



2 Cor. 3:18

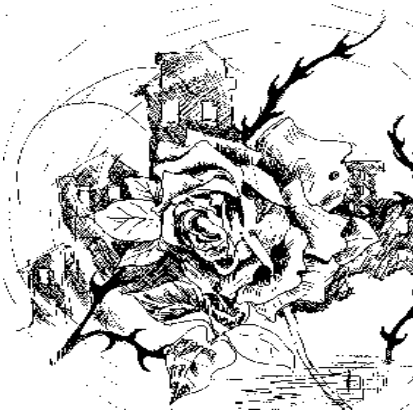
Open Face

No. 20

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The Measure of God's Love (Part 2)

David Clayton



God always loves us whether or not it is evident, but sometimes when He is silent we begin to question that love. We sometimes say, "Lord I need some money, I am having this problem and you are not solving it. This person is sick, and I prayed for You to heal him, but I haven't heard anything from You." But whether silent or speaking, demonstrating or quiet, God always loves us.

How long did God have to think about whether He should save me, or whether Jesus should die for me? how long did He have to think about it? My mind cannot grasp the time, distance or the ages. God had eternity to think about the death of Christ for me, about my ungratefulness, and His Son bleeding on that tree, suffering for an ungrateful, unaware, unconscionable, degraded vile people. He had to think about How they would beat Him, and spit in His face, or even how I, who say I am a Christian, would disobey Him day after day. He had all the time in the universe to change His mind, but He never did, because His love for me never changed.

I can never do something today that is so evil that it surprises Him. He contemplated these things from eternity, and still thought it was worthwhile to give His son to die for me. Therefore don't you ever question the love of God. You cannot do something so bad that it cuts you off from that love. It might cut you off from the *manifestation* of that love, He might not be able to show it to you, because you have shut the door in His face, but you cannot stop Him from loving you. Never let the question come into your mind again. When you pray and don't seem to get an answer, Remember that God in love and wisdom is working out something better for you..

More than conquerors

Romans 8:28 says, "*All things work together for good to them that love God.*" Now if you follow that argument, reading on down in the chapter you will see where Paul asks, "*who shall separate us from the love of God?*" Now separation means that some obstacle has come between you both. Something prevents one from reaching the other. "*Who shall separate us from the love of God?*" He mentions principalities, powers, distresses, persecutions, things present, things to come, life and death. He even mentions angels! What kind of angels is he talking about? Apparently Satan and His angels.

One of the phrases I sometimes hear being used by Christians, is, "Boy Satan is really working." I really hope I do not hear anybody using that phrase again, as though Satan is separating

you from the love of God, as though Satan has power over God. Now here is a phrase that comes a little later on. He says: "*Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*"

Let me ask a question: Who is a conqueror and how do you conquer? You conquer by fighting and overcoming. isn't that right? The man who fights against another man and beats him, is a conqueror, but who is, "more than a conqueror?"

You go to fight against somebody, and the man you go to fight against starts fighting on your side. You don't have to fight. He starts fighting on your behalf, so you are more than a conqueror. You don't have to fight and you don't have to conquer him, because even your enemies fight for you. That's what he says! Who shall separate us from the love of God? tribulation, distress, life, death, persecution, angels, principalities powers? Nothing can come between you and the love of God! That love of God is like a wall around you which is secure and safe, and nothing can come through that wall without being measured and tested by God. If it is good for you, He lets it

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Open Face
Manchester, Jamaica W.I.

April, 2001

Open Face is dedicated to the promotion of the truths committed to the Advent movement, as believed and taught by the early Adventist pioneers. 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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through, but if it is not, it cannot pass. So when Satan attacks you, what is it? It's a gift of love from a loving Father. It is a gift of love when your brethren speak badly about you, It is God at work in your life. Why do you complain? How can you complain when your Father allows it to come at you? The love that surrounds you cannot be broken. Nothing can separate you from that love. That is the beauty of that passage. That's why it says, *all things work together for good to those who love God*. Nothing can touch you or penetrate that love, except what that loving Heart allows to come through. Not life nor death, nor principalities or powers, nor angels nor things present, nor things to come. Nothing! And because of that, come rain or sunshine, come sickness or health, come life or death. praise be to that Father of love!

A necessary education

God made a statement through His son Jesus Christ. A statement so great and so comprehensive, so all pervasive, so all embracing that never again need we question the love of God. God gave us a demonstration that is not like the fickle expressions of emotion. A man

says to a woman today, "I love you," and tomorrow he cannot bother with her. Even your own brethren sometimes deal with you the same way. "I care for you, I will always be around to support you," but when you are in need, you do not see that demonstration of love. God knew that there were times when He would have to be silent. God knows that for our own good, and for our education, He would have to allow hard things to happen to us, not because He can't help us, or because His store house has run dry, but for our education.

