

Seventh-day Adventist Church and Presbyterian Church USA Conversation  
Office of the General Assembly PC (USA)  
Louisville, KY  
August 23, 2007

## **Ellen G. White and Sola Scriptura**

**Merlin D. Burt**

One of the fundamental tenets of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is that the gifts of the Spirit listed by the apostle Paul in Rom 12:4-8, Eph 4:11-13, and 1 Cor 12:27-31 extend beyond the first century A.D. and may be expected in the modern era. Among these gifts is prophecy and Adventists believe this gift was manifested in the life and ministry of Ellen G. White (1827-1915).<sup>1</sup>

This belief has led to misunderstanding by some Protestants who conclude that a modern manifestation of the gift of prophecy undermines one of the fundamental tenets of the Reformation—Sola Scriptura. Since Adventists believe in the legitimacy of an end-time manifestation of the prophetic gift, some have concluded that they treat the writings of Ellen White as additional scripture. This conclusion is incorrect.

The purpose of this paper is to present the Seventh-day Adventist view on the relationship between Ellen White's writings and the Bible and demonstrate that Adventists are Protestant Christians who believe in Sola Scriptura. This will be accomplished by providing a brief four-part overview. First we will look at the earliest Adventist understanding of Ellen White's prophetic gift in relation to scripture. Then we will examine Ellen White's own statements and experience in relation to scripture. Next we will consider the Adventist understanding of Ellen White's prophetic gift in terms of

---

<sup>1</sup>*Seventh-day Adventists Believe: An Exposition of the Fundamental Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Silver Spring, MD: Ministerial Association, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2005), 247.

canonical and non-canonical special revelation and inspiration. Finally, we will explore Ellen White's role in Seventh-day Adventist doctrinal development.

### **Adventist Historical Understanding of Ellen White's Writings**

Adventists have historically followed the restorationist approach to scripture that rejects creeds and tradition as authoritative. They seek to subject and critique the centuries of Christian institutional, liturgical, and doctrinal development to the direct scrutiny of scripture in order to construct a biblical faith. Two of the three principal founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, James White and Joseph Bates, came from the Northern New England branch of the Christian Connection Church. They brought to Adventism a firm *Sola Scriptura a priori*. Though Adventists now have a statement of fundamental beliefs, they do not view it as creedal but rather representative of their views. Over the years their statement of beliefs has been revised and enlarged.

The preamble to the statement of fundamental beliefs reads:

Seventh-day Adventists accept the Bible as their only creed and hold certain fundamental beliefs to be the teachings of the Holy Scriptures. These beliefs, as set forth here, constitute the church's understanding and expression of the teaching of Scripture. Revision of these statements may be expected at a General Conference session when the church is led by the Holy Spirit to a fuller understanding of Bible truth or finds better language to express the teachings of God's Holy Word.<sup>2</sup>

From the very beginning of their movement Seventh-day Adventists have decisively looked to the Bible alone to settle questions of doctrine and practice. The first fundamental belief currently reads:

The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration through holy men of God who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. In this Word, God has

---

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., v.

committed to man the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are the infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the test of experience, the authoritative revealer of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God's acts in history (2 Pet 1:20, 21; 2 Tim 3:16, 17; Ps 119:105; Prov 30:5, 6; Is 8:20; John 17:17; 1 Thes 2:13; Heb 4:12).<sup>3</sup>

In *A Word to the "Little Flock,"* the first publication of Sabbatarian Adventists, James White wrote: "The bible [sic] is a perfect and complete revelation. It is our only rule of faith and practice."<sup>4</sup> Nine years later he wrote: "I still say that the Bible is my rule of faith and practice, and in saying this, I do not reject the Holy Spirit in its diversity of operations."<sup>5</sup> In 1863 James White wrote: "When we claim to stand on the Bible and the Bible alone, we bind ourselves to receive, unequivocally and fully, all that the Bible teaches."<sup>6</sup> Uriah Smith, long-time editor of the *Review and Herald* wrote in 1868: "The Bible is able to make us wise unto salvation, and thoroughly furnish us unto all good works. Do the visions propose to invade this field, and erect a new standard, and give us another rule of faith and practice? Nothing of the kind. On the contrary, they are ever in harmony with the word, and ever refer to that as the test and standard."<sup>7</sup>

James White's reason for accepting the legitimacy of post-New Testament prophetic manifestation was based on his understanding of scripture. He quoted Joel 2:28-30 and Acts 2:17-20 and wrote: "Dreams and Visions are among the signs that

---

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 11.

