



2 Cor. 3:18

# Open Face

No. 35

JANUARY 2004

## The Mark of Perfection

David Clayton



*And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. (Rev 12:17)*

Many of us have used this verse in proving to people that we belong to the true movement of God in these last days. We have pointed out that there are two marks of the remnant, firstly, they keep the commandments of God, and secondly, they have the testimony of Jesus Christ and of course the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. (Rev. 19:10). These two things have been the key proofs in demonstrating that we are a part of God's Remnant Movement.

It is true that in the context of Revelation, God gives us these two identifying marks. However, Revelation is a book of figures and symbols and it is possible to misunderstand or misinterpret much of what it is really saying. There is a mark described in the Bible which is more fundamental, more basic and really more unmistakable which

is identified as the true mark of a perfect Christian. What is this true mark? Let us see what it says in 1 Cor. 12:28

*And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.*

Notice all the gifts which God put in the church. All these outstanding gifts are things to be coveted. The Mormons claim to have twelve apostles and a prophet. The Jehovah's witnesses claim that Judge Rutherford, their founder was a prophet, and Seventh-day Adventists make the same claim for Ellen White. The gifts of the spirit are things to be coveted and are often seen as an indicator of God's calling, the mark of the people of God. However, the apostle Paul continued with his argument in verses 29-31:

*Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way. (1 Cor 12: 29-31)*

What was Paul talking about? He was about to show a way which was more **excellent**, but more excellent than what? A way which was more excellent than having the gifts of teaching, apostleship, prophecy, miracles, healing etc. There is a greater way than having the spirit of prophecy, there is a greater way than even keeping "the commandments of God" and having

the "testimony of Jesus Christ," in the way that we usually understand these two identifying marks. In other words he is saying, "if you desire to set up a standard as the goal to be attained in your Christian life, here is what you are to go for."

### The greatest gift

Now this chapter, first Corinthian 12 is followed immediately by one of the greatest chapters in the Bible. It is 1 Corinthians 13, and of course you know that this is the chapter which speaks of love and its importance and in general, deals with love in its different facets. It begins,

*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. (1 Cor 13:1)*

I am one of the people who feels most comfortable with gentle sounds such as guitar music. The clash and clang of cymbals is not quite my kind of sound. At times the guitar almost seems to speak when it is played properly, but from my perspective, a cymbal only makes a meaningless noise.

Now Paul says, "it doesn't matter what gift of the spirit you have, if that is all you have you might as well be out there making a noise like an empty drum that is being beaten." It doesn't make any sense. He says, "if I have all those things and I don't have love I am only a noise maker."

*"And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge;*

Open Face  
Manchester, Jamaica W.I.

January, 2003

*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.

*Open Face* is published at least once quarterly, and is sent free of cost to all who desire to receive it.

David Clayton: Editor & Publisher  
P.O. Box 23, Knockpatrick  
Manchester, Jamaica W.I.  
Phone: (876) 625-2785  
email: david@restorationministry.com  
Website: <http://www.restorationministry.com>

*and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. (1 Cor 13:,3)*

### Love fulfills the law

Romans 13:8 gives us some additional insight into this subject of love. Let us see what it says. Here we begin to put Revelation 12:17 in its proper context. It says,

*Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (Rom*

*13:9,10)*

Whichever angle we approach it from the ultimate goal of Christianity is that we love each other. That is what Christ wants. Paul says the only obligation I have towards you is that I am bound to love you. If I could get up each morning and the only thought in my mind be, "what good thing can I do for you?" And if I could carry this attitude out in my life in a practical way each day, then according to the Bible I would have fulfilled the law. If that is my only motivation, not to seek my own good or my own aggrandizement or my own uplifting but the well-being of others, then the Bible says I have fulfilled the law. Is this the meaning of the text? This is what the Scripture means when it says that "love fulfills the law." Properly understood and exercised, love is the fulfilling of the law.

Now, you will notice it speaks about five of the commandments and it says, "if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Of course that needs a little explanation, so let's go to Matthew 22 and look at verse 37. This is the same quotation we use all the time to prove which is the greatest commandment of all but I want us to read a little further this time.

*Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Mat 22:37-40)*

The whole emphasis of these verses is love but it is love directed in two ways, directed first of all to God and then secondly directed to our neighbors.

When Paul says that love fulfills the law it is clear that in this passage he is speaking of the *second* part of the law. "Love thy neighbor as they self," ful-

fills the second part of the law. That is the second commandment, but Jesus says the first is, "love God with all your heart," and this covers the first section of the law of God. However, I can put the law in a negative setting. I can say "please don't come and pick my oranges, or, please don't come in my house with your dirty shoes," or, "don't speak to me in that way." This is the negative way of presenting it, but suppose I say "you are to love me and treat me like you would treat yourself." It covers everything without going into the details and that's what it means when it says "love is the fulfilling of the law." Love does not think ill or seek ill for its neighbor so love fulfills the law. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

### Love Forbears and Forgives

Lets look at Colossians 3:12-14 and you will find that this is an emphasis which is very prominent in the scriptures. It says,

*"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another," and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." (Col 3:12-13)*

What does it mean when it says, "forbearing one another?" It means, bearing with one another. Now if a person does not have faults do you need to bear with him?

