



Open Face

One interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up all others. Christ our Righteousness

No. 94

JANUARY 2014

When Religion Supersedes God

David Clayton



the statements presented there and in past articles I believe it will be clear to the reader that the "logical progression" of David Clayton's teachings is to lead one right out of Adventism.

.... How any Seventh Day Adventist could accept or condone for one minute these teachings is unfathomable. For too long I have been silent. Under the plea for unity, and brotherly love, we have let the flock of God be ravaged by wolves. Shall we continue to invite the men that hold these teachings to our camp meetings to speak, attend their meetings or share the pulpit with them, or condone their teachings?

Allen Stump also had comments to make in the January 2014 edition of Old Paths. I found it a little amusing that Allen prefaced his comments with the following words:

....we want to be very clear that we are not speaking about any person or personality. We will reference the quotations for the sake of documentation, without any reference to authors.

The articles did not write themselves and the Open Face newsletter is only an expression of the thinking of its author, namely, David Clayton. But, I suppose to some, it seems a more upright thing to clearly identify a person while not actually calling his name. Allen was one of my closest friends for several years and I still love him, but I grieve to see how he has closed his mind to truth. Having rejected the truth at one point he has no option but to be consistent and continue to reject

each step in its development. Here are a few of Allen's comments:

The November 2013 issue of Open Face magazine has some of the most shocking statements I have ever read from a publication that claims to be teaching the truth of the Advent movement, especially the truth about God.

As I was reading it, I began to notice statements that did not agree with inspiration and soon found that three key articles were full of confusing statements that contradict some of the plainest declarations of the Bible and of the Spirit of Prophecy.

To be truthful, it is a bit disturbing when the truth which we embrace is labeled as dangerous error, and even heresy. There is the challenging question as to how we should react to such accusations. I am not one for beating about the bush and making innuendoes and being hypocritical, I want to be straightforward. I am not interested in fighting a war, or creating further conflicts, but I would like all our readers to understand what lies at the root of the contention and to get a better idea of some of the issues which are affecting the movement.

Let me make something clear for the umpteenth time. We at Restoration Ministries do not believe the Ten Commandments are abolished. We

The previous edition of Open Face (no. 93) created uneasiness in the minds of some of our readers and in some cases it caused positive alarm. In fact there was such an outcry that I think we must have hit the devil in a tender spot. Apparently some viewed the articles as attacks on the "law of God," and feel that our emphasis is an assault on the foundations of Adventism.

Among those who have openly condemned our teachings are Allen Stump and David Sims. Brother Sims (I am not sure he will accept this title of "brother" since he intimated that I am a, "wolf") wrote in his recent newsletter:

As I recently browsed through the latest issue of the newsletter, Open Face my soul was stirred with a righteous indignation with some of

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Open Face is dedicated to the promotion and the restoration of apostolic Christianity. In particular to the restoration of those truths which have been cast down to the ground and trampled underfoot by the papacy, and adopted by her daughters.

Our purpose is to motivate our readers to commit themselves wholly to the task of personal preparation for the coming of the Lord, and to the taking of the final warning message to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

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ourselves are still very much committed to observing the Sabbath (maybe more so than many who are critical of our attitude to the law). Our attitude to the law has not resulted in diminished morality. I still have one wife, I still abhor stealing and killing, I don't own a gun or a weapon of offense (or defense), I have no desire to kill anyone, I don't live in opposition to the Ten Commandments. But I wish it to be clear that although I live in harmony with the law, this is not because I am governed by the law, no, it is because I am governed by the Spirit. Please read the next article, "*Christless Christianity*," for a better understanding of what I mean.

A DANGEROUS PRACTICE

One of the greatest potential dangers in the lives of God's servants is the danger of working to please men. Unity is a goal to be greatly desired and we should all strive to achieve it, but at what cost? Certainly not at the cost of principle; definitely not at the cost of watering down God's truth.

For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. (Gal 1:10)

The apostle Paul was one of the greatest advocates of the gospel. He was taught the gospel in its purity by Christ Himself and his focus on sharing the simple truth with Gentiles allowed him to grasp the essential points of the good news and to avoid the unnecessary baggage. His call to work among the Gentiles allowed him to more or less escape the compromises which the early church made with Judaism. yet on one occasion his love for the brethren and his desire to be in harmony with them led him to act in a way which was contrary to the truth which he advocated.

On his final trip to Jerusalem Paul accepted the counsel of the leaders of the church for the sake of unity, and subjected himself to the rituals of the Mosaic law, an institution which according to his teaching was abolished. He subdued his conscience in the name of unity and almost reached the place of offering animal sacrifices. His heart was right, but his compromise was *wrong*. God did not require Paul to do what he did.

We remember too, Peter's unchristian act of withdrawing from eating with Gentile brethren in order to please the messengers from James. This is another example of how sickening the consequences can be when we bend over to please others whose understanding of truth is limited. These two men are in many ways, outstanding examples of what Christians should be, but we have no desire to follow their example in compromising conscience for the sake of pleasing men. Paul's counsel is crystal clear, even though he diverged from it at one time.

Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. (1Cor 7:23)

It is eternally true that we cannot please Christ and please men at the same time. Not only do we bring the truth into disrepute when we do this, but we endanger our own souls. Nobody can have true faith in Christ while he lives to please men. Jesus commented on this in John 5:44 when He said,

How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only? (John 5:44)

We desire to believe; we wish the reality of Jesus' presence and the truth of His word to fill our lives and our ministry, therefore we must seek to please God alone. This legalistic, dry, parroting of old cliches will not do! We leave such methods to the doctors of the law. I do not desire that kind of Christianity. Therefore, if I lose friends, I will weep, but I will move on. If my ministry appears to be at an end as one detractor prophesied, then I will still have Christ and a clear conscience. Therefore I will not seek the honor of men! I will by God's grace seek the honor that comes from Him only, and this means speaking the truth which I find in His word, regardless of the opinions of those who refuse to read the word of God with an open mind.

