

THE CSDA Signet

“And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO YAH” (Exodus 28:36)

A bi-monthly publication of the CSDA Church

MISSION: *Rwanda*

Over the years in the Creation Seventh Day Adventist movement, we have often been solicited for affiliation and donations by independent ministries overseas, particularly on the continent of Africa. While most of these were from the country of Kenya and upon investigation quickly revealed themselves to be scams, we have long had a desire to send a missionary to work in the field for the sake of any who may be sincere in their appeals for materials and information, and those who do not have internet access at all.

Approximately a year and a half ago, we received an email from two men in Rwanda, Africa who, like many others, were calling themselves the “Creation Seventh Day Church of _____”, with the blank space being their particular country of origin. We maintained dialogue with them over the course of that year and a half, and at the beginning of the year, the CSDA Church membership voted in favor of sacrificing funds to send Pastor “Chick” and myself to Africa to work as missionaries in the field. After study of the various countries at our option and the various contacts requesting our presence to establish the Church among them, we chose to begin in Rwanda with these men.

We arrived in early February and received a warm greeting from those who were expecting us. We were early on given to speak on national radio and announce our presence and work in the country, to a great response from the listeners. As became quickly apparent, Africa is a nation with many diseases and afflictions – with 9 out of 10 being caused by the afflicted one’s own decisions. As a result, the majority of our labor here has been in the lines of medical missionary work, teaching the basic principles of health and how they, when violated, will cause disease and disorder in the human body.

Educating people with simple remedies has yielded great success. We have had success with diabetes within 3 days in one individual’s case, and another stopped us in the street to tell us that her AIDS was improving already, before she had procured the necessary items for **all** of the remedies we had told her of. We are told that our reputation among those who have had success but not reported it to us had spread all the way into the heart of Kigali, the capital city of Rwanda, within two short weeks.

At one point, we went into a medical laboratory for an unrelated purpose, and as it turned out we gave health counsel to the head nurse and the majority of his staff, who were suffering from various ailments themselves. This was done with the translation work of the head nurse, who himself seemed very excited about what we were presenting.

The fact that we do not charge for our time or counsel is a great boon in the eyes of the people. We were rather surprised when we arrived to find out that, with all of the missionary trips and “good works” bragged about by the several churches in the world regarding health work in Africa, none of the hospitals or clinics that had been established in the area by **any** were free of charge. As a result, the poorer class is commonly unable to visit these places for lack of funds.

As we quickly found out upon arrival, the men who invited us were not what they professed to be; they had not accepted our message, and had definitely not lead out in any prospective “CSDA Church of Rwanda”.

In this issue...

Mission: Rwanda
African Mission Report... Page 1

The Six Denials
Six “ends” and how they necessitate the means... Page 3

As many African contacts before them, they had invited us under false pretenses and with outright deception in order to, they expected, receive benefit of our work here. We were a bit surprised to find out that they were not even Sabbath-keepers; the two leading men who invited us were both administrating the Sunday church whose building they professed to be merely using for Sabbath services to reap tithes from disaffected Sabbath-keepers as well as Sunday-keepers.

Pastor “Chick” was given a vision within 4 days of arrival that consisted of a parable of two sheep with wolves tails and Bibles on their backs, coming to him. Following behind was a large group of people hauling lush and beautiful fruits behind them on carts.

When he shared the vision with the leaders that were assembled, the Spirit caused the two who invited us to confess to being the two sheep themselves. We made it quite clear to them that we were not here to build up their church bank account or membership, nor would we be charging for our health services.

Shortly thereafter many false and frivolous accusations were levied against us, which were quickly met and temporarily relinquished. Within a week, despite a meeting in which they confessed we had true love and shed many tears for how they had treated and falsely accused us, they kicked us out of their home and severed connections with us. They lead us to a small field near their home and, at 9:00 at night, laid our luggage in a heap then departed back to their home.

A man with whom we had come into contact since our arrival took us into his home, and he has since accepted our message and been a great blessing to our work here – particularly in his ability to communicate with the local people. The language here is Kinyarwanda, with French being known by the educated, and English known fluently by less than five people with whom we have come into contact since our arrival a month ago.

