

## 1. ELLEN WHITE AND THE BIBLE

1. Show me a community that doesn't interpret 5:27-29, and I will show you one without eyes.

## 2. Purpose of Ellen White in Relation to the Church

1. Exalt the word of God and attract minds to it that the beautiful simplicity of truth may impress all.

2. "The written testimonies are not to give new light, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed" (ibid 665)

3. "A lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light" (CM 125)

4. If people really read her writings they will find themselves driven back to the the study and authority of the Bible.

5.

1. Exalt the Bible and lead men and women to it

2. Clarify the great principles of the Bible for daily living so that people will have no excuse for not following its dictates.

3. Rebuke sin and urge obedience to the Bible.

1. Consciences have been blunted because light has been set aside, neglected, and despised.

4. Apply biblical principles in modern settings.

1. They point out the better way and provide guidance for daily Christian living and for the daily application of biblical principles.

5. To direct us to the only solution to the human sin problem.

1. Jesus is the only hope for the lost world.

6. To help prepare God's remnant church and people of earth's history.

1. None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict.

6. In relationship to her writings, her writings had a subordinate role to the Bible, however that does not mean that she saw her writings as lacking divine authority (this is really important).

7. She firmly believed that God spoke through her voice and pen in the tradition of the biblical prophets.

## 8. Relation to the Bible

1. Mrs. White did not want people making her the major authority in their lives.

2. "Our position and faith is in the Bible. And never do we want any soul to bring the Testimonies ahead of the Bible." -e. g. dubs

3. "In public labor, do not make prominent, and quote that Sister White has written, as authority to sustain your positions. To do this will not increase faith in the Testimonies. Bring your evidences, clear and plain, from the Word of God." -e. g. dubs

4. "'Thus saith the Lord' is the strongest possible testimony you can possibly bring to the people."

9. In 1901, When the church bureaucracy was discussing reorganizing the Church, Ellen White urged them to make Biblical principles the foundation of Adventist theology rather than the counsel of her words.

1. "Do not quote my words again as long as you live until you can obey the Bible." -The white woman

10. Ellen White argued that the Bible takes first priority in a Christian's life. However, that fact does not negate the importance nor the significance of her writing in relationship to contemporary topics.

11. James White wrote in 1847, "The Bible is a perfect and complete revelation. It is our only rule of faith and practice. But this is no reason, why God may show the past, the present, and the future fulfillment of his word, in the last days, by dreams and visions; according to

Peter's testimony.”

