

-1-

WHO IS A TRUE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST? (PART I)

We shall be attacked on every point; we shall be tried to the utmost. We do not want to hold our faith simply because it was handed down to us by our fathers. Such a faith will not stand the terrible test that is before us. We want to know why we are Seventh-day Adventists,—what real reason we have for coming out from the world as a separate and distinct people. {RH April 29, 1884, Art. B, par. 4}

Greetings dear friend. As Seventh-day Adventists we know we are modern spiritual Israel, or the spiritual Jews of the last days. In Revelation 3 though, we see two sets of Seventh-day Adventists mentioned distinctly at the end of time. One class of SDA is addressed lovingly by Christ using the words thy, thou, and thee. The other class of SDA is addressed negatively by Christ using the words them and they. Can you see the distinction below?...

Revelation 3:8-11 (KJV)>> 8I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. 9Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. 10Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. 11Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

As we see above, one class out of the two classes of SDAs is pronounced by Christ as being of the synagogue of Satan. What a pronouncement! These are obviously false SDAs. Christ says of the other class: 1)"thou hast a little strength", 2)"hast kept my word", 3)"I have loved thee", 4)"I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation" and 5)"hold that fast which thou hast". This class is evidently the true SDAs. So at the end of time we can be sure there will be two groups: True Seventh-day Adventists and False Seventh-day Adventists. We need to stand alongside the True!

The testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy (Rev. 19:10), brings to light this scene in Revelation 3:

-2-

"You think, that those who worship before the saint's feet, (Revelation 3:9), will at last be saved. Here I must differ with you; for God shew me that this class were professed Adventists, who had fallen away, and "crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." And in the "hour of temptation," which is yet to come, to show out every one's true character, they will know that they are forever lost; and overwhelmed with anguish of spirit, they will bow at the saint's feet." {WLF 12.2}

What solemn and awful scenes are before us! This is why we need to know the characteristics of the true SDAs so that we may be found faithfully among them; and likewise we need identify the errors of the false SDAs that we do not fall prey to those deceptions. Eternal consequences are at stake!

The Great Deception of False SDAs
What was it that caused the false SDAs to be pronounced as under the synagogue of Satan?
Revelation 3:9 (KJV)>> 9Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie...

These false ones say they were Jews, but Christ says they are not. What does the Bible say a true Jew is?
Romans 2:28-29 (KJV)>> 28For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Was there a church in the Bible who did not understand the inward principle of being God's true children?
John 8:31-34,38-39,44 (KJV)>> 31Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed:32And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. 33They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? 34Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin... 38I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which I have seen with my father. 39They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham... 44Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

The ancestral Jews in the time of Christ thought they were the true church - "Abraham's seed" - because they were the physical, earthly descendants of Abraham. But Jesus rebuked their deception, for mere earthly lineage does not constitute the true church. Rather as Christ said, they needed to do the works of Abraham - have a faith and character like Abraham - in order to be the true church. The same is true for Seventh-day Adventists - the Jews of the last days.

-3-

To be the true SDAs we must manifest the faith, principles and character that God has given us. If we do otherwise, and simply call ourselves by the name SDA, without fulfilling the principles of a SDA, we are as Christ said in Revelation 3:9, "of the synagogue of Satan". The false SDAs say they are Jews, but do not the works of true Jews, and Christ says as a result of this they make themselves liars and are of Satan's church. Can you believe it? Have we been guilty? Let us take heed to the further admonitions from Scripture...

How does the apostle John state this same spiritual condition?
1 John 1:5-7>> 5This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 7But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Before even John's epistle, Jesus also gave the same warning to His followers while He was on earth...
John 12:35-36>> 35Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. 36While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.

So, dear friend, to be a true SDA we must "believe in the light" - the truths God gave to us as a church. But we have to also "walk in the light" - practice these truths in our daily lives. If we believe and do not walk we are false SDAs, and if we outwardly walk and do not believe, we are also false SDAs. True SDAs believe AND walk in the light.

