

HISTORY

"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, **and his teaching in our past history**. We are now a strong people, if we will put our trust in the Lord; for we are handling the mighty truths of the word of God. ... we have been made the depositories of sacred truth to be given to the world in all its beauty and glory" (GCDB Jan. 29, 1893, par. 28).

- "God calls upon His people to stand firm upon **the platform of eternal truth**" (118LtMs, Ms 71 par. 53, 1903).
- "We are on the very same foundation; we have the same evidence, and we worked on it day and night to know in regard to the sanctuary question, **and in regard to the personality of God, and of Christ** and of all these subjects" (21 LtMs, Ms 138 1906).
- "**But I have ever had the same testimony to bear which I now bear regarding the personality of God**" (Lt 253 par. 9, 1903).
- "Let not erroneous theories receive countenance from the people who ought to be standing firm on the platform of eternal truth. **God calls upon us to hold firmly to the Fundamental Principles that are based upon unquestionable authority**" (8T 297-298).
- "We may be strengthened and confirmed in the past experience that holds us to the essential points of truth which have made us what we are - Seventh-day Adventists. **The past fifty years have not dimmed one jot or principle of our faith** as we received the great and wonderful evidences that were made certain to us" (Lt326, 1905).
- "In this time, when false doctrines are being taught, **we are to teach the same truth that we have taught for the past half century. I have not changed my faith one jot or one tittle**" (Lt 150, May 15, 1906).
- "The truth is the same as it ever has been, and not a pin or a pillar can be moved from the structure of truth. **That which was sought for out of the word in 1844, 1845, and 1846 remains the truth in every particular**" (Lt38, 1905).
- "The **straight line of truth** presented to me when I was but a girl is just as clearly presented to me now" (RH-Jan26, 1905).
- "**If you continue to believe and obey the truths you first embraced regarding the personality of the Father and the Son, you will be joined together with them in love.** There will be seen that union for which Christ prayed just before his trial and crucifixion" (Ms23, 1906). "
- **Truth is God's basis for the unity of his people**" (GW1892391).
- "We have no doubt ... that **the doctrines we hold today are present truth**, and that we are nearing the judgment" (2T 355).

"**But the waymarks which have made us what we are, are to be preserved**, and they will be preserved, as God has signified through His word and the testimony of His Spirit. **He calls upon us to hold firmly, with the grip of faith, to the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority**" (SpTest., Series B, No. 2:59 (1904).

Q & A

Isn't Elohim Plural? Yes, grammatically, but the verb בָּרָא *bārā'* (Gen 1:1) and the subsequent pronouns (He, His, Him) are singular. Moses = 1 man = *elohim* to Aaron (Ex 7:1). Hebrew lexicons don't use *Elohim* to defend or define a Trinity.

Genesis 1:26: "Let Us make man!" 2 Kings 4:10 has the identical term נֶעְשֶׂה *na'asê* between 2 people, not 3. EGW: the Father speaking to the Son (EW 145, 1SG 17, 3SG 33/15P 24, PP 45, 3SM 133).

Genesis 2:24 "one flesh": Adam & Eve didn't become one human: marriage, not children (1 Cor 6:16). *Trinity: 3 Gods = 1 God.*

Deuteronomy 6:4: אֶחָד "echad" is a compound unity! Mostly the mathematical term for 1. 1 rib (Gen 2:21). 1 person (Gen 4:19). A 3 in 1 Trinity is not in the text. *!! Deut 6:4-8 → Rev 14:9!*

Matthew 28:19: "in the name [singular] of" = same authority, but the word "God" is not even mentioned! 3 entities don't make a Trinity. EGW used Matthew 28:19 for baptism, *never* for a dogmatic Trinity. *Not once throughout her entire lifetime.*

John 1:1: "And the Word was God". Greek grammar: Quality, not Quantity. *Divinity, not Trinity*, affirming Jesus' divine nature as God's Son; but Jesus + Father are never 1 God in Scripture. → **Gen 5:1-2**: Eve is Adam = human, but not Adam = person.