Why does a man send his son to lay blocks, or to dig on the hillside? Is it because he cannot pay somebody to do it? No, but because his son must be educated. Why do I allow my children to wash dishes, instead of getting somebody to do it? Why do I send them to school, to spend dreary hours sitting on hard benches, and have lessons drilled into their heads every day, when they would much rather be outside playing? Is it because I don't want them to be happy? No, it is because I know they must be educated. My Father also knows that I must be educated, and He uses Satan to educate me. Praise the Lord! When Satan attacks me, the Lord uses him to chisel me down, and brings me to be what He wants me to be, But I say "Satan is really at work," and I am depressed, and I am gloomy. Poor foolish me.

Nothing can touch me, but what comes through my Father. Even Satan's attacks are blessings for me! So praise God. That's why the apostle Paul saw things so beautifully. That's why he could say, "*...I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses*" (2 Cor 12:10)

He mentions all the things we are so fearful of, and says: "I am glad. I rejoice in these things." In all these things, we are more than conquerors Through the One that loved us.

An eight-cow wife

I read a story sometime ago in the

Reader's Digest. It was entitled, "Johnny Lingo's eight cow wife." I don't know if it was a true story, but there is a moral in it that I want to bring across to you.

Johnny Lingo was a man who lived on one of those south sea Islands. He was noted for being a very wise person, and a very careful and astute bargainer.

The person who wrote the story said that one day he heard about something that Johnny Lingo had done, which made him wonder if he was really very smart after all.

Johnny Lingo had gotten married. Now on that Island, if you wanted a wife, you had to pay a dowry of one or two cows for her. That's how you obtained your wife in that country. You paid one cow normally, but if she was very beautiful, you paid two cows. The story was that Johnny Lingo had bought a wife for eight cows! But the fellow was even more astonished, when he found out who the girl was. She was a mousy type, who always walked around with her head hanging down, and to whom nobody paid much attention. He probably could have bought her for a little calf! But he had paid eight cows for this wife.

When this man heard the story, he said, "something is wrong somewhere." So he went to Johnny Lingo to find out what had really happened. As they were talking, the wife suddenly came into the room. The visitor gasped in disbelief, for he could not understand how this beautiful creature standing before him, could be the same person he had often seen looking so drab and unattractive. She had a regal bearing, and her head was held high. There was a light in her eyes, and her whole demeanor was transformed. "What happened to her?" was his astonished question. Johnny Lingo only smiled. "I can clearly see now that she is worth even more than eight cows," the man continued, "but you know you could have had her for much less? Why did you pay so much?" Johnny Lingo simply said, "Yes, that is true, but I wanted an eight cow wife."

The moral in this story, is what I am trying to get across to you. Because he had paid this high price for the woman, she began to feel worthwhile. She realized that somebody valued her. Her father had asked for one cow, but Johnny Lingo insisted that he was paying eight cows. The father of course, did not hesitate to accept. When she found out that somebody valued her enough to pay eight cows for her, that, according to the story, transformed her, because she felt more valuable than any other woman on the Island. She started to hold her head up, and to dress herself better, her eyes lit up and a feeling of beauty took her over. She had become somebody worthwhile. Not only did she become valuable in Johnny Lingo's eyes, but because of what he had done, she became valuable in everybody else's eyes.

Well, God has done that for us in the universe. How much are we worth? How much is the measure of my worth? Could you put me against a mountain of gold? God could have provided that with a snap of His fingers. What am I worth? I don't know. Down on the scale of created beings, I was low, I was filth, I was vile. But God paid a price for me, that was unbelievably great. There is nothing that could have been more valuable, and God paid it. *"Who am I that a king should bleed and die for?"* I feel like I am worth something. I feel like a son of God. God has exalted me to this place, and I ought to behave like a worthwhile person. I ought to behave like royalty.

Turn the key

There is a picture in my mind of a great dark wall that blocked us off from every thing that was good or worthwhile. A great dark wall, and on the other side of the wall was God. His head was in His hands, and He was thinking about what it would take to break through that wall. He thought about it for a billion years, and His mind didn't change. He knew that it would take the death of His beloved Son to break through that wall. He thought about the price that He would have to pay. On the other

side, huddling against the wall pitiful and wretched and down cast was me; was us. God saw the pitiful objects, and He knew that He had to pay the price to give us a chance. A price that caused Him more agony than the universe can ever comprehend. Nobody will ever understand what it took for God to give His Son to go through that. The Bible tries to give us a hint, but nobody can succeed in bringing it adequately to our minds.

There is an opening in that wall now. The key has been turned on His side. This is what the scripture says: *"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall He not with him also freely give us all things?"* (Rom 8:32)

As I look at that verse, I see God and His Son standing on His side of the door, and behind Him, there is a mountain of riches unimaginable. Every glorious good thing is mine, because God has already given me all of heaven in one gift. The only reason I can ever ask God for something and not get it, must be because it is not good for me. That is the only reason, because everything else has already been given to me. All these riches are waiting there behind the Father and He has turned the key on His side.