Those who sincerely desire to understand the will of God will recognize and embrace truth, those who are more interested in defending tradition and their own opinions will continue to be furious when things are written which expose their errors. As one sister put it,

"To them that understand there is need of no explanation, to them that don't understand there is no explanation!"

HISTORIC CONFUSION

I once embraced the label of "Historic Adventist," but I have changed my mind. I don't like the closed-mindedness which I see manifested, in the name of "Historic Adventism." I dare say that At the moment, "Historic Adventism" is in a state of utter confusion. There are so many different branches with so many differing beliefs that it seems impossible to reconcile them all. Yet all those involved in this confusion insist, "we are upholding historic Adventism." Some of the ideas are so confusing that very few persons understand what is being said, yet, the label of "historic Adventism," is so appealing that thousands jump on the bandwagon of unbalanced ideas.

For example, there is the group called "The Path of the Just." These people place great emphasis on William Mill-

er's 1843 chart. They claim that Ellen White endorsed this chart and claimed that there was no mistake in it. On the basis of this they have concluded that the judgment of the living started in 2001 when the planes crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center!

There is no less confusion within the "Godhead Movement." What is interesting is that all these differences are promoted in the name of "Historic Adventism." Brethren such as Lynnford Beachy have a great desire for unity, but it is difficult to see how such a thing can be achieved under the present circumstances. Everyone accuses everyone else of heresy.

It is no secret that Allen Stump and Smyrna Gospel Ministries broke ties with us here at Restoration Ministries because of our teaching on Righteousness by Faith. Allen insists that, "there is only one definition of sin: Sin is the transgression of the law, period." We started to see that sin is more than simply the transgression of the law, we saw that the Bible presents sin as something involving the very nature of sinful man. This was enough to raise up a storm of protest and a rejection of our ministry by some. Allen Stump was prominent among these, but in Australia, the Pinto Brothers, Tom and Bill, along with their supporters such as Robert Burness, also condemned our position and launched a campaign to discredit our teaching. Later others such as Jack and Barbara Barney also jumped on the bandwagon and initiated their own campaign of condemnation by way of email. All this, in the name of "Historic Adventism."

But while Allen and the Pinto brothers are allies in condemning our teaching, they are at odds with each other on the question of the nature of Christ in the incarnation. The Pinto brothers insist that Jesus carried all of His divine powers with Him when He became a man, and did not lay them aside. Allen Stump is in harmony with us on this point and believes that Jesus did lay aside His divine glory and power and possessed in Himself no power which a normal human being does not possess. He believes like us, that the only

supernatural power which Jesus was able to exercise was the power of the Father working through Him. Because of this difference there is no cooperation between Smyrna and Restitution Ministries (the ministry run by the Pintos). The Pinto brothers are very good at cutting off people who disagree with them. All in the name of "Historic Adventism."

Nader Mansour was one of the main representatives of Restitution Ministries. When he, like us, took the position that sin is more than simply transgression of the law, it meant the end of his connection with Restitution Ministries. Imad Awde, also an integral part of Restitution Ministries made the mistake of sympathizing with brother Nader and he also was forced to sever connections with Restitution Ministries (even though at the time he agreed with the theology of the Pinto brothers and did not agree with brother Nader!). This was all done in the name of "Historic Adventism." In emails which proceeded from Restitution Ministries, there were references to the "Born Sinners Camp." All were demanded to take their position on one side or the other so that the ministry could be purged of all who sympathized with the "Born Sinners," camp.

Nader Mansour's father, Nabil, who was employed by Restitution Ministries in the Middle East, was also required to take sides or to be severed from his employment. All his protestations that he had not taken sides in the issue were met with deaf ears. He was instructed to study out the issue and to make his position known. He refused to do this and eventually was forced to sever his association with Restitution Ministries.

David Sims has been one of the main speakers at the Smyrna campmeeting for several years. He and Allen Stump have remained close allies. Interestingly, David Sims does not believe that Christ literally lives in His people. He believes that it is only by the written word that Christ lives in us in a figurative sense. In other words, he believes that as we read the words of the Bible and understand and assimilate them, then we develop the atti-

tudes of Christ and in this sense He is said to dwell in us. He also does not believe that God is actually omnipresent. He believes that God is able to see everything from where He sits in heaven, as if looking through a telescope, but that He Himself is only present by the angel messengers. Of course it follows that he believes that since Jesus is in the heavenly sanctuary He cannot be in us at the same time.

This is what I have gathered from conversations with David Sims himself. If I have misrepresented his beliefs he may correct me and I will print an apology and correction. Naturally, David Sims, like everyone else believes that his teachings represent "Historic Adventism."

But the Bible says, that Jesus Christ Himself lives in us. We believe that a component of Jesus, His spirit, also referred to as "the Comforter," actually lives in our bodies and that our bodies are the dwelling places of the living God. We believe that this spirit of Christ is what changes our natures and delivers us from sin. As far as I know this is also what Allen Stump professes to believe, unless he has adjusted his thinking since we parted company eight years ago.

In spite of these conflicting beliefs in this most critical area, Allen Stump has been able to get along with David Sims quite comfortably and apparently so do the Pinto brothers who had David Sims as one of the speakers at their recent campmeeting. For some peculiar reason none of these brethren have found it convenient to accuse each other of being "wolves," or of teaching heresy in spite of their lack of harmony in this most critical area of Christian belief.