<sup>4</sup>[James White], *A Word to the "Little Flock,"* May 30, 1847, 13.

<sup>5</sup>[James White], "Note," *Review and Herald*, February 14, 1856, 158.

<sup>6</sup>[James White], "Do We Discard the Bible by Endorsing the Visions?," *Review and Herald*, January 13, 1863, 52.

<sup>7</sup>[Uriah Smith], *The Visions of Mrs. E. G. White: A Manifestation of Spiritual Gifts According to the Scriptures* (Battle Creek, MI: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing, 1868), 13.

precede the great and notable day of the Lord. . . . I know that this is a very unpopular position to hold on this subject even among Adventists; but I choose to believe the word of the Lord on this point, rather than the teachings of men.”<sup>8</sup> In 1868, James White remained consistent in his position on scripture. He wrote:

We now see the gifts of the Spirit occupying their proper place. They are not manifested to give a rule of faith and practice. We already have a rule that is perfect in the Sacred Writings. They [the gifts] were not designed to take the place of the Scriptures. And they are not given because the Scriptures are an imperfect rule of faith and practice. But in consequence of the errors of God’s professed people, in departing from the perfect rule, which he has given them, the gifts are manifested to correct the erring, and point them to the Bible as their lamp and guide.<sup>9</sup>

These statements are representative of the consistent early Seventh-day Adventist position on Sola Scriptura. Early Adventists steadfastly affirmed the unique authority of the Bible as normative in matters of faith and practice. Their reason for believing in the manifestation of the prophetic gift beyond the New Testament era was founded on biblical arguments. This early position has remained consistent to the present as demonstrated by the current Seventh-day Adventist statement of fundamental beliefs.

### **Ellen White and Scripture**

Ellen White wrote extensively on the relationship of her writings to the Bible and on the role of the Bible in faith and practice. She categorically subscribed to the tenet of Sola Scriptura. She wrote: “The Bible and the Bible alone, is our rule of faith.”<sup>10</sup> “The

---

<sup>8</sup>Ibid. See also Frank B. Holbrook, “The Biblical Basis for a Modern Prophet,” Biblical Research Institute, Washington, DC, April 1982.

<sup>9</sup>James White, *Life Incidents in Connection with the Great Advent Movement: As Illustrated by the Three Angels of Revelation XIV* (Battle Creek, MI: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing, 1868), 328.

<sup>10</sup>Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Sabbath School Work* (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald, 1938), 84.

words of the Bible, and the Bible alone, should be heard from the pulpit.”<sup>11</sup> The conclusion of Ellen White’s first book—published in 1851—set the tone of Ellen White’s position on the relationship of her writings to the Bible:

I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged. God has, in that Word, promised to give visions in the "last days"; not for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of His people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth.<sup>12</sup>

This statement made in her first book continued to resonate throughout her life. At the midcourse of her ministry in 1885 she wrote publicly in the church paper: “The Bible, and the Bible alone, is to be our creed, the sole bond of union; all who bow to this holy word will be in harmony.”<sup>13</sup> At her last presentation to the 1909 General Conference Session she concluded her sermon by holding up the Bible before them and saying, “Brethren and Sisters, I commend unto you this Book.”<sup>14</sup>

In writing of her experience and that of the other founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, she wrote: “We then took the position that the Bible, and the Bible only, was to be our guide; and we are never to depart from this position.”<sup>15</sup>

She wrote explicitly of the Protestant reformation principle of *Sola Scriptura*. “In our time there is a wide departure from their [the Reformers’] doctrines and precepts, and

---

<sup>11</sup>Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1943), 626.

<sup>12</sup>Ellen G. White, *A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White* (Saratoga Springs, NY: James White, 1851), 64.

<sup>13</sup>Ellen G. White, “A Missionary Appeal,” *Review and Herald*, December 15, 1885, 769, 770.

