

STATEMENT FROM CUC

NEWS • ANALYSIS • OPINION

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ADVENTIST TODAY

VOL. 7, NO. 5

SEPTEMBER • OCTOBER 1999

**“FORMAL NEUTRALITY” AND THE
DEATH OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY**

**FREEDOM OF SPEECH VERSUS
FREEDOM OF RELIGION**



LOMA LINDA DIVINE CREATION SEMINAR COVERAGE

Creation, Yes!
But How?

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What's a President To Do?

Monday morning, 9:00 a.m. A delegation from three city churches with predominantly African American memberships comes into your office to plead for more resources for city ministry. They quote Ellen White on the importance of city work and cite statistics about the needs in their communities. They would like to split the cost with the conference of a full time youth worker to serve the kids in their neighborhoods. This kind of youth programming would result in several hundred kids won or retained for the church over the next five years. The church has a moral obligation to do this kind of work, and it will produce results.

Monday, 11:00 a.m. A group of Korean pastors talks with you about the disparity between the tithe they contribute to the conference and the pastoral staffing they receive.

Monday, 1:00 p.m. A delegation from one of your larger Anglo churches expresses concern about the theological fuzziness of their pastor. They want a pastor who will help them articulate to their children the distinctive perspectives of Adventism.

Monday, 4:00 p.m. You chair an evangelism committee. If the conference puts \$25,000 into Spanish language meetings, they can plant a new congregation projected to grow to three hundred members over the next five years. The same \$25,000 would fund a media campaign to raise the visibility of the Adventist church in the metro area.

Tuesday, lunch. You are the guest of a group of professionals who insist that the conference do more to provide a spiritual home for those who are educated as well as devout. They warn of what will happen to tithe if the conference is not more responsive to their social peers.

Tuesday afternoon. Two meetings. The first concerns a seventh-grade teacher accused by three boys of sexual misconduct. The other involves a group of church members outraged that their pastor has managed to alienate every person in the congregation under thirty by his hypercritical spirit.

Wednesday. An irate doctor calls you demanding to know why you're still hiring as pastors graduates from a college known to undermine the verities of Adventism. A professor at a state university calls and pleads with you to work for a more open church that will welcome the inquiring minds of his graduate students, not Adventist kids, but non-Adventists who are asking questions about spiritual life. He said he would be embarrassed if these students got their hands on the recent Sabbath School quarterly on geochronology.

What's a president to do?

Adventism abounds in "prophetic voices," each offering its definition of essential Adventism. But they are all wrong because they are all too narrow. Adventism is more than a particular reading of the Book of Revelation or Genesis or Hebrews. It is more than an open-minded pursuit of truth. Adventism, like any living organism has a history, but is more than that history. It has a working creed, "The 27," but that is only a single frame from the video of our theological development.

The daunting job of a president is to form a community from the diverse personalities and perspectives that clamor for dominance in the church—meaning no group will ever be fully satisfied.

The church needs radicals and prophets to push and goad us. It needs theologians and scientists. It needs technocrats to work the machinery. It needs profoundly pious saints whose lives give form to our highest ideals. It needs true believers to anchor us to our roots and intellectual adventurers to help us discover new truth and unlearn venerable error.

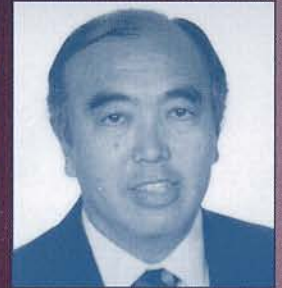
But none of these is the job of a president. What's a president to do? Work to create a genuine community of all the immiscible elements that make up Adventism, a community that is effective in sharing Jesus with the world and with all our children.

John McLarty, *editor*



DIVINE CREATION SEMINAR

- 10** Creation, Yes! ...but How?
- 12** Professor Langdon Gilkey on Science and Religion DENNIS HOKAMA
- 13** The Letter and Spirit of the Adventist Pioneers JAMES WALTERS
- 14** Convictions Over Risks GREG BILLOCK
- 15** Trends in Adventist Creationism JIM HAYWARD
- 16** A Historical Look Back: Adventism and Creation RENNIE B. SCHOEPFLIN
- 17** What Are Adventists to Make of Evolutionary Biology? JOHN W. WEBSTER
- 19** How the Seventh-day Adventist Church Should Relate to Evolution RONALD L. CARTER
- 22** Review: Defending Traditional Adventist Creationism ERVIN TAYLOR
- 24** God's Grief JOHN MCLARTY



D. HOKAMA 9



L. GILKEY 12



E. TAYLOR 22



M. STERLING 23

NEWS AND ANALYSIS

- 7 Fighting for Liberty and Justice
- 8 "Formal Neutrality" and the Death of Religious Liberty
- 9 A Battle of Presuppositions

LETTERS

- 4 Talking About Homosexuality
- 4 Homophobia
- 5 Investigative Judgment
- 5 Veteran College Administration Speaks Out
- 6 Folkenberg Intimidation

SOUNDINGS

- 23 No Time for Miracles MARYAN STIRLING

ABOUT THE COVER:

Is our first parent the big bang? Can finite man ever hope to understand an infinite God?

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PUBLISHER:
James Walters

EDITOR EMERITUS:
Raymond Cottrell

EDITOR:
John McLarty

NEWS EDITOR:
Dennis Hokama

ASSISTANT EDITORS:
Diana Fisher
Gayle Foster
Cherie Rouse
James H. Stirling
Susan G. Walters

EDITORIAL ADVISOR:
Steve Daily

OFFICE MANAGER:
Hanan Sadek

ART DIRECTION AND DESIGN:
Graphics Studio, Redlands, CA

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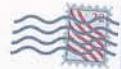
Telephone: (800) 236-3641
Fax: (909) 785-1595
E-mail: atoday@atoday.com
Web site: www.atoday.com

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FIRST CLASS

AT Reader
777 My Home St.
Hometownville, CA



Letters to the Editor
Adventist Today
P.O. Box 8026
Riverside, CA 92575-8026

Talking About Homosexuality

Regarding Elder McLarty's article entitled "Let's Talk About Homosexuality," What kind of sin is sufficient to cause one to be excluded from church membership? Polygamy is not God's ideal? Is it or is it not adultery? Should we then say idol worship is not God's ideal? Or maybe we should re-institute slavery since God "gave explicit rules regulating it." This is the kind of logic we end up with when the plain statements of the Bible are forgotten or ignored.

Whether the purpose is to excuse our own sin or to be "kind" and "compassionate" to others, we fail when we effectively set ourselves or other people up to meet an angry God face to face, by trifling with the Book that so many laid down not only their sins, but their very lives for.

Alas, I fear that even if this letter is printed, it will be dismissed by most readers as thoughtless fundamentalism, for many cannot imagine God as being deeply compassionate and yet angry. "However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8)

DAVID WRIGHT
VIA THE INTERNET

I was a little shocked by your July-August issue of *Adventist Today*.... No, I do not believe that homosexuality is acceptable to God. I think the Bible is very plain on that subject....

I loved the way J. Miller used his intellect to dissect the Bible to prove that we might want to wait before we judge the homosexual too harshly.... It was not only Mr. Miller's article that made me sick, John McLarty shocked me, also.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church does not need to take another look or a

broader look at homosexuality. We need to let these people know that we love them, but they can be delivered, if they will allow God to do so. Homosexuality, adultery, alcohol addiction, and all of the other sins must be put aside and let go of. God will deliver us from every besetting sin, if we will only let Him. God wants to deliver us.... Hopefully your journal does not continue to publish such junk. We need a report on what goes on within our church.

LEO CAMPBELL
ARPIN, WISCONSIN

Not once does this author mention the Bible as a way to deal with homosexuality. Why, maybe because it's lumped in the same category as adultery and to use his reasoning, some people's "sexual orientation" is to be bigamist because they desire more than one partner. Sin is innate because of our being born in sin and shaped in iniquity. All sin has a powerful pull on us. But Christ being the mainstay helps to break that bond.

It is as easy or as hard as that because just how much we depend on Christ to break bonds is how we become free. Addicts of any sort who have overcome will always say they still experience the draw of that addiction and until Satan is destroyed the pull will always be there.

Like any sin when we change the focus from ourselves and project it into Christ's work sin does not have the same power over us as it used to. To stop sinning is Christ's work alone and when we join into his work for others he works on us.

Then why do some homosexuals believe they were born that way? The same reason alcoholism runs in families, or drug addiction because any sin that the parents did becomes a part of their DNA and is passed to the children. How

is that true just look at how Adam and Eve brought sin into the world.

The important thing for us (sinners) who believe that Jesus has a place for us we must also remember that his word says in heaven there will be no place for whoremongers, back biters, lovers of themselves, effeminate, winebibbers, etc.

So the question is what place is important? Now if the author does not believe in the Bible as God's word than nuff said.

ALISHA CRAWFORD
VIA THE INTERNET

Homophobia

I was very pleased to read the July and August issue of *Adventist Today* on homosexuality. Homosexuals are misunderstood, judged wrongly, and do not have a place in most of the Adventist churches. Members think that if they say they are homosexual they are active sexually, what other reason for using that name?

In the church I attended after retirement we hired a young musician. For eight years he led our music, sang solos, directed Christmas and Easter programs and at least once a year had his own concert for the community in our church. He taught Sabbath school classes for most of those 8 years, was in our homes and at our socials. He signed contracts for salary and one statement read that he would "uphold Adventist standards." We never had reason to doubt his standards for he was known very personally by many of us. Our church was happy, growing and singing.

Then one day someone found out he was gay. Then all hell broke loose. Here was the same man we had known for eight years. Now they were afraid to have him lead out because his "disease" might be catching. They said, "If he says he is gay that means he is active sexually." This music leader was told that he better

not attend church for his own safety. Some members wrote letters to him asking him to repent of his orientation or he would go to hell. This lack of love or even kindness and total misunderstanding has divided a very happy church.