In addition to all this, a new development has taken place. The feast-keeping movement has joined itself to the godhead message and is making rapid strides. Since I am laying all the cards on the table I may as well mention this too. Many of those who believe in the truth about God, including significant leaders in the movement, have taken to observing the feast-days of the Le-

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Christless Christianity

David Clayton

When the reality of Christ living within is denied, the result is always an obsession with the law, it cannot be avoided. A person who seeks to worship God must be directed and guided in some way. In the absence of the living Christ, one has no options but to cling to the way of the law.

While we all agree with the doctrine that we possess the life of Christ, unfortunately, for many this is only a theory. The actual amazing reality of the indwelling Christ is only a pleasant doctrine, not something which affects every moment of life, not a dynamic experience where He literally speaks to us, works in and through us, directing and teaching us every moment. In reality, our dependence is on the letter of the law, on the rules, because we do not possess the living law, Christ in us. This is the reason for the crippling legalism among us and as we can see, the inevitable result is that many are not only focused on the Ten Commandments but are actually embracing the entire law of Moses, complete with blowing of trumpets, holy names and all kinds of legalistic works. This is the logical path to take in the absence of living interaction with Christ.

Under the New Covenant, God being in control is not just a matter of God's rules being obeyed, it's a matter of God dwelling within, God in an intimate relationship with the person, God's life within, this is the key element of righteousness in Christ, this is what the message really means as opposed to righteousness by works. This is the very heart of the good news.

The passage which most clearly illustrates the difference between the government of Christ and that of the law, is 2 Corinthians chapter 3. It is one of the most extreme passages in the New Testament and understandably, those who are promoting the observance of the law as the way of life for the Christian are very careful to avoid it. This passage is what really set me thinking about the place of the law, many years ago and was the beginning of my jour-

ney in coming to a proper understanding of the place of the law.

Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. (7) But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: (8) How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? (9) For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. (10) For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. (11) For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. (2Cor 3:6-11)

Let every honest person read this passage carefully. Let the modern Pharisees and doctors of the law examine it carefully and try to understand what it is saying.

CHRIST'S GOVERNMENT

First of all we are told that we are made ministers of the *New Testament* (not the Old). The difference between both covenants is explained by the phrase, "not of the letter, but of the spirit." The first covenant is of the letter, it is based on a relationship with the letter. The New Covenant is based on a relationship with the spirit. Let us not be confused about the meaning of the word, "spirit." The "spirit" in this passage is not speaking of an underlying principle, it is speaking of *Christ Himself*. In verse 17 we read,

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. (2 Cor 3:17)

What the passage is saying, is that in the New Covenant we have a relationship with the spirit who is the Lord

(Jesus Himself). This relationship with Jesus is the essence of the New Covenant and is to be the focus of our ministry to the world. We have been made ministers of this new Testament, this is what we share with others, this is the focus and the emphasis of our preaching, teaching and living. This is set in distinct contrast to the ministry of the Old Covenant. We are NOT ministers of the Old Testament.

But what is the Old Testament? The Old Testament is "the letter," and what does that mean? The verse which follows explains what this letter is: It is described as "*the ministration of death written and engraven on stones!!*" This is one of the most damning passages in the New Testament with respect to the government of the law. Those who reject the law love to use it, while those who embrace the law avoid it carefully. However, it is the word of God and the obvious course to take, is to accept it, but to make sure that we understand it correctly. According to verse 11, this ministration of death has been done away. This is very plain. Verses 12 and 13 further support this conclusion that this ministration of death (the ministry of the law) has been abolished.

Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: (13) And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: (2 Cor 3:12-13)

The problem is that this "ministration of death" is clearly identified as relating to what was "written and engraven on stones." There can be no mistaking what is being referred to here. This is not simply speaking of the ceremonial laws, this is a clear and unmistakable reference to the Ten Commandments! This is the reason why this passage is one of the least mentioned passages among Adventists. Yet, there it is. Those who have attacked our teaching concerning the law have never at-

tempted to explain the passage because, there is no way to explain it honestly, unless one arrives at the conclusion which we have been presenting for the past eight years.

In a nutshell, the passage is saying that the ministry associated with the Ten Commandments was the ministry of the Old Covenant and it was a ministry of death. We, God's people no longer are involved with that ministry because it has been abolished. Our ministry is the ministry of life, the ministry of the spirit (Christ) which is far more glorious. When the Ten Commandments were given at Mount Sinai, they were the main component of the Old Covenant. The Bible actually refers to them as "*the words of the covenant* (Exodus 34:28)." Just before he died, Moses reminded the people of how God had led them and dealt with them and he said,

And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone. (Deuteronomy 4:13)

When Moses came down from the mountain carrying these two tables of the (old) covenant, a glory covered the face of Moses, a glory so awesome that Moses had to cover his face to hide the glory from the people. However, the glory associated with our ministry, the ministry of Christ, is far more glorious.

Let every honest person read the passage with an open mind. If I have perverted the meaning of the passage, please, by all means write to me and show me where I have done this. Show where I have written anything which is contrary to what the word of God teaches here.

THE COMMANDMENTS ABOLISHED?

Now notice carefully that the passage does not say that the commandments are abolished. This is where those who reject the law make a great mistake. Even though it mentions the thing which was written and engraven on stones, the passage makes it clear that it is the **ministry** of the law, not the **law itself** which is abolished. There is a difference and understanding this difference is key. If we are able to grasp

this difference then we will be able to understand the truth concerning the law which we have been trying to explain for the past eight years.

A "ministry," or an "administration" is a system of government. It is a way of relating to people and controlling them. There was a ministry or administration associated with the Ten Commandments, this ministry was the ministry of the law. It was a system in which God dealt with His people by rules, by external instructions, by "the letter," or what was written. This is the essence of the Old Covenant, it was a system in which God governed His people from the outside by rules. The heart of that system of rules was the Ten Commandments. We notice that God promised specifically that in the New Covenant He would "write His laws on the hearts" of His people. He would no longer govern them by ten rules from the outside, but He would govern them by His spirit from the inside. This is precisely what Paul is speaking about here in 2 Cor. 3. The letter (rules from the outside) kills, but the spirit (Christ inside) gives life. We are not ministers of the letter (the rules) but of the spirit (Christ).