The Great Truths of True SDAs
Knowing that either a lack of belief or practice in SDA truth will make us false, we now need to be reminded of the truths which God gave to this church. We need to know what they are, and examine whether we are practicing them. For wherever we have willfully stopped walking in the light, we know we are entering upon the synagogue of Satan. What are the great testing truths and principles God has given especially to us as Seventh-day Adventists? Most, if not all of the truths would fall under the following themes:

- The Godhead - Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- The Holy Scriptures (Old and New Testament)
- The Everlasting Gospel
- The Second Coming of Christ
- The State of the Dead
- The Millennium
- The Three Angels' Messages
- The Spirit of Prophecy/Testimony of Jesus
- The Sanctuary: 2300 Days & Investigative Judgment
- The Law of the Ten Commandments
- The Sabbath as the seal of God
- The Sealing of the 144,000
- The Understanding of What is Babylon
- The True Character/Aims of the Papacy and Apostate Protestantism

- 4-
- Health Reform/Temperance
 - Separation from the World
 - The Sacredness of the Marriage Covenant
 - Systematic Benevolence (Tithe and Offering)
 - The Latter Rain: Loud Cry of the Third Angel/Fourth Angel's Message
 - Discipline, Order and Purity in the Remnant Church

Dear friend, as you look upon your standing before God, please remember that He judges us according to the light we are walking in - the light represented by the principles listed. Are you walking in all the light as a true SDA? Do you understand all these points of faith? Are you practicing them? Wherever you lack you need to study and begin to practice, lest your light become darkness.

Furthermore, is your church or conference walking in this light? Do you see them striving to uphold these original SDA principles? Are the leaders at the highest level (General Conference) teaching and practicing these truths? Friend, as you prayerfully consider these things I invite you to read through the inspired counsel closing this tract.

May God bless you as you strive to be a TRUE Seventh-day Adventist...

Inspired Counsel
Many of our people do not realize how firmly the foundation of our faith has been laid. My husband, Elder Joseph Bates, Father Pierce, Elder Edson, and others who were keen, noble, and true, were among those who, after the passing of the time in 1844, searched for the truth as for hidden treasure. I met with them, and we studied and prayed earnestly. Often we remained together until late at night, and sometimes through the entire night, praying for light and studying the word. Again and again these brethren came together to study the Bible, in order that they might know its meaning, and be prepared to teach it with power. When they came to the point in their study where they said, "We can do nothing more," the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me, I would be taken off in vision, and a clear explanation of the passages we had been studying would be given me, with instruction as to how we were to labor and teach effectively. Thus light was given that helped us to understand the scriptures in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God, was made plain to me, and I gave to others the instruction that the Lord had given me. {SpTB02 56.4}

God has a church. It is not the great cathedral, neither is it the national establishment, neither is it the various denominations; it is the people who love God and keep His commandments. "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Where Christ is, even among the humble few, this is Christ's church, for the presence of the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity can alone constitute a church. Where two or three are present who love and obey the commandments of God, Jesus there presides, let it be in the desolate place of the earth, in the wilderness, in the city, [or] enclosed in prison walls. {17MR 81.4}

The Lord Jesus will always have a chosen people to serve Him. When the Jewish people rejected Christ, the Prince of life, He took from them the kingdom of God and gave it unto the Gentiles. God will continue to work on this principle with every branch of His work. When a church proves unfaithful to the word of the Lord, whatever their position may be, however high and sacred their calling, the Lord can no longer work with them. Others are then chosen to bear important responsibilities. But if these in

turn do not purify their lives from every wrong action; if they do not establish pure and holy principles in all their borders, then the Lord will grievously afflict and humble them, and, unless they repent, will remove them from their place and make them a reproach. {14MR 102.1}

John met them with the scathing inquiry, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance; and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." {DA 105.3}

The Jews had misinterpreted God's promise of eternal favor to Israel: "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is His name: If those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me forever. Thus saith the Lord; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord." Jeremiah 31:35-37. The Jews regarded their natural descent from Abraham as giving them a claim to this promise. But they overlooked the conditions which God had specified. Before giving the promise, He had said, "I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. . . . For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jeremiah 31:33, 34. {DA 106.1}

"And now also," said the prophet, "the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." Not by its name, but by its fruit, is the value of a tree determined. If the fruit is worthless, the name cannot save the tree from destruction. John declared to the Jews that their standing before God was to be decided by their character and life. Profession was worthless. If their life and character were not in harmony with God's law, they were not His people. {DA 107.1}

