in Christ, and in the works of creation, is worshiped by but few.

Ellen White
The Great Controversy, 583

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PREFACE

I fell in love with Jesus and was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church at the age of eight after my family attended evangelistic meetings. I attended Adventist grade school, boarding academy, and college.

At this point I have been an Adventist Christian for forty-seven years. I have believed, taught, and defended our faith as a Sabbath School teacher and elder for decades.

I have been blessed by the Bible and have full confidence that it is the rule of our life and practice. I have been powerfully blessed and encouraged by the writings of Ellen White and fully trust that they are inspired by God.

In January 2017, my wife and I were encouraged by the Seventh-day Adventist *Adult Bible Study Guide*, and by Hope Channel, to pray to and worship the Holy Spirit. We began to search the Bible and Ellen White's writings for this instruction—to no avail.

Our study resulted in the astonishing realization that we as a denomination no longer

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depend on a “firm thus saith the Lord,” that we as a denomination no longer practice the biblical faith of our fathers, and that we as a denomination are not even worshipping the same God as did the Seventh-day Adventist pioneers!

Our study also resulted in . . . this book.

INTRODUCTION

This book is for my brothers and sisters in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, whose rule of faith is the Bible, and who recognize the writings of Ellen White as a lesser light leading to and confirming the truths of the Bible.

This book is a response to specific points in Doug Batchelor's book, *Exploring the Trinity*.

I know from personal experience the fear that tradition cultivates in us to question such a fundamental belief as the doctrine of God. However, some convictions are self-imposed.

We consider it a badge of fidelity to blindly trust those in leadership. It was no different when Jesus walked this earth. This kind of superstitious notion finds no place with a God who said, "Come now, and let us reason together" (Isaiah 1:18).

Several misrepresentations are made of the beliefs of those who cannot reconcile the Trinity with the God of the Bible. These misrepresentations range from unintentional insinu-

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ations to openly false claims, with the result of scaring others away from even considering the evidence. Here are some of these claims:

*They do not believe
in the divinity of Christ.*

*They do not believe
Jesus is God by nature.*

*They do not believe
Jesus is equal with the Father.*

They believe Jesus was created.

*They do not believe
the Holy Spirit is a person.*

*They do not believe
in the Holy Spirit at all.*

Each of these claims is absolutely false. In the following pages I would like to share with you the clearer, more biblical picture of these topics I've found in the pages of God's Word,

Introduction

fully supported by Ellen White's writings.

Curiously, modern Adventists hold several versions of the Trinity—there is no consensus of belief—and grace is demonstrated for the differences. I would plead for the same grace to be extended to those who challenge the doctrine of the Trinity and who are being limited in their church duties, marginalized, ostracized, disfellowshipped, and even persecuted, for simply following their convictions.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is blessed to have Doug Batchelor as an evangelist, and I've met numerous people whom God has won to the remnant church because of his ministry. I have great respect for him.

However, he is a man subject to the pressures put upon him by the corporate Seventh-day Adventist Church. He, like any man, is not free from the possibility of deception.

Gideon was directed by the Lord and gained a decided victory for God. But the same man the Lord used in such a marvelous way later made an ephod out of gold, caused God's people to sin, and led succeeding generations into idolatry. Past performance does not ensure fu-

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ture success! Flesh is not our arm.

Because of limited space, I cannot expound on the many things in Pastor Doug's book upon which we agree. Even an effort to point out inconsistencies may be seen as bashing or negativity. It is not my attempt to attack any man, even though I risk that perception by questioning such a prominent leader of the Adventist faith.

However, any doctrine should be able to stand the scrutiny of the Bible, and as Adventists, the clear teachings of the Spirit of Prophecy.

I completely agree with Pastor Doug that the subject of God's identity is holy ground and that we must approach it with humility and a willingness to learn.

I also agree that as humans we will never be able to completely "find out God" (Job 11:7). This is one reason He is God.

However, "the secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever" (Deuteronomy 29:29). The things God has revealed, He has done so because He

Introduction

wants us to understand. And furthermore, a misunderstanding can affect our relationship with Him, and therefore our very salvation.

So now, without further delay, here are the major conflicts that arose in my mind as I read Pastor Doug's book, *Exploring the Trinity*.

Because this book is responses to specific points, it reads more like questions and answers than like a normal book. If you pay attention right now, it will save you some confusion:

I will list the issue with which I wrestled (chapter title in bold), a quote from Pastor Doug's book (in italics with the page number(s)), and my response (beginning with a large capital letter).

ISSUE 1

THE NATURE OF GOD

Do these verses [Matthew 28:19, 20] teach us anything about the nature of God? (Page 10)

Absolutely not. They teach us only to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

These verses do not clarify the relationship of the three entities to one another, nor their nature.

And we are told that “the nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Men cannot explain it, because the Lord has not revealed it to them.”¹

See page 12, where Pastor Doug states, “The Bible has spoken to us directly on the nature of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

ISSUE 2

BAPTISM

Converts were not to be baptized in the name of the Father only. Nor in the name of the Son only. (Page 10)

You will have a very difficult time proving this point from the Bible.

Did the disciples and apostles violate a direct command from the Savior? Or do we misunderstand what it means to be baptized in the “name,” which Jesus indicated in verse 18 was “all power” that had been given unto Him?

And certainly, in the Bible we see that “name” refers not only to a title but to character. Every recorded instance of baptism in the New Testament after this injunction was done only in the name of the Son, Jesus Christ. (See Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5.)

“There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). “He that hath the Son hath life”

Baptism

(1 John 5:12). And Romans 6:3 states that we “were baptized into Jesus Christ,” a singular name, not the Trinity.

Baptism symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of the Son of God, not of the Father, nor of the Holy Spirit.

ISSUE 3

EARLY

ADVENTIST ARIANS?

It is true that, in the church's earliest days, some Adventist writers took what is known as an "Arian" position regarding the Trinity.

(Page 13)

First, I would point out that it wasn't just "some Adventist writers" who did not believe in the Trinity. This idea that Pastor Doug and others put forth is either ignorance of our rich Adventist history, or a subtle attempt to rewrite it.

In 1872 James White wrote and published, "A Declaration of the Fundamental Principles of the Seventh-day Adventists."² The first paragraph of this declaration affirms that this paper is "a brief statement of what is, and has been, with great unanimity, held by them" referring to Seventh-day Adventists as a whole.

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Here are the first three points:

1. That there is one God, a personal, spiritual being, the creator of all things, omnipotent, omniscient, and eternal, infinite in wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, truth, and mercy; unchangeable, and everywhere present by his representative, the Holy Spirit. Ps. 139:7.
2. That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father, the one by whom God created all things, and by whom they do consist . . .
3. That the Holy Scriptures, of the Old and New Testaments, were given by inspiration of God, contain a full revelation of his will to man, and are the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

Second, I see conflict in the idea that the Trinity Pastor Doug says the Adventist pioneers believed in, reflected an “Arian position.” They did not believe in the Trinity, and what has been termed as an “Arian position” regarding Jesus as the literal Son of God is diametri-

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cally opposed to all the Trinity stands for. Our Adventist pioneers believed in a literal Son of God who existed in point of time after the Father. Consider the candor with which SDA church leaders admit this:

Adventist beliefs have changed over the years under the impact of “present truth.” Most startling is the teaching regarding Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. Many of the pioneers, including James White, J. N. Andrews, Uriah Smith, and J. H. Waggoner, held to an Arian or semi-Arian view—that is, the Son at some point in time before the Creation of our world was generated by the Father. . . . The Trinitarian understanding of God, now part of our fundamental beliefs, was not generally held by the early Adventists.³

In addition, consider the well-documented stance early SDA Church leaders took regarding the Trinity:

“The doctrine of the Trinity which was es-

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established in the [Christian] church by the council of Nice, A. D. 325. This doctrine destroys the personality of God, and his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. The infamous measures by which it was forced upon the church which appear upon the pages of ecclesiastical history might well cause every believer in that doctrine to blush.”⁴

Also, the idea could be assumed that the “some” who supported these positions were not prominent believers of the Adventist faith, but this is not the case. James White and John Andrews (namesake for Andrews University) and many other well-known Adventist leaders not only disbelieved the Trinity but raised their opposition to it in their published writings.⁵

To confirm that it wasn’t just “some Adventist writers” who took what is labeled as an Arian position, consider the following from a book promoting the Trinity, published by Adventist theologians in 2002:

That most of the leading SDA pioneers were non-Trinitarian in their theology has become accepted Adventist history,

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surprising as it sounded to most Adventists 40 years ago when Erwin R. Gane wrote an M.A. thesis on the topic. More recently, a further question has arisen with increasing urgency: was the pioneers' belief about the Godhead right or wrong? As one line of reasoning goes, either the pioneers were wrong and the present church is right, or the pioneers were right and the present Seventh-day Adventist Church has apostatized from biblical truth.⁶

To say that “most” SDA pioneers were non-Trinitarian appears to be an understatement. As James White stated above, they held non-Trinitarian fundamental principles “with great unanimity.”

Could it be that the vast majority of Adventists today are completely unaware of well-documented history? History reveals that the doctrine of the Trinity did not gain a foothold in our Church until after the death of Ellen White in 1915, after the period of 1844 to 1915, the Church's earliest days. Also,

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it wasn't until sixty-five years after the death of Ellen White, in 1980, that the Trinity was voted in at the General Conference as an official doctrine of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. For most of you reading this, that's in your lifetime!

Ellen White wrote a troubling prophecy regarding this issue: "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."⁷

Please see the next issue to confirm that what we now hold as truth, denies what the pioneers believed to be true, and directly fulfills this prophecy.

ISSUE 4

DIVINITY GIVEN MEANS INFERIOR?

This view [Pastor Doug’s assertion that some early Adventist writers took what is known as an Arian position regarding the Trinity] claims that Christ hasn’t always existed; after He was brought forth, however, His divinity was given to Him by the Father. If this view were true, it would mean that Jesus is inferior to the Father—a view with which the Seventh-day Adventist Church has long disagreed. (Page 14)

To say, “If this view were true,” communicates a rejection of what our pioneers believed and fulfills the prophecy that our original beliefs would be “accounted as error.”⁸

Do the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy support this sentiment, or is it only human reasoning?

Jesus is indeed equal to the Father. But you

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will consistently find in the Bible and in Ellen White's writings that Jesus' equality is always in reference to the Father. God the Father is the starting point. This plainly stated truth creates numerous difficulties for the concept of a triune, or three-in-one, God.

Jesus is the one "who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God" (Philippians 2:6). The Bible consistently refers to "God" as the Father. Jesus was in the Father's form. And Jesus thought it not robbery to be equal with the Father.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). The Word, Jesus, was in the beginning with the Father.

In reference to the Father, Jesus is the only one described as "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person" (Hebrews 1:3). Jesus is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of the Father's person.

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19). God, the Father, was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. The Sanctuary's foundational mes-

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sage is of a Savior bringing us back into connection with the Father.

“No man hath seen God at any time” (1 John 4:12). It is the Father whom no human has ever seen.

In her description of her “End of the 2300 Days” vision, Ellen White wrote, “I asked Jesus if His Father had a form like Himself. He said He had, but I could not behold it, for said He, ‘If you should once behold the glory of His person, you would cease to exist.’”⁹ Are the contradictions to a three-in-one God not apparent here? Why could she see Jesus, who was glorified and is fully divine and equal with the Father according to the Word of God, but she could not see the Father? Could the Bible be correct when it identifies the Father as God (1 Corinthians 8:6), and when it says, “No man hath seen God at any time”? (1 John 4:12).