We have had opportunity to teach the children in the public schools about the principles of health as well as how to sing songs of praise in English. Our prayer and expectation is that those who are touched by our health ministry, being the “right hand of the gospel”, will be further lead to find out how to be fully healed not only in body, but in mind and soul as well.

We have naturally been met with opposition since our arrival as well. There is a class of people here known as “reformers”, who left the Adventist denomination for an unknown reason, and who cherish unknown differences from it. Despite calling themselves “reformers”, we have found no area in which they seem to be reforming themselves beyond the denomination – they generally have poor and un-Christlike characters, they cherish known sins, and like the Pharisees of old, they expect that they know more than everyone else about nothing in particular.

We have found that their work has, as always, worked together for the good to them that love God. Even if they themselves will not accept the message, the opposition they present to us gives

those watching a clear contrast between our spirits and teachings, as their arguments vanish away.

The day-to-day experience here has been as great a challenge as it has been a blessing. We constantly give thanks for the knowledge that the blow that comes to us comes from Christ, in that His Infinite love allowed it. Much like the persecution we are currently enduring in America, we are blessed to know that in peace or in tribulation, all is for the sanctification and patience of the people of God.

There are some unique things about Rwanda in particular that have attempted to hinder our progress. One is that Rwanda has adopted the ISO calendar, which places Sunday as the seventh day of the calendar week, and Monday as the first day. While this has hindered the Seventh-day Adventists in particular, we find that our name, pointing back to the seventh day of Creation, not the calendar, bypasses this problem easily.

Another is that, because the people do not generally speak English, they require a Bible written in their native tongue. The answer to this has been a modern version of the Kinyarwanda Bible that was a joint work between Catholics, Protestants, and Adventists.

From what I have found, however, the Adventist position has been wholly compromised, allowing several twisted and horrible renderings of key passages of Scripture dealing with subjects such as the law, the investigative judgment, and righteousness by faith.

Sometimes words and ideas are inserted entirely into the text; other times concepts and words found in the original Greek and Hebrew have been entirely changed or left out completely. The people in general are aware of these problems, however, and are readily willing to examine the more reliable sources rather than to rest entirely on the Kinyarwanda translation.

Due to our not charging for our work here, and the fact that CSDAs are almost wholly of the poorer class ourselves, we have had difficulty in locating a building or office space from which to consistently offer health classes – most of the time our work has been done in homes and in the streets, with a massive amount of interest expressed by passers-by who quickly become attentive listeners.

We continue to remain in prayer for someone who believes in the work we are accomplishing here to provide a small low or no-cost space for us to operate from. We expect to be visiting the smaller villages and towns soon, and to reap a great harvest from them, as most of our labors have been in the Kigali (capital city) district.

I will here conclude this mission report. We continue to covet the prayers of our brethren overseas, and lift prayers of our own for them and those for whom they labor. May the grace of Yahweh be upon all who herald the fourth angel’s message faithfully in these last days. Amen.

UPDATE

Since the writing of the previous account, some new developments have been brought to our attention. Brother R, the man who took us into his home and accepted the message upon our removal from our initial estate, was contacted by his brother recently.

According to his brother, who is involved in the politics of the Adventist denomination in Rwanda, very shortly after Pastor “Chick” met with the department leader of stewardship, the same went to the Union president regarding our presence in the country.

Brother R’s brother told him that the Union president contacted him to ask him to attempt to change R’s position in regards to separating from the denomination, as well as to inform him that the president had made the decision to sue us regarding our work in this country.

We view this threat with some level of incredulity, seeing as even were a trademark owned and enforceable in this country we do not have any Church buildings or advertisements save personal calling cards. We do not expect that it is illegal for visitors to hand out personal cards or do health ministry.

The Conference, we found out upon arrival, is locked in a standstill with several parent-owned Adventist schools, operating under that name in the area. The Conference has demanded that these schools stop operating under the name “Adventist,” which the schools, operated by Seventh-day Adventist members, have chosen not to comply with.

As there is no trademark on the name “Seventh-day Adventist” in Rwanda, the Conference has been using mostly threats in this situation. It has been reported by some that are intimately involved in the school conflict that the Union intends to offer monetary compensation to the government in return for a “favor” regarding a closure of the parent schools using the name.

