

**Is**  
Beyond Belief  
**Beyond Belief?**

*A Critique of Jack Sequeira's Book  
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Introduction

**Seriousness of Charges  
Against the Book *Beyond Belief***

Severe criticism of *Beyond Belief* (published 1993 by PPPA and currently available at your nearest ABC) has been voiced by certain prominent thought-leaders of independent ministries, in recent magazine articles and in public seminar presentations.

*Our Firm Foundation* published an article, “The Concept of Forensic Justification,” which declares it “too dangerous ... for any faithful Seventh-day Adventist. Above all, it is not the message of Christ our righteousness as presented by Waggoner, Jones and Sister White.” It is “Satan’s method to deceive” (November, 1993). Much stronger opposing comment has been recorded on audio tapes of various speakers in their public meetings. The denunciation is phenomenal, probably unprecedented in Seventh-day Adventist history.

Duty requires that we give attention, for we are implicated—we endorsed the book in our *1888 Message Newsletter*. Those who condemn *Beyond Belief* now include the message proclaimed by the 1888 Message Study Committee. Did we err in endorsing Elder Sequeira’s book? Are these opponents right or are they wrong? Where is the truth? We must investigate. We must not be foolish and endorse error, neither should we condemn truth which the Holy Spirit may be bringing to the world church.

The following are verbatim quotes taken from a transcript of public seminar lectures about *Beyond Belief* (Paradise, California). They indicate how serious is the opposition, how zealously these brethren condemn this book. These are generally representative of other widespread criticisms of it:

“Satan has brought this deadly deception into the Seventh-day Adventist church. Many are entrapped in it, including many conservative Seventh-day Adventists.”

“Many conservative Seventh-day Adventists believe that this book is

wonderful.” *Beyond Belief* is making an unbelievable impact across the world in the SDA church.” “I am aghast how quickly ‘straight testimony’ people have embraced this book.” “*Beyond Belief* will frustrate the return of Jesus. It is a masterpiece of deception.”

“This is the most deceptive book put out in recent years. Books like *Hot Potatoes* are full of error which is readily apparent, but they are crude compared to this.”

“This is most deadly heresy, ... a resurgence of new theology in the beautiful garb of conservative Adventism. ... I am heart-broken at this deception. Satan is coming with a subtle appeal. This is exactly the same theology as the new theology.”

“May God save us from Satan’s masterpiece of deception.” “Des Ford’s new theology was kindergarten stuff compared with this today.”

“This will lead many conservative Seventh-day Adventists to eternal destruction.”

A retired General Conference Youth Director is among those who join the attack on Sequeira’s book, declaring it to be the most deceptive he has ever seen published by a Seventh-day Adventist publishing house (see Appendix C). Thus the issue is drawn clear-cut, and we cannot evade it. The stakes are high, and the consequences are profound:

**(a) *These opposers unequivocally attribute this book to Satan. They warn all who accept it that they are on the road to “eternal destruction.”***

**(b) *On the other hand, there might be another possibility—this book may present “the truth of the gospel” in a way that the Holy Spirit is blessing. To condemn it as “Satan’s masterpiece of deception” would attribute to Satan what could be the genuine work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus says this would be an unpardonable sin (Matthew 12:31-33).***

Those who condemn this book believe sincerely that the Lord has appointed them as “watchmen on the walls of Zion” to warn the people away from this message. Thousands of Seventh-day Adventists look to them for spiritual guidance. If they had said only that Sequeira “teaches error” or that he is “mistaken,” such criticisms would not have forced us to publish this special re-examination. But

these brethren have unhesitatingly said *Beyond Belief* is inspired by Satan, his “masterpiece of deception.” As a consequence this issue has electrified the attention of thousands in many lands. If these brethren are right, they are doing a noble duty and all honest people must say “amen” to their criticisms. If they are wrong, they are turning many away from “the truth of the gospel” which the Lord is now seeking to present to His church at a time when the latter rain is long overdue. After a hundred years since Minneapolis, wouldn’t that be a tragic mistake? Our duty therefore is to seek carefully to discern where the truth may be.