Think for a moment and ask yourself the question, "what was my state when Christ forgave me?" Christ died for me when I had no desire to please Him. Which of us can stand up and say 'today I have not offended Christ, I have not hurt Him, I have not sinned.' I mean, if we look at the things our brothers and sisters have done to hurt us, how does that compare with what we have done to hurt Christ? The word here says that "just as Christ forgave you," that is the measure in which you are to

forgive your brother or your sister.

Furthermore Jesus told a parable that makes us know very clearly that if you don't forgive your brother and sister; then the forgiveness that God gave to you He is going to take it back. (Matt. 8:3-35). He told of a man who owed many thousands of pence to a certain king, but was freely forgiven by the king. However this same man went and caught a man who owed him a penny or two, grabbed him by the throat and threw him into prison. When the king heard about it he was highly displeased. The man was called back before the king who said, "You wicked man. I forgave you freely so you should also have forgiven your brother. Because you didn't forgive I am withdrawing my forgiveness. You are going to be sent to prison until you pay every penny that you owe." Jesus concluded the parable by saying, "that is how my father will deal with those of you who do not from your heart forgive one another."

It is true that these verses do not deal with all the issues. Sometimes human relationships are very complex and there are things that are not as simple as just forgiveness. There are also the issues of having confidence in one another and trusting one another. There are some issues that forgiveness alone does not cover, but if we start out on the principle of having God's attitude



towards one another, then we begin on the correct foundation and make it possible for wrongs to be made right, and for true harmony to exist among God's people.

I believe that my eternal salvation does not depend on anybody else apart from Christ and me. But I also believe that Jesus made me a part of His body and I believe that as a part of His body He wanted me to be responsible for every single person who is also a part of that body. I could not have a rotting finger and say, "I don't care about it, let it take care of itself." Similarly, I could not be a part of the body of Christ and not care that there is a part of that body which is sick and in need of help.

The truth is that if we need to forgive one another it will be because some of us offend others, isn't that right? If we don't offend each other there will be no need to forgive each other, if we don't have faults there will be no need to forbear with one another. It is evident that He is talking to people with the recognition that there are faults, there are problems, there are weaknesses and we are to bear with each other and be patient with each other.

If it ever comes to the point where you say "I have to lose this finger," it must be because this finger cannot be recovered as in the case of cancer or some other diseases that begin to rot away the limb and you know that if it spreads any further it is going to destroy the body then you cut it off but you cut it reluctantly.

Have you ever known anybody who happily goes to the surgeon and says "cut this hand off!" When you go to the dentist with a bad tooth they tell you, "try to fill the tooth and not to extract it." You try to save it and the only reason you extract it is if it cannot be saved. There are times when it must be pulled, there are times when you must cut out the cancer but it is the extreme measure that you try to put off as long as possible because you care for the limb. We're all a part of the body of Christ and so we need to think about this.

## Above all else

Now as we continue reading from Colossians chapter 3, it says,

*"And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." (Col 3:14)*

Above what things? Above meekness, longsuffering, kindness, humbleness of mind, mercies, forbearing with one another, forgiving one another. I may say to somebody "I forgive you, I will be patient with you, I will bear with you," but there is something greater than this and it is to have true love for the person. I've seen parents bearing with their children in a way that is marvelous. Sometimes these children are rude, disobedient and stubborn, but when I watch the parents bearing with them, I realize that love truly is patient and longsuffering. Something inside of them reaches out to that child so much that they can hardly bring themselves to hurt the child even a little bit, and even when it is very necessary. If we felt that way about one another we would be far more slow to condemn and to estrange ourselves from each another.

It says "above all these things put on love because this is the bond of perfectness." Why is it that love is chosen? Why is it that love is singled out as the mark of perfection? Notice, the mark of perfection is not the testimony of Jesus Christ or the keeping of the commandments; the mark of perfection is love. Why is that so? 1 John 4:8 says,

*"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."*

If God is love and I experience true love I have become like God and God is perfect. Love is the mark of perfection because love is the character of God.

## This is my commandment

One of the favorite verses of most Adventists is, John 15:10.

*"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even*



*as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.*"

This is similar to verse 14 where Jesus says,

*"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."*

The truth is that we often misunderstand the true meaning of these verses. Verse 12 emphasizes the point which Jesus was really making. It says,

*"This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you."*

In the context of John chapters 13, 14, and 15, when Jesus talks about the commandments, He is speaking the commandment to love one another. When Jesus was about to go back to heaven that was the great burden on His heart. These disciples had just been a little while before quarreling about who was going to be the greatest. The other ten disciples had discovered that James and John had gone around in quiet with their mother to Jesus to ask Him to give them a big position in the kingdom over the others? Imagine what kind of resentment was brooding in their hearts against these two disciples. Do you think there was any kind of charitable feelings toward those two?

Jesus did not get them together and say, "James and John you were out of place," and He didn't put them in their place before the other disciples. He just said to all of them, "there's a burden on my heart. I'm going to die and I'm going to leave you all and you are going into the greatest sorrow that you have ever experienced and there's a burden on my heart." So He tried to tell them, "the thing I want most is that you love one another as I have loved you." He knew that if James and John came to understand this they would never want to lord it over on their brethren. He knew that if those brethren came to understand this love they would never mind having James and John in a higher position than them. He knew it did not matter to people who loved

one another. He knew that people who loved one another would be thinking, "It is better that he should have it than that I should have it."