Only those with preconceived ideas that Jesus cannot be the literal Son of God and at the same time be equal to His Father, reject these plain biblical statements because they do not align with tradition or human logic. It is a real problem if we accept the traditions of men

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over the Word of God.

“The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand” (John 3:35). “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself” (John 5:26). Jesus plainly told us how the divine life of the Father is His own: it was given to Him.

If “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son” (John 3:16), God must have had a Son to give; therefore, Jesus must have been God’s Son before His incarnation. Jesus became the Son of God when God gave Him life. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God . . . and the Word was made flesh” (1:1, 14). He was the Word well before he was made flesh! Jesus, the Word, “was in the beginning with God” (verse 2). Jesus was in the very beginning with His Father.

“All things were made by him [the Word]; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3). “God, who created all things by Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 3:9). The Father was the Creator who accomplished everything through His Son. This requires that Jesus, as the Son of God, existed before any-

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thing was created, which means Jesus Himself could not have been created.¹⁰

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:11, 12). Again, the point of reference is the Father who has given us eternal life—the life he has given to the Son of God. The very reason this life is in Jesus is because He is the Son of God, and the Son of God is the only way we can obtain it.

“Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me” (John 8:42).

“As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me” (John 6:57). The Father sent the Son; therefore the Son was the Son before He was sent.¹¹

“But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me” (John 7:29).

“For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I

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came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God” (John 16:27–30).

The truth riveted in the minds of the disciples that caused them to say “Lo” and “now speakest thou plainly” and “thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee,” was not that the Father had sent Him. It was the plain fact that Jesus was the literal Son of God and “came out from” and “came forth from” the Father. All Jews believed the Messiah would be sent, so this was definitely not what got their attention.

“For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me” (John 17:8).

“Our heavenly Father is the God of the uni-

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verse, and Christ is the divine Son, the One equal with the Father.”¹²

The very reason Jesus is equal to the Father, the point of reference, is that Jesus is the divine Son. He is the One (only one) who is equal with the Father. Jesus is not the “God of the universe,” but He is that God’s divine Son. He is not divine independent of the Father but because of His literal relationship to the Father.

“God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God. To Christ has been given an exalted position. He has been made equal with the Father. All the counsels of God are opened to His Son.”¹³

Contrast this with Pastor Doug’s supposition that “after He was brought forth, however, His divinity was given to Him by the Father. If this view were true, it would mean that Jesus is inferior to the Father.”

Ellen White repeated the reason Jesus is equal to the Father. The same two reasons Pastor Doug is disputing are the exact reasons Sister White gave for Jesus’ equality with the Father (point of reference). “God is the Fa-

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ther of Christ”—He existed before Jesus and is the source of His life. What else can that mean unless we spiritualize away the truth she was trying to communicate? And as the Son of God, Jesus was “given an exalted position” and “made equal with the Father.” At what point did this occur? I can assure you that in the teaching of the Trinity there never has been a time when this statement can be applied to Jesus.

Both Pastor Doug and Ellen White confirm Jesus’ equality with the Father, but their reasons for this equality are diametrically opposed.

I would point out that this quote is not an obscure, hard to find truth. It is found in *Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 8, page 268, a book readily available to everyone. Part of what makes us Seventh-day Adventists is that we accept this as the “testimony of Jesus,” Himself. (See Revelation 19:10.) Is Jesus trying to mislead His people? Could He communicate in any clearer way His relation to the Father and why He is equal with His Father?

Pastor Doug referenced our pioneers. They took the Bible as it reads and believed Jesus is

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the literal Son of God.

One of the reasons for this was their understanding of Proverbs 8:22–30. Both the Bible and Ellen White point to Jesus as the one speaking in this chapter, under the title of Wisdom.

In 1 Corinthians 1:24, 30, Paul wrote: “But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”

Ellen White removed any remaining doubt that wisdom is a namesake for Christ by introducing her quote of Proverbs 8:22–30 in this way: “And the Son of God declares concerning Himself. . . .”¹⁴

In Proverbs 8:24, 25, Jesus said twice that He was “brought forth,” which literally means “born” or “given birth,” as rendered by several Bible versions. Jesus also declared that He “proceeded forth” and “came out from” the Father. (See John 8:42 and 16:27.) And in numerous places in the Bible and in Ellen

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White's writings, His equality with the Father shines forth. So, when someone says that this could not be true, that it would make Jesus inferior to His Father, whom should we believe?

God gave a special revelation of Himself and His Son when "God said to His Son, 'Let us make man in our image.'" Please look up *The Story of Redemption*, page 20, to see for yourself that the Father was speaking to His Son in Genesis 1:26.

The word "man" refers to the human race. "In the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created" (Genesis 5:1, 2).

What is God trying to tell us about Himself and His Son, and how does this relate to their equality?

In using the logic Pastor Doug has presented, that if Jesus is the literal Son of God it means He is inferior to the Father, he undoes the very lesson God was trying to teach. God could have very easily created Adam and Eve in the exact same way and given them life at the exact same time, but He didn't.

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How was mankind made in the image, in the likeness, of the Father and the Son?

Although both Adam and Eve came into existence on the same day, the sixth day of Creation, Adam existed before Eve.

Eve was brought forth from Adam:

“And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man” (Genesis 2:21–23).

As a result of their making mankind in their likeness, in their image, the Father and Son made two beings.

Did Eve existing after Adam—even though the timing was inconsequential—make her inferior to him?

Possessing Adam’s substance, was Eve less bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh than was Adam?

Was Eve inferior to Adam? Was she less hu-

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man than he was?

No human being regards his or her offspring as less human. Many human offspring can even be taller and smarter than the parents. An offspring has the very substance, the DNA, of the ones who existed before him.

The Bible tells us that God, a divine being, had a divine Son who was “the express image” of the Father’s person. (See Hebrews 1:3.) This absolutely does not make Jesus inferior or less divine than His Father.

The Jews correctly understood that if Jesus was the Son of God, it automatically made Him equal to God, and therefore divine. “Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God” (John 5:18).

My son’s equality with me has less to do with timing and more to do with his relationship to me as a human being; because he is my son, he is also human. Similarly, Jesus’ equality with the Father has less to do with timing and more to do with His relationship to the Father. Because His Father is divine, Jesus is divine.

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God introduced this concept by giving us the law of kinds: like bears like. “And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good” (Genesis 1:25).

So, if a divine being has a son, what substance would his son have? And if the son exists after the original divine being, would the son be less divine?

By virtue of birth, those born are not inferior but equal to their predecessor. This holds true in birth, not in creation. Creation is not the same as birth—not even close! (See Pastor Doug’s Rembrandt logic on page 44 of his book.)

In a very real sense, even Eve was birthed from Adam, giving us a picture or “image” of God and his Son.

How the Father accomplished the birth of His only begotten Son He has not revealed. To try to refute the truth by human philosophy is meaningless. Jesus did not have to have a mother to be born of the Father any more than Eve had to have a mother to come

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from Adam.

The fact is that those who are born possess the exact substance as those who bear them. When a man and woman come together to procreate a child, they are making someone equal to them, not an inferior.

God's command for children to honor their father and mother is not based on the children's inferiority. It is recognition that their parents preceded them and gave them something they did not always possess. Because of this, it is only right for children to honor and respect their parents.

A no less important truth is that no matter how hard he may try or desire to be, a child will never be his parent's parent. The Father is always the point of reference.

While God's Son is equal to Him, the Son of God will never be His Father's father. The end result of our saying that Jesus is not the literal Son of God is disrespect to the Father. It says Jesus is the Son of God by Himself, as children would say who deny their mother and father have anything to do with why they live. With this perspective, Father and Son are

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only titles in the same way Father and Mother are only titles and command no deference or respect.

“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. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”¹⁵

According to this statement, there are three ways to be a son of God, and Jesus is a Son of God in a way that no other being is. Ellen White did not agree with the human reasoning that if Jesus existed after the Father, that means He was created. She overtly distinguished between “a son by creation” and God’s “only-begotten Son.” They are not the same thing. The false argument that they are was put forth by Lucifer, that there was no difference between himself and the Son of God.

God the Father, not the Trinity, gave His

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Son for the world the Father loved. A singular being, not a group of beings, gave His only Son because God is love.

Jesus was the express image of the Father's person—verifying that the Father is the reference or starting point. Ellen White told a truth which affirms that as the literal Son of the Father, and because He is the Son of God, Jesus is equal with the Father in “authority, dignity, and divine perfection.”

In the above quote, by the “fullness of the Godhead,” Ellen White was referring to Christ having all the attributes of His Father. The messenger of the Lord was writing plainly, without a hint of proverbs, similes, or metaphors. Contrary to the opinions of men, Jesus being “brought forth” from the Father does not mean that Jesus is inferior to the Father.

Most telling is that when Jesus was begotten, it was “in all the brightness of his majesty and glory,” making it impossible that this is referring to His incarnation. If Jesus had come to this sin-filled world in all the brightness of His Father's majesty and glory, the sin-filled human race would have been annihilated and

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would have ceased to exist, in the same way Ellen White would have ceased to exist by seeing the Father.

The Bible tells us that Jesus “hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they” (Hebrews 1:4). This inheritance is based on the relationship between the Father and His Son!

If Jesus is not a real Son, the Father is not a real Father. Where does it end when we disbelieve the things the Bible plainly states? And if we can't believe the most primary, important truth of the Bible, what's the point in believing any of it?

The Bible gives a grave warning for those who deny the Father and His Son:

“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: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also” (1 John 2:22, 23).

This “antichrist” spirit has been alive and active since before Lucifer and the angels who believed him were cast out of heaven:

Divinity Given Means Inferior?

“This fact the [fallen] angels would obscure, that Christ was the only begotten Son of God, and they came to consider that they were not to consult Christ.”¹⁶

The great controversy between Christ and Satan continues. Who would try to convince us that facts are not real? Why would someone make God a liar and declare that His relationship with His Son is only a role-play, a simile, or a metaphor? A greater and more deceptive mind than man's is at work here!

ISSUE 5

A UNITY OF THREE COETERNAL PERSONS?

*There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
a unity of three coeternal Persons.¹⁷
(Page 14)*

But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him” (1 Corinthians 8:6).

I want you to contrast these two definitions of the “one God” to see if they are saying the same thing. The first is identifying three beings while the Bible is identifying only one.

Jesus Himself identified His Father as “the only true God” (John 17:3).

Jesus told Peter and the other disciples that He would build His church on the fact that He is “the Son of the living God,” in reference to His Father. (See Matthew 16:16.)

A Unity of Three Coeternal Persons?

Peter identified “the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers” by telling the Jews that this God—the Father—“hath glorified his Son Jesus” (Acts 3:13).

Paul also wrote, “Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you” (1 Thessalonians 3:11). Paul was repeating that “God himself” refers to the Father, and that the Father has a Son called “our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Furthermore, in Ephesians 1:3 Paul stated, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” The “God and Father” was in reference to a single being—Jesus’ Father and Jesus’ God.

Jesus said this Himself after His resurrection: “I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God” (John 20:17). Jesus’ God is the same God in whom we are to believe and whom we worship. Jesus Himself identified God as a being He called Father.

Not one of these clear biblical definitions

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of God can be reconciled with a composite god made of three separate beings. The Bible is clear and easily understood regarding the identity of God. The Trinity is a “mystery.” The mystery involved in this belief can be seen in the multitude of differing and very complicated theories regarding it. It is also revealing that any who question its inconsistencies and contradictions are silenced by declaring it a mystery.

