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Jim Ford  
Associate Director  
Center for Adventist Research

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From: Adventist Record [mailto:Adventist_Record@mail.vresp.com]  
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2015 9:13 PM  
To: Jim Ford  
Subject: Sabbath Defence

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LIVE MORE. LOVE MORE. LEARN MORE.

March 13, 2015

SABBATH DEFENCE

_Eternity_, the newspaper of the Australian Bible Society, recently ran a piece questioning the Sabbath doctrine. I wrote a response, which _Eternity_ was graceful enough to print (click [HERE](#)). I received a number of notes from Adventists, pleased to see Sabbath explained to the broader Christian community. But I feel no joy. I feel no joy because even as I write to explain the Sabbath to other Christians, I know that there is a growing movement within our Church that irrevocably undermines the foundation of the Sabbath, and much more. And all across the Western Church we are displaying the lack of fortitude to necessarily address the magnitude of the challenge.

There are two ways to attack any institution. The first is to do a full frontal attack, but generally that will be seen for what it is. A much better strategy is to undermine the foundation of the institution and then wait for it to collapse in upon itself.

What we believe about creation is the foundation for what we believe about the character of God, the story of salvation and the Sabbath. And today there’s a growing conflict within our Church between creationists and theistic evolutionists. This should shock us out of our complacency. Why?
Theistic evolution requires us to believe one of three possible explanations about the Ten Commandments—all of which reflect badly on the character of God. The first is that God claimed to do something in six days that He did not do.

A second explanation is the Ten Commandments are a hoax. But Jesus came and confirmed them. So Jesus Himself would have to be complicit in the hoax or ignorant of it. If ignorant, He could not be divine, as God is omniscient.

Some try to weasel around the problem by saying God really didn’t mean “six days” when He wrote with His finger “six days” in tablets of stone. But to believe this, we have to imagine the greatest Communicator somehow managed to flub His message, with the foreknowledge that people for thousands of years would be misled by His words. And if “days” in the Ten Commandments really mean “epochs”, Sabbath should be an epoch, not a day. Using this interpretive prism, the Ten Commandments could mean anything at all. Maybe don’t murder secretly means don’t ride donkeys? Who knows? We’ll have to wait for an expert to give us the hidden meaning. Rather than the Rock of Ages, we would be dealing with a god made of quicksand.

But there’s a bigger problem. Theistic evolutionists believe our all-powerful God deliberately and callously created animals to suffer and die in endless cycles throughout the eons, when, by definition, He could have created animals perfect from the start and avoided the excruciating pain common in nature. Atheist evolutionists deny God’s hand in nature’s suffering; theistic evolutionists blame Him for it. Which is doing the greater disservice to God’s character?

What of the story of salvation? Theistic evolutionists believe death is God’s building block of life and predates not only humanity but also sin. Why do we need a saviour? To save us from the cycles of death put in place by the saviour, of course. Sound nonsensical? That’s because it is.

And then we come to the Sabbath. God tells us, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. For in . . .” Go ahead, you fill in the rest. If He really didn’t, why are we keeping a weekly Sabbath? No creation week, no foundation for Sabbath. Full stop.

The temptation to mould God’s Word around men’s theories is not new. In fact, Ellen White had this to say about this specific problem:

“Millions of years, it is claimed, were required for the evolution of the earth from chaos; and in order to accommodate the Bible to this supposed revelation of science, the days of creation are assumed to have been vast, indefinite periods, covering thousands or even millions of years. Such a conclusion is wholly uncalled for”
Our greatest threat today isn’t from Evangelicals attacking the Sabbath; we can easily withstand that. But what we can’t withstand is our creation foundation being hollowed out. Evolution undermines the foundation of our faith in the character of God, the story of salvation and the Sabbath. Either we muster the fortitude to address the challenge or, in time, God’s Church will collapse in upon its hollowed out foundations.