Now the important point is this: This does not mean that the law is abolished and this is not what the Bible says. We have never taught this and we are not teaching it now. What it means is that the **government** of the law is abolished. In other words, we no longer live our lives in relation to the law (even though it still exists and even thought it still tells the truth). Instead, we who live under the New Covenant live our lives in response to Christ living on the inside, the law of the spirit governing us by giving us the new righteous nature of Christ. For us, the law is not the issue, we are done with that system of government. For us, Christ is all and in all and this is the ministry which God has given us. As we walk in union with Christ, abiding in Him, listening to His voice speaking to us personally as our living Comforter, as the One who personally directs us into all truth, we do walk in harmony with the Ten Commandments, but not because we are relating to the commandments, no no, it is because we are responding to Christ.

SUPERNATURAL RELIGION

The real issue here is the question of whether or not Christ can, and does literally lead His people Himself, by a personal and intimate communion on the spiritual level, rather than in a second-hand way, by external instructions and the directives of other men. This is the real issue.

It is tragically clear that many of us neither know the voice of Christ nor are willing to become familiar with it. Many of us are resolved to maintain a relationship with God which is based on the historical past rather than the present. We are willing to relate to God on the basis of what He did and what He said, but we are scared to death of interacting with Him here and now in the present, in a personal, intimate, living interaction where He personally speaks to us and we speak to Him. What is even more sad is that those who are foremost in rejecting this awesome truth of Christ living in us and governing us from within, are those who are leaders of the people! These are the ones standing between Christ and the people inducing them to reject the living Son of God while they pay lip-service to what He has done for us historically. Instead of a literal, living relationship to Christ they seek to bind them to the law.

Christianity is a supernatural religion, it is based on the reality of God living in men. *Hallelujah!* It is centered on the truth that we are no longer mere men, we are one with the almighty God of the universe! What is the point of saying that He is our Father, He is our God, He is our life, if we have no personal connection with Him where He guides and directs us moment by moment? Do we need to depend on standard rules to define our relationship with Him as was the case in ancient Israel when they lived under the Old Covenant? Are we no different in this the age of the kingdom of Christ? When Jesus said, "I will give you another Comforter that He may abide with you forever," does this mean nothing to us? What is the point of having a living, Personal comforter when we don't know His voice and cannot hear what He is saying to us?

I am not afraid of interacting with God anymore. At one time questions would come to my mind such as these: “What if an evil spirit speaks to me as I am seeking to have literal interaction with God? How would I know that it is not the voice of God?” Because of these kinds of questions I kept God at a distance, it was easier to relate to the rules where I felt I was safe. I did not want to venture into the spiritual realm where there were not only God, Jesus and angels, but there were also evil spirits waiting to deceive. However, I began to realize that the holy characters of the Bible did not have this fear. When God called Samuel as a boy, how is it that he did not think it was an evil spirit? Why was he so confident as to be able to say, “speak Lord, they servant heareth?” When angels appeared to Manoah, to Abraham, to Daniel, Elijah, Hagar and many, many others, how is it that they were not afraid to interact with the supernatural? How is it that they were not afraid of being deceived by Satan?

Now that I know the answer I realize that my fears were ridiculous, but I was a victim of my background. I was not brought up with the understanding I now have of the gospel and it bred an underlying fear into me. Thank God for opening my eyes so that I am now delivered from this silly fear. The fact is, Satan cannot interfere with a child of God. In fact, he is deathly afraid of those who are in Christ. Whenever the apostles approached a demon-possessed person the devils fled at their command. Many times God spoke to them and directed them, yet there was never the slightest fear that it might have been an evil spirit directing them. When a person is in union with Christ, where would Satan get the courage from to face such a person? He would be confronting Christ Himself! Such a thing is impossible!

So, as a person who is united to Christ, Christ will speak to him personally. Even if I hear a voice speaking to me, I will know it is the voice of Christ. Even if a supernatural being appears

to me, I will know it is a messenger of God. I am not a friend of Satan, I am a servant of God and possess the life of His Son. Satan has nothing to do with me. This is the absolute truth of the Bible.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)

There is no doubt in my mind that some of those who read this will accuse us of promoting spiritualism. It is the way of fallen mankind to condemn what one does not experience and does not understand. Satan has blinded some of us so effectively that there is now no option but to call the truth of God evil, and the end result will be that we call the work of the Devil, good. Like the Jews, we seek to destroy the work of God and think that we are doing service for God. May God help us, it is a fearsome thing to fight against the work of God.



Birth or Breeding?

Doctrinal ideas follow a logical path. This is why it is vital that we lay sound foundations to our understanding of truth. Eight years ago we came to understand that sin is a problem of the nature, rather than a

problem of actions. This has led us into a deep and satisfying biblical understanding of the plan of salvation. As we have seen the beauty and harmony in the truth, the fallacy and errors of falsehood have become more

and more evident. Please examine the chart below; it reveals the logical paths which are taken depending on what we believe about sin.

	Prevailing Philosophy	Sinners by Birth	Sinners by Choice
1	The problem is	Nature	Transgressing the law
2	Cause of problem is	Birth	Wrong choice
3	The consequence is	Helpless state	Guilty state
4	The solution is	Be born again	Obtain forgiveness
5	Jesus' input is	Died to destroy sin nature	Died to pay a penalty
6	Benefit obtained is	His life becomes mine	His death cancels my guilt
7	The resulting focus is	Christ, most important	The law, most important
8	Relationship is with	The spirit	The letter
9	Resulting approach is	Allow Christ to live	Imitate Christ
10	Resulting experience	Divine life	Divine help
11	My assurance is	Saved today	Saved some day (maybe)
12	Practical consequence	Sin journey ended	Constant struggle with sin
13	Works which I do	Divine miracles	Human solutions

When Religion Supersedes God

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vitical law. Those who are familiar with the message of righteousness by faith as we teach it, will know that there is no way that feast-keeping can harmonize with the message which we have presented for the past eight years, so there we see again, potential for further fracturing.