Next, if Jesus is “coeternal,” it means two things:

First, He is not the Son of God, because His Father is not really His Father. Pastor Doug admitted this with the argument that if Jesus existed after the Father, He is inferior to the Father. A very new and disturbing trend in Adventism is saying, God gave Himself, not His Son, for our salvation, in outright denial of the words of Jesus.

Second, Jesus did not truly die on the cross. The Trinity demands three coeternal beings who make up the “one God.” If any one of these three beings dies, the “three-in-one God” concept dies.

A Unity of Three Coeternal Persons?

You may find this idea strange, but I assure you it is very real. My wife and I had discussions with a practicing Seventh-day Adventist pastor at our kitchen table. He made the statement that when Jesus died on the cross, He said to the Father, “Now what are we going to do with the body?” The Trinity doctrine demands that Jesus had consciousness in death.

Our confusion on this issue is inexcusable considering the light given:

Jesus said to Mary, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father.” When He closed His eyes in death upon the cross, the soul of Christ did not go at once to Heaven, as many believe, or how could his words be true—“I am not yet ascended to my Father”? The spirit of Jesus slept in the tomb with his body, and did not wing its way to Heaven, there to maintain a separate existence, and to look down upon the mourning disciples embalming the body from which it had taken flight. All that comprised the life and intelligence of Jesus remained with

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his body in the sepulcher; and when he came forth it was as a whole being; he did not have to summon his spirit from Heaven. He had power to lay down his life and to take it up again.¹⁸

Reader, at this point you may protest, “I do not believe in Christ’s consciousness in death. I do not believe in praying to or worshiping the Holy Spirit. I do not believe in three beings, but three persons making up one being.”

Here is the point. Many church leaders and brothers and sisters sitting next to you in the pew *do* believe these things. And all of these confused ideas have a common root: a mental concept of God as a composite, triune being.

ISSUE 6

EXISTENCE AS THREE?

In the work Systematic Theology, influential author and theologian Wayne Grudem writes, “God eternally exist as three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God, and there is one God.”¹⁹ (Page 15)

And Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might enquire of him?” (1 Kings 22:7).

“Shall the world and the nominal churches convert the Seventh-day Adventists to their ideas? We say, No. Well, then, let us act.”²⁰ Sadly, this conversion has taken place, and the change from the position our pioneers held is well documented.

I find it ever so strange that we are going outside our faith and the plain teachings of the Word of God and Ellen White’s writings to bolster our traditions. I will repeat what the messenger of the Lord has revealed that em-

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phatically contradicts the opinions of a man outside of our faith as Seventh-day Adventists.

“Our heavenly Father is the God of the universe, and Christ is the divine Son, the One equal with the Father.”²¹

If the words of an “influential author and theologian” contradict and in no way can be reconciled with the words of a prophet with whom God has blessed the remnant church, which one should we believe?

This is not inconsequential. In choosing to believe one, I willfully reject the other. The two authors are absolutely not describing the same God. To worship one is to worship “the only true God” and the “God of the universe.” To worship the other is false worship and idolatry! Elijah challenged God’s people: “How long halt ye between two opinions?” (1 Kings 18:21). The two opinions are mutually incompatible.

The identity of God is repeatedly written in the writings of Ellen White in such contrast to current tradition that we as the remnant church are without excuse:

“God is the Father of Christ.”²²

Existence as Three?

The Father is identified as the “Sovereign of the universe”²³ and as the “King of the universe.”²⁴

“The Father’s life flows out to all,” and this single being is identified as “the great Source of all” and “the great Giver.”²⁵

These quotes are not obscure or hard to find, and every Seventh-day Adventist should have easy access to them.

“The man Christ Jesus was not the Lord God Almighty, yet Christ and the Father are one.”²⁶

“The Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of the Father, is truly God in infinity, but not in personality.”²⁷

Sadly, as Seventh-day Adventists, it appears that our confidence in the truth of Ellen White’s writings has been eclipsed by tradition and the teachings of those outside our faith.

Is it possible that another prophecy is being fulfilled right before our eyes and the coming of our Savior is even closer than we imagined?

“The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. ‘Where there is no vision, the peo-

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ple perish' (Proverbs 29:18). Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony."²⁸

ISSUE 7

MISSING YET CENTRAL

And yet this idea, called the “Incarnation,” is never called the “Incarnation” in the Bible, yet the Incarnation is central to Christian theology. (Page 17)

Pastor Doug is using the argument that just because we don't find the word Trinity in the Bible doesn't mean it's not a truth central to Christian theology. You will not find the words Trinity or Incarnation in the Bible.

However, Pastor Doug is overlooking the unrecognized witness of the Spirit of Prophecy and historical evidence on this matter.

Many of our Pioneers came out of Trinitarian churches. They most certainly were aware of the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds, but Seventh-day Adventist Church historians have verified that “most of the leading Adventist pioneers were non-Trinitarian in their the-

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ology.” Please see Issue 3 (Early Adventist Arians?) and Issue 4 (Divinity Given Means Inferior?) in this book.

It is very telling that a search of Ellen White’s writings at egwwritings.org for the word incarnation returns 268 results, verifying the truth of this concept in agreement with the Bible. However, the same cannot be said of the word Trinity. Ellen White never used the word Trinity in relation to God. And if she wished for us to understand God as a Trinity, why not use the very common words used by the Christian churches in her day to describe their god?

ISSUE 8

GOD'S PLURAL NATURE?

Just as in Genesis 1:26 when the Lord was talking about Himself as a plurality. . . . Why would God use this language if not pointing to His plural nature? . . . What else could it mean? (Page 25)

Why do we jump to the conclusion that the God speaking is a group talking to one another? Was the Holy Spirit saying, “Let us”? Was Jesus saying, “Let us”? Was the Father saying, “Let us” in unison with the other two? We jump to this conclusion only if we think God is a composite of beings.

What else could it mean? Could it mean that God, a singular being, was speaking to someone in His express image, someone who shares His nature and by whom He created the worlds? (See Hebrews 1:1–3.)

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“After the earth was created, and the beasts upon it, the Father and Son carried out their purpose, which was designed before the fall of Satan, to make man in their own image. They had wrought together in the creation of the earth and every living thing upon it. And now God said to His Son, ‘Let us make man in our image.’”²⁹

The “God” of Genesis 1:26 is the Father. He was not “pointing to His plural nature” but was speaking to His Son! Again, what excuse do we have as Seventh-day Adventists for not believing this?

Pastor Doug continues to put forth the point of the plurality of God on pages 26 to 28. Despite all the attempts to define God as a plurality of beings, he fails to see that God, the Father, was saying, “Let us” to His Son.

Pastor Doug would also lead us to believe that the plurality he is defining consists of three beings, which he represents as three atoms of one water molecule.

Ellen White refuted the idea of a plurality of three. Multiple times she conveyed the truth that Christ is the “only being in all the

God's Plural Nature?

universe that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God,"³⁰ God being the Father. This denies the possibility that the Holy Spirit is a separate being from the Father and Son and with them makes up the plurality of God.

“From my girlhood I have been given plain instruction that God is a person, and that Christ is ‘the express image of His person’ [Hebrews 1:3.] God always has been. That which concerns us is not the how or the wherefore.”³¹ Ellen White was once again clear that God is a person, not a plurality of persons!

ISSUE 9

IS GOD LIKE A WATER MOLECULE?

Consider this analogy: One water molecule is made up of two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom. These are three distinct parts. And yet it is still just one water molecule, despite the triune nature of that one water molecule. Couldn't the same be said of one God made of three distinct parts? (Page 27)

No. The Bible and Ellen White's writings do not support this.

Is Pastor Doug not aware that John Kellogg tried to define God in a similar way in his book, *The Living Temple*? What does Ellen White's response tell us about the methods of John Kellogg and Doug Batchelor?

I am instructed to say, the sentiments of those who are searching for advanced

Is God Like a Water Molecule?

scientific ideas are not to be trusted. Such representations as the following are made: "The Father is as the light invisible; the Son is as the light embodied; the Spirit is the light shed abroad." "The Father is like the dew, invisible vapor; the Son is like the dew gathered in beauteous form; the Spirit is like the dew fallen to the seat of life." Another representation: "The Father is like the invisible vapor; the Son is like the leaden cloud; the Spirit is rain fallen and working in refreshing power." All these spiritualistic representations are simply nothingness. They are imperfect, untrue. They weaken and diminish the Majesty which no earthly likeness can be compared to. God cannot be compared with the things His hands have made.³²

ISSUE 10

DOES LOVE REQUIRE PLURALITY?

If nothing was there, what existed for God to love? . . . Love can exist only in a relationship with the one loving the object of that love.

Hence, the idea of God as love indicates the necessity of His plural nature.

(Page 37)

God is love” (1 John 4:8). It is not what He does but who He is. God’s nature is not dependent on any object outside of Himself. What Pastor Doug is describing is *eros* love. *Agape* love functions regardless of an object to love and regardless of that object’s worthiness or acceptance of that love.

“God so loved the world” (John 3:16). “He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world” (Ephesians 1:4). Jesus is “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world”

Does Love Require Plurality?

(Revelation 13:8). We were the object of God's love—He loved us—before we existed! We did not need to exist for Him to be love.

On close observation, Pastor Doug's logic destroys itself. Was God "God" only after He created intelligent beings who recognized Him as God? It is self-evident that God's sovereignty and His nature are dependent on nothing—He is God!

ISSUE 11

ALL THREE WERE THERE?

How fascinating that at the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry, Jesus, the Father, and the Holy Spirit all manifested. (Page 38)

This is in reference to the baptism of Jesus found in Matthew 3:16, 17. It is assumed that the “Spirit of God” is a different being from the Father, not the Spirit of the Father, or God.

Here is how Ellen White described the scene as Jesus emerged from the water, knelt on the riverbank, and prayed to His Father: “Never before had angels listened to such a prayer as Christ offered at his baptism, and they were solicitous to be the bearers of the message from the Father to his Son. But, no; direct from the Father issues the light of his

All Three Were There?

glory. The heavens were opened, and beams of glory rested upon the Son of God, and assumed the form of a dove, in appearance like burnished gold. The dove-like form was emblematical of the meekness and gentleness of Christ.”³³

Please notice that what happened at the baptism was “direct from the Father”—it was the Father’s voice, the Father’s Spirit, and the Father’s glory, that testified Jesus was His Son.

The spirit of a person is always his or her spirit, not someone else. My spirit is not a different person—it’s part of me. Satan’s spirit is not a different person—it’s part of him. While God’s Spirit is a different manifestation of Him, it’s not another or separate being—it’s part of Him.

We don’t speak in terms that give the impression that our spirit is another person. So, why do we make the huge illogical leap to assume that the Spirit of God is a separate being?

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man,

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but the Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 2:11). The “even so” means that, although our spirit and the Spirit of God have vastly different capabilities, they function in the same way. After all, we are made in God’s image.

“When Adam came from the Creator’s hand, he bore, in his physical, mental, and spiritual nature, a likeness to his Maker.”³⁴

ISSUE 12

BIBLICAL TITLES?

Even the opening of Revelation contains references to the three persons of the Godhead: “Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come [God the Father], and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne [God the Holy Spirit], and from Jesus Christ [God the Son] . . . (1:4, 5).”

(Page 42)

God the Father” is the only one of these terms you will find in the entire Bible and in the writings of Ellen White.