John 10:30: "I and My Father are one." Greek *ἓν hen* is neuter, indicating that the Father and the Son are "one in purpose, in mind, in character, but not in person." It is thus that God and Christ are one" (MH 422). *Trinity | Trinitarian language*

2 Corinthians 13:14: Only the Father is identified as *God!*

1 John 5:7-8: SDA Bible Commentary: this text was added to Scripture. If original, it is not trinitarian at all: **3 agree in their witness** but the 3 are not 1 God, just like Spirit, water, blood are not 1 entity. KJV: "these three **agree in one**" (v8). Yes, Amen!

"Heavenly Trio": Exactly. 3, not 1. *Trio ≠ Trinity*. Ellen White used "Heavenly Trio" to *correct the trinitarian William Boardman!*

Love requires a Plurality! A human philosophical assumption, not Scripture. In 1 John 4:8 ("God is love") God is not a plurality but **God the Father who gave His Son**. → **1 John 4:9: The Gospel!**

Are(n't) you lowering the position of Jesus in the Godhead?! I uphold the divinity of Christ 100%, and uplift Jesus as the true Son of God, and affirm the personality of the Holy Spirit.

DA 530: "In Him was life original, unborrowed, undervied." This most misused quote comes from W. Channing and J. Cumming and was published in a Unitarian magazine - not exactly trinitarian. **Point: the divinity of Christ assures eternal life to the believer.** Jesus "asserted His right and power to give eternal life" ... "The Father's life flows out to all; through the Son it returns" (DA 21). "Christ is invested with power to give life to all creatures" (RH April 1, 1906 par. 12). → Her original publication (Ms2-1896; ST 8. April 1897) cites John 17:3! *Trinity*

Why don't you become a Jehovah's Witness? Why would I?! I am an original SDA! I believe Jesus was begotten, not created.

Is this new light? No. *This is what Adventists believed for >130 years!*

Is this really that important?! This issue is about the God of the Sabbath, His Son, and the Gospel, ranking higher than anything! **The 3 Angels' Message focuses on God the Father 3 times in Rev 14:7** (Mt 16:16; Acts 14:15!) - culminating in a final global call to worship! → Deut 6:4-9 → Rev 14:9! *Highest importance!*

"Are we worshippers of Jehovah, or of Baal? of the living God, or of idols? No outward shrines may be visible; there may be no image for the eye to rest upon; yet we may be practicing idolatry. It is as easy to make an idol of cherished ideas or objects as to fashion gods of wood or stone. **Thousands have a false conception of God and His attributes. They are as verily serving a false god as were the servants of Baal** (RH Dec 3, 1908)."

"... let us make use of every opportunity to know the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent" (1 Dec 21, 1893, par. 5). → MH Ch. 1; SR Ch. 1!

The Doctrine of THE TRINITY

Issues • Insights

Information • Inspiration



"earnestly contending for the faith
once delivered to the saints"

(Jude 3)

Ingo Sorke, PhD

TOP QUOTES

Scripture

Deut 4:35 "the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him." → Deut 32:39; Job 42:71; 1Kgs 8:60; Isa 42:8; 43:10-11; 44:6,8; 45:18-22; 46:9; Hos 13:4; Neh 9:6; 1Chr 17:20; Rom 3:30; Rev 3:12: Jesus → Father: "my God" 4x!

Deut 6:4 The highest OT profession! → Mark 12:29-34!

Isa 45:6 "I am the LORD, and there is no one else."

Mal 2:10 "Have we not all one father? Has not **one God** created us?"

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

Rom 15:6 "That you may with one mind and one mouth glorify **God**, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Cor 8:4-6 "4 there is **none other God but one**. ... 6 But to us there is but **one God, the Father**, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." **How readest thou?!**

1 Cor 11:3 "the head of Christ is God"

Eph 4:6 "One God and Father of all"

1 Thess 1:9-10 "and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; 10 and to wait for his Son from heaven."

1 Tim 2:5 "For there is **one God**, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

James 2:19 "You believe there is **one God**; you do well!"

