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ERROR DRAWS ITS LIFE FROM THE TRUTH

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

It is through false theories and traditions that Satan gains his power over the human mind. We can see the extent to which he exercises his power by the disloyalty that is in the world. Even the churches that profess to be Christian have turned from the law of Jehovah, and have erected a false standard. Satan has had his hand in all this; for by directing men to false standards, he misshapes the human character, and causes humanity to acknowledge him as supreme. He works counter to the holy law of God, and denies God's jurisdiction. It is at his throne that every evil work finds its starting-point and obtains its support. RH October 22, 1895, par. 4

Clarifying The Godhead

Thabo Mtetwa

Introduction:

The present truth movement is comprised of Seventh Day Adventists. It exists within the broader Adventist ecosystem and is exposed to all the pathogenic false doctrines that exist within that ecosystem. The force of the present truth message has tended to immunize its adherents against many false teachings. But nevertheless some of these teachings do make their way into the movement. A pertinent example being the teachings of the anti-trinitarian movement which have in recent times been magnified to such an extent as to warrant a response. This doctrine has fastened itself like a parasite to the truth in the minds of some, and has been a source of distraction to ministries, study groups and fellowships that make this message their focus.

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diverse from the plant of heavenly origin. {Ev 589.1}

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This article has been produced in order to address the false teachings of the anti-trinitarian movement. It presents an overview of the key issues in relation to the teachings of this movement and sets forth their most glaring errors while also vindicating the truth. The arguments presented should be clear and conclusive enough to all but the most prejudiced. This article is addressed to people within the present truth movement and will therefore consider the subject through the use of principles and concepts familiar to most within the movement.

Defining the Problem:

Inspiration teaches that there is a "Heavenly Trio" comprising of three beings that are separate and distinct - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each person within this Godhead is God. Each retains their own personality but are one in purpose, character and mission.

...The Father is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and is invisible to mortal sight. {Ev 614.2}

The Son is all the fullness of the Godhead manifested. *The Word of God declares Him to be “the express image of His person.” “God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Here is shown the personality of the Father. { Ev 614.3}*

The Comforter that Christ promised to send after He ascended to heaven, is the Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead, *making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Saviour. There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will cooperate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.—Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 7, pp. 62, 63. (1905). { Ev 615.1}*

All three of these entities were present at the institution of the plan of redemption, and all three are working to bring it to completion.

The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption. *In order fully to carry out this plan, it was decided that Christ, the only begotten Son of God, should give Himself an offering for sin. What line can measure the depth of this love? God would make it impossible for man to say that He could have done more. With Christ He gave all the resources of heaven, that nothing might be wanting in the plan for man's uplifting. Here is love—the contemplation of which should fill the soul with inexpressible gratitude! Oh, what love, what matchless love! The contemplation of this love will cleanse the soul from all selfishness. It will lead*

the disciple to deny self, take up the cross, and follow the Redeemer. PH148 5.3

This position is in contrast to that of the anti-trinitarian movement which says that there are only two co-existing Persons that comprise the Godhead - God the Father and Christ the Son. They believe Christ is a created being and that the Holy Spirit is not a third distinct person, but the presence or power of the Father and the Son. They believe that to accept any arrangement which sees the Godhead as comprising of three entities is to receive the Catholic Trinity which they believe is the Omega apostasy.

There has been within the Adventist church a steady drift towards the adoption of Catholic ideas on this subject. One evidence of this is the adoption of the Catholic word “Trinity” to define the Godhead. The word was never used by Ellen White and was first introduced into the church's statement of fundamental beliefs in 1931 (see appendix). But that similarities exist between the Catholic doctrine and the truth on this subject (such as the identification of three entities comprising the Godhead) should not surprise anyone. Inspiration warns that the track of error lies very close to that of the truth.

