



Prominent Participants in Adventist-Evangelical Conferences (L-R): Donald Grey Barnhouse, Walter R. Martin, T. Edgar Unruh (*Adventist Heritage*, Winter 1977). Bottom row (L-R): LeRoy E. Froom (credit: Center for Adventist Research); Walter E. Read (courtesy of Graham Barham); R. Allan Anderson (credit: Adventist Heritage Centre, Australia).

Adventist-Evangelical Conferences, 1955–1956

GILBERT M. VALENTINE

Gilbert M. Valentine, Ph.D. has served internationally in teaching and senior administrative roles in Adventist higher education in Europe, Asia, the South Pacific and North America. He has written extensively in Adventist studies and has authored several books, including biographies of *W. W. Prescott* (2005) and *J. N. Andrews* (2019). *The Prophet and the Presidents* (2011) explored the political influence of Ellen White. He has also written for the *Ellen G. White Encyclopedia* (2013).

The Adventist-Evangelical Conferences of 1955-1956 initiated by Protestant polemicist Walter R. Martin constituted a watershed development in the history of interfaith relationships between Adventists and evangelical Christians.

Involving a small group of Seventh-day Adventist church officials and prominent evangelical churchmen, the 18-month-long dialogue achieved a more appreciative understanding of important shared doctrinal positions. The conferences also resulted in the correction of doctrinal misunderstandings that had prevented spiritual fellowship and had led some evangelicals to view Adventists as a cult. The new era of more amicable interfaith relationships followed a wave of new initiatives in Adventist apologetics and resulted in important apologetic works published by both sides of the dialogue. On the other hand, in the 15 years following the conferences these publications generated intense resistance within the respective communities to some of the new understandings that conferees had reached. The publication of *Questions on Doctrine*, the written response to questions generated by Walter Martin during the discussions, led to a deep theological rift within the Adventist community that has yet to be healed and some fear may never be healed.

The Conferences and the People

The conferences began on March 8, 1955, when five conferees met together for what was initially intended to be just a brief exchange. The dialogue partners soon expanded to involve other personnel and eventually the meetings stretched out over about 18 months and involved a total of 18 consultation sessions of varying lengths.¹ Convened in four different east coast locations, Washington, D.C., the Pennsylvania towns of Reading and Doylestown, and New York, some consultations were one-day events while others convened over two or three days.

The meetings were requested by Baptist clergyman Walter R. Martin, who had recently authored books against Jehovah's Witnesses and the Christian Science Church.² In early 1955 he had sent to his publisher a manuscript for a book to be entitled *The Rise of the Cults*.³ The manuscript included a short critical chapter about Adventists, listing them as one of the "big five" of the "cults."⁴ Martin, also a consulting editor for the widely read evangelical magazine *Eternity*, edited by Presbyterian minister Donald Grey Barnhouse, had been commissioned by Barnhouse to write more extensively against Seventh-day Adventism. According to Adventist historian Julius Nam, they envisioned a separate book analyzing Adventist doctrines and warning against the deceptiveness of the church.⁵ Wanting to have a more accurate understanding of the Adventist church's current teachings before writing, Martin contacted T. Edgar Unruh, president of the East Pennsylvania Conference of Seventh-day

Adventists to arrange face-to-face meetings with appropriate church officials. Unruh had established a friendly correspondence some years earlier with Donald Barnhouse after Unruh heard one of Barnhouse's radio programs and wrote to commend him on it. Martin had discovered the correspondence in his initial research in Barnhouse's files in preparation for his proposed book.⁶ Consequently, Martin requested Unruh to introduce him to former *Ministry* magazine editor, Leroy Edwin Froom, because Martin had become familiar with Froom's recently published four-volume apologetic project, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, and was impressed by its scholarship.

The first of the historic meetings was held at General Conference headquarters in Washington, D.C., with Martin accompanied by a friend, George E. Cannon, a New Testament professor at Nyack Missionary College in New York, operated by the Christian and Missionary Alliance denomination. Martin apparently invited Cannon along to deal with biblical exegesis questions.⁷ Froom was accompanied by British-born Walter E. Read, a field secretary of the General Conference. Edgar Unruh, an experienced church leader with a background in education, acted as chair of the small group. and would continue to do so throughout the 18 months.⁸

After the first two-day session resulted in correction of substantial misunderstandings on Martin's part and development of much warmer than expected personal relationships, the participants all agreed that the meetings would need to be extended, and that they would need to include Martin's sponsor and publisher, Donald Barnhouse, his clergyman son, and Russel Hitt, Barnhouse's publishing associate. On the Adventist side Froom and Read suggested in May 1955 that Roy Allan Anderson, the current *Ministry* editor and an experienced evangelist and church diplomat also be invited to join the Adventist team, making for a trio that became known colloquially by a combination of their initials, FREDA. Anderson had developed warm relationships with influential evangelical scholar Carl F. H. Henry and with Bernard Zondervan, a co-founder of Zondervan Publishing. Before finally concluding in 1956, the dialogues also involved discussion sessions with groups of faculty from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C.⁹ Arrangements were also made for Martin to travel to California to meet Voice of Prophecy speaker H. M. S. Richards and his staff and other church leaders and scholars on the west coast. This was to help demonstrate to Martin and Barnhouse that the theological perspectives Froom, Read and Anderson were sharing with them genuinely represented a strong "consensus" view within Adventism.¹⁰

Unruh kept General Conference officials advised of developments.¹¹ General Conference President, R. R. Figuhr, after initial caution, warmly supported the initiative. Caution was needed for negative attitudes toward other Christian denominations had long been part of Adventist identity and moderating or modifying this posed dangers for Adventist leadership.

Historical Context

For most of its first hundred years, Julius Nam observes with some understatement, Adventists and other Protestants “harbored a degree of suspicion and hostility toward the other.” These feelings originated in the early 1840s when the Millerites became alienated from their denominations as a result of their insistence that Christ would return in 1844. After 1844, some of the separated Adventists then became strong advocates for the observance of the seventh-day (Saturday) Sabbath as a decisive marker of the end-time faithful remnant. They regarded observance of the first-day (Sunday) Sabbath as a practice instituted by the papacy and identified Protestants who failed to follow the “new light” on the biblical Sabbath as “apostate.”