When we talk about love we are not talking about sentimentalism. Look at what it says in 1 Cor 13:4-6:

*"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." (1 Cor 13:4-6)*

Love "suffers long." Does this mean that you can stand up in the fire or put your hand in the fire and hold it there for a long time? Is that the kind of longsuffering which Paul means? What is it talking about? It is talking about when somebody hurts you again and again and what do you do? You allow it, you endure it for long. You put up with it again and again and again. That is what love is like. It suffers long "and is kind;"

*"Charity envieth not."* Love does not care that this brother is getting up here and you are down here, you are glad for your brother. You don't try to exalt yourself or put yourself in the first place. "seeketh not her own," meaning what? We don't seek for our own interest and that's very interesting because what do we do from morning till night but seek our own interest? But it says that true love does not seek its own interest.

Think about the life of heavenly beings. At the beginning of each day what is the first concern on the mind of my guardian angel? It is me isn't it. I am his interest, I am his hobby, his life. All his energies are exerted for my salvation, he doesn't concern himself about himself because he knows that the Father is thinking about him. Now we are supposed to be God's messengers on earth but we get up in the morning and what is the first thing we think about? You can fill in the blanks. But true love is not self-seeking. the pas-

sage goes on to say,

*"Love is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil,"*

Would to God that this might rivet itself into our hearts. Little things annoy us so easily, sometimes something so innocently said. This ability to withstand provocation goes hand in hand with the virtue of thinking "no evil." What does that mean? I want to rephrase it; "love is not suspicious." Love does not put a bad motive to your actions even when it seems that way. I don't think that when you did this it was because you wanted to slight me or to show off yourself. Love puts the best construction on a person's actions.

### The finishing of the work

You know we can put perfection in any kind of language or context that we want but ultimately perfection means being like God, and being like God means experiencing and having and demonstrating the love that God has. There is a beautiful comment by Ellen White which expresses it in a thrilling way.

*"when we love the world as He (Jesus) has loved it, then for us His mission is accomplished. We are fitted for heaven for heaven is in our hearts." - The Desire of Ages p. 641*

Every time I read this, it stirs me. What does perfection mean? How do I become perfect? How should I perceive of perfection? When we love the world as Christ loves it then Jesus' work on our behalf is finished. We may talk about the Atonement, we may talk about the blotting out of sins, the perfecting of the saints, or the sealing of the 144,000, but here is a simpler way: When we love the world as Christ loved it then His work for us is finished. We are ready for heaven because at that point, when that kind of love is in us, heaven is in our hearts. It's a simple way of putting it, it's a marvelous way of putting it, but it's the way that we really ought to come to see it.

How can people know that we are His disciples? How can people know that we are Christians? Not because we keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. How can people know that you are Christians? Jesus says "this is how people are going to know that you are Christians, this is how people are going to know that you follow me, it is when you have love one for another."(John 13:35).

But how will they know that we love one another? Will it be when we walk around and say, "I love the brethren?" doesn't everybody do that? How are people going to know that we have love one for another?

The apostle John suggests that if we don't love our fellowmen whom we can see then it is not possible to love God whom we cannot see. (1 John 4:20). A person might say, "I love God and I'm seeking the glory of God," but if we don't demonstrate love for our fellowmen it shows that we don't have love for God at all.

If an unbeliever should do an examination of our lives over the past year will they truly come to the conclusion that we love one another? What then will they conclude about the kind of

people we are with respect to the Christianity of the Bible?

In 1 John 3:18 it says,

*My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. (1 John 3:18)*

Could we paraphrase that? "Let your actions show your love, not your mouth."

There is one other thing which probably needs to be emphasized and it is this. My chief concern, if I read the Bible right, is not to be that another person does not love me. My concern should be that I love that person! That's what the Scripture emphasizes. It emphasizes my duty to love the world. Do I expect the world to love me? If I expect the world to love me it is because I don't understand the word of God. God's word says that the world will hate me but I must love the world as Christ loved the world, I'm to love my brethren regardless of how they regard me and if everyone of us gets this concept right then a lot of the things that are wrong will become right.



## Isaiah 9:6

*(Isa 9:6) For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

This verse has often been used by defenders of the Trinity as evidence that Jesus is God Himself. Here it states quite clearly that "His name shall be called ... mighty God," and this, it is declared, makes it evident that Jesus is God Himself. Some go further and note that His name is also called, "everlasting Father," and draw the conclusion that this indicates that Jesus is God the Father! This is one of the key texts used by those who believe in the "Jesus only," doctrine, to prove that the Father and Son are one and the same person. Most Trinitarians however, ignore the part where it says He will be called the, "everlasting Father," while they make a big thing of the fact that He is called the, "mighty God."

Let us not forget as we examine this verse that it also says that Jesus would be called, "wonderful counselor," as well as the "Prince of Peace."

The interesting question is this: Was Jesus ever called by any of these names? Is He called by these names today? Well, the angel who announced His birth told Mary specifically to call His name "Jesus." This was the name by which He was known all His life apart from a few times when He was referred to as "Christ," "Messiah," "Lord," or "Master." Even today He is referred to as "Jesus," "Lord," "Christ," or "Jesus Christ." He is never referred to as, "everlasting Father," or even "wonderful Counselor."

What is the explanation of this? Did Isaiah make a false prophecy? The answer is no. The fact is, that people, as they so often do, have misinterpreted and misunderstood this prophecy and read a meaning into it which God did not intend.