The Bible uses the title “God the Father” thirteen times but does not do the same with the Son or with the Holy Spirit. The Father is always the point of reference, not a composite. Therefore, the Bible and Ellen White always use terms such as “Son of God” and “Spirit of God.”

ISSUE 13

THREE EQUALS VS. EQUAL WITH ONE

Trinitarian theology is that God is one God but composed of three equal persons—each fully and completely God. “In all the universe there was but one who could, in behalf of man, satisfy its claims. Since the divine law is as sacred as God Himself, only one equal with God could make atonement for its transgression. None but Christ could redeem fallen man from the curse of the law and bring him again into harmony with Heaven.”³⁵

(Pages 46, 47)

Personally, I cannot understand how someone could think these statements harmonize or are saying the same thing. One says God is “composed of three equal persons.” The other identifies “God” and “God Himself” as the Father.

Three Equals vs. Equal with One

It is the Father's law, and it is the Father with whom Christ is equal, not "Himself" as a three-in-one composite. He is equal to the Father, "God Himself!"

"In all the universe there was but one"—only one—who was equal with "God Himself." Where is the Holy Spirit as a separate divine being in this picture? The one of "three equal persons—each fully and completely God"? If each one is "fully and completely God," why was Jesus the only one who could make a sacrifice in man's behalf?

The idea that the Trinity was role-playing to accomplish our salvation does not hold water. We are not dealing with a simile, metaphor, or act on the part of God. The Father is a real Father with a real Son. His Son is the only being in the universe equal to Him, and no other being could role-play the part of the Son of God in our salvation.

ISSUE 14

SUNDERING

*“The sundering of the divine powers”?
What could that possibly mean apart from
the eternal deity of Christ? (Pages 54–56)*

It could mean many things, but what is the basis for jumping to that conclusion?

It absolutely does not mean that Jesus is not the Son of the Father. The “eternal deity” being proposed is that Christ is equal to Himself, not His Father.

As we have pointed out before, the Trinity God is composed of three coeternal beings, or as others believe, three persons making one being. If you take one away, the God you have made ceases to exist. The Trinity in reality denies the death of the Son of God on the cross. So where is the “sundering of the divine powers” in the Trinity?

The very idea of the “eternal deity” of Jesus denies the possibility of His death. When

Sundering

Jesus' "eternal deity" was interrupted by His death on the cross, did that affect His equality with the Father? We could use the exact same logic being promoted in Pastor Doug's book to say that because Jesus died and the Father didn't, then Jesus is no longer equal with the Father. The basis of the equality of Jesus is that He is the Son of God, not His "eternal deity."

Christ is divine and equal to His Father. The Son was equal to the Father and the only being with the divinity of His Father. Until that point in time there never had been a separation between the Father and His Son. My sin caused the "sundering of the divine powers," the separation between the Father and Son.

This is not a foreign concept to humanity and relationships. As parents we experience this "sundering" in humanity when our child, who has always been in our home, goes off to school, is married, or is lost to death. The point is that the close union that exists is interrupted, causing pain to both parties. If there is no separation, then there is no source of pain. Love knows no time. Sundering can happen when a child is born or thirty years later, but

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the pain of the divide is the same for the one who loves.

God our Father gave His only begotten Son to save us, to experience our death penalty, and the sundering between them was the only way for us to live.

ISSUE 15

CREATION VS. BIRTH

How could something created be equal to what created it? If Christ were a created being who later came forth from the Father, He could not possibly be equal with the eternal God. (Page 56)

By birth. On the surface, our minds have difficulty comprehending the vast difference between creation and birth. However, I can assure you that my painting a picture like Rembrandt (creation) is not the same as my wife giving birth to my son (birth).

“Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me” (John 8:41, 42).

The Jewish leaders were pointing to Jesus’

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earthly birth with suspicion and contempt. Jesus then claimed birth from His Father—“I proceeded forth and came from God.”

Jesus Himself said He came from His Father, but that in no way diminishes His equality with Him. His equality is not based on time or eternity, but on His relationship to the Father. The exact point of argument between Jesus and the leaders was who had God as their Father. Jesus claimed God as His Father in a way that not one of them could, and it had absolutely nothing to do with His birth in Bethlehem.

What a marvelous illustration God has given us in birth. God has given humans the power and privilege of procreation that not even the angels possess. The very word procreation indicates our ability to bring forth offspring, recognizing that the original life we have was given to us by God in Adam.

Jesus recognized the same principle at work when He said, “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself” (John 5:26).

Can something be equal to the thing that

Creation vs. Birth

generated it and existed before it? Absolutely!

I made a conscious choice to give my son life. I existed before him, and yet he is not inferior to me but my equal. He has the same substance, life, nature, image, attributes, purpose, name, and the same ability I have to convey all of these to his own posterity.

ISSUE 16

SUBORDINATE ONLY AS A HUMAN?

Jesus became a finite human being; when in human flesh, He took on a subordinate role. (Page 58)

It was in His humanity that He lived in submission to the Father. (Page 58)

In His role as a human, coming to earth to be our example and our substitute, Jesus lived in complete submission to His Father. (Page 59)

While many passages talk about His subordination to the Father, they do so in the context of His role as a human. (Page 64)

Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God” (Hebrews 10:7). “For I came

Subordinate Only as a Human?

down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38). “And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him” (John 8:29).

It was the Father who sent Jesus. Jesus was submissive to His Father’s will before He was sent, before He was human. Jesus has always done and will always do the things that please His Father.

To say Jesus was subordinate to the Father only in His humanity, is to say He was not subordinate before He became human.

Subordination is viewed as weakness and inequality. While we defend the dignity and equality of the wife who is subordinate to her husband, somehow Christ’s submission to His Father is viewed as weakness and inequality.

The result of Pastor Doug’s attempt to preserve the equality and divinity of Christ, is to deny Jesus’ literal relationship to His Father. This approach demands that no member of the Trinity is truly subject to another but that they are all actors with one of them playing a role of feigned subjection.

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Does the Bible and Ellen White support the view that Christ was/is subordinate to His Father only in His “role” as a human being?

In 1 Corinthians 11:3, Paul wrote, “But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.” This is present tense!

If Paul were referring to “God” in this verse as a unity of three coeternal persons, Christ would be the head of Himself. Does that make any sense at all?

The following verse tells us why the Father is the head of Christ—by telling us why the man is the head of the woman: “For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man” (1 Corinthians 11:8).

The Father is the head of Christ because the Father is not of Christ, but Christ is of the Father.

The next text shows Christ’s subordination to the Father in His glorified state when the universe is once again free from sin and back to its original design:

Subordinate Only as a Human?

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all (1 Corinthians 15:24–28).

The God who put all things under His Son is none other than the Father!

Ellen White was not silent on Jesus' submission to His Father before he took on human flesh:

“The Son of God had wrought the Father’s will in the creation of all the hosts of heaven; and to Him, as well as to God, their homage

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and allegiance were due. Christ was still to exercise divine power, in the creation of the earth and its inhabitants. But in all this He would not seek power or exaltation for Himself contrary to God's plan, but would exalt the Father's glory and execute His purposes of beneficence and love."³⁶

ISSUE 17

LIMITATIONS OF HUMAN LANGUAGE?

Some people, understandably so, have difficulty with the concept of an eternal Jesus being a “son,” since the term implies someone who came after his parents. But we need to tread carefully, understanding the limitations of human language in the midst of the divine.
(Pages 59, 60)

So, the Almighty God who created humans and language cannot effectively communicate with us in ways we can take literally and understand?

What other portions of Scripture can we not take as it reads? Did the Father Himself speak in His own voice from heaven on three separate occasions³⁷ declaring Jesus to be His Son, but not mean for us to take Him at His word?

This reasoning of an “eternal Jesus” is based

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on the false assumption that if Jesus is not eternal there is no way He can be equal with His Father. We have seen by the concept of birth that this is a false assumption.

One of the foremost proof texts for the Messiah does not agree with this assumption. Micah 5:2 in the King James Version points to the “goings forth” of Jesus being “from of old, from everlasting.” The words “goings forth” in Hebrew mean “origin, a family descent, and going forth.”³⁸ The NIV renders it, “Whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.” The verse does not say Christ had no origin.

Ellen White could easily have written that Christ is life, original, unborrowed, and unde-rived, but instead she wrote, “In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived.”³⁹ In John 5:26, Jesus explained: “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.” Is there any point in time when this truth could be applied to Jesus in the concept of the Trinity?

If there is danger in taking the word of God literally and of the “limitations of human lan-guage in the midst of the divine,” why was the

Limitations of Human Language?

messenger of the Lord so plain about Jesus' relationship with His Father without any warning that it could be misunderstood?

“God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God. To Christ has been given an exalted position. He has been made equal with the Father. All the counsels of God are opened to His Son.”⁴⁰

“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. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”⁴¹

While we may be confused by another man’s interpretation of Scripture, two things from these Ellen White quotes are crystal clear: Jesus “is the Son of God” and He was “a Son begotten in the express image of the Father’s person.” Both of these quotes establish the equality of Jesus with the Father based on

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birth and something given to the Son that he did not possess as an “eternal Jesus.” So, again, the assumption that Jesus has to be eternal to be equal with the Father is shown to be false.

“Angels were expelled from heaven because they would not work in harmony with God. They fell from their high estate because they wanted to be exalted. They had come to exalt themselves, and they forgot that their beauty of person and of character came from the Lord Jesus. This fact the angels would obscure, that Christ was the only begotten Son of God, and they came to consider that they were not to consult Christ.”⁴²

Where are the limitations of human language here? What fact did the fallen angels deny before they were cast out of heaven and well before the incarnation of Christ? Is it possible that Christians could be persuaded to join in sharing the sentiments of God’s enemies in denying the fact that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God?

ISSUE 18

SON OF GOD

ROLE-PLAY?

Pastor Doug quotes from
*God in Three Persons—in the
New Testament*⁴³:

*“Jesus is called ‘the Son of God’ . . .
because of His role of representing
the Godhead.” (Page 61)*

The implication of what Pastor Doug is quoting is as real and alarming as it is subtle: Jesus is the Son of God only as a title; He is not truly the Son of God.

While Pastor Doug is apparently not bold enough to come right out and say it as others do, the implication is that Jesus is only playing the “role” of the Son of God to represent the Godhead. It’s not a real Father with a real Son representing Him—it’s all an act! And Jesus is not the only one acting. The Father and Holy

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Spirit are also acting out roles to represent themselves and accomplish our salvation.

I don't know how to effectively communicate my dismay at the dethronement of God the Father in this subtle but deadly role-play. Who are we worshipping? And who but Satan himself would instigate these ideas and embed them not only in the Christian church, but in the remnant church itself?

Most Adventists know of the issues of John Harvey Kellogg relating to pantheism. However, after Dr. Kellogg wrote *The Living Temple*, he came to believe in the Trinity. Consider a letter written to Willie White by A.G. Daniels, then president of the General Conference:

Ever since the council closed I have felt that I should write you confidentially regarding Dr. Kellogg's plans for revising and republishing "The Living Temple."