This musician graduated from an Adventist college and became a boys' dean. He loved this and thought maybe this was what he would do for life. He took more schooling in music and got a job in California as music teacher in a small academy. He loved his work. His students and choir sang in churches around the Conference. One day he ordered some tapes that promised to clarify his orientation. That summer when he was in Alaska fishing, the small girls in the house where his car was parked, got into his car, found the tapes and showed them to their parents. When he got back from Alaska he was fired for being gay. Shortly after this he was singing around the conference with a young lady. They got along very well singing. So well in fact they got married. He can tell some comical stories about after the wedding. This of course was what everybody did to be straight and accepted. He wanted both. It didn't work, and in a short time there was a divorce. They are still good friends.

My friend has not been sexually active in the gay community. He has not had a partner. He has tried to live up to the Adventist standards. There is so much homophobic fear that members lied about him and those who supported him to remove him.

I miss my friend and his great musical abilities..

ELLSWORTH WELLMAN
REDMOND WASHINGTON

Thanks for the article on homosexuality... It was a blessing to many...

EVA LANTON
VIA THE INTERNET

Investigative Judgment

[This is] concerning your affirmation of the Investigative Judgment(IJ) in *Adventist Today*. I too grew up with the teaching and believed it for forty years. Unlike you however after study I now find the IJ teaching completely incompatible with the Gospel and without credible Biblical support.

What other basic doctrine of Adventism falls or stands on a dubious reading of one (1) text? (Dan 8:14).

DENNIS TEDMAN
VIA THE INTERNET

Veteran College Administrator Speaks Out

I just finished reading the "Adventist Ethos" editorial by Jim Walters. I want to compliment you folk on stating a prob-

Then one day some one found out he was gay. Then all hell broke loose. Here was the same man we had known for eight years. Now they were afraid to have him lead out...

lem in Adventism that has troubled me for years. The Adventist subculture has historically promoted the concept that as Adventists we have "the truth," which somehow takes care of any and all failures in personal and corporate ethical behavior. I have often wondered if some Adventists aren't the most Machiavellian of all Machiavellians when it comes to employing the most questionable means to achieve what they believe to be theological orthodoxy. Having been on the receiving end of this type of behavior, I can personally testify to the vitriolic, destructive actions of such individuals. Face to face dialogue, honesty, accuracy, compassion and forgiveness are ignored in the frenzy to achieve their ends.

Although I believe Adventist theology contributes to this behavior, I am also convinced that the educational system of the church shares much of the blame.

As Adventist theologians caught up with their colleagues in other academic disciplines through advanced graduate study and broadened their intellectual horizons, it became somewhat easier to convince them of the importance of designing courses specifically for the general student. The evolution from Bible Department to Religion Department to Theology Department has included enlightenment as well as increased educational preparation for employment in an Adventist academic setting. I can clearly recall the 5 year struggle I encountered while serving as Academic Vice President at an Adventist college with what was then known as the Bible

Department. I became convinced that placing the general student in religion courses designed for theology majors was a disservice to students who had no plans to enter denominational employment. Rehashing Adventist theology and memorizing Bible proof texts hardly seemed the best preparation for those students looking for careers in medicine, law, and computer science.

Espousing certain theological beliefs does not guarantee ethical behavior unless the connection between one's beliefs and one's behavior is clearly taught by parents and teachers. Adventists can no longer equate a person's orthodoxy with ethical behavior but must begin to seriously address this defect in both the home and school. Since I have not been closely connected to the Adventist educational system in recent years, I may not be aware of current trends in this direction.

I'm sure you have received many comments about the unfortunate ethical failure of the former General Conference president, but I could not help sharing some of my thinking on

this topic since it has been a lifelong concern of mine as I have observed the reactions of students and faculty in four different Adventist educational institutions. I will never forget the reaction of a student of Southern Adventist University when I served there as Academic Dean and Dean of Students. He was observed engaging in some questionable social behavior and when questioned by me admitted to the accusations, but concluded the long litany of his sins by assuring me that he did not eat hamburgers. Sad but true!

If there was ever a time in the history of the Adventist church when an independent voice is needed it is surely now! There are many changes impacting the church such as multiculturalism, theological pluralism and increasing demands for recognition in decision making by both laity and church employees. The days of blind obedience and unity, if they ever did really exist, are now over and must be addressed in a realistic and candid manner if the church is to survive into the new millennium. We believe that *Adventist Today* is providing a degree of candor

and honesty unmatched anywhere else in the church.

JOHN CASSELL
CALIMESA, CALIFORNIA

Folkenberg Intimidation

Reading "Folkenberg Business Details Revealed" brought back unpleasant memories that enable me to understand why people interviewed for that article would not want their names revealed.

After reading Folkenberg's June, 1989 *Ministry* magazine article entitled, "Church Structure—Servant Or Master," I spoke to Adventist clergy friends to learn whether or not he practiced what he was preaching in his article. Two of those friends were retirees who had served with Folkenberg in the Inter-American Division. What each of them said in separate conversations about this man was shocking: as a leader Folkenberg was domineering, vindictive and prone to conflicts of interest.

When I asked why they were silent on these moral lapses, they replied that oth-

ers had reported such behavior and regretted it because nothing was done, and the whistle blowers were disciplined instead.

After Folkenberg was elected GC president in 1990, I called both of my friends for their reaction. Needless to say, that they were devastated, and predicted that in time the church would be hurt. What really surprised me was their very real fear, bordering on paranoia, that Folkenberg could now use his office to retaliate against them even as retirees if he were to learn if they had shared information of their knowledge of his conflicts of interest.

A careful reading of the serious charges in the Summary Statement of the Ad Hoc Committee posted on www.atoday.com confirms in principle all of the serious charges that my two friends shared with me 10 years ago. The Ad Hoc Committee issued that summary statement after spending many hours reading, studying, and discussing the exhibits of evidence, and the detailed charges set forth in a legal brief of over 80 pages. In a talk to the East Bay Association of Adventist Forums chapter, attorney Phil Hiroshima said that one of the reasons Folkenberg resigned was that he did not want the church to learn what was in the 80-page brief.

Hiroshima commented several times on the bravery and courage with which the committee members carried out their unpleasant task. Hiroshima, further, stated his belief—not mine—that the work of the Ad Hoc Committee proves that GC governance is working the way it should be.

I thank you for your candid reporting on the Folkenberg scandal. I also urge us, as followers of Christ, to pray for ourselves that we not be consumed with anger, that we pray for Folkenberg and his family, and that we have courage to admit wrongdoing before lawsuits are filed.

BRANTLEY JOHNSON
VIA INTERNET

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Adventist Today, P.O. Box 8026
Riverside, CA 92515-8026
E-mail: atoday@atoday.com

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Fighting for Liberty and Justice

A Statement From Columbia Union College

Through the federal courts, Columbia Union College is seeking its share of funding available to Maryland private colleges and universities through a state program named, ironically, after a Catholic priest.

Indeed, three Catholic colleges (in this heavily Catholic state) receive the aid, which would amount, for CUC, to more than \$800,000 a year, not to mention substantial assistance with capital projects. Maryland education officials regulate the college's degree-granting capacity, but because of its Adventist perspective and practice, they say CUC cannot participate in the state's "Sellinger program."

This, we say, is unconstitutional religious discrimination. And to make matters worse, it is discrimination against a *minority* religion. Considering one reason the colonists came here in the first place, it is a betrayal of our nation's heritage.

The Argument With the Maryland Attorney General

The Maryland attorney general says that under current interpretation the First Amendment bars governments from channeling direct aid into "pervasively sectarian" institutions. On his analysis, CUC is sectarian in the forbidden sense, and is disqualified from receiving assistance. Equal treatment of CUC, the state argues, would "establish" religion and thus be unconstitutional. The First Amendment guarantees the right to free exercise of religion, but according to the state the Amendment's ban on "establishment" of religion trumps this right: in a war of First Amendment clauses, freedom of religion must be the loser.

Catholic colleges survive the scrutiny of the (Catholic) attorney general because, under current case law, they are religious to a permissible degree. The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled, however, that Maryland had so far failed to prove that CUC should be disqualified

and sent the case back to the District Court for further review. We argue that no matter what the outcome of this (still ongoing) investigation, the First Amendment should protect CUC, not reinforce government injustice. If the vague distinction between "pervasively" and "nonpervasively" sectarian ends up putting CUC at a state-sponsored disadvantage, then the case law containing that language itself should be reexamined and the integrity of the First Amendment fully restored.

With the aid of top constitutional lawyers (CUC's lead attorney clerked for two Supreme Court justices and one Circuit Court judge), the college has offered these supporting arguments:

ment of CUC, the program is wholly compatible with the American principle that no belief system should receive special treatment (or mistreatment) from the government.

Maryland authorities continue to draw a circle small enough to exclude our minority viewpoint from the benefits of liberty and justice. CUC insists that by helping to diversify conversation a larger circle would honor America's ideals and fortify its chances for ever-deeper understanding.

Misunderstanding Inside the Church

Although the college consulted top Adventist constitutional lawyers from the beginning, our aggressive effort for liberty and justice has offended some church members. They worry that we may be undermining Adventist principle and mission—or even undermining Adventist education in general. We believe these worries are groundless.

Aid to CUC would by no means favor Adventism, let alone "establish" it as a state-sponsored religion.

- CUC is academically qualified to receive the more than \$1,000 per eligible student that Maryland provides each year. Even if the light of Christ touches every subject taught here, that light is a viewpoint and deserves constitutional protection just as other viewpoints do.

- Aid to CUC would by no means favor Adventism, let alone "establish" it as a state-sponsored religion. The Maryland program gives no support to core religious activities—it does not pay for chaplains and hymn books, nor even count theology majors in calculating the total annual appropriation. The program gives no incentive, moreover, for students to pick a religious instead of a secular college—the overwhelming preponderance of Sellinger aid goes, in fact, to secular institutions. Except for the state's treat-

- Our litigation fits the deeper Adventist tradition. Ellen White thought that when government assistance can advance church mission, we should take advantage of it. A. T. Jones, the turn-of-the-century Adventist editor, made clamorous arguments on the other side, even saying that the church should refuse tax-exempt status for its properties. Ellen White resisted his arguments, and to this day our institutions around the world regularly accept government assistance. As to whether we should *contend* for it, the answer is that we should contend for religious liberty and justice. The church has long done so—by voice and print and in the courts of law.

