

The True and the Counterfeit Holy Spirit

J. M. Handwerk

We begin with an apparent biblical conundrum. The Bible and Spirit of prophecy speak indisputably of *three* divine Agents or Persons working for our salvation—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—but name only *two* in the counsel of peace (Zech 6:13); only *two* on the throne (Rev 22:1, 3); only *two* in the greetings of Paul’s epistles; only *two* that we must know for eternal life: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3); only *two* in heaven that receive honor (John 5:23); only *two* with whom we have fellowship (1 John 1:3); only *two* that, in denying, a person is antichrist (1 John 2:22-23); and other verses like these. Why isn’t the Holy Spirit included with Father and Son in these biblical examples, and more? Is He not also part of the “heavenly trio”?

Is the Bible saying there is no Holy Spirit? Of course not. The Scripture revelations about the actions and feelings of the Spirit of God are too numerous and plain to conclude that. Nor are we saying there is no Holy Spirit. This entire study is *about* who He is, so He obviously exists! The real issue is not *whether* there is a Holy Spirit, or *what kind* of Person He is. **The heart of the matter, which Satan uses every diversionary tactic to “shut from our view,”ⁱ is Who He is.** Once we know Who the Holy Spirit is, Satan’s masquerade is exposed.

The Spirit of prophecy plainly states,

“The Holy Spirit is as much a person as God is a *person*,” a “divine person,” a “free, working, *independent agency*,” used by God as He pleases—a “*regenerating agent*.” FLB 52.1, 3, 5.

In fact, the Holy Spirit is essential to our salvation:

“...Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the third person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fulness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world’s Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given his Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress his own character upon the church.” RH, May 19, 1904, par. 3.

Nevertheless, despite our necessity of the Holy Spirit, there are only *two* to whom “all heaven gave allegiance:” “Christ, equally with the Father” (GC88 493); only *two* with whom some of the disaffected angels thought to seek reconciliation: Father and Son (PP 40); only *two* to whom Adam and Eve sang “joyful adoration:” Father and Son. SR 31. Note, too, that the third highest being in heaven was Satan, *not* the Holy Spirit: “We are all to understand that there is a fallen angel who was once next to Christ in honor among the heavenly host...” (TDG 248.1); “...standing next to Christ in power and honor, yet he coveted glory that belonged to the Son...” RH 2.4.09.

How, then, is one to reconcile *three* Persons in the heavenly trio, yet only *two* in so many biblical and Spirit of prophecy instances? Let us mine God’s Word and the Spirit of prophecy, for therein we will find the pure gold of God’s wisdom for us. Then we will know whether we have been standing on solid ground concerning our beliefs about the Holy Spirit, or whether the Lord has in mercy made a necessary correction in our understanding in these late hours of earth’s history. The truth is, knowing WHO the Holy Spirit is—not just His office or work, but WHO—will explain WHY there are *three* Persons in the Godhead, but only *two* mentioned in so many places in the Bible and in the writings of Ellen White.

Regarding the Holy Spirit,

“it is not essential for us to be able to define just *what* the Holy Spirit is...” AA 51.3

“The *nature* of the Holy Spirit is a mystery.... Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden.” AA 52.1.

Be assured, we are not discussing the *nature* of the Holy Spirit, but His *identity*. To obtain the answer we seek, it is sufficient just to learn WHO He is. We are cognizant, as we trust you, the reader, are, that there is a big difference between our *natures* (fallen human, corrupt) and our *identities* (John Smith, unique physical form plus thoughts, feelings, experiences). So, too, the *identity* of the Holy

Spirit is not the same as His *nature*. It is critical that we know what has been revealed of the *identity* of the Holy Spirit—WHO He is—for there is a *counterfeit* Holy Spirit, as well as God's *true* Spirit.

The Spirit of prophecy instructs us to

“take the Bible as it reads;” it is to be “explained according to its obvious meaning.” GC88 599.

That means we are to read it literally, unless symbolic language is plainly employed. The Bible and Spirit of prophecy are very clear as to WHO the Holy Spirit is. And, of course, if He is a “WHO,” then He is a Person—the necessary third Person or saving “Agent” in the plan for our redemption.

Biblical Passages

As Ellen White wrote,

“The great truths of the Word of God are so clearly stated that none need make a mistake in understanding them....” 11MR 266.2.

That there is some kind of difference between the Holy Spirit and the Father and Son is apparent in His very name. Indeed, the Bible repeatedly refers to the Holy Spirit as the “Spirit of God” and the “Spirit of Christ.” The “Spirit of God” is the same as the possessive “God’s Spirit,” just as “the hand of man” is “man’s hand.” The grammar tells us specifically, then, that the Holy Spirit is God’s Spirit and Christ’s Spirit. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is *not a third, totally different Person other than Father and Son. He is not a third God*, but a third divine agency or person, *the Spirit of God*. In fact, as you’ll soon see, God’s Word reveals that the Holy Spirit is the personal presence of God and Christ, in a spiritual sense. *What could possibly be more wonderful?*

In the Psalms, Jewish parallelism provides an identity. God’s *presence* is used synonymously with His *spirit*:

“Cast me not away from *thy presence*; and take not *thy holy spirit* from me.” Ps 51:11.

“Whither shall I go from *thy spirit*? or whither shall I flee from *thy presence*?” Ps 139:7.

The Bible explains itself perfectly. In the following two verses, the “Holy Ghost” and “Spirit of Christ” are one and the same source of inspiration of prophecy:

“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the *Holy Ghost*.” 2 Peter 1:21.

“Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the *Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify*, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.” 1 Peter 1:10-11.

The Spirit of prophecy offers confirmation, speaking of the Savior and the Spirit of Christ synonymously.:

“The *Saviour had spoken* through all the prophets. ‘The *Spirit of Christ which was in them*’ ‘*testified* beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.’ 1 Peter 1:11.” DA 234.1.

Revelation 1:10-18 provides John’s unmistakable description of Christ just prior to His dictating to John the messages for the seven churches. And then, for each church, Christ would begin,

“Unto the angel of the church in ___ write....”

Each message ends with Christ’s words,

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what *the Spirit* saith unto the churches....”

It is clearly Christ telling John what to write, and clearly Christ speaking of Himself when He says “...the Spirit saith....”

Jesus is “the way, *the truth*, and the life.” John 14:6. Therefore, the “Spirit of truth” is *His* Spirit. Please now read John 14:16-18 carefully, thoughtfully, for much was said that so many of us have missed before:

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you *another Comforter*, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the *Spirit of truth*; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.”

Ellen White, in 14MR 179, quoted that preceding passage from John and then added,

"This refers to the *omnipresence* of the Spirit of Christ, called the Comforter." She also wrote, "...Christ was the spirit of truth...." SW Oct. 25, 1898, par. 2.

Jesus told the disciples that they *already knew* the identity of the "another Comforter" who hadn't even come to them yet! And then He told them how they knew: "He dwelleth with you." Jesus was referring to none other than Himself, and He repeated His assurance in His words, "*I will come to you.*" This is not a minor point. Some stumble at this, claiming that when Jesus said, "I will come to you," He would come *in addition to* the Comforter, but here He reveals He is the One who would come to them. Would He come in physical form, as He was then speaking to His disciples? No. He explained that as the Holy Spirit/Comforter, He would be "in" them. His "personal presence" would be with them spiritually. RH June 22, 1897, par. 9. Jesus explained how He would be with them non-physically:

"At that day [Pentecost] ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I *in you.*" John 14:20.

It is without question that the apostles *knew* Jesus was speaking of Himself when He spoke of the coming Comforter. Jesus had said in verse 21,

"...He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest *myself* to him."

In verse 22, Judas' question acknowledges that Jesus would be manifesting Himself to the apostles. Judas' question was not "Who?" but "How?"

"Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that *thou wilt manifest thyself* unto us, and not unto the world?"

Ellen White wrote,

"That Christ should manifest Himself to them, and yet be invisible to the world, was a mystery to the disciples. They could not understand the words of Christ in their spiritual sense. They were thinking of the outward, visible manifestation. They could not take in the fact that they could have the *presence of Christ with them*, and yet He be unseen by the world. They did not understand the meaning of a spiritual manifestation." *Southern Watchman*, Sept. 9, 1898.

Jesus did not answer the "how" of Judas' question. It was not necessary that they understand the *nature* of His Spirit, but He wanted them to know WHO was coming. His reply in the next verse (v. 23) confirms earlier verses regarding the *identity* of the anticipated Comforter:

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and *we will come* unto him, and make *our abode* with him."

In John 14:28-29, Jesus summarized their discussion:

"You have heard how I said unto you, *I go away, and come again unto you....* And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe."

These sentences were not referring to Jesus' future second coming in visible, physical form. They referred to something that would soon occur to the apostles, so that they would be comforted and strengthened by His spiritual indwelling, i.e., Pentecost. Jesus went away, physically, but He soon returned via His omnipresent Spirit in fuller measure than that by which His Spirit had beforehand worked among men.

Not only would One they knew and loved come—One who had loved them so dearly—but the invisible Father Himself would also come, of whom Jesus had spoken so often as He guided their thoughts heavenward! What wondrous love has been shown to mankind! Both Father, who "so loved the world," and Son, who "gave himself" for us, would be spiritually present with believers! John 3:16; Gal 2:20. Christ's word is true:

"Never will I leave you, nor forsake you." Heb 13:5.

Ellen White wrote,

"...On the day of Pentecost the *promised Comforter* descended, and the power from on high was given, and the souls of the believers thrilled with the conscious presence of their *ascended Lord....*" GC88 351.