Feast-keeping finds its roots in the Armstrong movement and is based on a commitment to the way of the law, but inevitably, feast-keepers insist that their involvement in the feasts is founded on the historic Adventist position, and is in harmony with the message of righteousness by faith. They quote Ellen White freely to support feast-keeping and there has even been a recent publication, claiming that Jones and Waggoner were promoting feast-keeping in 1888!

I have not commented on the positions of persons such as Lynnford Beachy, Adrian Ebens and others, who are considered leaders in the godhead movement. Why not? Because these people have been content to correspond with us quietly, voicing their concerns as brothers, even when they don't fully agree with us. I respect that attitude and will not involve them in this commentary. However, I feel it is fair to comment openly on those who have condemned us openly.

BIGGER THAN TRUTH?

We have received many criticisms for the things which we teach, but very few of these criticisms have been based on the Bible. Those who have deplored our teachings have done so because, according to them, we are contradicting Ellen White, seeking to destroy Adventism, eroding the foundations of Adventism, contradicting Jones and Waggoner. There has been copious quoting of Ellen White, but very little attention to the Bible. For my part I can say that our teaching has been based exclusively on what the Bible says. I say with great confidence that all those who have bothered to do a careful study of the Scriptures without bias, have come to understand and

to agree with the things which we are teaching. The greatest problem exists for those who defend "Adventism," rather than the Bible.

Many in the movement have taken a position where their religion supersedes God. They have set the teachings of our forebears in stone and what they defend is what people taught one hundred years ago. God's living word hardly matters anymore. It's what Ellen White says, it's what the church says, it's what the pioneers said, it's "what we have always believed." It's William Miller and the 1843 chart, it's Ellen White's statements about "the daily," it's how she defines sin etc. It's about Adventism, God's word does not matter anymore. We have found something bigger than the Scriptures and the holy spirit and have set our roots in stone.

CHRIST OR MOSES?

There are some striking similarities with what is happening among us and what happened to the Jews at the time when they crucified Christ. The Jews believed in the "old time religion," their pioneer was Moses and for them, his teachings were the final word. If you contradicted Moses that was the end, you were a heretic of the worst sort. Yet in spite of their commitment to Moses, they had significant differences among themselves too, just like the historic of today. There was the



Sadducee party and the Pharisee party. The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection and did not believe in angels! Amazing! Yet they all based their claims on Moses. Interestingly, both groups worked together to crucify Christ in spite of their differences!

These people revered their historic religion to the point where it became greater than God. They knew Moses so well that God could not speak to them anymore. When God's Son came and did the works which no man had ever done and the holy spirit convicted their hearts that He was whom He claimed to be, they defied their consciences and rejected him, because, He contradicted their understanding of Moses.

Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is. (John 9:28-29)

This was the issue; it was Christ or Moses and Christ lost out. This was because the religion of the Jews had superseded God. God could not communicate with them, because Moses had it all covered and they knew Moses inside out (so they thought). Amazingly it turned out that the greatest enemy of Christ when He carried out His ministry, was Moses! The Jews made it so and constantly threw Moses in His face. They could not understand why He said and did things which were in opposition to the clear statements of Moses and the law.

The problem was their limited comprehension, their inability to understand divine things, their inability to discern God's purpose in giving the law. But more than that was their refusal to submit to the holy spirit. In spite of their intellectual ignorance, the holy spirit was constantly speaking to the hearts and consciences of these people and they would have learned the truth had they listened.

The same exact thing has happened in our movement today. Moses (Ellen White) has taken the place of the holy spirit. God is unable to speak to people anymore because we know EVERYTHING. All those who possess the little red books, or better yet, the CD ROM have access to all knowledge, answers to every question, definitions of every doctrine. We no longer need to study the Bible because everything is already worked out for us!

Let me pause to clarify again, this is not to suggest that we have rejected

Ellen White. Just as with the law, it is not a question of rejection or acceptance, it is a question of relationship. We need to relate to Ellen White as Christ related to Moses, not as the Jews related to Moses. Moses was God's servant, but God was greater than Moses. It was true that God had spoken through Moses, but the problem was, the Jews stopped with Moses and refused to accept that Moses' revelation was not perfect or complete, and that God was still speaking. We have repeated the same mistake.

ESSENTIAL LEGALISM

Legalism is more than simply a doctrine. As Allen Stump has pointed out, nobody ever admits that he is a legalist. The doctrines may even be technically correct, but legalism is more an attitude where a person pays lip service to the **words** of Christ while he rejects the **living** Christ. Legalism is epitomized in the attitude of the Jews as described by Jesus:

You study the scriptures thoroughly because you think in them you possess eternal life, and it is these same scriptures that testify about me, but you are not willing to come to me so that you may have life. (John 5:39-40) NET

Unfortunately this is exactly the attitude which has come to dominate in historic Adventism. Legalism produces people who live in the past, in the writings from decades and centuries ago. There is no interaction with the living Christ, therefore there is heavy dependence on the dead letter, the words of Christ in the past, rather than the spirit of Christ in the present. Men embrace the teachings of past heroes while they reject their spirit. They condemn those who opposed the prophets while they display the same spirit which led to the stoning of those prophets.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto your-

elves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. (Matt 23:29-32)

So today, everybody speaks about 1888 and we all bemoan the fact that the church rejected the focus on Christ and persecuted Jones and Waggoner. Yet, incredibly, while we cling to the form of their message, we reject the very essence of it in denying the place of Christ as our living Teacher. We declare,

"If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets."