- So far from weakening its identity as an Adventist institution, CUC is

CONTINUED ON BACK

“Formal Neutrality” and the Death of Religious Liberty

ALAN J. REINACH, ESQ.

Columbia Union College is at the forefront of a movement that threatens to destroy religious liberty. The U.S. Supreme Court has held that the First Amendment’s Establishment Clause prohibits government from providing aid directly to religion. According to the Court, some schools are so “pervasively religious” that aid to those schools inevitably aids religion. CUC argues that this distinction should be abandoned, and that even pervasively religious schools should be included in government aid programs.

CUC advocates the principle of “formal neutrality”—treat religious institutions the same as nonreligious, for funding purposes. But CUC really doesn’t want equal treatment when it comes to regulation, and here is where its legal approach is fatally flawed. He who pays the piper still calls the tune. Government aid comes with a price and the state determines the price, and continually adds regulations, choking liberty right out of aid recipients.

Nothing in the theory of “formal neutrality” protects religious schools from being treated equally for regulatory purposes. I have asked legal scholars who advocate formal neutrality: “How do you justify equal funding, yet avoid equal regulation?” No one has provided an answer, and indeed, there is none.

What regulations would CUC wish to avoid? Civil rights laws currently protect the college’s right to discriminate in hiring on the basis of religion, and to impose religious lifestyle standards on employees. These laws reflect the separation of church and state. Abandon that principle, as CUC urges, in favor of neutrality, and there are powerful forces in our society eager to impose nondiscrimination laws on the church. We have already faced these efforts on the state level. Formal

neutrality threatens to destroy the institutional autonomy of the church, and with it, the freedom of the church to define itself and to advance its mission through employees specially selected for that purpose. Formal neutrality is, therefore, the enemy of religious liberty.

CUC contends that denying state aid to pervasively sectarian schools is discriminatory. Separation of church and state denies aid to religious schools, while also protecting them from invasive regulation. This is fair. CUC wants the aid, but not the regulation. This is not “neutrality” but favored treatment. If religious schools get the same aid, why shouldn’t they abide by the same rules? Catholic colleges are per-

Formal neutrality threatens to destroy the institutional autonomy of the church...

mitted to receive the aid not because of a Catholic attorney general, as CUC contends, but because the U.S. Supreme Court already found that these schools had substantially secularized.

CUC insists it can receive state aid to provide the same educational benefit as any other college, and that such aid would “give no support to core religious activities.” In this way, CUC seeks to avoid the constitutional prohibition on direct aid to religion. One problem with this approach is that it effectively adopts a dualistic view of reality that Adventism explicitly rejects. Adventist policy considers education and redemption a unity (NAD Policies, F 05 01. Education, pp. 16, 17). In the book *Education*, we are told that “whatever line of investigation we pursue, with a sincere purpose to arrive at truth, we are brought in touch with the unseen, mighty Intelligence that is working in and

through all.” P. 14. The state cannot aid the secular educational function, because from our religious standpoint, education and redemption are one. In short, education is a “core religious activity.”

Some critics contend that our schools have so secularized already that we are not so different from other church schools that receive state aid. The trial court will have another opportunity to examine these facts, since it will conduct a trial on the issue of whether CUC really is pervasively sectarian.

CUC argues that since the Adventist church participates in government funding programs around the world, its lawsuit is consistent with Adventist principles. This is clearly wrong. The North American Division, applying church policy, rejected CUC’s request that it be permitted to apply for these funds and to prosecute the lawsuit. Indeed, the recent Autumn Council reaffirmed the historic Adventist commitment to separation of church and state.

The real issue in this lawsuit is not whether CUC will obtain the funds, it is whether CUC or anyone else will succeed in convincing the U.S. Supreme Court to adopt a new premise that will treat religious institutions as nothing special, as worthy of the exact same consideration as any other institution in society. If that happens, religious freedom is dead, and with it, the ability of religious institutions to operate according to religious principles out of step with the current brand of political correctness.

The CUC lawsuit is one of many vehicles chosen by legal scholars, mostly Catholic and fundamentalist Protestant, who wish to reshape American church-state relations. Adventists have long understood that American constitutional principles protecting religious freedom would give way. We didn’t expect an Adventist institution to participate in undermining these principles.

Alan J. Reinach is Director of Public Affairs & Religious Liberty, Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, (805) 497-8766, free@churchstate.org, who wishes to acknowledge the thought contributions of Nicholas Miller, Esq., Executive Director, Council on Religious Freedom, (888) 590-8766, freedom@crf.org, in helping shape this piece.

A Battle of Presuppositions

A non-legal analysis

DENNIS HOKAMA

Background Information

When *AT* contacted Clarence Hodges, Director of NAD PARL (North American Division's Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department), in mid September, it was informed that *Liberty* and the church were withholding judgement on the CUC case until an ad hoc committee consisting of NAD and CUC officials submitted their findings.

Readers should be aware that as a respondent, Reinach was given CUC's piece to study in preparing his piece, whereas time constraints did not allow for CUC to be given a chance to respond to Reinach's arguments, although that would have been desirable.

The Question

The dispute between CUC and Reinach seems to come down to a simple question: Does a religious organization have a legal right to demand the same share of financial assistance from the state that secular organizations receive, while retaining all of its legal exemptions from intrusive state regulations that apply to all other secular organizations?

The Reinach Position

Reinach says "no" on grounds that Caesar's financial aid and regulation are both inseparable sides of the same coin of state intrusion. From his closing statement, it is evident he presupposes it to be only a matter of time before state intrusion turns malevolent, in accordance with traditional SDA apocalyptic. Given that presupposition, any proposal to further legitimize state intrusion into religious affairs, however beneficial it may appear presently, must be interpreted as an acceleration of that prophetic time table. The Religious Liberty Department of the church has historically seen their role as merely "holding back the (apocalyptic) winds of strife" that must eventually prevail. From this perspective, the question "Why not take government

aid so long as it doesn't seem to prevent us from fulfilling our mission?" makes no more sense than the question, "Why not smoke if it feels good now and doesn't lead to any harmful long term effects?"

CUC's Position

CUC, on the other hand, argues "yes," apparently on grounds that exemption from certain government regulations given to religion are independent of any other form of state intrusion. Thus, making demands for equal funding on the basis of free speech does not endanger any exemptions obtained on the basis of freedom of religion. In arguing this way, CUC is apparently unencumbered by SDA apocalyptic presuppositions, and buttresses its position with statements from the post-apocalyptic Ellen White.

CUC challenges the constitutionality of the notion that one first amendment provision, the prohibition against the "establishment of religion," should be interpreted in a way that effectively nullifies two others; freedom of speech and freedom of religion.

CUC has a point because the extremely sensitive way in which "establishment of religion" is today defined, seems neurotic from a modern perspective no longer haunted by the beasts of Revelation or "the divine right of kings." The question of how and why the "establishment of religion" became the scourge of the first amendment, and whether it continues to serve the church's and the national interest to remain this way, is a legitimate question that deserves to be re-examined.

The Appeal to Freedom of Speech and Dualism

But instead of tackling that question head on, CUC appears to be making an end run by appealing to free speech dis-

guised as appealing to freedom of religion, and endorsing a contrived dualism. The bundle of rights, privileges and exemptions that come attached to freedom of religion seem much greater than, or at least different from, that which is implied in the freedom of speech, which is purely secular in nature.

Freedom of speech, for example, does not entitle an employer to be exempt from certain laws of the land pertaining to hiring, whereas the freedom of religion does. That being the case, there is an incentive to mask "free speech" arguments as "freedom of religion" arguments. CUC's "enlarge the circle" arguments are based on freedom of speech arguments rather than freedom of religion arguments.

Reinach seems correct in arguing that CUC's distinction between sectarian and nonsectarian parts of a curriculum is a con-

CUC's "enlarge the circle" arguments are based on freedom of speech arguments rather than freedom of religion arguments.

trived dualism because a college curriculum, like human body parts, form a unity without which the college cannot survive. State funding for science would simply free up more money for hymn books and chaplains, so it cannot honestly be claimed that funding a sectarian college's science program is not directly aiding that sectarian school.

There are undoubtedly sound reasons why CUC has undertaken this apparently circuitous strategy in attempting to reshape the face of religious liberty in the United States. The constitutional questions will be settled in the courts without our help. Depending on our presuppositions regarding the United States in prophecy, we will either be alarmed or gratified by the outcome. But if the ad hoc committee endorses CUC's efforts, then, win or lose, it will mark a turning point in the church's self-understanding in terms of end time events.



DIVINE CREATION

Creation, Yes! But How?

The Divine Creation Seminar at Loma Linda, September 24, 25, 1999

A Question of "How"

"Creation, yes, ...but how?" was the rhetorical question posed by Pastor William Loveless during his sermon in the Loma Linda University Church sanctuary on September 25. The notion that Genesis, while explaining the source of our existence, was not necessarily intended to explain the means by which the world came into existence, seemed to be the one point on which many of the speakers and panelists agreed. That fact in itself, in an Adventist-sponsored event of this magnitude, may prove in retrospect to be historically significant.

Geoscience Research Institute's Conspicuous Absence

The seminar, jointly sponsored by *Adventist Today*, the AAF/*Spectrum*, and the University Church, and funded in part by the Wuchenich Foundation, provided an answer to the question, "What would happen if you had a Divine creation seminar and nobody from the Geoscience Research Institute (GRI) showed up?" Jim Gibson, GRI's director, was spotted in the audience for the Friday night meeting. Ariel Roth, GRI's former director, was in Las Vegas for the weekend leading a geological workshop. Their conspicuous absence as speakers or panelists, resulting in ideological imbalance, provided fuel for comment, criticism, and speculation both during and after the meetings.

As event organizer and *AT* publisher Jim Walters explained to a suspicious questioner from the audience following the panel discussion on Friday night, "they" (the GRI which was not mentioned by name) were invited and encouraged to participate, but firmly declined to do so. When questioned privately about GRI's explanation for boycotting the event, Walters stated that Gibson had

refused to let GRI participate because a public forum was not the proper venue in which to address controversial doctrinal issues.