In John 14:16-18, 22-23 that we have been discussing, we noted that Jesus used the first-person pronoun *I*: "I will come." He also spoke of Himself as the coming Comforter, referring to Himself as "he"

and “him.” It was not unusual for Christ to speak of Himself in the third person; he had done so earlier when He said,

“...When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8),

and when he replied to the high priest,

“...Ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven” (Mark 14:62),

and when He talked of Himself to the two travelers on the road to Emmaus,

“...Ought not Christ to have suffered these things...?”

The third-person pronoun “he/him,” as Jesus used it in John 14:16-18, does not refer to someone other than Jesus. The promised Comforter that was sent was none other than the Son, via His own invisible Spirit.

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the *Spirit of his Son into your hearts*, crying, Abba, Father.” Galatians 4:6

“God is a Spirit...” John 4:24.

“The mighty power that works through all nature and sustains all things is not, as some men of science claim, merely an all-pervading principle, an actuating energy. God is a spirit; yet He is a personal being, for man was made in His image. As a personal being, God has revealed Himself in His Son....” Ed 131-2

“When He should come forth from the tomb, their sorrow would be turned to joy. After His ascension He was to be absent in person; but *through the Comforter He would still be with them*, and they were not to spend their time in mourning.” DA 277.

“The disciples still failed to understand Christ’s words in their spiritual sense, and again He explained His meaning. *By the Spirit, He said, He would manifest Himself to them.*” DA 670.

How exactly Jesus’ Spirit manifests, we are not told. It does not matter; it is enough that we are promised the presence of Christ.

Ephesians 3:16-17: “That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That *Christ may dwell in your hearts* by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love...”

Col 1:26-7: “Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the *riches* of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory.**”

“Christ *in us*,” as promised in John 14:17, by His omnipresent Spirit! What had been “hid from ages and from generations” is now “manifest to his saints.” Until Christ’s incarnation, it was not yet known how God would fulfil His promise of the Seed. But now we know! Precious knowledge—and shall we fail to comprehend? Shall we miss knowing that Jesus by faith is *personally in us*—His beauty of character, His power, His perfect love and wisdom—all may be ours; that is why He is there! All the accumulated riches of the world cannot equal that gift of God to us! The One “altogether lovely,” who has lived in our flesh, shared our limitations, experienced our temptations, and lived without sin *for us*—it is *He* who comes to dwell *in us*, not someone else who has not qualified himself to sympathize with, and to succor and uplift humanity, as Jesus has.

Our work is to remove self from the throne of our hearts. Who would want to retain self when the alternative is Jesus on that throne! Paul said of Him, “...Who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Gal 2:20.

Jesus is there in the believer because

“...without the *life of Christ in us*, we cannot withstand the storms of temptation.” DA 599.

“...It is our privilege to have the joy of *Christ in us*, that our joy may be full....” *Ye Shall Receive Power*, 305.

This precious understanding of WHO the Holy Spirit is uplifts and strengthens us, enabling us to more resolutely and joyously accept His righteousness in place of our own, by our ever-increasing love for and faith in Him—righteousness by faith, indeed! “Christ in you, the hope of glory....” What beautiful words.

Ezekiel 36:26-27: "A new heart also will I give you, and a *new spirit* will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put *my spirit* within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

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

Just as Jesus, during His incarnation, "showed" us, or represented to us, the Father (John 14:9), so now the "things of God" are "revealed" to us by His Spirit, and as that "new spirit" of Ezekiel 36:26 is entrusted to believers, we, too, will reveal the things of God to others. The need of the growing church necessitated a presence beyond the physical presence of Jesus, hence the gift of "another Comforter," who is the invisible yet very real, personal omnipresence of Son to believers everywhere. It is He who works in and through us. Paul wrote,

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me...." Gal 2:20.

He was still Paul, but a very changed Paul, for he was now a partaker of the divine nature. The Comforter was abiding in him.

Omnipresence is an attribute or quality unique to divine Father and Son; they can "send" or "give" their Holy Spirit as a separate working Agency or Person—their representative personal presence and power—whereas man cannot give or send his spirit anywhere outside of himself. Romans 8:9 makes it plain Father and Son have the same Holy Spirit:

"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the *Spirit of God* dwell in you. Now if any man have not the *Spirit of Christ*, he is none of his."

The same point is made in 1 Cor 12:13:

"For by *one Spirit* are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into *one Spirit*."

And the same point is in Eph 2:18:

"For through him we both have access by *one Spirit* unto the Father."

See also 1 Corinthians 2:10-11.

Spirit of Prophecy Passages

As we may expect, the Spirit of prophecy *explicitly* validates the testimony of the Bible as to WHO the Holy Spirit is. For example, Ellen White states clearly that Jesus Himself is our Comforter. There is no mystery here; the Holy Spirit's identity is plainly revealed to us.

"...Christ is everything to those who receive Him. *He is their Comforter*, their safety, their healthfulness...." LHU 221.

"...We adore God for His wondrous love in giving *Jesus the Comforter*." 19MR 297.3

"There is no comforter like Christ, so tender and so true. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. His Spirit speaks to the heart." AG 187.2

"...In giving us His Spirit, *God gives us Himself*, making Himself a fountain of divine influences, to give health and life to the world." 7T 273.1

"...Christ is present by his Holy Spirit...." RH 11.4.02

"The reason why the churches are weak and sickly and ready to die is that *the enemy* has brought influences of a discouraging nature to bear upon trembling souls. *He has sought to shut Jesus from their view as the Comforter*, as one who reproves, who warns, who admonishes them, saying, 'This is the way, walk ye in it....' RC 21.3

"Although *God* dwells not in temples made with hands, yet He honors *with His presence* the assemblies of His people. He has promised that when they come together to seek Him, to acknowledge their sins, and to pray for one another, *He will meet with them by His Spirit*.

"When Christ ascended to heaven, the sense of His presence was still with His followers. It was a *personal presence*, full of love and light.

"Henceforth through the Spirit, *Christ* was to abide continually in the hearts of the children.... All that Christ was to the disciples, He desires to be to His children today.

"...We are to make supplication according to the will of God, relying on the precious Word, and believing that *Christ not only gave Himself for, but to, His disciples*. The record declares, 'He

breathed on them, and saith unto them, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost*' (John 20:22)." 2MR 36.2; ST, October 3, 1892 par. 3.

"...Jesus is seeking to impress upon them the thought that *in giving His Holy Spirit He is giving to them the glory which the Father hath given Him, that He and His people may be one in God.* Our way and will must be in submission to God's will, knowing that it is holy, just, and good...." 2MR 36.3.

The Comforter that Christ promised the disciples "shall be in you" is Himself: "By his heavenly gifts the Lord has made ample provision for his people. An earthly parent can not give his child a sanctified character. He can not transfer his character to his child. *God alone can transform us.* Christ breathed on his disciples, and said, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost.' This is the great gift of heaven. *Christ imparted to them through the Spirit his own sanctification.* He imbued them with his power, that they might win souls to the gospel. *Henceforth Christ would live through their faculties, and speak through their words.* They were privileged to know that *hereafter he and they were to be one.* They must cherish his principles and be controlled by his Spirit. They were no longer to follow their own way, to speak their own words. The words they spoke were to proceed from a sanctified heart, and fall from sanctified lips. No longer were they to live their own selfish life; Christ was to live in them and speak through them. *He would give to them the glory that he had with the Father, that he and they might be one in God.*" GCB, Oct. 1, 1899, par. 12.

"...Receiving Christ, we are clothed with power. An *indwelling Saviour* makes His power our property.... *Christ's presence in the heart* is a vitalizing power, strengthening the entire being." FLB 62.4-7.

Did you notice the triple usage of the word "power" in that last paragraph of the excerpt? Jesus said, "For John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.... Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:5, 8.

"The wind is heard among the branches of the trees, rustling the leaves and flowers; yet it is invisible, and no man knows whence it comes or whither it goes. So with the *work of the Holy Spirit* upon the heart. It can no more be explained than can the movements of the wind. A person may not be able to tell the exact time or place, or to trace all the circumstances in the process of conversion; but this does not prove him to be unconverted. *By an agency as unseen as the wind, Christ is constantly working* upon the heart...." DA 172.3.

In this next brief story, we read that the *Spirit* of Jesus had drawn the palsied man to make efforts to come into Jesus' *physical* presence for forgiveness and healing:

"...Like the leper, this paralytic had lost all hope of recovery. His disease was the result of a sinful life, and his sufferings were embittered by remorse. In vain he had appealed to the Pharisees and doctors for relief; they pronounced him incurable, they denounced him as a sinner and declared that he would die under the wrath of God.

"The palsied man had sunk into despair. **Then he heard of the works of Jesus.** Others, as sinful and helpless as he, had been healed, and **he was encouraged to believe** that he, too, might be cured if he could be carried to the Saviour. But hope fell as he remembered the cause of his malady, yet he could not cast away the possibility of healing.

