The doctrine of righteousness by faith is crucial to salvation, for God “demands now as ever perfect righteousness as the only title to heaven.” Review & Herald, September 21, 1886

“The essence of all righteousness is loyalty to our Redeemer. This will lead us to do right because it is right --- because right doing is pleasing to God.” Christ’s Object lessons, pp. 97, 98.

Righteousness by faith encompasses the mighty sanctuary message, perfect commandment-keeping in God’s power, God’s justifying grace, and His sanctifying power. It is “the foundation of His throne.” Counsels on Health, p. 458.

It is not the purpose of this article to provide a detailed account of the 1888 message. Many excellent books are available outlining this message. We invite God’s people to study the divinely-inspired reports of the message, as outlined in Sister White’s writings. These are recorded in Testimonies to Ministers, pp. 89 – 98; Selected Messages, Volume 1, pp. 355 – 405; and Selected Messages, Volume 3, pp. 156 – 204.

In a few words, Sister White explained the principle of justification by faith as presented at the 1888 General Conference Session:

“But while God can be just, and yet justify the sinner through the merits of Christ, no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ’s righteousness while practicing known sins, or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart before justification can take place; and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul.” Selected Messages, volume 1, p. 366

Here, the currently accepted error, held by many church administrators, college theologians, church pastors and lay people, is unmasked. Even the cover of the Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly, January to March 2000, depicted a man still wearing the filthy garments of his own righteousness, being robed by the pure garment of Christ’s righteousness. Such a view defies Scripture, plainly presented.

“Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.” Zechariah 3: 3, 4

The use of the illustration of a beautiful rosy apple, perfect in appearance, but rotten on the inside, became a popular concept presented by Avondale College-trained pastors in the 1970’s. Such a person is a hypocrite in a lost state, not a justified state. The robe of Christ’s righteousness is not a cover for a corrupt character; it rather represents a transformation of character. It is impossible to be justified while one is unsanctified. Both justification and sanctification are the possession of the redeemed.

Notice Sister White’s clear statement, defining justification:

“What is justification by faith? – It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which is not in his power to do for himself. When men see their own nothingness, they are prepared to be clothed with the righteousness of Christ. When they begin to praise and exalt God all the day long, then by beholding they are becoming changed into the same image. What is regeneration? – It is revealing to man what is his own real nature, that in himself he is worthless.” Special Testimonies, Series A, number 9, p. 62
Sister White plainly defined sanctification:

"Excitement is not sanctification. Entire conformity to the will of our Father which is in heaven is alone sanctification, and the will of God is expressed in His holy law. The keeping of all the commandments of God is sanctification. Proving yourselves obedient children to God's Word is sanctification. The Word of God is to be our guide, not the opinions or ideas of men."  Selected Messages, Volume 3, p. 204

"By the wedding garment in the parable is represented the pure, spotless character which Christ's true followers will possess....It is the righteousness of Christ, His own unblemished character, that through faith is imparted to all who receive Him as their personal Saviour."  Ibid, p. 310

"This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. 'All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.' Everything that we of ourselves can do is defiled by sin. But the Son of God 'was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.'"  Ibid, p. 311

"By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness."  Ibid, p. 312

Justice is God's pardon. Sanctification is Holy Spirit-empowered obedience. Justification is imputed righteousness; sanctification is imparted righteousness. Justification provides our title for heaven; sanctification provides our fitness for heaven.

"Righteousness within is testified to by righteousness without. He who is righteous within is not hard-hearted and unsympathetic; but day by day he grows into the image of Christ, going on from strength to strength. He who is being sanctified by the truth will be self-controlled, and will follow in the footsteps of Christ until grace is lost in glory. The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed; the righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted. The first is our title to heaven, the second is our fitness for heaven."  Messages to Young People, p. 35

Christ is our Substitute for our confessed and forsaken sins.

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed."  Isaiah 53: 5

"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."  1. Peter 2: 24

He is our Example of obedience.

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth."  1. Peter 2: 21, 22

The union of forgiveness and obedience, justification and sanctification, are inseparable concepts which permeate Scripture. To separate them, as does the New Theology, is to destroy them both. The New Theology is a masterpiece of deception which seeks to destroy man's salvation. By including justification within the gospel and excluding sanctification, Satan has discovered a masterful means by which he wrests Christ's heritage from Him.

We illustrate some passages which demonstrate the inseparable union of pardon (justification) and obedience (sanctification and cleansing):

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."  1. John 1: 9

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."  Matthew 6: 12, 13

"Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him."  Acts 5: 31, 32

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."  Matthew 3: 11

"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, He cannot enter into the kingdom of God."  John 3: 5

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is righteous, let him be righteous still."  Revelation 22: 11

"He is our Example of obedience.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit....For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."  Romans 8: 1 – 4

The current concept of forensic justification pro-
It has been claimed that:

“This righteousness ‘in Christ’ is the only means of our salvation and unless we resist and reject it, it fully qualifies us for heaven now and in the judgment.” Dynamics of the Everlasting Gospel, p. 13. E. H. [Jack] Sequeira.

This is sometimes described as unconditional salvation, but in its defence, Pastor Sequeira provided six references. When examined, not surprisingly, each text asserts a condition of salvation. We quote these six texts. All emphasis is mine.

“And by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.” Acts 13: 39

“Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.” Romans 3: 28

“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” Romans 10: 4

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” Galatians 2: 16

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Ephesians 2: 8, 9

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” Titus 3: 5

Yet ignoring these conditions, Pastor Sequeira wrote, totally demeaning sanctification, that,

“The first phase of salvation is often described as the imputed righteousness of Christ, and is what qualifies the believers for heaven now and in the judgment. The second phase of salvation is described as the imparted righteousness of Christ. It does not contribute one iota toward our qualification for heaven, but witnesses or demonstrates what is already true of us in Christ.” Ibid.

Here, Pastor Sequeira contradicts inspiration. Sister White stated plainly in a letter to Pastor A. T. Jones on April 9, 1893, that

“There are conditions to our receiving justification and sanctification, and the righteousness of Christ….While good works will not save even one soul, yet it is impossible for even one soul to be saved without good works.” Selected Messages, Volume 1, p. 377

In unifying the law and the gospel, the 1888 message returned power to our Advent message and promoted the possession of a purified character.

“The soul-saving message, the third angel’s message, is the message to be given to the world. The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus are both important, immensely important, and must be given with equal force and power. The first part of the message has been dwelt upon mostly, the last part casually.” Selected Messages, Volume 3, p. 184 [written in 1889].

“John’s words are to be sounded by God’s people, that all may discern the light and walk in the light: ‘He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: He that cometh from heaven is above all. And what He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth; and no man receiveth His testimony. He that received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God hath giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth in him.’

