

"Watchman, what of the night?"

"The hour has come, the hour is striking, and striking at you,
the hour and the end!"

Eze. 7:6 (Moffatt)

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Editor's Preface

This issue for the most part was written and assembled by the Foundation Librarian, Terrie Lambert. Drawing from her reading as she filed letters and publications as well as from her own private study of the Word, she challenges the reader by some insightful observations in the first article from the life of Paul, the Pharisee of the Pharisees. There is a precise balance to be drawn between truth as a theory and "the truth as it is in Jesus." Our doctrines must be correct, but they must also correct our lives. "A theoretical knowledge of the truth is essential...[but] the truth must be brought into [the] heart," is the counsel given.

In the field are many who are reading the various publications which are flooding the homes in the Community of Adventism. As they read they sense that things are not adding up, but rather confusion is increasing. Some are seeking to find answers as to why the confusion. The second article was the result of one such answer which was suggested in a telephone conversation. What is written in "Corporate Calvinism" is straight to the point, and the example chosen to illustrate it is very apropos. The hour of the end is upon us. The complacency of living with fulfilled prophecy in the past, and with other prophecies to be fulfilled at some future time is no longer viable. We are in the midst of fulfilling prophecy! We can no longer play "tiddly-winks" with the real issues confronting the individual in Adventism. A straight testimony must be borne.

The article - "Spare the Rod..." - is not only practical in its insightful diagnosis of child raising, but it also can suggest to the thoughtful reader some questions about the Babe of Bethlehem. Printed with permission, we suggest more than a casual scanning of what the author is saying.

In "Let's Talk It Over," we confront one of the most troublesome questions in Adventism today, the use and the misuse, as well as the place of the Writings of Ellen G. White.



Overcoming Phariseeism

To overcome Phariseeism, one must first understand it. How does one understand a Pharisee when they are among the most misunderstood group of people in the Bible. First, we need to take a brief look at their history.

After Alexander the Great conquered the ancient Near East (331BC), there followed a more permanent cultural invasion by Greek language, customs, ideas and religion. Antiochus Epiphanes attempted to "Hellenize" the Jews, that is, to compel them to adopt Greek culture, and this provoked the most determined resistance, the Maccabean wars being the result (164BC). However, among the Jews, particularly beyond the borders of Palestine, there was a gradual tendency to adopt Greek culture which resulted in a liberal element in Jewish society.

The Pharisee sect arose in Judea in opposition to Greek influence. It was a conservative movement as they clung tenaciously to the customs and religion of their forefathers - historic Judaism. Their name means "the separate ones," i.e. the holy ones, the true community of Israel. Joachim Jeremias, in his book *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, says that "the Pharisees were the people's party; they represented the common people as opposed to the aristocracy. ... Whereas the Torah laid down rules of purity and rules on food for the officiating priests alone, the Pharisaic group made these rules a general practice in the everyday life of the priests and in the life of the whole people" (p 265).

In short their motives were to prepare a people, by strict adherence to the law, to be ready for the coming Messiah. As a result "the people wholeheartedly supported the Pharisees andlooked to [them], in their voluntary commitment to works of supererogation, as models of piety, and embodiments of the ideal life" (*ibid* p 265,266). The similarities to the Adventist independents of today cannot be missed.

To understand the individual Pharisee, one has only to look at the most famous of them all, at least from the Biblical perspective, Paul. In describing his background to Agrippa, Paul said that "after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee" (Acts 26:4-5). You could not get more pharisaical than Paul. So much so that he tells the Philippians that he was a "Hebrew of the Hebrews; ...Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless" (Phil 3:5-6). But what made Paul what he was, for not all Jews were Pharisees? The Scripture reads:

I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. (Acts 22:3)

Paul was taught to be a Pharisee. It was his education that was the contributing factor to his religious zeal. He "was a Jew, not only by descent, but by the stronger ties of life-long training, patriotic devotion, and religious faith. Though a Roman citizen, born in a Gentile city, he was educated in Jerusalem by the most eminent of the rabbis, and diligently instructed in all the laws and traditions of the Fathers" (*Sketches from the Life of Paul*, p 10). And Paul truly excelled in his learning. The Jewish leaders considered him a man of great promise and had high hopes concerning him. Paul was admired for his genius and eloquence. But he, along with his compatriots, despite their thorough education, were *ignorant* - ignorant of saving faith. For all Paul's learning and preparation for the Messiah, he could not even discern Him when He came. Historic Judaism failed Paul.