"His great desire was relief from the burden of sin. **He longed to see Jesus** and receive the assurance of forgiveness and peace with heaven. Then he would be content to live or to die, according to God's will." MH 73.2-74.1

"Again and again the bearers of the paralytic tried to push their way through the crowd, but in vain. The sick man looked about him in unutterable anguish. When the longed-for help was so near, how could he relinquish hope? At his suggestion his friends bore him to the top of the house and, breaking up the roof, let him down at the feet of Jesus. The discourse was interrupted. The Saviour looked upon the mournful countenance, and saw the pleading eyes

fixed upon Him. He understood the case; **He had drawn to Himself that perplexed and doubting spirit. While the paralytic was yet at home, the Saviour [by His omnipresent Spirit] had brought conviction to his conscience.** When he repented of his sins, and believed in the power of Jesus to make him whole, the life-giving mercies of the Saviour had first blessed his longing heart. Jesus had watched the first glimmer of faith grow into a belief that He was the sinner's only helper, and had seen it grow stronger **with every effort to come into His presence.**

"Now, in words that fell like music on the sufferer's ear, the Saviour said, 'Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.'" DA 268.1-2

"...**It was Christ [not physically present, but by His omnipresent Spirit] who had drawn the sufferer to Himself...**" MH 75.2 "The burden of guilt rolls from the sick man's soul. He cannot doubt. Christ's words reveal His power to read the heart. Who can deny His power to forgive sins? Hope takes the place of despair, and joy of oppressive gloom. The man's physical pain is gone, and his whole being is transformed. Making no further request, he lay in peaceful silence, too happy for words." MH 76.1

"God calls upon His people, many of whom are but half awake, to arouse, and engage in earnest labor, praying for strength for service. Workers are needed. *Receive the Holy Spirit*, and your efforts will be successful. *Christ's presence* is what gives power." *The Central Advance*, Feb 25, 1903, "Power for service."

"Christ is to live in his human agents, and work through their faculties, and act through their capabilities. Their will must be submitted to his will, they must act with *his spirit*, that it may be no more they that live, but *Christ that liveth in them.*" 14MR 1107.

"*By the Spirit* the Father and the Son will come and make their abode with you." BEcho, Jan 15, 1893, par. 8

"... 'It is *the spirit* that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life' (John 6:57, 63). Christ is not here referring to His doctrine, but to *His person, the divinity of His character...*" 1SM 249

"Remember that the body is the *temple of the Holy Spirit*, and that it is to be kept pure and undefiled, fit for a *dwelling place for Christ.*" 20MR 329.5.

"...They have one God and one Saviour; and one Spirit—the Spirit of Christ—is to bring unity into their ranks." 9T 189.3.

"Cumbered with humanity, *Christ* could not be in every place personally; therefore it was altogether for their advantage that He should leave them, go to His father, and send the Holy Spirit to be His successor on earth. *The Holy Spirit is Himself* [Christ] divested of the personality of humanity and independent thereof. He [Christ] would represent [portray, explain] Himself as present in all places by His Holy Spirit, as *the Omnipresent.*" 14MR 23.3

"...By the Spirit the Saviour would be accessible to all. In this sense *He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high.*" DA 669. While we may not have walked with Jesus, He is nearer to us than He was when physically with the apostles, for now He dwells in the hearts of all believers.

"...He comforts them with His own presence...." Ibid.

"...His word is pledged that their need shall be supplied, and He has promised that which is far better than worldly good, —the abiding comfort of *His own presence.*" DA 367.

"...It is *the spirit* that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are *spirit*, and they are *life*' (John 6:57, 63). Christ is not here referring to His doctrine, but to His person, the divinity of His character..." 1SM 249

"The greatness of *God* is to us incomprehensible. 'The Lord's throne is in heaven' (Psalm 11:4); yet *by His Spirit* He is everywhere present...." Ed 132

"The living church of God is individually a habitation of God through the Spirit, that man may become a well-built temple for the *indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God*, that the *Lord Jesus*

Christ may dwell in his innermost being, ennobling and sanctifying his human nature by His divine attributes.” HP 283.2

“The influence of the Holy Spirit is the *life of Christ in the soul*. We do not see Christ and speak to Him, but His Holy Spirit is just as near us in one place as in another....” 6BC 1112

Thus we see, from both God’s Word and the writings of Ellen White, that God and Christ from their throne in heaven send their omnipresent Spirit—their own power, presence, and divine personality—as their representative when they themselves are not bodily present. By this one Spirit both God and Christ have unfettered personal access to all creation, in any part of the universe. In this third manifestation of divinity—this third member or agent of the Godhead, men experience the personal, indwelling divine presence of the Father and Christ. Surely this is a humbling yet joyous truth—an incontestable basis for righteousness by faith.

Twelve Critical Points

There are twelve critical points related to this study that we must understand.

First, we know the Holy Spirit

“...helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttereth....” Rom 8:26.

If the Holy Spirit is someone *other than* God and Christ, then we have two intercessors, or *two* “mediator(s),” not just

“one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,”

as the Scripture specifically states in 1 Timothy 2:5.

Second, the history of the Advent movement is important for us to know. Early in his religious experience, John Harvey Kellogg believed with other Advent believers that the Holy Spirit was the invisible personal presence and power of both God the Father and the Son of God while They themselves were in heaven. Later in life, however, he told A. G. Daniels that “he had come to believe in the trinity” (Daniels, letter to W. C. White, Oct. 29, 1903), and to believe in a “God the Holy Spirit” that was “in” everything—even in sinners. Ellen White was unable to persuade Kellogg to desist; she wrote,

“...Satan’s power over him has not been broken.” Letter 116, April 22, 1905.

It is well-known that Mrs. White called the Holy Spirit the “third person of the Godhead.” Indeed, it was that statement around which the controversy about Kellogg’s book centered. Kellogg stated the divisive issue correctly in a letter to former G.C. president G. I. Butler on Oct. 28, 1903:

“As far as I can fathom, the difficulty..., the whole thing may be simmered down to the question: Is the Holy Ghost a person? You say no. I had supposed the Bible said this for the reason that the personal pronoun ‘he’ is used in speaking of the Holy Ghost. Sister White uses the pronoun ‘he’ and has said in so many words that the Holy Ghost is the third person of the Godhead. How the Holy Ghost can be the third person and not be a person at all is difficult for me to see.”ⁱⁱ

Brother or sister, did Kellogg state your thoughts as he stated his own? Is your reasoning like his? In fact, is it not the dominant position within our denomination today? Be aware, then. Mrs. White rebuked Kellogg for his views, which she said were

“written under the inspiration of the arch-deceiver.” *Battle Creek Letters*, 103.

G. I. Butler, doubtless knowing full well Mrs. White had written of “the third person of the Godhead,” nevertheless denied to Kellogg that the Holy Ghost was a person. “You say no,” wrote Kellogg to him. But did Butler deny Mrs. White’s testimony outright, or did he deny Kellogg’s *interpretation* and *application* of her words, which turned the “third person” into an entirely different person other than God and Christ?

In fact, Kellogg did misrepresent what Mrs. White meant in the phrase “third person of the Godhead.” He claimed her words supported his views, but she wrote,

“I am compelled to speak *in denial* of the claim that the teachings of *Living Temple* can be sustained by statements from my writings.” 1SM 203

Mrs. White plainly identified WHO that “third person” was:

“...Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the *Third Person* of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the *Spirit* that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the *Spirit* that the heart is made pure. Through the *Spirit* the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. *Christ has given His Spirit* as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church.” DA 671.2 (1898).

This quote unmistakably shows the “*third Person*”=*Holy Spirit*=*Christ's Spirit*. That was the unanimous belief of the church at that time, before Kellogg unsettled it. It indicates not the slightest tendency toward the three different gods of Trinitarianism.

Another quote, written two years later and one of many of this nature, repeats the point:

“I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you.’ The divine Spirit that the world's Redeemer promised to send is the *presence and power of God*. *He* [God] will not leave his people in the world destitute of his grace, to be buffeted by the enemy of God, and harassed by the oppression of the world; but he will come to them.” ST Nov. 23, 1991.

Ellen White spoke of a “presence,” a “third person,” but clarified just who that presence or third person is: God Himself, but by His Spirit.ⁱⁱⁱ

We have received the warning:

“Be not deceived; many will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.’ We have now before us the alpha of this danger. The omega will be of a most startling nature.” 1SM 197.4.

Kellogg, Mrs. White said, was “inspired by the arch-deceiver;” he believed in a “doctrine of devils.” Kellogg’s ideas were the *alpha* of apostasy; Mrs. White “trembled” when she was given a view of the *omega*. 1SAT 341. We believe that the *alpha* and *omega* are closely related; both have the same fundamental point of deception. The *alpha* was a deceptive, unbiblical teaching about the identity of the Holy Spirit; so, too, is the present different, more sophisticated misrepresentation of the Holy Spirit, which presents Him as a third, equal, different “God the Holy Spirit,” which denies the *explicit witness* of both the Bible and Spirit of prophecy, as you have seen for yourself earlier in the first two sections of this document.

The ramifications of accepting a false concept of the Spirit of God are enormous, even eternal. Not only that, the division in our church over the identity of the Holy Spirit is increasing as members become aware of the issue and take sides, either for Kellogg’s Trinitarian “God the Holy Spirit” or for the biblical and Spirit of prophecy “Spirit of God and of Christ.”^{iv} What can end the divide? Unceasing prayer, and lovingly,

“earnestly contend[ing] for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 1:3), and a return to the doctrines established earlier in our history under the direct auspices of the Holy Spirit. How can we have true unity unless that which caused the division in the first place be rectified? **Third**, both God’s Word and the Spirit of prophecy testify that the Holy Spirit is *of* and *from* Father and Son, i.e., Their omnipresence. Without controversy, though, Their Spirit *must* be distinct from them, for It/He operates apart from them, as directed from heaven. He represents and “personifies Christ, yet is a distinct personality” (20MR 324), equal with Father and Son simply because, as their own Spirit, He cannot be otherwise! He is a third, *critically necessary* divine “Person” or divine “Agent” or “Agency” in the plan of salvation.^v The Bible and Spirit of prophecy identify the Holy Spirit to be Father and Son, but in a different manifestation or “form” (formless, or variable form—a spiritual form), whereas they both have physical forms (EW 54). Their omnipresent Spirit has a different and most essential function. In the plan of salvation, as Father and Son carry out their work in heaven, necessarily “the Holy Spirit is a free [unfettered, unencumbered], working, independent agency.” RH May 5, 1896.