*I have many things to say. **The track of error lies close beside the track of truth,** and at first sight many feet will be led astray, supposing they are in the very exalted way cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in; but that deceptive track widens more and more until all kinds of makeshifts and delusive, beautiful things, professedly called the truth, enter upon it. Lt301-1903.7*

If error did not bear a close resemblance to the truth it would lose its power to deceive. The very strength of error is in the fact that it bears so close a resemblance to the truth that the

incautious or undiscerning would be led to believe that it is the truth. The opposite but equally dangerous end of this scenario is because the error bears so close a resemblance to the truth, the incautious or undiscerning will reject the truth believing it to be error. The issue therefore is not what the Catholic church teaches but what is presented as truth by the plain words of inspiration.

The Testimony of the Spirit of Prophecy:

Ellen White is clear about the personality of the Holy Spirit.

We need to realize that the Holy Spirit, who is as much a person as God is a person, is walking through these grounds.—Manuscript 66, 1899 (From a talk to the students at the Avondale School.). Ev 616.5

The Holy Spirit is a person, for He beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. When this witness is borne, it carries with it its own evidence. At such times we believe and are sure that we are the children of God.... Ev 616.6

The Holy Spirit has a personality, else He could not bear witness to our spirits and with our spirits that we are the children of God. He must also be a divine person, else He could not search out the secrets which lie hidden in the mind of God. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."—Manuscript 20, 1906. Ev 617.1

She also makes very clear statements about the pre-existence of Christ.

In speaking of his pre-existence, Christ carries the mind back through dateless ages. He assures us that there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God. He to

whose voice the Jews were then listening had been with God as one brought up with Him.—*The Signs of the Times*, August 29, 1900. Ev 615.2

He was equal with God, infinite and omnipotent.... He is the eternal, self-existent Son.—Manuscript 101, 1897. Ev 615.3

*While God's Word speaks of the humanity of Christ when upon this earth, it also speaks decidedly regarding His pre-existence. **The Word existed as a divine being, even as the eternal Son of God, in union and oneness with His Father. From everlasting He was the Mediator of the covenant,** the one in whom all nations of the earth, both Jews and Gentiles, if they accepted Him, were to be blessed. "The Word was with God, and the Word was God." Before men or angels were created, the Word was with God, and was God.*—*The Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906. Ev 615.4

How then do anti-trinitarians manoeuvre around such statements to maintain their belief in doctrines that are clearly contrary to the plain reading of Inspiration? This will be explored in the following sections.

The Pioneers:

Proponents of anti-trinitarianism often point to the fact that the majority of the pioneers, particularly in the Millerite phase of the Advent movement, believed as they do on this subject. They are indeed correct on this point. The pioneers came from various denominational backgrounds and carried the doctrinal baggage of their denominational pasts with them into the Advent movement. What united them was the emphasis on Christ's second coming which had its basis in the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation.

But with the passage of time the diversity of views which characterized the Millerite

phase of the Advent movement gradually gave way to unity. Clear and sound positions were taken by the majority on such doctrines as the Godhead, the deity and eternal pre-existence of Christ, and the personality of the Holy Spirit, righteousness by faith, the true relationship of law and grace, and on the death of Christ as the complete sacrificial atonement for sin. One thing that helped bring about this unity is the fact that they were united in their understanding of the authoritative nature of the writings of Ellen White. It was understood that her visions and writings never contradicted the Bible but simply unfolded further light on that which the scriptures already taught. Thus the Spirit of Prophecy, whether it was expressed through Ellen Whites visions or her written counsels, was allowed to provide guidance in the framing of various doctrinal positions.