Gibson himself had a slightly different take when asked to comment on October 13, 1999. He declined, he said, because Walters was unable to explain to him what the purpose of this event was. In absence of any new findings, he didn't see any point in participating, because he had his own engagements to keep him busy. "If *Adventist Today* wants to be taken seriously," he said, "then present some formal papers and we can discuss it."

Historical Baggage

Recent history may also have played a role in GRI's decision. On April 2, 1994, *AT* sponsored another Creationism panel discussion held in the University Church Chapel before a standing-room-only audience. Past and present GRI members, including then director, Ariel Roth, were panelists. A problem arose when the earlier speakers on that panel critical of short chronology were allowed to exceed their allotted time limits. Consequently, the GRI panelists who were to address those criticisms felt they had been hurried and short-changed in time, though no speaker was told he was out of time and the meeting was extended an hour beyond its scheduled closing time. Though nothing was said at the time, GRI may have blamed Ray Cottrell, the moderator and editor of *AT*, for their failure to get equal time.

The tension was exacerbated a few days later when the April 4, 1994, edition of "From the G.C. President," Folkenberg's weekly newsletter, proclaimed that "historicity of Scripture and the Genesis account" had come under "attack" from Cottrell and Richard Hammill in a panel discussion. That characterization was

immediately challenged by Cottrell and Hammill, but despite an exchange of communications, neither ultimately succeeded in getting a retraction from Folkenberg. The speed with which the word had gotten to Folkenberg, and the characterization of the panel, made some wonder if scores were being settled.

Seminar Origins

In light of the creation seminar sponsored five years ago, some wondered what spurred *AT* to push for another seminar on the same subject. According to Walters, the subject of origins was actually suggested by University Church senior pastor, Bill Loveless, when they began discussions leading up to the University Church co-sponsoring the event for *AT*. Loveless, as he confessed in his sermon, is an avid reader of the world-renowned evolutionary biologist, Stephen J. Gould and other natural history writers. Walters was agreeable because the subject of evolution and creation remained a major concern despite the '94 panel discussion.

Langdon Gilkey was selected as the plenary speaker because he was arguably the most famous creation theologian in the world, author of *Maker of Heaven and Earth*, as well as an evolutionist who testified against and helped defeat the Creationism law in the famous Arkansas Creationism trial of 1981. As an expert on the relationship between science and religion (*Nature, Reality, and the Scientific Future*), it was thought he could make a contribution in an area of vital concern to Adventists.

The Events

The seminar officially consisted of three meetings, all of which were held in the sanctuary of the LLU Church:

A. Friday evening, September 24, 7:15 p.m. A panel discussion to address "Why We've Been Where We Are, and Where We're Going." Estimated attendance: about 500 people. Panelists:

- 1) Diana Fisher, panel moderator, and incoming managing editor of *AT*;
- 2) Greg Billock, Cal Tech graduate student, *AT* web master;
- 3) Jim Hayward, biologist, Andrews University;
- 4) Rennie Schoeflin, historian, La Sierra University;
- 5) Jim Walters, ethicist, Loma Linda University, publisher of *AT*.

B. Saturday afternoon, 1:45 p.m. Langdon Gilkey's Plenary address: "The Meaning and Relevance of Creation." The introduction was by Fritz Guy of La Sierra University and a former student of Gilkey. The estimated attendance: about 1,500.

C. Saturday afternoon, 3:00 p.m. A panel discussion to address the question, "What Are Adventists to Make of Evolutionary Biology?" Attendance: about 1,500. Panelists:

- 1) John Webster, professor of Systematic Theology and History of Christianity, La Sierra University;
- 2) Ron Carter, professor of Biology (Behavior genetics research, molecular evolutionary systematics), Natural Sciences Department, LLU Graduate school;
- 3) Paul Giem, assistant professor of Emergency Medicine, LLU, author of *Scientific Theology*, 1977;
- 4) John McLarty, pastor, writer, editor of *AT*;
- 5) John Moore, non-SDA emeritus professor of Biology at UC Riverside;

6) Jim Walters, ethicist, author, event organizer, *AT* publisher, LLU;

7) Langdon Gilkey, non-SDA creation theologian.

In addition to these designated meetings, Langdon Gilkey also participated in the 9:45-11:00 a.m. Schuman Pavilion Sabbath School class, Rm A609-11, run by Jim Walters, Dalton Baldwin, and Rick Rice. After his short presentation, there was a question-and-answer period. Attendance was estimated to be about 100. According to many who attended, including this reporter, it was in this meeting that Gilkey made his most valuable contribution of the weekend. (For more details, see Gilkey sidebar.)

The Lone Defense of Short Chronology and Microevolution

Paul Giem was the only speaker of the weekend to take any stand on a short chronology of earth, and limiting evolution to the "micro" variety. Shortly after he had made his defense of short chronology, his stance was challenged by John Moore. Although there was no opportunity given for that challenge, and he had no signs of visible support from his SDA colleagues on the panel, Giem was far from intimidated.

Audience Reactions

Some seminar attendees were outraged by the near unanimity of the speakers and panel members on the necessity of acknowledging a long chronology and macroevolution. After the last meeting, a conversation between unhappy attendees was overheard in which they complained that the deck had been stacked by "long earthers" against "short earthers," and hypothesized that Giem had been included only as a token. They suggested it might be necessary for a different organization to sponsor another creation seminar in which "short earthers" stacked the deck and invite only one "token long earther." Jim Gibson, director of GRI, who attended only the Friday night session, recalled that he heard only negative things. "They only tore down other people's ideas rather than presenting something positive." When asked on 10/13, in retrospect, if he still thought he had made the right decision in not participating, he affirmed that he would make the same decision again, based on the information he had. "Long earthers" were quite ecstatic about the great attendance and overall success of the event, except for the failure of the air conditioning on Saturday.

Some, like Gary Gilbert of Boston, expressed serious reservations over whether it was politically possible to hold a church body together when such a major doctrine is altered, regardless of the objective merits of the alteration itself.

Jason Tan was persuaded to attend against his wishes by his well meaning parents. Tan, a recent college graduate and born to a SDA family, has found himself increasingly alienated from a church that demanded a six-thousand-year-chronology and banned macroevolution. After only attending the Saturday afternoon meeting, Tan was exhilarated to discover that he was not alone in his struggle with a literalistic interpretation of Genesis. As a result, his faith in the intellectual integrity of the church was renewed and he returned home feeling validated and better able to identify with the church. His parents, while perhaps not as impressed with the content of the meetings, were nevertheless grateful for the powerful and positive effect the meeting had on their son.



DIVINE CREATION



Professor Langdon Gilkey on Science and Religion

DENNIS HOKAMA

The historic antagonism between science and religion is based on the pre-Kantian idea that there was such a thing as “objective” science, according to Gilkey. Since Kant, it has been generally recognized that science is dependent upon human categories of thought. Post-Kantian creationists and scientists, therefore, need not view each other as competitors but as complementary partners in a quest for truth transcending the old absolutist barrier between religion and science.

Genesis 1 and 2 explicitly provide believers with the basic presuppositions for understanding their world and their place in it. And because until 200 years ago society was essentially religious, the roots of Western Civilization’s understanding of existence is drawn from its biblical assumptions—not its Hellenic sources:

1) Humans were created in the image of God and must be regarded as ends in themselves, 2) Time is a creation of God, and therefore not blind fate, 3) Time runs irreversibly forward in linear fashion (rather than cyclical) to its end in God’s promises, 4) All of creation is basically “good” and orderly because it was made by a caring God. This positive attitude toward material things is the foundation of empirical science; 5) The Genesis Fall cautions us that every opportunity for good comes with possibilities for evil. Thus, in many fundamen-

tal ways, both the secular and Christian West are all children of Genesis.

In contrast to the indebtedness the West owes Genesis for its fundamental and positive view of existence, what the Genesis story appears to say about women and the environment are rightfully suspect. Genesis has contributed toward the subordination of women and domination of nature. Natural resources were rescued by environmental concerns arising out of an evolutionary perspective. Scientific technology is also the means by which religious values are expressed in the world.

Developments in the historically sensitive geological sciences at the end of the 18th century forced modern theology to reconsider its antagonistic relationship with science. The theologian credited with recognizing that religion and science were partners rather than competitors was the post-Kantian Friedrich Schleiermacher, who in 1825 declared that religious truth had limits and does not convey information about science, history, or “philosophical speculations.” Most subsequent theology followed Schleiermacher’s lead. Therefore contemporary theology’s understanding of Genesis, as expressed by Gilkey, is fully compatible with modern science, an important consideration for a religious community like Adventism, which contributes to medical science.

This article is a paraphrase of the two presentations made by Professor Langdon Gilkey at Loma Linda on Saturday, September 25—eds.



DIVINE CREATION

Divine Creation Seminar Panel Discussions

The following features represent only some of the panelists' and speakers' presentations at the Divine Creation Seminar held on September 24 and 25, 1999 at the Loma Linda University Church. Not all presentations were made available for publication. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. For a complete set of video tapes of the weekend events, please contact the AT office at 1-800-236-3641. Please note that most of the following presentations were edited for publication.

Look at the apostle Paul's words in Romans 2:28: "He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart—in the spirit, and not in the letter."

But consider the Revised Adventist Version: "He is an Adventist who is one inwardly, and real Sabbath-keeping is a matter of the heart—in the spirit, and not in the letter."

Elsewhere Paul says the letter kills, but the spirit gives life! This is radical thinking! How would you incorporate Paul's philosophy in the list of 27 fundamental beliefs? Paul wasn't writing creedal doctrines; he was doing sacred theology. What he said to the original Jewish Christians, he is saying to us Adventists today: "Don't get hung up on the letter of the Bible; see the grand spiritual reality that the letter is feebly pointing to!"

There's a tension between letter and spirit and it's a healthy one. This tension is essential in getting at the Adventist view of Divine Creation—a view conceived of and written up by our pioneers 140 years ago. My point is this: the spirit of what our pioneers wrote is immensely more vital than the exact letter of what they wrote. Isn't this just an echo of Paul? We're too stuck on the letter of the past; we need an infusion of the spirit of our pioneers! Another way of speaking of our pioneers "letter" and "spirit" is to speak of their mind and heart.