“The man who once so wisely said,  
‘Be sure you’re right, then go ahead,’  
Could well have added this, to wit,  
‘Be sure you’re wrong before you quit.’”

Jesus commands us, “Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment” (John 7:24). In other words, “Stop judging superficially; you must judge fairly” (Williams’ translation). We pray for wisdom and discernment to do so. This is no time for “superficial” reading!

Have we learned the lesson of 1888? Ellen White told the opposing brethren a century ago:

“If [Waggoner] is in error, you should, in a calm, rational, Christlike manner seek to show him from the Word of God where he is out of harmony with its teachings. If you cannot do this you have no right to pick flaws, to criticize, to work in the dark, to prejudice minds with your objections. This is Satan’s way of working. ... Our greatest fear should be that we may be found rebelling against God’s Word, which is to be our guide amid all the perils of the last days. We must be sure that we are on the Lord’s side, that we have the truth as it is in Jesus. ... No one must be permitted to close the avenues whereby the light of truth shall come to the people. As soon as this shall be attempted, God’s Spirit will be quenched, for that Spirit is constantly at work to give fresh and increased light to His people through His Word. ... We should not reject or oppose the views of our fellow laborers because they do not agree with our ideas until we have used every means in our power to find out whether or not they are truth, comparing scripture with scripture” (MS 15, November 1, 1888).

This is not to compare personalities, but only to note that the principles of fair play Ellen White expressed then apply today, and equally to any of our brethren. We hope to bear those principles in mind as we proceed with our investigation of this book.

## Section 1 **Who Is Jack Sequeira?**

To many in the church, he may be a stranger. Grace and Robert J. Wieland have probably known him longer than others in the church because they were the first Seventh-day Adventists he became acquainted with. He was their non-Adventist neighbor who lived across the street in Nairobi, Kenya, in the 1950 s. A successful young architect, he was caught up in the whirl of Nairobi secular society. Wieland has described what happened when the neighbors became acquainted:

“I was serving as president of the Central Kenya Field, working directly for the Africans in ‘Section One’ of the mission program. I was trying to help the African pastors who used bicycles to visit their churches 40-50 miles apart, by getting motorcycles for them. We had no money to buy new ones so I scrounged the junk yards for used machines (one was burnt!) that I could fix up. Jack was a motorcycle enthusiast. Out of neighborly kindness he would come across the street and help me make the old machines run. He told the family where he lived, ‘That priest over there really does love the Africans!’

“Through a providential circumstance (he says I caught’ him with Paul’s ‘guile’) Jack attended an Adventist meeting. I had asked him would he please chauffeur a neighbor lady to the meeting, who had no other way to get there. Being a kind-hearted neighbor, he could not bring himself to refuse. Although up to that time he had shown no interest, he found himself sitting in the back of the little chapel where Elder Dale Ringering was explaining the 2,300-year prophecy and the investigative judgment. Jack became interested. Eventually it became my privilege to baptize him (two others of my neighbors were baptized also, including the lady), but I did not instruct him. In fact, my duties occupied me with ‘Section One’ work with the Africans, and Elder Ringering and Jack and these neighbor ladies were in the ‘Section Two’ category, beyond the sphere of my ministry. My contribution was only our neighborly friendship.

“As we knew Jack in those early days, it seemed impossible to conceive of him ever becoming a preacher. Later he responded to a conviction that he should attend a Seventh-day Adventist college, and then came a conviction that he should prepare for the ministry. He rode his motorbike

up through Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan, Egypt, the Middle East, the continent of Europe, finally arriving at Newbold College in England where he was promptly refused admission. Later he was accepted. He worked as a colporteur selling Seventh-day Adventist books in Scandinavia where he learned Swedish. In college or the Seminary he heard my name bandied about as one of the authors of '1888 Re-examined,' and wondered if that could be the same person who had baptized him in Nairobi.

