

# VI. Adventism's Historic Witness Against Creeds

by William Wright

**“When God’s Word is studied, comprehended, and obeyed, a bright light will be reflected to the world; new truths, received and acted upon, will bind us in strong bonds to Jesus. The Bible, and the Bible alone, is to be our creed, the sole bond of union; and all who bow to this Holy Word will be in harmony. Our own ideas must not control our efforts. Man is fallible, but God’s Word is infallible. Instead of wrangling with one another, let men exalt the Lord. Let us meet all opposition as did our Master, saying, ‘It is written.’ Let us lift up the banner on which is inscribed, The Bible our rule of faith and discipline.”**—Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages, Book 1*, p. 416.

Ellen White’s clear declaration that the Bible must be our only creed, together with the historic Adventist witness against creeds, has made our church justifiably reluctant to legislate doctrine. Today, however, with some church leaders feeling it necessary to make a militant effort to preserve the landmarks of our faith, the question of creeds has arisen anew.

Two doctrinal statements, one on creation and the age of life on the earth, the other on the doctrine of inspiration and revelation, are currently being considered by our church. The process moves forward at two levels: first, the discussion about whether adopting such statements is the best way to preserve the landmarks; second, the effort to perfect the content of the statements themselves.

This article deals with the former problem,

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whether formal statements of a creedal nature (which is what these statements, if adopted, would amount to) are good and safe weapons with which to defend the faith. Although the article makes use of history, it is really a position paper. I here argue against the *adoption* of the proposed statements. This is a question of policy, not of doctrine. Hopefully, this article can provide evidence and arguments which those involved in these decisions and their consequences will want to weigh.

We must, of course, start with a definition of a “creed.” At its simplest level, a creed is any statement of belief. But here we are obviously concerned with *official* doctrinal statements promulgated by churches. The meaning of the word “creed” cannot be captured by any simple dictionary definition. It is a term overlaid with centuries of historical development and ecclesiastical controversy. Still, the semantic underbrush need not prevent our seeing the forest.

A first glance at our *Church Manual* might tempt us to throw up our hands. It contains at least three sets of statements which might be considered “creedal.” There are the “Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists,” the “Doctrinal Instruction for Baptismal Candidates,” and the “Baptismal Vow.”<sup>1</sup> Does this mean we have already drifted from our historic position and the counsel of the Spirit of Prophecy in this area? At least one has to admit that the trend has not been toward greater strictness in our effort to maintain our historic witness against creeds.

Still, there are significant differences between what we have done thus far, and what we are now in danger of doing.

Although these *Church Manual* statements

are “official” declarations on doctrine, they are all concise and brief, and are given either specific, limited functions, or very loose, ambiguous functions. For instance, when one looks at the reasons for which church members may be disfellowshipped, one finds that “denial of faith” in the “cardinal doctrines” of the church, or teaching doctrines contrary to the same, are grounds for dismissing members from fellowship. Still, nowhere are the “cardinal doctrines of the church” officially equated with the summary of the “Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists” in the form in which it appears in the *Manual*. That may be intended, but the ambiguity is significant—it is a logical outgrowth of our historic witness.

Another important factor which distinguishes our present doctrinal formulas from the type of creed against which Ellen White and our pioneers protested is that we have never formed creeds to settle controversy or denounce heresy within the church. Indeed, L. E. Froom observes that variant opinions on doctrinal questions were the very reason why, for long periods of time, statements of fundamental belief were omitted from our annual yearbooks.<sup>2</sup>

Adventist statements of belief have always expressed the broad, general consensus of the church. They have, unlike many creeds, emerged in periods of calm and brotherly agreement, not in periods of suspicion and crisis. This again is a monument to the influence of the Spirit of Prophecy within our church and to the power of our historic position.

There is, of course, no way of knowing whether our pioneers would approve the statements of faith we have already adopted. But, I am fairly certain that the statements currently under consideration would alarm them.