It is on this point that the anti-trinitarians make a dangerous mistake. They quote passages from inspiration in which Ellen White speaks of the importance of the writings of the pioneers:

God has given me light regarding our periodicals. What is it?—He has said that the dead are to speak. How?—Their works shall follow them. We are to repeat the words of the pioneers in our work, who knew what it cost to search for the truth as for hidden treasure, and who labored to lay the foundation of our work. They moved forward step by step under the influence of the Spirit of God. One by one these pioneers are passing away. The word given me is, Let that which these men have written in the past be reproduced. And in the Signs of the Times let not the articles be long or the print fine. Do not try to crowd everything into one number of the paper. Let the print be good, and let earnest, living experiences be put into the paper. CW 28.1

Based on passages such as that quoted above, anti-trinitarians make the extrapolation that what the pioneers

believed on the subject of the Godhead is correct; and constitutes a part of their testimony which is to be repeated in fulfilment of the instruction given in Counsels to Writers and Editors pg. 28. In doing this they ignore the fact that Ellen White subsequently provided light on this subject which corrected their position. The pioneers were led by God but they were not inspired men. Their writings cannot be placed on an equality with the biblical canon or the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy. By holding to the pioneer understanding of this doctrine in the face of light from Inspiration to the contrary, they place the writings of uninspired men above those of Inspiration. In doing this they make her writings of non effect and this is what she warned against when she stated the following:

The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Proverbs 29:18). Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God’s remnant people in the true testimony. He will bring in spurious visions to mislead, and will mingle the false with the true, and so disgust people that they will regard everything that bears the name of visions as a species of fanaticism; but honest souls, by contrasting false and true, will be enabled to distinguish between them. { 10MR 311.1 }
Likewise, he works through persons who have been reprovved for some inconsistency in their religious life, for some course of action which was dangerous to themselves and others. Instead of receiving the testimony as a blessing from God, they refuse the means God uses to set them right. Such apparently may be very zealous for God, but they put their own interpretation upon the Word and make it contradict what the Lord has revealed in the testimonies. They think they are doing

God's service, but such work God has not given them to do. { 10MR 311.2 }

The pioneers did not have all the light on certain points. They manifested a willingness to be corrected by Inspiration as God progressively unsealed truth to their understanding. This is seen with their understanding of Sabbath and Sunday, God's law, the laws relating to clean and unclean foods, the sanctuary and the atonement among others. Therefore it only makes sense that Inspiration have the final say on this subject also.

Making an Idol of False Doctrine:

The plain words of Inspiration teach that the Godhead comprises of three separate and distinct entities each with their individual personality. These words are so plain that they cannot be side-stepped or explained away. In the face of such decided testimony anti-trinitarians often resort to doing away with the passages wholesale by suggesting that they were added by Jesuits or by certain apostate leaders of the church. This is what is done with the passages quoted earlier from the book Evangelism. The first point here is that the book Evangelism is a compilation. Regardless of whether or not the man who compiled it was an apostate, this book is simply a collection of quotes taken from elsewhere in the Spirit of Prophecy. And a study of each of those passages will reveal that their presentation in the book Evangelism is true to their original context.

By suggesting that there are portions of the inspired writings which cannot be trusted anti-trinitarians exemplify their disbelief in the fact that God protects the integrity of His Word (Psalm 12:6-7). If the believer can be led by any argument to account any portion of Holy Writ unessential, they begin upon a slippery slope whose end is unbelief and apostasy. Ellen White warned against this and this will be seen to be the end-game of the anti-trinitarian doctrine by anyone who

follows such reasoning to its logical conclusion.

I have my work to do, to meet the misconceptions of those who suppose themselves able to say what is testimony from God and what is human production. If those who have done this work continue in this course, Satanic agencies will choose for them. . . . Those who have helped souls to feel at liberty to testify what is of God in the testimonies and what are the uninspired words of Sister White, will find that they were helping the devil in his work of deception. —Letter 28, 1906.