<sup>14</sup>Quoted in W. A. Spicer, *The Spirit of Prophecy in the Advent Movement* (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald, 1937), 30.

<sup>15</sup>Ellen G. White, Letter 105, 1903, EGW Estate, Silver Spring, MD.

there is need of a return to the great Protestant principle—the Bible, and the Bible only, as the rule of faith and duty. . . . God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms.”<sup>16</sup>

In referring to Protestants who appeal to tradition or the Church Fathers she wrote:

“They may claim the authority of tradition and of the Fathers . . . but in so doing they ignore the very principle which separates them from Rome—that the Bible, and the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants.”<sup>17</sup>

In all, Ellen White’s published writings contain the phrase “Bible and the Bible only” forty-five times and “Bible and the Bible alone” forty-seven times.

The Bible played a central role in Ellen White’s personal experience and ministry. Not only did she use scripture, her writings are full of scripture. A number of her major books are commentaries on the Bible. Her five-volume *Conflict of the Ages* series is largely a chronological commentary on the Bible. Other books like *Christ Object Lessons* and *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing* are commentaries on Jesus’ parables and sermons from the gospels. Her other major books, *Education*, *Ministry of Healing*, and *Steps to Christ*, while topically written are firmly rooted in scripture and Bible principles. Even her counsel books are strongly Bible oriented.

Ellen White believed that her visions and writings would not have been necessary if professed believers had been diligent in their study of the Bible. On April 30, 1871, she had a dream, which led to perhaps her most direct discussion of the relationship of

---

<sup>16</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1950), 204, 595.

<sup>17</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 448.

her writings to the Bible.<sup>18</sup> She saw herself addressing a large group at an important church meeting. “You are not familiar with the Scriptures,” she wrote. “If you had made God’s word your study, with a desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection, you would not have needed the Testimonies. It is because you have neglected to acquaint yourselves with God’s inspired Book that He has sought to reach you by simple, direct testimonies.” She continued, “The Lord designs to warn you, to reprove, to counsel, through the testimonies given, and to impress your minds with the importance of the truth of His word. The written testimonies are not to give new light, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed.”<sup>19</sup>

Ellen White used analogy to describe the relationship of her writings to scripture. She wrote that “little heed is given to the Bible, and the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light.”<sup>20</sup> The “greater light-lesser light” comparison suggested that “just as the moon derives its light from the sun and reflects only what that source emits, so her messages are seen as deriving their authority from scripture, serving only to mirror the principles presented therein.”<sup>21</sup>

These clear descriptions and statements make it abundantly clear that Ellen White believed in Sola Scriptura even while she believed that God had spoken to her in a supernatural and prophetic way.

---

<sup>18</sup>For an excellent discussion of the relationship between Ellen White’s writings and scripture see: Tim Poirier, “Contemporary Prophecy and Scripture: The Relationship of Ellen G. White’s Writings to the Bible in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, 1845-1915” (Research Paper, Wesley Theological Seminary, March 1986).

<sup>19</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol., 2 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 605, 606.

<sup>20</sup>Ellen G. White, “An Open Letter from Mrs. E. G. White to All Who Love the Blessed Hope,” *Review and Herald*, January 20, 1903, 15.

<sup>21</sup>Poirier, “Contemporary Prophecy,” 16.

## Ellen White's Writings and the Bible Canon

While Seventh-day Adventists do not see a difference in the nature or character of Ellen White's inspiration compared with the Bible writers, they are very clear on the difference between the role and function of Bible and her writings. Adventists would compare her writings to non-canonical prophets such as Enoch, Huldah, Deborah, Miriam, Elijah, Elisha, Nathan, Gad, Ahijah, Iddo, John the Baptist, and disciples/apostles of Jesus who did not write portions of scripture. Ellen White wrote:

During the ages while the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testament were being given, the Holy Spirit did not cease to communicate light to individual minds, apart from the revelations to be embodied in the Sacred Canon. The Bible itself relates how, through the Holy Spirit, men received warning, reproof, counsel, and instruction, in matters in no way relating to the giving of the Scriptures. And mention is made of prophets in different ages, of whose utterances nothing is recorded. In like manner, after the close of the canon of the Scripture, the Holy Spirit was still to continue to work, to enlighten, warn, and comfort the children of God.<sup>22</sup>

Nathan in particular is a good example of a non-canonical prophet with a similar role as Ellen White. He is called a prophet, he wrote an inspired book, yet his book is not included in the Bible. Nevertheless his prophetic role was recognized by David (who was himself a canonical prophet). See 1 Kings 1; 1 Chronicles 17:1-15; 29:29; 2 Chronicles 9:29; Psalm 51:1.