Why? The statements on creation and revelation are much longer and more detailed than any we have previously adopted on any given doctrinal question. They do not emerge out of the broad consensus of the church, but as a result of debate at high levels of theological, scientific and administrative leadership. They employ technical terms and phraseology about which many of us know

little or nothing. They will, if enacted, represent the first attempt by our church to settle significant differences of opinion within the church through creedal enactments. Finally, they will represent the first use of creedal formulas to guard any passage beside the fundamental one—the door to church membership through baptism.

It has been repeatedly suggested that prospective teachers in our institutions should be confronted with such statements and asked whether they agree with them. The statements are also designed to help administrators “evaluate” those currently employed, without, as it is said, undertaking a witch hunt or instituting an inquisition. It has also been discussed at the highest levels whether it would be appropriate to have people sign such statements and whether individuals would be willing to sign them. I do not claim that such a use was recommended or urged, merely that it was considered and discussed. My guess is that no one would have dared even raise such a question in the days of the pioneers. In all these ways these new statements represent a significant departure from the past.

The Adventist witness against creeds goes back to William Miller. F. D. Nichol notes that Miller was not overwhelmed by the controversy which arose early in the Advent Movement.<sup>3</sup> Nichol goes on to point out Miller’s “keen insight into human nature and his knowledge of church history.” Miller knew that in “past ages, when church authority was strong, controversy could sometimes be suppressed and a false appearance of calm be made to prevail. He neither possessed nor desired such authority,” Nichol tells us.

Miller’s own words are then quoted:

There is no sect or church under the whole heaven, where men enjoy religious freedom or liberty, but there will be various opinions. And our great men, leaders, and religious demagogues have long since discovered [this], and therefore come creeds, bishops and popes. We must then, either let our brethren have the freedom of

thought, opinion and speech, or we must resort to creeds and formulas, bishops and popes. . . . I see no other alternative.<sup>4</sup>

Millerites had been cast out of their former churches, not because they were proven wrong from the Bible, but because their beliefs were not in harmony with church creeds. But, unfortunately, the majority of the Millerites themselves, at the Albany Conference in 1845, drew a circle of narrow orthodoxy around their beliefs, excluding those who believed in the seventh-day Sabbath, the visions of Ellen White, and the ordinance of footwashing. That is how Sabbathkeeping Adventists acquired their original antipathy to creeds, an antipathy which echoes down to the present day.

It is little wonder Ellen White later wrote that the “creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils” should not be regarded as evidence for or against “any point of religious faith.”<sup>5</sup>

Still, the tension between this distrust of creeds and the need for some agreed-upon definition of Adventist doctrine became apparent early. At the organization of the Michigan Conference in 1861, a simple “church covenant” was proposed declaring that those who signed it associated them-

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selves together as a church, took the name Seventh-day Adventist, and covenanted to “keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus Christ.”

J. N. Loughborough, speaking with the majority, favored the covenant, and did not feel that it meant that Adventists were “patterning after the other churches in an unwarrantable sense.” Loughborough, nevertheless, took the occasion to voice his trenchant opposition to creeds:

The first step of apostasy is to get up a creed, telling us what we shall believe. The second is to make that creed a test of fellowship. The third is to try members by that creed. The fourth is to denounce as heretics those who do not believe that creed. And, fifth, to commence persecution against such.<sup>6</sup>

About the same time, Loughborough supplied the *Review* with a long list of anti-creedal quotations from various religious figures and ecclesiastical manuals. In one of the many statements, the Puritan divine Richard Baxter noted two things which, down through the ages, have “set the church on fire.”

First, enlarging our creed, and making more fundamentals than God made; and second, composing, and so *imposing*, our creeds and confessions in our own words and phrases.<sup>7</sup>

**A** landmark in the development of Adventist statements of faith was reached in 1872 when Uriah Smith anonymously authored a pamphlet titled *A Declaration of the Fundamental Principles Taught and Practiced by the Seventh-day Adventists*. Smith’s introductory remarks are worth quoting quite fully:

In presenting to the public this synopsis of our faith, we wish to have it distinctly understood that we have no articles of faith, creed, or discipline, aside from the Bible. We do not put forth this as having any authority with our people, nor is it designed to secure uniformity among them, as a system of faith, but is a brief statement of what is, and has been, with great unanimity, held by them. We often find it necessary to meet inquiries on this subject, and sometimes to correct false statements circulated against us, and to remove erroneous impressions which have obtained with those who have not had an opportunity to become acquainted with our faith and practice. Our only object is to meet this necessity.