It is Satan's plan to weaken the faith of God's people in the Testimonies. Satan knows how to make his attacks. He works upon minds to excite jealousy and dissatisfaction toward those at the head of the work. CCh 93.5

The gifts are next questioned; then, of course, they have but little weight, and instruction given through vision is disregarded. Next follows skepticism in regard to the vital points of our faith, the pillars of our position, then doubt as to the Holy Scriptures, and then the downward march to perdition. When the Testimonies, which were once believed, are doubted and given up, Satan knows the deceived ones will not stop at this; and he redoubles his efforts till he launches them into open rebellion, which becomes incurable and ends in destruction. By giving place to doubts and unbelief in regard to the work of God, and by cherishing feelings of distrust and cruel jealousies, they are preparing themselves for complete deception. They rise up with bitter feelings against the ones who dare to speak of their errors and reprove their sins. CCh 94.1

If you lose confidence in the Testimonies you will drift away from Bible truth. I have been fearful that many would take a questioning, doubting position, and in my distress for your souls I

would warn you. How many will heed the warning? Testimonies for the Church 5:672-680 CCh 94.3

The preceding arguments address the subject at the most basic level - that of how one approaches the Spirit of Prophecy and the pioneers. The following sections will present arguments that have their basis in concepts and understandings that are emphasized by the present truth movement.

The Everlasting Gospel:

Many anti-trinitarians elevate the subject of the Godhead to one of testing present truth. That is to say that what one believes on this point has salvational implications and that their teachings on this subject are a special test for God's people at this time. Some do not claim to view it as testing present truth as stated above but they certainly behave as if it is by the debate and contention they raise whenever the subject is broached. Believers in the present truth message should be insulated against the idea that the doctrines of the anti-trinitarian movement are present truth by the understanding that the everlasting gospel is prophetic in nature. The everlasting gospel has been defined as a three-step prophetic testing message that develops and thereafter demonstrates two classes of worshippers.

The rule of first mention teaches that the first mention of a subject in the Bible presents all its essential qualities. And every subsequent mention of that subject is merely an unfolding of that which is summarily expressed in the first mention. The first mention of the everlasting gospel is Genesis 3:15. And Inspiration is clear that this was the first gospel sermon ever preached.

In Eden the first Gospel sermon was preached. God said to the serpent, "I will

put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." ST June 17, 1897, par. 5

But this first gospel sermon was also a prophecy. Thus establishing the fact that the everlasting gospel is prophetic.

*"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Genesis 3:15. **The divine sentence pronounced against Satan after the fall of man was also a prophecy, embracing all the ages to the close of time and foreshadowing the great conflict to engage all the races of men who should live upon the earth.** GC 505.1*

There is a new phase of truth, a new gospel message that goes to each successive generation. This gospel message is tailored to the needs of God's people and their circumstances in a given time. But it is always prophetic in nature. Now the anti-trinitarian doctrine is not prophetic. Therefore it cannot be the everlasting gospel and thus cannot be elevated to the status of a testing message that must be received by God's people or they will be lost.

Further to this, Inspiration teaches that the third angels message is to "engross the whole mind" and "the whole attention."

*I then saw **the third angel**. Said my accompanying angel, "Fearful is his work. Awful is his mission. He is the angel that is to select the wheat from the tares, and seal, or bind, the wheat for the heavenly garner. These things should engross the whole mind, the whole attention." EW 118.1*

The third angels message is a prophetic warning against receiving the mark of the beast. The increase of knowledge on the third angel shows it to be Daniel 11:40-45

and the truths associated with it. These truths are to engross the whole mind and the whole attention. This leaves no room in the minds of the balanced for the agitation of anti-trinitarianism and the false teachings that come in its train.

The Foundations:

The foundations of Adventism are set forth on the 1843 and 1850 charts.¹ It is significant that the truths on these charts are all prophetic in nature. By virtue of their being foundations, they must necessarily form the basis and substance of that which follows them. This would mean that subsequent phases of truth that may be characterized as present truth will be of the same nature as the source from which they issue forth; the foundation from which they are built. The anti-trinitarian doctrine is not seen or alluded to anywhere on these sacred charts. This should communicate to the sincere believer that the subject lies outside the borders of present truth. It should therefore not be allowed to distract from the third angels message which has been clearly defined, and which, as stated earlier, is to engross the whole mind and the whole attention.