If the leaders in Israel had received Christ, He would have honored them as His messengers to carry the gospel to the world. To them first was given the opportunity to become heralds of the kingdom and grace of God. But Israel knew not the time of her visitation. The jealousy and distrust of the Jewish leaders had ripened into open hatred, and the hearts of the people were turned away from Jesus. {DA 231.3}

The Sanhedrin had rejected Christ's message and was bent upon His death; therefore Jesus departed from Jerusalem, from the priests, the temple, the religious leaders, the people who had been instructed in the law, and turned to another class to proclaim His message, and to gather out those who should carry the gospel to all nations. {DA 232.1}

As the light and life of men was rejected by the ecclesiastical authorities in the days of Christ, so it has been rejected in every succeeding generation. Again and again the history of Christ's withdrawal from Judea has been repeated. When the Reformers preached the word of God, they had no thought of separating themselves from the established church; but the religious leaders would not tolerate the light, and those that bore it were forced to seek another class, who were longing for the truth. In our day few of the professed followers of the Reformers are actuated by their spirit. Few are listening for the voice of God, and ready to accept truth in whatever guise it may be presented. Often those who follow in the steps of the Reformers are forced to turn away from the churches they love, in order to declare the plain teaching of the word of God. And many times those who are seeking for light are by the same teaching obliged to leave the church of their fathers, that they may render obedience. {DA 232.2}

Will the churches heed the Laodicean message? Will they repent, or will

they, notwithstanding that the most solemn message of truth--the third angel's message--is being proclaimed to the world, go on in sin? This is the last message of mercy, the last warning to a fallen world. If the church of God becomes lukewarm, it does not stand in favor with God any more than do the churches that are represented as having fallen and become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Those who have had opportunities to hear and receive the truth and who have united with the Seventh-day Adventist church, calling themselves the commandment-keeping people of God, and yet possess no more vitality and consecration to God than do the nominal churches, will receive of the plagues of God just as verily as the churches who oppose the law of God. Only those that are sanctified through the truth will compose the royal family in the heavenly mansions Christ has gone to prepare for those that love Him and keep His commandments. {19MR 176.1}

If most earnest vigilance is not manifested at the great heart of the work to protect the interests of the cause, the church will become as corrupt as the churches of other denominations. {4T 512.3}

The great heart of the work is at----; and, as the human heart throws its living current of blood into all parts of the body, so does the management at this place, the headquarters of our church, affect the whole body of believers. If the physical heart is healthy, the blood that is sent from it through the system is also healthy; but if this fountain is impure, the whole organism becomes diseased by the poison of the vital fluid. So it is with us. If the heart of the work becomes corrupt, the whole church, in its various branches and interests, scattered abroad over the face of the earth, suffers in consequence. {4T 210.4}

Satan's chief work is at the headquarters of our faith. He spares no pains to corrupt men in responsible positions and to persuade them to be unfaithful to their several trusts. He insinuates his suspicions and jealousies into the minds of those whose business it is to do God's work faithfully. While God is testing and proving these helpers, and fitting them for their posts, Satan is doing his utmost to deceive and allure them, that they may not only be destroyed themselves, but may influence others to do wrong and to injure the great work. He seeks by all the means in his power to shake the confidence of God's people in the voice of warning and reproof through which God designs to purify the church and prosper His cause. {4T 210.5}

I have been shown that God here illustrates how He regards sin among those who profess to be His commandment-keeping people. Those whom He has specially honored with witnessing the remarkable exhibitions of His power, as did ancient Israel, and who will even then venture to disregard His express directions, will be subjects of His wrath. He would teach His people that disobedience and sin are exceedingly offensive to Him and are not to be lightly regarded. He shows us that when His people are found in sin they should at once take decided measures to put that sin from them, that His frown may not rest upon them all. But if the sins of the people are passed over by those in responsible positions, His frown will be upon them, and the people of God, as a body, will be held responsible for those sins. In His dealings with His people in the past the Lord shows the necessity of purifying the church from wrongs. One sinner may diffuse darkness that will exclude the light of God from the entire congregation. When the people realize that darkness is settling upon them, and they do not know the cause, they should seek God earnestly, in great humility and self-abasement, until the wrongs which grieve His Spirit are searched out and put away. {3T 265.1}