But it's a two way lock. We have to turn a key on this side as well, and in this, I see a picture of us. We are huddled behind the door, watching the key, fearful that the door is going to open. why? Because I have a few toys here, and I have a little money, and some friends over there. I have a little bad habit here, and something that I treasure, and I am afraid that somebody is going to open that door and take away these things from me. I am huddling and cuddling them. I am dressed in these filthy dirty rags, and I am a little wretch. I am clinging, and fearful of opening that door, because if I do, somebody is going to come and take away my pleasure. But look at the Person I am afraid of! Look at what is behind Him available to me, and look at what I am holding on to! He is wait-

ing and asking us to please open the door that we can receive the abundance of His riches.

The only way through that door is trust in Jesus Christ. If there were any other way, God would not have paid such a price. It's absolutely complete but it's the only way. God meditated on this thing for billions of years, and He never came up with any other plan. That is why there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby men might be saved, but through Jesus Christ. He is the only way.

What am I worth?

I want to make one more point. In the eyes of the King, I am worth more than the whole material universe. The whole universe is not worth the life of His Son, so there is not a world out there, or galaxy or anything that is better than I am. God gave the life of His Son for me. His love is the only scale on which we can get a true estimate of the value of things. We can't do it by checking the exchange rate at the bank, or by checking something on a scale to see how much it weighs. We should value things by putting them on the scale of God's love. Where do I rate on that scale? I rate at the top, because He gave the greatest gift in the universe for me. The only thing I could ever put above me or on an equality, is His Son. His only begotten Son. I put us on an equality in terms of God's love for us, because Jesus says: *"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you,"* And Jesus; love for us is no different from the Father's love for us. Truly, no other being in the universe has ever brought forth such a demonstration of love from God.

Our Duty

How terrible then the reality of billions of souls, purchased with this ultimate price, objects of this high manifestation of God's love, and of infinite value, still wrapped in ignorance, sin, darkness and death.

Think of the person you feel most negative towards, or the person who is most

ungrateful. Think of the person that is most harassing and disturbing to you and remember that God saw him when He gave His Son. God saw that one, and God's Son shed His blood for him. God valued him more than He valued the sufferings of His Son. That one that you despise, and dislike and can't stand. Think of it!

They are treading still the ways of the ordinary and the common place. They are treading the ways of rebellion and insecurity, the ways of uncertainty; the ways of death. How vital that we should somehow reach them, and impart to them a knowledge of this love. That we should make them aware of what they are worth and share the gift of salvation, not because of their loss alone but moreso the loss to our Father, who gave everything. Whose love, although unrequited and unfulfilled, still yearns for His earthly children with a hunger that is stronger than death. He is waiting for them and we don't even begin to appreciate how much the Father loves them, otherwise our hearts would go out to them. We would love the worst and the most degraded because none of us was any better at the time when Christ died for us.

A Gem

I found a gem in the writings of Ellen White and I marveled when I saw how beautifully it expressed everything. It is from the Youth's Instructor Oct. 17 1895. It says:

"the Lord God of heaven collected all the riches of the universe, and He laid them down in order to purchase the pearl of lost humanity. The Father gave all His divine resources into the hands of Christ, in order that the richest blessings of heaven might be poured out upon a fallen race. God could not express love greater than He expressed, in giving the son of His bosom to this world."

Settle that in your mind. If you want to fully discover the love of God, you won't find it in the trees, or in the moun-

tains or in meditation on His works. Where can we discern that love of God fully revealed? We find it in the gift of His Son. That is a great thing to hold on to. If you want to discover the love of God, don't look at what is happening in your life, because sometimes things happen in our lives that seem to be very difficult and bitter. Instead of looking at that, look at the gift of His Son. That is God's once and forever and for all statement. "I gave this much for you, can you ever doubt My love?" Don't doubt it because you are lying on death's bed, and you are suffering, and it seems like the forces of the enemy are overcoming you. Don't doubt God's love for that. If your child lies dying, and you are praying and nothing seems to be happening, or if you are hungry, and deliverance doesn't seem to be at hand, don't doubt His love, because when He gave His Son to die for you, He showed a love, that can never ever after be questioned. That love has been stated clearly once and for all and for ever. If you want to appreciate that love, go and study what He did for us in Christ.

The quotation continues:

"this gift was given to man to convince him that God left nothing undone that He could do. There is nothing held in reserve."

So don't expect God to do something extra. He cant do anything more. He didn't hold back anything.

"All heaven has been poured out in one vast gift. The present and eternal happiness of man consists in receiving God's love and in keeping Gods commandments. The universe of heaven the worlds unfallen, the fallen world and the confederacy of evil, cannot say that God could do more for the salvation of man than He has done. Never can this gift be surpassed, never can He display a greater depth of love. Calvary represents His crowning work. It is man's part to respond to His great love. We

are to show our appreciation of the wonderful gift of God, by becoming partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

I have asked God to help me, never to stop studying this subject as long as I live, and I hope I can start us all on a project of the same nature. I have seen, and I am determined that I am not going to stop studying it, because I know I want to live above sin. But the key is not in fighting myself, or in struggling against a carnal nature. It's not in trying to make flesh into something that it is not. It is beholding the love of God, and by beholding being changed. "We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory." If you really want to change, or if you really want to become what God wants you to be, then stop fighting against other people. Stop fighting against your self. Start looking into the beauty of the love of our Father, and I guarantee you as I have seen in my own experience, things will begin to happen in your life. Mysteriously and strangely, but surely they will happen, because that is the power that rules the universe. It can surely rule your life.