The Pioneer Mind


Our pioneers were highly intelligent. If IQ tests were available to them, how would they score? In the 130s or 140s? They were blessed with abundant common sense and organizational ability. In sum, a talented lot! But they had little formal education, which has far-reaching implications. Today our world views are formed in association with teachers

The Letter and Spirit of the Adventist Pioneers

and fellow students, and that intelligent association goes on for years. Ellen White had only three years of education—at the primary level; James White had less than a year; and Joseph Bates left home for the high seas at 15. The bright J.N. Andrews, coming a generation later and whose namesake is a university in Michigan, had only a few months of formal education.

The Pioneer Heart

Our pioneers were believers of unquestioned virtue: courage, dedication, and especially integrity—spiritual and intellectual integrity! They left personal families, church families, jobs, and even often sacrificed personal health—all in being true to themselves and their God, as they understood each.

In conclusion, as Paul said long ago, the letter kills, the spirit gives life. And this is doubly true for Adventist professionals today. In fact, if many of us educated Adventists are to possess the spirit, yea, the heart of our pioneers, we dare not merely repeat the letter of those pioneers' beliefs. If we do, we betray the pioneers' spirit and our own integrity! And such betrayal would be an unconscionable sin. 

JAMES WALTERS



Dr. James Walters is currently serving on the faculty of Loma Linda University as Professor of Religion and Ethics, where he has taught since 1980. His interest in Adventist issues led him to be a co-founder of *Adventist Today* Magazine seven years ago.



DIVINE CREATION

Convictions Over Risks

GREG BILLOCK



Greg Billock is a graduate student at the California Institute of Technology in the Electrical Engineering Department where he is earning a PhD. Some of you may know him as the Webmaster of the Adventist Today website.

About ten years ago I became involved in the creation/evolution dialogue. Approaching the discussion from a traditional Adventist perspective, my questions were limited to scientific ones, as this was the way I experienced the argument. I was interested in physics and astronomy, and so my first encounter in mainstream science was with the Big Bang theory. Those of you involved in the dialog will recognize my questions: "How do we know the speed of light is constant? How can something come from nothing? Doesn't the second law of thermodynamics prevent order coming from disorder?"

As I learned more of physicists' discoveries about the universe, I found that my scientific questions about the Big Bang had well-thought-out answers. Subsequently, I asked myself about the age of the earth, "How do we know that the assumptions of radiometric dating are accurate?" As I explored the issue, I found convincing answers to my questions in this area as well. By the time I began asking questions about evolutionary biology, my previous mistrust of mainstream science had been transformed into a willingness to listen and investigate the issue. Here again, my questions about transitional forms, the state of evolutionary theory on the development of complex organs such as the eye, were answered. Many times over, I learned that what I'd been told evolutionists believed was misrepresentative. In other instances, the counterintuitive turned out to have sound experimental support.

Today my scientific questions are in line with the development of mainstream science. I am interested in the unit of natural selection (gene or organism), not whether or not natural selection can account for the evolution of wings. I'm still interested in the creation/evolution discussion, but my questions have a more historical and theological slant. I now see these as underlying the scientific objections Christians have had to evolutionary theory.

One of the central theological questions we wrestle with in thinking about evolution is how to revise our view of sin and death. How can we come to terms with the idea that death long preceded the emergence of human beings on the planet? Another is the issue of the authority of Scripture. If the straightforward reading of Genesis is not historically accurate, what idea of inspiration can we compose which will maintain the respected position of the Bible in our spiritual life? For Adventists, the question of the Sabbath is an important one. We have traditionally appealed to the Sabbath as a memorial to a literal six-day creation. If that event never took place, what rationale continues for seventh-day Sabbath observance?

A large underlying concern is the breakdown of what I'd call the degenerate-world theodicy. That is, our cosmology is built around a fall from grace in which the world is not running now the way it ought, and death and temporary measures exist until the apocalypse. The mainstream scientific view, instead, indicates that the world is functioning now, except for the small perturbations of human beings, much the same as it has for billions of years.

I don't claim to have all the answers for these theological considerations, or a complete historical understanding as to how they have shaped the traditional scientific footing of the creation/evolution debate. In pondering them, though, I've come to appreciate the role of stories of origins as instrumental in composing the worldview of a community. And here I have come to have more questions about the subtext of the Creation story as told in our western tradition. According to our story, the world was made for human beings. And, the way we often tell it, not just any human beings, but the human beings of our particular place and time. This story of dominion has very little room upon which to base an ethic of care for the earth, its ecology, and its peoples.

In my trajectory through scientific questions into more theological, historical, and philosophical questions, I've found that one thing has been key: a conviction that the rewards of confronting a problem, whether scientific or theological, are always greater than the risk. My experience has supported this conviction, that addressing these issues head-on will result in richer, more meaningful images of God and of the world.



DIVINE CREATION

Trends in Adventist Creationism

Traditional Seventh-day Adventist perspectives on creation and earth history involved deep interest in two topics: a six-day creation and a 6,000-year chronology for the world. This interest led to attempts to determine the precise events of each day of creation, to decide whether or not there was a gap between the events of Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, to establish a chronology of earth history based on the Old Testament genealogies and king lists, and to match the levels of the geological column with the stages of the Genesis flood. Today these activities continue to occupy the concerns of many, perhaps most, Adventist laity and some Adventist academics.

Something important occurred at SDA colleges and universities when, during the 1950s-70s, significant numbers of faculty began to earn advanced degrees in theology, biblical studies, and archaeology. There developed, for example, a growing perception that the creation accounts are rich in symbolism, a growing suspicion that the history of the earth and life is much more complicated than once thought, and a growing understanding of the particular historical, sociological, and theological factors that had shaped Adventist views of the past. All this resulted in a substantial increase in the variety of Adventist perspectives on this topic.

Despite this increased pluralism, I think we can identify at least seven contemporary trends among Adventist academicians on the topic of earth history:

1. Greater attention to what science has to say as compared to what sacred writings have to say about the physical history of the universe, the earth, and life.
2. A distancing from Archbishop James Ussher's 6,000-year chronology for the

world. Some conservative Adventist scholars are now privately comfortable with 10,000, 40,000, or even 100,000 years for the age of life on earth.

JIM HAYWARD

3. Acceptance of progressively higher levels of biological change, including overt acceptance of some forms of macroevolution.

Adventist academics, with some notable exceptions, have distanced themselves from “traditional Adventist creationism” and are shifting toward a more centrist Christian position

4. Heightened theological interest in the relationship of sin to death in view of the fossil record and the crucial roles of death and reproduction in the natural economy.
5. Increasing apologetic use of the “argument from design” and decreasing emphasis on “flood geology” as a faith-building tool.
6. An emerging fascination with artistic and liturgical expressions of creation themes.
7. Very embryonic but developing interest in the importance of Christian environmental stewardship in the preservation of creation.

Dr. Jim Hayward, a graduate of WWC, earned a MA in Biology from Andrews University and a PhD in Zoology from Washington State University. He is currently a Professor of Biology at Andrews University.

In short, Adventist academics, with some notable exceptions, have distanced themselves from “traditional Adventist creationism” and are shifting toward a more centrist Christian position on this topic.



DIVINE CREATION

A Historical Look Back:

Adventism and Creation

RENNIE B. SCHOEPLIN

Born into a nineteenth-century America committed to progress and intoxicated by a sense of divine mission, Seventh-day Adventists (SDAs) found a unique way to blend science and religion into a popular message for their day. As social outsiders, they stood over against many of the ideals and values of their age, and they used their sectarian perspectives to look askance at their contemporaries and often to demand a radical transformation of the world. Adventists lived with their own unique sense of cosmic destiny. They fervently believed that they lived in a pivotal moment—end time—when history would cease, or a transcendent God would act decisively on behalf of his saints. For Adventists time lines conveyed a sense of mathematical certainty about the future; a matter of apocalyptic “faith” thereby became a matter of apocalyptic “fact.” In turn, that certainty engendered the sense of self-confidence necessary to engage actively in a cosmic struggle against evil.

Given the profound assurance of the “rightness” of their vision, Adventists took to hand whatever means their culture presented them to buttress their views and spread the word. Therefore, given the growing preeminence of science as an investigative method and an authoritative body of knowledge, science often became a tool for apology. Adventists used it to attack others and to defend their own claims. “True” science brought confirmation of their world view; science that disconfirmed their message became “false” science.

Prophetic Rationalism and Cosmic Salvation

When Christ did not return to earth on October 22, 1844, as William Miller (1782-1849) and others had predicted, “the great disappointment” left the Millerites in disarray. However, a small faction, from which evolved the SDAs, believed the biblical arithmetic but spiritualized the predicted event. Thus, SDAs inaugurated a universal cosmology in which heavenly and earthly events intertwined throughout God’s universe, and God’s secrets became unlocked in human history through prophetic interpretation. The Bible not only served as a trustworthy historical record of conflict, but with diligent study enlightened by the Holy Spirit, its apocalyptic passages predicted the future and its account of the Hebrew sanctuary system presented a symbolic typology for the antitypical realities in heaven itself. Taken together, apocalyptic prophecy and the typology of Hebrew sacrifice provided a Rosetta stone for unlocking God’s plan for the universe. Drawing upon the growing authority of scientific objectivity within America, SDAs turned

the Bible into a mathematically certain road map for a predictable, confirmable, coherent, and all-encompassing journey into the future. Through their use of time charts, graphs, and tables, they transmogrified inherently ambiguous biblical passages into transparently demonstrable truths.

Natural Theology and Earth’s Origins

While the Bible contained the most certain knowledge of a cosmic future, science, when “rightly understood,” could lead one to spiritual truth. The struggle for life, observed in nature, presented a microcosm of the spiritual struggle between good and evil in the universe. But just as careless or prideful study would lead to errors of prophetic interpretation, so would natural theology, when constructed by unsanctified minds, yield to “sciences of satanic origin” such as historical geology or evolutionary biology. For nineteenth-century SDAs, belief in a six-literal-day creation week about 6,000 years ago buttressed their observance of the seventh-day Sabbath as a memorial of God’s day of rest after creation week. But it also grounded their prophetic time schedule in the context of an established earth history.