If these rumors are accurate - and we have little reason to doubt it from the verified actions of the Conference in this particular area - it is possible that a similar course, if successful, may be pursued against us. If so, we may or may not be able to operate freely in Rwanda much longer.

In this, as in all situations, we covet the prayers of Yah’s people for the success and preservation of His work.

“When a church in alliance with the state employs the secular power to enforce its doctrines by punishing heretics, it repudiates the essential idea of Christianity.”

—W.W. Prescott, Protestant magazine, Nov. 1911

THE 6 Denials

I recently sat through a Sabbath talk given by a prominent Seventh-day Adventist theologian. While the content of the presentation was nothing particularly new, one concept that came up – almost in passing – stuck in my mind. I realized that this concept had a broader application than the specific issue being discussed, and after some thought and prayer I realized that there are six main ways in which this principle is made manifest.

That principle is *a denial of the medium*. All Christians, whether nominal or dedicated, will share the same set of declared goals. The goals of Christianity, as embraced by all but the most liberal groups, are these: to teach the Gospel to the world, to walk in the manner of Christian duty, to receive continued instruction for this life through Bible study and hearing sermons or Bible lessons, and to serve the Almighty in Heaven and/or the world to come.

When an athlete, to use an example like Paul's in 1Cor 9:24-27, seeks a prize, he does not do so without expecting to run the race, or compete in the relevant event. When one seeks a qualification of merit such as a diploma or certification from a recognized institution, he does not do so without understanding that a course of study and perhaps an examination lies ahead. When a carpenter seeks to create a table, he knows that there is some labor (sawing, planning, hammering, etc.) in his immediate future.

In the Christian world, however, many do not see the relationship between the means and the ends of the sanctified life. We find that in each of the six cases I will mention below, the object or the goal is praised, while the medium, or the means of attaining that object, is denied. All wish to possess, or say they wish to possess, the objects of the Christian life, but far too often the God-ordained, Biblically sanctioned means for receiving or attaining these objects are rejected by those who claim to believe the Word of God.

“Faith, not works,” is the battle cry of those who persist in their denials of Christianity's Heaven-ordained methods, and it is an incomplete Gospel. Faith in the Savior justifies us before God and Heaven, yes, but as the Scriptures declare, while this faith makes us children of the King, it must “go on unto perfection.” (Hebrews 6:1) It is by our loving obedience to the instructions of Heaven that this is accomplished. (James 2:22)

The six denials, the six ways in which Christians praise a Biblical goal while despising the manner of reaching it, are as follows:

1) A Denial of The Victory over Sin

Denying victory over sin is not a New Testament phenomenon. Many today say, “I am a Christian, saved by grace... whether or not I sin has nothing to do with that fact.” What this amounts to is a belief that one can be saved simply by making claims to Christianity, rather than being transformed in truth by the message that they claim to bear.

The prophet Jeremiah faced the same fatal error amongst the professed people of God centuries ago. He had a message for those who accepted this view of faith and works, however, “Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Ba'al, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, ‘We are delivered to do all these abominations’? Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith Yahweh.” (Jer 7:8-11) The implications of this teaching are clear: One cannot say, “I am delivered,” and then continue to commit wicked acts without proving to both the divine and human witnesses that he or she is a liar.

John repeats this doctrine in his letters: “This 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. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But 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.” (1John 1:5-7)

He continues, pressing the point, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (verses 8, 9) That statement, “if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,” is often misused to declare that a Christian cannot cease from known sins. This is not, however, what John is pointing out. He is merely repeating his assertion that those who are in darkness, yet declare themselves to be clean, are misusing the idea of “grace.” Further, on a textual level, the language he uses is identical to Paul's who declares, “All *have sinned* and come short of the glory of God.” (Rom 3:23) The tense of the word “sin” in both these verses is the same, and denotes a past-perfect (*i.e.*, completed) state of being. If any say they have not sinned, in other words, they deceive themselves, for God has declared that “ALL” have sinned. John is being fully consistent with his later, powerful declarations that “whosoever is born of God doth *not* commit (*i.e.*, deliberately perform, present tense) sin.” (1John 3:9)

We are not told to seek Heaven independently of the complete

victory over sin. We are not told to expect a divine reward for evil deeds by calling upon the name of Christ in the absence of genuine repentance. Repentance, by definition, is a turning-away from evil acts, and this is prompted by the indwelling Spirit of Christ, giving evidence of Its presence. The Scriptures declare Yahweh's will for His people: "And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." (Ezek 36:27) This is not a statement that can be legitimately used to support religion by works, for the Spirit is placed within the believer, and then – after they have already received the Spirit – they are motivated by that Spirit to walk in Heaven's statutes and judgments.