As Seventh-day Adventists we desire simply that our position shall be understood; and we are the more solicitous for

this because there are many who call themselves Adventists who hold views with which we can have no sympathy, some of which, we think, are subversive of the plainest and most important principles set forth in the word of God.<sup>8</sup>

As strong as Smith's disclaimers were, the argument still had a certain ambivalence to it. He did, in fact, intend to secure a measure of uniformity among Adventists through his little pamphlet, at least he hoped to discredit the claims of some who said they were Adventists and yet held views with which Adventists had no sympathy. Still, his statement was an exercise in moral suasion rather than an effort on the part of the church to force the issue through "official" declaration and subsequent enforcement of the statement.

It is interesting to observe that Smith's pamphlet formed the basis for most of the subsequent statements of Adventist belief, and echoes of his language may be found in our current statement. Compare, for instance, these statements on Scripture:

*Uriah Smith, 1872:*

That the Holy Scriptures, of the Old and New Testaments, were given by inspiration of God, contain a full revelation of his will to man, and are the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

*Church Manual, 1976:*

That the Holy Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament were given by inspiration of God, contain an all-sufficient revelation of His will to men, and are the only unerring rule of faith and practice. (2 Tim. 3:15-17.)

As time went on, Adventists continued to reflect on the consequences of creeds. In 1874, Uriah Smith listed what he saw as the source of confusion and schism within Protestantism. Three great errors were at fault, he declared.

1. A wrong principle of interpretation.
2. An effort to bring the Bible to support what we have pre-determined to believe.
3. Reforming in part, and then barring the way to all further progress by a human creed.

This last is perhaps the worst error of all, for it is a step backward toward the spiritual tyranny of Rome.<sup>9</sup>

But, someone may argue, is it necessary to rehash our fundamental beliefs in every generation, to study and discuss without ever being able to freeze anything into an enforceable standard of doctrine? Don't we have some "nonnegotiable" beliefs? The questions are misleading in the present context. Of course, there are some irreducible fundamentals in Adventism, but the issues confronting the church today on the subjects of the age of life on the earth and on the nature of revelation and inspiration have *not* been discussed and debated in each generation. Our pioneers were aware of some problems along these lines, but we are faced with a mass of new discoveries in the earth sciences, history and archeology. Most laymen have little awareness of, nor have they had opportunity to ponder, the implications of the technical language in which the proposed creedal statements are phrased. But the larger question remains: whether any doctrine, however nonnegotiable and irreducible, ought to be defended and enforced through the decisions of ecclesiastical councils.

The possibilities for abuse in the enforcement of these statements are enormous. How will they really be used to "evaluate" present and prospective employees of the church? If one administrator uses them fairly, can we be sure another administrator will not use them in a cruel or capricious manner? In 1879, the *Review* reprinted an article which insisted on the right of every man accused of teaching false doctrines to appeal to the Scripture, and be tried by the Scripture; and on the duty of every church which recognizes the Scripture as the only final authority in matters of religious doctrine to test all teaching by Scripture, and be always ready to defend its historic faith from Scripture, and abandon whatever in that faith it cannot so defend.<sup>10</sup>

Can we really maintain this noble position once we have asked administrators to evaluate their employees by our creedal statements? Can we really maintain this position when these creedal statements declare positions on subjects about which the Scripture is totally silent? One draft of the statement on creation, for instance, said that the fossil record of past life was largely the product of the

deluge. That, however, is obviously a *scientific* statement, not a doctrinal or theological one. The Bible does not concern itself with the problem of fossils. Should the church be asserting itself on scientific questions with which the Bible does not deal?