Yet on the basis of revealed truth, one can state positively that the Holy Spirit is not someone *different from* Father and Son. We are told that Christ is

“the only being in all the universe that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God.”
GC88 493.

There was and is no third “God the Holy Spirit” to make it a threesome in those counsels. A “trio” does not make a “trinity.”^{vi} Remember, too, it is not we who omit inclusion of the Holy Spirit in so many passages; God’s Word and the Spirit of prophecy omit it. Those two sources are inspired and trustworthy, so the evident cause of any puzzlement is our own misguided expectation or understanding of the topic.

The fact is, we have been taught to believe in a third divine Being *just like* Father and Son. After all, we are told the Holy Spirit is coequal and coeternal with Father and Son—a God in his own right. Some leaders claim He is so like Father and Son that He is interchangeable with Them.^{vii} Not only that, Adventism’s equilateral-triangle depiction of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, identical to Rome’s portrayal, conveys the same “alike-ness.”^{viii} To support these claims, one is referred to what is admitted to be *implicit* biblical support, whereas plentiful *explicit* textual evidence exists to support the understanding held in early Adventism (See the first two segments of this document.) Why should we choose the shadow when the substance is right before us? Why prefer “hints” or “suggestions” over plain statements?

It is obvious, as can readily be observed from their writings, that the Bible authors and Mrs. White obviously understood the Holy Spirit in a different way than the Trinity doctrine teaches Him to be. They neither ignored nor downplayed the Spirit, for they made abundant references to the important work of the Spirit, but there is something sufficiently different or unique about the Holy Spirit that caused the Bible writers and Ellen White not to include Him in most references wherein Father and Son are mentioned together. The Spirit was not perceived by them the same way as Father and Son were perceived. That is because they understood Him to be Father and Son in invisible omnipresence, not someone *other than* Father and Son. If Father and Son were removed somehow, no Holy Spirit would remain. Without Father and Son, there is no Holy Spirit.

“...In giving us His Spirit, God gives us Himself....” 7T 273.

Ellen White herself made a subtle distinction between the natures of Father and Son, as compared to the nature of the Spirit:

“...The Father *is all the fulness* of the Godhead bodily, and is invisible to mortal sight.... The Son *is all the fulness* of the Godhead manifested.... The Comforter ... is the Spirit *in all the fulness* of the Godhead....” SpTB07 62-3.

In those statements, the Father and Son *are* “all the fullness of the Godhead.”^{ix} The divine Spirit possesses that fullness and *brings* all that fullness to abide in us—the “very life of God.” MB 55. The Spirit is the marvelous “regenerating agency” (AA 52) through whom God grants us,

“according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might *by his Spirit* in the inner man.”

Why does He strengthen us? The verse continues:

“...That *Christ may dwell* in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be *filled with all the fullness of God.*” Eph 3:16-19.

“*All the fullness....*” Heaven withholds nothing from us. The Comforter that dwells in us is our Christ, not a god we do not know.

The common concept of “God the Holy Spirit” as someone other than Father and Son is entirely of human manufacture. Therefore, to believe in such a false concept, and to promote it, is to place human devising above divine revelation.^x The true third Person, or divine active Agent, in our redemption, is the very real omnipresence of the Spirit of God and of Christ within all believers. You have seen the biblical and Spirit of prophecy evidence for yourself. That supposed third, different “God” of the trinity doctrine is Satan’s counterfeit—a *slick and deadly spiritual substitute for the indwelling presence of our Saviour and our heavenly Father.*

This is a most serious matter; we do not know where this deception will lead, nor how deep into the pit of spiritualism it will take some of God's people. Some who have escaped the snare of spiritual formation have been taken in this trap. Please do not hesitate to forsake wrong understandings. Remember the experience of the Israelites:

"They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; *to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.*" Deut 32:16-17.

Ellen White cautioned,

"...Thousands have a **false conception of God** and His attributes. They are as verily **serv***ing a false god* as were the servants of Baal. Are we worshipping the *true God* as He is revealed in His Word, in Christ, in nature, or are we adoring some philosophical idol enshrined in His place?..." LHU 43.

How could this happen to us? Ellen White wrote,

"The truths **most plainly revealed in the Bible** have been involved in doubt and darkness by learned men [Kellogg and associates, and others in more recent times], who, with a pretense of great wisdom, teach that the Scriptures have a mystical, *a secret, spiritual meaning not apparent in the language employed.* These men are false teachers.... *If men would but take the Bible as it reads,* if there were no false teachers to mislead and confuse their minds, a work would be accomplished that would make angels glad and that would bring into the fold of Christ thousands upon thousands who are now wandering in error..." DD 38.4

"Some who are unacquainted with the Bible think that what the ministers tell them must be true. They do not, like the noble Bereans, search the Scriptures for themselves; but they accept the statements of those who have studied the word of God, not to learn the truth, but to sustain false doctrines, to justify their own theories. Many times these *false theories are a jumble of inconsistencies;* and if men would use their reason, and **take the Bible as it reads,** they would see the absurdity of their positions. *The plain 'Thus saith the Lord,' would dispel their errors,* as the mist is dispelled by the glories of the rising sun." ST, Aug 5, 1886, par. 13.

Fourth, you may ask, What difference do all these names and identities make, so long as the Holy Spirit's work in our hearts is accomplished? Well, since Satan, the "arch-deceiver," is the one who inspired Kellogg's concept of "God the Holy Spirit," according to Mrs. White, we might well ask what difference it makes to Satan. The answer might surprise you.

Lucifer had been

"given a position next to Jesus Christ in the heavenly courts" (4BC1143).

"Pride in his own glory nourished the desire for supremacy.... He gloried in his brightness and exaltation, and aspired to be equal with God.... Yet the Son of God was the acknowledged Sovereign of heaven, one in power and authority with the Father. In all the councils of God, Christ was a participant, while Lucifer was not permitted thus to enter into the divine purposes. 'Why,' questioned this mighty angel, 'should Christ have the supremacy? Why is He thus honored above Lucifer?'" GC 495.

Though a created being, Lucifer saw himself as equal with the Son of God and thus deserving of inclusion in the counsels of God the Father. Thus

"...when God said to His Son, 'Let us make man in our image,' Satan was jealous of Jesus. He wished to be consulted concerning the formation of man, and because he was not, he was filled with envy, jealousy, and hatred. He desired to receive the highest honors in heaven next to God" (EW 145),

but no third being was qualified to enter into those counsels. *There would be no "trinity" in heaven, but....*

In these last days, Satan has found a way to mock and override God, and to get the worship and honor he so desires. In his masterpiece of deception, he has devised a way to insert himself into those counsels as a third equal—at least in men's minds. Trinitarianism presents the Holy Spirit as someone distinct from Father and Son—a third, equal, and different God—someone other than the literal,

omnipresent, personal presence of Father and Son. In Satan's false representation of who the Holy Spirit is, he has actually, finally, achieved the appearance of a "divine threesome." He has set himself up as that false "third god" of the Trinity, and draws worship to himself as a supposedly coequal, coeternal, but different god called the Holy Spirit, worthy of worship. Ellen White's specific teaching that "the Father and the Son *alone* are to be exalted" (SD 58) has been made of "none effect." Satan thus distorts the gospel and diminishes both Father and Son—lessening their supremacy (each a third of who "God" is) and obscuring their true identities in order to "get his share" of worship. He actually competes for worship. Where will that worship lead? We don't know, but Ellen White "trembled for our people." 1SM 203.

This perspective is not ours only. Here is a stunning exposé from the pen of Ellen White as to what has occurred:

"...Possessing supremacy in guilt, he claims supremacy for himself, and exercises over his subjects the power of royalty. He [Satan] cannot expel God from his throne, but through the system of idolatry, he plants his own throne between the heaven and the earth, between God and the human worshiper. *He intercepts every ray of light that comes from God to man, and appropriates the worship that is due to God.*

"Satan has wrought with deceiving power, bringing in a multiplicity of errors that obscure the truth. Error cannot stand alone, and would soon become extinct if it did not fasten itself like a parasite upon the tree of truth. Error draws its life from the truth of God. The traditions of men, like floating germs, attach themselves to the truth of God, and men regard them as a part of the truth. Through false doctrines, Satan gains a foothold, and captivates the minds of men, causing them to hold *theories that have no foundation in truth*. Men boldly teach for doctrines the commandments of men; and as *traditions* pass on from age to age, they acquire a power over the human mind. But age does not make error truth, neither does its burdensome weight cause the plant of truth to become a parasite. The tree of truth bears its own genuine fruit, showing its true origin and nature. The parasite of error also bears its own fruit, and makes manifest that its character is diverse from the plant of heavenly origin." RH, October 22, 1895, par. 2-3.

Fifth, the Scripture verses quoted earlier in this study show the apostolic understanding of the Holy Spirit as the invisible presence and power of Christ and the Father. The writings of Ellen White show the same view was held in early Adventism and, in fact, up through the 1940s. However, after the death of Ellen White, a new understanding was gradually established in our church. It has happened as she predicted:

"...The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error. A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced..." 1SM 204.