Again, we read, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, *and His righteousness*; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Mat 6:33) Too many in Christendom overlook, ignore, or downplay this italicized portion, yet it is an integral part of the Christian's "seeking." Paul writes, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Yahshua, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom 10:9, 10) Many will read and cherish the first portion of this passage, but will deny the means explained in verse 10; the reason why confession of the Lord Yahshua results in salvation is because true confession involves not the mouth *only*, but also the heart which then believes "unto righteousness."

2) A Denial of The Sabbath Day

This need not take a great deal of time to explain, as most of the audience for *The CSDA Signet* is already composed of dedicated Sabbath keepers. It is, however, a relevant item of this list of "denials," and important to mention.

The Sabbath commandment, while included in the Mosaic Covenant, was nevertheless in existence from the very beginning of the Creation. (Gen 2:3) Like circumcision, it was considered a part of "the Law," (John 7:23) although it pre-dated Israel's experiences at Sinai, and is shown to be an everlasting covenant between the Almighty and His people. (Isa 66:23)

Many in Christendom, however, believe that since the Cross, or since the events of Pentecost in some cases, the sanctification of the Sabbath was either dissolved or transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week. Neither of these is Biblical, and the first notion is directly contradicted by the record of His disciples keeping the seventh day holy after the crucifixion. (Luke 23:56)

Although the Messiah explicitly pointed out that He had not come to destroy the law, (Mat 5:17) encouraged others to teach it, (Mat 5:19) encouraged others to listen to the words of the Pharisees who were teaching it, (Mat 23:3) declared it to be unchangeable, (Luke 16:17) and confirmed it as an outward evidence of love for Him, (John 14:15) many make the remarkable claim, "Now that we have Jesus, we do not need the Law."

It is true that we are not justified by keeping the Law, but by the blood of the Messiah's sacrifice; this does not, however, mean

we do not "need" the law. It was given to point out transgression, (Rom 4:15) and remains, all through the Old and New Testaments, the only standard by which righteousness and sin may be judged. (1John 3:4) Christ offering a sacrifice that we may be atoned before the Father does not affect any of humanity's other biological and spiritual needs. His subsequent ministry, and our assenting to that ministry, constitute an ongoing process of intercession on our behalf. (Heb 7:25)

Mankind continues to require air, water and food on a physical level. He continues to require prayer, faith and humility on a spiritual level. We continue, in fact, to need every gift that Yahweh has given to us, and those who are unable to see the Sabbath day as a gift have never truly experienced, or have forgotten due to backsliding, the blessing of those sacred hours.

As the Bible tells us, "There remaineth therefore a rest (*i.e.*, "a keeping of the Sabbath") to the people of God," (Heb 4:9) and those who reject this blessing are the very ones who so often seek in vain for the true peace, joy and freedom that they claim to be attaining, or wish – by some *other* means – to attain. The Sabbath, according to the Book of Hebrews, is the very means by which these fruits of the Spirit are developed, for it reminds us that we leave off from our own works, our own attempts at self-justification, our own efforts to earn spiritual benefits, "For he that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His." (Heb 4:10) The seventh day is the teaching tool, the medium, for instructing us in this matter.