What did the education of Paul actually achieve for him? In recounting the testimony of Stephen, it is stated that "it appealed loudly to [Paul] and thrust conviction upon his mind; but his *education and prejudices, his respect for priests and rulers, and his pride of popularity*, braced him to rebel against the voice of conscience and the grace of God" (*ibid.*, p 24; emphasis supplied). What did it really achieve? It created prejudices against all that were not of his ilk; it made him a respecter of persons; it made him desirous of popularity and acceptance from his peers and superiors. It eventually took him to the point where he rebelled against his conscience.

However, beneath the blindness and bigotry of the pharisee, God discerned a heart loyal to truth and duty, and thus Christ revealed Himself personally to Paul on the road to Damascus. Paul's response was true repentance:

And as he journeyed he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? And he said, who art thou Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. ... And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what will thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. (Acts 9:3-6)

Paul recognised and accepted the voice as from God but received no direct answer to his earnest and genuine enquiry. Why didn't Jesus give him the instructions he asked for? Christ performed the work of revelation and conviction and now the penitent was in a condition to learn of those whom God had ordained to teach His Truth. Christ sent Ananias to restore Paul's sight, and then Paul became a learner of the disciples (vs. 18-19). From the very beginning of his conversion, Paul had to come to terms with the prejudices that had been instilled in him through his education. He not only had to become a "babe" and re-learn of those who only hours before he considered inferior, but he had to learn from people he

didn't even like! And there is no indication that he was reticent in doing so. It was true conversion.

Was this the end of Paul's battle with his Pharisical background? One particular occasion where his upbringing resurfaced, needs to be noted.

Years passed from the time Paul met Christ on the road to Damascus. He was on his second missionary journey. Having left Berea because of the persecution stirred up by the Thessalonian Jews, he was accompanied to Athens by some new converts. Timothy and Silas were left in Berea to strengthen the work. However, no sooner does he arrive in Athens but he sends the Bereans back with "a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed" (Acts 17:15). Paul is on his own in Athens.

Now Athens was the metropolis of heathendom. Paul encountered there a people famous for their intelligence and education. Statues, magnificent architecture and paintings abounded. Sanctuaries and temples were built with untold expense. The senses of the people were entranced by the beauty and the glory of art. But what was Paul's reaction to all of this? How would an ex-pharisee react? "His spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry" (17:16). If there was one thing a pharisee learned to loathe, it was idolatry; and to see it exhibited so brazenly had to have brought back some old attitudes for Paul. The difference this time was that his heart was drawn out in deep pity for the citizens and his mind was deeply impressed with the importance of the work before him.

However, Paul was *alone*. So much so that "his solitude in that great city where God was not worshipped was *oppressive*; and he longed for the sympathy and aid of his fellow-labourers. As far as human fellowship was concerned, he felt himself to be *utterly isolated*" (*ibid.*, p 90; *emphasis supplied*). But, Paul didn't remain idle. He felt a holy zeal for his Master's cause and went to work; first in the synagogue and then the market place (17: 17).

How was Paul received? Surely such a learned and educated community would have recognised the intellectual calibre of this visiting speaker. But what happened?

Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbling say? Other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. (17: 18)

The word "babbling" in the Greek is σπερμολογος (spermologos) and means a "seedpicker". Just as a crow or sparrow would pick up grain in the fields or tidbits in the marketplaces, a "babbling" was one who picked up stray scraps of knowledge and was overready to use them on those better informed. It was a piece of Athenian slang,

with connotations of a parasite, empty talker or ignorant plagiarist. This insult was not aimed at Paul's speaking ability, for despite a speech impediment, he was known for his eloquence. This was a direct attack on his intelligence and would have been an affront to the ex-pharisee.

Paul's opportunity to fully display his wisdom and oratory came with an invitation to Mar's Hill, and he made the most of the occasion. (Please take the time to read carefully the speech as recorded in Acts 17:22-31.) Paul ably exposes the fallacies of their religion, and charges the Athenians with ignorance for worshipping "THE UNKNOWN GOD." His words could not be controverted. The people were "carried away with admiration" as he spoke in "the most impressive manner" with "earnest and fervid eloquence." "The wisest of his hearers were astonished as they listened to his reasoning" (*ibid.*, p 94-95). Paul would have done old Gamaliel proud that day! Surely such reasoning and logic must have raked in the converts, but what were the results?