Early protesters against the doctrinal changes about the Godhead eventually died off, so that today, the Holy Spirit is now officially viewed as not the Spirit of Father and Son, but as an entirely different divine being—that third God who is said to be fully equal to and interchangeable with Father and Son. *Eight years* after Ellen White penned *Desire of Ages*, she wrote of the early Adventist understanding,

"I do not wish to ignore or drop one link in the chain of evidence that was formed as, after the passing of the time in 1844, little companies of seekers after truth met together to study the Bible and to ask God for light and guidance.... The truth, point by point, was fastened in our minds so firmly that we could not doubt.... The evidence given in our early experience has the same force that it had then. 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.*" Letter 38, 1906, 1-2.^{xi}

Those sentences of hers—and others like them—do not support the claim that she changed from non-Trinitarian to Trinitarian views.

If one considers the Scriptures and writings of Ellen White as inspired, then it is evident that the teaching that the Holy Spirit is *someone other* than the Father and Son leads us away from truth, directly into the enemy's camp. Ellen White warned,

"We need to study the simplicity of Christ's teachings...[i.e., "take the Bible as it reads" GC 599]." He [Christ] urges the need of prayer and humility. These are our safeguards against the erroneous reasoning by which Satan seeks to lead us to *turn aside to other gods*, and to accept *misleading theories*, clothed by him in garments of light." MS 132, Nov 8, 1903.

"...Those who diligently search the Scriptures will not accept *Satan's delusions* as the truth of God. No one need be overcome by the *speculations* presented by the enemy of God and Christ." ST Aug 8, 1905.

"The truths given us after the passing of the time in 1844 are just as *certain and unchangeable* as when the **Lord gave** them to us in answer to our urgent prayers. **The visions that the Lord has given me are so remarkable that we know that what we have accepted is the truth. This was demonstrated by the Holy Spirit.** Light, precious light from God, established the main points of our faith *as we hold them today*. Letter 50, **1906**, 1-2.

We know that every new truth, if indeed true, is consistent with previously revealed truth. Concerning the doctrinal change of the Holy Spirit from a spiritual manifestation of the personal presence of Father and Son to an entirely different being—someone other than Father and Son—we must ask, then: Has God erred or changed His mind, to give us, through His Spirit, a new and *very different* understanding of the identity of the Holy Spirit than He gave to the apostles and to the early Adventists into the 1940s? Or is the Spirit's gift of prophecy unreliable, so that what was revealed to Ellen White is no longer valid? Or did the apostles and Ellen White completely misunderstand what the Spirit revealed to them, and therefore, are their writings untrustworthy? You can see for yourself where this new concept of the Holy Spirit leads us.^{xii}

At this point we will address the claim that all, or almost all, of the pioneers—or variously even just Ellen White or James White—became Trinitarian by the end of their lives. This claim is untrue and can easily be disproved. Because that topic diverges from the Holy Spirit focus of this document, we refer the reader to a quick resource: *A Study of the Godhead As It Pertains to Seventh-day Adventism*.^{xiii} Chapters 13 and 14 are full of quotations about the beliefs of early SDAs concerning Christ, and Ellen White's published endorsements of those beliefs. Chapter 17 contains published quotations on the continuing belief of SDAs in the 1940s and onward in the Sonship of Christ. Chapters 23 and 24 prove through Ellen White's own writings that she could not have been a Trinitarian due to her inspired statements concerning the risk Father and Son took, and also because she wrote that a divine person died at Calvary. The eternal risk taken by Jesus and the Father^{xiv} and Jesus' death on the cross are facts are not compatible with the beliefs of Trinitarians, who hold that the three members of the triune God are indivisible and inseparable. That is a key concept in Trinitarianism, for it is how they reason in order to combine three Gods into one God. Therefore, in Trinitarian thinking, there was no possibility of one member of the indivisible triune Godhead being separated from the other two at the cross, or anywhere else. One wonders, then: Had the one God (Jesus) sinned, would He have been destroyed, would all have been destroyed (if so, by whom?), or would sin have been immortalized? If the first, what would happen to a triune God if one of the trinity were lost? Further, the Trinitarian mindset cannot account for how the Son of God could die and be separated from the other two members of the Godhead, but the Bible and Spirit of prophecy are plain that "Christ died for us"—literally, not metaphorically (Rom 5:6, 8; 14:15; 1 Cor 8:11, 15:3).^{xv} We urge the reader to "search the Scriptures" to see the abundant evidence concerning the true identities of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Sixth, if we understand and teach that the Holy Spirit is different from God the Father and His divine Son—a different God, in fact, fully equal (coequal) with them—then it can be taught, and *is taught*, that we may pray to **and worship** this concept of "God" called "God the Holy Spirit." This means we no longer need to pray only to the Father through the Son, since all three are equally and therefore interchangeably God.^{xvi}

If we pray to the false “God the Holy Spirit” for our spiritual and temporal needs, prayer being a form of worship, we are in conflict with the Spirit of prophecy, which states unequivocally,

“The Father and Son alone are to be exalted.” SD 58.

We also conflict with God’s Word that

“neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12.

“Jesus saith unto him, *I am the way*, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but *by me*.” John 14:6.

“I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved....” John 10:9.

“...That whosoever believeth in *him* [Jesus] should not perish, but have life eternal.” John 3:16.

Jesus is the “way,” the “door” to the “great Source,” the “great Giver.” DA 21.

Shall we become confused about worship this late in the great controversy? Shall we be led to take our eyes off Jesus, to seek blessings and gifts—and salvation—from a counterfeit god, as do the Charismatics and Pentecostals?

“The time has come when we must firmly refuse to be drawn away from the platform of eternal truth, which since 1844 has stood the test.” Letter 277, 1904, 6.

Let us “...stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.” Phil 1:27

Seventh, Paul, “beseeching” us, wrote

“there is one body, and one Spirit....”

Obviously, there can be only one biblical view of that Spirit; the other is error. The current dichotomy between past and present Adventist theology as to who the Holy Spirit is makes “endeavoring to keep the *unity of the Spirit* in the bond of peace” impossible. It forces a separation within our ranks; we are no longer “one body,” but two, under the general name of Seventh-day Adventist. Error always divides; true doctrine unites. How can we “come into the unity of the faith” (Eph 4:1, 3-4, 13) when we clearly are not united on this matter? How can God safely entrust the power of the latter rain upon a divided people? This is no small matter, given the perspective of the other points in this study. God must “shake”—and is shaking—His people, in preparation for that outpouring. Ellen White wrote,

“God will arouse His people; *if other means fail, heresies will come* in among them, *which will sift them*, separating the chaff from the wheat. The Lord calls upon all who believe His word to awake out of sleep. Precious light has come, appropriate for this time. It is Bible truth, showing the perils that are right upon us. This light should lead us to a diligent study of the Scriptures, and *a most critical examination of the positions which we hold*.”

The present anti-Trinitarian movement within Adventism is not heresy; this heresy occurred when our church stepped away from the biblical, non-Trinitarian understandings held in earlier years of our denomination.

“God would have *all the bearings and positions of truth thoroughly and perseveringly searched, with prayer and fasting*. Believers are not to rest in suppositions and ill-defined ideas of what constitutes truth. Their faith must be firmly founded upon the word of God, so that when the testing time shall come, and they are brought before councils to answer for their faith, they may be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear.

“Agitate, agitate, agitate! The subjects which we present to the world must be to us a living reality. It is important that in defending the doctrines which we consider fundamental articles of faith, we should never allow ourselves to employ arguments that are not wholly sound. These may avail to silence an opposer, but they do not honor the truth. We should present sound arguments, that will not only silence our opponents, but will bear the closest and most searching scrutiny....” CW 40.1-3

Eighth, Jesus Himself said that He is the promised Comforter. John 14:16-23. He would come in “another” form (Gr: *allos*) than His physical presence. If we accept that the “another Comforter” that was sent from heaven after Jesus’ ascension is someone other than Jesus, it means we believe that

Jesus is not our Comforter—which denies the testimony of both the Bible and Spirit of prophecy that you read earlier. It means Satan has succeeded in his effort to

“shut Jesus from their view as the Comforter.” *Reflecting Christ*, 21.3.

And this means that whenever anyone prays to “God the Holy Spirit”—***Satan’s counterfeit of the true Holy Spirit***—it is Satan who receives and answers those prayers, just as he does the prayers of those who continue to pray to the empty throne in the Holy Place:

“I turned to look at the company who were still bowed before the throne; they did not know that Jesus had left it. Satan appeared to be by the throne, trying to carry on the work of God. I saw them look up to the throne, and pray, ‘Father, give us Thy Spirit.’ Satan would then breathe upon them an unholy influence; in it there was light and *much power*, but no sweet love, joy, and peace. Satan’s object was to *keep them deceived* and to draw back and *deceive* God’s children.” EW 56.

Were they lost because they were deceived? Were they responsible for the light they had not sought? Or for the light they had rejected?

Do the deceived ones receive “much power” from Satan to spread his error and influence? Absolutely. *Satan hates Jesus and wants worship for himself*. He steals worship away from Jesus; he has indeed

“shut Jesus from their view as the Comforter” (RC 21.3)

by devising a pleasing counterfeit. Churches departing from God’s Word have accepted his counterfeit holy-spirit third “God” that receives prayer and worship, and Satan ensures continued worship of his counterfeit spirit by means of the exciting “gifts” he bestows upon deluded believers: speaking in unintelligible tongues, “holy” laughter, being “slain in the Spirit,” dancing in the pews and aisles, and other “ecstatic” experiences such as answers to contemplative prayer, miraculous healings, and more. When the false spirit thus manifests, the deceived believe it is evidence of their acceptance with God and, as a result, they have little concern for sanctified lives. Is that not a fatal deception? (Satan also works to “...**obscure, that Christ was the only begotten Son of God**...” (TDG 128.2), but that is a subject for another study.)