3) A Denial of The Narrow Way

The denial of the Sabbath is but one specific in a generally much more widespread condition of modern Christendom, and that is the tendency toward *anomia*. This is a Greek term that means "without the Law," or, more simply, "Lawlessness." Many in modern Christianity will say, "Jesus Christ was the end of the law," misquoting Romans 10:4 – "For Christ is the end of the law *for righteousness to every one that believeth*." Those who believe in Christ as their Savior are not attempting to follow any set of rules in order to be righteous, for the Lord Himself is their righteousness, and His righteousness is placed upon them as a motivating factor in their lives. (Jer 33:16, Isa 41:10)

Significantly, when John says, "sin is the transgression of the law," (1John 3:4) the word he uses in this verse is *anomia*. In this, the only New Testament verse that defines sin, the apostle writes, "sin is *anomia*."

There are few who truly wish to follow Christ. Many claim to be His, and many go to churches and gatherings in which His name is praised, but who is willing to believe what Yahshua believed, and to do what Yahshua did? It is a narrow way, as He Himself declared, "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Mat 7:14)

While many point to the many baptisms their organization may

perform every year, the state of true godliness in the world is in decline. In the days of Christ, 2000 years ago, almost everyone was “religious” in one sense or another, yet in this time of unprecedented wickedness, few take seriously the words of the Messiah, that “few there be that find” the way to eternal life.

Even among ordinarily conservative Churches, including Adventism, there has been a steady increase in “celebration” mentality. Yet what is the truth? We believe that we are in the anti-type, the spiritual fulfillment, of the Day of Atonement ritual, of which it was said, “And ye shall have on the tenth day of this seventh month an holy convocation; and ye shall afflict your souls: ye shall not do any work therein.” (Num 29:7) In more detail, “Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement; it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto Yahweh. And ye shall do no work in that same day, for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before Yahweh your God. For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.” (Lev 23:27-29)

This afflicting of the soul is not to be understood as any sort of formalized mourning, or any artificial sorrow, but rather a solemn time of contemplation in light of the great importance of the spiritual procedure taking place on our behalf. The Apostles, though not directly living in this very last time, nevertheless embraced its principle. They write, “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Yahshua the Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” (2Cor 13:5) “But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.” (1Pet 4:7) The celebration movement mentality entirely diminishes the impact of these important words, sets the lament of Christ about the “few” who find their way to a life of no effect, and removes a sense of urgency that should attend our preparations and our seeking to help others to prepare.

True and godly sorrow, it is almost a paradox, is not in opposition to true peace or even true joy. There is great joy that comes from being united with the Father and Son. There is great peace in having a loving Father in Heaven, and a Savior who has been through more trials and temptations than we will ever called upon to overcome. There is great satisfaction in being able to explain one’s faith, and one’s relationship with the Lord, and to see that this testimony can be a comfort to those struggling to find their way through life. At the same time, it cannot be denied that there is a narrow way, and a sometimes-challenging walk, ahead for those who covenant to stand against Satan and the forces of this darkened world. The narrow way is, in fact, allowed by the Almighty in order to refine our characters and try our patience, (1Pet 1:7) as we all began this journey of sanctification with many defects and much baggage that must be abandoned before we could be truly happy in the presence of a holy God and the sinless angels. To deny the Narrow Way is, in fact, to deny a powerful and necessary medium of sanctification.

4) A Denial of Church Structure and Authority

As with the Law, as with the Narrow Way, many claim that the organized structure maintained under both covenants (first with the priests and Levites, and later with the apostles, deacons, etc.) has become a useless appendage. The concept of a *covenant* has largely been forgotten in those who claim to worship Yahweh and His Son, and this has been an irreplaceable loss.

The covenant that Yahweh made with Abraham has been the template for every covenant since: “And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, Yahweh appeared to Abram, and said unto him, ‘I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.’” (Gen 17:1)

Continuing to read through that chapter we see that this covenant had a condition (obedience), a change of name (Abram to Abraham), a token (circumcision), and a promise (many descendants). We can cite many examples of this pattern being repeated down through the ages. When Israel was called through the patriarch Jacob there was a condition (obedience), a change of name (Jacob to Israel), a token (a blessing), and a promise (a nation).