George McCready Price (1870-1963), Adventism’s armchair geologist, launched the movement’s first full-scale assault on the science of origins and advocated instead a “new catastrophism.” Price and more formally trained Adventist scientists such as Harold W. Clark (1891-1986) and Frank L. Marsh (1899-1992), maintained a continual rear guard action against evolutionists. They insisted that Adventist biblical interpretations and the writings of Ellen White must direct scientific investigation, and when the two contradicted, science must obey revelation.

Historically speaking, therefore, Adventists have felt constrained to maintain their doctrinal commitment to a six-literal-day creation week about 6,000 years ago because of the important role it plays in buttressing their understanding of and ensuring their pivotal role in the cosmic great controversy. Creationism not only anchors, for many, the doctrine of the seventh-day Sabbath, but it also grounds an understanding of the prophetic time table in the context of an established earth history.

Dr. Rennie Schoepflin is currently serving as Associate Professor of History and Chair in the Department of History, Politics, and Society at La Sierra University. Dr. Schoepflin did his doctoral studies at the University of Wisconsin in the History of Science.



DIVINE CREATION

What Are Adventists To Make of Evolutionary Biology?

It is inconceivable to me both as a professional theologian and as a baptized member of the Christian church *not to believe* that God is the Creator—Maker of heaven and earth. The Advent message tells us that the God who came to us in Jesus Christ, and who will come again to re-make heaven and earth, is the same God who created all things *ex-nihilo*—that is freely, for the sake of Divine covenantal love (a message captured so powerfully in the Biblical meaning of the Sabbath). The opening words of Genesis 1, John 1 and the first article of the Apostles' Creed, are *irreplaceably fundamental* to Christian faith. However, it is likewise essential to note that they are also *fundamentally and irreversibly part of it*.

The notion of *creation* is an inherently and unavoidably theological notion. It is not as if we get the notion of “God as Redeemer” from the Bible but “God the Creator” from peeking outdoors. Faith in God the Creator is just that—faith. Therefore when I call myself a “creationist” I’m using theological language. I acknowledge the creative God, self-revealed in Jesus Christ, is also the creator of heaven and earth. It *does not* (in fact, it *cannot*, strictly speaking) say anything at all about my convictions concerning various competing scientific theories dealing with origins.

Science is inherently reductionistic—hence its power. Natural science (unless it wants to become a pseudo-religion, ideology, or philosophy) cannot either prove or disprove God’s existence, nor speak for or against God’s causal action in the world. For sure, science cannot use God, or God’s actions, as elements in theoretical explanation. And purport-

JOHN W. WEBSTER

“Science, rightly understood, and Scripture, rightly interpreted, are not in conflict but are coherent or consonant.”

Dr. John Webster is Professor of Systematic Theology and History of Christianity at La Sierra University. He earned his doctorate degree at Princeton Theological Seminary.

ed Divine acts cannot be subjected to scientific scrutiny as *Divine acts*, per se. This does not mean that one becomes a deist at best, or a rank naturalistic secular-humanist at worst. It simply means that one comprehends and respects the methodological (i.e. procedural) limits of science. As long as one understands the different levels being considered, God’s agency (e.g. as primary causality) and material agency (e.g. as secondary causality) can be understood as coinciding. On this account it should be clear that “creation science” is an oxymoron. One can indeed be both a creationist and a scientist, but not a “creation scientist” or a “scientific creationist.”

What then are we going to do about “Evolutionary Biology?” Let me briefly suggest four things:

First—calm down. We need a collective communal time-out.

This is not the time for a fight to the death. It’s a time to widen our horizons and enlarge our conversation. Perhaps it would be helpful in this regard if we were to recognize the distinction between our primary convictions and commitments and our secondary ones, and that the latter serve the former. For example, our *primary commitment* could be stated in this way: “Science, rightly understood, and Scripture, rightly interpreted, are not in conflict but are coherent or consonant (since one and the same God is both Creator and Revealer).” On the other hand, the “ecological-zonation flood model” on the science side, and the “old universe–young earth (passive gap) theory” on the theology side, are current widely held

examples of *secondary convictions and commitments* in Adventism. What we need to recognize is that our secondary convictions and commitments *have* already changed and developed, and could do so again in the future. This should not unsettle our primary claim. Change in secondary commitments means that we are alive, self-critical, and willing to follow truth wherever it leads. *It does not in itself represent a threat to our Christian and Adventist commitment to the coherence of science and theology or our belief in the truth of Divine Creation.* Of course, we must add for the sake of intellectual integrity, that our primary commitment and conviction is not itself beyond critique, neither in principle or actuality. But to come to the conviction that we have to abandon it, either in the form of an *authoritarian religious fideism or an agnostic and naturalistic a-theology*, would mean nothing less than that we had *lost our Christian faith*. The surest way to make this happen is to *fail to distinguish between our primary and secondary convictions and commitments*.

Second—Sit up, open our eyes, look around, and be honest about the scientific evidence and options we have.

We need to be humble. We do not have all the answers. None of our current theories is a silver bullet. Let's take our hands off the throats of our scientists and let them (all) speak openly and without fear. I believe that one of our problems has been that we have tended to restrict our dialogue partners to those whose underlying Biblical hermeneutics appear close to our own. On this basis how can we ever expose our own assumptions to someone else's searching critique? We need to read not only conservative creationists, on the one hand, but radical atheists (like Richard Dawkins and E.O. Wilson), on the other. It's time to listen more carefully to responsible scientists and believers—e.g. Polkinghorne, Peacocke, Barbour, Russell, Jaki, Murphy and Ellis, Davies, Schroeder, Ross and Torrance, just to mention some well known names—who have come to different solutions for the same problems we struggle with.

Third—Sit down, open our ears, hearts and minds anew to the Scriptures and those who interpret it.

I suggest that what is needed on the biblical side is serious theological exegesis (something that we have strangely neglected in our near obsession with issues of chronology). In it all we have practically ignored Genesis 2 and other equally different accounts of creation in Scripture. For all our pretensions to Biblical nor-

mativeness we have largely brought our own cosmological and scientific questions to the text, which we have then used as a sort of "filter" as we look for what we want to find. What a pity that we have not, to date, really engaged with the diverse and significant work done by serious Biblical scholarship from all studies of the theological spectrum, to say nothing of the major theologies of creation of our time.

Fourth—Get up, gather our communal and traditional assets, minimize our collective and historical failures, and get on with the real job of witnessing to the reality and meaning of Divine Creation.

What assets? Let me mention two: Unlike other groups, we have been saved from officially joining forces with the "Creation Science" movement because of our deep commitment to religious liberty. Secondly, we have already shown that we *can* change in our secondary commitments to models and theories. To see what I mean, just compare the articles in the 1950's editions of the SDA Bible Commentary, Vol. 1 on "Science and a Literal Creation" and the "Worldwide Flood" with the correspondingly rewritten articles in the 1970's edition.

What's on the agenda? On Friday night it was pointed out that for Adventists it is our eschatological beliefs, together with our focus on the Law and the Sabbath, that colors our own particular struggle with the issues. We will need to focus on each of these issues if we are to make progress.

Adventism at its best has never believed that wisdom begins and ends with us. Its commitment to present truth ensures that it must remain open to new ways of understanding and proclaiming the good news of the everlasting gospel—"Fear God and give him glory ...worship him who made heaven and earth..." Rev. 14:7.

Finally, someone out there, listening to all this is probably saying to herself like Alice in Wonderland—"things are getting curiouser and curiouser"—please just answer the question, "What are Adventists to make of Evolutionary Biology?" In the final analysis, I think we should do pretty much what Paul did with the proto-Ptolemaic cosmology of his day—he lived with it. It seems clear that Paul had no commission to correct the geocentric worldview of the navigators who used it to get him across the Mediterranean to Rome, so long as he, even there, could proclaim the gospel. Likewise, I would suggest that we do what "the three wise men from the Orient" did with the Babylonian astrology of their day—find a way to the God who comes, despite it, alongside it, or perhaps even through it.

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DIVINE CREATION

How the Seventh-day Adventist Church Should Relate to Evolution

RONALD L. CARTER

The nature of inspiration, the exercise of faith, and the uniting of community are three concerns in which Adventists today should relate to biological evolution. I am a trained evolutionary biologist. While a great deal of my research deals with conservation genetics, arguably the most important scientific task for a creationist, much of my laboratory activity is in molecular systematics which gives insight into the relationships of various animal taxa. In my opinion the scientific data are consistent with the belief that evolution is real. Evolution has occurred in the past and is an active process today. At this point it is important to clarify what I mean by evolution. The term evolution can be made more precise by using one or more of its common modifiers like micro, macro, mega, anagenetic, phylogenetic, reticulated, co, and parallel. Within our church community the distinction between micro and macro has been offered as a way to designate acceptable forms of evolution. Microevolution, referring to inherited change within species, has been acceptable to creationists. Macroevolution, which is evolutionary change above the species level, has been unacceptable. The evidence for at least some macroevolution is very strong. I believe new species have evolved since God originally created them. This does not mean that I feel forced to accept the origin of life or the origin of most taxa to have occurred via evolutionary processes. I do not. As a creationist I certainly do not believe the general theory of evolution to be the best theory for understanding the origin of life. Unfortunately, any discussion within our church on the nature of evolution is hampered by the many misunderstandings that the public has regarding evolution.

One may accept evolution as a process but not necessarily accept that evolution is all that there is in biological history or is even the best interpretation of life's origin and history. I believe the church needs to recognize that a great deal of inherited change has occurred over time. This change may well be what God allowed or even planned so that organisms might change, adjust, and survive in a world of massive change.

The tension within our community over issues of evolutionary biology will not go away. I personally believe that this tension can be constructive or destructive, depending on treatment. The conservatives (traditionalists) within our community voice legitimate concerns about science and faith and evolution specifically. They remind us the authority of the scriptures has stood the test of time. The Bible's credibility is through archaeology, fulfilled prophecy and especially Christ's teachings. The conservatives believe theologians and philosophers have sold out to the "sacred cow" of science. They remind us that modern science has precluded God by requiring proof of his existence with experimental design. We are reminded that the scriptures teach us to be humble and to exercise faith in God's word.