"Quite independently of anything I may have said, he became interested in the 1888 message of Jones and Waggoner, recognizing its value and the significance of its history."

Elder Sequeira began his public ministry as a missionary to the Africans, speaking to thousands in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda. His communication skills were honed by the discipline of making the Seventh-day Adventist message simple and clear to Africans. Born in Kenya and knowing how they think and feel, understanding Kiswahili, he knew how to reach them. They were arrested by the freshness and vitality of his message and by his loyal friendship.

He has won thousands of Africans not merely to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church but to an enthusiastic love of the Adventist message and a vital spiritual experience. He was particularly successful in attracting African university students when he served as their chaplain. In meeting rebellious, threatening students in a Communist land (Ethiopia) who employed violence, he fearlessly confronted them with the gospel and saw its good news truths awaken love and win their hearts.

But from the 1970's he directed his special attention to explaining to the Africans why the popular "new theology" is not true Adventism. (Those who criticize his book as being disguised "new theology" may not realize that the focal point of his ministry has been to clarify the issues raised by the "Reformationist theology," using its vocabulary to overthrow its error). Because the vast proportion of our Africans do not possess the Ellen G. White books, he has concentrated on Biblical exegesis. Indeed, if we as a denomination are at last to meet the Evangelicals on their own ground, we must use Scripture as our "sword of the Spirit," rather than relying on Ellen White to articulate our ideas for us and save us the bother of deep

Bible study. Her writings are to lead us to the Bible, to sharpen our Biblical exegesis, and certainly not to take the place of the Bible.

Sequeira would doubtless have remained in Africa except for an unusual circumstance. As a missionary residing outside his native country, he lost his Kenya citizenship by default, not being resident at the time the nation became independent. Then he was expelled from Uganda by the insane dictator Idi Amin. A man without a country, in desperation he appealed to the American Consul, and was finally granted citizenship provided he spend some years in residence in the United States. Thus without a personal choice on his part, his path led to pastorates in America, where his message has stirred a deep interest, as it did in East Africa.

Section 2  
**Sin and Agape**  
*(Chapters 1 and 2)*

**In his Introduction, Sequeira asks us to “put aside all preconceived ideas” (p. 7).** A prominent opposer interprets this as a demand that we abandon our solid Adventist convictions of truth. Thus suspicions are planted concerning this book. Sequeira explains his meaning in his next sentence: “new wine cannot be put into old bottles (see Matthew 9:17).” The “preconceived ideas” Sequeira refers to are not the solid truths that Seventh-day Adventists hold, but the same “preconceived ideas” that Ellen White asked her 1888-era brethren to “lay aside” when she appealed to them at Minneapolis: “There are mines to be discovered in which are precious jewels of truth. Let no one close these mines, and cease to dig for the truth lest they should have to lay aside some preconceived idea or opinion” (MS 15, November 1, 1888; *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 163). Four years later she wrote,

“There is no excuse for anyone in taking the position that there is no more truth to be revealed, and that all our expositions of Scripture are without an error. The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people, is not a proof that our ideas are infallible. Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation” (*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 35; 1892).

While it may have been better if the order of these two chapters had been reversed, the text itself is clear. It contains no “sin-and-live” leanings. We cannot fault the author’s foundational statement that “self-love is the underlying principle of all sin” (p. 11; this cannot be Spiritualism). When he says that “sin ... is basically rebellion against God” (*idem*), he is in harmony with Ellen Whites definition, “sin is the transgression of the law” [*anomia*, Greek]. No tincture of Augustinian or Calvinist original sin occurs in Sequeira’s statements such

as these: “we are born self-centered,” and “love of self is the driving force of our natures” (pp. 12-14), and “our sinful condition (iniquity) makes it impossible for us to do anything but miss the divine mark (sin) unless we have a Saviour” (p. 15). While this is painfully, universally true, Sequeira says we do have that Saviour, thank God.