Each time there has been a calling-out, the covenant has been repeated. The fall of Israel at the crucifixion of the Messiah, for example, led to a covenant of obedience that included a change of name (Christian), a token (baptism and communion), and a promise (everlasting life). While the condition, token and promise have never changed since that time, the name of the Bride has always been modified to provide a testimony relevant to the current era. In the age that rejected Christ, the disciples were called “Christians” in order to properly reflect the covenant. In the age that was characterized by a slavish adherence to the authority of men, “Protestant” testified to the freedom each man has in Yahshua to worship according to the dictates of his own conscience. In the age that rejected the commandments of God and the soon return of His Son, “Seventh-day Adventist” was an open rebuke to these prevailing errors.

In this last generation, compromised by a belief in both biological and spiritual evolution (*i.e.*, no true victory, but “we’re getting there... eventually”) the name “Creation Seventh Day Adventist” testifies to the creative power of the Gospel. This is the testimony of the covenant God has made with us: “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature (*i.e.*, “creation” – this is the same word in the manuscripts); old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. For in Christ Yahshua neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” (2Cor 5:17, Gal 6:15)

It is necessary to add, in this age where the common view of “Church” is extremely unbalanced, that the issue is not about the name or structure of the Church *per se*, but about the method and object of worship; it is God who set up the Ecclesiastical system described in the New Testament, and God who allowed the various names to be given and to take hold. There are, of course, extremes in Christendom regarding what it means to be a Church member. One view is that the organization is itself to be worshipped as if Yahweh were not willing to

speak to and through every individual member. The other extreme is that the structure demonstrated in type by the Old Testament system of priests and Levites, and confirmed by antitype in the New Testament system of apostles, elders, deacons, etc. (1Cor 12:28, Eph 4:11, 12) is somehow less important now than it was in the first century.

That quote from Ephesians 4 reads in full, and continuing past the cited verses: “And [Yahweh] gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ” (Eph 4:11-15)

To say, “Yes, we must be perfected in Christ; yes, we must grow in Christian graces,” but to deny the medium – that organized structure of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers that the Almighty Himself instituted for that very purpose – is among the greatest errors of modern Christianity.

5) A Denial of The Holy Spirit’s True Nature

Within the Church structure, it is also (and absolutely) the case that we are saved individually by our personal association with the Savior. The Church does not invalidate the need for a personal relationship with Christ, yet neither does the individual connection with the Savior eliminate the need for the united fellowship of the saints. (Heb 10:25) The means of the connection between man and divinity, however, is the Holy Spirit. This is the medium, the mechanism, by which man maintains his link to the Savior and the Father of all. This is the reason why it is written, “All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.” (Mat 12:31) Why is this the case? Is there a part of God unwilling to forgive? This is not the case at all, but if a man rejects the Holy Spirit, he thereby severs the very conduit through which grace and forgiveness are imparted unto him. This is “unforgivable” for the simple reason that the Spirit is that which induces the repentance necessary for forgiveness and righteousness. (Ezek 36:27 as above)

This is expressed clearly in a number of verses, such as: “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” (Rom 8:26, 27)

Unfortunately, the Trinitarian view of the Godhead that is almost universal in modern Christendom has done a great deal to subtly leaven individuals away from having a healthy and Biblically accurate perception of the Father and Son. The statement

that “the Godhead is a mystery” has been used as license for largely unchecked speculation about the nature, essence and composition of that Godhead, far beyond what the Bible actually declares. For some, the Godhead is three beings acting as one. For some, It’s one being acting as three. For others, it is One not merely acting, but actually manifest as three, and for yet others it is three acting with a common purpose, but they are not “joined” in any way except cooperatively. *Not one of these concepts is expressed in the Bible*, yet Churches and communities have been divided over a futile attempt to grasp what is, by its very nature, beyond human capacity to grasp.

The problem with the Trinity paradigm is that it is an entirely human invention; it exists as an attempt to describe the three highest powers in existence, but its great flaw is that it is limited to human language, and the great mistake associated with it is that it has been used as a test of orthodoxy for hundreds of years. An individual, a Christian, may believe *every written word* of the Scriptures, Old Testament and New; but if he or she says, “I don’t believe the Trinity doctrine,” immediately labels like “cultic,” “unorthodox,” even “heretical” are applied, and this is a travesty, considering that most of the wielders of these words claim to follow the principle of *sola scriptura*.