And when they had heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. So Paul departed from among them. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them. (vs 32-34)

What went wrong? We know that our God is not the God of numbers, but ever since the day of Pentecost, when an Apostle had the opportunity to speak before a crowd of people, many believed. This is the history of the early church when thousands were converted in a day. Something was wrong; something was missing.

In order to find the answer, we need to take a closer look at the Athenians, and the Greeks as a whole. The condition of the world at that time is recorded in 1 Corinthians 1:21 as being at the point where "the world by wisdom knew not God." Commenting on these verses, A.T. Jones makes the following statement:

It was 'by wisdom' that the world was caused not to know God. And that wisdom was the world's philosophy, the world's science, - in a word, the world's education. Therefore inspiration plainly shows that that which was accepted by the world as education, was itself the means of their not knowing God. But Christianity is the definite and certain knowledge of God. How could any two things be more directly at opposites, than are a system which causes men definitely and certainly to know, and a system that definitely causes men not to know? The Place of the Bible in Education, p. 10

What made the Greeks what they were? It was their education. And what did their education give them? It gave them prejudices, made them respecter of persons (intellectual snobs), and caused them to desire popularity (attention seekers). And for all their learning and intellec-

tualism, they were the most ignorant men, ignorant of the true God.

The question needs to be asked; what was the difference between the Pharisees and the Greeks, or worldlings? And the answer is - nothing! Both made a profession of religion and yet both were ignorant of what true religion is all about. How ironic that the sect of the Jews that arose in direct opposition to the worldly influences of the Greeks, ended up most like them. The education of the Pharisees failed them, as did the education of the Greeks. It achieved nothing more than to fill them with self and pride. And the same results are being seen today:

Athens was the third of the great centers of the world's education. Athen's was more than this: she was the mother of the then world's education. Yea, she was even more than this: she was the mother, in a large sense, of that which has been the world's education to this day. (ibid., p. 11-12)

Early Adventists understood well the principles involved in education, but midway this century Adventism lost the vision, and as a result generations have been churned out of the best of S.D.A Colleges thoroughly ignorant. Let's face it - how ignorant is it to believe that one is fully clothed when you are actually naked?

So back to Paul's speech on Mars Hill. What went wrong, or more appropriately, what was missing from his sermon that day? Just what was Paul trying to accomplish? Try to picture the situation again. Here is Paul, all alone, and in the worst place that a lonely ex-pharisee could be - in the midst of brazen idolatry. Not only that, he was facing public ridicule from the idolaters themselves. His education was questioned, and his prejudices aroused. He had no popular support for he was alone. And Paul demanded respect. Paul had to prove himself.

His Intellectual power commanded the respect and attention of the more intellectual and learned; while his earnest logical reasoning, and his power of oratory, held the promiscuous audience. Thus the Apostle stood undaunted, meeting his oppsers on their own ground, matching logic with logic, and philosophy with philosophy. Sketches, op. cit., p 92

Paul presented logic and philosophy instead of the message of the Son of God uplifted on the cross as man's Substitute which arrests the attention and awakens the interest of sinners. He brought himself down to the level of the Greeks and lost his priorities. How very, very human! And lest it be said that we are being too critical, we are not the only ones, for Paul was also critical and disappointed with himself that day. Paul left Athens for Corinth, determined to pursue an entirely different course. Later in writing to the Corinthians, he reminded them of what he taught them. He wrote:

For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath God not made foolish the wisdom of this world.....For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God..... And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. 1 Corinthians 1:17- 24; 2:1,2

Paul presented the plain simple truth, unadorned with worldly wisdom and, as a result, the fruits of his labours were notably different for "many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized" (Acts 18:8). He "did not labour to charm the ear with oratory, nor to engage the mind with philosophic discussions, which would leave the heart untouched. He preached the cross of Christ, not with laboured eloquence of speech, but with the grace and power of God; and his words moved the people" (*ibid.*, p. 105). Paul taught the Corinthians that salvation is not the result of adopting a creed, embracing a doctrine or believing a theory, but receiving the Truth in a Person, the very Truth itself. The learning of the world appeals to the intellect but is powerless to move hearts. It is the incarnate Lord, uplifted on the cross as man's Substitute, that arrests the attention and interest of sinners.