The phrase, "his name shall be called," or some variation of it appears several times in the Bible and especially in the

### **REMEMBER** ...

#### **RESTORATION MINISTRIES CAMPMEETING**

*Will be held on April 8-12, 2004*

**at the Youth With A Mission Campsite at Rudds Corner,  
Manchester, Jamaica West Indies.  
(15 minutes away from the Restoration Ministries chapel)**

**Special guest speakers include: Brother Willis Smith &  
Doctor Steven Burks (both from Ohio in the USA)**

**Make early plans to attend  
For more information call (876) 625-2785  
or email: [info@restorationministry.com](mailto:info@restorationministry.com)**

book of Isaiah. Often we find that the person or the institution referred to was never in fact actually called by that particular name. Here are some examples of what I mean:

Isa. 7:14 – “call his name Immanuel...”

Isa. 1:26 – “shalt be called the city of righteousness”

Isa. 4:1 – “Let us be called by thy name”

Isa. 4:3 – “Jerusalem shall be called holy.”

Isa. 58:12 – “thou shalt be called the repairer of the breach ...”

Isa. 61:3 – “be called trees of righteousness ...”

Isa. 62:4 – “thou shalt be called Hephzibah...”

Jer. 23:6 – “His name ... the Lord our righteousness.”

In these verses we do not have a difficulty in understanding what is being said. We understand that the emphasis in these names is on the character which they describe, rather than that

the individuals or institutions referred to were to be actually addressed by such titles. The names described the characteristics of the persons or institutions referred to and God’s only intent was that as we read these names we should focus on the characteristics. He was not saying that they would actually be addressed by these titles.

So in these names ascribed to Jesus in Isa. 9:6, what characteristics are we being directed to? The meaning and implication of most of the titles is self evident. But let us briefly look at the meaning of the two phrases which usually cause the most controversy, the names, “Mighty God,” and “Everlasting Father.”

In Jesus there is the character, the qualities of God. Firstly, He had the character of God and secondly He has the power of God. His name or His character is that of the mighty God.

This is not saying that Jesus is God

Himself, any more than the title, “everlasting Father,” means that He is God the Father. His character shall be that of the mighty God. In Him will be found the qualities of the everlasting Father, therefore in that sense, this would be the name by which He would be called.

In Exodus 23:21. Speaking of Christ, the “angel” whom He would send before the Israelites, God stated,

*“Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him.”*

Thus the angel rightly had the name of God because He possessed the power, the authority and the character of God. However, this did not mean that He was God Himself. The name of Christ in His preexistence is “*Michael*,” which means, “He who is like God.” This em-

**Continued on page 11**

---

## Atonement, Christology, and the Trinity

---

The following article is an excerpt from the book, *The Sanctuary and the Atonement, Biblical, Historical and Theological Studies* Prepared by the Biblical Research Committee of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, pages 530-533. Many Seventh-day Adventists are persuaded that Leroy Froom was a dependable historian and that the criticisms we have made of him both for his beliefs and for his misrepresentations of SDA history are unfounded and unfair. In light of this, it is interesting to see what the Biblical Research Committee of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists has to say about Leroy Froom’s representation of the doctrine of the Trinity in Early Adventism.

That some kind of Arianism was present among pioneer Seventh-day Adventists is well known. The extent, nature, and reason for its presence is less well known. Confusion has been contributed by the success of L.E. Froom’s *Movement of Destiny*. Written to defend genuine Adventism from critics outside of and within the ranks, *Movement of Destiny* treats early Adventist Arianism like an encapsulated cancer, gross but confined. That it was held by leaders and was taught

in the *Review* and in widely circulated books and pamphlets did not deter Froom from his restricted appraisal.

Had Froom been able to grasp the Arian aspect of early Adventism more perceptively, he would have realized its general pervasiveness – and, at the same time, would likely have been less embarrassed by it.

Erwin Gane in a master’s thesis and Russel Holt in a research paper have demonstrated that for several decades Sabbath-keeping Adventists were about as uniform in opposing Trinitarianism as they were in advocating belief in the second coming. The situation was general and widespread.

Explanation for this situation involves early Adventist understanding not only of Trinitarianism but also of the atonement. The atonement is one of the themes of the present paper.

J.M. Stephenson may be regarded as a spokesman for his brethren in this area. A series by him entitled “The Atonement” appeared in the *Review*

in nine front-page installments between August 22 and December 5, 1854. Editor James White urged readers at the beginning of the series to “carefully peruse each article when published.” Immediately after the series closed, he rejoiced that this “valuable assistant” in the study of the atonement was now available in book form. Even though Stephenson soon withdrew his fellowship, his book on the atonement was advertised until sometime in 1861 when, presumably, the supply of copies ran out.

At the outset, Stephenson made a nice distinction between atonement and reconciliation. Atonement he defined as having “exclusive reference to the mind of an offended God, “whereas reconciliation, he said, “refers to the mind of offending men.” He used the distinction to demonstrate that Christ’s atonement should not lead to the doctrine of Universalism.

Stephenson dealt with Trinitarianism when he discussed Christ’s fitness to offer God an adequate atonement.

Trinitarians, he charged, “claim that the Son of God had *three* distinct natures at the same time; viz., a human *body*, a human *soul*, united with his Divine nature: the body being mortal, the soul immortal, the Divinity co-equal, co-existent, and co-eternal with the everlasting Father. Now, none of the advocates of this theory, claim that either his soul or Divinity died, that the body was the only part of this triple being which actually died “the death of the cross;” hence, according to this view (which makes the death of Christ the grand *atonement sacrifice* for the *sins* of the world) we only have the sacrifice of the most inferior part — the human body — of the Son of God.”