Thus Adventists and Ellen White clearly ascribe fundamental authority to the canon of scripture and do not see modern prophetic visions and dreams as additional scripture.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup>White, *The Great Controversy*, 1911, viii.

<sup>23</sup>See attachment from *Ministry* February 1983 for a more recent explanation of Ellen White's writings and the canon of scripture.

### **Ellen White's Role in Seventh-day Adventist Doctrine**

One additional point needs to be considered before we conclude this explanatory paper and that is the role of Ellen White's visions and dreams in the development of Seventh-day Adventist doctrine. It can be historically demonstrated that Ellen White's writings were not the source of any Seventh-day Adventist doctrine. Her counsels have enriched Adventist doctrinal study and provided a correcting and unifying influence, but her writings have never been the basis for fundamental Adventist doctrine or Christian experience. A brief survey of the development of Seventh-day Adventist beliefs follows.

Adventists brought with them from other Protestant denominations their doctrines of God, salvation, and sin. Though these concepts developed over time, they were comparable in many ways to the Arminian rather than the Calvinist branch of Protestantism. Certain doctrines that might be considered distinctive for Seventh-day Adventists were also either inherited or developed through Bible study. The concept of the imminent return of Jesus based a historicist interpretation of Daniel and Revelation came through the Millerite movement and an understanding of Reformation era historicists. The Adventist doctrine of conditional immortality, the unconsciousness of the soul in death, and the final destruction of the lost came through a minority view from within the Millerite movement and particularly through the influence of George Storrs.<sup>24</sup> The Seventh-day Sabbath concept was largely due to the influence of Seventh Day Baptists. Ellen White accepted conditional immortality before she had her first vision and she accepted the Sabbath through personal Bible study in connection with a tract

---

<sup>24</sup>George Storrs, "An Inquiry: Are the Wicked Immortal? In Six Sermons," *Bible Examiner*, May 1843, 2-14; idem, "Intermediate State of the Dead, or State from Death until the Resurrection," *Bible Examiner*, May 1843, 15-16.

written by Joseph Bates. This was soon after her marriage or about September 1846. She did not have a vision on the Sabbath until five months later. The heavenly sanctuary doctrine and the eschatological importance of the Sabbath came largely through the theological influence of O. R. L. Crosier and Joseph Bates.<sup>25</sup> Ellen White's visions provided support and enrichment but the essential concepts were biblically derived and explained.

The doctrine of tithing waited until Adventists studied the matter biblically in the 1870s. The development of this doctrine was not initiated or directed by Ellen White's writings.<sup>26</sup>

The most recent major theological shift for Seventh-day Adventists was the formal adoption of the doctrine of the Trinity. It was a renewed emphasis on soteriological and Christological themes and particularly the relationship between gospel and law during the 1890s and early 20<sup>th</sup> century that led to a new appreciation of the full equality, personality, and unity of the Godhead. Again, Ellen White did not initiate this understanding, though her writings did enrich and push the church in a biblical direction. Her clear statements on the eternal deity and equality of Jesus to the Father and the personality and full deity of the Holy Spirit, helped unify the church on the doctrine. She wrote in *Desire of Ages* "In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived."<sup>27</sup> She also

---

<sup>25</sup>O. R. L. Crosier and F. B. Hahn, *Day-Dawn* published on last page of *Ontario Messenger*, March 26, 1845; O. R. L. Crosier, "The Law of Moses," *Day-Star Extra*, February 7, 1846, 37-44; Joseph Bates, *The Seventh day Sabbath, a Perpetual Sign, from the Beginning to the Entering into the Gates of the Holy City, According to the Commandment* (New Bedford, MA: Benjamin Lindsey, 1847).