Another milestone on the path toward our present position was passed in 1883. The year before, the General Conference had recommended that a committee prepare a church manual. In a gesture of genuine good faith and openness, the proposed manual, containing some 30,000 words, was published serially for discussion and criticism in eighteen *Review and Herald* articles, from June 5 to October 9, 1883. The proposed manual declared that “it should never be regarded as a cast-iron creed to be enforced in all its minor details upon members of the S. D. Adventist church;”<sup>11</sup> even so, the manual idea was defeated at the 1883 General Conference session.

The committee explained why the church turned away from the proposed manual:

It is the unanimous judgment of the committee, that it would not be advisable to have a Church Manual. We consider it unnecessary because we have already surmounted the greatest difficulties connected with church organization without one; and perfect harmony exists among us on this subject. It would seem to many like a step toward the formation of a creed, or a discipline, other than the Bible, something we have always been opposed to as a denomination. If we had one, we fear many, especially those commencing to preach, would study it to obtain guidance in religious matters, rather than to seek for it in the Bible, and from the leadings of the Spirit of God, which would tend to their hindrance in genuine religious experience and in knowledge of the mind of the Spirit. It was in taking similar steps that other bodies of Christians first began to lose their simplicity and become formal and spiritually lifeless. Why should we imitate them? The committee feel, in short, that our tendency should be in the direction of

simplicity and close conformity to the Bible, rather than in elaborately defining every point in church management and church ordinances.<sup>12</sup>

Late in the 1880s Adventists for the first time read *Review* articles mildly favorable to creeds. L. A. Smith, son of Uriah Smith, wrote on the “Value of a ‘Creed,’ ” but argued not so much for a formal official creed as against the idea that it is immaterial what a person believes so long as he agrees on a few simple basics of Christianity. “If there is anything which Scripture plainly teaches,” Smith declared, “it is the importance of possessing a clear and definite faith, or summary of religious beliefs; in short, a ‘creed’ in harmony with the truths God’s word has revealed.”<sup>13</sup> Smith did not stress that this had to be something officially enacted by the church—that was not the point at issue in this article.

A year later the younger Smith returned to the same theme, pointing out that in actuality, every person has a creed: “His creed is simply his belief.”<sup>14</sup> Obviously, Smith was not using the same definition of “creed” that we are using in this article.

In this atmosphere of renewed interest in creeds, the Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook of 1889 carried a statement of the Fundamental Principles of Seventh-day Adventists, offered as an informational statement of consensus. (The statement cropped up again in the Yearbook of 1905 and from 1907 to 1914.)

An outburst of Adventist comment on creeds occurred in early 1890, sparked, apparently, by the bitter and well-publicized struggle then in progress over the revision of the Presbyterian creed.<sup>15</sup>

The discussion began with a reprint in the *Review* of an article by a non-Adventist clergyman, Rev. J. M. Manning. Manning defended the use of creeds. If positive statements of Christian doctrine are neglected, Manning argued, the “descent to religious indifference” is swift—the very opposite of the argument which was advanced in 1883 when the General Conference rejected the proposed church manual.

Manning continued:

Such creeds are a safeguard against er-

ror. Having learned them in early childhood, and knowing that they contain the substance of the gospel, we are not deceived by new forms of error constantly springing up around us . . . . As good businessmen have their familiar tests by which to detect adulterations and counterfeits, so we have in a Christian creed, thoroughly learned and faithfully applied, a ready test by which we may distinguish all false gospels from the true. We know what human

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doctrines to accept and what ones to reject. We can tell the movements in society about us which are opposed to Christ, and those which are a development of his kingdom.

It is needful to our self-respect that we hold some positive religious belief. Indecision makes a man weak, suspicious, untrustworthy . . . . Our use of that colloquial phrase, “on the fence,” shows how we forfeit all title to respect by being without clear and pronounced beliefs.<sup>16</sup>

Manning went on to argue how important a creed is for purposes of instruction. It “stimulates the mind to hold a positive faith; to stand pledged to something which we feel bound to defend, which obliges us to search the Scripture, for the universal acceptance of which we toil and pray.” Again, the argument directly opposes the view taken by the General Conference. While the General Conference session saw creeds as a diversion from Scripture, Reverend Manning believed they would lead to a searching of Scripture.