“This is the testimony that must go throughout the length and breadth of the world. It presents the law and the gospel, binding up the two in a perfect whole.” Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, pp. 93, 94

“Sanctification is the result of lifelong obedience.” Acts of the Apostles, p. 561

“Exact obedience is required, and those who say it is not possible to live a perfect life throw upon God the imputation of injustice and untruth.” The Southern Watchman, December 5, 1899

“At every stage of development, our life may be perfect; yet if God’s purpose for us is fulfilled, there will be continual advancement. Sanctification is the work of a lifetime. As our opportunities multiply, our experience will enlarge, and our knowledge increase.” Christ’s Object Lessons, pp. 65, 66

“This sanctification is a progressive work, and an advance from one stage of perfection to another.” My Life Today, p. 250

Sister White summed up the crucial issues in the 1888 message:

“The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the
sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given to His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 91, 92

Here we see how vital this message was to the completion of our divine commission. As Sister White had written a little earlier,

“Justification by faith…is the third angels’ message in verity.” *Selected Messages, Volume 1*, p. 372

Sanctification (imparted righteousness) is also the third angel's message:

“All power is given unto His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 92

It is strange that Christ's imparted righteousness, His sanctification, is so despised in God's church today. Holiness of living, when espoused and promoted by faithful church members, is frequently sufficient reason to be banned from all offices in a church or even to be disfellowshipped.

It is no wonder that the third angel's message is now muted, if it receives any mention at all. It is no surprise that rampant sin is a characteristic of most of our church!

Sister White provides no doubt as to what true character perfection (sanctification) involves. Because of this, her writings are frequently ignored. What peril this is to souls.

“That which God required of Adam before his fall was perfect obedience to His law. God requires now what he required of Adam, perfect obedience, righteousness without a flaw, without shortcoming in His sight. God help us to render to Him all His law requires. We cannot do this without that faith that brings Christ’s righteousness into daily practice.” *Selected Messages, Volume 2*, pp. 380, 381

The third angel's message is the proclamation of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ. The commandments of God have been proclaimed, but the faith of Jesus has not been proclaimed by Seventh-day Adventists as of equal importance, the law and the gospel going hand in hand. We cannot find language to express this subject in its fullness.

“The faith of Jesus.’ It is talked of, but not understood. What constitutes the faith of Jesus, that belongs to the third angel’s message? Jesus becoming our sin-bearer that he might become our sin-pardoning Saviour. He was treated as we deserve to be treated. He came to our world and took our sins that we might take His righteousness. And faith in the ability of Christ to save us amply and fully and entirely is the faith of Jesus.” *Selected Messages, Volume 3*, p. 172


"Through the agencies of nature, God is working, day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, to keep us alive, to build up and restore us. When any part of the body sustains injury, a healing process is at once begun; nature’s agencies are set at work to restore soundness. But the power working through these agencies is the power of God. All life-giving power is from Him. When one recovers from disease, it is God who restores him.

"Sickness, suffering, and death are work of an antagonistic power. Satan is the destroyer; God is the restorer.

"The words spoken to Israel are true today to those who recover health of body or health of soul: “I am the Lord that healeth thee.”

"The desire of God for every human being is expressed in the words, “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” *Counsels on Health*, page 168.

"Godliness does not conflict with the laws of health, but is in harmony with them. Had men ever been obedient to the law of Ten Commandments, had they carried out in their lives the principles of these ten precepts, the curse of disease that now floods the world would not be.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, page 454.
Far-Reaching Implications and Long-Lasting Consequences
By Colin D Standish and Elvis Placer

Thirty-five years after the meetings between the Biblical Research Institute of the Australasian Division (now the South Pacific Division) and the Concerned Brethren, what has happened to the Seventh-day Adventist Church? The recital of events surrounding the 1976 Palmdale Conference illustrates the incessant and unrelenting struggle that has been waged within the denomination for many years between God’s unchangeable message of salvation and the New Theology — a contest between pure unvarnished truth and subtle bewitching error. This contest has far-reaching implications and long-lasting consequences for every person, not only for this life but also for eternity. The reverberations of the controversies that shook the church in Australia to its foundations during the 1970’s continue to be felt very strongly today as the New Theology is expounded from the pulpits, colleges, and publications of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, not only within the South Pacific Division, but throughout the entire world field.

April 26 – 30, 1976: The General Conference convened a meeting at Palmdale, California, with representatives from the Australasian Biblical Research Committee to dialogue the concerns in respect of the doctrinal split within the Australasian Division.

The General Conference representatives were:


The Australasian Division delegation consisted of:


Older readers of this article will recognize that some of the General Conference representatives were also of the same theological persuasion as Desmond Ford, especially Dr. Dederen, Pastor Eva, and Dr. LaRondelle. Some others were less than strong in their convictions. Pastor Pierson and Pastor Wood stood strongly for authentic Seventh-day Adventist doctrines. Generally speaking, Dr. Ford would not have been unhappy with the General Conference attendees.

The Australasian delegates would have greatly favoured Desmond Ford. He had strong support from the leadership of the Australasian Division, including the Division president, Pastor Robert Frame. No doubt there was significant communication between the members of the General Conference representatives who were supportive of the New Theology and the Australasian team.

Pastor Robert H. Pierson communicated with the president of the Australasian Division, Pastor Robert Frame, asking that some representatives of the Concerned Brethren in Australia be included in the Australasian delegation. But the Australasian leaders firmly refused to include even one of them. What a difference would have been made if men such as Pastors John Keith, James Kent, George Burnside, or Dr Russell Standish had been part of that delegation. Yes, there would have been passionate interaction, but the General Conference representatives would have heard the deep convictions held so dearly by these faithful former leaders of the Division. They knew the Word of God. The Australasian delegation, comprised by hand-picked delegates who were immersed in the New Theology, treated the faithful retired leaders as rebels who opposed the then leadership of the Division because they could no longer wield leadership power that they once held. Knowing these godly men, Colin is adamant that such an accusation was wholly false. These ancient warriors were fighting for the integrity of God’s mighty salvation truths. They were contending for the faith that God had entrusted to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which has been raised up to take the everlasting gospel of the three angels to the inhabitants of the world. Satan was unceasingly seeking to destroy the efforts of God’s true warriors of the truth.

Under these circumstances, it was felt that there was only one single avenue remaining to deliver a more complete picture of the doctrinal crisis in Australia to those gathered at the Palmdale meeting. This avenue was the presentation of a manuscript that dealt with the problem. For this purpose, Conflicting Concepts of Righteousness by Faith in the Seventh-day Adventist Church — Australasian Division, had set out to fulfill. If a fair representation had been accorded within the Australasian Division, it is certain that this manuscript would never have been written.

As in the meetings in Australia two and a half months previously, while there were moments of high tension and striking disagreement at Palmdale, eventually it was possible to produce a consensus statement. It was published in the Review & Herald, May 27, 1976 (and in the Australasian Record, May 31, 1976). The statement was brought forth:

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“not as a formal presentation of doctrine, nor as an official pronouncement by church leaders. Rather it is offered as a statement of consensus of their understanding on this vital issue of doctrine and experience.”