Many Christians considered Adventists to be guilty of legalism—the Galatian heresy. Adventist acknowledgement of Ellen White’s visions as having spiritual authority for the community exacerbated the negative perceptions of other Christians. From these earliest years Protestants began to brand “Adventism as cultic and heretical” notes Nam, while Adventists, in turn, “denounced Protestantism as Babylon.”¹² Later, biting criticism from prominent former Adventists such as Dudley M. Canright and E. B. Jones, contributed further “to promote the cultic image” that Protestants had of Adventists during the decades around the turn of the century.¹³ Walter C. Irvine, a Church of the Brethren missionary to India and a popular counter-cult writer, further promoted such perspectives when he included Adventism in his influential *Timely Warnings* (1917), a discussion of 20 religious movements he considered as “heretical cults.”¹⁴ Christian Reformed minister Jan Karel Van Baalen, drawing heavily on Irvine’s book and on the writings of Dudley Canright, would continue to promote this perception of Adventism to the next generation of evangelicals in his 1938 volume *The Chaos of Cults*.¹⁵

During the 1920s, Adventists found common cause with the Fundamentalist movement that reacted against the advance of the evolutionary theory of origins and acceptance of German higher critical approaches to scripture in the Protestant denominations. Yet, despite this somewhat more benign Adventist sentiment toward fundamentalist Protestants, writers such as Irvine and Van Baalen would continue to identify Adventists as heretical and cultish.¹⁶ During the 1930s and 1940s, ongoing doctrinal criticism, particularly regarding teachings about Christology and the Godhead contributed to maturing theological reflection on the part of Adventists. They began to revise or delete problematic unorthodox expressions from their classic doctrinal books such as *Bible Readings for the Home Circle* and Uriah Smith’s *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation*. Such revisions excised notable anti-Trinitarian expressions, semi-Arian perspectives in Christology and expressions about the sinful nature of Christ that were starting to be seen as inadequate.¹⁷ The revisions represented a slow but genuine strengthening consensus around more orthodox statements of Christian doctrine although earlier heterodox views still prevailed among many in the church.

During the early 20th century a new wave of scholarly apologetic writing in defense of Adventist doctrinal perspectives eventually led to a moderating of the criticism of Adventism and a tentative reassessment of its categorization as a cult on the part of a few evangelicals. Some prominent Adventist authors at this time focused on publishing books that attempted to demonstrate the orthodoxy and “normalcy” of Adventism to Fundamentalists since, Julius Nam notes astutely, it was the Fundamentalists within the broader category of

evangelicalism who “were the authors and consumers of anti-Adventist literature.”¹⁸

Francis Nichol, for example, who joined the editorial staff of the *Review and Herald* in 1927 and became its senior editor in 1945, published five carefully written, well-reasoned apologetic volumes intended to persuade both Adventist and non-Adventist readers of the orthodoxy and validity of Adventist truth. The most notable were *The Midnight Cry*, a history of Millerism; *Answers to Objections*, a defense of Adventist doctrines; and *Ellen G. White and Her Critics*.¹⁹ Nichol's *Midnight Cry* was cited positively by some non-Adventist historians and sharply critiqued by others. It demonstrated, however, that Adventism, with its Millerite roots, was a serious topic of historical enquiry.²⁰ Other authors contributing to the new wave of apologetic literature included evangelist and administrator Carlyle B. Haynes and William H. Branson, vice president and eventually president of the General Conference (1950-1954). Haynes produced a flurry of books and pamphlets and Branson authored a long-anticipated reply to the criticisms of Dudley Canright.²¹ The willingness of the *Review and Herald* publishing house to embark on the development of a multivolume Bible commentary in the early 1950s based on more rigorous exegetical principles than simple proof-texting also demonstrated a shift in Adventism toward engaging more seriously with the larger religious and academic community.

LeRoy Froom's *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* (1946-1954), published by the Church's flagship publisher, the *Review and Herald*, was perhaps the most influential set of apologetic volumes from this period. Froom's series on the history of prophetic interpretation endeavored to show how Adventism's historicist approach was rooted in a long hermeneutical tradition that could be traced back to the Early Church era. The four volumes were richly documented, had been reviewed by numerous non-Adventist scholars and were widely circulated to seminaries and libraries. Froom believed that the volumes led to a significant muting of negative criticism of Adventist doctrines and that they provided a much stronger basis for taking issue with prejudicial misrepresentations of the church and its teaching that had appeared in various general encyclopedias and reference works. He had developed connections with Wilbur M. Smith of Fuller Theological Seminary about the volumes and he would also cite the example of how the series provided opportunity for him to dialogue with Dr. E. Schuyler English, the Plymouth Brethren editor of the popular evangelical expository magazine *Our Hope*. English retracted statements about Adventists he had made in error and gave strong affirmation of Adventism's orthodoxy on Christology.²² It was the scholarship of *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* that led Walter Martin to seek out LeRoy Froom as he prepared for his projected further writing against Adventism for Donald Barnhouse.

Central Issues of Discussion

Unruh recalled that the first meeting in March 1955 “could best be described as a confrontation.” Martin, who expected “resistance and cover-up,” brought to his initial discussions with Froom and Read “a formidable list” of aggressive questions framed by his reading of Canright and other similar critics of Adventism, and posed them in a way that seemed designed to expose Adventism in its heresy.²³ Martin had read statements in 19th-century

Adventist literature denying the Trinity and Christ's co-equality with God the Father.²⁴ How could Adventists be both anti-Trinitarian and semi-Arian and still claim to be Christian?

Instead of giving defensive responses, Froom focused on asserting Adventism's fundamental Protestant understanding of the primacy of scripture and its ultimate authority. This premise laid a foundation for discussions on the role of Ellen White and the nature of her authority. She was subject to scripture, Froom affirmed. He then outlined 19 basic Adventist beliefs that he said Adventists shared with theologically orthodox Christians of all traditions in all ages. These, he argued, established Adventists as "truly Christian." Then he outlined 12 beliefs on which Protestants might legitimately differ and are not held exclusively by Adventists, such as the mode of baptism, the seventh-day Sabbath, or the idea of soul-sleep. Finally he outlined five other distinctive beliefs which applied to Adventists' concept of their end-time mission. These, he explained, were of importance for Adventist identity, but they did not conflict with other core Christian beliefs.²⁵ The Adventist conferees shared extensive reading material with Martin and Cannon as hard evidence of what they had explained—literature reflecting contemporary, public, Adventist expressions of their faith. They also promised to respond in writing to Martin's questions so that the exchange of information would be clear and unequivocal. After the first session, Froom promptly prepared a 20-page written response.

Overnight reflection on the reading material and on the presentation by Froom and Read persuaded Martin and Cannon that many of their pre-conceptions and prejudices about Adventism had been misinformed. A disconcerting awareness had developed that at least those Adventists who believed the same as their conferees "were truly born-again Christians."²⁶ Martin's totally "unexpected" announcement the next morning that they could no longer consider such Adventists as heretics but "redeemed brothers in Christ," was noted by Froom as "really remarkable." Martin followed with the "dramatic gesture" of extending the hand of fellowship.²⁷ As Nam observes, these actions "permanently changed the nature of the relationship between Adventists and Evangelicals."²⁸ The tone of the meetings changed radically. The turnabout posed new challenges for Martin and his writing project and it became clear during the second day that the discussions would need to continue, that they should involve Martin's sponsors and that time would be needed to develop further written materials to document the new understandings reached.