**What does it mean to be “shaped in iniquity” (Psalm 51:5)?**

Sequeira deals with the question directly without espousing Augustinian original sin: “We are born with a nature that is bent toward sin or self. ... We have all followed the natural bent to our ‘own way’. ... This self-centeredness [is] the iniquity that was laid upon Christ” (p. 14). But such a “bent” or “tendency” is not sin unless it is yielded to. Sequeira says that although “all we” have yielded to it, when Christ took the nature of “the children” and their “flesh and blood” and took a “self” as we have a self, He perfectly denied self. He took a will of His own that had to be denied in order to follow His Fathers will (John 5:30; 6:38; Matthew 26:39, etc.). *A total denial of self is the opposite of selfishness.* Thus Christ could take our sinful nature yet not be a sinner. In our case, we have all become naturally selfish in character because we are by nature separated or alienated from God. “There is none righteous, no, not one.”

Sequeira’s statements do not require an “Immaculate Conception” or an “exemption” for Christ in His incarnation, as does a false definition of sin. He makes clear that in His incarnation Christ took the fallen, sinful nature which we all share, experiencing temptation “like as” we experience it, including the necessity to deny the clamors of self. In fact, no book published by a Seventh-day Adventist publishing house today presents the 1888 view of the nature of Christ as powerfully as does this one. Yet one very prominent opponent, a former General Conference leader, has publicly declared that *Beyond Belief* teaches that Christ took the sinless nature of Adam before the fall, disclosing to thoughtful people the embarrassing fact that he has not read the book.

**What does Sequeira say about God’s love?** We have searched the chapter on “God’s Redemptive Love” for some evidence of the “most deadly heresy” that opponents say permeates this book. Speaking of *Beyond Belief* one speaker warns congregations that

they should beware of the teaching that “God is love” because love is over-emphasized with the dangerous possibility that the Satanic deception of Spiritualism lurks within it (he cites *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 4, p. 405, as evidence). Since he regards this book as “Satan’s masterpiece of deception,” we must give special attention to Sequeira’s remarks about love (*agape*). If the book is satanic, surely something will be apparent in this chapter. Satan is very clever, but he cannot *completely* cover his tracks. What does Sequeira say about God’s love?

He contrasts it with human love, declaring that *agape* is “unconditional,” which troubles his critics. Yet we read that God “justifieth the ungodly.” “When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. ... God commendeth his *agape* toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners [enemies, vs. 10] Christ died for us” (Romans 4:5; 5:6, 8, 10). “Herein is love [*agape*], not that we loved God, but that He loved us” (1 John 4:10). Christ enjoins upon us unconditional love for our fellowmen (“love [*agapao*] your enemies, bless them that curse you,” Matthew 5:44). Would He ask us to love others with an unconditional love that He Himself does not exercise?

Of course God’s love for the sinner is unconditional! We are surprised that some “historic Adventists” wish to deny it. (That doesn’t mean that He loves sin.) Ellen White speaks thus of “conditions”: “The question will come up, How is it? Is it by conditions that we receive salvation? Never by conditions do we come to Christ” (MS 9, 1890; *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 537). We can receive *agape* “only as the unmerited bestowal of the Father’s love” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 210), “God so loved the [sinful] world that He gave His only begotten Son.”

**We do “not work in order to earn God’s love”** (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 283). Although it requires a response of obedience on our part, we must never give the impression that God waits to love us until we make ourselves good first. *This is the key issue here*. Since the gospel has to be the good news about God’s love, if that love for the sinner should prove to be unconditional it would follow that the

gospel that tells about it must also be unconditional good news. And Sequeira’s opponents are very unhappy with that statement.

Sequeira does not mean that the repentant sinner does nothing, does not obey, or that there are not dire consequences if he rejects the unconditional good news. He does not mean that love’s requirements of obedience and service are lessened in the least, nor does he mean that God’s plan of salvation is unconditional. *He simply says that the news about God’s unconditional love is unconditionally good*. That is what the very word “gospel” (*euangelion*) means.