In the days of Samuel, Israel thought that the presence of the ark containing the commandments of God would gain them the victory over the Philistines, whether or not they repented of their wicked works. Just so, in Jeremiah's time, the Jews believed that the strict observance of the divinely

appointed services of the temple would preserve them from the just punishment of their evil course. {4T 166.3}

The same danger exists today among the people who profess to be the depositaries of God's law. They are too apt to flatter themselves that the regard in which they hold the commandments will preserve them from the power of divine justice. They refuse to be reproved for evil, and charge God's servants with being too zealous in putting sin out of the camp. A sin-hating God calls upon those who profess to keep His law to depart from all iniquity. Neglect to repent and obey His word will bring as serious consequences upon God's people today as did the same sin upon ancient Israel. There is a limit beyond which He will no longer delay His judgments. The desolation of Jerusalem stands as a solemn warning before the eyes of modern Israel, that the corrections given through His chosen instruments cannot be disregarded with impunity. {4T 166.4}

The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. {1888 1336.2}

An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren Waggoner and Jones. By exciting that opposition, Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world. {1888 1575.2}

God help us that we may remove ourselves out of the snares of the devil! If ever a people needed to be removed, it is those that took their position in Minneapolis at that time on the wrong side. It is a true saying that we cannot do anything against the truth, but for it. The precious truth of God will triumph; it has the triumph in it, and it is not going to fall to the ground, but somebody will fall, just as in the days of Christ. They have their boundaries and lines, and God has got to work in their line. God disappoints people a good deal. He works right contrary to what they expect. The Jews expected, of course, they were going to be blessed with a Messiah. You see there was no place for Christ. He had to make new bottles in order to put His new wine of the kingdom in. Just so He will here. {1888 639.1}

To a large degree the General Conference Association has lost its sacred character because some connected with it have not changed their sentiments in any particular since the conference held at Minneapolis. {1888 1567.1}

As things now exist in Battle Creek, the work of God cannot be carried forward on a correct basis. How long will these things be? When will the perceptions of men be made clear and sharp by the ministrations of the Holy Spirit. Some there do not detect the injurious effects of the plans which for years have been working in an underhanded manner. Some of the managers at the present time are walking in the light that they have received, and are doing the best they can, but their fellow-workers are making things so oppressive for them that they can do but little. The enslaving of the souls of men by their fellow-men is deepening the darkness which already envelops them. Who can now feel sure that they are safe in respecting the

voice of the General Conference Association? If the people in our churches understood the management of the men who walk in the light of the sparks of their own kindling, would they respect their decisions? I answer, No, not for a moment. I have been shown that the people at large do not know that the heart of the work is being diseased and corrupted at Battle Creek. Many of the people are in a lethargic, listless, apathetic condition, and assent to plans which they do not understand. Where is the voice, from whence will it come, to whom the people may listen, knowing that it comes from the true shepherd. I am called upon by the Spirit of God to present these things before you, and they are correct to the life, according to the practice of the past few years. {1888 1567.2}

The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist in giving up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engaging in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place, what would result? The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. Our religion would be changed. 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. The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath, of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure. {SpTB02 54.3}

I was confirmed in all I had stated in Minneapolis, that a reformation must go through the churches. Reforms must be made, for spiritual weakness and blindness were upon the people who had been blessed with great light and precious opportunities and privileges. As reformers they had come out of the denominational churches, but they now act a part similar to that which the churches acted. We hoped that there would not be the necessity for another coming out. While we will endeavor to keep the "unity of the Spirit" in the bonds of peace, we will not with pen or voice cease to protest against bigotry. {1888 356.4}

It will be well for us to consider what is soon to come upon the earth. This is no time for trifling or self-seeking. If the times in which we are living fail to impress our minds seriously, what can reach us? Do not the Scriptures call for a more pure and holy work than we have yet seen? {RH, May 29, 1913 par. 8}

Men of clear understanding are needed now. God calls upon those who are willing to be controlled by the Holy Spirit to lead out in a work of thorough reformation. I see a crisis before us, and the Lord calls for his laborers to come into line. Every soul should now stand in a position of deeper, truer consecration to God than during the years that have passed. {RH, May 29, 1913 par. 9}

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