Nowhere are the flaws of the Trinity model more obvious than in its attempt to define the Holy Spirit as a co-equal, co-eternal member of the Godhead. Nowhere in the Scriptures is the Holy Spirit given the same status as the Father or Son. The Spirit is not called God, is not prayed to, is not shown to act or speak without the presence of an agent (a prophet, a Church, an angel), is *never* worshipped, and is never described in anthropomorphic terms. This last fact is significant; humanity is said to have been created in the “image” of God, and it is therefore entirely appropriate that both the Father and Son are described in very “human” terms. This is not the case with their Holy Spirit. Instead, the Spirit is poured out, sent, withheld, etc., according to the will of the Father and/or the Son, being manifest as a flame, a dove, and so on.

The Spirit is the very “earnest” of Salvation, the very down payment on life everlasting, (2Cor 5:5) but that life itself depends upon knowledge of the Persons of the Godhead. (John 17:3) Those who deny the true nature of the Spirit, as the *spirit* of the Father and Son, and not a separate being unto Itself, seek to be filled by a third, non-existent person, yet to reap the benefits of being filled with the Father and Son by means of their Spirit. This latter view is that which the Bible promotes: “Yahshua 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) Now, this is not to say that one who believes in the Trinity cannot have a loving relationship with the Savior, and be walking on the road that leads to salvation. Yet with the concept of a third co-equal person working with the Father and Son, it is far more difficult (in the experience of this Church) for such an individual to truly grasp the concept of absolute victory over all known sin, and this is tied in to the fact that everlasting life involves an intimate *knowledge* (not speculative idea) of the Father and the Son.

6) A Denial of The Image of The Beast

This last denial is found commonly (but not exclusively) among mainstream Seventh-day Adventists. The truth is that it can be found among any individuals or group of people who have a very strong view of what the “image of the beast” and the consequent “mark of the beast” is. Adventists have developed a very consistent Biblical view of this, demonstrating that a “beast” represents a kingdom of human power, and that in the last days there will be a choice to make between allegiance to this representation of worldly authority, or the King of Heaven. One of the signature beliefs of Seventh-day Adventism is that there is a coming Sunday Law, in which the nations of the earth will enact a decree forbidding the proper observance of the Biblical Sabbath, and instead the first day of the week will be exalted according to the traditions of man.

This is certainly a valid application of the Biblical principles but, and here is the problem, it is not the *only* Scripturally sound application of John’s prophecy. Of course, if a Sunday Law comes to pass those who are faithful to God will reject it, even unto death if necessary, rather than violate the commandments of God. The protest of any worldly power that sets itself up against God’s commandments is one of the defining characteristics of the last-day saints. They have “the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus,” (Rev 14:12) and they overcome this beast power due to the fact that “they loved not their lives unto the death.” (Rev 12:11)

Does this mean that since it is prophesied that a Church will unite with a state and produce a particular unjust law that we are duty-bound to protest, we may ignore other unjust laws produced by unions of civil and ecclesiastical power? This is not a proper view of Biblical prophecy.

The Scripture says, “What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?” (Mat 12:11) It is lawful, therefore, to lift a sheep out of a pit on the Sabbath day, yet not violate the spirit of “thou shalt do no work.” But now, what if a goat should fall into a pit? What if a team of oxen should be stuck in a mudslide? Do we, because inspiration says “sheep,” ignore the suffering of other helpless animals? Much the same has been done within Adventism regarding the Sunday Law, and among other denominations regarding their personal view of what the Mark of The Beast is, whether it be the worship of Mary, a microchip in the hand, or (as we teach it) a trademark on the name “Seventh-day Adventist” that seeks to restrict those who feel it a religious duty to bear that name as a testimony from doing so.

So which of these is correct? Which is the real Mark? The truth is, they are potentially all – every one of them – the result of a union of civil and religious power. So which do we protest? We are duty-bound to protest *every* existing product of a church/state union that seeks to restrict religious liberty, and vigorously so. Many, upon hearing about the union between the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and the United States civil government, say, “That’s no big deal.” Many, upon

hearing that this church has, by the use of civil power, put men in jail, confiscated property, ruined lives, say, “That’s just the church doing what it must to protect itself.” Many, upon hearing that this ecclesiastical body has the authority, under the law, to regulate religious observances, say, “What does this have to do with an image of the beast?”