The statement consisted of two and a half pages of fine print. It was the first sentence, however, that attracted the greatest attention:

“We agree that when the words RIGHTEOUSNESS and FAITH are connected (by ‘of’, ‘by’, et cetera) in Scripture, reference is to the experience of justification by faith.”

If a simple statement is made on the roots of the controversy in Australia concerning the doctrine of righteousness by faith, it could be summed up in a single sentence. Those accepting the New Theology proclaim that it is impossible to keep God’s law fully, even for a Christian filled with the Holy Spirit, while those holding to the old Adventist beliefs assert that it is not only possible but mandatory.

Now these two positions have certain undeniable far-reaching implications. One of these is that, if one believes in the New Theology, it naturally follows that righteousness by faith cannot encompass the process of sanctification. Rather it is confined to justification by faith alone. If a totally obedient life is not possible, then obedience, sanctification, victory, or any other synonym for the process of sanctification surely cannot be a requirement of acceptance with God. The New Theology loudly proclaimed this view. For example, in April 1977, fifth form (grade eleven) students at Lilydale Adventist Academy in Melbourne, Australia, were given a sheet of paper in their Bible class. This paper asserted the following:

“There are two aspects of Christ’s work — that which He did for us which brings complete acceptance with God for every believer, and the work He does in us --- which has nothing to do with our acceptance by God.” The Good News, Desmond Ford

A corollary of this idea is the view that our salvation is based entirely upon the objective facts of Christ’s death on Calvary, and that to include experience within the confines of righteousness by faith is to accept a Roman Catholic concept. In order to bolster this position, the assertion is made that sanctification is not entirely of faith or even of God, but partly involves the input of the individual.

In the initial flush after the Palmdale Conference, one of the Australians who attended, along with others, claimed a great victory for Dr. Ford and ‘the defeat of the Review and Herald men’ [Pastor Kenneth Wood and Herbert Douglass]. Of course the claim to victory or to inflict defeat was not the purpose of the meeting. Pastor Robert Frame had emphasized in a letter distributed to the Australasian Ministry that no one was on trial at Palmdale. Nevertheless in the four-week period which intervened between the conclusion of the Palmdale Conference and the publication of the results, such rumours swept Australia. Dr. Desmond Ford soon passed on to Robert Brinsmead the news that the initial sentence of the Palmdale Statement read:

“We agree that when the words ‘righteousness’ and ‘faith’ are connected, by ‘of,’ ‘by,’ etc., Scriptural reference is to justification by faith only.”

The astute reader will soon note the subtle difference between this report and the actual statement printed in the Review & Herald and the Australasian Record. This report became widespread throughout Australasia during the period of waiting for the presentation of the consensus statement. Naturally those supporting the old Adventist faith were absolutely dismayed by what they heard, for they full well knew that Scripture teaches that ‘...he that feareth [God], and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.” Acts 10: 35

It was with no little relief that these people read the statement as finally printed in the Review & Herald and the Australasian Record, comparing the correct statement with the bogus report. It can be seen that it differed in two vital ways:

(1): The word “experience” was omitted in the spurious report. Naturally for those who did not believe that justification has any experiential aspects, it was an embarrassing intrusion into the sentence.

(2): The word “only” was added.

Interestingly, these modifications or similar ones continued to be used by the advocates of the New Theology even after all could see the changes for themselves. In fact, the modifications became so incorporated into the discussions of the Palmdale Statement that many may still be unaware of the true version (even after thirty-five years).

Other examples of modifying the first sentence of the Palmdale Statement are easy to document. Three are cited below (emphasis supplied):

“Where the word righteousness occurs in the New Testament with the words faith, ‘of’ or ‘by,’ — righteousness of faith or righteousness by faith — it always means justification.” Desmond Ford, May 18, 1976. A chapel talk given to the students at Avondale College entitled “Sanctification”, delivered as a preview of the Palmdale Statement.

“It [the Palmdale Statement] clearly says that
when ‘righteousness’ is linked with faith in any phrase such as ‘righteousness by faith’ or ‘righteousness of faith’ – it means justification only." Letter by Desmond Ford to Russell Standish, June 7, 1976.

“The Palmdale Group did assent to the fact that in the Pauline writings, the term ‘righteousness’ when linked with ‘faith’ by the preposition ‘of’ or ‘by’ means justification, and justification only.” Review & Herald, December 23, 1976. Letter to the editor by Desmond Ford.

It should be stated here that the framing of consensus statements have not been entirely satisfactory. By their very nature, these statements attempt to cover two incompatible positions with a statement acceptable to both parties. This procedure is not the way in which truth should be presented. Although it is obvious that the Palmdale Consensus did uphold the old Adventist teaching, it did so in such a way as to leave an escape for those who wished to continue in their false beliefs. The time has come to abandon this form of consensus statement. What we need are plain, precise, unequivocal statements of truth, statements which cannot in any way be misinterpreted by those who wish to uphold a position divergent from that of Scripture. In this respect, the Palmdale Statement fell short of the mark.

As the Palmdale Consensus was read in its published form, it became very evident that the ‘doctored’ first sentence (as given in reports before its publication) was in total error, and that those who wished to interpret it that way were failing to read the statement in its entirety, for the statement went on to say:

“Righteousness is concerned with both God’s gifts and His requirement, with justification and sanctification, with both imputed righteousness and repentance, and imparted righteousness by faith and obedience, with both the title and the fitness for heaven.” Review & Herald, May 27, 1976; Australasian Record, May 31, 1976.

So inventive had become the minds of some of the holders of the New Theology that they tried to minimize even this clear statement by contending that it simply mentioned “righteousness” and not “righteousness by faith.” One example of this distortion is cited:

“When ‘righteousness’ is used on its own, it can mean either justification or sanctification.” Letter by Desmond Ford to Russell Standish, June 7, 1976.

The reader must surely be led to wonder whether there is some form of righteousness which is not of faith.

So persistent were the misrepresentations of the Consensus Statement in Australia that eventually the editor of the Review & Herald, Pastor Kenneth Wood, who himself attended Palmdale, had little option but to express the true conclusions of the conference in a series of four editorials entitled, “F.Y.I” (For Your Information). In the first of these articles, it was stated:

“Historically Seventh-day Adventists have used ‘righteousness by faith’ to mean the whole process of God’s saving grace – both justification and sanctification….The Palmdale Statement concurs with this view.” Review & Herald, October 21, 1976.

This statement, expressed in the clearest and most unequivocal terms, left no doubt that the Palmdale Statement meant that which it stated. It easily refuted the assertion:

“It’s a wonderful thing that recently in America [at Palmdale], we could make a statement like this for the first time in our history --- a wonderful thing.” Desmond Ford, May 18, 1976. A chapel talk delivered to the students at Avondale College entitled “Sanctification”, given as a preview of the Palmdale Statement.

Incidentally this statement unquestionably shows that Dr. Ford fully knew at that time that the New Theology was indeed new to Seventh-day Adventists (“for the first time”).