The Light of the Midnight Cry:

A similar argument to that in the preceding section relates to Ellen White's first vision. In this vision the Midnight Cry is represented as a light behind the advent band that lights their pathway all the way up to the heavenly Canaan.

I seemed to be surrounded with light, and to be rising higher and higher from the earth. I turned to look for the advent people in the world, but could not find them, when a voice said to me, "Look again, and look a little higher." At this, I raised my eyes, and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world.

*On this path the advent people were traveling to the city which was at the farther end of the path. **They had a bright light set up behind them at the beginning of the path, which an angel told me was the "midnight cry."** [See Matthew 25:6.] **This light shone all along the path, and gave light for their feet, so that they might not stumble.** CET 57.2*

Samuel Snow's specific arguments drew from the 6000 years he suggested paralleled the six days of creation, of which the seventh millennium would be marked by Christ's second Advent; the 2520, the 2300 days, the 1335 and 1290 year prophecies, and the autumnal types of the sanctuary feasts which were prophecies to be fulfilled at the end of the world. However the Midnight Cry can be viewed more broadly as the truths set forth on the 1843 and 1850 charts. According to Ellen White's first vision these truths are calculated to prevent God's people from stumbling into darkness and apostasy. The Godhead is nowhere found or alluded to among these truths that constitute the Midnight Cry.

The Prophetic Context:

This controversy over the Godhead must be understood within the context of where God's people currently stand in prophetic history. And in order to understand their present position one needs to study the end of ancient Israel (the Jews at Christ's first advent) as they are a type of the end of spiritual Israel (the Seventh Day Adventist Church now at the end of the world). The Jewish nation at Christ's first advent is specifically highlighted as illustrating the position of God's people just prior to the second advent.² Therefore the fact that there was a Godhead controversy in Christ's day should indicate to us that there will be a Godhead controversy now at the end of the world.

When Christ came to the Jewish nation He presented Himself as God.

John 10:30-33 (KJV)

I and my Father are one. 31 *Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.* 32 *Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?* 33 *The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and **because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.***

John 5:17-18 (KJV)

But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. 18 *Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that **God was his Father, making himself equal with God.***

By His being God He was therefore representing Himself as being part of the Godhead. But the Jews did not receive this increase of knowledge on the Godhead. They could not move beyond their orthodox or "pioneer" understanding which said that God was one God. And there is no other being that is equal to Him.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (KJV)

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: 5 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

Luke 5:18-21 (KJV)

And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him. 19 *And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus.* 20 *And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.* 21 ***And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying,***

Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?

Now within the history of spiritual Israel there is an increase of knowledge on the Godhead. This increase of knowledge was given by Ellen White in the numerous statements in which she clarified the nature of the Holy Spirit - some of which have been shared in previous sections of this study. In these statements she clearly presents the Holy Spirit as a third person - separate and distinct from the Father and the Son. But as with the Jews in Christ day, there are those in Adventism who will not move beyond the pioneer position on this subject. They cling to the understanding that the Godhead comprises of only two persons - the Father and the Son. In the dispensation of the Son, when He walked upon the earth the Jews did not receive the truth that He was part of the Godhead. And now in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, which Christ sent at Pentecost, and which is now being poured out in the latter rain, there are modern Jews who will not receive the truth that the Spirit is God - the third person of the Godhead - and that the Spirit is a person separate and distinct from the Father and the Son.