"It is true that God gave His only-begotten Son to die for us, to suffer the penalty of the [broken] law of God. We are to consider this and dwell upon it. And when our minds are constantly dwelling upon the matchless love of God to the fallen race, we begin to know God, to become acquainted with Him, to have a knowledge of God...." {1888 Materials, p.75}

TRUSTING GOD'S LOVE

Daliah Burton-Deerr

The longer I walk with Him the more amazed I become with the seemingly ever increasing love of God for us. Of course He isn't becoming more loving, for the greatness of His Person is unchanging. He is love.

But looking back through my life I can see the times that God has intervened. The goodness we sing about isn't simply a happy time of being thrilled when things are going well, nor is it only for crises when we receive those "tough times" assistance from God in our struggles and our pains. Yes, there are happy times. His loving goodness gives them all, and certainly there is a special grace for hard times when God's love comes shining through beyond the trial to shower the glory of His presence in a way that heals hurt and comforts us in sorrow.

There are a thousand facets to life and for each one there is an answering facet of God's great love. It is always good, and He's always there, always for us, so that whenever we deal with questions or concerns, whatever comes or goes, or however much time passes and the answer is not yet ap-

parent, still his words speak saying, "what shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who, or what can be against us? We are more than conquerors through Him who loves us."

As Christians, we can only discern more clearly where we are going when we can learn from every negative experience that enters our lives. When we begin to learn from them, then our faces will not be cloudy but bright, and as we grow into this attitude, our faces will be brighter, because we learn to glory in our tribulations. Whatever good things we are fighting for in our lives should we stop fighting? Should we stop hoping? Should we stop praying? Should we stop trying?

Many times we are tempted to give up. None of us ever maintains a hundred percent effort! Many times we allow false assumptions, disappointments, perplexities to take over our lives. But have we ever exercised patience? Have we ever tried to understand the relationship of our trials to our spiritual development?

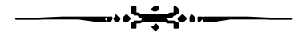
But let patience have her perfect work that ye may be per-

fect and entire wanting nothing." James 1:4.

Confidence goes along with patience:

"Cast not away therefore your confidence which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. Hebrews 10:35,36.

Presently I am seeing the love of God for me. I have been through many rough seas, and it is these rough experiences that I can use as the spiritual resources from which I can draw that will be of great help when we start running with the horses and experiencing the bigger problems. I can thank God for the problems that I have been through. I have learned and am still learning, and I am persuaded that neither life nor death, angels or dark powers, things present or future, things high or low, through the grace of God, that there will never be any created thing that shall ever be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.



AS I SEE IT

by W.A. Sutherland

During the latter part of February 2001, the media, was full of debate on the issue of a mass nude wedding which took place at a popular hotel in Jamaica. At the same time another event was taking place elsewhere in the world which to my mind was of far greater significance and which should have absorbed the attention of Christians far more than the news of couples choosing to be married in the nude..

On the 5th of February 2001, CBS News informed us of a Jew who has erected a large building in Orlando, Florida, in which he has on display ar-

tifacts which were used by the Jews in ancient times. The news reporter stated that this Jew's aim is to convert as many Jews to Christianity as possible. Some of the visitors (Jews) were upset with this man's stated intention, but there was an equal number of Jews who declared that it is time that Jews accept that Christ is THE Saviour. One Jewish lady told the interviewer that many Jews are now accepting the fact that Jesus Christ is THE Saviour.

As I listened, the thoughts of Paul, expressed to the Romans, came back to me and I now ponder on their signifi-

cance. He spoke of the Jews and their relationship to God.

(Rom 11:1-36) I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. (2) God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew....(5) Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.....(7) What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath ob-



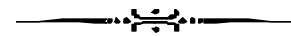
tained it, and the rest were blinded (11) I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. (12) Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?....(15) For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? (16) For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. (22) Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. (23) And they also, if they

abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. (24) For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? (25) For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. (26) And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: (27) For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. (28) As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for

your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. (29) For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. (30) For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: (31) Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. (32) For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all

After seeing this news clip on CBS my mind turned to this chapter and I could not help thinking that the time has come when this chapter is being fulfilled right before our eyes. It seems we have but a short time remaining.

This is as I see it.



MEETINGS IN HICKORY, NORTH CAROLINA

On Tuesday, March 6, 2001, Brothers David Clayton and Howard Williams departed from the island of Jamaica to Hickory, in North Carolina, USA to conduct three weeks of evangelistic meetings.

Upon arrival at the Douglas International Airport in Charlotte, we were greeted and received by Bro. Edwin Ward, who had previously visited us some months before, in Jamaica. We then drove for a little over an hour to Hickory, where we met Dr. Herb Cole (Naturopathic Doctor) who is the sponsor and leader of a small church called, "The Truth followers."