The reader is strongly encouraged to acquire a copy of the book written by Russell and Colin Standish on the history of the doctrinal controversy within the Australasian Division, The Gathering Storm and the Storm Bursts (available from Remnant Ministries). This book (formerly published for a time as Adventism Challenged, Vols. 1 & 2) provides a thorough, detailed, and insightful account into the developments that took place within the denomination at that time. It provides a template for understanding the dramatic changes that have come upon the Adventist landscape over the last several decades.

In a lot more detail than can be provided in this article, The Gathering Storm delineated a number of events that transpired in the years following the February 1976 B.R.I. conferences. Those events were consequences of the decision made by the Biblical Research Institute to vindicate Dr Desmond Ford’s stances on salvation and prophecy, which were diametrically opposed to what the church had previously taught, as defended by the Concerned Brethren.

Those events included:

1. Official condemnation of the manuscript prepared by Drs Russell R Standish and John Clifford, Conflicting Concepts of Righteousness by Faith in the Seventh-day Adventist Church – Australasian Division, which upheld what Seventh-day Adventists have long believed about righteousness by faith.
2. Vehement opposition within the Australasian Division towards the content of the Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly, April – June 1977, Jesus, the Model Man, written by Herbert Douglass. The lesson plainly taught that Christ took the nature of man after the fall, setting forth Jesus as our Example as well as our Substitute, thus

"when God asks men and women to obey Him and to live above sinning, He is not asking the impossible or merely tantalizing them. Jesus proved what a man or woman can do. Jesus not only gave mankind 'an example of obedience'; He also settled the question once and for all that 'it is possible for us also to obey the law of God.' Desire of Ages, p. 24." Lesson Quarterly page 21: note for April 6, 1977.

3. Acclamation of Dr Geoffrey Paxton (an Australian Anglican professor, who was a close associate of Robert Brinsmead in the 1970's) in his speaking circuit around Australia and the United States; unstinting praise for his book, The Shaking of Adventism (published in 1977), which gave a glowing appraisal of the "Reformation Theology" as espoused by Edward Heppenstall, Robert Brinsmead, and Desmond Ford.

4. The Concerned Brethren were increasingly marginalized from the pulpits of Seventh-day Adventist churches by a Division that was fully aligned with the theology of Dr Desmond Ford.

5. The Association of Adventist Forum meeting at Pacific Union College on Sabbath, October 27, 1979: Dr Desmond Ford revealed his life-long disbelief in the doctrine of the investigative judgment, denied the change of ministry by Christ from the Holy Place to the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary in 1844, and downgraded the inspiration of Spirit of Prophecy.

6. The Glacier View Meetings in Colorado, August 10 – 15, 1980: upon examination of Dr Desmond Ford's near-1000 page document that defended the statements he made at Pacific Union College in October 1979, his ministerial credentials were removed after he refused to withdraw any position he took in his voluminous manuscript.

Most particularly, the repercussions from Desmond Ford's Adventist Forum presentation and the loss of his ministerial credentials were so extensive that over 180 pastors left the ministry in the Australasian Division during the 1980's (many renounced the Adventist faith altogether). It was manifestly evident that the New Theology had firmly entrenched itself within this division, which was formerly the most fundamental division within the denomination prior to the arrival of the Awakening Movement (Robert Brinsmead) in the late 1950's and the New Theology in the 1960's. The "new" thinking in Adventism has influenced countless of conference administrators and church pastors in the Oceanic division for decades, as evidenced in these few examples:

7. At the 2005 General Conference Session in St. Louis, Missouri, the South Pacific Division successfully led the initiative to expunge the word "sanctifies" from what is now the eleventh Fundamental (for more documentation, please obtain the book from Remnant Ministries, The Twenty-eight Fundamentals: Apostasy Proclaimed in Silence).

8. At the same General Conference Session, again on the initiative of the South Pacific Division, a pitiful three point alternative baptismal vow was adopted. Virtually no doctrines or standards were included and a creed based upon the church Fundamentals was implicitly proclaimed.

9. At the 2000 General Conference Session in Toronto, Canada, the President of the South New Zealand Conference successfully opened the initiative to lower our standard on the matter of divorce and re-marriage.

10. During 2004, the South Pacific Division led a continuous attack upon the Spirit of Prophecy, attempting to destroy its value as a reliable and inspired source (see Remnant Herald, April 2004, pp. 1397 – 1403 and June 2004, pp. 1415 – 1417).

11. In 2002, Avondale College Church led an initiative to have Dr. Desmond Ford, a non-member by his own decision, welcomed into the pulpits of our church (Mapping the Past and Sketching the Future – document of Avondale College Church).

The fruit of the New Theology is to produce a lack of confidence in the integrity of our message, the unravelling of the framework of our beliefs that undergird the entire Adventist movement, and the unsettling of our experience in righteousness by faith that brings victory over sin into our lives through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is in sharp contrast to what the apostle Paul longed to behold in the believers of the gospel in his day:

"Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith." Romans 16: 25, 26

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." 1 Thessalonians 5: 23, 24

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the
dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen.” Hebrews 13: 20, 21

As accurately portrayed by Dennis Priebe in his book, Face to Face with the Real Gospel (as quoted in the opening article of the January-February issue of this paper), a succession of consequences rapidly unfold when one embraces the tenets of the New Theology, such as a dramatic collapse in standards. The Spirit of Prophecy describes the impotency of the New Theology or a religion with only a form of godliness without the power thereof in these words:

“Unless divine power is brought into the experience of the people of God, false theories and erroneous ideas will take minds captive, Christ and His righteousness will be dropped out of the experience of many, and their faith will be without power of life. Such will not have a daily, living experience of the love of God in the heart, and if they do not zealously repent, they will be among those who are represented by the Laodiceans, who will be spewed out of the mouth of God.” Review & Herald, September 3, 1889

“What is it that constitutes the wretchedness, the nakedness of those who feel rich and increased with goods? --- It is the want [lack] of the righteousness of Christ. In their own righteousness they are represented as clothed with filthy rags, and yet in this condition they flatter themselves that they are clothed upon with Christ's righteousness. Could deception be greater?” Review & Herald, August 7, 1894.

In view of the trends that have taken place within the denomination since the New Theology became accepted by many as a mainstream belief for them, we need to make an important decision: shall we individually accept a genuine conversion experience that will transform our lives from a state of negligence and insubordination to that of loving, submissive obedience (through an entire, unreserved surrender of our hearts to Jesus)? Only by accepting wholeheartedly the Biblical terms of salvation can we truly “teach transgressors Thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto Thee” Psalm 51: 13.

“When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature....” Desire of Ages, p. 324

“In the religion of Christ, there is a regenerating influence that transforms the entire being, lifting man above every debasing, grovelling vice, and raising the thoughts and desires toward God and heaven. Linked to the infinite One, man is made partaker of the divine nature. Upon him the shafts of evil have no effect; for he is clothed with the panoply of Christ's righteousness.” Counsels to Teachers, Parents, and Students, pp. 51, 52

“Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His people. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.” Christ's Object Lessons, p. 69

Anniversaries of Significance (Part 2)
By Elvis Placer

2017: 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation

Editor's introduction: This decade will also witness another noteworthy milestone: the 600th anniversary of the martyrdom of John Hus, who sang, “Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me,” as the flames devoured him at the stake on July 6, 1415.