2 John 3 "Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from **God the Father**, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love."

Scholars

• "The concept of Trinity ... that the three are one, is not explicitly stated but only assumed" (F. Canale, SDABC 12:138 [2000]).

• "No text of Scripture specifically says that God is three Persons" (K. Donkor [BRI], *Theology*, 2015, p. 20).

Ellen White

• "The Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of the Father, is truly God in infinity, but not in personality (Ms116-1905.19).

• "There is a personal God, the Father; there is a personal Christ, the Son" (SDABC 6:1068; RH Nov 8, 1898).

• "You are not definitely clear on the **personality of God, which is everything to us as a people**. You have virtually destroyed the Lord God Himself" (L1300-1903; RH Mar 8 1906 par. 19).

• "A denial of the personality of God...take[s] away the vital principles which have made us a separate people" (Ms 8, 1914).

• "The man who does not know God as his Father, and Jesus Christ as the only begotten Son of the infinite God, cannot rule wisely" (17MR 318.4).

NAD, Issues (1977), p. 50: "Complex theological definitions, the Trinity, for example, may serve the church well in general but cannot be imposed as a test for all Adventists everywhere. ... Remembering our non-Trinitarian past as well as the simplicity of our landmarks should encourage a certain humility in the church and lead us to resist any attempt by one segment of the church to impose its views on the rest."

THE FUNDAMENTAL ISSUE

"earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3)

Contrary to Scripture, Spirit of Prophecy, and SDA history, Adventists have changed their description of God to a trinitarian formulation of 3 Gods = 1 God.

"Let the Scriptures be read in simple faith, and let each one form his conceptions of God from His inspired Word."
(Letter 214, 1903, Oct. 9, to P. T. Magan and E. A. Sutherland)

"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets" (Acts 24:14).

Compare our past Fundamental Principles to our current Fundamental Beliefs:

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES (1872/1889)

1. That there is one God, a personal, spiritual being, the creator of all things, omnipotent, omniscient, and eternal; infinite in wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, truth, and mercy; unchangeable, and everywhere present by his representative, the Holy Spirit. Ps. 139:7.

2. "That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father ..."

MY BAPTISMAL VOW (1986!)

1. "I believe in God the Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit." **Simple. Clear. Biblical.**

Historical SDA Preamble: "In presenting to the public this synopsis of our faith, we wish to have it distinctly understood that we have no articles of faith, creed, or discipline, aside from the Bible. We do not put forth this as having any authority with our people, nor is it designed to secure uniformity among them, as a system of faith, but is a brief statement of what is, and has been, with great unanimity, held by them."

👉 "I feel my spirit stirred within me. I feel to the depth of my being that the truth must be borne to other countries and nations and to all classes. **Let the missionaries of the cross proclaim that there is one God**, and one Mediator between God and man, who is Jesus Christ the Son of the Infinite God. **This needs to be proclaimed throughout every church in our land.**" *My favorite quote!* ❤️

(Ms40-1891.78; Ellen White 1888 Materials). 886.3).

FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS (SINCE 1980)

2. There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three coeternal Persons. ... (Gen 1:26; Deut 6:4; Isa 6:8; Mt 28:19; Jn 3:16; 2Cor 1:21, 22; 13:14; Eph 4:4-6; 1 Pet 1:2.) **Catholic & Ecumenical wording!**

✗ **None of these Bible texts define God as 3!**

4. God the Eternal Son

5. God the Eternal Spirit

✗ **None of these phrases exist in Bible or EGW!**

CURRENT BAPTISMAL VOW

1. "Do you believe there is **one God**: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three coeternal Persons?" **1=3=1?!**

✗ Trinity does not mean Father, Son, Holy Spirit

✗ Trinity does not mean Heavenly Trio

✗ Trinity does not mean Godhead

Trinity means 3 Gods = 1 God = 3 Gods

✗ unbiblical, and not in Spirit of Prophecy

✗ not voted at a GC in session until 1980!

"His Church must be kept free from all false doctrine" because "error is never harmless!"
(Ms 46, 1905 par. 6; CW 46)