Follow-up meetings were held at Unruh's office in Reading in late March and then again at the General Conference in April. New sets of questions were drawn up for discussion.²⁹ Then in August 1955 the expanded group of conferees met for two days at Donald Barnhouse's home in Doylestown. Like Martin, Barnhouse became convinced that they would need to publicly acknowledge their misreading and maligning of Adventism if its doctrines were really as had been explained to them. Preparation for these public acknowledgments and the need for further clarification and documentation involved lengthy discussion sessions stretching out over another year.³⁰ Toward the end of 1955 the series of exchanges were nearly derailed when Martin's *Rise of The Cults* was published by Zondervan and it was found to include a short negative discussion of Adventism. The Adventist conferees were offended that after their long discussions, Martin had still included the denomination

in the book and a scheduled meeting was cancelled while the problem was sorted out. Martin apologized, explaining that the book had been in press for some time and he had not been careful enough to properly revise it.³¹

Martin and Barnhouse came from the Calvinist strand of evangelicalism and were particularly concerned with four theological issues central to their own Calvinistic theology: 1) the eternal deity of Christ; 2) a completed atonement on Calvary; 3) salvation by faith alone (not faith plus commandment keeping); and 4) the sinless nature of Christ. They regarded these doctrines as essentials of Christian orthodoxy, necessary to affirm to be considered a Christian. The Adventist participants provided much contemporary documentation to show that the Adventist church believed in the complete eternal deity of Christ. They also explained that Adventists believed that Christ's sacrificial atonement on the cross was complete and final but that the benefits of the atonement still needed to be applied through Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. While Adventist writers may not have been careful in their use of language in this regard, the Adventist conferees insisted that this is what they really meant. They also documented their orthodox convictions on soteriology, stressing that they did not teach that salvation was based on law keeping. Keeping Sabbath was not how Adventists earned salvation. They also asserted Adventist belief in the prelapsarian³² sinless nature of Christ, although as later Adventist scholars pointed out, this assertion was more an aspirational conviction, based on the notion that the church was moving in this direction, than a reality. The conferees supported this position with a selective use of Ellen White statements.³³ Part of Froom's argument asserted that such orthodox positions had been taught consistently by Ellen White across the years from the beginning even though other Adventist writers may have deviated from them.

Nam observes that other Christian faith traditions more liberal in their theological perspective were not concerned with questions of what constituted a Christian cult. Only Christians with fundamentalist convictions were asking such questions.³⁴ Nam also observes that Martin apparently experienced a personal breakthrough in understanding that his strict Calvinism could accommodate Arminianism within Christian orthodoxy. This led to a "recognition" that much of Adventism was rooted in "Arminian beliefs."³⁵

The continuing discussion also revealed that "many misunderstandings rested on semantic grounds" noted chairman Unruh. The Adventist participants realized the limitations of their "inbred denominational vocabulary," and they learned "to express our beliefs in terms more easily understood by theologians of other communities."³⁶ In response to pointed questions about Adventism's earlier unorthodox views on such matters as the Trinity, the deity of Christ, or of confining Christ's work of atonement to a post-1844 period, the Adventist participants argued that such earlier views were those of individuals or groups and not those of the "church as a whole." Thus they did not feel the need to disavow previous positions of individual writers but instead stressed "the soundness of the *present* position of Adventists."³⁷

Outcomes

In September 1956, as promised to the conferees, Barnhouse published his fresh assessment of Seventh-day Adventists in a long *Eternity* magazine article entitled, "Are Seventh-day Adventists Christians?" He regretted that they had been "a much-maligned group of sincere believers" and he now acknowledged them as "redeemed brethren and members of the body of Christ." They should be regarded quite differently from "utter heretics" such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons and Christian Scientists.³⁸ Martin followed up the Barnhouse assessment a few weeks later with a similar reappraisal in a 12-page article, "Seventh-day Adventism Today," published in *Our Hope*.³⁹ He then wrote up a longer report and published it as a three-part series in *Eternity* citing points of agreement and difference between Evangelicals and Adventists.⁴⁰ Four years later, in 1960, he published a full report in his long awaited Zondervan book, *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism*.

The 1956 landmark reassessment of Adventism by the two prominent Evangelicals initiated a windstorm of both dissenting and approving correspondence in evangelical magazines. It also caused an acute problem for Barnhouse whose *Eternity* magazine immediately lost 25% of its subscribers. However, according to Unruh, circulation numbers returned within a year.⁴¹ He did not indicate whether the returning subscribers were accompanied by new Adventist subscribers.

Several prominent evangelical leaders vehemently disagreed with Barnhouse and Martin and published their acerbic dissent. The influential Louis Talbot, president of the fundamentalist Bible Institute of Los Angeles (BIOLA), for example, believed that Barnhouse and Martin were "utterly wrong, both in their methods and in their conclusions." He wrote several articles stridently setting out his objections.⁴² Paul Wilson, editor of *Christian Truth*, another popular evangelical magazine based in Chicago, asserted that the dialogues had resulted in a "gigantic whitewash engineered by a few self-appointed leaders." He saw the *Eternity* articles as "a capitulation to Adventism" and in rather alarmist terms warned that the reversal in assessment would have a hugely damaging impact that would "shake the whole structure of fundamentalism to its very foundations." He worried that the development would produce "a rift" among fundamentalists that might never be healed.⁴³ In *Bibliotheca Sacra*, associate editor James Rand argued for retaining the classification of Adventism as a cult and lamented that Martin's assessment would only cause "confusion." If Adventists, with their "suspect" and clearly "heterodox" teachings could be admitted into the evangelical fold, he opined, so too could Roman Catholics.⁴⁴ Karel Van Baalen took a similar negative view of Martin and Barnhouse in his 1958 book *Christianity Versus the Cults*.⁴⁵ Over the next 15 years the standing of Adventists among other Christians would continue to be "debated vigorously" in the evangelical press as further ground-breaking publications emerged from the conferences.

During their August 1955 discussion sessions at Barnhouse's home, both parties agreed that they would simultaneously publish books about Adventism that would reflect the rapprochement. The Adventists would publish their volume as written answers to Martin's questions and Martin would publish his re-assessment in his Zondervan book to be entitled *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism*. During the latter half of 1955, Froom,

Read and Anderson met with the General Conference administration explaining their proposal for a publication, circulating the extensive manuscript they had developed for review, and seeking approval for the publishing venture. Several subgroups at the Washington headquarters of the church reviewed the written materials in order to be satisfied that the positions taken, though apparently expressed in language more readily understood by evangelicals, nevertheless did not adjust any belief expressed in the already established definitions of fundamental beliefs. The then current statement had been written up in 1931 and endorsed by its annual publication in the *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* and in the *Church Manual* beginning in 1946.⁴⁶ In October 1956 the General Conference officers “heartily approved” the much reviewed manuscript as well as the plans for publication and then turned their attention to developing a statement dealing with the delicate issue of whether the church had changed any of its positions. How might this sensitive problem be addressed?⁷

Walter Martin had been inclined to think some things had changed while Froom and his colleagues wanted to stress continuity even as they frankly admitted “a diversity of doctrinal positions—and even heresies” had been evident among early Adventist individuals.⁴⁸ The final approved statement avoided the idea of “repudiating” former viewpoints and stressed the theme of continuity by strongly affirming the distinctive Adventist concept of “present truth.” Truth needed to be relevant to the present time and could be subject to change with better ways of understanding and expressing it in the future. The agreed statement would be included as chapter three in the forthcoming book. By December a select sub-committee of General Conference personnel had added an appropriate introduction to the manuscript, final approval was given by the officers and the manuscript was circulated to all the North American local and union conference presidents for feedback and review. The adoption of the manuscript and the support of the General Conference for the entire project, as Julius Nam observes, was a “resounding endorsement of the statements by Froom, Read, Anderson and Unruh.” It also provided “a firm footing” for the book which would be published in 1957 as *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine* (QOD).⁴⁹

Text adjustments for the manuscripts being prepared by both sides were reviewed by the conferees and more questions by Martin were addressed in the two sets of conference meetings convened in February and May 1956. Sometime during this period Martin and Cannon also spent several sessions with the faculty of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. reviewing draft material for the various articles.