Anti-trinitarians often point to the fact that the Bible does not give any instruction to pray to the Holy Spirit. They suggest that this is proof that the Holy Spirit cannot be God. The scriptural counsel to pray to the Father in the name of the Son does not contradict the testimony that the Holy Spirit is God. In like manner, the fact that God's people are instructed to refer first to the Bible before resorting to the the Spirit of Prophecy, in no way contradicts the fact that the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy are on an equality as far as inspiration is concerned. In like manner, the fact that man is woman's head does not make the woman any less human or any less a child of God. All this reveals is that there is a system and an order to how

God works with His people and how He wants His people to relate to Him. To suggest that the absence of counsel to pray to the Spirit is evidence that the Spirit is not God is to read into the inspired texts more than their plain readings would allow.

An Instructive Counterfeit:

It is a contention of the anti-trinitarians that there are fundamentally two beings that comprise the Godhead - these being the Father and the Son. And that the Holy Spirit is not a separate and distinct person but merely the presence of the Father and the Son. Truths that have formed part of the prophetic message for some time can give us clarity on how to view this subject. An example is the principle that Satan counterfeits God's order. Satan's desire from the beginning was to "be like the most high."

Isaiah 14:12-14 (KJV)

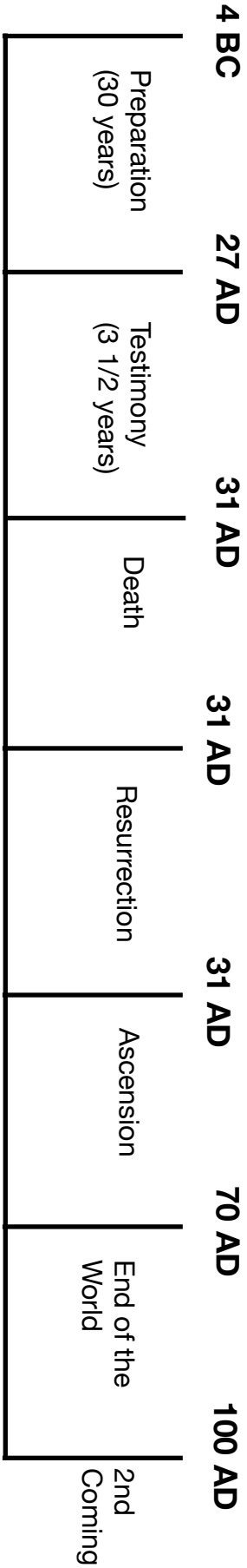
How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! 13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

And it is this desire that has led him to counterfeit God's order in many things. An example can be seen in the study entitled the "Pattern of Christ." In this study it can be seen that Christ lived out a pattern when He ministered in person at the beginning of the gospel era. He underwent thirty years of preparation in which he lived in relative obscurity. At the age of thirty He entered upon His public ministry in which He gave His testimony that He was the son of God. His three-and-a-half years of testimony was followed by His crucifixion. After three days He was resurrected and then He ascended to

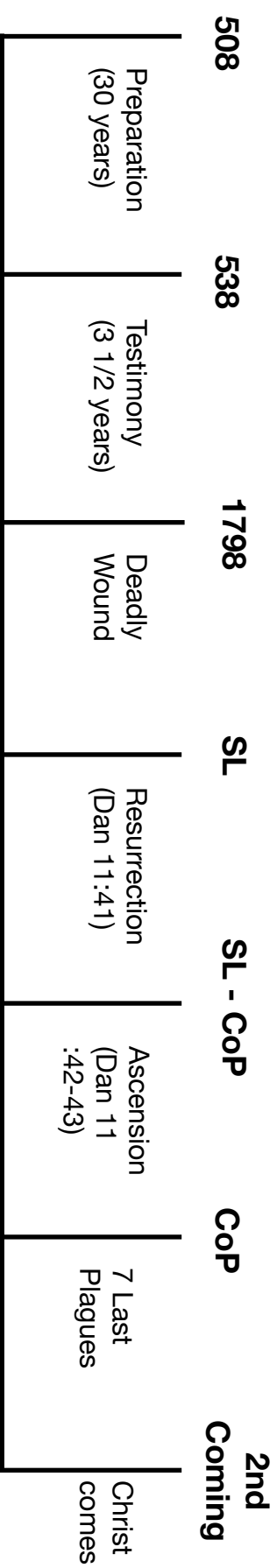
Heaven. The destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD typifies the destruction of the world just prior to His second coming. And Christ coming to John on the Island of Patmos typifies the second coming at the end of the world.