In the acceptance within Christian denominations, including our own, of a false holy spirit, has Satan achieved his desire? Regretfully, it certainly appears so, as we read of his intentions in the words inspired by the true Holy Spirit:

“Sin originated with him [Satan] who, next to Christ, had been most honored of God and was highest in power and glory among the inhabitants of heaven.... Though all his glory was from God, this mighty angel came to regard it as pertaining to himself. Not content with his position, though honored above the heavenly host, he ventured to *covet homage* due alone to the Creator. Instead of seeking to make God supreme in the affections and allegiance of all created beings, it was his endeavor to *secure their service and loyalty to himself*. And coveting the glory with which the infinite Father had invested His Son, this prince of angels *aspired to power* that was the prerogative of Christ alone....” CTr 9.3.

Ninth, we submit just a portion of one sample testimony of the effect of the teaching that the Holy Spirit is someone other than God and Christ. Edward Edstrom was an SDA conference worker in Central Africa. His job was to assist pastors and teachers in their front-line labors. A few decades ago, he wrote,

“Our pastors and teachers were very distressed. Islam ... was spreading faster than Christianity! The disciples of the Prophet of ‘No God but Allah,’ the promoters of belief in only one God, were ‘winning’ against the missionaries of what really appeared to be three separate, distinct Gods that were being ‘called’ One! My men needed help! ... How was a *committee of three*, though eternal, though in complete agreement, though described as one, really one! ...In what way can *three individual, personal entities* honestly be one?

“...I, the one who should help, didn’t know the answers. For thousands of Africans in ‘my’ territories, eternal life was at stake! ...I set out for a solution. I saw also that, should I find one, I would then have a better way to bring Jesus, the ‘only mediator between God and man’ (1 Tim 2:5), to all the people of the world, especially to the Arabic and Hebrew thinkers who have

misunderstood **true** Christianity's teaching about the oneness of God, having for centuries recognized the same problem with which I had just been so clearly faced...."

"...Satan has led the 'Christian' world to profess belief in the only One who can give strength, guidance, and real ability to honor His laws. But along with the profession of their acceptance, Satan leads them to deny the claims of the laws Jesus came to uphold, especially the day which He taught was planned for man. They [the Christians] added to the confusion by seeming to worship three gods! The result is that, rather than attracting the Jewish world to Jesus, these '**Christians' repel the people they try to win.** The deception will be complete when Satan himself, as a *visible, complete person*, will come as our Lord to deny 'true' truth and settle men in error for their final destruction. In preparing for this final act of the drama, **Satan has made it seem necessary to look apart from Jesus, in another direction, for the Holy Spirit.** As they look to this *other being*, they are captured by the spirits of fallen angels. *By the power of these spirits*, men will do many marvelous 'miracles,' many 'god-like' deeds, preach many 'love' sermons, reveal much 'light!' Because they have neglected the study of God's Word in depth, Satan interposes himself between their souls and the Saviour—they are caught in the trap of *Genuine Spiritualism*!^{xvii}

Reader, we have no way of knowing how Satan will utilize this false conception of the Holy Spirit in the future. We do know at present that those in Pentecostal and Charismatic congregations pray for and receive a spirit that causes the desired "ecstatic" emotions or behaviors. They believe they have invited the Holy Spirit of Scripture—to their thinking, a divine being other than the Spirit of God and of Christ. But there is no such being; there is only a demonic counterfeit. The fatal deception is that when they experience what they think is the spirit's blessing and approval of them, yet continue to transgress God's commandments and partake largely of the world's values and activities, they will be lost. We are all judged by that "law of liberty." James 2:12.

Tenth, some would ask, "Don't Jesus' words to the apostles in the 'baptismal formula' of Matthew 28:19 indicate a triune God—a Trinity?" If that is so, then why, after having been so instructed, did the apostles baptize only in Jesus' name? Acts 2:37, 8:12; Rom 6:3; 1 Cor 1:13; Gal 3:27, etc. Were they disobedient? No. They understood correctly what Jesus meant. The "name" means the "authority" (John 5:43), and those who are baptized submit to the authority of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Father gave Jesus all authority. Jesus said,

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Mat 28:18.

He has the authority of His Father, of His own divine Self, and of His Spirit. Thus being baptized "in the name of" those three Persons of the Godhead is the same as being baptized in the name of Jesus, which encompasses all three. And indeed, Jesus' words, acted upon by His disciples, actually *disprove* the Trinity doctrine.

What few Trinitarians realize is that the Trinity doctrine actually denies the existence of a heavenly Father and His holy Son, teaching instead that those terms are merely figures or metaphors. It is taught that, being coeternal, "Father" and "Son" have no real Father-Son relationship. They have merely "assumed" those "roles" for the duration of the plan of salvation.

"...One of the divine Beings accepted and entered into the role of the Father, another the role of the Son...." *Adventist Review*, October 31, 1996, p. 12.

"The Father-Son relationship should be understood in a metaphorical sense, not in a literal sense." Max Hatton, *Understanding the Trinity*, p. 97.

Not only do those advocating women's ordination promote a new way to interpret the Bible, via a new hermeneutic, but so do Trinitarians. Whidden, Moon and Reeve, Andrews University professors and authors of *The Trinity* (2002), wrote on page 94,

"Another important consideration involved how we interpret the Bible. Here the issue pertains to whether we should interpret some passages literally or whether we may treat them more figuratively. While we often refer to Jesus as the son and frequently call the first person of the Godhead the Father, *do we really want to take such expressions in a totally literal way? Or*

would it be more appropriate to interpret them in a more metaphorical way that draws on selective aspects of sonship and fatherhood?" (Emphasis added.)

In answer,

"Yes, we *do indeed* want to take such expressions literally."

And

"No, we do not think it would be 'more appropriate' to interpret such passages metaphorically."

First, we have the direct counsel of the Holy Spirit through Ellen White that we are to

"take the Bible as it reads." GC88 599; 4SP 417; RH 6/28/06.

She also wrote,

"...To those who hear, the gospel is made the power of God unto salvation. *Present the gospel in its simplicity....*" CT 255.

"...Even the great men are more easily drawn by the *simplicity of the gospel* than by any effort made in human power." Ev 557.

"...In His teaching He [Jesus] used the *simplest terms and the plainest symbols.*" MH 443.

Shall we now confound and complicate the Scriptures, by interpreting "selective aspects" of the Father and Son to be mere metaphors? Who decides which passages need to be interpreted by the new hermeneutic? What do we say to those self-sacrificing people in anti-Christian countries who risk imprisonment and torture, or death, in their dedication to get Bibles to people who have waited years for the Word of God? Shall we tell them they risk their lives for a lovely, instructive metaphor, but there really isn't a Father and Son? What do we tell those remote villagers who had only one Bible in the entire village, so they carefully divided it into thirty parts and shared it among themselves? Shall we tell them that they needn't hope to meet the Father and Son they've come to love and trust? That they'll meet the unknown Gods who acted out those roles?

And are we to interpret Jesus' simple parables metaphorically, as well? So many of Jesus' teachings plainly indicate a true Father-Son relationship. The parable of the leased vineyard in Luke 20:9-15, for example: The lord of the vineyard, learning that the leaseholders had attacked servants sent earlier to collect their master's due, at last sent his son, saying, "...It may be they will reverence" my son. But they killed the son who had come in his father's name.

Unless we are prepared to deny the authenticity and authority of the Spirit of prophecy through Ellen White, we have no reason to doubt Ellen White's words:

"...In the parable the householder represented God, the vineyard the Jewish nation, and the hedge the divine law which was their protection. The tower was a symbol of the temple. The lord of the vineyard had done everything needful for its prosperity.... Messenger after messenger had been slain. Thus far *the application of the parable could not be questioned, and in what followed it was not less evident.* In the beloved son whom the lord of the vineyard finally sent to his disobedient servants, and whom they seized and slew, the priests and rulers saw a distinct picture of Jesus and His impending fate. Already they were planning to slay Him whom the Father had sent to them as a last appeal. In the retribution inflicted upon the ungrateful husbandmen was portrayed the doom of those who should put Christ to death." DA 596.3

We also have the example of Abraham and Isaac. The sacrifice demanded of Abraham by God the Father reveals the extent of the love of the God of the universe for fallen mankind.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son;"

"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given."

Ellen White wrote so distinctly that one cannot reasonably deny a true heavenly Father and His beloved Son:

"The offering of Isaac was designed by God to prefigure the sacrifice of His Son. Isaac was a figure of the Son of God, who was offered a sacrifice for the sins of the world. God desired to impress upon Abraham the gospel of salvation of men.... He was made to understand in his own experience how great was the self-denial of the infinite God in giving His Son to rescue man from ruin." TMK 20.2.

There is also considerable evidence that words have been added to Matthew 28:19. See *Theos: Search for the One True God*, part 5, at www.theos.institute.

It is a most serious thing to refuse God's instruction. Jesus' commission to His apostles was this:

"...Go ye into all the world, and *preach the gospel* to every creature...." Mark 16:15.

What is "the gospel" that Jesus wanted them to preach? What is the believer to believe before he can be baptized?

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

This plainly teaches us of a selfless Father and the Son He sent to this world, to become one of us.

Mark 16:16 finishes Jesus' thought:

"...*He that believeth* and is baptized shall be saved; but *he that believeth not* shall be damned."

So does John 3:18:

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

The Trinity doctrine denies both Father and Son, relegating that relationship to temporary metaphorical, role-playing status. He that hath an ear, please hear the truth of this matter. It is a serious thing to question the "name" or authority of the Son of God.