There is the tendency today to consider the Pharisees in our ranks as those who give strict adherence to outward reforms, in short, those working their way to heaven. While this is true and there are plenty of them; there are generations graduated from Adventist colleges with the same attitudes and problems with which Paul struggled. How many, for example, under the pretence of medical work, use portions of the sacred hours of the Sabbath to earn a living, not discerning the difference between the original health message and the deceptive counterfeit promoted by the world? We have to come to terms with the fact that there is little difference, if any, between the worldly education based on the Grecian model, and the education presently received by students in Adventist institutions.

A few years after his visit to Corinth, Paul wrote to the Philippians concerning his pharisaical past and testified that "what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Phil. 3:7- 8).

Did Paul regard his learning and education as worthless? No, but he had come to the realization that education sought and acquired for a purely selfish purpose is idolatry. All that he had achieved was of value only so far as it could be used to reveal Christ. For what good is it to know the Sabbath truth, and not know Him who is "the Lord of the Sabbath" (Luke 6:5); or to know all the texts for the state of the dead and not know Him who has "the keys of hell and of Death"? (Rev 1:18) What does it profit to understand the Sanctuary message, and not know the great High Priest who alone will accomplish the final atonement? (Lev. 16) Or what value is it to be an historic Adventist and fail to walk in the advancing light of truth?

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be... ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth. (2 Tim. 3: 1,7)

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Corporate Calvinism

Calvinism, the name given to a theological concept, dominates, with more or less rigidity, the doctrine of a large section of Protestant churches. It has become synonymous with the notion of "once saved - always saved," a perception rejected by the Seventh-Day Adventist Church as unBiblical. Calvin asserted that God had from eternity foreordained all things that should come to pass, so that some individuals were predestined, or "elected", to eternal salvation and others predestined, or "reprobated" to eternal punishment. The elect were made willing to be saved by God's grace which was irresistible. They were regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and *once saved always saved*. The saved ones could not finally fall away from a state of grace.

The Bible teaches that God, prior to creation, foreordained the divine provision for man's redemption, and that He desires that all men should be saved (2 Tim. 2:3,4). This is Biblical predestination. God does foresee each individual's choice that will be made, but His foreknowledge does not determine what that choice shall be. All who choose to believe in Christ shall be saved, with human choice being the determining factor (Deut. 30:15-19; John 1:12).

Is it possible to reject Calvinism as far as the individual is concerned, and yet accept it for a corporate structure? Can it be that our salvation, individually, depends on the choices we make, but the Seventh-Day Adventist Church is unconditionally God's predestined church, going through to the end? A brother in the East has suggested a term for this perception - "Corporate Calvinism" - which neatly defines the warped reasoning occurring in Adventism today.

From the beginning God stated emphatically that, "My spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. 6:3), and this

we apply to the individual. Years later He predestined a chosen people from the seed of Abraham, and established an "everlasting covenant" with them (Gen. 17:7). Israel, for thousands of years, would cling to this as an unconditional calling. Prophecy, that could be taken out of context to support their thinking, was dwelt upon (Jer. 31:35,36); while prophecy that would dare to tell them otherwise - "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people..." (Dan 9:24), was rejected, as were the many calls to repentance from the Lord's messengers. Finally, Christ Himself was rejected (Matt. 21:33-45), probation closed for the corporate structure in 34 AD, and only those individuals who heeded the prophecy given by the Lord (Luke 21:20,21), were saved from the final destruction.

History is being repeated. God has not changed, and His Spirit will not always strive with man. In 1844, God predestined a people with a "Sacred Trust" to take the last message of mercy to a dying world. For generations, Adventists have clung to this as an unconditional calling. Writings, that could be taken out of context to support this thinking is dwelt upon (See *Testimonies to Ministers* p. 15); while warnings that dare to state otherwise are muted (See quotation below from *Testimonies for the Church* Vol. 8, p. 247), as well as the rejection of the calls for denominational repentance (See *A Warning and its Reception*). Finally, Christ's own prophecy (Luke 21:24), that signals the end of corporate bodies, is also being rejected. Individuals are now making their final choices; either to accept Calvinism and remain with the corporate structure that has been spewed out of the mouth of God (Rev. 3:16), or to open the door and let Christ come in (Rev. 3:20).