In place of so inadequate a sacrifice as a mere human body, Stephenson (and other early Sabbatarian Adventists) taught a Christ who was able to offer God the death of a whole man, body and soul — yet not of an ordinary man by any means. Christ, in Stephenson’s thought, was created somewhere in eternity in the special sense of being “only begotten.” He was deathless, divine, and Son of God before His incarnation. At His incarnation, His divinity did not take on humanity, as Trinitarians claimed; it was exchanged for humanity while Jesus nonetheless remained the Son of God. He “did not lose his personal identity in his transition from God to man.” Said Stephenson, commenting on John 1:14, “‘*The Word was made flesh.*’ The natural import of this language is, that the only begotten of the Father, was actually converted into flesh, . . . that the *Divine nature was made human*; nay, that the very substance of which he was originally composed was converted into flesh.”

The present paper is not oriented to tracing the development of Christology and anti-Trinitarianism in Seventh-day Adventism. We touch on it here because of its relationship to the doctrine of the atonement. A few further comments in passing, however, may be helpful.

First, Stephenson’s objections to

Trinitarianism were related not only to the atonement but also to the question of the soul’s immortality. His views on both Trinitarianism and Conditionalism are traceable, in part at least, to Henry Grew, who, via the writings of his disciple George Storrs, influenced many Millerites to adopt conditionalism. Conditionalism has always been a major feature of Sabbatarian Adventism. Conditionalism influenced early Adventists to be anti-Trinitarian.

Second, some of Ellen White’s later statements about Christ’s human and divine natures gain meaning when read in the context of Stephenson’s theology. In the *Review* for June 15, 1905, she said that Christ “veiled his divinity with the garb of humanity, but He did not part with His divinity. A divine-human Saviour, He came. . . .” In the *Review* for February 18, 1890, she said, “In Christ, divinity and humanity were combined. Divinity was not degraded to humanity; divinity held its place, but humanity by being united to divinity withstood the fiercest test of temptation. . . .” In *QOD*, p. 650, she is quoted as saying, “when Christ was crucified, it was His human nature that died. Deity did not sink and die; that would have been impossible.” Such a statement would have bothered Adventist pioneers if first published in the 1850s (instead of in 1904). Her statement in *DA*, p. 530, “In Christ was life, original, unborrowed, underived,” caused consternation in the 1890s, but it also nudged Adventism effectively toward appreciation for a concept of Trinitarianism that was consonant with Conditionalism.

Third, Stephenson’s Christology intended definitely to honor Christ and also to correct popular misconceptions about Christ’s sufferings: “Having investigated the original nature, glory and dignity of our Lord and Master; having gazed a few moments upon the face of him who is the fairest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely; having had a glance at the celestial glory he had with the Father, before the world was, and beheld that matchless form which is the image of the invis-

ible God; and having looked with wonder and admiration upon this august personage, exalted far above angels and thrones and dominions, principalities and powers; we are prepared, as afar as our feeble perceptions can comprehend, to appreciate that amazing love and condescension which induced our adorable Redeemer to forego all the glories and honors of heaven, and all the endearments of his Father’s presence.”

Indeed, according to Stephenson, so great was Christ’s condescension in giving up His divinity in order to become a man, that we need to realize that His earthly experience was only a portion of His sacrifice on our behalf: “The great difficulty with most writers on the atonement is this; they do not commence this sacrifice at the proper place: they commence with the poverty of our Redeemer’s birth, and reason correctly in reference to his subsequent history: whereas they should commence with his highest nature, as “*the only begotten of the Father,*” and “*beginning of the creation of God,*” and follow him through every degree of his humiliation, from the moment he consented to divest himself of the glory of the Father, to his descent into the depths of the grave. His sacrifice covers the whole ground between these two points. But, by far the greater portion of the sacrifice had been made before his advent in the flesh. It consisted in the Word’s consenting to become flesh; in the Divine nature, consenting to become human: in him who was rich voluntarily becoming poor.

Whatever criticism may be leveled at early Adventist anti-Trinitarianism, it cannot fairly be accused of intending to downgrade our Lord. It labored lovingly to upgrade popular conceptions of the atonement. *Movement of Destiny* need not have been embarrassed!

From the book, *The Sanctuary and the Atonement, Biblical, Historical and Theological Studies* Prepared by the Biblical Research Committee of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, pages 530-533



## OTHERS MAY, YOU CANNOT

If God has called you to be really like Jesus, He will draw you into a life of crucifixion and humility, and put upon you such demands of obedience that you will not be able to follow other people, or measure yourself by other Christians; and in many ways He will seem to let other good people do things which He will not let you do.

Other Christians and ministers, who seem to be very religious and useful may push themselves, pull wires and, work schemes to carry out their plans, but you cannot do it; and if you attempt it, you will meet with such failure and rebuke from the Lord as will make you sorely penitent.

Others may boast of themselves, of their work, of their success, of their writings, but the Holy Spirit will not allow you to do any such thing; and if you begin it .... will lead you into some deep mortification that will make you despise yourself and all your good works.

Others may be allowed to succeed in making money, or may have a legacy left to them; but it is likely God will keep

you poor, because He wants you to have something far better than gold, namely, a helpless dependence on Him, that He may have the privilege of supplying your need day by day out of an unseen treasury.