He (Kellogg) said that some days before coming to the council, he had been thinking the matter over, and began to see that he had made a slight mistake

Son of God Role-Play?

in expressing his views. He said that all the way along he had been troubled to know how to state the character of God and his relation to his creation works... He then stated that his former views regarding the trinity had stood in his way of making a clear and absolutely correct statement; but that within a short time he had come to believe in the trinity and could now see pretty clearly where all the difficulty was, and believed that he could clear the matter up satisfactorily. He told me that he now believed in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; and his view was that it was God the Holy Ghost, and not God the Father, that filled all space, and every living thing. He said if he had believed this before writing the book, he could have expressed his views without giving the wrong impression the book now gives. I placed before him the objections I found in the teaching, and tried to show him that the teaching was so utterly contrary to the gospel that I

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did not see how it could be revised by changing a few expressions. We argued the matter at some length in a friendly way; but I felt sure that when we parted, the doctor did not understand himself, nor the character of his teaching. And I could not see how it would be possible for him to flop over, and in the course of a few days fix the books up so that it would be all right.⁴⁴

I am reminded of a warning that Ellen White penned to Dr. Kellogg relating to his theories about God and their effect:

“You are not definitely clear on the personality of God, which is everything to us as a people. You have virtually destroyed the Lord God Himself.”⁴⁵

In addition to this, here is what James White and John Andrews wrote regarding the Trinity:

“Here we might mention the Trinity, which does away the personality of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ, and of sprinkling or pouring instead of being ‘buried with Christ in bap-

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tism,' 'planted in the likeness of his death:' but we pass from these fables to notice one that is held sacred by nearly all professed Christians, both Catholic and Protestant. It is, The change of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment from the seventh to the first day of the week."⁴⁶

"The doctrine of the Trinity which was established in the church by the council of Nice, A. D. 325. This doctrine destroys the personality of God, and his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. The infamous measures by which it was forced upon the church—which appear upon the pages of ecclesiastical history—might well cause every believer in that doctrine to blush."⁴⁷

"Those who seek to remove the old landmarks are not holding fast; they are not remembering how they have received and heard. Those who try to bring in theories that would remove the pillars of our faith concerning the sanctuary, or concerning the personality of God or of Christ, are working as blind men. They are seeking to bring in uncertainties and to set the people of God adrift, without an anchor."⁴⁸

Notice that the personality of God and of

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Christ were nonnegotiable pillars of the Adventist faith!

Another tragedy of the Trinity theory is the exponential damage it does to our perception of the love of God. Without a real Father and a real Son, God did not truly give us His Son. In this scenario, Abraham, offering up his real, only, and begotten son Isaac, showed greater love than did God. How can this be, especially when the Bible identifies God as love itself? (See 1 John 4:8.)

ISSUE 19

“ONLY BEGOTTEN” MISTRANSLATED?

[Pastor Doug quotes John 3:16.] *Here’s where we run into the limitations of human language—this time with the translation from one language to another. The Greek word monogenes, translated in the KJV, NKJV, and NASB as “only begotten,” doesn’t really mean “only begotten” as in being born—which implies once not existing.*
(Pages 61–63)

Great efforts are taken to say Jesus’ own declaration that He is the “only begotten Son” of God is mistranslated and doesn’t mean exactly that.

In the previous issues, it was declared that Jesus was only playing the role of a son, and therefore how he is a son of God is pointless when it’s not real. The other premise being de-

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fended is that if Jesus is the literal Son of God, then he is not equal with the Father.

So, in the Trinity, these verses relating to the “only begotten Son” have to be defined in a way that maintains Jesus’ eternal equality with the Father.

The bottom line in the teaching of the Trinity is this: No matter how John 3:16 is interpreted, Jesus is not truly the “only” or “the one and only” Son of God. It’s just a role He is playing in representing the Trinity.

Without any other consideration, the word Son in John 3:16 on its own is a masculine noun. It is translated to mean “child, foal, son.”⁴⁹

And whether you use the Greek words *genes* or *gennaō*, both contain the Greek root “gen,” as in the word generate. Each one can mean birth. Anyone with even a slight knowledge of the Greek words we commonly use in the English language recognizes the word “genes” as the second part of the word monogenes. “Gen” is its main component.

My very first internet search of “gen” brought up the following result:

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-gen: word-forming element technically meaning “something produced,” but mainly, in modern use, “thing that produces or causes,” from French -gène (18c.), from Greek -genes “born of, produced by,” which is from the same source as *genos* “birth,” *genea* “race, family,” from PIE root *gene- “give birth, beget,” with derivatives referring to procreation and familial and tribal groups. First used in late 18th century French chemistry (see oxygen), it probably involves a misunderstanding of -genes, as though it meant “that which produces.”⁵⁰

I think it is rather revealing that we have to jump through hoops to try to prove that Jesus is not the literal Son of God because it does not fit in with the Trinity God.

And the messenger God gave to the Seventh-day Adventist Church evidently did not buy into the theory of the “limitations of human language” when defining the “only begotten Son” of God.

We refer to the writings of Ellen White as

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the “Spirit of Prophecy” because her writings are part of that great body of communication God gave to us through the true prophets. Therefore, the thoughts she presented ultimately came from the “Spirit of Christ” (1 Peter 1:10, 11) as the “testimony of Jesus” Himself (Revelation 19:10).

Was Ellen White in error when she stated the meaning of “begotten?” Did she “erroneously” apply it to Jesus, as Pastor Doug asserts others have done (page 62)?

Through Ellen White Jesus has revealed that He was a “Son begotten in the express image of the Father’s person, and in all the brightness of his majesty and glory, one equal with God in authority, dignity, and divine perfection. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”⁵¹

She could not have been writing of Jesus’ incarnation, for He did not come in “all the brightness” of the Father’s “majesty and glory” in Bethlehem. It is impossible that Jesus could be the “express image of the Father’s person” without the Father being the point of reference and the one whom Jesus was like in ev-

“Only Begotten” Mistranslated?

ery way. Ellen White did not discard the word “begotten” but intended for us to understand it in the common English usage of the word.

In a book that is a favorite for most Adventists, Sister White again affirmed the birth of the Son of God from eternity: “The dedication of the first-born had its origin in the earliest times. God had promised to give the First-born of heaven to save the sinner. This gift was to be acknowledged in every household by the consecration of the first-born son. He was to be devoted to the priesthood, as a representative of Christ among men.”⁵² The reason the Israelites were to give their first-born son was to keep in their memory that God, the Father, had promised to give His first-born Son.

It is impossible that God “gave his only begotten Son,” “sent not his Son into the world to condemn,” and “spared not his own Son,” unless he had an actual Son to give, send, and spare not (John 3:16, 17; Romans 8:32). God is not an actor!

ISSUE 20

JESUS THE ETERNAL GOD?

*I believe the Scripture is clear about
Jesus being the eternal God. (Page 64)*

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3).

“And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16).

Neither Jesus Himself, nor the Bible writers, nor Ellen White supported the belief that Jesus is the “eternal God.” They taught that Jesus is the “Son of the living God” and the one sent by the “only true God.”

The very idea defended in Pastor Doug’s book is that the “eternal God” is composed of three coequal, coeternal individuals. Therefore, it is a contradiction to say that only one of

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those individuals is the eternal God. If each individual is the eternal God, then there are three Gods, not one.

ISSUE 21

CREATED TO BE SACRIFICED?

We say the cross reveals God's love. How so? By God the Father, at some point in the past, "bringing forth" Jesus for the purpose of being the sacrificial lamb for humanity's sins? If that were the case, the plan of salvation would be profoundly diminished because, in the end, it was not the eternal God on the cross dying for our sins but, instead, it was God creating a temporal being for the purpose of being thrown to the wolves. (Page 65)

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:9, 10).

Created to Be Sacrificed?

The Son of God, heaven's glorious Commander, was touched with pity for the fallen race. His heart was moved with infinite compassion as the woes of the lost world rose up before Him. But divine love had conceived a plan whereby man might be redeemed. The broken law of God demanded the life of the sinner. In all the universe there was but one who could, in behalf of man, satisfy its claims. Since the divine law is as sacred as God Himself, only one equal with God could make atonement for its transgression. None but Christ could redeem fallen man from the curse of the law and bring him again into harmony with Heaven. Christ would take upon Himself the guilt and shame of sin—sin so offensive to a holy God that it must separate the Father and His Son. Christ would reach to the depths of misery to rescue the ruined race.

Before the Father He pleaded in the sinner's behalf, while the host of

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heaven awaited the result with an intensity of interest that words cannot express. Long continued was that mysterious communing—‘the counsel of peace’ (Zechariah 6:13) for the fallen sons of men. The plan of salvation had been laid before the creation of the earth; for Christ is ‘the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world’ (Revelation 13:8); yet it was a struggle, even with the King of the universe, to yield up His Son to die for the guilty race. But ‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ John 3:16. Oh, the mystery of redemption! the love of God for a world that did not love Him! Who can know the depths of that love which ‘passeth knowledge’? Through endless ages immortal minds, seeking to comprehend the mystery of that incomprehensible love, will wonder and adore.⁵³

Created to Be Sacrificed?

The truth that “the plan of salvation had been laid before the creation of the earth” reveals two things. First, Jesus existed before the plan and was aware of the plan, should Adam fail. Second, Jesus was the Son of God before creating the very ones for whom He would voluntarily sacrifice Himself. To say that Jesus being the literal Son of God brings God’s love and motive into question, is twisted at the very least.

The Bible does not say it was the “eternal God” dying for our sins, but the “Son of God.”

Jesus being the literal Son of God only for the purpose of sacrificing Himself for humanity is narrow thinking. “He was the Word of God—God’s thought made audible.”⁵⁴ The Bible says, “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3) and that it was “God, who created all things by Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 3:9).

The Father created everything through His Son, the channel, or medium, through which everything in the universe was created; therefore, the Son Himself was not a created tem-

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poral being.” Would it not harmonize with the very identity of God to say the primary reason He had a Son was because “God is love”? (1 John 4:8).

Consider that “God suffered with His Son”⁵⁵ for the very reason that it actually was His Son who died on the cross. Any parents with God’s self-sacrificing love for their child would tell you it would be far easier to die themselves—and they would willingly do so—rather than see their child suffer and die. Do you think Satan did not inflict great pain on the Father by hurting His Son?

The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of “the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal.” Romans 16:25, R. V. It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God’s throne. From the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan, and of the fall of man through the deceptive

Created to Be Sacrificed?

power of the apostate. God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence, and made provision to meet the terrible emergency. So great was His love for the world, that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, “that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16.⁵⁶

When God sent His Son to this world, He was born to die, but Jesus had a choice in the matter. He understood the risk before the creation of the world! He chose to save humanity. Even though he was the literal Son of God, it was not mandatory that he give His life for Adam’s sin. As quoted above, even the Father struggled with the decision. And at any point during His life on earth Jesus could have saved Himself and made the choice to abandon us. He came to this fallen world “at the risk of failure and eternal loss.”⁵⁷

And if Jesus had failed by sinning, would the Trinity God have ceased to exist? If it requires three individuals to make up the one God, and

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one of those individuals is no longer qualified to be God, what happens to your God?

ISSUE 22

TAKING GOD'S WORD TOO LITERALLY?

Just as we can't take the words "Father" or the "Son" too literally, the same goes with the Holy Spirit. (Page 69)

Jesus said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (3:17).

"The Bible was not written for the scholar alone; on the contrary, it was designed for the common people. The great truths necessary for salvation are made as clear as noonday; and none will mistake and lose their way except those who follow their own judgment instead of the plainly revealed will of God."⁵⁸

Where in all the Bible or in Ellen White's

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writings, are we cautioned to not take the words of the Father and Son concerning themselves too literally? Where is there any indication that they are symbolic—or role-playing—and shouldn't be taken at face value? It is a slippery slope when any human decides what part of the word of God is not to be taken literally, unless symbolism is used. Are the dead really dead? Does God really intend for us to keep the Sabbath holy?