But our deeds give the lie to our profession. We reject the very essence of what God wanted to accomplish through these men, the exaltation of Christ to the place where He is absolutely EVERYTHING! Therefore we demonstrate that we are *"the children of them which killed the prophets."* We possess the same spirit of resistance to God which those murderers possessed.

The dead letter creates far more problems than it solves. Even among the most ardent Ellen White advocates there are deep and troubling disagreements. Why isn't it evident to these brethren that doctrinal wrangling will never solve the problems? Why can't we see that the only possible answer is Christ Himself living in each believer, personally teaching each one of us and infusing His spirit into our hearts, giving us the blessed peace and unity of the spirit? Our problems exist because we focus on doctrine instead of Christ. Our religion has superseded our God!

In most cases, the head of each little ministry has set himself up as the final authority, the interpreter of Ellen White and Scripture, the definer of what is doctrinally pure. All who disagree are anathematized! We cut them off from our fellowship and our camp-meeting speaking lists. With a dozen such authorities, how can there be unity?

It may be argued that we here at Restoration Ministries are guilty of thinking that we know more than everyone else also, but what we are advocating

is that we look to Christ rather than to the law, to men, or to the past! That we seek a living relationship with the living Christ rather than with written instructions! It is the misconstruing of written instructions which causes the confusion which exists today. What we need is Christ to personally instruct us today, now - not instructions from a former age, applicable to those who lived then! Christ alone is able to guide us into all truth. When we give Him His rightful place as Teacher, Director, Governor, All in All, then we will all know the truth for He said, *"I am the way, the truth and the life."* This is our emphasis. If we are wrong in this obsession with Christ then we are happy to die with it.

It is amazing in the extreme, that people should object to such an emphasis. As one poor misguided brother here in Jamaica angrily exclaimed, "all you people want to do is talk about Christ, Christ! Why don't you talk more about the law? (!!)" But experience has taught us that the further we are from Christ, the more we become fixated on little points of disagreement and make these the reason for condemning others.

THE SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST

I am not suggesting that we should not seek doctrinal harmony. Wrong ideas lead to wrong behaviour and ultimately, wrong ideas harm our relationship with Christ. We should always speak out about what we perceive to be false, and show our brothers where we believe they are going wrong. However, the Bible teaches me that there is one great central focus to the Christian faith. Apostasy means to reject this central focus. When a man rejects this, then it is time to reject him, but not before then. This central focus is Christ, He is everything. ***The really dangerous false doctrines are those which hinder our ability to see and to interact with Him.*** The word of God makes it clear that when a person rejects the doctrine of Christ, such a person is not even to be tolerated in our homes:

For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: (2 John 1:7-10)

These are serious words indeed, but notice what the key issue is: Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. Jesus has come to live in your flesh and my flesh (if we are indeed Christians). This is the doctrine of Christ. This is the greatest truth in the Bible, the most thrilling, the truth which affects and changes our lives when we receive it. The key element in the doctrine of Christ is not what He did two thousand years ago as important as that is; it is not about what He is doing in the heavenly sanctuary, as necessary as that may be; it is about the living presence of the living Son of God abiding with me forever, in and with me, my Counselor, my Teacher, my Guide, my Life, my Everything. This is the essence of the Christian life, yet, incredibly, it is what some people want to label as “spiritualism.” Is it true that Christ lives in the believer? Is this literally true? To enter into the reality of this experience must be the fixed aim of all who claim to be Christians. It is fully time that we all, in the godhead movement get our eyes fixed on the central goal and stop obsessing with trivia.

The person who denies that Christ lives in us is a deceiver and an anti-christ. Wow! Why such an extreme label? We definitely need to stop inviting such people to speak at our campmeetings! These are the people who are the real danger. In fact, the apostle says we should not even welcome such persons into our homes!

The heart of Christian experience is Christ Himself in the believer. A personal living Saviour. This is a real experience brothers and sisters, a literal real experience. Christ lives in His people in an experience which is as real as the opposite experience of demon-possession. The difference is that

we willingly yield to Him so that He takes possession of us. But it is reality, He lives in us and communicates with us. This is why John tells us,

But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. (1 John 2:27)

So those who deny this reality are Satan’s helpers, they destroy the great element of the New Covenant, the life of Christ in the believer, the living law impressed on living hearts. To deny this is to set oneself against the great central reality of the gospel. Therefore, this is the essence of the doctrine of antichrist. This is what it means to deny the Father and the Son, it is the rejection of God’s greatest plan for uplifting mankind through His Son. This is the false doctrine which we all need to rise up and resist. The sobering question is, are there antichrists among us?

WITH US FOREVER

Jesus Himself promised,

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. (John 14:16-18)

“With you and in you,” He says! We in the godhead movement have known the theory of this truth for decades. We insist on the doctrinally correct statement, “Jesus is the Comforter,” while in the reality of our nit-picking, letter-oriented, legalistic lives, we deny the living reality! Stephen’s accusation against the Jews who killed him could well be applied to many of us today:

Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it. (Acts 7:53)

We received the truth concerning the godhead, no doubt from God Himself,

but we have not kept it. We have not received Christ as our life. Practically there is no difference between us and the legalistic Jews who were wholly dependent on rules to direct them. Two thousand years after Pentecost we are still without the living reality of the Comforter, the Teacher, Christ Himself living in us.

Now Restoration Ministries is being condemned because we are uplifting this truth that Christ is all in all, because we are declaring the biblical reality that when we have found Christ our relationship is with the living law and no longer with the letter of the law.