**T**he very next week the *Review* carried a markedly different opinion on creeds,

penned by W. A. Blakely, editor of the *American State Papers* and a close associate of Adventist religious liberty workers. Blakely opened with a definition: “Creeds and confessions of faith are the designations given to the authorized or official expressions of the Church at large, or of some denomination or sect of the Church.”<sup>17</sup>

Blakely pointed out that creeds naturally spring out of theological arguments and controversies within the church, since there is a “natural inclination of humanity to desire to prevail in an argument,” especially where “one party considers that their views are the all-important thing, and at the same time that the views of the other party are extremely dangerous, and ought, by all means, to be suppressed.”

Then Blakely discussed the various objections to creeds. First, he pointed out that just because the views expressed in the creed are voted by the majority of some council, that does not necessarily make the view correct. “Is the truth,” Blakely asked, “to be determined by the *votes* of a majority in a conference, council or synod, especially when a percentage, sometimes large and sometimes small, do not fully understand the subject under consideration . . . ?”

Next, Blakely observed that the tendency of creeds “has invariably been to embitter the controversy, to multiply sects, to suggest and foster intolerance, and to transform persons who are naturally amiable, into acrimonious and malevolent persecutors.” Blakely admitted that this language might be strong, but insisted that it was nevertheless true.

Waxing Jeffersonian in eloquence, Blakely asserted that

just as soon as freedom of thought is hindered, just so soon and to just that extent progress and development are checked. The mind of man is the greatest and most wonderful creation of God. It was created for use . . . . And whenever any council, synod, conference, presbytery, or ecclesiastical power whatever dictates as to what a person shall believe, or what he shall not believe, that body is assuming prerogatives possessed by no earthly power.

For my own part, it is not because I trust the power of the human mind that I distrust creeds, but, quite to the contrary, that I am skeptical of the ability of uninspired minds to improve on the work of inspiration or to settle controversies which inspiration does not try to settle.

We come, now, to the genesis of our current statement of fundamental belief. In 1930, the African Division presented a request that a statement of Adventist beliefs be restored to the Yearbook, from which it had been absent since 1914.<sup>18</sup> Division leaders wanted something they could present to government officials in countries in which Adventist missionaries sought to work. Thus our current statement grew out of a need to inform outsiders about our beliefs.

In response to this request, the General Conference Committee appointed a group to prepare such a statement for the Yearbook. It was actually, however, Elder F. M. Wilcox who drafted the statement, which was published in the 1931 Yearbook.<sup>19</sup> No special authorizing action authorized the specific wording of the statement, nor was there any requirement that the statement be submitted to any further committees for approval. By common consent, it went into the 1931 Yearbook. The process was simple and noncontroversial because the statement was a general statement of a broad consensus directed at outsiders. It was not a razor designed to cut a fine line between orthodox and heterodox believers.

A *Church Manual* became a reality the following year, and it included a "suggested" outline for examination of baptismal candidates. In 1941 an Autumn Council approved a Summary of Fundamental Beliefs, and, in 1946, the General Conference assumed jurisdiction over the statement when it declared that it could no longer be changed except at a General Conference session.<sup>20</sup> Step by step, Adventist statements of belief have become ever more formal, ever more official.

**A**dventist experience with creeds has been so limited that it may be useful to go outside our own denomination for further evidence concerning their effect. I recently read

Harold Lindsell's militant new book, *The Battle for the Bible*.<sup>21</sup> Nothing could illustrate more clearly the dangers of counting as an ally everyone who contends (as Lindsell does in this book) for a "high view" of Scripture.

For our purposes here, the most instructive chapter is Lindsell's attack on Fuller Theological Seminary and its alleged drift toward liberalism. Fuller has replied to Lindsell in a special issue of its alumni journal, *Theology, News and Notes*. From this exchange emerges a tale from which Adventists might indeed profit.