An outstanding example of this Calvinistic attitude occurred in an article entitled *The End-Time Church* written by Colin Standish. He writes:

Some feel free to declare that the Seventh-Day Adventist Church is no longer God's church. If that were true, then probation would have already closed for the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. How can humans be confident of this? When probation does close, no one will know. This decision is God's, not man's. Even in abject apostasy, God did not forsake Judah. "For Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of hosts; though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel" (Jer. 51:5). Neither has He forsaken the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, though many within the church have no doubt forsaken Him. (Our Firm Foundation Vol.7, No. 8, p. 24)

To question the prophecy that Jesus gave for the last days is one thing, but to ignore the full history of the Jewish nation is another. God did reject Israel; and we can be confident that in the same way that He has worked in the past, He will work again. God does not alter, He "will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7). He has done so through His suffering Servant, Jesus Christ. The irony in all of this, is that

many of the voices in Adventism that are advocating corporate Calvinism and urging the laity to "stay with the church," are themselves outside the church!

"The Jewish people cherished the idea that they were the favorites of heaven, and that they were always to be exalted as the church of God. They were the children of Abraham, they declared, and so firm did the foundation of their prosperity seem to them that they defied earth and heaven to dispossess them of their rights. But by lives of unfaithfulness they were preparing for the condemnation of heaven and for separation from God." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 294)

"In the balances of the sanctuary the Seventh-Day Adventist church is to be weighed. She will be judged by the privileges and advantages that she has had. If her spiritual experience does not correspond to the advantages that Christ, at infinite cost, has bestowed on her, if the blessings conferred have not qualified her to do the work entrusted to her, on her will be pronounced the sentence, 'Found wanting.' By the light bestowed, the opportunities given, will she be judged." (*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 8, p. 247)

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Spare the Rod.....

While researching material for a previous WWN, we came across an article from the March 1997 issue of *Signs of the Times* which puts an interesting angle on the battle with "self". The author is John Rosemond, director of the Center for Affirmative Parenting in Gastonia, North Carolina. The title of the article is "Dethroning the Omnipotent Infant," and we reprint it in full below:

"Egocentric" was the term Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget (1896-1980) - the "Einstein" of child development - used to describe the infant's sense of omnipotent self-centeredness. The belief that he is the source and center of all creation is the child's first construction of reality. And for the first eighteen months or so of his life, his parents and other significant adults - assuming they are adequately sensitive to his needs - respond to him as if that belief were true.

When he's hungry, he signals to be fed, and someone feeds him. When he's tired of walking, he signals to be carried, and someone carries him. His parents roll him through shopping centres and other public places in a portable throne, in front of which perfect strangers kneel and ask for his blessings in the form of a smile. Given all of this, which isn't the half of it, the young toddler has every reason to believe he controls the world and everyone in it.

In short the toddler is his own first concept of God.

It takes the better part of two years to instil this fantasy in the mind of a child. It takes another eighteen months or so to wipe it out. In effect, a parent's job description reads: *Convince your child that he is God. Then convince him that he is not - and in the latter process, lead him toward a true understanding of his relationship with his heavenly Father.*

During the second eighteen months of life, the *Terrible Two's*, parents are charged with "dethroning" the child and assuming the authority he once believed was his and his alone. If they are successful, then by age three or thereabouts, the child will have made the passage from *egocentricity* to *parentcentricity*. His parents will have taken him out of the center of their attention and established themselves at the center of his.

The importance of this transition cannot be overstated. A child who remains mired in self-centeredness, who occupies the center of his parent's attention, cannot be successfully disciplined. Under the circumstances, he cannot develop respect for them; therefore, he cannot develop respect for anyone else. Scripture is also clear that we attain self-respect only after we've given away a sufficient amount of it to others. So the child who remains at the center of his parents' attention long past toddlerhood, while perpetually self-absorbed, can never develop true self respect. But the real tragedy in all this is that until a child is gently *forced* (!) out of the cocoon of his parent's dotting attention, he cannot begin the journey toward a deeply meaningful relationship with God.