The Bible teaches that the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, **Christ is the goal!** But it seems clear that many of us believe the opposite thing, we believe that the purpose of Christ was to bring us to the law, **the law is the goal!**

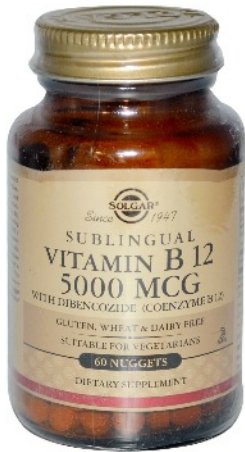
What a turning upside down of God’s purposes! What a tragedy that those who have the theory of the truth deny and resist its practical application! May God have mercy on us!

We appeal to all in the godhead movement, to our brothers and sisters, those who are detractors as well as our allies and friends to consider the truth of what we have presented in this article. There is hope of unity if we all congregate around Christ and accept the implications of what Christ means to us. If we truly will receive Him as our all in all, our differences are bound to vanish in the face of a divine unity. What we need are spirits infused with Christ, rather than intellects indoctrinated by the law. Him alone as our one GREAT need. We appeal to all to depart from this obsession with the law and give Christ His rightful place. This is our appeal. It is our hope and prayer that we all will see that this is really the only way and that it is God’s way. If we continue to be focused on defending the past and our history and the law, I predict that the disunity will only grow greater and the godhead movement will never achieve its potential. God will have to look elsewhere in carrying out His final work.



Vitamin B12

Lenworth Frankson



Vitamin B12 is one of the key essential vitamins. Deficiency of vitamin B12 can limit your ability to think clearly so it is very important that we pay attention to our vitamin B12 intake. When we are not getting enough of this vitamin our everyday normal metabolic function and health diminishes.

Many experts once believed that strict vegetarians were the group most likely to suffer from vitamin B12 deficiency, however, we now know that Vitamin B12 deficiency and depletion are much more common than previously thought, especially in individuals over 60. Apparently almost one in four people over the age of 60 have deficient levels of this vital vitamin. In addition, younger age groups are now showing signs of deficiency as well. It was once believed that if you had adequate stored amounts of this vitamin in your body, you would not develop a deficiency in B12, but this idea is no longer accepted.

It is important to recognize that our bodies depend on vitamin B12 for many functions. Here are some of these functions that vitamin B12 plays an essential role in:

- Helps to maintain normal energy levels
- Promotes healthy neurological activity, including mental alertness and memory
- Supports healthy cardiac function

- Helps to ease occasional stress and sleeplessness
- Helps in maintaining healthy cell growth and repair
- Helps in promoting normal immune function
- Supports normal metabolism of carbohydrates and fats
- Supports the manufacturing of red blood cells; a deficiency leads to a characteristic kind of anemia
- Needed to support the normal function of nerve cells
- Required for the replication of DNA
- Helps maintain a healthy digestive system.

B12 DEFICIENCY

There are two ways that a person can become deficient in vitamin B12. One way is by not getting enough of the vitamin in your diet and the other is from losing the ability to absorb it.

In countries that have a very strong vegetarian based diet, studies show that a significant number of adults are deficient in vitamin B12. However, vegetarians and vegans are not the only ones who can become vitamin B12 deficient. As we grow older our digestive system breaks down and weakens, especially the lining in our stomachs. This gradual loss, lessens our ability to produce hydrochloric acid which assists in releasing vitamin B12 from our food. Also the prolonged use of antacids or anti-ulcer drugs will lower the stomach's acid secretion and decrease the ability to absorb vitamin B12. The main cause of this vitamin deficiency occurs when the stomach lining loses its ability to produce a protein that binds to vitamin B12 allowing your body to absorb it at the end of your small intestine.

B12 DEFICIENCY MAY CAUSE:

- Pernicious Anemia – a type of anemia characterized by large red

blood cells. Symptoms include fatigue, breathlessness, listlessness, and poor resistance to infection.

- Nerve damage. Symptoms may include numbness and tingling in the hands and feet.
- In infants: delayed growth and development, movement disorders, anemia
- Other problems: constipation, loss of appetite, weight loss, depression, confusion, difficulty keeping balance, dementia, poor memory and possible promotion of Alzheimer's disease

SYMPTOMS OF B12 DEFICIENCY

Clinical (severe) deficiency can cause anemia or nervous system damage. Although most vegans consume enough B12 to avoid clinical deficiency, two subgroups of vegans are at particular risk of B12 deficiency: long-term vegans who avoid common fortified foods (such as raw food vegans or macrobiotic vegans) and breast-fed infants of vegan mothers whose own intake of B12 is low.

In adults typical deficiency symptoms include loss of energy, tingling, numbness, reduced sensitivity to pain or pressure, blurred vision, abnormal gait, sore tongue, poor memory, confusion, hallucinations and personality changes. Often these symptoms develop gradually over several months to a year before being recognized as being due to B12 deficiency. These symptoms are usually reversible on administration of B12. There is however no entirely consistent and reliable set of symptoms and there are cases of permanent damage in adults from B12 deficiency.

Infants typically show more rapid onset of symptoms than adults. B12 deficiency may lead to loss of energy and appetite and failure to thrive. If the deficiency is not promptly corrected then this can progress to coma or even death. There is no entirely consistent

pattern of symptoms. Infants are more vulnerable to permanent damage than adults. Some make a full recovery, but others show retarded development.

B12 is very important and vegans need to set a positive example. Every case of B12 deficiency in a vegan infant or an ill-informed adult is a tragedy and creates a lack, of respect for veganism.

INCREASED NEED

Many people avoid eating meats for various reasons; some for religious while others do it for health. Whatever the reason may be, it is important that vegans and vegetarians realize that they are at a high risk for developing vitamin B12 deficiency because plant sources have virtually no vitamin B12. Oral supplements of B12 are taken by many but some health experts argue that nearly all supplements are practically useless, as little is absorbed into your bloodstream. Vegetarians however should take this essential vitamin because it is found almost exclusively in animal tissues. Vegans can get B12 from fortified foods (like fortified cereals) nutritional yeast, and dietary supplements. Fortified foods are made with the B12-producing bacteria, not animal products.