The Lord may make others be honoured and put forward, and keep you hidden in obscurity, because He wants to produce some choice, fragrant fruit for His coming glory, which can only be produced in the shade. He may let others be great, but keep you small. He may let others do a work for Him, and get the credit for it, but He will make you work and toil without knowing how much you are doing; and then, to make your work still more precious, He may let others get the credit for work which you have done, and thus make your reward ten times greater when Jesus comes.

The Holy Spirit will put a strict watch over you, with a jealous love, and will rebuke you for little words and feelings, or for wasting your time and money, which other Christians never seem distressed over.

So make up your mind that God is an infinite Sovereign, and has a right to do as He pleases with His own. He may not explain to you a thousand things which puzzle your reason in His dealings with you; but if you absolutely sell yourself to be His love slave, He will wrap you in an inexpressible love and bestow upon you many blessings which come only to those who are in the inner circle.

Settle it forever, then, that you are to deal directly with the Holy Spirit, and that (God) is to have the privilege of tying your tongue, or chaining your hand, or closing your eyes, in ways that He does not seem to use with others. Now when you are so possessed with, the living God that you are, in your secret heart, pleased and delighted over this peculiar, personal, private jealous guardianship and management of the Holy Spirit over your life, you will have found the vestibule of heaven.

G.D. Watson in *Living Waters*



## The Experience of Abiding

To maintain an awareness of the indwelling presence of God and Jesus, we must learn to look at the world through God's eyes. We must educate, train, discipline ourselves to think the thoughts of God. We must **know** ourselves to be holy beings as the word of God tells us that we are. To recognize ourselves as being truly partakers of the divine nature and as such to have the very mind of God. To realize that our actions are the very actions of God; our attitude to a brother or sister, the very attitude of God. that it is God HIMSELF, by His Spirit in actual fact who lives inside of us. This is what it means to "walk in the Spirit". To walk as spirit beings, that is, beings who are an ex-

tension of God Himself, through the indwelling of His Spirit.

My words are not mine, but His. My relationship to the world is **His** relationship to it. The attitude of others to me, whether to ignore, abuse, curse or bless, is not an attitude towards me (why should it bother me?) but is an attitude towards an untouchable being. One who is infinite, sovereign, who knows His inherent worth and needs not men's approval to prove who He is. By faith this relationship is attained. **Because** we believe God, it becomes real and so we live the actual life of God.

"*He that is born of God does not commit sin.*" The illustration of birth is not perfect. In birth, a father implants the seed of life which becomes his son. However, the Son becomes a separate

entity, though with similar characteristics. He **partook** of, but does not partake of the Father's life.

When one is born of God, the seed (The Holy Spirit) is placed in Him, linking Him to God, not as a separate being, but making Him a **part of God**. The challenge before us and the battle which we have to fight, is the battle to believe and to remember and to live the reality of this experience, every moment of every day.





# Letters



I have received the Tape you sent me about the *Meat Offering*. I believe you understand what I mean when I say, it came right on time! Thank you! God is good to us. – *Germany*

I had the privilege of watching your “*Roots of the Trinity*” video presentation shared by a brother and I truly appreciate the resource. I intend to share the tape with others in my former church group whom I’ve officially ‘left’. There is the issue of separation from corporate worship. We can’t call them out while we’re still in. I’m a lay person thanking God that He has shown His light on me on the truth about Him and His only begotten Son. – *New Jersey*

I’m so truly thankful that God has led me to find this website. I purchased this computer spring of 2001 for the sole purpose of finding others that believe God is one God and not three in one. That He indeed sent His Only-Begotten Son. At that time I was working 2 part time jobs to make ends meet. I’ve been blessed with a full time position at work, but I work night shift that include Friday to Saturday mornings.

I was unable to attend a schedule meeting in Tampa on July 19th, because of a lack of sleep and other engagements. Please pray for me that the Lord bless me with a new assignment with the full Sabbath off. – *Florida*

I’m very glad to have the opportunity to send you our greetings from here our poor country !!

I’m sorry I didn’t see you before you left Romania. I have to tell you that I gave out all the books and sold a lot of books, I also, see, how confused are

the people in their minds !!

I have already receive a phone for our Conference (Romanian one) I think that they are looking for some reasons to disfellowship soon- just because of the tithes I’m in a little war with them. I’ll see !! – *Romania*

I totally agree on NOT having a ‘Fundamental Statements’! I know you are aware of the quote by Loughborough on setting up a creed. If there is one, it should be Rev 14:12. I also totally agree of NOT forming a ‘monolithic’ structure. Our Adventist pioneers did not intend to become a denomination but a movement. Let’s keep it this way. It’s a movement, not a denomination. Let’s learn from history. God leads this movement and there is no need for an ‘official’ denomination.

As an aside, I am planning to go to the Philippines next year and start a fire. Please include this in your prayers. The Biblical principle is “kindred, tongue, people” and I intend to follow this. Instead of waiting to be ex-communicated, I’ve voluntarily requested the church board to remove our names (my wife and I) from the church books. – *New Jersey*

Greetings in the name of Jesus. How are you brother since you left us in Nairobi? How is brother Howard Williams? How is the message touching people where you are? I have seen the light of God because I was in darkness. Pray for me very much to teach more about this truth of the word of God. I also I’m praying for you very much for God to strengthen you in this truth. I have written this because you saved me from the faith which was of false spirit. Send me more books, tracts and your preaching cassettes. – *Kenya*

We are really thankful of the good news we are getting from the trip. I thank God that we met you. Really you introduced something which God is driving into our hearts and we had been blessed by the message and the fine understanding of the love of our Father.