It should be alarming that a man of God would present sentiments discouraging us from taking God's word "too literally." These sentiments are not of man but of the one whose first lie of "Hath God said" caused Eve to disbelieve the literal word of God.

And what is the reason we are told not to take the words "Father" or "the Son" or "Holy Spirit" too literally? It's because doing so doesn't fit in with the fondly cherished doctrine of the Trinity.

Some who are unacquainted with the Bible think that what the ministers tell them must be true. They do not, like the

Taking God's Word Too Literally?

noble Bereans, search the Scriptures for themselves; but they accept the statements of those who have studied the word of God, not to learn the truth, but to sustain false doctrines, to justify their own theories. Many times these false theories are a jumble of inconsistencies; and if men would use their reason, and take the Bible as it reads, they would see the absurdity of their positions. The plain 'Thus saith the Lord,' would dispel their errors, as the mist is dispelled by the glories of the rising sun.⁵⁹

Satan is a cunning worker, and he will bring in subtle fallacies to darken and confuse the mind and root out the doctrines of salvation. Those who do not accept the Word of God just as it reads, will be snared in his trap.⁶⁰

God requires more of His followers than many realize. If we would not build our hopes of heaven upon a false foundation we must accept the Bible

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as it reads and believe that the Lord means what He says.⁶¹

The Word of God, just as it reads, is the ground of our faith. That Word is the sure word of prophecy, and it demands implicit faith from all who claim to believe it. It is authoritative, containing in itself the proof of its divine origin.⁶²

Consider the words of James White, one of our foremost pioneers:

“If we take the liberty to say there is not a literal Ark, containing the ten commandments in heaven, we may go only a step further and deny the literal City, and the literal Son of God. Certainly, Adventists should not choose the spiritual view, rather than the one we have presented. We see no middle ground to be taken.”⁶³

ISSUE 23

ANOTHER PERSONAL BEING?

The Holy Spirit is . . . a being who interacts with us in a personal way . . . (Page 69)

A personal being . . . (Page 71)

Another personal being, much as both the Father and Son are personal beings. (Page 72)

According to Pastor Doug, the Holy Spirit is a third and different “being” besides the Father and Son.

“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead

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dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you” (Romans 8:9–11). According to the Bible, the Spirit of God belongs to two beings—to the Father and to Christ.

Christ the Word, the Only Begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father—one in nature, in character, and in purpose—the only being in all the universe that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God.⁶⁴

Before the assembled inhabitants of heaven the King declared that none but Christ, the Only Begotten of God, could fully enter into His purposes, and to Him it was committed to execute the mighty counsels of His will.⁶⁵

Since the divine law is as sacred as God Himself, only one equal with God could make atonement for its transgression. None but Christ could redeem fallen

Another Personal Being?

man from the curse of the law and bring him again into harmony with Heaven.⁶⁶

The only Being who was one with God lived the law in humanity, descended to the lowly life of a common laborer, and toiled at the carpenter's bench with His earthly parent.⁶⁷

It should be noted that Ellen White's references to the Holy Spirit being a person, or third person, does not indicate she believed it was "another personal being." Just as the Bible does, the body of her writings must harmonize with itself. Do the quotes just referenced support a third divine being who is equal with God? According to these quotes, there is no third being who is equal with God. Either the prophet's understanding was wrong, making her a false prophet, or our understanding is wrong when it comes to the number of divine beings.

The idea that the Holy Spirit is a third personal being in addition to the Father and Son, is a direct contradiction to the light we as Sev-

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enth-day Adventists have been given in Ellen White's inspired writings.

Ellen White revealed the being who occupied the third position in relation to the Father and the Son: "Sin originated with him who, next to Christ, had been most honored of God and who stood highest in power and glory among the inhabitants of heaven. Before his fall, Lucifer was first of the covering cherubs, holy and undefiled."⁶⁸

The question is not, Does the Holy Spirit have a personality? Nor is it, Is the Holy Spirit a divine person? The question to be asked is this: Is the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Godhead, which is the "Spirit of your Father (Matthew 10:20) and the "Spirit of Christ" (1 Peter 1:11), a separate being from the Father and Son?

On page 72 of his book, Pastor Doug quotes from page 671 of *The Desire of Ages*. However, he did not include the full context, snipping off the messenger of the Lord's identification of the Third Person:

Sin could be resisted and overcome only

Another Personal Being?

through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church.⁶⁹

Can the "Spirit of Christ" and "His Spirit" point to anyone other than Jesus Himself?

"While Jesus ministers in the sanctuary above, He is still by His Spirit the minister of the church on earth. He is withdrawn from the eye of sense, but His parting promise is fulfilled, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' Matthew 28:20. While He delegates His power to inferior ministers, His energizing presence is still with His church."⁷⁰

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“By His humanity, Christ touched humanity; by His divinity, He lays hold upon the throne of God. As the Son of man, He gave us an example of obedience; as the Son of God, He gives us power to obey.”⁷¹

To see her consistency in who gives us this power, please see *The Desire of Ages*, pages: 24, 166, 305, 324, 329, 331, 336, 339, 341, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 367, 370, 371, 382, 385, 386, 388, 389, 392, 429, 439, 466, 474, 478, 480, 490, 493, 494, 599, 676.

ISSUE 24

THREE GET EQUAL BILLING?

[Regarding Luke 3:22:] *It does show all three persons—Father, Son, and Spirit—together, getting equal billing in the plan of salvation. (Pages 73, 74)*

The counsel of peace shall be between them both” (Zechariah 6:13).

“Before the foundations of the earth were laid, the Father and the Son had united in a covenant to redeem man if he should be overcome by Satan. They had clasped Their hands in a solemn pledge that Christ should become the surety for the human race.”⁷²

It is indisputable that there is a Father, there is a Son, and there is a Holy Spirit, involved in our salvation. The problem lies with the fact that the Spirit of the Father is seen to be, not His Spirit, but an entirely different being. The

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previous “issue” revealed quotes that make this an absolute impossibility—unless of course we choose to ignore the light given to the remnant church.

Additional light reveals that the Holy Spirit in Luke 3:22 is a manifestation of the Father Himself, not another being:

“Never had angels listened to such a prayer. They were solicitous to bear to the praying Redeemer messages of assurance and love. But no; the Father himself will minister to his Son. Direct from the throne proceeded the light of the glory of God. The heavens were opened, and beams of light and glory proceeded therefrom and assumed the form of a dove, in appearance like burnished gold. The dove-like form was emblematical of the meekness and gentleness of Christ.”⁷³

It was the Father’s voice, and it was the Father’s Spirit, testifying that Jesus is the Son of God!

ISSUE 25

LED INTO THE WILDERNESS

Christ “was led by the Spirit into the wilderness” (Luke 4:1). Who but another member of the Godhead could lead a member of the Godhead anywhere? (Page 74)

But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God” (1 Corinthians 11:3).

The “God” referred to here is the same God that John 1:1 says Jesus was with “in the beginning.”

“And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him” (John 8:29).

The Father was with His Son by His Spirit, so if anyone was leading Jesus into the wilderness—if Jesus was obeying any voice—

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it was the voice of His Father, not that of someone else.

Also, the word Godhead does not refer to a numerical quantity but to the quality of having a divine nature. As Ellen White stated in *The Great Controversy*, page 493, Jesus is the “only being in all the universe” who shares the nature of the Father.

The Father is always the indisputable point of reference. If there are only two divine beings in all the universe, and if the Father is the head of the other one, that makes the Father the ultimate being, or “Godhead.” This does not detract from His Son sharing His exact nature, nor does it mean that Jesus is not equal to His Father.

ISSUE 26

BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF . . .

Baptized in the name of the Father, who is God; the Son, who is God; and the Holy Spirit, who is not God but just an impersonal force? That doesn't make sense, does it? What does make sense is that the Holy Spirit is on par with the Father and the Son, regardless of the different function He plays in the plan of salvation. (Page 74)

What makes biblical sense is realizing that “God is a Spirit” (John 4:24).

When His Spirit is present, it is not an “impersonal force” but God Himself. Jesus is the “express image” of His Father (Hebrews 1:3). When His Spirit is present, it is not an impersonal force but Jesus Himself.

“Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth

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the Son hath the Father also” (1 John 2:23).

“Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me” (John 14:11).

“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:23).

There is no way to “make sense” of these very clear statements by saying it is not the Father and Son. The only way this does “make sense” is that the Spirit of the Father dwells in His Son, and when the Spirit of the Son dwells in us, we have both the Father and the Son.

The messenger of the Lord’s clear identification of the Comforter has only one meaning and does not indicate that the Holy Spirit is another being:

It is not essential for you to know and be able to define just what the Holy Spirit is. Christ tells us that the Holy Spirit is the Comforter, and the Comforter is the Holy Ghost, ‘the Spirit of truth, which the Father shall send in My name.’ ‘I will pray the Father, and He shall give

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you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you' [John 14:16, 17]. This refers to the omnipresence of the Spirit of Christ, called the Comforter.⁷⁴

The reason why the churches are weak and sickly and ready to die is that the enemy has brought influences of a discouraging nature to bear upon trembling souls. He has sought to shut Jesus from their view as the Comforter, as one who reproveth, who warns, who admonishes them, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Christ has all power in heaven and in earth, and He can strengthen the wavering, and set right the erring. He can inspire with confidence, with hope in God; and confidence in God always results in creating confidence in one another.⁷⁵

ISSUE 27

LYING TO AN IMPERSONAL FORCE?

[Regarding the experience of
Ananias with the Holy Spirit in Acts 5:]

*Can you lie to and grieve an impersonal
force? . . . These texts could not be said to refer
to some nebulous force or some impersonal,
immaterial essence that only emanates from
the Father or the Son. (Pages 71, 75)*

As has been previously shown from the Bible, and supported by Ellen White's writings, the Spirit of the Father and Son is not a separate individual but the Father and Son manifesting Themselves. And if this is the case, lying to the Spirit is lying directly to God.

What is overlooked in Acts 5 is the testimony of verse 9, which identifies the Holy Spirit being lied to: "How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?"

Lying to an Impersonal Force?

(Acts 5:9). The term “Lord” is in reference to Jesus. Jesus is the one who has been lied to.

“The Spirit of truth revealed to the apostles the real character of these pretenders, and the judgments of God rid the church of this foul blot upon its purity. This signal evidence of the discerning Spirit of Christ in the church was a terror to hypocrites and evildoers.”⁷⁶

According to the Bible, and supported by Ellen White, the Holy Spirit is the “Spirit of the Lord,” the “Spirit of truth,” and the “Spirit of Christ.”

ISSUE 28

JESUS AS GOD HIMSELF?

*Jesus the Son, God Himself, dying on
the cross for our sins. (Page 80)*

Not once in all the Bible do we find that “God Himself” died on the cross. Too numerous to mention are the times that the Bible indicates it was the Son of God who died on the cross. Also, God Himself dying on the cross contradicts two foundational truths: God cannot lie, and God cannot die.

The Bible and Ellen White’s writings identify “God Himself” as a singular being—the Father:

“But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him” (1 Corinthians 8:6).

“Now God himself and our Father, and our

Jesus as God Himself?

Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you” (1 Thessalonians 3:11).

“And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God” (Revelation 21:3).

“Since the sin of our first parents there has been no direct communication between God and man. The Father has given the world into the hands of Christ, that through His mediatorial work He may redeem man and vindicate the authority and holiness of the law of God. All the communion between heaven and the fallen race has been through Christ.”⁷⁷

If there has been “no direct communication between God and man,” then Jesus is not “God Himself.” He is the Son of God, and because of His relationship to His Father, He shares the divine nature of the Father, “God Himself.”