In other words, the righteousness of Christ by which “the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life” was accomplished “while we were yet sinners,” totally without our making any contribution, and totally without our doing anything to merit it. Sequeira means that Christ is our Saviour 100%; we cannot save ourselves even 1%. He believes there is no power in the universe except *agape* that can “constrain” lukewarm, materialistic, egocentric, fear-dominated Seventh-day Adventists to live “henceforth [not] unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again.” All motivation based on fear or hope-of-reward will ultimately fail because it is essentially egocentric. (The mark of the beast will be the ultimate test; yet one prominent opposer leads congregations to believe that this book will program Seventh-day Adventists to accept that mark. In fact, this message may be a heaven-sent preparation to help God’s people meet that test, because no one can then make the right decision if egocentric concern remains the paramount motivation.)

**Sequeira’s high regard for the quality of *agape*-love is the guiding principle of his book, out of which all of his ideas emanate.** In fact, *agape*, not legal justification, is its real focus. He says: “Human love is conditional, ... changeable, ... self-seeking. ... God’s love is unconditional, ... unchanging, ... self-giving. ... Not until we recognize this threefold quality of God’s *agape* love will the gospel become unconditional good news to us” (p. 23). Is that a “satanic heresy”? In particular, does Sequeira teach the fatal “sin-and-live theology” that opponents attribute to him?

**What does he mean by “unconditional good news”?** Does he say that there are no conditions for *eternal* salvation? No. The gospel

is not news of what we do, but of what *Christ* has done (past tense), and does (present tense), and will do (future tense) for us. Any news of what we do cannot be *good news*, for no merit can be attached to our works, even good ones. The author frequently says that the sinner can reject the good news and be lost. But no lost soul can at last claim that God's love to him was partial or conditional.

Sequeira's analysis of *eros*, *agape*, and *caritas* forces our acknowledgement that it is correct. He declares unequivocally that the only true gospel is *agape*. The Galatian heresy anticipated the *caritas* error of a "gospel of faith plus works, or justification plus sanctification, ... the heart of Roman Catholic theology. It is a subtle form of legalism" (p. 25). Opponents consider this a "deadly" disparagement of obedience or of sanctification, but it brings us to the place where we must make a choice between two contrasting and irreconcilable formulae: (a) we are saved by faith *and* by works, or (b) we are saved by faith *which* works. We believe the truth has to lie with (b), as we will soon demonstrate.

**We must not inject into Sequeira's words what is not there.**

Justification has to be what *God* does, and sanctification has to be what *we* do in cooperation with Him. Sequeira's remarks do not hint that sanctification is not necessary to *eternal* salvation, or that it is not equally by faith as is justification. He maintains only that the gospel has to be good news of what *Christ did for the human race*, "while we were yet sinners." The point is, no human being can invent or produce a righteousness that is better than Christ's righteousness, or that can stand independent of it, or substitute for it. It is not correct to confuse Sequeira's definition of the gospel with his understanding of the fruits of the gospel, which he says depend on understanding and believing the former. His position is distinctly different than that of the "Reformationist new theology."

Sequeira's analysis of "*agape* and self-worth" is on target (p. 26). Contrary to insinuations from his opponents otherwise, this is opposed to every principle of Spiritualism and is the only effective defense against its subtle inroads of egocentric self-esteem. To attribute Sequeira's message of *agape* to Spiritualism, or even to imply that it is related to it, is contradicted by a careful reading of the evidence

in this chapter. We must take our stand firmly that God's *agape* for sinners is indeed the strongest moral force in the universe and is unconditional, although of course the sinner can resist and reject it because God has granted him the power of choice. ("Unconditional" does not mean irresistible.)

In concluding this section, we cannot agree with the opponents that *agape* is in any way a dangerous doctrine or that it is possible to over-emphasize or over-state it, for "God is *agape*" (1 John 4:8; see 1 Corinthians 13). Nor can we agree that the gospel is "faith *plus* works." It is the pure good news that arouses in human hearts a "faith *which* works" (Galatians 5:6). We conclude that we do not see "deadly heresy" or "satanic deception" in this section.