Following the final meeting of the conferees in August 1956, Froom, on the advice of the General Conference leadership, sent the manuscript to 225 church leaders, teachers and editors worldwide for “constructive criticism and suggestion.”⁵⁰ President Figuhr at times fretted that the conferees may have gotten too deep in the give and take of clarification and some of the advice coming to him was conflicting.⁵¹ The consultation was thus intended to help demonstrate the reality of a wide consensus in the church on the answers the team had provided to Martin’s final list of 48 questions. The international consultation elicited significant feedback, and while it was not all bland or unanimous, it was overwhelmingly positive.⁵² Froom felt assured that the

consultation process could not have involved “a more eminent or representative group” of Adventists.⁵³ A small editorial committee appointed in September by the General Conference Committee processed the feedback and prepared the manuscript for final publication. A. V. Olson, a general vice president of the General Conference, chaired the panel consisting of W. E. Read and Merwin Thurber, book editor of the Review and Herald Publishing Association along with four specialist consultants.⁵⁴ Processing the feedback took some months, as the editorial panel wrestled with implementation of several significant revisions requested by respondents.⁵⁵ In the meantime a final title for the volume was approved and a vigorous promotional program arranged.

Questions on Doctrine

The 720-page book *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine* finally came off the press in November 1957 with its 48 chapter-length answers arranged under ten thematic rubrics along with three appendices consisting of Ellen White statements. The appendices provided further documentation for answers given in the book on the particularly critical problems of Christology and the atonement.⁵⁶ The book was not intended to be a systematic theology and was not organized as such. It dealt only with the specific questions raised by the evangelical conferees. Nevertheless, it became hugely influential and was widely distributed within the church. By 1970 Froom estimated that 138,000 copies had been sold.⁵⁷

In 1960, after considerable logistical delays, Zondervan published Martin’s 248-page *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism* with an affirming foreword by Donald Barnhouse and endorsement by numerous notable evangelical figures. Harry Lowe, director of the General Conference’s Biblical Research Committee, contributed one of the preliminary essays providing the Adventist perspective on the background to the book. Martin had been given access to the final page proofs of QOD and was able to cross reference the book in his own discussion.⁵⁸ The book affirmed and elaborated on what Martin and Barnhouse had published in their 1956 articles, acknowledging current Adventism’s orthodoxy on central Christian truth and critiquing rather sharply what he viewed as its heterodox teachings such as the Sabbath, sanctuary doctrine, soul-sleep and the church’s claim to “the remnant.” The book concluded with a discussion of the problem of Christian fellowship with Adventists. Martin faulted them for overemphasizing their “special” teachings but appealed to evangelicals to lay aside prejudices and embrace Adventists in the fellowship of Christian love.

Martin’s book added fuel to the raging discussion among evangelicals about whether Adventists should no longer be considered a cult. Nonetheless, it contributed enormously to the rehabilitation of Adventism in evangelical understanding. As Barnhouse had observed in his foreword to the book, the conferences had achieved a remarkable “milestone in Christian apologetics.” As Martin had hoped, the book helped usher in “a new era of Adventist-evangelical relations.”⁵⁹ In the view of Arthur Maxwell, editor of the Adventist’s flagship evangelistic magazine *Signs of the Times*, the conferences had been “one of the most epoch-making events” in recent Adventist church history.⁶⁰

Aftermath

Reactions to Martin's volume were swift and numerous with many reviews and some book-length discussions of Adventism that largely disagreed with Martin's conclusions and critiqued his analysis. Many of Martin's critics saw no change in Adventist teachings and continued to view the movement as cultic.⁶¹ However, Julius Nam, who carefully reviewed the wide-ranging reactions, concluded that eventually "Martin's vision for a new era did come about as his *Truth about Seventh-day Adventism* prevailed." In Nam's assessment, the book's impact on how evangelicals viewed Adventism was much greater "than all the other works of the 1960s combined."⁶²

After its publication, Adventist scholars replied to Martin's pointed criticisms of distinctive Adventist teachings in a series of 16 articles in *Ministry* magazine between June 1960 and July 1961. These were later published in book form as *Doctrinal Discussions*.⁶³ Though the articles defended traditional Adventist viewpoints, British-born seminary professor Edward Heppenstall used the opportunity to evade the exegetical criticisms Martin made against the traditional cleansing of the sanctuary doctrine (Heppenstall regarded the criticisms as valid) and reframed the teaching of the investigative judgement from the perspective of the vindication of God rather than simply a judgement of the saints. Church leaders did not see Heppenstall's attempt to reframe the doctrine as negative but as an expansion of understanding.⁶⁴

After endeavoring carefully to ensure that QOD expressed a doctrinal consensus, not only of church leaders in America but internationally, the strength of bitter opposition and criticism of the book from within the denomination surprised Adventist leaders. Some resistance had been anticipated but the vigor of the reaction was unexpected. Shortly after the discussions began in 1955, Froom had alerted General Conference president R. R. Figuhr that there might be some concerns over the issue of the sinful nature of Christ, an issue their evangelical interlocutors had particular difficulty with because of statements on the topic by some early Adventist writers. Martin and Cannon had viewed such statements not just as inadequate but as unvarnished heresy. They had also pointed out objectionable examples published relatively recently in books by W. H. Branson, the previous General Conference president, M. E. Kern, a former dean of the SDA Theological Seminary, and M. L. Andreasen, a former professor at the seminary whose writings were the most problematic to them.⁶⁵ Church leaders, however, had already developed a sensitivity to the matter.

Opposition to the problematic postlapsarian nature of Christ teaching⁶⁶ had simmered away in the church in Australasia for several years but also elsewhere. By 1949, denominational leadership, in response to criticism and discomfort with the teaching, had already decided to revise the inadequate wording in *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*. The Adventist conferees in the mid-1950s saw this as a reflection of the growing consensus in the church on the need to speak in a more orthodox way on this issue.⁶⁷ As another example of the growing discomfort, Julius Nam reports that in early 1955, quite independently of the discussions beginning with the evangelicals, the recently retired General Conference President W. H. Branson readily agreed to revise his infelicitous expressions on the topic in his book *Drama of the Ages* when they were pointed out to him by

Australian pastor Algie Gallagher.⁶⁸ But in an informal survey of a few church leaders Froom had learned that the idea of Christ possessing a sinful human nature was still more widespread than he thought, and he alerted Figuhr to this.⁶⁹ Thus, when Froom and his colleagues addressed the topic in QOD later that year, they wrote aspirationally about a shift in perspective that they knew was still just underway. Part of their rationale for doing so was the evidence they found for support of the prelapsarian perspective in various Ellen White statements.