<sup>26</sup>*Report of the General Conference Held at Battle Creek, Michigan, June 3-6, 1859: Containing an Address on Systematic Benevolence, also Practical Discourses* (Battle Creek: MI: Review & Herald Office, 1859); *Systematic Benevolence: The Bible Plan of Supporting the Ministry* (Battle Creek, MI: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing, 1878).

<sup>27</sup>Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1898), 530.

wrote of the Holy Spirit: “Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power.”<sup>28</sup> Even with her influence, though, it took several decades for the doctrine to become mainstream for Adventists. Though Ellen White’s writings were influential it was scripture that remained the determining authority for this doctrine.

Thus Ellen White is not the source or initiator of Seventh-day Adventist doctrinal development. Her writings provided a unifying and enriching influence. Her positions did not result in a suspension of biblical study, rather they served as a catalyst for further Bible study.

## **Conclusion**

This brief paper has provided an overview of the Seventh-day Adventist view regarding Ellen White and Sola Scriptura. Adventists consider themselves Protestants and have from their beginning embraced a restorationist approach to the principle of Sola Scriptura. Ellen White also explicitly subscribed to this principle. Neither early Adventists nor Ellen White herself saw her prophetic experience as incompatible with this principle. Rather they saw her visions as a *fulfillment of biblical predictions* and *subject to biblical authority*. Ellen White went even further and expressed that her writings were intended to lead people back to the Bible and would not even have been necessary if there had been greater faithfulness in Bible study and practice. Finally, an examination of Seventh-day Adventist doctrinal development shows that Ellen White’s

---

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 671.

visions and prophetic dreams supported and enriched the process but were never originating or determinative.

It is vital to understand Ellen White's passionate personal experience in relation to the Bible. She earnestly studied the Bible and had committed much of it to memory. She did not give token acknowledgement to Scripture. Both her personal and public writings are centered on the Bible and contain almost continual allusions, references, and quotations to it. The theological and lifestyle standards she promoted were invariably linked to scripture. It is expected that Seventh-day Adventists will continue to focus their attention on the Bible and cherish the principles of Sola Scriptura.

**Some Additional Statements By Ellen White  
on the Relationship of her Writings to the Bible**

The Lord desires you to study your Bibles. He has not given any additional light to take the place of His Word. This light is to bring confused minds to His Word, which, if eaten and digested, is as the lifeblood of the soul. Then good works will be seen as light shining in darkness.--Letter 130, 1901.

In public labor do not make prominent, and quote that which Sister White has written, as authority to sustain your positions. To do this will not increase faith in the testimonies. Bring your evidences, clear and plain, from the Word of God. A "Thus saith the Lord" is the strongest testimony you can possibly present to the people. Let none be educated to look to Sister White, but to the mighty God, who gives instruction to Sister White.--Letter 11, 1894.

It is my first duty to present Bible principles. Then, unless there is a decided, conscientious reform made by those whose cases have been presented before me, I must appeal to them personally.--Letter 69, 1896.

The Spirit was not given--nor can it ever be bestowed--to supersede the Bible; for the Scriptures explicitly state that the Word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. . . . Isaiah declares, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20). *The Great Controversy*, Introduction, p. vii.

Brother J would confuse the mind by seeking to make it appear that the light God has given through the Testimonies is an addition to the Word of God, but in this he presents the matter in a false light. God has seen fit in this manner to bring the minds of His people to His Word, to give them a clearer understanding of it. Letter 63, 1893.

The Bible must be your counselor. Study it and the testimonies God has given; for they never contradict His Word.--Letter 106, 1907.

If the Testimonies speak not according to this word of God, reject them. Christ and Belial cannot be united.--*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 691.

How can the Lord bless those who manifest a spirit of "I don't care," a spirit which leads them to walk contrary to the light which the Lord has given them? But I do not ask you to take my words. Lay Sister White to one side. Do not quote my words again as long as you live until you can obey the Bible. When you make the Bible your food, your meat, and your drink, when you make its principles the elements of your character, you will know better how to receive counsel from God. I exalt the precious Word before you today. Do not repeat what I have said, saying, "Sister White said this," and "Sister White said that." Find out what the Lord God of Israel says, and then do what He commands.--Manuscript 43, 1901. (From an address to church leaders the night before the opening of the General Conference session of 1901.)