Satan's counterfeit of the pattern of Christ is expressed through the Papacy which is his earthly representative. The Papacy underwent thirty years of "preparation" from 508 - 538 AD when the Daily (paganism) was taken away and the Papacy itself was being set up. The Papacy then gave its satanic testimony for three and a half prophetic years from 538 - 1798. When it concluded its testimony it received a deadly wound paralleling Christ's crucifixion. The Bible teaches that Papacy's deadly wound will be healed. This parallels Christ's resurrection. After the healing of the deadly wound the Papacy will ascend to the throne of the earth. The short season within which it will bear universal rule will be followed by the destruction of the world when the four winds are fully loosed and the seven last plagues are poured out. This is followed by Christ's second coming.

Christ:



The Beast:



Thus it is seen that Satan, in his desire to be like the Most High, counterfeits the order of heaven. Satan is therefore governed by the Bible - the revelation of the order and operations of the Most High - in how he presents himself and the manner in which he works. Satan is the king of the north who is a counterfeit of Christ the true king of the north. He is a roaring lion which is a counterfeit of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. He is Lucifer the light-bearer and the ancient modes of worship he devised to deceive involve the worship of himself as a sun god. This is a counterfeit of Christ who is the Sun of Righteousness.

In the final battle preceding Christ's second coming Satan works through three entities - the dragon, the beast and the false prophet. These entities are separate and distinct, but one in their satanic purpose to make war against God's people and the third angels message. The question to ask is where does Satan get this arrangement from? Satan's three-fold union, the union through which he will set himself upon the throne of the earth, is a counterfeit of the three-fold union of the Godhead - the Father, the Son and the Spirit, who bear rule over all creation. Thus the prophetic principle that Satan counterfeits the work of God presents an important witness to the fact that the Godhead comprises of three separate entities.

In Closing:

This article has sought to set forth a few simple but clear and conclusive lines of thought on the subject of the Godhead and the false doctrines of the anti-trinitarian movement. God's people now stand on the very borders of the close probation. It is a tragedy that some have allowed this doctrine to divert their attention from the sealing truths for this time. It is even more of a tragedy that some have allowed this false doctrine to

create divisions among them. But while probationary time remains there is opportunity to correct ones course and establish themselves firmly upon the testing truths for our time. May each consider whether they are indeed in the faith or giving heed to cunningly devised fables.

Appendix:*An Overview of the Trinity Within the Fundamental Beliefs of the Seventh Day Adventist Church.*

Year	Fundamental Beliefs
1872	<p>-I- That there is one God, a personal, spiritual being, the creator of all things, omnipotent, omniscient, and eternal, infinite in wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, truth, and mercy; unchangeable, and everywhere present by his representative, the Holy Spirit. Ps. 139:7. {1872, FP1872 4.2}</p> <p>-II- That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father, the one by whom God created all things, and by whom they do consist; that he took on him the nature of the seed of Abraham for the redemption of our fallen race; that he dwelt among men full of grace and truth, lived our example, died our sacrifice, was raised for our justification, ascended on high to be our only mediator in the sanctuary in Heaven, where, with his own blood he makes atonement for our sins; which atonement so far from being made on the cross, which was but the offering of the sacrifice, is the very last portion of his work as priest, according to the example of the Levitical priesthood, which foreshadowed and prefigured the ministry of our Lord in Heaven. See Lev. 16; Heb. 8:4, 5; 9:6, 7; etc. {1872, FP1872 4.3}</p>
1889	No significant change
1931 : Introduction to the word Godhead and Trinity	<p>2. That the Godhead, or Trinity, consists of the Eternal Father, a personal, spiritual Being, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, infinite in wisdom and love; the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father, through whom all things were created and through whom the salvation of the redeemed hosts will be accomplished; the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, the great regenerating power in the work of redemption. Matt. 28:19. {1931, FB1931 377.3}</p> <p>3. That Jesus Christ is very God, being of the same nature and essence as the Eternal Father. While retaining His divine nature He took upon Himself the nature of the human family, lived on the earth as a man, exemplified in His life as our Example the principles of righteousness, attested His relationship to God by many mighty miracles, died for our sins on the cross, was raised from the dead, and ascended to the Father, where He ever lives to make intercession for us. John 1:1, 14; Heb. 2:9-18; 8:1, 2; 4:14-16; 7:25.</p>
1942	No change
1957 : Questions on Doctrine p. 21-22	In Common With Conservative Christians and the Historic Protestant Creeds, We Believe— That the Godhead, the Trinity , comprises God the Father, Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
1975	No change