“John Hus, whose surname in the Bohemian language signifies goose, [had] proclaimed the truth a century before the time of Luther. When assailed by persecution, he declared: ‘The wicked have begun by preparing a treacherous snare for the goose. But if even the goose, which is only a domestic bird, a peaceful animal, and whose flight is not very high in the air, has nevertheless broken through their toils; other birds, soaring more boldly toward the sky, will break through them with still greater force. Instead of a feeble goose, the truth will send forth eagles and keen-eyed vultures.’” Signs of the Times, June 14, 1883 [footnote]

A century later, the eagle that was to spearhead the Protestant Reformation was none other than Martin Luther himself.

“The First Blow of the Reformation” – this was the heading that appeared in the afore-mentioned edition of the Signs of the Times. Ellen White commenced her inspiring series on the life of Martin Luther with these words:

“The year 1517 marked the beginning of a new era for the church and the world.”

When Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of the cathedral at Wittenberg, Germany, on Octo-
ber 31, 1517, in protest against the sale of indulgences for the building of St. Peter’s Basilica, he could not have envisaged three things:

1): the impact this simple act would have upon the Roman Catholic Church:

“Under the plea of raising funds for the erection of St. Peter's church at Rome, indulgences for sin were publicly offered for sale by the authority of the pope. By the price of crime a temple was to be built up for God's worship, -- the corner-stone laid with the wages of iniquity. But the very means of Rome's aggrandizement provoked the deadliest blow to her power and greatness. It was this that aroused the most determined and successful of the enemies of popery, and led to the battle which shook the papal throne to its foundation, and jostled the triple crown upon the pontiff's head.” The Great Controversy, 1884 edition, p. 102

Martin Luther's attitude towards the papal authority became more bold and uncompromising, particularly after gaining heavenly inspiration into the meaning of the text,

“The just shall live by faith” (Habakkuk 2: 4; Hebrews 10: 38).

Developments over the next three and half years eventually led Martin Luther to stand before the German parliament to answer for his faith. On Thursday evening, April 15, 1521, in front of more than five thousand spectators who thronged the ante-chamber and recess of the parliament building, and surrounded by two hundred of the most illustrious personages of the empire, including the reigning monarch, Charles V, in answer to the question put forth by the spokesman of the Diet as to whether he would retract his writings, Martin Luther uttered these immortal lines:

“Unless I shall be convinced by proofs from Scripture or by evident reason (for I believe neither in popes or councils, since they have frequently erred and contradicted themselves), I cannot choose but adhere to the word of God, which has possession of my conscience. Nor can I possibly nor will I ever make any recantation, since it is neither safe nor honest to act contrary to conscience. Here I take my stand; I cannot do otherwise. God be my help! Amen.” Ibid, pp. 134, 135.

When “Luther [had] publicly burn[ed] the pope's bull, with the canon laws, the decretals, and certain writings sustaining the papal power...he boldly declared his final separation from the Roman Church. He accepted his excommunication, and proclaimed to the world that between himself and the pope there must hereafter be war.” Ibid, p. 118.

2): the long passage of time that would elapse since those 95 theses were nailed:

“I hope the Day of Judgment is not far, I persuade myself verily it will not be absent full three hundred years longer; for God’s Word will decrease and be darkened for want of true shepherds and servants of God. The voice will sound and be heard ere long: Behold, the Bridegroom cometh. God neither will nor can suffer this wicked world much longer, but must strike it with the dreadful day, and punish the contemning of His Word, and so will quite beat out the barrel's head.” The Familiar Discourses of Dr Martin Luther, pp. 7, 8. Sussex Press, London. 1818. Translated into English by Captain Henry Bell.

It is highly significant that three hundred years from the time Martin Luther wrote those words brings one down to the era of William Miller, who proclaimed that the end of the 2300 year prophecy would occur in 1844. From August – October 1844, the theme of the Midnight Cry message was, “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh! Go ye out to meet Him!”

3): the ecumenical movement that would bring Lutherans and other Protestants back into fellowship with Roman Catholicism:

Contrast the unshakeable position held by Martin Luther towards Rome with the rapprochement made by Protestants since the time of the Second Vatican Council (1962 – 1965), as aptly described in the following paragraph:

“Bewitched by the ‘new look’ of the Roman Church, willing to forget its past, no longer concerned about its doctrine, convinced that separation is a ‘scandal’ and unity is more important than truth, millions of ‘separated brethren’ [Protestants] are looking toward her with new understanding. By some mysterious alchemy, blind hatred has been transmuted into ‘wondering admiration.’ What a striking fulfilment of the prophecy: ‘And his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast’ (Revelation 13: 3). How faithfully these unprecedented events fix the date for the end of all things!” Journal of True Education, Summer 1964, p. 7. Review & Herald Association. Takoma Park, Washington, D.C.

In commemoration of the five hundredth anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther, an article appeared in Time, October 31, 1983, which was entitled, “Luther: Giant of His Time and Ours.” A few excerpts from this insightful article reveal how Martin Luther is being used as a means to help unite Lutherans and Protestants with Roman Catholicism!
“Indeed, as the reformer who fractured Christianity, Luther has latterly become a key to reuniting it. With the approval of the Vatican, and with Americans taking the lead, Roman Catholic theologians are working with Lutherans and other Protestants to sift through the 16th century disputes and see whether the Protestant-Catholic split can someday be overcome. In a remarkable account, Catholic scholars today express growing appreciation of Luther as a ‘father in the faith’....

“According to a growing consensus, the great division need never have happened at all....

“The enormous presence of the Wittenberg rebel, the sheer force of his personality still broods over all Christendom. Although Luther declared that the Roman Pontiffs were the ‘Antichrist’, today’s pope, in an anniversary tip of the zucchetto, mildly speaks of Luther as ‘the reformer.’ Ecumenical-minded Catholic theologians have come to rank Luther in importance with Augustine and Aquinas....

“Only a generation ago, Catholics were trained to consider Luther the arch-heretic. Now no less than the Vatican’s specialist on Lutheranism, Monsignor Aloys Klein, says that ‘Martin Luther’s actions were beneficial to the Catholic Church’....

“Like many Catholics, Klein thinks that if Luther were living today there would be no split. Klein’s colleague in the Vatican’s Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, Father Pierre Duprey, suggests that with the Second Vatican Council (1962 – 1965), Luther ‘got the council he asked for, but 450 years too late.’” (Bold emphasis supplied by the editor)

A timeline of the ecumenical convergence between Lutheranism and Roman Catholicism is briefly outlined as follows:

1964 – present: Lutheran – Catholic dialogues take place between U.S. Bishops’ Committee for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Affairs and the Lutheran World Federation.

December 11, 1983: Pope John Paul II preached a sermon inside a Lutheran church in Rome – the first time a Roman pontiff stood before a Lutheran congregation inside their own house of worship.