## Section 3

## What Is the Gospel? (Chapters 3 and 4)

Since only “the gospel ... is the power of God unto salvation” (Romans 1:16), the church must learn what is “the truth of the gospel” (Galatians 2:5, 14) if we are to proclaim it to the world with the mighty power described in Revelation 18.

Sequeira’s opponents are disturbed because he maintains that the gospel is the news of “a righteousness that is entirely of God’s doing without any human contribution whatsoever. ... In Christ ... humanity stands perfect and complete before God and His holy law.” Sequeira defines this “salvation” as including deliverance from “1. the guilt and punishment of sin. 2. the power and slavery of sin. 3. the nature and presence of sin.” He says that “all three of these aspects ... have already been accomplished in ... our Lord Jesus Christ, ... offered to us in Christ; they cannot be separated” (pp. 29, 30). By entering the stream of our fallen humanity as the second Adam, Christ has redeemed the entire human race. Is this heresy?

**If Sequeira is teaching that a legal justification “in Christ” is sufficient for eternal salvation the answer would be yes.** His opponents accuse him of this, creating revulsion for his teaching that salvation is “unconditional.” But his next sentence clearly says no: “We cannot choose to receive one without the others.” In other words, “salvation” from “the power and slavery of sin” (sanctification) is just as essential for eternal life as salvation from the guilt and punishment of sin (legal justification). This on-going, life-long process is what Sequeira defines as “sanctification by faith” (p. 31). Although opponents maintain that he neglects sanctification, he devotes a large section of his book to it (pp. 101-178).

Sequeira’s phrase “the finished work of our Lord” (p. 30) does not mean a finished atonement on the cross, even though to some readers the word “finished” is a red flag implying heresy. He uses the

word in the same sense as Jesus’ prayer, “Father, ... I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do,” and as His last cry as He died, “It is finished.” Christ did not mean that *the process* of the atonement was finished—the *sacrifice* was finished.

Opponents object to remarks which Sequeira makes on p. 32 where he says: “Confusion comes as a result of failing to see the distinction between what God has already accomplished in Christ some two thousand years ago and what He is presently doing in the lives of believers through the indwelling Spirit. ... The *imputed* righteousness of Christ ... qualifies the believer for heaven, both now and in the judgment. ... *Imparted* righteousness ... does not contribute in the slightest way to our qualification for heaven; it witnesses, or demonstrates, what is already true of us in Christ.” “Righteousness ‘in Christ’ is the only means of our salvation, and unless we resist and reject it, it fully qualifies us for heaven.” “Jesus Christ has already accomplished everything necessary for sinful men and women to be declared righteous and candidates for heaven.” Does Sequeira exalt Christ’s righteousness too much? Should he make room for our own righteousness to be given at least some merit alongside Christ’s righteousness? The objection is that this gives readers the idea that obedience to the law is not necessary, that all one needs is a mental assent to the legal event of the cross without a change of heart and life. Is this a correct deduction?

**Readers don’t have to go far to find that Sequeira effectively refutes this charge on the same page:** “If [imparted righteousness] is lacking in our lives, that is evidence that we either do not clearly understand the gospel or that we have rejected the gift of imputed righteousness. A refusal to clothe ourselves with the imputed righteousness of Christ indicates we do not have genuine faith and therefore unfits us for heaven.” What Christ accomplished in His incarnation can be despised or rejected by the sinner through his choice to *disbelieve*. Words could hardly be more clear to emphasize that mere trusting to a legal justification (imputed righteousness) without receiving imparted righteousness “*unfits us for heaven*.” If we choose to refuse a fitness for heaven (internal sanctification) we

reject the qualification for heaven that Christ has already effected for us by His sacrifice (external legal justification).