1. True visions are given to lead us to God and his written word, but those that are given for a new rule of faith and practice, separate from the Bible, cannot be from God, and should be rejected. -James White's response to visions and prophetic gifts (affirming the fact that his wife is inspired)
  12. The Bible is supreme, but God uses spiritual gifts in the last days to point his people back to the Bible.
  13. James White wrote in 1851, “The gifts of the spirit should all have their proper places.”
    1. “God in much mercy has pitied the weakness of his people, and has set the gifts of the gospel church as an [auto-]correct for our errors”
  14. It's important to understand that though Ellen White taught that the Bible held more importance than her own writings, that did not mean that they held her inspiration to be of a lesser quality than that of Bible writers.
    1. Basically they argued that her gift of prophecy was insubordinate to the Bible, but her inspiration was not of a lesser quality than that of the Bible writers.
    2. The balance for understanding Ellen White and her relation to the Bible is that because Ellen White's authority is directly derived from the Bible, it thus could not be equal to it. As a result, her authority was not to transcend or contradict the boundaries of truth set forth in the Bible.
  15. Some Adventists have seen Ellen White as an infallible Bible commentator in the sense that we should use her writings to settle the meanings of scripture.
  16. Although Ellen White and her writings were inspired commentaries motivated by the prompting of the Holy Spirit, she did not claim that we should take her writings as the final word on the meaning of Scripture.
    1. By way of contrast, A. T. Jones, in 1894 article on the purpose of Ellen White's writings argued that Ellen White is an infallible interpreter of the Bible and that it is necessary to study the Bible through her writings.
  17. Ellen White rejected the approach of those who would use her as an infallible commentator.
  18. Fritz Guy illustrates the issue nicely in relation to this whole thing:
    1. If I point towards the ceiling with my finger and say, “look!” I do not want you to look at my finger. I want you to look with my finger—to look in the direction it's pointing.
    2. Indeed, if you insist on looking at my finger, I will know that you didn't understand me.
  19. Another person also gave a good illustration for this whole thing, and it was Robert W. Olson:
    1. To give an individual complete interpretative control of the Bible would in effect, elevate that person above the Bible.
    2. Our only safety is to allow the Bible writers to speak for themselves. The same goes for Ellen White. Read each writer for his or her own message in its context.
  20. Ellen White's writings are generally homiletic, or evangelistic in nature, and not exegetical.
    1. Robert Olson argued, “One needs to be quite sure of how Ellen White is using a given text before claiming that she is interpreting the text from an exegetical standpoint for her reader.”
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1. Maintaining Truth Not to Preclude New Light
    1. "we must not look with suspicion upon any new light which God may send... Those who feel rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing, are in a condition of blindness as to their true condition before God, and they know it not.
  2. Led of God, but Not Infallible
    1. The truth is an advancing truth, and we must walk in the increasing light.

2. I dare not say they were not led of God, for Christ leads into all truth; but when it comes to inspiration in the fullest sense of the word, I answer, No. I believe that God has given them a work to do, but if they are not fully consecrated to God at all times, they will weave self and their peculiar traits of character into what they are doing, and will put their mold upon the work, and fashion men in religious experience after their own pattern.
3. Increased Light to Shine
  1. A spirit of pharisaism has been coming in upon the people who claim to believe the truth for these last days. They are self-satisfied. They have said, "We have the truth. There is no more light for the people of God.
  2. We should take the Bible, and investigate it closely for ourselves.
  3. Increasing light is to shine upon us
4. Many Gems Yet to Be Discovered
  1. New light will ever be revealed on the word of God to him who is in living connection with the Sun of Righteousness. Let no one come to the conclusion that there is no more truth to be revealed.
5. Investigation of Doctrine
  1. The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people, is not a proof that our ideas are infallible.
  2. No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation.
6. How to Search the Scriptures
  1. Many who read and even teach the Bible, do not comprehend the precious truth they are teaching or studying.
  2. Many give the words of Scripture a meaning that suits their own opinions, and they mislead themselves and deceive others by their misinterpretations of God's word.
  3. It was the unwillingness of the Jews to give up their long-established traditions that proved their ruin.
  4. God and heaven alone are infallible.
7. Would-be Guardians of the Doctrine
  1. The rebuke of the Lord will be upon those who would be guardians of the doctrine, who would bar the way that greater light shall not come to the people.
  2. The message of God will come to the people; and if there were no voice among men to give it, the very stones would cry out.
8. A Sign of Growth
  1. But as real spiritual life declines, it has ever been the tendency to cease to advance in the knowledge of the truth. Men rest satisfied with the light already received from God's word, and discourage any further investigation of the Scriptures.
  2. They become conservative, and seek to avoid discussion.
  3. The fact that there is no controversy or agitation among God's people, should not be regarded as conclusive evidence that they are holding fast to sound doctrine.
  4. Agitate, agitate, agitate!
9. Continual Search for Greater Light
  1. When God's people are at ease, and satisfied with their present enlightenment, we may be sure that He will not favor them.
  2. There has come in a self-confidence that has led them to feel no necessity for more truth and greater light.
10. Right Spirit Essential
  1. You may question matters with yourselves and with one another, if you only do it in the right spirit; but too often self is large, and as soon as investigation begins, an unchristian spirit is manifested.