1983/1999: Joint statements and declarations issued by the Lutheran World Federation and the Vatican concerning common understanding on justification by faith.

December 16, 2010: Pope Benedict XVI was invited by the President of the Lutheran World Federation to be involved with the preparations for the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation by the Lutheran Church.

“We cannot achieve this ecumenical accountability on our own, without your help. Thus we invite you to work together with us in preparing this anniversary, so that in 2017 we are closer to sharing in the Bread of Life than we are today....Within our lifetimes, the climate of relations between Lutherans and Catholics has warmed dramatically — and this climate change has been for the good! Around the world, our churches live in a new ecology of relationship.” --- Dr. Munib A. Younan, President, Lutheran World Federation. www.asia-lutheran.org: “Pope Benedict XVI Invited to Help Plan 500th Anniversary Commemoration”. Article released December 20, 2010

A year before, the bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hanover, Germany, Dr Margot Kassmann, issued a strong plea to “give the jubilee of the Reformation a clear, ecumenical dimension....'

“On 26th March [2009], in one of the main presentations at the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) consultation, ‘Theology in the Life of Lutheran Churches: Transformative Perspectives and Practices Today,’ the bishop insisted that, despite their disagreements and their specific identies, the Roman Catholic and Lutheran Churches have more things in common than things that separate them.” www.lutheranworld.org: “Reformation Jubilee in 2017 Must Have Clear Ecumenical Dimension”. Article released March 27, 2009

Sadly, it is not Lutherans alone who have made compromises with the papal power. A random selection of examples from the last forty years is sufficient to make this point very evident:

Evangelicals: “The 1972 Franciscan International Award for true ecumenism will go to evangelist Billy Graham. The Roman Catholics bestowed this honour on Dr Graham on April 21st. An increasing number of Roman Catholic orders and agencies are honouring Evangelist Billy Graham in various ways.” The Christian Beacon, May 4, 1972 (Collingwood, New Jersey, USA.)

Reformed Church of America: During Pope John Paul II’s visit to Los Angeles in 1987, Robert Schuller said: “It’s time for Protestants to go to the shepherd [Pope] and say ‘what do we have to do to come home?’” Calvary Contender, November 15, 1987 (Huntsville, Alabama, USA.)

Baptists: “The Baptist World Alliance, with headquarters in Falls Church, Virginia (USA), includes some 42 million baptized adherents within a larger community of 100 million.

“In 2006, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) and the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) agreed to organize a second phase of international conversations. The first phase took place from 1984 – 1988, and published a report entitled, "Summon to Witness to Christ in Today’s World" (1990).....

“...the first meeting of the first phase in 1984 was
the beginning of a new international relationship between Baptists and Catholics since the beginning of the Baptist movement in 1609, which emerged from the 16th century Reformation...

"...The space of 16 years between the end of one phase and the beginning of a second phase of formal international conversations allows one to see the ecumenical changes that have taken place during that time, the growth of confidence in one another as dialogue partners and the growing influence of the ecumenical movement in general..... “Catholic-Baptist Relations” -- report by Monsignor John A. Radano on behalf of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, dated January 23, 2007. Available on the official website of the Vatican: www.vatican.va.

These few examples, amongst the scores of others that can be produced, highlight the truth of the following observation made by the then-editor of the Adventist publication, The Protestant Magazine:

“The departure of Protestantism from its original principles, and the acceptance of human philosophy in place of revealed truth, are giving to Romanism the opportunity to put forward with a greater show of plausibility the claim that the great Reformation was a delusion and that the only stability of truth is found in the Roman communion.” The Protestant Magazine, Number 1, p. 1 (Second Quarter 1909), W. W. Prescott

Should our appraisal of the abandonment of Protestantism by the denominations that prefer to label themselves today as “evangelicals” be any different when this reversal is tragically evident even within the Seventh-day Adventist denomination?

Seventh-day Adventists: "Although it is true that there was a period in the life of the Seventh-day Adventist Church when the denomination took a distinctly anti-Roman Catholic viewpoint, that attitude on the church's part was nothing more than a manifestation of widespread anti-papery among conservative Protestant denominations in the early part of this century, and the latter part of the last, which has now been consigned to the historical trash heap as far as the Seventh-day Adventist Church is concerned." Neal C. Wilson, President of the North American Division. Court Transcript of Equal Employment Opportunity Commission vs. The Pacific Press Publishing Association. Reply Brief for Defendants, p. 4, Civil Case #74-2025 CBR. Sworn statement submitted on March 6, 1975.

It was in this framework that on May 18, 1977, Bert Beverly Beach, in his capacity as head of the Department of Public Affairs of the General Conference, was able to give a gold medal to Pope Paul VI, on behalf of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (as reported in the Review & Herald, August 11, 1977). His reflection of that occasion was encapsulated in this un biblical (and --- dare we say it --- blasphemous) description:

“It was a great honour for me, as the Secretary of the Conference, to be present here in Rome, in audience with the Holy Father.” Glas Koncila, June 5, 1977 [Catholic newspaper from Yugoslavia]

It is conceivable that such a gift to the Pope was made possible in light of the recognition given by the pontiff to the late Samuele Bacchiocchi for his academic achievements at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, whereby he received two medals from Pope Paul VI (one was a gold medal worth $1000 -- Australasian Record, October 27, 1975, p. 1). He was also the first non-Catholic to study at the Jesuit university in its then-425 year history.

“Church documents that prescribe the church's structure and governance confirm that all parts of the church are parts of a single entity. Next to the Roman Catholic church, the Adventist church is the most centralized of all the major Christian denominations in this country.” Derrick Proctor vs. General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Case #81 C 4938: Findings of Fact, Section B, Church Objectives and Structures, p. 22.

“The Seventh-day Adventist Church follows a model of organizational order in the church which is modified from the orders of Roman Catholicism, but it retains the same notions of clerical order which separates the members of the Church into two classes – clergy and laity.” Canadian Adventist Messenger, December 1993, p. 2. Statement made by Douglas Devnich, then-President of the Canadian Union of Seventh-day Adventists.

God has called Seventh-day Adventists to carry on the arrested Protestant Reformation --- a protest movement against Rome that has been abandoned by its one-time adherents (the evangelical churches). One example of this calling is to be found from the pen of Inspiration:

“While the Protestant world is becoming very tender and affectionate toward the man of sin, shall God's people take their place as bold and valiant soldiers of Jesus Christ, to meet the issue which must come, their lives hid with Christ in God?” Manuscript Releases, Volume. 14, p. 287 [Letter 112, 1890]

When we read from the Spirit of Prophecy that

“Christ was a protestant.....The Reformers date back to Christ and the apostles. They came out and separated themselves from a religion of forms and ceremonies. Luther and his followers did not invent the reformed religion. They simply accepted it as presented by Christ and the apostles.” Review & Herald, August 11, 1977.
what can be said about the inexcusable desire amongst some ministers and officials within the denomination to fraternise with the papacy and the ecumenical movement? What justification could be offered and rendered acceptable for adopting even the hierarchical order of the Roman Catholic Church and embodying it within the framework of the Seventh-day Adventist organizational structure?