The most vigorous opposition to QOD and its authors came from retired theologian M. L. Andreasen who saw the publication as a sellout to evangelicals and a gross denial of what was distinctive about Adventism. After Froom, in introducing some of the themes of the book to *Ministry* readers, wrote of Christ's act of atonement at the cross as a "complete, perfect and final" sacrifice, Andreasen charged that Froom had undercut what Adventists had traditionally taught about Christ's work of atonement beginning in 1844. Historian George Knight has demonstrated that Andreasen misunderstood and misquoted Froom, who had not "abandoned traditional Adventist understanding," but Andreasen repeatedly made the charge and it resonated with his many supporters who joined him in opposing the publication.⁷⁰

More crucial to Andreasen, the move away from speaking of Christ having a sinful nature and adopting a prelapsarian view of Christ's humanity undermined his own theological system of end-time sinless perfectionism. Andreasen had developed the concept that the last generation of believers, under the great stress of the time of trouble just before the return of Christ would give a demonstration of faithful, perfect law keeping. This was, for him, the eschatological cleansing of the soul temple that paralleled Christ's work of cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. He interpreted Ellen White's statement about Christ "waiting with longing desire" to see his character "perfectly reproduced in His people" before returning to claim them as supporting the scheme.⁷¹ This was, he asserted, the essential meaning and goal of "historic" Adventism. He had grounded the teaching in his conviction that since Christ had a sinful nature like that of humanity, Christian believers could likewise be victorious over sin and live a perfect sinless life. In the last days, in fact they would need to achieve a level of sinless living because there would come a time when they would have to live "without a mediator" after Christ had finished his mediatorial work in the heavenly sanctuary.⁷² By their sinless living these faithful saints would prove that, contrary to the claims of Satan, God's law could be kept. God would thus be vindicated and "in the remnant Satan will meet his defeat." Only after an entire generation of end-time believers clearly demonstrated this level of faithful living would Christ return. Andreasen had articulated this perspective in much detail in his widely read books, *The Sanctuary Service* (1937, 1947) and *The Book of Hebrews* (1948).⁷³ The perspective became known as "Last Generation Theology."

Seeing his system under threat, Andreasen launched an aggressive pamphlet and letter campaign attacking the General Conference leadership, alleged a conspiracy to change the church's core beliefs, and called for revision of QOD. This prompted the General Conference officers to request White Estate Board President A. V. Olson to circulate his 33-page analysis of Andreasen's criticism. Olson strongly disputed Andreasen's claims and pointed out where Andreasen had misread his sources, and apparently suffered memory problems for he had himself

previously advocated similar perspectives as those in QOD. Olson objected to Andreasen claiming that Ellen White was the source of his theology.⁷⁴ Andreasen's agitation eventually became schismatic attracted a large following and in 1961 the General Conference suspended his ministerial credentials. Ten months later, just before his death, he agreed to restrain his followers, apologized for his campaign, and reconciled with church leadership. His credentials were restored posthumously.⁷⁵ As Knight observes, Andreasen had seriously misunderstood Froom and the statements in QOD on the atonement, and there had been no conspiracy to subvert the church.⁷⁶ According to Knight, QOD "is almost entirely made up of clear restatements of traditional Adventist theology that are phrased in such a way that the book remained faithful to Adventist beliefs while at the same time speaking in a language that those outside of Adventism could understand more easily."⁷⁷

The commitment of those who shared Andreasen's viewpoint and his negative reaction to QOD eventually developed, as Knight observes, into a separate movement within Adventism. The result was "prolonged alienation" as the church found itself coping with "two permanently warring factions."⁷⁸ In the later 1960s, Australian Robert Brinsmead would develop Andreasen's theology into an eccentric version of eschatological perfectionism that would in its turn spark vigorous opposition from writers like Heppenstall and Australian theologian Desmond Ford who would challenge both Brinsmead's and Andreasen's understanding of Christian perfection. The debates and disputed ideas would lead to the formation of factional, independent, advocacy groups claiming to represent "historic" (meaning pre-1950s) or "authentic" Adventism, each with their educational enterprises and publishing ministries.⁷⁹ Writers such as Herbert Douglass would further develop Andreasen's ideas under such rubrics as "The Harvest Principle" in explaining why Christ's second coming had not yet occurred.⁸⁰ Douglass would later observe that "most, if not all, of the so-called 'dissident' or 'independent' groups" which arose in Adventism in the last half of the 20th century were the "direct results of the explicit and implicit positions espoused by [*Questions on Doctrine*] on the atonement and the Incarnation."⁸¹ In Adventist circles QOD would thus prove to be enormously divisive and create wide theological rifts that continue to be a feature of contemporary Adventism. After the 1970s the book was not reprinted by any church publishing house. Walter Martin viewed this development as "a bad mistake" and worried that he had been "misled" or that the church was backsliding on its orthodoxy. He corresponded with General Conference President Neal Wilson on the issue.⁸²

An extensive literature has been generated in Adventism over the issues considered in the Adventist-Evangelical Conferences of the mid-1950s. Partisan literature has advocated differing interpretations of the event and its outcomes and doctoral dissertations have probed different aspects of the episode. Much of the debate has been about the question of whether the church changed its teaching or not. Walter Martin's positive assessment of the church was founded on a conviction that the church "had indeed changed in some significant ways." And Barnhouse believed that there had been change, noting in particular that "the whole doctrine of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment have undergone recasting and reinterpretation."⁸³ Figuhr and his administrative colleagues, on the other hand, insisted that QOD did not change any doctrine but simply found ways of restating

Adventist beliefs in language that was more accessible to non-Adventists. "Great care was exercised," he told readers of the *Review* after publication of the *Eternity* articles, so that there had not been "in any sense a modification or alteration of what Seventh-day Adventists proclaim to the world as their belief."⁸⁴ *Review* associate editor Raymond Cottrell also made this argument in an evaluation requested of him by the General Conference. The evangelicals' assertion that Adventist theology had recently changed, he declared, was "a fundamental fallacy."⁸⁵

Did this historic exercise in apologetics, however, unavoidably lead to clarifications and at least changes in emphasis? Did the church better understand its own teaching as it sought to explain its theology more clearly to the public? R. A. Anderson understood the tensions and the dilemma church officials faced when coping with such change and the need for nuanced use of language that, as Nam suggests, might sound at times like "double entendre."⁸⁶ When Martin, in 1956, was upset by Figuhr's denials of change on the part of the church, Anderson told his evangelical counterpart that he would have written Figuhr's sentence differently. His version would have been "the answers therefore are not in any sense a modification or alteration of the real truth Seventh-day Adventists have been called to proclaim to the world."⁸⁷ For Anderson, "the real truth" was apparently the core, or essence of the idea, not necessarily some of its supporting scaffold-like structures. The problem was how to accommodate inevitable change without really acknowledging that change was happening. The episode of the Adventist-Evangelical Conferences has thus become a case study in theological development. To what extent did the church, over time, change its teaching in response to the questions posed by Walter Martin and Donald Barnhouse and the criticism Martin offered? German Adventist theologian Rolf Pohler observes that the episode is a demonstration of both continuity and change in Adventist theological development.⁸⁸ The "historical sources," he suggests, do not allow a denial of "significant changes and revisions in Adventist doctrinal history" either in early Adventist history or in the 1950s.⁸⁹

In 2003 after QOD had been out of print for many years, a new edition of the book was published by Andrews University Press with annotations by George Knight and a comprehensive "Historical and Theological Introduction." The annotations explore and document the dynamics of change while the Introduction provides reflection and analysis on the enormous influence of the book on contemporary Adventism.⁹⁰ In 2007 on the 50th anniversary of the publication of the original QOD, a major conference convened at Andrews University to revisit the intense debate generated by the conferences of 1955-1956 and the resultant book. The conference, organized and coordinated by Michael W. Campbell and Julius Nam, involved presenters who had been major players in the contentious debate with the objective of providing opportunity for the divided parties "to listen to and understand each other better" and to heal relationships. The conference, according to *Review* associate editor Roy Adams, helped achieve better relationships even though "minds may not necessarily have changed."⁹¹ Fifty years after the landmark Martin and Barnhouse conferences, tensions continued in the church arising from what Herbert Douglass likened to an "attempted merger of two theological tectonic plates."⁹² The 2007 conference demonstrated, however, that "unity in diversity" was possible. Diversity of interpretation of the

historic episode and its implications continue within Adventism.