The church is concerned about Unity—one body in Christ—one view of doctrine. Unity of doctrine, especially a doctrine that doesn't change, is to many a mark of being the "right" church. I believe this stance is a subtle glue of stasis within our community, especially concerning evolutionary biology within Adventism. Another consideration is our confidence in Ellen G. White's writings. Many believe we have a modern-day prophet, and any acceptance of evolution would effectively render her at best devotional.

The small number of scientists have worked hard using insights from scripture and White to suggest alternative ways of interpreting earth history. While their work has not proven or disproven major theories, they have done excellent science using insights from scripture to ask overlooked scientific questions. Studies like these need to be encouraged, as we stay open to all scientific investigation.

Theories of evolution that account for the naturalistic origin of life challenge our fundamental doctrines. Can theistic evolution

Dr. Ron Carter is Professor of Biology (Behavior genetics research, molecular evolutionary systematics), Natural Sciences Department, at the Loma Linda University Graduate School. Dr. Carter received his PhD in Biology from LLU and also did post-doctoral training in molecular evolutionary systematics at Claremont College.

and the Great Controversy be harmonized? Can the Sabbath stand the challenge of an ancient creation or nonliteral creation week? Our concept of a creator God, his nature, the origin of sin, perfection and free will are all challenged by the theory of evolution. How we as a church should relate to evolution depends greatly on how we as a church relate to one another and to any other issues of diversity.

So what do we make of evolution? Our young people are confronted with challenges to traditional SDA teachings. We must therefore create for them a safe environment in which they may discuss evolution and its implications for faith and reason. We need a church that recognizes the real struggle that many in our community have regarding these issues. We need to create a church of healing and tolerance. Not where anything goes, but a community that nurtures those who seek to combine their worlds of faith and academic science.

One may accept evolution as a process but not necessarily accept that evolution is all that there is in biological history...

Specific suggestions of how the SDA Church should deal with evolution:

- Recognize the term evolution is defined in many different ways. Evolution as inherited change through mutation, recombination and differential survival is well established. Therefore fixity of species should not be identified with SDA teachings.
- Recognize the amount of evolution (production of new species and major adaptive traits) since a post-Edenic fall would be vast in any traditional model to account for the development of new food chains and highly adapted structures proposed as a result of sin (i.e. predator-prey modifications).
- Provide a nurturing environment for all those who struggle with ways to harmonize faith with modern science.
- Avoid antievolution legislation. Instead, be proactive in developing improved apologetics for our beliefs.
- Resist the temptation to become pragmatic deists in our community of scholars.

Admonitions to my various friends:

To the conservatives:

- Recognize that even you, at some level, interpret the scriptures and the writings of Ellen White. Many within the church who hold nontraditional views walk with the Lord and have the same ultimate goal of service. Not everyone who understands differently from you is out to destroy the teachings of the church. I don't ask you to adopt alternative views, but to attempt to understand them.
- Don't discount theologians who aren't members of the Adventist Theological Society.
- Consider your motives. Do you see yourself as the last guard, defending the faith?

- Keep up the good work. You provide a point of view that must be heard and should minister to all of us. Ultimately you may be right and may be vindicated. But God does not ask you to be the judge. Also, be of good cheer, even if you end up being incorrect. If you have the ministering spirit of God's love, you will be blessed anyway.

- Look for ways to befriend a liberal – you have a lot in common and much to learn from each other.

To the liberals:

- Assess your motives. Are you on a mission to prove that you are right or better educated than others? Are you seeking some type of sanction, so that you can feel legitimized, or do you have a passion for truth?
- Respect the church's attempts to reconcile traditional teachings with modern science through such organizations as the Geoscience Research Institute.
- Be of courage. Continue to hold on to core values in spite of tension. Stay open to the possibility that the traditional views could be ultimately right. Remember that science is a human device and limited in the discernment of ultimate truths.
- Continue to ask all questions, and to attempt new ways to reconcile your world with the leading of God's Spirit.
- Above all, be Christ centered. If God wants our church to change, then change will only be valuable as it is reflected in lives brought closer to a wholeness with God.

To the moderates:

- To you I recommend all of the above admonitions.
- Be sure that your position is not born out of complacency or some desire to be politically correct or simply to save your job by being neutral.
 - Avoid strong anticreationist or antievolutionist language just to demonstrate your neutrality or ability to be critical.
 - Take a stand even if you are in between the various views. For you to hold multiple hypotheses doesn't mean you must be neutral or apathetic. Act upon your best theories. Be open to change, but find ways to express your faith and give strong, positive testimony.
 - Be truly passionate about healing the hearts of mankind (no matter what their philosophical views may be).

To all of us

I recommend a mission of Christian wholeness. Within a context of true concern for each other's spiritual well-being, we can begin a clear dialogue on matters of science and faith. By committing ourselves to the values of Christ, we will create an atmosphere of spiritual growth along with academic credibility. This is especially true for institutions of higher education. Our schools should exist only if they have a special mission. It is not good enough to be another private school with good humanistic values or a comfortable workplace. Conservatives, liberals, and moderates alike must be committed to the ministry of Jesus first. It is only then we will have a growing understanding of the nature of inspiration, the exercise of faith, and the uniting of community.

God's Grief

CONTINUED FROM BACK

the young ones. And God as the heavenly parent hurts for his children. When grief batters our hearts and wets our eyes, God hurts because we hurt. But there's more.

God's grief is not simply the outgrowth of his love for those who grieve. God's identification with our pain grows out of his own intense affection for the one who has died. Death interrupts God's own conversation with his child. God bears the emotional cost of the system he has designed and allows to continue even in its broken condition. God asks nothing of us that he does not require of himself.

This perspective of God as a grieving parent has large implications for how we view the "delay of the Advent." There are many different explanations offered by believers for why human history with its attendant suffering and injustice goes on so long. God is waiting because he wants to save more people. He is waiting for some predetermined time, for evil to reach its full flower, for the gospel to be preached in all the world, for the character of Christ to be perfectly reproduced in his people.

Each of these explanations has something to recommend it and each has problems as well. The Adventist understanding of the nature of death does not answer the question, why does God wait? It does, however, change the emotional content of the question. Instead of asking why God doesn't hurry up and rescue us from our trouble (a good and proper question), this picture of God's grief prompts us to ask as well, why doesn't God spare himself? The second coming will be God's first opportunity to hear again the voices of millions of his children. It will be the beginning of an eternity of intimate friendship with his human children. Between now and then he carries a staggering load of grief.

So why does God continue to put off the end of human history? I don't know. But knowing the pain the delay causes him gives me increased confidence that there must be some powerfully compelling reason. If God's heart is as tender as the heart of Angela's mother, then the delay must cost him terribly. If he misses his children who died four hundred years ago as much as Lois misses her girl who died forty years ago, then the enormity of his grief is beyond imagination.

In the traditional view of death, there is little motivation for God to bring human history to an end. Every day God is finding fresh delight in the addition of earthlings to the heavenly court. Every day he is welcoming children home. But in the Adventist view, every day that passes adds to the grief that weighs on God's heart.

God does not ask us to bear burdens he himself does not carry. He does not encourage us to be brave in the face of pain that he himself does not feel. I remember sitting in the back at a funeral in Akron, Ohio. The front row included four or five kids. The coffin held an eight-year-old boy, killed when the front tire of his bicycle hit a rock and he swerved in front of a car.

The preacher was trying to make sense of this senseless tragedy. He spoke directly to the young people on the front row. "Try not to

take your brother's death too hard. I know you miss him, but God needed him up in heaven and that's why he took him. God must have some very important job in mind for your brother up there. Stay close to Jesus and some day you'll join your brother in heaven, and he'll show you around the New Jerusalem and tell you all about what he's been doing while you were down here working for Jesus."

I respect the pastor's effort to find meaning in a senseless and heart-numbing accident. He was doing his best to offer comfort, given the spiritual and theological resources of his community. But sitting there on the back row, it was all I could do to keep from jumping up and interrupting.

"So are you telling me," I said to myself, "that every time God runs low on kitchen help in the heavenly cafeteria he throws rocks in front of little kids' bike tires? Is God really that hard up for help in heaven? When they run short of tenors in the heavenly choir does he tell some angel go knock off another kid? What kind of God is that?"

The pastor was trying to offer comfort, but the picture of God he painted was repugnant to me. If I took the pastor's words seri-

The Adventist view, on the other hand, addresses the reality of pain confronted by those who are still alive. For those who survive the death of a loved one, the only "immediate" reality is grief and hurt. And the Adventist view of death shows that one of the survivors, one of the mourners is God himself.

ously it would mean our deepest wounds bring great joy to God. People who are the most lovable and leave the greatest hole here on earth when they die, bring instant joy in the courts of heaven. We bear all the cost of improving heaven's work force.

The traditional view of death does give some people comfort. It places those who have died in a good place far from all pain. And in the experience of the person who dies, this traditional view is accurate. When a believer dies, the very next moment in their experience will be the resurrection and the presence of God.

The Adventist view, on the other hand, addresses the reality of pain confronted by those who are still alive. For those who survive the death of a loved one, the only "immediate" reality is grief and hurt. And the Adventist view of death shows that one of the survivors, one of the mourners is God himself. There is no benefit for God in the death of his children. He is not knocking off children to fill the heavenly kitchens. He does not forget our grief in the great joy of his communion with his children who have escaped into his presence from their earthly prisons. Instead God enters the very depth of our grief. In fact, our purest, deepest grief is in reality a mirror of his own.

Defending Traditional Adventist Creationism

REVIEW BY ERVIN TAYLOR

Leonard Brand.

Faith, Reason, and Earth History.

Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 1997.

Ariel A. Roth.

Origins: Linking Science and Scripture.

Hagerstown: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1998.