Lindsell criticizes the seminary for changing its statement of faith, which formerly declared that the Bible was without error "in the whole or in the part." In Fuller's reply, William LaSor, an Old Testament professor, deftly points out the inadequacy of that formulation by citing the very obvious errors which Scripture teaches if taken only "in the part," that is, apart from the context of the entire Scripture: the lies of Satan, for example.

The point here is that Fuller Seminary got itself into difficulty by adopting an explicit statement of faith. It is instructive to notice the circumstances under which the original statement of faith was formed. Fuller had a professor, Bela Vasady, who was somewhat

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more liberal than his colleagues and whose participation in the World Council of Churches also provoked suspicion. Indeed, Vasady's affiliation with the World Council so disgusted many of the financial supporters of Charles Fuller's radio program, "The Old-Fashioned Revival Hour," that Fuller finally appealed to the seminary to get rid of Vasady.

How was Vasady gotten rid of? By drafting a statement of faith which he could not and would not sign. The ploy worked, but it left a number of far more conservative professors with a dilemma because they had reservations about the new creed which, to meet the crisis, had been gotten up in such haste.

When the statement of faith finally was revised to accord better with the majority position, Fuller Seminary was left vulnerable to attacks like those of Lindsell, who took the opportunity to accuse it of a drift toward liberalism.

The episode points up the hazard that creeds are almost impossible to change without embarrassment and acrimony. Any changes are likely to unleash on the creed-revisors charges of having abandoned the faith of the fathers.

As we consider whether to adopt or reject the proposed statements on creation and revelation, a number of questions need to be answered. Are these statements really expressions of the nonnegotiable fundamentals of our faith?<sup>22</sup> Or are they, on the other hand, merely the church's "current" understanding of its beliefs, subject to continued examination, discussion and reformulation? When one asks why the statements are needed, one gets the former answer: We have to defend the nonnegotiables. When one questions the credal nature of the statements, one gets the latter answer: These are not creeds because they are not to be cast in cement and declared the church's position for all time. But if they are nonnegotiable fundamentals, why not cast them in cement? The question remains: in what sense and by what criteria are these statements not creeds? And if they are creeds, how can they escape Ellen White's condemnation?

Of course, one may say, Yes, perhaps there is some danger in our enacting credal statements, but it's just the price we have to pay for the far greater value of preventing the church's loss of its faith. But is this really the only way to preserve the landmarks? Has it come to the place where with all the administrative talent, theological expertise, and Divine guidance with which the church is blessed it can think of no better way to defend the faith?

Another question. Suppose an administrator decides someone on his staff does not measure up to the test imposed by these statements? Then what? Does this person lose his chance for tenure or promotion? Is he to be fired? Does he go on trial? Before whom?

Creeds are tools. They may be sharp or blunt. The ones we are fashioning are particularly sharp. If we are to trust such sharp tools to human beings, we deserve to know who will be handling them and under what guidelines and protections. Will they be handled with the care, patience, training and concern of a surgeon or with the crude dispatch of a hooded executioner?

We should now summarize the various elements of the historic Adventist witness against creeds, along with some objections to creeds which grow out of our own study of the subject.

1) There is a tendency for the more specific doctrinal statement to seize interpretive control of the less specific. Thus when a credal statement attempts to define a doctrine more precisely than inspiration does, the creed becomes the authorized interpreter of Scripture rather than Scripture standing alone as its own interpreter. In trying to defend Scripture against the "opinions of learned men" and the "deductions of science," we need to do better than to substitute "the creeds and decisions of ecclesiastical councils." Not one of these, Ellen White says, should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith.<sup>23</sup>

2) As the General Conference of 1883 pointed out, once a creed is promulgated, people begin to look to it to obtain guidance in religious matters. Bible study and the leadings of the Spirit are neglected, and the church becomes formal and spiritually lifeless. "The selfsame principle which was maintained by Rome," Ellen White writes, "prevents multitudes in Protestant churches from searching the Bible for themselves. They are taught to accept its teachings *as interpreted by the church*; and there are thousands who dare receive nothing, however plainly revealed in Scripture, that is



contrary to their creed or the established teaching of their church.”<sup>24</sup>

3) As Blakely pointed out in the *Review* in 1890, creeds increase controversy, polarization and schism within a church rather than lessening it. There is potential for devisiveness not only in the content of the creed but also in the whole question of whether the creed should be adopted and how it should be used.