SOURCES

"Conference Provides Forum for Dialogue." Andrews University News, November 12, 2007. Accessed October 4, 2023. https://www.andrews.edu/news/2007/11/qod_conference

Andreasen, M. L. *The Book of Hebrews*. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1948.

Andreasen, M. L. *The Sanctuary Service*, 2nd ed. rev. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1948.

Barnhouse, Donald Gray. "Are Seventh-day Adventists Christians? A New Look at Seventh-day Adventism." *Eternity*, September 1956.

Branson, W. H. *Drama of the Ages*. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1950.

Branson, W. H. W. H. Branson to A. Gallagher, June 21, 1955. C 152, Box 2, Fld 10, Roy Allan Anderson Collection, Center for Adventist Research, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI (CAR).

Clark, Elmer T. *The Small Sects in America*. Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1937.

Davies, Horton. *Christian Deviations*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1954.

Douglass, Herbert. "The QOD Earthquake: Attempted Merger of two Theological Tectonic Plates." Paper presented at the "Questions on Doctrine 50th Anniversary Conference." Andrews University, October 24, 2007. Accessed October 4, 2023. <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=qod>

Figuhr, R. R. R. R. Figuhr to W. R. Beach, et al., October 4, 1955. RG 11, Box 3203, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Archives, Silver Spring, MD (GCA).

Froom, L. E. to [Seventh-day Adventist Leaders Worldwide], July 25, 1956. RG 58, Box 11145, GCA.

Froom, L. E. L. E. Froom to R. R. Figuhr, May 10, 1955. RG 58, Box 11145, GCA.

Froom, Leroy E. "The Priestly Application of the Atoning Act." *Ministry*, February 1957.

Froom, LeRoy E. *Movement of Destiny*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1971.

Gallagher A. to W. H. Branson, 20 May 20, 1955, C 152, Box 2, Fld 10, Roy Allan Anderson Collection, CAR.

Heppenstall E. E. Heppenstall to M. L. Andreasen, March 6, 1959. C190, Box 3, Folder 3, CAR.

Hook, Milton. "Unruh, Tobias Edgar (1894-1982)." *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, October 14, 2020. Accessed October 4, 2023. <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=CABF&highlight=T|E|Unruh>

Irvine, William C. ed., *Heresies Exposed: A Brief Critical Examination in the Light of the Holy Scriptures of Some of the Prevailing Heresies and False Teachings of Today*, 4th ed. Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1955.

- Irvine, William C. *Timely Warnings*. Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1917.
- Knight, George R. "Historical and Theological Introduction to the Annotated Edition." In *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine: Annotated Edition*, edited by George R. Knight. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2003.
- Knight, George R. *A Search for Identity: The Development of Seventh-day Adventist Beliefs*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000.
- Martin Walter R. "The Truth about Seventh-day Adventism: Its Historical Development from Christian Roots." *Eternity*, October 1956.
- Martin, Walter R. "Seventh-day Adventists Today." *Our Hope*, November 1956.
- Martin, Walter R. "The Truth about Seventh-day Adventism: Adventist Theology vs. Historic Orthodoxy." *Eternity*, January 1957.
- Martin, Walter R. "The Truth about Seventh-day Adventism: What Seventh-day Adventists Really Believe." *Eternity*, November 1956.
- Mayer, F. E. *The Religious Bodies of America*. St. Louis: Concordia, 1956.
- McGraw, Paul Ernest, "Bom in Zion? The Margins of Fundamentalism and the Definition of Seventh-day Adventism." Ph.D. dissertation, George Washington University, 2003.
- Melton, J. Gordon. *Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults in America*. New York: Garland, 1992.
- Nam, Juhyeok. "The Questions on Doctrine Saga: Contours and Lessons." Paper presented at the "Questions on Doctrine 50th Anniversary Conference," Andrews University, October 24-27, 2007.
- Nam, Juhyeok. "Reactions to the Seventh-day Adventist Evangelical Conferences and Questions on Doctrine 1955-1971." PhD Dissertation, Andrews University, 2005.
- Olson, A. V. "An Examination of M. L. Andreasen's Objections to the Book, *Seventh-Day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine*" November 1960. Ellen G. White Estate. Accessed November 30, 2023.
<https://media2.ellenwhite.org/docs/1014/1014.pdf>
- Pohler, Rolf J. *Dynamic Truth: A Study of the Problem of Doctrinal Development* Möchern-Friedensau, Germany: Institute of Adventist Studies Friedensau Adventist University, 2020.
- Rhodes, Arnold Black. *The Church Faces the Isms*. New York: Abingdon Press, 1958.
- Sanders, J. Oswald. *Heresies: Ancient and Modern*. London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1948.
- Talbot, Louis T. "Why Seventh-day Adventism Is Not Evangelical." *King's Business*, April, May, and June 1957.

Unruh, T.E. "The Seventh-day Adventist Evangelical Conferences of 1955-1956." *Adventist Heritage* 4, no. 2 (Winter 1977): 35-46.

Valentine, Gilbert. "'The Vindication of God:' Edward Heppenstall and the Use of The Concept of Cosmic Conflict for Reframing The Sanctuary Doctrine – A Contextual Study of Theological Development." Paper scheduled for the Annual Meeting of the Adventist Society of Religious Studies Conference, San Antonio, Texas, November 17, 2023.

Van Baalen, Jan Karel. *The Chaos of Cults: A Study of Present-Day Isms*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1938.

Whidden, Woodrow. "What is Last Generation Theology?" In *God's Character and the Last Generation*, edited by Jiri Moskala and John C. Peckham, 23-43. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2018.

White, Ellen G. *Christ's Object Lessons*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1899.

White, Ellen G. *The Great Controversy*. Mountain View, CA. Pacific Press, 1911.

Wilson, Paul. "Editor's Column." *Christian Truth*, March 1957.