Sequeira's objectors agree that he says many good things, but insist that contradictory remarks are scattered through his book which make it to be "most deadly heresy." That's why, they add, this book is "Satan's masterpiece of deception." A former General Conference leader charges him with using NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) in order to deceive his readers, that is, implanting a heresy on one page while assuringly denying it on another.<sup>1</sup>

**Why does Sequeira exalt Christ's righteousness so highly? Why does he take pains to speak in such precise language?** He wants to make very clear that salvation is the work of our Saviour, not of ourselves. He is concerned about the lukewarmness that permeates the church worldwide, which is the result of a failure to appreciate "the truth of the gospel." He wants to direct the reader's attention to Christ, not to self. He believes that righteousness is totally by faith, not by works. Further, it is not by faith *and* by works, but by a faith *which* works. When he insists that we are saved by faith he does not deny that we shall be judged by our works, but our works simply testify in the judgment whether or not our faith has been genuine.

Careful attention to details reveals that there is no contradiction. Sequeira says that "the imputed righteousness of Christ qualifies the *believer* for heaven." If he had said that the "imputed righteousness of Christ qualifies the *unbeliever* for heaven," then we would indeed have "deadly heresy" here. "Well," someone says, "the problem is that Sequeira also says that *imparted* righteousness does not *contribute* to our qualification for heaven."

**We should make certain what Sequeira means by "qualification for heaven."** Does he mean "our *title* to heaven," or our "*fitness* for heaven"? Ellen White says that imputed righteousness (justification) is our title to heaven, while imparted righteousness (sanctification) is our *fitness* for it (*Review and Herald*, June 4, 1895). According to that statement, the difference is profound. If one qualifies as the owner of a car, he may have a title to it, but it may not have the "fit-

ness" to be driven on the highway. If Sequeira had said that imputed righteousness is our *fitness* for heaven, we would also disagree with him. But it is not right to read into his words what is not there. He has chosen his words carefully, and they must be understood as he says them, not as we inject into them our own uncharitable surmises. **The crucial issue here is whether Christ is completely our Saviour.** Or is He only partially so with our own good works contributing to our *qualification* for heaven? The inspired phrase must tell the truth—"Christ our righteousness," *that is, we have none of ourselves*. Whatever is either imputed or imparted is totally of Him and from Him. Never will we have any merit in ourselves. Sequeira is seeking to combat Galatianism, which is the doctrine of salvation by faith *and* works. He sees that this falsehood has seriously infiltrated this church worldwide, including "historic Adventism," producing lukewarmness and legalism. But this does not mean he is downplaying genuine obedience to the law. Galatianism will prepare people to accept the mark of the beast when the test comes because it is based on the egocentric motivation of fear rather than *agape*. Satan will know how to appeal to this deep fear. Every trace of such legalism must be overcome, or we will face disaster in the final crisis. The pure, true gospel must be restored to the third angel's message in verity.

**Does Ellen White comment on this issue?** She explains herself in two of the most pointed and emphatic 1888-message statements she ever wrote. Nothing else that she ever wrote can be wrested to contradict this:

"There is not a point that needs to be dwelt upon more earnestly, repeated more frequently, or established more firmly in the minds of all than the impossibility of fallen man meriting anything by his own best good works. Salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ alone. ...

Let the subject be made distinct and plain that it is not possible to effect anything in our standing before God or in the gift of God to us through creature merit. Should faith and works purchase the gift of salvation for anyone, then the Creator is under obligation to the creature. Here is an opportunity for falsehood to be accepted as truth. If any man can merit salvation by anything he may do, then he is in the same position as the Catholic to do penance for his sins. Salvation, then, is partly of debt, that may be earned as wages. If man cannot, by any of his good

<sup>1</sup> \* See Appendix A, "Carol Kawamoto Interviews Elder Jack Sequeira."

works, merit salvation, then it must be wholly of grace, received by man as a sinner because he receives and believes in Jesus. It is wholly a free gift. Justification by faith is placed beyond controversy. And all this controversy is ended, as soon as the matter is settled that the merits of fallen man in his good works can never procure eternal life for him.

“The light given me of God places this important subject above any question in my mind. ...