4) Truth cannot be determined by majority vote. Often a greater or lesser number of the majority are not even aware of what the issues are, but since creed-making involves official church actions invariably involving political and personal power relationships, creed-formation can easily be corrupted by personal or political ambitions.

5) Once a creed is enacted, any attempt to

change it will unleash charges of laxness and heresy on the very ones who are only attempting to safeguard the inspired writings. On the other hand, if the change is toward greater strictness and definition, similar charges of authoritarianism and narrowness are brought forward. This will be a greater hazard in direct proportion to the specificity of the creedal statement involved.

6) The enactment of a precise and detailed creed places a sharp tool in the hands of those in power. No matter how carefully some may handle such a tool, there are always those who will use it to coerce the conscience and impugn the motives and beliefs of their fellow church members.

For all these reasons, our church should seek other ways of defending and preserving the landmarks of our faith.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual* (Washington, D.C., 1976), pp. 34, 54, 61.

2. L. E. Froom, *Movement of Destiny* (Washington, D.C., 1971), pp. 412, 413.

3. F. D. Nichol, *The Midnight Cry* (Washington, D.C., 1944), pp. 294, 295.

4. *Ibid.*

5. Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, (Mountain View, Calif., 1911), p. 595.

6. J. N. Loughborough statement, quoted in “Organization of the Michigan Conference,” *Review and Herald*, Vol. 18 (October 8, 1861), p. 148.

7. Richard Baxter, as quoted in J. N. Loughborough, “Creeds,” *Review and Herald*, Vol. 18 (October 21, 1861), p. 176.

8. [Uriah Smith], *A Declaration of the Fundamental Principles Taught and Practiced by the Seventh-day Adventists* (Battle Creek, 1872), p. 1.

9. Uriah Smith, “Reformation Not Yet Complete,” *Review and Herald*, Vol. 43 (Feb. 3, 1874), p. 60.

10. “Don’t Stagnate in Creeds,” *Review and Herald*, Vol. 54 (Oct. 23, 1879), p. 141.

11. “The S.D.A. Church Manual,” *Review and Herald*, Vol. 60 (June 5, 1883), p. 361.

12. “General Conference Proceedings,” *Review and Herald*, Vol. 60 (Nov. 20, 1883), p. 733.

13. L. A. Smith, “The Value of a ‘Creed’,” *Review and Herald*, Vol. 64, (May 10, 1887), p. 298.

14. L. A. Smith, “Creeds,” *Review and Herald*, Vol. 65 (Nov. 6, 1888), p. 699.

15. Leffertz A. Loetscher, *The Broadening Church* (Philadelphia, 1954).

16. J. M. Manning, “The Use of Creeds,” *Review and Herald*, Vol. 67 (January 7, 1890), p. 5.

17. W. A. Blakely, “Why Not Have a Creed?” *Review and Herald*, Vol. 67 (Jan. 14, 1890), p. 19.

18. Robert W. Olson and Bert Haloviak, “Who Decides What Adventists Believe?” (mimeographed, Washington D.C., 1977), p. 13. For this and a number of other items in this paper I was led to the sources by this excellent collection of documents on this subject brought together by these two men.

19. L. E. Froom, *Movement of Destiny*, p. 414.

20. Olson and Haloviak, “Who Decides What Adventists Believe?” pp. 16-23.

21. Harold Lindsell, *The Battle for the Bible*, (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1976).

22. Willis J. Hackett, “Preserve the Landmarks,” *Review and Herald*, Vol. 154 (May 26, 1977), p. 2. Hackett speaks of how the church, years ago, “fixed certain landmarks of truth” which it has, ever since, “held to be nonnegotiable.” The intent of these statements is to “spell out clearly and in contemporary terms the basic body of truth that accounts for the church’s unique place.” Yet later in the editorial, Hackett speaks of the statements as simply the church’s “current majority understanding.”

23. Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 595.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 596.