Dr. Cole was no stranger to us as we had met before at the West Virginia camp meeting last summer (2000).

After we met, we were escorted to, The Icard Inn Motel where we stayed for the duration of our visit.

The meetings started the following

evening and were held in the back section of Dr. Cole's health food store. These meetings were well advertised, by flyers and posters which were placed on the health food stores operated by Dr. Cole and which were also handed out to every customer who came in to purchase goods..

There were two possible meeting places. One was a very large room which could accommodate a large crowd, and one which was significantly smaller. We decided to use the smaller room because the crowd never got very large on any night, and secondly because it was really cold and we had to use heaters to keep the place warm. A smaller room was easier to warm up than a large one.

David was the main speaker at the meetings which were held every night from 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm, except on a Monday, which was the night off.

One of the features which we introduced to these meetings and which seemed to be very much enjoyed and appreciated by those who attended, was a quiz, given each night and based on the previous night's sermon.

Several visitors came in from time to time, and some travelled from quite a distance away. Most showed keen interest in the messages. One person who sticks in my mind is Chuck. Chuck is a street person and an alcoholic, but he was there almost every night and expressed a sincere desire to turn his life around. Please remember to pray for him. During the last week, we had some especially serious and consistent visitors.

We did enjoy the hospitality extended to us by the brethren in North Carolina and the experience we had will be long remembered.

Howard Williams

Where is the third person?

David Clayton

In studying the word of God we sometimes encounter passages which seem to contradict each other, or to be in conflict. One example of this is the two statements by the apostles Paul and James concerning justification. Paul says:

"... A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Rom. 3: 28)

"For by Grace are ye saved through faith ... Not of works lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2 : 8,9)

But James says:

"... By works a man is justified and not by faith only." (James 2:24)

Do these statements contradict each other? At first sight they may seem to. The person who has little faith will say, "see the Bible is not dependable. It contradicts itself." However, the person who knows that the Bible is the true infallible word of God, will say, "well, here is something that needs to be examined more carefully. Let me see how these two verses. can be harmonized with each other."

Which of these two attitudes is the proper one? Of course it is the second one. Such a person will find that the Bible is indeed in perfect harmony with itself when it is properly understood. He will find that it is he who needs understanding and not the Bible which needs correcting. He will discover that what at first seemed to be contradictory and puzzling was really the Avenue to a richer and deeper understanding of God and his ways.

Why don't we apply the same rule when studying the subject of the godhead? Why is it that so many of us seem to believe that the subject is taboo and must not be discussed? Why is it that we cling to the popular long-accepted theory and refuse to exam-

ine all of its contradictions? Is this the true spirit of a learner, of a humble Bible student, of a child of God?

As soon as the subject of the godhead is raised and the inconsistencies of the popular belief are pointed out, one word is trumpeted:

Mystery! Mystery!

This is supposed to cover all. This word is the end of all discussion and the end of all reasonable examination of the subject. However, this is not a safe attitude to take towards any doctrine of the Scriptures. The moment we take that attitude that is the moment when our learning comes to an end. We may expect such a response from dogmatic institutions such as the Papacy and others which are of a similar spirit. But this, surely is not the spirit of the Protestants who broke the mental shackles of popery by daring to examine the Scriptures and to accept what they found there.

Today our discussion focuses on the spirit of God and it is imperative that we approach the subject with a willingness to apply the principles just mentioned.

Does the Bible teach that there is a third Being in the godhead called *The Holy Spirit*? There are some Scriptures which may seem to suggest that there might be such a being. On the other hand, there are many Scriptures which indicate that there is no such person. What are we to do with these Scriptures? As believers in the truth of God's word, let us examine them without bias and without traditional leaning and see if we can find how these verses harmonize with each other. We will also examine statements from the pen of Ellen G. White to help us in reaching our conclusions.

Trinitarian Verses?

Let us first of all examine some of the more popular verses which are said to

teach that the Holy Spirit is a third member of the godhead, separate from God the Father and His Son.

1. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... (Gen 1:26)

Here we find that God was talking to somebody, but not necessarily to more than one person. Who was He talking to?

"After the earth was created, and the beasts upon it, the Father and Son carried out their purpose, which was designed before the fall of Satan, to make man in their own image. They had wrought together in the creation of the earth and every living thing upon it. And now God said to His Son, "Let us make man in our image." – The Story of Redemption, p. 20-21.

Notice, there was no third Person there.

2. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (Mat 28:19)

In this verse we are told that we should baptize in a certain name. A name in the Bible, of course, indicates authority and character. The apostles went out and baptized in the name of Jesus. (Acts 2:38; Acts 19:5) Were they disobedient to the command of Christ? No. They knew that Christ was not emphasizing a particular formula, but rather the different elements of our salvation which must be accepted by every believer. They understood that what He meant was that every new believer should accept the authority, character and work of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in his life. The Father Gave His Son and His life to mankind. We must accept the gifts of His love in the gift of His Son, and His life and power in His Holy Spirit. If we fail to receive one or the other, then our salvation would not be complete. Is there

any teaching here that the Holy Spirit is a third Being separate from Father and Son? No. Only if we read something into the Scriptures which they do not say.