They do not see, or will not see, that based upon the Bible, this is an example of an image of the beast; this is a Church directing the course of a worldly power to accomplish its own desired ends. It is an image, a very reflection, of papal Rome, which Protestant Christians were once (and rightly) convinced was an emblem upon this earth of the power of Satan to corrupt that which was once pure and holy.

We read the Scripture, “If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation ...” (Rev 14:9, 10) We know the importance of avoiding the worship of the beast or the image, and the necessity of being able to properly identify what these are... yet many believe that since these things have already been defined (in their view) there is less need to *watch* and pray (Mat 26:41) that we may avoid the deceptions of the last days. By denying the Biblical principles of how to identify a beast (a worldly kingdom in opposition to Heaven) and the apostate woman of the Revelation (a fallen Church using the worldly kingdom for her own gain – Rev 17:3-7) many in modern Christianity fail to come to an understanding of the true role of a Protestant in these last and most dangerous times. They deny the medium that would allow them to stand in integrity in the closing scenes of human history.

In each of the above examples, the professor of faith desires, or claims to desire, the goal outlined in the Scripture. Yet in each case, the very means of identifying the path to acquiring it, or to establish one in the truth, is ignored, seen as unimportant, disbelieved, or rejected for some carnal consideration. It is necessary, more now than ever before, that we accept the Scripturally sound means of obtaining our goals. The Christian must 1) walk in victory, 2) keep the commandments of God – including the fourth, 3) recognize that there is a “narrow way” that requires a dedication to the process of sanctification, 4) respect the institutions that God Himself has designed for the express purpose of equipping and refining the saints, 5) accept the Biblical view of the Godhead and look with great caution upon those paradigms and explanations and “tests” offered by human reasoning, and 6) be able to use the Scriptures to identify the last Biblically described enemy of the people of God that his protest will be according to the responsibilities to which he is called.

If we are diligent in prayer, and humble to accept the truth where it lies, we will find ourselves firmly committed to walking ever upward on the Highway of Holiness.

— David P. Aguilar

Feast of Unleavened Bread 2008

The Feast of Unleavened Bread camp meeting will be held at the CSDA Church in Guys, Tennessee. Services will begin Friday, April 18th and continue through Sabbath, April 26th.

Healthy meals and on-site lodging will be provided free of charge. Please contact Barbara McGill for more details and to arrange accommodations for yourself and your loved ones. All are welcome and invited to attend and enjoy the fellowship of the saints as we prepare for the final ingathering of God's people to the heavenly garner.

Mrs. McGill may be contacted using the national toll-free Church number at 1-888-284-2487 or via email at barbli@hotmail.com

You may also visit our website for more information, at www.csdachurch.org or www.csd.us

"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; that he took on him the nature of the seed of Abraham for the redemption of our fallen race; that he dwelt among men full of grace and truth, lived our example, died our sacrifice, was raised for our justification, ascended on high to be our only mediator in the sanctuary in Heaven, where, with his own blood, he makes atonement for our sins; which atonement, so far from being made on the cross, which was but the offering of the sacrifice, is the very last portion of his work as priest, according to the example of the Levitical priesthood, which foreshadowed and prefigured the ministry of our Lord in Heaven. See Leviticus ch. 16, Hebrews 8:4, 5; 9:6, 7; &c.

- 1872 Statement of Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventists, Article 2

Announcement

CSDA Internet Radio is Live!

Join us on the internet 24/7 via Winamp, Realplayer, or iTunes to hear broadcasts of various CSDA inspirational and educational programs.

Join us Sabbath mornings starting at 10:30 a.m. CST for live broadcasts of our song service and Sabbath sermon.

For more information, and a listing of our upcoming Sabbath song list, please visit:

www.7thdayadventist.ws

Live broadcasts will also be available for select services during the upcoming camp meeting.

A Publication of the CSDA Church

Church Home Office:

1162 Old Highway 45 South
Guys, TN 38339

Editor:

Lucan Chartier
claimvictory@hotmail.com
662-287-9758

Distribution:

Barbara McGill
Barbli@hotmail.com
731-239-8000