“It is a backsliding church that lessens the distance between itself and the papacy.” Signs of the Times, February 19, 1894

“When Christ saw in the Jewish people a nation divorced from God, He saw also a professsed Christian Church united to the world and the papacy.” Review & Herald, October 8, 1901

This compromise with the papacy (and backsliding from the Lord) is a marked sign of apostasy — a reflection of the apostasy by the early church in its quest to unite with paganism, which ultimately produced the papacy. Eventually it led to the systematic persecution of millions of Bible-believing Protestants who would not surrender their God-given liberties. We are told that history shall be repeated again:

“It was apostasy that led the early church to seek the aid of the civil government, and this prepared the way for the development of the papacy — the beast…..So apostasy in the church will prepare the way for the image to the beast.” The Great Controversy, 1888 edition, pp. 443, 444.

“The Scriptures teach that popery is to regain its lost supremacy, and that the fires of persecution will be rekindled through the time serving concessions of the so-called Protestant world.” General Conference Bulletin, April 13, 1891.

Notwithstanding all the compromises that have been made towards Rome by evangelicals and Seventh-day Adventists since the Second Vatican Council, Protestantism shall remain a living principle in the hearts and lives of all those who will remain true to the Scriptures, even in the face of persecution. May God help us to honour the price that has been paid by our Protestant forbears, who bequeathed to us the delicate flame of civil and religious liberty that they hoped would never be extinguished again. Though prophecy tells us of the impending last conflict between “the Christianity of the Bible and the Christianity of human tradition” (Review & Herald, January 1, 1889), God will have His champions of truth who shall declare in that day, “Here I stand. I can do no other. So God help me. Amen.”

“The voice of Luther, that echoed in mountains and valleys, that shook Europe as with an earthquake, summoned forth an army of noble apostles of Jesus, and the truth they advocated could not be silenced by fagots, by tortures, by dungeons, by death; and still the voices of the noble army of martyrs are telling us that the Roman power is the predicted apostasy of the last days, the mystery of iniquity which Paul saw beginning to work even in his day…. Protestants are losing the mark of distinction that distinguished them from the world, and they are lessening the distance between themselves and the Roman power. They have turned away their ears from hearing the truth; they have been unwilling to accept light which God shed upon their pathway, and are therefore going into darkness….

“But though the attitude of the churches is discouraging, yet there is no need of being disheartened; for God has a people who will preserve their fidelity to his truth, who will make the Bible, and the Bible alone, their rule of faith and doctrine, who will elevate the standard, and hold aloft the banner on which is inscribed, "The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." They will value a pure gospel, and make the Bible the foundation of their faith and doctrine.” Signs of the Times, February 19, 1894

Manilla Evangelism

As this edition of Remnant Herald goes to print, Brother Elvis Placer is conducting an evangelistic series in the city of Manticao, on the Philippine island of Mindanao. This series was behind on June 5, and will be completed on June 18. Please pray for Elvis, that God will bless him with His Holy Spirit, and those who are attending the meetings.

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For years, the gospel that has been brought into our church largely by Des Ford, one of many false and dangerous gospels, has received support from different corners of the globe, largely from Australia, the USA, and Europe.

Recently I was introduced to a Seventh-day Adventist evangelist in the Melbourne area. He came to our local church near Melbourne, where he was invited by the pastor to conduct a series of evangelistic meetings.

Evangelistic meetings are vital for our church, but using the wrong gospel can have devastating effect on the quality of membership, based on the gospel they espouse. When some aberrations were brought to my attention, I reviewed his message and noticed that he taught a different gospel from our pioneers, Ellen White, Jones and Waggoner, and important ministries such as Hartland College, and Amazing Facts, Inc. I checked with Amazing Facts, and verified that my concerns were correct, that there were indeed serious differences.

It became evident that a new wave of ‘new theology’ is pushing through our ranks, and therefore our people need to be warned of this dangerous teaching.

As we know from Ellen White, to remain silent in a religious crisis is the greatest form of disloyalty we could display.

Because of this, I began, with some earnest brethren, to ‘prove all things,’ and ‘hold fast that which is good’, and ‘refuse the evil.’

Reviewing the website of this evangelist, www.hkea.org.au, I was surprised to find numerous classic new theology gospel statements, so similar to Des Ford. Then, only the next day, as I was sharing some of this with a brother, he said: I have heard that before!

He certainly had. Only recently had he been reviewing a sermon by Des Ford, in the USA, on the gospel. That sermon can be found on the internet, at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CW9yPT3MGXY. And also at: http://noelrt.com/?p=877#more-877.

Then, I read to him from the website, at: http://www.hkea.org.au/gospelsimple.pdf, and it became clear that the Herb Kersten Evangelistic Website had virtually copied the sermon by Dr Des Ford, on the Forensic Atonement.

Please don’t misunderstand. There is nothing wrong with using information that someone else has put together. Our deep concern is that it is the very gospel God’s people have been warned against, and have been concerned about, for decades now.

While Herb has publicly debated against Des Ford’s prophetic interpretations, he agrees with the same gospel that Ford teaches, and this is cause for serious concern. It is clearly different from the Bible and writings of Ellen White, and the 1888 message that God gave to Jones and Waggoner. Because God said that their message was the beginning of the loud cry of the fourth angel, we must be so careful not to discredit their message by making it look like Ellen White differed on the gospel, to Jones and Waggoner, during the 1888 conference.

Some of the serious errors taught at the above-mentioned web sources are printed on the following page, along with God’s clear truth, to reveal the difference, and to warn God’s people to “Quench not the Spirit, despair not prophesying. Prove all things, hold fast that which is good…”

It is a deadly teaching to state that justification is only a declaration by God, and doesn’t change the believer. God says:

“When we bring our lives to complete obedience to the law of God, regarding God as our supreme Guide, and clinging to Christ as our hope of righteousness, God will work in our behalf. This is a righteousness of faith, a righteousness hidden in a mystery of which the worldling knows nothing, and which he cannot understand.” Manuscript Releases, Volume 7, page 357

We need to check everything we hear by the word of God, and the writings of Ellen G White. Ellen White wrote 100% truth, not only as devotional material, but it is 100% truth theologically. There is not one heretical sentence in all that she wrote, and God Himself sealed Ellen White’s ministry with all the Biblical tests of a messenger of God. Only two prophets were given the titles and descriptions that Ellen White received. The other prophet was John the Baptist. No wonder Ellen White said the Testimonies should be in every SDA home and be read again and again. We would do well to take heed to the counsel from God through Ellen White:

The volumes of Spirit of Prophecy, and also the Testimonies, should be introduced into every Sabbathkeeping family, and the brethren should know their value and be urged to read them. It was not the wisest plan to place these books at a low figure and have only one set in a church. They should be in the library of every family and read again and again. Let them be kept where they can be read by many, and let them be worn out in being read by all the neighbors. Testimonies, Volume 4, page 390.