ISSUE 29

THE HOLY SPIRIT AS GOD HIMSELF?

We know the truths we know only because the Holy Spirit, God Himself, reveals these truths to us. (Page 82)

Amen! The Holy Spirit is God Himself, the Spirit of the Father—not someone else!

“And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 16:17).

“For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you” (Matthew 10:20).

“Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart” (2 Corinthians 3:3).

The Holy Spirit as God Himself?

“And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God” (John 6:69).

It is clear that the disciples believed that “the living God” was the Father of Christ—and therefore that “the Spirit of the living God” is the Spirit of the Father, “God Himself,” not someone else.

ISSUE 30

OUR EARTHLY INTERCESSOR?

[Pastor Doug quotes Paul Petersen in his book, *God in 3 Persons:*] *As Jesus is our intercessor in the heavenly sanctuary (Hebrews 7:25), the Holy Spirit comes to us on earth as the intercessor (Romans 8:26) to help us pray with the attitude and mind of Jesus, connecting us while still on earth to God in heaven. (Page 82)*

If the Holy Spirit is “God Himself” (Issue 29), and He “comes to us on earth as the intercessor” and connects us with God in heaven, how does that make an ounce of sense when the Holy Spirit, who is God Himself, is already with us on earth? Why do I need to be connected to God in heaven when God Himself is already with me?

Paul identified the human problem in Ro-

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mans 8:26. “We know not what we should pray for as we ought.” God’s solution to that problem is that “the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities” and that “the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”

“We must not only pray in Christ’s name, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This explains what is meant when it is said that the Spirit ‘maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered.’ Romans 8:26.”⁷⁸

The intercession by the Holy Spirit causes us to pray effective prayers. The Spirit inspires us to pray prayers injected with the resources of heaven and that promote God’s kingdom.

The question is, How many intercessors do we have? According to Pastor Doug, “Jesus is our intercessor in the heavenly sanctuary”—that’s one. And “the Holy Spirit comes to us on earth as the intercessor”—that’s two. This reasoning points to two intercessors, one in heaven (Jesus), and one on earth (the Holy Spirit.)

How many intercessors do we have, according to the Bible? Notice Jesus’ own words:

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“No man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6).

“Without me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5).

And the apostle Paul added:

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5).

And Ellen White’s testimony falls right into line with Scripture:

“While Jesus ministers in the sanctuary above, He is still by His Spirit the minister of the church on earth.”⁷⁹

“We have only one channel of approach to God. Our prayers can come to him through one name only—that of the Lord Jesus our advocate. His Spirit must inspire our petitions. No strange fire was to be used in the censers that were waved before God in the sanctuary. So the Lord himself must kindle in our hearts the burning desire, if our prayers are acceptable to him. The Holy Spirit within must make intercessions for us, with groanings that cannot be uttered.”⁸⁰

The final and most tragic consequence of believing that our intercessor on earth is

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someone other than Christ is that it removes our Savior from us and places Him far away in the sanctuary in heaven. His words promising, “I will come to you” (John 14:18) and, “I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20), do not *really* mean that “the Lord Jesus,” “the Lord Himself,” and “His Spirit,” is within us. The representative Trinity Triangle shown at the end of this book confirms the Trinity teaching that the Holy Spirit “is not” the Father and “is not” the Son.

ISSUE 31

ELLEN WHITE AND THE TRINITY

*The Trinity in the Writings of
Ellen White (Page 91)*

This is the title of the last two pages of Pastor Doug's book and imply that Ellen White believed in the Trinity and supported it in her writings.

The casual reader will come away with the thought that the inspired messenger of the Lord agreed with the sentiments of Doug Batchelor and the contributors to his book. Dear reader, in your honest and prayerful appraisal, do the quotes we've presented from the pen of Ellen White support or contradict these sentiments?

If Ellen White believed in the Trinity, you would think she would have mentioned it many times. How many times did she use

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the word Trinity? She used it exactly once. Here it is:

“This warning now comes to you, and what will you do with it? Will you say, ‘Have no fear of me?’ But beware of that which the old writers called the world’s trinity—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.”⁸¹

How many times did Ellen White use the terms “triune” or “three-in-one” to describe God? Zero for both.

Please note that editors added the word Trinity to headings in her writings, such as in the compilation *Evangelism*, page 616, and to introductory comments, such as in the *SDA Bible Commentary*, Volume 7A, page 437. These additions were not a part of her inspired writings. This practice makes it look like Ellen White taught the Trinity, much like Pastor Doug is attempting to do in his book. I was fooled by this for many years.

We have a dead prophet on our hands. She cannot defend what she wrote nor explain what she meant. How easily her words could be misconstrued to support someone’s agenda:

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I am compelled to speak in denial of the claim that the teachings of Living Temple can be sustained by statements from my writings. There may be in this book expressions and sentiments that are in harmony with my writings. And there may be in my writings many statements which, taken from their connection, and interpreted according to the mind of the writer of Living Temple, would seem to be in harmony with the teachings of this book. This may give apparent support to the assertion that the sentiments in Living Temple are in harmony with my writings. But God forbid that this sentiment should prevail.⁸²

Don't be fooled by a title implying that Ellen White believed and wrote regarding the Trinity. She did not, and God forbid that this sentiment should prevail. Her response above is a challenge to the Alpha of Apostasy—the error regarding the “presence and personality of God.”⁸³ Is the Omega to be totally unrelated to the Alpha? Is it not the “presence and

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personality of God” that the doctrine of the Trinity attempts to define?

Beloved reader, I would like to bring your attention to one last point. In addition to what has already been highlighted about the prophesied Omega for the Church, there are two more qualifiers to identify it: “Books of a new order would be written” and, “Our religion would be changed.”⁸⁴ It is left for you to decide which books abandon God’s teaching in our past history. And it is left for you to contemplate, What greater change could there be in our religion as Seventh-day Adventists than to change the very God we worship?

CONCLUSION

The doctrine of who God is affects every other doctrine we hold. As seen in the words of Sister White, “The personality of God . . . is everything to us as a people.” As she told John Harvey Kellogg regarding his book, *The Living Temple*, a misunderstanding of this vital truth can virtually destroy “the Lord God Himself.”⁸⁵

The papacy acknowledges this. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, “The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of the Christian faith and of Christian life. It is the mystery of God in himself. It is therefore the source of all the other mysteries of faith, the light that enlightens them. It is the most fundamental and essential teaching in the ‘hierarchy of the truths of faith.’”⁸⁶

The Trinity is the “rock” upon which the professed Christian church has chosen to build, and it has contaminated the truth of most other clear biblical teachings. As seen in the responses of this book, the Trinity doc-

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trine affects and misrepresents the biblical teachings regarding God, the Son of God, the Holy Spirit, the Godhead, subordination, the nature of God, the love of God, grieving the Holy Spirit/unpardonable sin, salvation/atonement/sanctuary, Creation, baptism, intercession/mediation, death, the Testimony of Jesus/Spirit of Prophecy, and taking the Bible as it reads.

This reality should not be dismissed by declaring the Trinity is a mystery. God has given us faculties to use and even common sense aided by the Holy Spirit which should be causing us to see red flags. One of our pioneers wrote about these contradictions. I will share only an excerpt:

QUESTION 1. What serious objection is there to the doctrine of the Trinity?

ANSWER. There are many objections which we might urge, but on account of our limited space we shall reduce them to the three following: 1. It is contrary to common sense. 2. It is contrary to scrip-

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ture. 3. Its origin is Pagan and fabulous.

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

2. It is contrary to Scripture. Almost any portion of the New Testament we may open which has occasion to speak of the Father and Son, represents them as two distinct persons. The seventeenth chapter of John is alone sufficient to refute the doctrine of the Trinity. Over forty times in that one chapter Christ speaks of his Father as a person distinct from himself. His Father was in heaven and he upon earth. The Father had sent

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him. Given to him those that believed. He was then to go to the Father. And in this very testimony he shows us in what consists the oneness of the Father and Son. It is the same as the oneness of the members of Christ's church. "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one." Of one heart and one mind. Of one purpose in all the plan devised for man's salvation. Read the seventeenth chapter of John, and see if it does not completely upset the doctrine of the Trinity.

To believe that doctrine, when reading the scripture we must believe that God sent himself into the world, died to reconcile the world to himself, raised himself from the dead, ascended to himself in heaven, pleads before himself in heaven to reconcile the world to himself,

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and is the only mediator between man and himself. It will not do to substitute the human nature of Christ (according to Trinitarians) as the Mediator; for Clarke says, “Human blood can no more appease God than swine’s blood.” Com. on 2 Sam. 21:10. We must believe also that in the garden God prayed to himself, if it were possible, to let the cup pass from himself, and a thousand other such absurdities.⁸⁷

The truth about God, His Son, and His Holy Spirit is simple enough for a child to understand, yet profound. It can be understood without declaring it a mystery, without acting or role-play, without using the “limitations of human language” as an excuse, and without jumping through hoops with a doctoral degree to “make it work.”

The shocking reality of which the vast majority of Seventh-day Adventists are completely unaware is that we are not practicing the faith of our fathers. The quotes provided in this book are only the tip of the iceberg.

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God gave Sister White the supernatural revelation that “the fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error.”⁸⁸ It should get the attention of every Seventh-day Adventist that we believe our pioneers had it all wrong regarding their beliefs about God. If James and Ellen White, and other pioneers, came to our church today, not only would they not recognize it, but they would be turned away for rejecting the Trinity.

The rock upon which Jesus said He would build His church, the same rock upon which our Adventist pioneers built, was the truth revealed to Peter by the Father Himself, that Jesus is “the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). Even suggesting we can’t take this at face value denies the very truth Jesus said was the foundation of His church.

As previously shown, the foundation of the papal system is the Trinity, which denies that Jesus is the Son of the living God. Tragically, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has imbibed these principles that find no basis in the Word of God and that accomplish the same

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purpose of denying that Jesus is the Son of God. We have bought into the lie that Jesus cannot be both the literal Son of God and at the same time equal to God.

The very first mind to challenge God was that of Lucifer, who questioned the wisdom of the Father in sharing His divine prerogatives only with His Son. Lucifer wanted to be included with the Father and the Son. He didn't want to be third any longer but to be included in the divine counsels. Truly, this is not a battle against flesh and blood—human logic and reasoning—but against a mind greater than any human mind. The Word of God is our only defense against this great mastermind and deceiver.

As far as the writings of Sister White, what she believed and what Jesus revealed to her is as clear as noonday:

God: Ellen White believed that God is a person, not a unity of persons. “God is the Father of Christ.”⁸⁹ She wrote that the Father is “the Sovereign of the universe”⁹⁰ and “the great Source of all”⁹¹—not the Trinity.

Son of God: She believed and wrote in

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terms that sustain the biblical teaching that Jesus is the literal Son of God begotten in the express image of the Father's person. She makes a crystal-clear distinction between a begotten Son and a created Son—they are not the same! She testified that Jesus was “given an exalted position”⁹² and “made equal with the Father.”⁹³ This is in direct opposition to any and all teachings supporting the doctrine of the Trinity. She wrote, “In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived.” And her very next sentence was, “The divinity of Christ is the believer's assurance of eternal life”⁹⁴—not His eternal preexistence, as the Trinity demands.