We got that photocopying machine and

we are copying currently materials to distribute to some of the brethren

. At the end of September we had a trip to another province where we held meetings with some people and they were quite happy to hear the truth being taken from the bible and enjoyed the truth. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of November again we will be having another trip again to the same province. They are scheduled for Friday, Saturday and Sunday. We are really happy to share this message with other people at whatever cost. If you can send any material we can now copy and distribute it.

There are those brothers who were very arrogant (opposed) to the message, thank God now they believe and are champions in spreading the truth as it is. Brother, do not forget to send that disc with your publications as we now have a computer we can print. We give praises to God and thank you again for the assistance as we have already been sidelined from their denomination. The work has begun, our aim with the help of God is to visit all the provinces.

Greetings are sent also to you and blessings of God through His Son to you and your wife and children, Brother Howard and all other brethren. – *South Africa*

I have already started to work with publication/typing and translation of the books which are:

*The Mystery Demystified, The Spirit of Antichrist, The Formulation of The Doctrine of The Trinity, The Holy Spirit*, (all these are already translated) The following are being worked on.

*Who is Telling The Truth About God, God’s Plan To Save Us, The Omega of Apostasy, Adventist Review Perpetuates The Trinity, This is The Church, From Babylon to New Jerusalem, Love of God, God of The Bible, and Satans Deadliest Lie*. Books which are not yet translated and that I am still working with are: *A Time to Choose* and *100 and more Facts on the Trinity*. The work above is go-

ing on in a good time I will let you know each step of this work. It is very difficult to translate the books but am trying to do my best and I hope God will help as I am determined to do this work. – *Tanzania*

Arlene Bailey has been forwarding your e-mail editions of Open Face to me. It was such a blessing to hear of the work you have done for the Lord in Africa. It is so awesome to know that Jesus is coming in our lifetime. I want to encourage you in your work for the Lord. – *Arizona*

We just read Old Paths Vol. 12 No. 9 about report on the work in Europe. It is amazing what you and Allen are doing and we are praying continually for you that God may bless you. Also we were listening and watching the Tape (Video) “The Holy Spirit,” together with our youngest son and his family. We all of us are very impressed by that presentation. That is just what we always believed and we are now 50 years in the advent message.

David, I like your dialect because you pronounce letters in the way we do, in the German way and not in the English way but we understand both ways, we have to because we live in Australia.

It is wonderful to know that on this planet are lots of people who believe in the Truth about God.

Our spirit and prayers are always with you in your efforts to find people who keep the word of Christ’s patience whom Christ will also keep from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth Rev. 3:10 and we think that is the Trinity’s problem

God be with you and with all the others – *Australia*

Thank you for taking the time out to visit with me on the phone last Monday Nov. 4. You are a tireless worker.

The Roots of the Trinity video is clear and informative, like all your presentations. I wish everyone could receive its message.

I’m grateful for all the spiritual help you provide me. – *USA*

Thank you for the tapes you sent us. We are looking for ways to spread the Gospel in our area. We have some ideas, these include setting up stands at the train station, airport, port area and other tourist areas round town. We would like to distribute material that directs people to God not a denomination (or to preconceived ideas). – *Australia*

We recently had a visit from my aunt in Germany who was brought up as a Lutheran but who has married a Catholic and lives in a small village where everyone is Catholic and religion is a part of life. She stayed at Mum’s and I went to visit them there as well. She received the truth with an open heart and started keeping the Sabbath while she was there. We were all praying that her husband would see the truth as well and our prayers were answered above expectations. He accepted the truth also with open arms, the whole family (5 children included) now keep the Sabbath and know the truth about God and His Son. The husband said for the first time his life has meaning and it is as if he has been reborn. Also my grandparents who live with them are a bit skeptical but are very interested in reading Ellen White. Our God is such a good and loving Father. – *Australia*

Open Face was waiting in the mail for us when we returned from church this morning. Your words were especially meaningful to me today, and I thought I should let you know. This is true not just for this issue but for past sermons and articles also and I want you to know how I appreciate your work. I don’t wish to be critical of the conference church, its pastors or the Sabbath School teachers but I am often left with an emptiness of soul, and/or an inner anger over the misrepresentation of truth and lack of study to know the truth. – *West Virginia*



## Surrender

The key to victory and happiness in the Christian life is, surrender. A man who surrenders fully to God may live a life that is fulfilled, satisfying, useful and meaningful. However, each one of us has his dreams, his goals, his plans. He has his own identity, linked to his preferences, his habits, his lifestyle, his possessions. Before God can give a man a better, more worthwhile life, the man must first agree to give up the one which he presently possesses, in its entirety.

But how to give it up? This is the difficult question which we all face. Shall a man abandon his own identity with all the things which he prefers? Shall he resign himself entirely to the will and ways of another? How shall I choose to die, to relinquish all I have accumulated, to face the possibility that another may say, you must give up all these things. My salary, my respectability, my admiring friends, my links with my religion, my nation, my race.....how shall I choose to die?!!

Yet I must, if I would live. Jesus impressed the necessity of this forcefully upon His disciples when He said,

*“If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple ... whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:26,33)*

If I would have life more abundant; if I would end frustration and failure, my entire identity must go, that God may have His way in me and make me into another, better man. In practical terms what this means is that I must deliberately and decisively choose to completely abandon MY life. I must give it up immediately regardless of the consequences: my plans, preferences, biases, concepts, possessions, all must be relinquished. Then I must commit myself to an existence of waiting upon

God in perfect submissiveness that I may discern His perfect will moment by moment. Finally I must bind myself to an irreversible surrender where God's will, desires, purposes are carried out without hesitation or wavering, not intermittently, but any and every time, with my whole heart and to the best of my ability.