3. *And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* (Mat 3:16,17)

Here, we are told, there were the three members of the godhead all in one place. The Son was baptized, the Father spoke, and the Holy Spirit descended on the Son in the form of a dove. Let us see once again how Ellen White explains this passage.

*“Never before had angels listened to such a prayer as Christ offered at His baptism, and they were solicitous to be the bearers of the message from the Father to His Son. But, no! **Direct from the Father issues the light of His glory.** The heavens were opened and beams of glory rested upon the Son of God and assumed the form of a dove, in appearance like burnished gold. The dovelike form was emblematical of the meekness and gentleness of Christ. . . . From the opening heavens came these words: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” . . . Notwithstanding the Son of God was clothed with humanity, yet Jehovah, with His own voice, assures Him of His sonship with the Eternal. In this manifestation to His Son, God accepts humanity as exalted through the excellence of His beloved Son”.* That I May Know Him- 31

Again we see that there is a Father, Son and Holy Spirit. But what is the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is an extension of the Father. It comes directly from the Father. In Luke 11:20, Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as “*The Finger of God.*”

But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. (Luke 11:20)

4. *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.* (2 Cor 13:14)

In this verse, three powers are mentioned, but notice, only **one** of them is called God. One is the Lord, and the other is the Holy Ghost (spirit) through which we have communion or fellowship with God and Jesus. A little later we will see how other Bible passages explain this one very clearly.

5. *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. (8) And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.* (1 John 5:7-8)

The Seventh day Adventist Adult Sabbath School Quarterly has taught us that this verse does not belong in the Bible. An abundance of historical evidence indicates that this verse was added to the Bible during the 15th Century. (See *SDA Adult Sabbath School Lesson Quarterlies for April – June, 1997, p.86 and October – December, 1991, p.33.*)

The SDA Bible Commentary also comments on 1 John 5: 7. it says,

“The passage as given in the KJV is in no Greek MS earlier than the 15th and the 16th centuries. The disputed words found their way into the KJV by way of the Greek text of Erasmus (see Vol. V, p. 141). It is said that Erasmus offered to include the disputed words in his Greek Testament if he were shown even one Greek MS that contained them. A library in Dublin produced such a MS (known as 34), and Erasmus

included the passage in his text. It is now believed that the later editions of the Vulgate acquired the passage by the mistake of a scribe who included an exegetical marginal comment in the Bible text that he was copying. The disputed words have been widely used in support of the doctrine of the Trinity, but, in view of such overwhelming evidence against their authenticity, their support is valueless and should not be used.”

However, even if we were to accept this verse as a legitimate part of Scripture, does it teach three Beings? In verse 8 we are told that there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, the water and the blood. Here we see that one does not have to be a living person to bear witness. The water bears witness and the blood bears witness, yet no one would suggest that the water and blood are persons. Why then should we insist that because the spirit bears witness in heaven it must be a living person?

There are three ways in which witness is borne to the truth in heaven. These witnesses are one, or they bear a united witness. It does not mean that they are one person, one being, or one God. Jesus explained what this oneness means when He prayed that we all might be one as He and His father are one. Not that we might become one human, but simply that we might be in perfect harmony even as He and His Father are in perfect harmony.

In heaven, God bears witness to the truth, so does Christ, and so does the holy spirit! However, while God and Jesus may witness audibly by the words they speak, the holy spirit, whether in heaven or on earth, witnesses by making impressions on the hearts of those who are willing to learn, giving them understanding of the truths of the plan of salvation. In heaven there are three avenues of witness, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, on the earth, there are three, the water, the spirit and the blood. Are the three in heaven a trinity

because they are mentioned in the same breath? By this reasoning we would have to conclude that the water, the spirit and the blood are also a trinity, and that the water and the blood are persons.

The Third Person is Missing

Let us now examine some of the places where the Holy Spirit is missing. In these places, the Holy Spirit would have to be present if he were a third member of the godhead.

1. *Jesus 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)

Where is the Third Person?

2. *And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.* (Rev 21:22)

Where is the Third Person?

3. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.* (John 17:3)

Where is the Third Person?

4. *That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* (1 John 1:3)

Where is the Third Person?

5. *All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.* (Luke 10:22)

Where is the Third Person?

6. *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.* (John 17:23)

Where is the Third Person?

Note also these quotes from the pen of Ellen White:

“Before the assembled inhabitants of heaven the King declared that none but Christ, the Only Begotten of God, could fully enter into His purposes, and to Him it was committed to execute the mighty counsels of His will.” – Patriarchs and Prophets, p.36

“Christ the Word, the Only Begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father, - one in nature, in character, and in purpose, - the only being in all the universe that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God.” – *The Great Controversy*, p.493

Where is the Third Person?

Harmonizing The Scriptures

If we are to fully accept all that we have examined thus far, we would have to conclude that the godhead consists of three POWERS, but only two BEINGS. How can we explain that? Ellen White's Son, Willie, had an explanation for it which may shed some light on the matter.