It was once thought that sea vegetables, fermented soy, spirulina and brewer's yeast would provide adequate amounts of B12 for vegetarians, but plant foods that are said to contain B12 actually contain B12 analogs called cobamides that block intake of, and increase the need for true B12. These foods do not contain the active forms of the vitamin. Instead, they contain inactive forms, which may actually interfere with B12 absorption and metabolism.

When looking at Nutrition Facts labels, you will see vitamin B12 expressed as a percent of Daily Value. Daily Values are helpful in deciding whether the food is a good source of the vitamin. Foods with 20% or more of the Daily Value for B12 are considered very good sources. Foods that provide 5% or less of the Daily Value are considered low sources.

Adults should include at least three good sources of vitamin B12 each day. It is best to include a variety of different fortified foods in your diet, rather than solely relying on one source. Examples of good B12 sources include:

- fortified soymilk
- fortified breakfast cereal
- fortified meat substitutes (such as Yves Meatless Barbeque "Beef" Skewers™, Worthington canned Vegeburger™, Worthington frozen Stakelets™) etc.
- Nutritional yeast (such as Red Star Vegetarian Support Formula™)

Brewer's and nutritional yeasts do not contain B12 unless they are fortified with it however there is at least one vegan, B12-fortified yeast currently on the market for those who can afford and find it: Red Star Vegetarian Support Formula.

Unfortunately, there are some drawbacks to relying solely on B12-fortified nutritional yeast for B12:

- B12 is light sensitive. Nutritional yeast is likely to be exposed to the light because it is often stored in clear bins or plastic bags.
- There is the occasional vegan who thinks he/she is getting B12 from nutritional yeast but ends up developing B12 deficiency symptoms. This however can be cleared up upon taking a B12 supplement.

VITAMIN B12 INJECTIONS

Vitamin B12 Injections have been used for a long time by some people for several reasons:

- The injection contains 500 times more vitamin B12 than the recommended daily dosage.
- When injected, vitamin B12 is easily absorbed by the body and then utilized in the formation of red blood cells, as well as aiding in the maintenance of a healthy nervous and cardiovascular system.
- The 3 major health benefits of vitamin B12 injections are an increase in energy, improved sleep patterns, and a feeling of alertness.

B12 shots deliver far more B12 into the system than supplements, and avoid absorption difficulties. B12 is virtually non-toxic and, for most people, the shots are nearly painless. Below are several conditions for which B12 has been shown to be valuable

FATIGUE

Fatigue can be present for many reasons. These include lack of sleep, inadequate nutrition and lack of stable blood sugar levels, use of stimulants that cause the body to "crash" a few hours later, and long-term stress. In the absence of diagnosed anemia, many people find that B12 gives them an energy boost, both short- and long-term. Athletes have reported increased endurance as well.

INSOMNIA

People often report improved sleep with adequate B12 intake. Vitamin B12 influences melatonin secretion, which tells the brain to go to sleep. Winter depression also has been linked to imbalanced melatonin levels. B12 plays a vital role in melatonin production. Melatonin has been called "the sleep hormone" because it is responsible for letting you get a good night's sleep. As you age, it becomes increasingly more difficult to get a good night's sleep because your body becomes less efficient at making this hormone. It might be a good idea to take B12 to help you sleep better each night.

DEPRESSION

If high levels of B12 are in the blood, research shows that people, who suffer from depression, respond better to treatment. One theory states that vitamin B12 helps play a role in the manufacture of brain chemicals, a shortage of which is believed to be linked to depression. Another theory is that people diagnosed with depression have low plasma levels of cobalt, the mineral that forms the center of the B12 molecule.

HEART DISEASE

Homocysteine, a nerve and blood vessel toxin, is produced by imbalanced biochemical processing in the body. It has been associated with higher levels

of death by heart disease and stroke. The cause of this production has been tied to deficiencies of several B vitamins, including B12. High levels of Homocysteine have also been predictive of increased incidences of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

DEFICIENCY AND THE ELDERLY

It is especially important to diagnose B12 deficiency early in the elderly because it can lead to permanent impairment of neurological and mental function if left untreated.

Vitamin B12 is vital for the formation of red blood cells, as well as for the proper functioning and health of nerve tissue. If left untreated, B12 deficiency can lead to anemia, as well as nerve and brain damage, which may eventually become irreversible. Our bodies need this B vitamin to make blood cells and to maintain a healthy system.

Vitamin B12 is found naturally in animal products and most people who eat animal products are not likely to

develop vitamin B12 deficiency anemia, unless their bodies can't absorb it from food. Strict vegetarians (vegans) who do not eat animal products and babies of mothers who are strict vegetarians are at increased risk for developing anemia and should take a supplement containing vitamin B12 as well as eat fortified foods containing this vitamin.

Some medical professionals believe that Vitamin B12 is stored in the liver for a year or more, which reduces a person's risk of anemia, but others disagree. What is important is that with the availability of this vitamin, no-one should be deficient in these times, but unfortunately there are those who are. The good news is that in most cases, this deficiency is reversible and preventable. For those who don't understand, let us try to educate them. No one needs to be ignorant anymore!



Open Face

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Sister Vatasia Goes to Rest

It is with the greatest regret that we note the passing of our sister Vatasia Sherman. Vatasia died on the 20th of December 2013 after a battle with cancer which lasted for several years. She passed away at her home in Florida after spending some time in the hospital. She is survived by her three children and many grieving friends. We look forward to seeing her again in the resurrection. In the meantime we ask special prayers for the children she leaves behind.