In this regard, parents would do well to be always mindful of Proverbs 6:23: "For these commands are a lamp, this teaching a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way of life."

Think of it! The child who is deprived of adequate discipline is deprived of life itself! Such a child will likely become an adult who is obsessively enslaved to serving the demands of self and unable, therefore, to fathom the freedom of serving God.

Using terms similar to those of Proverbs 6:23, Christ said He was "the way" and "the light" (John 14:6). He also said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them" (Luke 18:16). Taken together, these words of Christ might serve as a warning to parents of the ruinous effect of inadequate discipline.

Unfortunately, too many of today's parents, with the best of intentions, are depriving their children of the way of life. Because they never stop catering and indulging, their children remain stuck in emotional/spiritual toddlerhood - demanding, whining, petulant, rebellious, and irresponsible. In short, *spoiled*. In a state of decay.

The bad news is there are entirely too many such children.

The good news is this condition of deterioration - of uselessness to God - is not irreversible. No, it is not easy to turn the tide of a child's corruption, but the rewards of doing so are as abundant as life itself.

Family Psychologist John Rosemond is the author of eight books on child rearing and family life, including *A Family of Value*, (Andrews and McMeel). Reprinted with permission.

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Let's Talk It Over

A recent mailing from Pilgrim's Rest included an article from the February 19, 1894 issue of *The Signs of the Times* (#767). On the back of the page, a concept was lifted from the article and printed in Old English script at the top with deletions. The deleted version reads:

God has a people who will preserve their fidelity to His truth ... [and] who will elevate the standard, and hold aloft the banner on which is inscribed, "The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."

In full context the "lifted part" reads:

But though the attitude of the churches is discouraging, yet there is no need of being disheartened; for God has a people who will preserve their fidelity to His truth, who will make the Bible, and the Bible alone, their rule of faith and doctrine, who will elevate the standard, and hold aloft the banner on which is inscribed, "The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." They value a pure gospel, and make the Bible the foundation of their faith and doctrine.

This is a misuse and perversion of the Writings, and shifts the emphasis which the "messenger" of the Lord intended to convey. The phraseology and emphasis used in the *Signs* article echoes what Ellen White wrote in the 1884 Great Controversy edition:

But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. (Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. IV, p. 413)

It should be obvious to even the casual reader that Ellen White did not change her position from 1884 to 1894 in regard to the primacy of the Bible. In reporting her final words at the 1909 General Conference Session, which would be her last session to attend, W. A. Spicer has written:

Well I remember the last words this faithful servant ever spoke in the general assembly of the movement. At a world's General Conference in Washington D.C., she came to the platform, on the last day of the session, to speak a farewell word to the delegates who had come in from the four quarters of the earth. She felt impressed that she would never attend another General Conference; and she never did. What would be the last message

by personal presence, in such an assembly, by one who had been so many years the agent through whom the writings of the Spirit of prophecy had come? Mrs. White spoke a few words of good cheer and farewell, and then turned to the pulpit, where lay a Bible. She opened the book, and held it out with hands that trembled with age. And she said:

"Brethren and sisters, I commend unto you this Book."

Without another word, she closed the Book, and walked from the platform. It was her last spoken word in the world assembly of the remnant church. Well was it symbolic of the lifelong ministry through this gift, ever exalting high, supreme above all, the Holy Scriptures as the foundation of the faith of the people of the advent movement. (The Spirit of Prophecy in the Advent Movement, p. 30)

What makes men, who claim to be "leaders" in this hour of crisis and confusion in the Community of Adventism, want to mute the position of "the Bible, and the Bible only"? And Ferrell is not alone in this work; the Standish Brothers have added their voices, as well as others. It is the hallmark of what is termed, "historic" Adventism. Well did the servant of the Lord write - "If you had made God's word your study, with a desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection, you would not have needed the *Testimonies*." Is the converse not also true, the Writings are exalted by men who do not know their Bibles? These voices may mouth texts but they are unable to exegete the Word of God.

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In Canada, write - The Adventist Laymen's Foundation of Canada, P. O. Box 117, Thorne, ON POB 2JO.

In Australia, write - The Adventist Laymen's Foundation, P.O. Box 846, Belmont, Victoria 3216.

Caribbean Contact - P. O. Box G M 537, Castries, St. Lucia

Editor

Elder Wm. H. Grotheer

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