“The statements and the arguments of some of our ministers in their effort to prove that the Holy Spirit was an individual as are God the Father and Christ, the eternal Son, have perplexed me and sometimes they have made me sad. One popular teacher said ‘We may regard Him, (the Holy Spirit) as the fellow who is down here running things.’

“My perplexities were lessened a little when I learned from the dictionary that one of the meanings of personality, was Characteristics. It is stated in such a way that I concluded that there might be personality without bodily form which is possessed by the Father and

the Son.

“There are many Scriptures which speak of the Father and the Son and the absence of Scripture making similar reference to the united work of the Father and the Holy Spirit or of Christ and the Holy Spirit, has led me to believe that the spirit without individuality was the representative of the Father and the Son throughout the universe, and it was through the Holy Spirit that they dwell in our hearts and make us one with the Father and with the Son....” (Letter by Willie White, April 30, 1935)

While Ellen White has made statements which in the eyes of some, seem to support the idea of a Trinitarian God, a careful comparison of various statements made by her leads to the conclusion that her seemingly Trinitarian statements were not intended to say what many are concluding that they say, today. One of the problems is that most people either do not have access to many of her writings, or else do not study them carefully along with the Bible, seeking to harmonize both. Here are some statements concerning the holy spirit which are in perfect harmony with the Bible and which help to clarify other statements made by her.

1.The Holy Spirit emanates from the Father:

It is His purpose that the highest influence in the universe, emanating from the source of all power, shall be theirs. They are to have power to resist evil, power that neither earth, nor death, nor hell can master, power that will enable them to overcome as Christ overcame. – *Desire of Ages*, p.679

2.The Holy Spirit is the Father's life:

All things Christ received from God, but He took to give. So in the heavenly courts, in His ministry for all created beings; **through the beloved Son, the Father's life flows out to all; through the Son it returns, in**

praise and joyous service, a tide of love, to the great Source of all. And thus through Christ the circuit of beneficence is complete, representing the character of the great Giver, the law of life. – *Desire of Ages*, p.21

3.The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Saviour:

The sap of the vine, ascending from the root, is diffused to the branches, sustaining growth and producing blossoms and fruit. So the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Saviour, pervades the soul, renews the motives and affections, and brings even the thoughts into obedience to the will of God, enabling the receiver to bear the precious fruit of holy deeds. – *Acts of The Apostles*, p.284

4.The Holy Spirit is the life of Christ:

“The Indwelling of the Spirit. — The influence of the Holy Spirit is the life of Christ in the soul. We do not see Christ and speak to Him, but His Holy Spirit is just as near us in one place as in another. **It** works in and through every one who receives Christ. Those who know the indwelling of the Spirit reveal the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith” – *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p.1112

5.The Holy Spirit is the presence of Christ Himself:

“Cumbered with humanity Christ could not be in every place personally, therefore it was altogether for their advantage that He should leave them to go to His Father and send the Holy Spirit to be His successor on earth. **The Holy Spirit is Himself, divested of the personality of humanity and independent thereof.** He would represent Himself as present in all places by His Holy Spirit.” – *Manuscript Release #1084*

The truth is, there are times when the holy spirit is referred to as “he” in the Scriptures. Why is this so? The reason is that the Holy Spirit is not just a force, but is actually the very real presence and personality of both the Father and the Son.

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

Jesus 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)

I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. (John 14:18)

God the Father and Jesus Christ are with us, but not in a form where we can see, or touch them, but in an invisible, intangible, but very real spiritual form. Because this is the presence of God, it is holy. Because it is in a spiritual form, it is spirit. Hence, *The Holy Spirit*.

This is the only explanation of the godhead which will fit all the facts. God has a Son, and He has a Spirit. The Son **proceeded** from God:

“Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. (John 8:42)”

But the Holy Spirit **proceedeth** from God:

“But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: (John 15:26)”

The Son is a separate Being from the Father, while the Holy Spirit is an extension of the Father, by means of which He is present everywhere.

Whither shall I go from thy

spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? (Psa 139:7)

All things Christ received from God, but He took to give. So in the heavenly courts, in His ministry for all created beings; **through the beloved Son, the Father’s life flows out to all; through the Son it returns, in praise and joyous service, a tide of love, to the great Source of all.** And thus through Christ the circuit of beneficence is complete, representing the character of the great Giver, the law of life. – *Desire of Ages*, p.21

The Father dwells in His Son by His spirit. Thus, they are one. Then the Son dwells in us by that same spirit, so we also are one in God, as He and His Son are one:

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. (John 17:21)

And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: (John 17:22)

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. (John 17:23)

Jesus is seeking to impress upon them the thought that in giving his Holy Spirit he is giving to them the glory which the Father has given him, that he and his people may be one in God. Our way and will must be in submission to God’s will, knowing that it is holy, just, and good. – *Signs of The Times*, 10-03-92

Ellen White says that there are three living persons in the godhead. At least, that is how the quote appears in present day editions of her writings. However, it is most interesting to note that in the original statement written in her own handwriting, Ellen White her-

self crossed out the word *persons* and replaced it with the word, *personalities*. Surely, it is evident that in her mind, there was a difference between a person and a personality. Her concept of the Holy Spirit was not properly described by the word *person* but rather by the word, *personality*. Let us note that a person may be said to have more than one personality. The term *split personality* is a popular one nowadays, referring to a person who has more than one way of expressing or revealing himself. This is exactly what Ellen White was saying when she stated that there were, not three persons, but three **personalities** in the godhead.