Spirit of God: Those taking her references to the Third Person “from their connection”⁹⁵ will have to answer to God Himself someday. That connection is with the true Third Person—Jesus Christ Himself. She wrote: “Christ has given His Spirit,”⁹⁶ that Jesus Himself “is still by His Spirit the minister of the church on earth,”⁹⁷ and that the Comforter “refers to the omnipresence of the Spirit of Christ.”⁹⁸

Ellen White agreed with the Bible in its ref-

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erence to the Holy Spirit as “the Spirit of your Father” (Matthew 10:20) and as “the Spirit of his Son” (Galatians 4:6). This contradicts the teaching of the Trinity, which asserts that the Holy Spirit is not the Father and is not the Son but a different being altogether called God the Holy Spirit.

The disparity between the doctrine of the Trinity and Ellen White’s writings is particularly glaring in the first chapter of *Patriarchs and Prophets*. She wrote:

Shall Christ be compelled to bear continually the shameful infirmities of His people because they accept the false sentiments proceeding from the first traitor in the heavenly courts? If the angels were deceived by Lucifer’s ingenious methods of misrepresenting God, if Adam and Eve were deceived by his declaration that God was withholding from them the higher education that would make them as gods, is there not danger that men today will be deceived? Please read the first chap-

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ter of *Patriarchs and Prophets* and see if the precious truths contained in this book are not given by the Lord to protect His people from deceptions that are urged upon them just now.⁹⁹

“Just now” was in 1906 when she wrote this, eight years after *The Desire of Ages* was printed with the quote about Christ’s original, unborrowed, underived life. Apparently, people were still in danger of being deceived by those misrepresenting God. Why point God’s people back to *Patriarchs and Prophets* if she had come to a new understanding of God with the printing of *The Desire of Ages*?

“The history of the first great rebellion has been frequently presented to me in figures. The same spirit that brought about the great deception in heaven is at work in our world today. Our watchmen must be wide-awake to give the trumpet a certain sound. Study carefully the first chapter in *Patriarchs and Prophets*.”¹⁰⁰

The history of God’s people and their repeated returning to idolatry has been “written

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for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come” (1 Corinthians 10:11). Do you think it is impossible for us to be worshipping idols? Is it possible to be involved in idolatry and be totally unaware of it?

Jesus quoted the words of Isaiah to the religious leaders of His day, saying, “In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Matthew 15:9). If the Trinity is a commandment of men, our worship of God in that tradition, and even the concept in our thinking, is vain and useless worship.

As the philosophical three-in-one Trinity god is not found in the Bible, it is a tradition of man. Its effect is to virtually destroy the Lord God Himself—the Father. If Paul was right that “God” is the Father (1 Corinthians 8:6), and if Jesus was right that the Father is the only true God (John 17:3), then requiring Jesus and the Holy Spirit to make up a composite God not only makes each a stand-alone God, but also removes the Father from His rightful position as Sovereign of the universe.

The result of worshipping the philosophical

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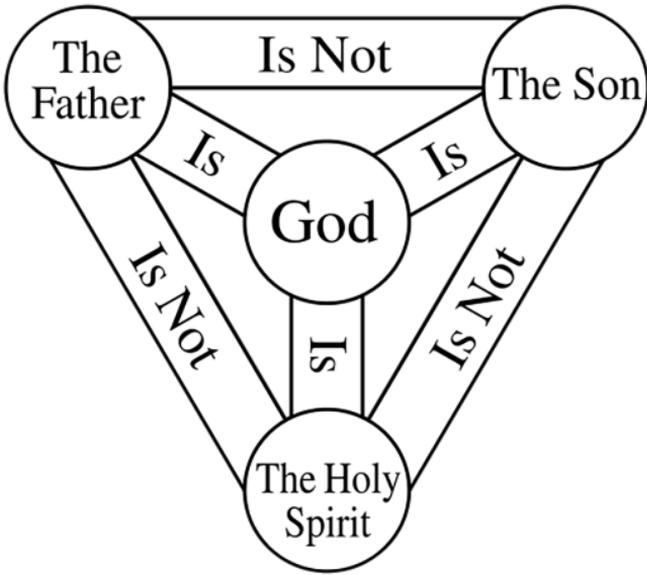
idol of the Trinity is evident:

In rejecting the truth, men reject its Author. In trampling upon the law of God, they deny the authority of the Law-giver. It is as easy to make an idol of false doctrines and theories as to fashion an idol of wood or stone. By misrepresenting the attributes of God, Satan leads men to conceive of Him in a false character. With many, a philosophical idol is enthroned in the place of Jehovah; while the living God, as He is revealed in His word, in Christ, and in the works of creation, is worshiped by but few. Thousands deify nature while they deny the God of nature. Though in a different form, idolatry exists in the Christian world today as verily as it existed among ancient Israel in the days of Elijah. The God of many professedly wise men, of philosophers, poets, politicians, journalists—the God of polished fashionable circles, of many colleges and universities, even of some theological institutions—

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is little better than Baal, the sun-god of Phoenicia.¹⁰¹

It is my earnest prayer that your eyes have been opened as you have read this book, that your ears have heard the certain sound of the trumpet, and that your voice will now warn God's precious remnant church.



*On the previous page is the
representative Trinity Triangle that
can easily be found in our
Adventist publications and that was
shared with me by a well-meaning
Adventist brother and sister.*

*Please consider if the assertions it
makes can be reconciled with the Bible
and Ellen White's writings.*

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

How can the Trinity be true if Jesus is the “only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God”?¹⁰²

How can the Spirit of Christ be another and different person to Jesus Himself?

If the Holy Spirit through all the Old Testament was the Spirit of Christ, as 1 Peter 1:11 says, then why can't the Comforter and Spirit of Christ be Jesus Himself after He ascended? What would the apostles receive when the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost? (See Acts 1:8.) And to whom was all power given? (See Matthew 28:20.)

If the Comforter refers to the “omnipresence of the Spirit of Christ,” could the Holy Spirit be someone other than Christ?¹⁰³

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If Jesus is present in physical human form in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, and by His Spirit he is also “the minister of the church on earth,”¹⁰⁴ can the term “Third Person” be reconciled with a different manifestation of the very same person?

“Since the sin of our first parents there has been no direct communication between God and man.”¹⁰⁵ How can this be true if Pastor Doug’s assertions are true that it was God Himself who died on the cross (page 80) and that the Holy Spirit is God Himself, as a separate being from Jesus Christ (page 82)?

If the Holy Spirit is a different being from the Father and the Son, and if the Trinity Triangle is true, how do the lines to the following songs we sing make sense?

“The voice I hear falling on my ear the Son of God discloses . . .”

Thought Questions

“Live out thy life within me O Jesus
King of kings . . .”

“He lives within my heart . . .”

“Anywhere with Jesus I can safely go . . .”

Is it not a contradiction to sing such things when the very doctrine we hold prevents them from being a reality in our lives?

THE WAY FORWARD

Reader, you must decide for yourself, from the weight of evidence, which God you worship.

One is the Creator and God of the universe, and the other is the creation of that great mastermind which first opposed God and His Son. One allows you to easily believe the Word of God and take it as it reads, while the other requires role-play, similes, metaphors, and in the end ends up in “mystery.” One is a correct mental picture of God that exalts Him, and the other mental concept results in having “destroyed the Lord God Himself.” One reconciles everything written in the Word of God and in Ellen White’s writings on the subject, and the other requires overlooking or actually discarding truth to uphold a tradition.

I can tell you how shocked and even disoriented I was at my discovery about the true God. It seemed unbelievable to me. The tradition of the Trinity I held and vigorously defended blinded my eyes to truths that were

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right in front of me all along. If you bring what you already believe, or what someone has told you to believe, to the Word of God, you will most often find what you want to believe. This is especially true if your membership, position, rank, or financial situation depends on adhering to the truth you want to see, versus experiencing the loss of what you esteem.

Tradition has far greater power over your mind than you think—such great power that even the disciples of Jesus rejected the very truth about His approaching death spoken by the Word of God Himself!

As Adventists and Laodicea, we carry some of the same spiritual pride manifested by the “Church” leaders of Jesus’ day. We can easily spot others following tradition in worshipping on Sunday and are baffled by their blindness. But tragically, we cannot discern the beam in our own eye. When someone tells us, You know not what you worship, we reject even the possibility that this could be true. Because it offends us, we label it as heresy. We have no more desire to see for ourselves than the religious leaders had to go to Bethlehem when

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the truth of Jesus' birth was spoken to them by pagans.

Like Nathaniel, listen to the warnings of God's Spirit before you decide to reject truth. Pray for the Spirit of God to guide you into all truth. Go to the Bible and to Ellen White's writings seeking truth, not to prove what you already believe. Live by "every word" that proceeds out of the mouth of God and do not discard or ignore even a tittle of truth to make up your mind. As far as possible, harmonize everything you learn and see.

Look for how the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are presented in the Gospels—their identity, their work and relationships, and believe it. Read the salutations and benedictions in the other New Testament books and note identities and relationships. Read beyond "another Comforter" in John 14 and see who it is. Once you see it, I promise that you can't unsee it! But without the Comforter to open your eyes, you won't see anything. Don't imagine God will enlighten you if you have no intention of obeying Him. (See Acts 5:32.)

Embrace the safety God has mercifully given

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to His remnant church in the writings of Ellen White. They contain wisdom and power to reveal the lies of our enemy and clarify portions of Scripture the enemy uses to try to confuse us, a tactic he used even on Jesus. If you think your wisdom is sufficient, consider this: “The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. ‘Where there is no vision, the people perish’ (Proverbs 29:18). Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God’s remnant people in the true testimony.”¹⁰⁶

Pay attention to who is being prayed to and worshipped at church. Pay attention to the songs you sing, realizing that they are an act of worship, and decide who is receiving that worship.

Count the cost and realize that you are not wrestling against flesh and blood, even though flesh and blood will oppose you and say all manner of evil against you for the sake of believing the truth about God and His Son. That is a powerful sign in and of itself!

Claim God’s promises. “Ye shall seek me,

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and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13). “Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper” (2 Chronicles 20:20).

If God opens your eyes to new truth through His Word or through Ellen White’s writings, don’t hide what He has revealed but share it with others.

Finally, seek the company of others who sincerely want to serve God, and know that you cannot go wrong in worshipping in the way our Savior has directed: “The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23, 24). And know that when you bow to the Son of God, worshipping Him and confessing that He is Lord, it is “to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:11).

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- 4 J. N. Andrews, *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Volume 6, March 6, 1855, 185.
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- 7 *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 204.
- 8 *Ibid.*
- 9 *Early Writings*, 54.
- 10 Please read *The Desire of Ages*, page 21, to see the “law of life for the universe”: that the Father is

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the “Source” of that life, and that “all things Christ received from God.”

11 Please read Matthew 23:37; John 3:16, 17; 10:36; 11:27; 16:5; Romans 8:32; 1 John 4:9; and the first chapter of *Patriarchs and Prophets* and of *The Desire of Ages*.

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- 30 *The Great Controversy*, 493.
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- 33 *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Volume 2, 60.
- 34 *Education*, 15.
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- 36 *Ibid.*, 36.
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- 45 Letter 300, 1903, paragraph 7.
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- 47 J. N. Andrews, *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Volume 6, March 6, 1855, 185.
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- 54 *The Desire of Ages*, 19.
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- 60 *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 52.
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- 64 *The Great Controversy*, 493.
- 65 *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 36.
- 66 *Ibid.*, 63.
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- 68 *The Great Controversy*, 493.
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