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*I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.
Galatians 1:6–9 (NIV)*

God recently used a remarkable group of people to pierce my conscience.

They're former Seventh-day Adventists. They came to southern California from as far away as Canada and the Caribbean to attend the third annual Former Adventist Fellowship meeting. And to be honest, despite my many years of trying to avoid the subject, they now have my undivided attention.

What explains the inner turmoil and confusion experienced by so many who leave Adventism? The sad answer: It's not a normal church; it's a cultic movement—one that must be exposed and opposed both here and around the world.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has 15.4 million followers in more than 200 countries—placing it in the same size range as the Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and New Apostolic Church. Last year it grew by roughly a million members, at a rate of about 3,000 per day. And it accomplished this, in large part, by persuading non-Adventists that faith alone in Christ alone is not sufficient for salvation. Indeed, if contemporary Adventists merely emphasized Saturday as the ideal day of worship, it would be one thing; but the differences between biblical Christianity and Seventh-day Adventism run far, far deeper.

The movement sprang from the false prophecies of William Miller, a Baptist preacher who twice predicted the Second Coming of Christ—first in March of 1843, then in October of 1844. In the wake of these failures, three of the groups that had followed Miller's message banded together and eventually organized the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1863. One of the principal members of these early groups was Ellen G. White, who as a teenager claimed to experience the first of some 2,000 divine visions in 1844.

What separates Seventh-day Adventism from biblical Christianity today? There are many areas of serious conflict, but three stand out:

- ▶ **Ellen G. White.** Considered "the Lord's messenger" and the "spirit of prophecy," Mrs. White is central to Seventh-day Adventism. The nature of her role as a "continuing and authoritative source of truth" for the church demands that we test her affirmations by biblical tests of a prophet (such as Deut. 18:21–22). Mrs. White wrote copiously,

claiming that God had given her visions of the past, the future, and even the sinless and smiling inhabitants of other planets. Though she was not always in error, in her revelations she contradicts not only the Bible, but herself. At times she undermines the deity of Christ, indicates that He had a sinful nature while on earth, and declares His atoning work on the cross incomplete. Mrs. White also places an unbearable—and fundamentally unscriptural—burden of righteousness through works on her followers (labeling the teaching that Christ’s imputed righteousness fulfills the law as “gross deception”). We now know that she plagiarized vast amounts of material in her supposedly inspired writings—a fact that church leaders have actively sought to suppress.

- ▶ **Investigative Judgment.** Right after the “Great Disappointment” of Miller’s failed 1844 prediction, an Adventist named Hiram Edson said he received a vision clarifying the prediction’s true meaning. Instead of Christ’s Second Coming, the completed 2,300-day period of Daniel 8:14 signaled Jesus’ transition from one compartment to another within the heavenly sanctuary. Adventists explain that He did this to initiate a long-term “investigative judgment” of professed Christians. This convoluted new doctrine—which has no scriptural support—was intended to solve one problem, but instead unleashed a host of others. Serious Adventists live in fear that they will be lost for eternity because Christ will plead their case only if they are found worthy.
- ▶ **Remnant Church.** Adventism promotes the elitist view that it is the true church portrayed in Revelation chapter 12. Naturally, this means that other churches are apostate and lack the “full truth”—giving Adventists license to seek converts among evangelicals, often through stealth techniques like “Revelation seminars.”

And this is only scratching the surface. Other serious problems include Adventism’s confusion of law and gospel, its denial of hell, its denial that humans have a soul or spirit, and its use of the deceptive *Clear Word* “Bible.” And though much SDA medical and educational work is unquestionably praiseworthy, humanitarian “fruits” do not negate our responsibility to subject false prophets to the scrutiny of Scripture. Many of us who have served as missionaries in the Third World recognize the two faces of Adventism: Indulging in cozy ecumenism in English-speaking cultures while engaging in bare-knuckle proselytizing nearly everywhere else. The Seventh-day Adventist Church cannot have it both ways.

As those who have been commanded to “test all things” (1 Thess. 5:21)—especially in relation to prophetic claims—and “defend the faith once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3–4), we have neither the liberty nor the luxury of turning a blind eye to the challenge of Adventism. Doing so would mean not only unconscionable compromise, but spiritual bondage for countless Adventists who need to hear the Gospel proclaimed as God intended.

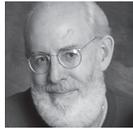
CFAR is partnering with Life Assurance Ministries to develop new materials for a wide-scale response to Adventism in spiritual battlegrounds like Africa and Latin America. For this, we need your prayers! Ask that God will give us wisdom in warning the church about the errors of Ellen G. White, even as we extend a message

of correction and hope to Adventists who trust in her unbiblical message for their salvation.

In Christ our Hope,

Paul Carden, executive director

P.S. I recently wrote the foreword to *Truth About Seventh-day Adventist "Truth,"* a booklet summarizing many of the deceptions and dangers of Adventism. For information on how you can obtain a copy, contact CFAR. 🌐



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