Ellen White also says that there is no

Being in the universe apart from Jesus who can enter into the counsels of God. Assuming that Ellen White was not confused and contradicting herself, this must mean one of two things. Either,

- a. The Holy Spirit is a Being, but is not able to enter into the counsels of God. This would mean that the Holy Spirit would be a lesser being than God, or,
- b. The Holy Spirit is a person (personality), but not a Being. This is clearly the proper explanation.

As Willie White pointed out, the word person can be used to refer to a particular role of someone, or to the characteristics of an individual. In this sense, one individual may have more

than one person-ality, The word *person* is not often used in this sense nowadays. Generally, today, it is used as a synonym for the word, *being*. However, 100 years ago when Ellen White wrote, "*There are three living persons in the godhead...*" the other usage of the word was evidently well understood, for it was she also who wrote, "*Christ the Word, the Only Begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father,- one in nature, in character, and in purpose, - the only being in all the universe that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God.*" – *Great Controversy, p. 493*



Campmeeting, Summer 2001

AUGUST 1-5

Our campmeeting this year promises to be one of our best in several ways. Firstly, from present indications it promises to be very well attended. Secondly, it promises to be the one where we will have the greatest variety of speakers. And thirdly, we will be having it in a new and very beautiful location.

Our speakers will include from the United States, Allen Stump of Smyrna Gospel Ministries, Willis Smith of Third Angels' Prison Ministry and Benjamin Vela and Arthan Wright from the Philadelphia Shabbat Church. We will also have the usual input from our local speakers.

This year we will be having it at the beautiful Crystal Springs campsite just out of Buff Bay in the green parish of Portland. This campsite, located on 150 acres, is just a little over a mile from the coast and has very beautiful facilities. There are cabins available with good sleeping facilities. There is also an abun-

dance of space for those who wish to camp on the grounds. There is a clean spring running through the property and there is piped water and electricity.

We will not be making any arrangements to provide meals for this campmeeting. However, there is a kitchen and a lovely dining room.

The cost of using the campsite will be \$150.00 per night per person. For five nights this will be \$750.00 (US 17.00)

While we want all of you to attend, we are asking that you do not send your children unattended to campmeeting. Please ensure that if your children come without you, the parents, they are under the supervision of a responsible adult who will be able to supervise and control them.

Once again we are requesting that you indicate early whether or not you will be attending. Please call or send us a note as soon as possible

if you are planning on attending.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Call or write:

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or (876) 904-9326*

**Remember our convention
will be in Albion, Manches-
ter on Sabbath April 21,
2001. Please make every
effort to attend.**

PRESIDENT BUSH, OFFICIALLY OPENS POPE'S CULTURAL CENTER

By Patricia Zapo

Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Seven cardinals and President Bush presided over the March 22 ceremony and ribbon-cutting that marked the grand opening of the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center in Washington.

Detroit Cardinal Adam J. Maida, president of the center dedicated to the Catholic faith, told the audience of about 1,200 guests in a huge tent on the grounds of the center that the pope insisted it be located in Washington instead of any of several other suggested sites, including Warsaw or Krakow in Poland.

“He sees Washington, D.C., as the crossroads of the world,” Cardinal Maida said. “The center’s location here will allow it to impact and shape the many events that transpire here.”

In a letter read by Cardinal Edmund C. Szoka, president of the Pontifical Commission for Vatican City State, the pope said he was grateful “that the new center was planned as a means of introducing visitors to Catholic cultural life and as a place of study and reflection on themes related to the religious and humanitarian mission which the church is called to carry forward at the dawn of the third millennium.”

Bush traced some of the highlights of the pope’s life, from a 1976 stop in Washington to speak at The Catholic University of America, near the cultural center, through his first visit to Poland after he became pope. That visit, Bush said, was “when faith turned into resistance and began the swift collapse of imperial communism.”

The president noted that the last leader of the Soviet Union called the pope “the

highest moral authority on earth.” He referred to the pope’s visits to Manila in 1995, when more than 5 million people came to see him, and to Israel last year, “on a mission of reconciliation and mutual respect between Christians and Jews.” . . .

The evening before, Bush hosted about 60 bishops and other church leaders for a reception at the White House.

He said the best way to honor the pope “is to take his teaching seriously, is to listen to his words and put his words and teachings into action here in America.”

Bush thanked the bishops as among those “who inspire and teach love and compassion and hope,” and for their concern for the weak and suffering as well as for “making sure every child is educated.”

Open Face

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