How does this all relate to our study on the Holy Spirit? Simply this: If the Trinity doctrine is misleading about the relationship between Father and Son, is it not likely that it also presents an erroneous view of the Holy Spirit?

"...**He is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son.**" 1 John 2:22.

Can Antichrist be trusted to present the Holy Spirit accurately to us? You know the answer.

Eleventh: In 1935, a concerned H. W. Carr wrote to W. C. White, asking what Ellen White's views had been on the Holy Spirit. W. C. White's response reveals that

"the trinity doctrine was not yet established within Seventh-day Adventism. His response is also proof that even though Ellen White had said that the Holy Spirit was a person, not everyone understood that term to mean He was a person like God and Christ were persons. Not even her own son believed that, nor did he believe his mother believed that the Holy Spirit was a personal being like God and Christ."^{xviii}

Carr explained his concern:

"It is urged by some of our leaders now that The Holy Spirit is a third person of the same nature of the Father and Son, a member of the heavenly trio, cooperative in creation and personally active with the Father and Son."

Carr had compared the view generally held and taught within the denomination, and recognized this new view "now" from leadership as quite a change. The several paragraphs that follow now are taken from Terry Hill's document endnoted just above:

White replied to Carr, saying, "...You requested me to tell you what I understand to be my mother's position in reference to the personality of the Holy Spirit. This I cannot do, because I never clearly understood her teachings on the matter.... There always was in my mind some perplexity regarding the meaning of her utterances, which to my superficial manner of thinking, seemed to be somewhat confusing. I have often regretted that I did not possess that keenness of mind that could solve this and other perplexities. And then remembering what Sister White wrote in "Acts of the Apostles," pages 51 and 52, "regarding such mysteries which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden." I thought best to refrain from discussion and have endeavored to direct my mind to matters easy to understand." (W. C. White to H. W. Carr, letter, April 30, 1935)

Now let's reason this through. W. C. White was Ellen White's third son. He had managed his mother's writings, and was still doing so in 1935 when Carr wrote his letter. In fact, he is partly responsible for the indexing of her writings. Certainly he was not ignorant of her views. Can you imagine how many times over the years he had heard his mother preach, and also the number of Bible studies that he had attended with her? Can you imagine also the number of

private discussions that he had with his mother about matters of a spiritual nature—probably even concerning the Holy Spirit? These are obviously inestimable.

I believe it is reasonably obvious that if Ellen White had regarded the Holy Spirit as simply a person like God and Christ are persons—which is the belief taught today within Seventh-day Adventism—then Willie White would not only have known about it, but he would also have understood this quite easily. After all, many Seventh-day Adventists today believe it without a problem. Certainly it would not have been beyond W. C. White’s capabilities to fathom it, yet here he says that he could not quite get to grips with what his mother believed. This is absolute proof that he did not believe that his mother regarded the Holy Spirit as simply another divine being like God and Christ. It also tells us that it was not his belief, either. He obviously viewed what she believed as a much more complex matter—even too complex for him.

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

Whilst Ellen White was alive, this was the standard belief of Seventh-day Adventists. It was that whilst the Holy Spirit was regarded as a personality, He was not thought of possessing “individuality” exactly like the Father and the Son. In other words, His nature was different from the Father and the Son. To Seventh-day Adventists, the Holy Spirit was both God and Christ omnipresent—not another “being” of the same nature as them. This is the same as was said by Butler to Kellogg (see chapter 21)....

[W. C. White continued:] “The statements and the arguments of some of our ministers in their effort to prove that the Holy Spirit is an individual as are God the Father and Christ, the eternal Son, have perplexed me and sometimes they have made me sad.” (Ibid)

Now what is this telling us? It is telling us that in 1935, there were those of the Seventh-day Adventist ministry who were trying to introduce a trinitarian concept of the Holy Spirit into Seventh-day Adventism—also that it was saddening Ellen White’s son. Obviously, by then (1935), it was not generally believed that the Holy Spirit is a person like God and Christ. It is also emphatic proof that W. C. White believed that his mother did not regard the Holy Spirit as a person as God and Christ are persons—else why make this statement?

...This today is the way that many Seventh-day Adventists regard the Holy Spirit. They see Him as an individual person like the Father and the Son who is here on earth, directing God’s will in the affairs of men. Again, it can only be said that if Ellen White had believed that the Holy Spirit was simply another person like God and Christ, then W. C. White would have had no problem in understanding it, but as it was, he said he could not quite understand what she did believe. To read these letters between W. C. White and Carr please see here:

<http://theprophetstillspeaks.co.uk/SB-Othersarticles.htm>. [End of Terry Hill document.]

Twelfth, last, and just as important, some say, “Well, I believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, all coequal and coeternal, but I don’t pray to the Holy Spirit.” And there they leave the matter, unconcerned to hear what the Scriptures say on this topic since they feel their belief has not led them to do anything wrong. That, too, is a deception, for at least three reasons. First, there is the matter of *other souls*. Many have fallen for Satan’s impersonation of the Holy Spirit, and are very vulnerable to spiritualistic impressions; they often neglect obedience. Ellen White wrote,

“Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is always dangerous. The enemy has great power over minds that are not thoroughly fortified by prayer and established in Bible truth.” CW 46.2.

Shall we not learn what is truth, to share with them, to pull them out of the pit into which they’ve stumbled?

The second reason is this: This issue about the identity of the Holy Spirit is only one part of Satan's deception. The identities of Father and Son, and their relationship to each other, has had to be changed in order for there to be a coequal, coeternal "third God." Relevant parts of the Bible have had to be reinterpreted with a new hermeneutic in order to accomplish that. Ellen White wrote,

"Again and again we shall be called to meet the influence of men who are studying sciences of satanic origin, through which Satan is working to make a *nonentity of God and of Christ*." 9T 68.1.

"...Satan is not ignorant of the result of trying to define God and Jesus Christ in a spiritualistic [USED HERE IN REFERENCE TO A SYSTEM OF INTERPRETATION, NOT SPIRITISM POPULARLY CALLED SPIRITUALISM.] way that sets *God and Christ as a nonentity*. The moments occupied in this kind of science are, in the place of preparing the way of the Lord, making a way for Satan to come in and confuse the minds with mysticisms of his own devising. Although they are dressed up in angel robes, they have made *our God and our Christ a nonentity*. Why?—because Satan sees the minds are all fitted for his working. Men have lost track of Christ and the Lord God, and have been obtaining an experience that is Omega to one of the most subtle delusions that will ever captivate the minds of men. We are forbidden to ... set the imagination in a train of conjecture." Diary, #48, pp. 153, 163, Aug. 25, 28, 1904. (Capitals as written in 11MR 211; underlining ours.)

Is it not conjecture—outright speculation—to redefine who God, Christ and the Holy Spirit are, to suggest that the Bible cannot be read literally, to teach that the supreme God is not the Father, the "only true God," but a combination of three? What can be said of these changes in our doctrines that have made us ecumenically in harmony with Babylon?

Finally, Adventist beliefs were established in the mid-1840s, when the Spirit of God was manifested in a very marked manner to aid the early believers as they searched perseveringly to know what to believe on different topics. The Spirit of prophecy was thus given unmistakably to the remnant church—and now, some have been led to view some of those established beliefs as error. We have not room here to write even a portion of what pioneer authors had to say about the Trinity. One quote must suffice, that of Loughborough, who reduced his many objections to the trinity to three primary ones:

"1. It is contrary to common sense. 2. It is contrary to scripture. 3. Its origin is Pagan and fabulous." November 5, 1861, UrSe, ARSH 184.3.

We must know *individually for ourselves* what is truth, for we do not want to shame our Lord with our disloyalty or ignorance, nor lose an opportunity to present truth to listeners.

"Every position of truth taken by our people will bear the criticism of the greatest minds; the highest of the world's great men will be brought in contact with truth, and therefore *every position we take should be critically examined and tested by the Scriptures*. Now we seem to be unnoticed, but this will not always be. Movements are at work to bring us to the front, and *if our theories of truth can be picked to pieces* by historians or the world's greatest men, *it will be done*." *Maranatha* 252.

Surely the concept of a third, different God does not stand the test of Scripture. You have seen the Bible verses, read about Kellogg's *alpha* beliefs, reviewed the warnings of the Spirit of prophecy, and read the reasoning for yourself.

"...The Word of God must be recognized and obeyed as an authority above that of all human legislation. 'Thus saith the Lord' is not to be set aside for a 'Thus saith the church or the state....'" AA 69.

What do we do with this information? The Holy Spirit through Ellen White tells us,

"For years the voice of God has been saying to us, 'Agitate, agitate, agitate.' Study every point of truth, that you may know for yourselves what is truth in distinction from error. Let students search for themselves, that they may know the deep things of God. Let this work be done in the Spirit of Christ. **Put no restriction** upon the students." CSW 36.2

Let us prepare ourselves now to present the matter in truth and light and love—in the Spirit of Christ. And let us also understand that none of us has all the light on a given topic, nor shall we ever be able to say there is no more light to be received regarding it. We will be learning more throughout eternity. For a fuller presentation of the true and counterfeit Holy Spirit, as well as of the true and counterfeit Son of God and the true and false concept of God the Father (Satan has not spared anything), go to the very helpful website www.theos.institute. Under the “Godhead” tab, find the downloadable power point “Godhead Presentation.” Do not let the length deter you; you may learn in six hours what otherwise might take you six weeks or six months. The Bible and Spirit of prophecy information is amazing and conclusive. Many quotations will be new to you.