<p>1981: removal of the word “Godhead” to keep only the Catholic term: “Trinity”. Introduction of the concept “Three-in-one God”</p>	<p>2. The Trinity {1981, FB1981 5.4} There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three co-eternal Persons. God is immortal, all-powerful, all-knowing, above all, and ever present. He is infinite and beyond human comprehension, yet known through His self-revelation. He is forever worthy of worship, adoration, and service by the whole creation. (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 4:46; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 Tim. 17; Rev. 14:7.) {1981, FB1981 5.5}</p> <p>3. The Father {1981, FB1981 5.6} God the Eternal Father is the Creator, Source, Sustainer, and Sovereign of all creation. He is just and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. The qualities and powers exhibited in the Son and the Holy Spirit are also revelations of the Father. (Gen. 1:1; Rev. 4:11; 1 Cor. 15:28; John 3:16; 1 John 4:8; 1 Tim. 1:17; Ex. 34:6, 7; John 14:9.) {1981, FB1981 5.7}</p> <p>4. The Son {1981, FB1981 5.8} God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through Him all things were created, the character of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is accomplished, and the world is judged. Forever truly God, He became also truly man, Jesus the Christ. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived and experienced temptation as a human being, but perfectly exemplified the righteousness and love of God. By His miracles He manifested God's power and was attested as God's promised Messiah. He suffered and died voluntarily on the cross for our sins and in our place, was raised from the dead, and ascended to minister in the heavenly sanctuary in our behalf. He will come again in glory for the final deliverance of His people and the restoration of all things. (John 1:1-3, 14; Col. 1:15-19; John 10:30; 14:9; Rom. 6:23; 2 Cor. 5:17-19; John 5:22; Luke 1:35; Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 2:9-18; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4; Heb. 8:1, 2; John 14:1-3.) {1981, FB1981 5.9}</p> <p>5. The Holy Spirit {1981, FB1981 5.10} God the eternal Spirit was active with the Father and the Son in Creation, incarnation, and redemption. He inspired the writers of Scripture. He filled Christ's life with power. He draws and convicts human beings; and those who respond He renews and transforms into the image of God. Sent by the Father and the Son to be always with His children, He extends spiritual gifts to the church, empowers it to bear witness to Christ, and in harmony with the Scriptures leads it into all truth. (Gen. 1:1, 2; Luke 1:35; 4:18; Acts 10:38; 2 Peter 1:21; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 4:11, 12; Acts 1:8; John 14:16-18, 26, 27; 16:17-13.) {1981, FB1981 5.11}</p>
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¹ The Foundations of Adventism, <<http://www.futurenews.ca/the-foundations-of-adventism/>>, accessed 13-02-2019

² *The trials of the children of Israel, and their attitude just before the first coming of Christ, illustrate the position of the people of God in their experience before the second coming of Christ. — The Review and Herald, February 18, 1890. HL 280.1*

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