Historically, Seventh-day Adventist Creationism is the source of several key elements of the literalistic perspective of earth history. As well documented in Ronald Numbers' "The Creationists," it was a Seventh-day Adventist layman, George McCready Price, who was largely responsible for creating the 20th century version of "Flood Geology" as an explanation for the geologic column.

Currently, the two key foundations of traditional SDA Creationism are the creation of all living things within the last 10,000 years, i.e., "Young Earth Creationism" (YEC), and the occurrence of a recent—also within the last 10,000 years—worldwide flood (RWWF). Conventional SDA Creationism shares with many conservative literalists a rejection of macroevolutionary processes of life forms on earth. However, it is its insistent support of YEC and RWWF positions that sets SDA traditionalists apart from many scientifically literate Evangelical Protestants and even from many SDA scientists.

These two authors make sophisticated efforts to support arguments for YEC and RWWF positions within the SDA community. Both do this in the context of combating evolutionary explanations for the fossil record. Both authors are technically well trained in their areas of professional expertise.

Dr. Brand's treatment has as its subtitle "A Paradigm of Earth and Biological Origins by Intelligent Design." He prefers

the term "informed intervention" and "interventionism" to "creation" and "creationism." Brand adheres to a literal version of "interventionism" when it comes to the Biblical narrative. He states his version of informed interventionism is one "which reflects my confidence in the Scriptural account of origins" (p. ix). He argues for what he himself calls an "outrageous hypotheses" (p. 273), namely the occurrence of a recent worldwide flood. He argues against the mass of scientific evidence supporting a geological time scale of millions of years. He candidly admits why he must argue for a recent worldwide flood: "Without the flood to provide a mechanism for sorting the animals and plants, the order of the fossils calls for megaevolution to explain the fossil evidence" (p. 287). Since he rejects megaevolution, he is required to posit a recent worldwide flood and reject scientific evi-

dence of great age for the fossil record.

In his view, the reason that one accepts or rejects these positions ". . . depends largely on whether he or she has more trust in God's communication to us, or more confidence in human scientific theories of earth history." (p. 317).

Dr. Roth's volume has as its subtitle "Linking Science and Scripture," an enterprise which, he states, some consider to be an "impossible task." He, however, asserts he can do it. Stating that he takes both science and the Bible "extremely seriously," he sets out as his thesis that "much more scientific information corroborates Scripture than most people have generally surmised" (page 57). To advance his thesis, he points to the validity of evolutionary biological explanations for the biosphere as opposed to his understanding of what the

Scripture teaches about Creation. He starkly posits as his question: "Which is true, creation or evolution?" (p. 57). The focus of his analysis is directed at the question of "which is true, science or Scripture" (p. 19), or, as he restates it, "Which is more authoritative—science or Scripture?" (p. 26). Roth's analysis asserts that "[Biblical] Creation proposes a recent origin of life a few thousand years ago by God, and a subsequent destruction of that creation in the great deluge (flood) of Genesis." (p. 162). Roth addresses the massive corpus of geochronological data—including the isotopic dating methods supporting long ages in the fossil record—by focusing attention at the relatively infrequent anomalies. It is a disappointment that Roth, a formally trained scholar, engages in this line of argumentation.

Regretfully, neither Brand nor Roth exhibit any awareness of the extensive contributions by mainstream Adventist colleagues in theology, Hebrew languages and literature concerning interpretations of Genesis. A number of Adventist

Regretfully, neither Brand nor Roth exhibit any awareness of the extensive contributions by mainstream Adventist colleagues in theology, Hebrew languages and literature concerning interpretations of Genesis.

Biblical scholars have addressed the Genesis creation accounts and concluded that the subject of the narrative is God and his relationship to the created world. To them, the Book of Genesis is fundamentally a theological treatise. It is difficult to believe that Brand and Roth were unaware of the work of these colleagues in light of their reference to more conservative SDA Biblical scholars, e.g., as Roth does of the late Gerhard Hasel.

It would appear that it is in the area of Biblical hermeneutics that the most fruitful future dialogue concerning how the SDA faith community might deal with Creationism should be centered.

Ervin Taylor is Professor of Anthropology at the University of California, Riverside, and one of the founders of *Adventist Today*.

No Time for Miracles

MARYAN STIRLING

Jesus said “No” to his mother at Cana of Galilee. He said he couldn’t do anything about the shortfall of refreshments at the wedding. It wasn’t the right time. Minutes later he produced a miracle that solved the problem.

I worry about things like that. If it was time for a miracle, why did he say it wasn’t time? If it wasn’t the right time, why did he do it? You could wonder if something happened between the time he said he couldn’t do it and the moment he did it.

So look at it: Mama asks him. He says the time is wrong. She says something to the servants. Jesus speaks to them and they do something. Jesus says a few words. Servants do what he told them to do. And suddenly it’s time for a major, major miracle.

We need to look at what she said: “Whatever he tells you, do it.”

Good advice. It puts the control in the right place. She isn’t controlling Jesus, or directing his work. But she doesn’t go off to the kitchen either. She’s doing the very thing that needs to be done. She’s telling the hired help not to ask the manager what to do. The establishment would tell them to take orders from the man who hired them, who was going to pay them. But Mary told them to act as if the skinny young teacher was the boss.

So they all looked at Jesus and quit talking long enough to hear him say to fill the jars with water. He didn’t tell one tall servant to direct the others. Each one heard him, and each did his part of the job for no other reason than that Jesus told him to do it.

No hierarchy. No human authority. No “great leader” playing his agenda. Just Jesus telling each one about a job that needed to be done. They did it. They filled the six stone jugs “to the brim.” No stinting. No halfway service. They grabbed a jar, went to the well, filled the jar and emptied it into the huge, heavy stone jugs. And they shuttled the jars back and forth until the jugs were overflowing.

Jesus tells the servants one more thing to do. He doesn’t want to bypass the established authority entirely. He has the servant draw out some of whatever it was, wine or water, and take it to the ruler of the feast. The man in charge. They take the cup to the ruler and he takes a long, thirsty pull of something cool and sweet and full flavored. He likes it, and he knows quality when he tastes it! He hurries to the host. He’s feeling threatened.

**No hierarchy. No human authority.
No “great leader” playing his agenda.
Just Jesus telling each one about a job
that needed to be done. They did it.**

His management and control are compromised. How did this happen? This is no way to run a feast. “I didn’t give those orders,” he complains. “That resulted in serving the best wine last.”

Nobody apologized. Not Jesus. Not Mary. It’s an awkward moment.

John tells us that the ruler didn’t know where the “best wine” came from. And he adds, “but the servants knew.”

Ha! It’s miracle time. 

Maryan Stirling, charter member of the Gender Inclusiveness Commission of the Southeastern California Conference beginning in 1989, wore a pink equality button at the 1990 GC session. Our readers name her a favorite writer and preacher, equal (or superior) to the best men.



God's Grief

JOHN MCLARTY

I had been in my new church just a few weeks and was making my rounds getting acquainted. It was not very many minutes into my visit with Lois when she began telling me about the great hole in her life left by the death of her daughter, Angela. Her grief was sharp and fresh like Angela had died just yesterday.

I listened closely as details spilled out. Angela had drowned. She had been a beautiful girl, sweet, thoughtful. It was a hot summer day. She and some friends had gone to the lake.

It did not quite make sense to me. The way Lois talked, I was sure the accident had occurred only a short time ago. But Angela

According to traditional Christian teaching, when someone dies, he or she goes immediately into the presence of God or enters the torments of hell.

sounded like a teenager. And Lois was eighty years old. Finally Lois mentioned the detail I had been listening for. Angela had died on her sixteenth birthday, more than forty years before.

A mother's heart does not forget. Her grief does not go away.

According to traditional Christian teaching, when someone dies, he or she goes immediately into the presence of God or enters the torments of hell. And in modern American funerals, it is near-

ly always assumed someone who dies is headed for heaven. In this view, before death God is limited in his interaction with people by the separation between heaven and earth, but death erases this separation and leads immediately to the joy of unhindered fellowship between God and his children. So for God, death is a great boon. We who are left bereft on earth may be wracked by grief, but God's heart is gladdened by the homeward flight of his child.

The Adventist understanding of what happens when people die paints an entirely different picture of God. When someone dies, the person ceases to exist. In the language of the Bible, the person "sleeps." A dead person has no awareness of anything. The person remains "unconscious" until the resurrection. All of God's people arrive at the heavenly party together (Hebrews 11:39-40).

In this view, God himself is as deprived of the presence and fellowship of a person who dies as are the grieving family and friends. Instead of death being a boon to God, death robs God of the worship of his people (Psalm 115:17). When people die, the heavenly Father no longer hears the voices of his children. He has only memories to cherish; he is not in fellowship with their vital, interactive "souls."

In the story of Jesus' friend, Lazarus, we read that moments before Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, he wept. Given Jesus' deity, this incident portrays God's identification with human pain. Jesus knew that Lazarus was not going to remain dead, but the heartbreak of his friends brought Jesus himself to tears. It is a truism that when children hurt, their moms and dads hurt as much as

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

A Statement From Columbia Union College

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

strengthening that identity. The newly formed Adventist Accrediting Association evaluates colleges under guidelines that focus on campus spirituality. After its campus visit in 1998, the Association gave CUC full accreditation, making it the *first Adventist college in North America to receive this honor*. The college, then, is certifiably, as well as unapologetically, Adventist. No dark hints of institutional compromise, and no careless rhetoric involving the obscure and legally dubious phrase "pervasively sectarian," can negate this fact.

• This lawsuit entails no threat to the existing academic and religious freedom of Adventist colleges and universities. None is located in a state with a funding program similar to Maryland's. But the larger point is that a CUC victory would not entail increased control over religious colleges and universities. It is meant precisely to protect religious freedom and integrity, including the right to hire faculty who can advance the distinctive mission of distinctive institutions.

Evoking Martin Luther, the president of CUC once told the Maryland

Higher Education Commission, "If this commission refuses to draw the circle large, and again excludes Columbia Union College from participation in the Sellinger program, that will invite a truly chilling question: If we recant, would we qualify?"

Later, a judge at the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals wrote that this question sums up the entire case. It also sums up the many reasons why every Adventist should want us to win.

Revised October 8, 1999