The website www.theprophetstillspeaks.co.uk includes Terry Hill’s excellent, downloadable, comprehensive study of the Godhead-Trinity issues (*The Godhead as it Pertains to Seventh-day Adventism*), among other valuable biblical and Spirit of prophecy studies.

On YouTube or at www.revelation1412.org, the video titled “Who or What is the Holy Spirit: New Gods” begins simply, but soon reveals serious implications regarding the counterfeit Holy Spirit. Two more among many to view are “Biblical 9-11” and “Response to Trinity Presentation” at an Adventist Church. On that website one can also find explanations of Bible verses that may seem to indicate a trinity, but with a closer look, do not. Two good resources to that end (among many excellent resources) are the booklet *The Godhead: Studies on the Father, Son and Holy Spirit* by Imad Awde and *Common Bible Questions and Answers on the Godhead*, compiled by Nader Mansour and Imad Awde.

What believers in the past could not know, has now been “made manifest to his saints.” It is to us, post-cross, that

“God would make known ... the *riches* of the *glory* of this mystery” which is “**Christ in you, the hope of glory.**” Col 1:26-7.

We do not understand *how* this can be, beyond the fact that Christ dwells in us by His Holy Spirit. God nevertheless wants us to fully appreciate the infinite, transformative “*riches of the glory*” of this understanding. Can we appreciate what is being done for us?

“...When God’s people take the position that they are the temple of the Holy Ghost, *Christ Himself abiding within*, they will so clearly reveal Him in spirit, words, and actions, that there will be an unmistakable distinction between them and Satan’s followers...” 3SM 211

ⁱ “The reason why the churches are weak and sickly and ready to die is that the enemy has brought influences of a discouraging nature to bear upon trembling souls. He has sought to **shut Jesus from their view as the Comforter**, as one who reproveth, who warns, who admonishes them, saying, ‘This is the way, walk ye in it.’ Christ has all power in heaven and in earth, and He can strengthen the wavering, and set right the erring. He can inspire with confidence, with hope in God; and confidence in God always results in creating confidence in one another.” *Reflecting Christ*, 21.3.

ⁱⁱ Kellogg saw the “he” in John 14:16-18, for example, but ignored the “I” in Jesus’ “I will come to you.”

ⁱⁱⁱ Sinless angels work closely in conjunction with the Holy Spirit, but they are created beings, not Deity.

^{iv} For a fuller discussion of this topic, watch the video *The Alpha and Omega of Deadly Heresy* by Nader Mansour, found either on YouTube or at www.revelation1412.org.

^v The Holy Spirit was present on earth during Christ’s incarnation. For example, “...Their hearts open to Him [Jesus as He speaks], and, as they listen, the Holy Spirit unfolds to them something of the meaning of that lesson which humanity in all ages so needs to learn.” MB 6.1. “He [Nicodemus] began to see the kingdom of heaven as he submitted himself to the leading of the Holy Spirit.” DA 175.

In fact, the Holy Spirit—the Spirit of God and of Christ—has been with mankind since the Fall: “...Ever since the fall of Adam, Christ had been committing the seed of the word to His chosen servants, to be sown in human hearts. And an unseen agency, even an omnipotent power [the omnipresent Spirit of Christ], had worked silently but effectually to

produce the harvest....” DA 192. “From the beginning, God has been working by His Holy Spirit through human instrumentalities for the accomplishment of His purpose in behalf of the fallen race.” AG 182.2.

The Son of man had the Spirit of God dwelling in Him: “...Christ’s humanity was united with divinity. He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.” DA 123.

^{vi}Just as “trio” does not equate to “trinity” in this theological context, the terms “Godhead” and “Trinity” are not synonymous, either. “Trinity” implies much more than the simple belief in three divine Persons of the Godhead working for our salvation. For that reason, “Godhead” and “Trinity” should not be used interchangeably.

^{vii}See J. R. Spangler, RH Oct. 21, 1971, found in Terry Hill, *A Study of the Godhead as it Pertains to Seventh-day Adventism*, p. 208—an online publication found at www.theprophetstillspeaks.co.uk, p. 211-212. See also Whidden, Moon and Reeve, *The Trinity* (Review and Herald, 2002), p. 273. Those three authors, Andrews Univ. professors at the time of writing, state that the biblical passages concerning the relationship of Father and Son should be interpreted “figuratively” or “metaphorically,” rather than literally. That is because Father and Son cannot be true Father and Son if Jesus, like the Father, is without beginning, as they claim. They further explain that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are “roles” being played by the three unnamed Persons of the Godhead. Each One “chose” a role, or had a role chosen for Him. For example, “Jesus was chosen” for the role of Son of God. (p. 248-9) See also pp. 243.4-244.1-2; 274.5; 277.2. This interpretation far exceeds the revelation of Scripture.

^{viii}*New Pictorial Aid for Bible Study* (Signs Publishing: Warburton, Victoria, Australia, 1987), p. 74.

^{ix}The word *Godhead* in Webster’s 1828 dictionary was defined as (1) “Godship; deity; divinity; divine nature or essence; applied to the true God, and to heathen deities. (2) A deity in person; a god or goddess.” A 1989 unabridged dictionary defines it as (1) “the essential being of God; the Supreme Being. (2) godhood or godship. (3) *rare*, a deity; god or goddess.” A current online dictionary defines it thus: “ ‘Godhead’ is from two Greek words *theos* and *deitas* combined in Gr. *theioteôs*. The scriptural term Godhead (KJV) is rendered ‘divine nature’ or ‘deity’....” *Godship, Godhood, or Godhead*, then, is the state of being God, i.e., deity or divinity. Ellen White’s phrase “third person of the Godhead” essentially means “third Being who is divine, who is deity.” To read into it more than that is to mislead oneself or others. It is not a group or family name for three divine Beings, nor does it imply equality among those three. Divinity or deity is their state, their nature or essence, but to go beyond that is to exceed the definition. There are other holy spirits, as well, but they are not divine. Unfallen, hence holy, angels are “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.” Heb 1:14.

^xWrong doctrines cause division and disunity. Unity and harmony are restored either by getting rid of the wrong doctrines, or getting rid of those who oppose the wrong doctrines. The latter was the experience of Elijah, Jesus, the Waldenses, Martin Luther and William Tyndale and other Reformers, and the Millerites. The method of restoration reveals which spirit is actuating it.

^{xi}George Knight wrote in *Ministry* magazine, Oct. 1993, p. 10, that “most of the founders of Seventh-day Adventism would not be able to join the church today if they had to subscribe to the denomination’s Fundamental Beliefs. More specifically, most would not be able to agree to belief Number 2, which deals with the doctrine of the Trinity.” Truths that Ellen White wrote were “certain and unchangeable” and “demonstrated [confirmed, established] by the [true] Holy Spirit” have been set at nought, in favor of a new interpretation based on a new hermeneutic that denies the reality of God the Father and the Son of God, and sets up a new concept of the Holy Spirit as another God to be worshiped.

^{xii}“Our brethren should be willing to investigate in a candid way every point of controversy. We should all know what is being taught among us; for if it is truth, we need it. We are all under obligation to God to know what He sends us.” GW 300-301.

^{xiii}Terry Hill, *A Study of the Godhead as it Pertains to Seventh-day Adventism*, www.theprophetstillspeaks.co.uk.

^{xiv}Christ submitted Himself to the temptations of Satan “at the risk of failure and eternal loss” (DA 49); He *could have sinned*; He had free choice, just as we do. “Heaven itself was imperiled” (COL 196).

^{xv}We know the SOP quote, “When Christ was crucified, it was His human nature that died. Deity did not sink and die; that would have been impossible.” 5BC 1113. See also 1SM 44.1. However, readers also know that a human sacrifice would not be sufficient to atone for the sins of humanity; only a divine Being could fulfill the demands of the broken law. We are also told that “the two expressions, ‘human’ and ‘divine’ were, in Christ, closely and *inseparably one*, and yet they had a distinct individuality.” 5BC 1129.3. We know that had Jesus sinned, He would have lost his Humanity and His Deity, i.e., His existence: “Though Christ humbled Himself to become man, the Godhead was still His own. His Deity could not be lost while He stood faithful and true to His loyalty.” ST 5.10.99. Unfortunately, this discussion diverges from our focus on the Holy Spirit and will not be dealt with further in this manuscript. Let this be understood, though: Do we have full and final understanding of Jesus’ incarnation? We cannot make that claim, though we have dug deep. Our salient point here is that both the Bible and SOP testify that Jesus, the Son of God, *did* in fact die and become temporarily separated from the Father: Jesus

“...feared ... Their separation was to be eternal...” DA 753. We are assured “...this sundering of the divine powers will never again occur throughout the eternal ages.” MS 93, 1899; 7BC 924.2. Trinitarians, in denying the possibility of any separation, also deny the authority of the SOP and the Word of God.

^{xvi}This teaching—that we may pray to *and worship* the Holy Spirit—can be found in the book *The Trinity* (Review and Herald, 2002), authored by three Andrews University professors, page 273. It is also currently taught by some of our leaders, by printed and spoken word, and by example. See Pastor Holbrook, “These Times—Our Times,” June 1, 1981, for instance, found in Terry Hill, *A Study of the Godhead as it Pertains to Seventh-day Adventism*, p. 208—an online publication found at www.theprophetstillspeaks.co.uk.

^{xvii}Edward Edstrom, *The Mysterious Union of the Human and the Divine*, Bk. 1, edited ed., p. 1, 3, 27-8, 12 (italics original, bold and underlining supplied).

This entire account has been condensed from Terry Hill, *A Study of the Godhead as it Pertains to Seventh-day Adventism*, online at www.theprophetstillspeaks, pp. 367-371.