Please prayerfully read the fourth volume of the Testimonies for the church, page 390, and ask God to grant you unflinching allegiance to all the revealed will of God.
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>“You died at AD 31.” The NIV incorrectly says: “one died for all, and therefore all died.”</td>
<td>However, the KJV is quite different. It says, correctly, “if one died for all, then were all dead.” 2 Corinthians 5:14. In other words, Christ died for everyone, because everyone was dead in sin. The context of the chapter shows this quite clearly. So we did not all die at Calvary, even when we believe, we didn’t die 2000 years ago. We die to sin at the moment of repentance and faith in Christ.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>“You’re a villain, but I love you and I died for you. And just as you are, in all your stupidity, and in all your weaknesses, I accept you. I accept you.” Acts 10:35 “…he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.” Villains are only accepted when they become saints. We come to Christ as villains. He changes us into saints, and now we are accepted. “…if ye do these things, ye shall never fall. This is the only election spoken of in the Bible. Your election is dependent on your course of action.” Peter’s Counsel to Parents, page 30</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>“…I am ‘accepted in the beloved’ (Ephesians 1.6), ‘complete in Christ’ despite bad habits, failures, mistakes, and sins.</td>
<td>Refer to the truth of point 2, plus: “If you will to make your election sure, you can do so; If you will to make it uncertain by sinning while professing to be righteous, you can do so. You can become angry, you can be dishonest in trade, you can in other respects follow the course of the ungodly.” Ibid.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>“the Greek word for justification means not to ‘make righteous’ as though we were reformed, but it means to be ‘accepted as righteous’, to be ‘declared righteous.’” These teach that God declares you righteous even though you are not, THEN he makes you righteous. WRONG.</td>
<td>While this word may have an emphasis on declaration, never forget that God only declares the truth. He only declares you righteous because He has made you righteous. “Having MADE US RIGHTEOUS through the imputed righteousness of Christ, GOD PRONOUNCES US JUST, AND TREATS US AS JUST.” God’s Amazing Grace, page 181 (emphasis supplied)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>“…the righteousness of justification is 100%, it is outside of me - it is in Him, in Christ. But the righteousness of sanctification inside of me is never 100%. So you never worry about how you are doing, but how He has done.”</td>
<td>Both justification AND sanctification come from God, and transform us inside. AND both are 100% at every stage of development. “For, “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17). That which was objectionable in the character is purified from the soul by the love of Jesus. All selfishness is expelled. All envy, evil-speaking are rooted out and a radical transformation is wrought in the heart. {Manuscript Releases, volume 6, page 55.” Also read: Manuscript Releases, Volume 7, page 357 quoted on page 2199</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>“For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.” 2 Corinthians 5:14, NIV, CONTRAST WITH KJV…”then were all dead.”</td>
<td>KJV “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead.” 2 Corinthians 5:14</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>“Whenever Paul links righteousness with faith in Romans he’s only ever talking about justification. Not justification plus sanctification. That only robs you of assurance.”</td>
<td>“In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ has given a definition of true sanctification. He lived a life of holiness. He was an object lesson of what His followers are to be. We are to be crucified with Christ, buried with Him, and then quickened by His Spirit. Then we are filled with His life.” Selected Messages, Book 3, page 202. Sanctification is inseparable with justification.</td>
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The Middle Road
By Russell R Standish

In the current crisis of faith in our church, many have flattered themselves that they are admirable church members by declaring that they adopt a middle-of-the-road posture, being neither loose liberals nor fanatical conservatives. It is a comfortable posture. Usually such persons, if truth were told, simply lack a firm conviction. In secular circles it is possible that they may even be described as spineless. These people drift along the easy road, taking their cues from church leaders, and changing their stances in accordance with the whims and dictates of men in leadership, rather than from the unvarying commands of God. Such church members provided a fertile environment for papal-type dominance.

The Bible never speaks of three classes of people. There are only the saved and the lost. Christ spoke of the wheat and the tares. On another occasion He referred to the sheep and the goats. Those who wish to include a third category are going beyond Scripture. Christ does speak of the right and the left, but in a very different sense from the manner in which these terms are being used in God's church today.

*Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world...Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Matthew 25:34,41.*

Those on the left hand represent the lost, and those on the right, the redeemed.

These terms do not possess the political connotations which we often associate with them. Those on the left are not confined to Liberals, and the Conservatives are most certainly not represented by those on the right. Scripture reveals that both liberals and conservatives will be found on Christ's left. If this were not true then unrepentant Sadducees (the liberals of Christ's day) and the Pharisees (conservatives) would be saved.

It is true that in God's church today both classes abound. The liberals are found in large numbers destroying the distinctive doctrines of God's church and lowering virtually every Christian standard, growing ever bolder in their ecumenism. These liberals uphold abortion on demand, see no wrong in homosexual practice, attack the sanctuary doctrine, advocate the drinking of alcohol in moderation, enjoy movies, are unfaithful in their tithe paying, and regard adultery as a matter of minor importance, and Scripture as less than accurate. Liberals are in the vanguard of virtually every denial of doctrine and weakening of standards. They suffer

from the illusion that the broad way leads to life eternal.

Conservatives, on the other hand, believe that our doctrines are correct. They do not approve the lowering of standards. Some may even be as meticulous with their service to God as were the Pharisees of old. Just as the Pharisees in Christ's day were more dangerous than the Sadducees, so too are the conservatives in our day. None are more harsh in their treatment of God's flock than are the conservative elements in our church.

In Christ's day no group upheld with greater care the Sabbath, the law of God, and strict moral standards, than did the Pharisees. In the eyes of most believers they were destined for heaven. Yet these same men crucified the Son of God. They were totally oblivious to their fallen state. Christ declared that they boasted,

*If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Matthew 23:30.*

They truly believed their boast, while planning the death of One far holier than any slain by their forefathers. In planning this act, which surely must rate as the most diabolical in the entire history of this earth, these conservatives fully believed that they were fulfilling God's will and protecting His church. Their mistake was to imagine that God's church was themselves, the identical mistake of many conservative leaders in God's church today. God's church is His flock, of which church leaders are only a small fraction. Thus, while the Pharisees believed that they were protecting God's church they were in fact only protecting their own personal positions and authority. It was not the church of God that Christ threatened, but the usurped authority of the Jewish leaders.

It is a matter of deep distress when we reflect that the "radical right"of the 1990s were the humble pillars of God's church in the 1950s. Nothing reflects the damaging decline of God's church more than the use of the appellation *radical right wing*, to describe sincere level-headed followers of God's Word.

It takes little effort to be a bold liberal, and little more to be a courageous conservative. Thee stances we can take in our own strength. But it takes an infilling of God's omnipotent power to be a member of the remnant.

*From The Sepulchres are Whited* pp 15-22. Hartland Publications. Available from our office for

Remnant Herald No. 137, Jul/Aug 2011