NOTES

1. LeRoy E. Froom, *Movement of Destiny* (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald, 1971), 476. The sessions occurred during five or six clusters of meetings. For a complete listing of the dates, locales, and participants in the meetings, see the addendum "Schedule of Adventist-Evangelical Consultations & Related Meetings (1955-1956)" in the Related Content for this article.
2. Walter R. Martin and Norman H. Klann, *Jehovah of the Watchtower* (Paterson, NJ: Biblical Truth Publishing, 1953); Walter R. Martin and Norman H. Klann, *The Christian Science Myth* (Paterson, NJ: Biblical Truth Publishing, 1954).
3. Walter R. Martin, *The Rise of the Cults* (Grand Rapids, MI Zondervan, 1955).
4. Ibid, 12.
5. Juhyeok (Julius) Nam, "Reactions to the Seventh-day Adventist Evangelical Conferences and Questions on Doctrine 1955-1971" (Ph.D. diss., Andrews University, 2005), 47, 48. This article draws extensively on this authoritative and comprehensive study of the events.
6. T.E. Unruh, "The Seventh-day Adventist Evangelical Conferences of 1955-1956," *Adventist Heritage*, Volume 4 Number 2 (Winter 1977, 42. Unruh provides a detailed first-hand account of the meetings and their background. In 1953 Barnhouse made a New Year's resolution to have Christian Fellowship with a wider circle of people which perhaps helps explain his more open attitude toward Adventists; see Donald Grey Barnhouse, "New Year's Resolution," *Eternity*, January 1953, 2.
7. Nam, "Reactions," 51.

8. Unruh, 37. Milton Hook, "Unruh, Tobias Edgar (1894-1982)," *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventist*, October 14, 1920, accessed November 29, 2023, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=CABF&highlight=T|E|Unruh>.
9. E Heppenstall to M. L. Andreasen, March 6, 1959. C190, Box 3, Folder 3, CAR. Heppenstall reports attending three joint sessions with the evangelical representatives and his faculty colleagues during the last stages of the discussions as magazine articles were prepared for the public acknowledgement by Martin and Barnhouse that Adventists should be considered *bona fide* evangelical in faith.
10. Unruh, "The Seventh-day Adventist Evangelical Conferences," 39-41.
11. Nam, "Reactions," 69.
12. Ibid. 1-23. Nam provides a detailed discussion of the negative background to Adventist interchurch relations before 1955.
13. Ibid., 8.
14. William C. Irvine, *Timely Warnings* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1917). Irvine's book, later retitled as *Heresies Exposed: A Brief Critical Examination in the Light of the Holy Scriptures of Some of the Prevailing Heresies and False Teachings of Today*, went through some 10 editions and 21 printings by 1955. See J. Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults in America* (New York: Garland, 1992), 335.
15. Jan Karel Van Baalen, *The Chaos of Cults: A Study of Present-Day Isms* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1938). Van Baalens' volume was also reprinted numerous times although after dialogue with L. E. Froom in the late 1940s later editions of the book were less inflammatory in its rhetoric about Adventists. See Nam.18, 19.
16. Nam, "Reactions," 28-35.
17. Ibid., 39, 40.
18. Ibid., 43.
19. Francis D. Nichol, *The Midnight Cry: a Defense of the Character and Conduct of William Miller and the Millerites* (Washington DC: Review and Herald, 1944); Francis D. Nichol, *Answers to Objections: An Examination of the Major Objections Raised against the Teachings of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1932, 1947, 1952); Francis D. Nichol, *Ellen G. White and Her Critics: An Answer to the Major Charges That Critics Have Brought against Mrs. Ellen G. White* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1951).
20. See Whitney R. Cross, *The Burned-over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1950). David Rowe critiqued Nichol's handling of evidence and some of his conclusions which he argued were impossible to prove. See David Leslie Rowe, "Thunder and Trumpets: The Millerite Movement and Apocalyptic Thought in Upstate New York, 1800-1845" (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1974), 54, 205, 206.

21. Best known of Haynes' works are *The Return of Jesus: A Presentation of the Bible Teaching of Our Lord* (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald, 1926); *From Sabbath to Sunday* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1928) and *The Book of All Nations* (Nashville TN: Southern Publishing, 1950). See also LeRoy E. Froom, *Movement of Destiny* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1971), 467, 468.
22. Froom, 469-470. See English, "To Rectify a Wrong," *Our Hope*, February 1956, 458.
23. Unruh, 37.
24. Nam, "Reactions," 53.
25. Froom, 478, 479; Unruh, 37, 38. Froom's account of the meeting concurs with that of Unruh.
26. Unruh, 38.
27. *Ibid.*; Froom, *Movement of Destiny*, 480.
28. Nam, "Reactions," 56.
29. *Ibid.*, 60.
30. See "Adventist-Evangelical Consultations & Related Meetings (1955-1956) in Related Content for a listing of the times and locations of the conference, drawn from Nam, 51-84.
31. L. E. Froom to Special Officer Group Dealing with 33 Questions and Answers, January 10, 1956, RG 21, Box 3495, GCA; see also Nam, 81, 82. Martin removed the offending sections in the second edition of the book.
32. A term for the time or state prior to the fall of humankind into sin.
33. George R. Knight, "Historical and Theological Introduction to the Annotated Edition," in *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine: Annotated Edition*, George R. Knight, ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2003), xvii.
34. Nam, "The *Questions on Doctrine* Saga: Contours and Lessons" (paper presented at the "*Questions on Doctrine* 50th Anniversary Conference," Andrews University October 24-27, 2007, 5), accessed October 4, 2023, <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1002&context=qod>.
35. *Ibid.*, 4.
36. Unruh, "The Seventh-day Adventist Evangelical Conferences," 40.
37. Froom, *Movement of Destiny*.

38. Donald Gray Barnhouse, "Are Seventh-day Adventist Christians?" *Eternity*, September 1956, 6, 7, 45.
39. Walter R. Martin, "Seventh-day Adventists Today," *Our Hope*, November 1956, 273-285.
40. Walter Martin, "The Truth about Seventh-day Adventism: Its Historical Development from Christian Roots," *Eternity*, October 1956, 6, 7, 38-40; "The Truth about Seventh-day Adventism: What Seventh-day Adventists Really Believe," *Eternity*, November 1956, 20, 21, 38-43; "The Truth about Seventh-day Adventism: Adventist Theology vs. Historic Orthodoxy," *Eternity*, January 1957, 12, 13, 38-40. For a summary of the content of these articles see Nam, 86-95.
41. Unruh, "The Seventh-day Adventist Evangelical Conferences," 44.
42. Louis T. Talbot, "Why Seventh-day Adventism Is *Not* Evangelical," *The King's Business*, April 1957, 26-28; May 1957, 23-36; and June 1957, 30.
43. Paul Wilson "Editor's Column," *Christian Truth*, March 1957, 75-84.
44. James F. Rand, "About Seventh-day Adventism," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 114 (April 1957): 189, 190.
45. Jan Karel Van Baalen, *Christianity Versus the Cults* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958), 101, 102. See Julius Nam, 105-137 for an in-depth analysis of the wide-ranging debate generated by the Martin and Barnhouse articles.
46. Nam, "Reactions," 76, 77.
47. R. R. Figuhr to W. R. Beach et al., October 4, 1955, RG 11, Box 3203, GCA.
48. Nam, "Reactions," 78.
49. *Ibid.*, 80.
50. L. E. Froom to [Seventh-day Adventist Leaders Worldwide], July 25 1956, RG 58, Box 11145, GCA.
51. Nam, "Reactions," 79.
52. See Nam, "Reactions," 247-262.
53. L. E. Froom to [Seventh-day Adventist Leaders Worldwide].
54. General Conference Officers Minutes, September 19, 24, 1956, GCA. the officers appointed seminary teacher, William. G. C. Murdoch, Old Testament scholar, Richard L. Hammill, L. E. Froom, and R. A. Anderson as consultants to the committee.
55. See Nam, "Reactions," 98, 99 for detail on readers who provided feedback.