### Maintaining Surrender

The source and the maintenance of the blessed life; the divine life; the victorious life, is constant communion with God; an obsession with God (Deut. 30:20; Jer. 29:13; Prov. 2:1-5; Matt. 13:44,45) such communion requires continual SACRIFICE. Sacrifice of time, pleasures, work, social fellowship, privileges which others may regard as essential. There is no alternative. He in whom God lives His life is a part of God. through the link of faith, this relationship is formed and must be maintained by the same means. However, we only maintain faith as we focus on the object of faith (Matt. 14:30; Heb. 12:2).

We must deliberately, continually and consistently make sacrifices, in order that we may focus on Him. we must seek the Lord frequently and wholeheartedly. This is, this must be our WHOLE LIFE. And yet, if God lives my life, what could be more reasonable and natural than that this should be the way my life is lived? Conversely, what could be more impossible than that God should live His life in me, and that He should be crowded out by work, duties, entertainment, unfulfilled duties, deadlines, cares of this life etc. etc? insomuch that prayer and study can only be squeezed in now and then?

It is human to make resolutions, to plan, to place confidence in one's ability, and it is true that some of us do have great will-power and the ability to stick to our resolutions. In the spiritual realm, however, it is eternally true that without Christ, we can do nothing (John 15:5). Our whole security lies in clinging to Him. May God help us never to forget this.

## Isaiah 9:6

Continued from page 6

phasizes the fact that Jesus has the qualities and in this sense, the names of God, without being God Himself. Notice it says, "His name shall be called ..." This is how people would regard Christ. These are the qualities which they would see in Him. He would be ruler, the government would be upon His shoulder and the people would "call" Him, or would see in Him the qualities of counselor, the qualities of God or of divinity, the qualities of a father, even those of God the Father Himself, and finally the qualities of a king who would bring peace, hence, the Prince of Peace.



## Convention Report

Sabbath December 6, 2003 was a high day for the believers in Jamaica. They came together from several different places in Jamaica to fellowship together in a Convention at Albion in the parish of Manchester. Believers were there from Kingston, St. Elizabeth, Westmoreland, Trelawny, St. Catherine, and of course Manchester. Unfortunately the brethren from St. James were unable to attend because of transportation problems.

Our theme for the day was "The Victorious Life," and it was a day filled with spiritual blessing from the various presentations, but this was enhanced by the fellowship which we enjoyed throughout the course of the day.

The first service for the day, the Sabbath School was taken by brother Peter Barnz from Kingston. He chose to give a study which focused on the ind-

welling of Christ in the believer. This was a challenging presentation which blessed all who were present. The mid-



day speaker was brother David Clayton. His topic was, "The Missing Component," and he focused on the place of surrender in the Christian's life. These presentations were followed in the afternoon by testimonies and reports from the various groups. The day

was concluded with a discussion on the various ways in which we could work to get the message out. Brother Neville Morris led out in this discussion.

An additional feature of the day was the musical items which were presented during the day. We were delighted and blessed by the singing of Sister Joy Morris, the brethren from Duncans, the Albion Group, and Ayon & Kaydeen.

The only shadow which hung over the day was the fact that several of our number were absent because of illness. This added a sobering note to the day's proceedings which only caused us to pray more earnestly. We are happy to note that all those who were sick, some quite seriously, have by the grace of God made a full recovery.



# How to Know God

*Ellen G. White*

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16.*

How can we understand God? How are we to know our Father? We are to call Him by the endearing name of Father. And how are we to know Him and the power of His love? It is through diligent search of the Scriptures. We cannot appreciate God unless we take into our souls the great plan of redemption. We want to know all about these grand problems of the soul, of the redemption of the fallen race. It is a wonderful thing that after man had violated the law of God and separated himself from God, was divorced, as it were, from God --that after all this there was a plan made whereby man should not perish, but that he should have everlasting life. . .

. God gave His only-begotten Son to die for us. . . . 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. . . .

Right here on this little atom of a world were enacted the grandest scenes that were ever known to humanity. All the universe of heaven was looking on with intense interest. Why? The great battle was to be fought between the power of darkness and the Prince of light. Satan's work was to magnify his power constantly. . . . He was all the time placing God in a false light. He was presenting Him as a God of injustice, and not a God of mercy. He was constantly stirring up their minds so that they would have an incorrect view of God.

How was God to be rightly represented to the world? How was it to be known that He was a God of love, full of mercy, kindness, and pity? How was the world to know this? God sent His Son, and He was to represent to the world the character of God. . . .

We want to keep this perfect Pattern before us. God was so good as to send a representation of Himself in His Son Jesus Christ, and we want to get the mind and heart to unfold and reach upward. . . . Let yours be the prayer, Reveal Thyself to me, that in Thy matchless grace I may lay hold on the golden link, Christ, which has been let down from heaven to earth, that I may grasp it and be drawn upward.

*In Heavenly Places, p.11*



## ***Open Face***

*Restoration Ministries  
P.O. Box 23, Knockpatrick  
Manchester, Jamaica W.I.  
ph. (876) 625-2785*