# The inspiration and authority of the Ellen G. White writings

*A statement of present understanding.*

*In response to requests, a statement on the relationship of the writings of Ellen G. White to the Bible was prepared initially by an ad hoc committee of the General Conference. The statement was published in the July 15 Adventist Review and August issue of MINISTRY with an invitation to readers to respond to it. Suggestions from readers and from several groups have led to a refinement of the statement to its present form. Although it is not a voted statement, we believe that the worldwide participation in its development makes it a reflection of the views of the church on the topic it addresses.—Biblical Research Institute.*

**I**n the Statement of Fundamental Beliefs voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists at Dallas in April, 1980, the Preamble states: "Seventh-day Adventists accept the Bible as their only creed and hold certain fundamental beliefs to be the teaching of the Holy Scriptures." Paragraph one reflects the church's understanding of the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, while paragraph seventeen reflects the church's understanding of the inspiration and authority of the writings of Ellen White in relation to the Scriptures. These paragraphs read as follows:

## **"1. The Holy Scriptures**

"The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration through holy men of God who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. In this Word, God has committed to man the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are the infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the test of experience, the authoritative revealer of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God's acts in history. (2 Peter 1:20, 21; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Ps. 119:105; Prov. 30:5, 6; Isa. 8:20; John 17:17; 1 Thess. 2:13; Heb. 4:12.)"

## **"17. The Gift of Prophecy**

"One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is

prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord's messenger, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. (Joel 2:28, 29; Acts 2:14-21; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 12:17; 19:10.)"

The following affirmations and denials speak to the issues which have been raised about the inspiration and authority of the Ellen White writings and their relation to the Bible. These clarifications should be taken as a whole. They are an attempt to express the present understanding of Seventh-day Adventists. They are not to be construed as a substitute for, or a part of, the two doctrinal statements quoted above.

## **Affirmations**

1. We believe that Scripture is the divinely revealed Word of God and is inspired by the Holy Spirit.
2. We believe that the canon of Scripture is composed only of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments.
3. We believe that Scripture is the foundation of faith and the final authority in all matters of doctrine and practice.
4. We believe that Scripture is the Word of God in human language.
5. We believe that Scripture teaches that the gift of prophecy will be manifest in the Christian church after New Testament times.
6. We believe that the ministry and writings of Ellen White were a manifestation of the gift of prophecy.
7. We believe that Ellen White was inspired by the Holy Spirit and that her writings, the product of that inspiration, are applicable and authoritative, especially to Seventh-day Adventists.
8. We believe that the purposes of the Ellen White writings include guidance in understanding the teaching of Scripture and application of these teachings, with

prophetic urgency, to the spiritual and moral life.

9. We believe that the acceptance of the prophetic gift of Ellen White is important to the nurture and unity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

10. We believe that Ellen White's use of literary sources and assistants finds parallels in some of the writings of the Bible.

## **Denials**

1. We do not believe that the quality or degree of inspiration in the writings of Ellen White is different from that of Scripture.

2. We do not believe that the writings of Ellen White are an addition to the canon of Sacred Scripture.

3. We do not believe that the writings of Ellen White function as the foundation and final authority of Christian faith as does Scripture.

4. We do not believe that the writings of Ellen White may be used as the basis of doctrine.

5. We do not believe that the study of the writings of Ellen White may be used to replace the study of Scripture.

6. We do not believe that Scripture can be understood only through the writings of Ellen White.

7. We do not believe that the writings of Ellen White exhaust the meaning of Scripture.

8. We do not believe that the writings of Ellen White are essential for the proclamation of the truths of Scripture to society at large.

9. We do not believe that the writings of Ellen White are the product of mere Christian piety.

10. We do not believe that Ellen White's use of literary sources and assistants negates the inspiration of her writings.

We conclude, therefore, that a correct understanding of the inspiration and authority of the writings of Ellen White will avoid two extremes: (1) regarding these writings as functioning on a canonical level identical with Scripture, or (2) considering them as ordinary Christian literature.