56. Excellent summaries of the book can be found in Nam 95-95 and Knight, "Historical and Theological Introduction to the Annotated Edition."
57. George R. Knight, *A Search for Identity: The Development of Seventh-day Adventist Beliefs* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 166.
58. A helpful summary analysis of Martin's book from an Adventist perspective can be found in Nam, "Reactions," 175-185.
59. Nam, "Reactions," 185.
60. A. S. Maxwell, "Adventists Vindicated," *Signs of the Times*, October 2, 1956, 3.
61. See for example, Norman F. Douty, *Another Look at Seventh-day Adventism* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1962); Russell P. Spittler, *Cults and Isms: Twenty Alternates to Evangelical Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1962), 29-38; and J. Oswald Sanders, *Heresies and Cults* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1962), 122-135.
62. Nam provides a comprehensive analysis of the book in "Reactions," 185-222. Unruh agrees that the publication "improved relations between Evangelicals and Seventh-day Adventists"; see "The Seventh-day Adventist Evangelical Conferences," 45.
63. The authors were Edward Heppenstall, H. W. Lowe, R. L. Hammill, R. A. Anderson, W. E. Read and Don Mansell. See Nam, "Reactions," 349. *Doctrinal Discussions: A Compilation of Articles Originally Appearing in The Ministry June, 1960—July, 1960, in Answer to Walter R. Martin's Book The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, [1961]).
64. Edward Heppenstall, "The Hour of God's Judgment Is Come," *Ministry*, June 1961, 8-13, 30, 31; continued in July 1961, 6-13, 38. See Gilbert Valentine, "The Vindication of God: Edward Heppenstall and the Use of The Concept of Cosmic Conflict for Reframing The Sanctuary Doctrine – A Contextual Study of Theological Development" (paper presented at the annual Adventist Society for Religious Studies Conference, San Antonio, Texas, November 17, 2023).
65. L. E. Froom to R. R. Figuhr, April 26 and 28, 1955, RG 58, Box 11145, GCA. R. R. Figuhr to L. E. Froom, April 29, 1955, RG 11, Box 3204, GCA.
66. The view that Christ took on a sinful nature like that of humans after the fall (Genesis 3).
67. Knight, *A Search for Identity*, 155, 156. Knight reports that the problematic statements had not appeared in the earliest versions of *Bible Readings* but had been introduced later by editor W. A. Colcord.
68. W. H. Branson, *Drama of the Ages* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1950), 81, 101. In Queensland, Australia in 1954-1955 there was considerable agitation over the church's loose and heterodox statements about the sinful nature of Christ. Brisbane pastor Algie Gallagher wrote Branson pointing out that his statements represented a "terrific" and "extreme" view of Christ's human nature. In reply, Branson acknowledged his "unfortunate" wording and thanked Gallaher for pointing it out. See A. Gallagher to W. H. Branson, May 20, 1955, and W. H. Branson to A. Gallagher, June 21, 1955, both letters in C 152, Box 2, Fld 10, Roy Allan Anderson Collection, CAR. See also the more detailed

discussion in Nam, "Reactions," 67, 68.

69. L. E. Froom to R. R. Figuhr, May 10, 1955, RG 58, Box 11145, GCA.
70. LeRoy Edwin Froom, "The Priestly Application of the Atoning Act," *Ministry*, February 1957, 10. Knight, "Historical and Theological Introduction to the Annotated Edition," xviii, xix.
71. Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1899) 69.
72. In support of this claim, Andreasen adduced Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 605.
73. M. L. Andreasen, *The Sanctuary Service*, 2nd ed. rev. (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald, 1948), 299-321; and *The Book of Hebrews* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1948), 53, 59, 60. See also the extended discussion in Knight, *A Search for Identity*," 144-152, 167-173.
74. A. V. Olson, "An Examination of M. L. Andreasen's Objections to the Book, *Seventh-Day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine*," November 1960, accessed November 30, 2023, <https://media2.ellenwhite.org/docs/1014/1014.pdf>. The document was circulated to church administrators in the North American Division. A discussion of Olson's critique can be found in Nam, "Reactions," 333. Other helpful correspondence on the dispute with Andreasen can be found on the Ellen G. White Estate website, www.ellenwhite.org.
75. For a detailed account of the traumatic events see Nam, "Reactions," 333-345, and Knight, "Introduction to the Historical and Annotated Edition," xxv.
76. Knight, "Introduction to the Historical and Annotated Edition," xviii, xix.
77. *Ibid*, xxix.
78. G. R. Knight quoted in "Viewpoints," front matter in *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine: Annotated Edition* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2003), v. See also Knight, "Introduction," xiii.
79. Knight, *A Search for Identity*, 167. See also Woodrow Whidden, "What is Last Generation Theology?" in *God's Character and the Last Generation*, Jiri Moskala and John C. Peckham, eds. (Nampa ID: Pacific Press, 2018), 23-43. The Heartland Institute, Hope International and Remnant Ministries are parachurch organizations that identify with "historic" Adventism.
80. Herbert Douglass, *Why Jesus Waits: How the Sanctuary Message Explains the Delay in the Second Coming* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2002).
81. As quoted in "50th Anniversary Conference," accessed November 30, 2023, <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/qod/>.
82. Martin reported that he had corresponded General Conference President Neal Wilson on the issue; see "Walter Martin Interview," *Adventist Currents*, July 1998, accessed November 30, 2023, <https://arthurandteresabeem.blogspot.com/2011/04/interview-with-walter-marin-about->

[sdas.html](#).

83. Donald Grey Barnhouse to R. A. Greive, January 24 1957, Donald Grey Barnhouse Collection, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA as cited by Nam, "Reactions," 88.
84. R. R. Figuhr, "A Non-Adventist Examines Our Beliefs," *ARH*, December 13 1956, 3.
85. Raymond F. Cottrell, "An Evaluation of Certain Aspects of the Martin Articles," November 1956, Document File 6200.02, Adventist Heritage Room, Loma Linda University (LLU).
86. Nam, "Reactions," 365.
87. R. A. Anderson to Walter R. Martin, December 11 1956, ADF 3773.06c, LLU. See also Nam 364, 365.
88. Rolf J. Pohler, *Dynamic Truth: A Study of the Problem of Doctrinal Development* (Möchern-Friedensau, Germany: Institute of Adventist Studies Friedensau Adventist University, 2020), 131-135, 208-210. 237-242.
89. *Ibid.*, 242.
90. Knight, "Introduction to the Historical and Annotated Edition," xviii.
91. "Conference Provides Forum for Dialogue," Andrews University News, accessed October 4, 2023, https://www.andrews.edu/news/2007/11/qod_conference.
92. Herbert Douglass, "The QOD Earthquake: Attempted Merger of two Theological Tectonic Plates" (paper presented at the "Questions on Doctrine 50th Anniversary Conference," Andrews University, October 24, 2007, accessed October 4, 2023, <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=qod>.

encyclopedia.adventist.org is an official website of the [Seventh-day Adventist World Church](#)

© 2020 General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 12501 Old Columbia Pike Silver Spring , MD 20904 USA 301-680-6000