“Discussion may be entered into by mortals strenuously advocating creature merit, and each man striving for the supremacy, but they simply do not know that all the time, in principle and character, they are misrepresenting the truth as it is in Jesus. They are in a fog of bewilderment” (*Faith and Works*, pp. 19-23; MS 36, 1890; *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, pp. 810ff).

“Must works come first? No, it is faith first. And how? The cross of Christ is lifted up between heaven and earth. ... The man is drawn to the One who uplifts him, and the One who uplifts him draws him to repentance. It is no work of his own; there is nothing that he can do that is of any value at all except to believe” (MS 5, 1889; *ibid.*, p. 344).

Note that Ellen White says that man’s obedience, manifested in sanctification, “can never procure eternal life for him.” “It is wholly a free gift.” This is the same as saying that our obedience or our sanctification can never “qualify us” for heaven, which Sequeira says. “All this controversy is ended.” In effect, Ellen White is saying that all our good works in sanctification “do not contribute in the slightest way” to “procure,” to “merit” for us, or to “qualify” us, for eternal life.

**What Christ accomplished on His cross—this is the all-important issue.** At the bottom of p. 32 Sequeira makes an arresting statement that again arouses his opponents: “In Christ, all humanity was redeemed—legally justified and reconciled to God.” If he had said that all humanity “in Christ” will be saved *eternally*, we would indeed disagree with him, for many will be lost. But we note that he says “redeemed.” He defines that word as “legally justified,” not as eternally saved.

Christ did in fact redeem the entire planet. Life here would have totally ceased if He were not the “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Ellen White has made statements similar to Sequeira’s: “[Christ] took in His grasp the world over which Satan claimed to

preside as his lawful territory, and by His wonderful work in giving His life, He restored the whole race of men to favor with God” (*Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 343). In fact, her statement is more than similar; it presents the identical thought. “Redeemed” means bought back. “Ye are bought with a price,” says Paul (1 Corinthians 6:20). When and where was the price paid? It is hardly “deadly heresy” or “satanic deception” to answer emphatically, *at the cross*. And whatever happened there relates to “all men.” Ellen White frequently says that Christ “redeemed” the “world.” “Jesus became the world’s Redeemer” (*Bible Echo*, August 6, 1894).

**Sequeira holds the cross of Christ in very high esteem, clearly as having accomplished infinitely more than those who disagree with him seem willing to recognize.** He sees the cross as “redeeming” the entire human race. Christ has taken the initiative in our salvation, not we, and He continues to do so. He has not backed off leaving us to grope our way to heaven. He has tasted the equivalent of the second “death for every man” (Hebrews 2:9), and His *agape* continually seeks the lost soul as the Good Shepherd seeks the lost sheep. There is no reason for any human being to die the second death except that he resists the grace of the Lord and refuses by unbelief to let Him be his Saviour (1 Timothy 4:10; John 3:16-19; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 58). This is glorious news that many have not clearly seen, for they have not known the constraint of the *agape* motivation. For want of this their hearts have not been truly reconciled to God, and they simply cannot serve Him with joyous abandon. Will “historic Adventists” reject this obvious truth?

Sequeira’s opponents see the cross of Christ as only provisionally offering something to the sinner, but accomplishing nothing unless that person first takes the initiative and thereafter continues to hold the initiative (see also, for example, *Senior Sabbath School Quarterly*, July 23, September 3, 1988; August 4, 1993). But Sequeira sees the life that “all men” now enjoy as the purchase of Christ’s sacrifice—their very breath and heartbeat made possible only because He has borne their iniquity upon the cross (see *The Desire of Ages*, 660). By His sacrifice He has elected “all men to be saved” (1 Timothy 2:3, 4).

*In that sense*, the entire human race has been “redeemed” and thus legally justified.

Jones and Waggoner also both saw that Christ redeemed the entire human race from the second death, having died that death “for every man” and thus “abolished death” (Hebrews 2:9; 2 Timothy 1:10; see following article by Gerald L. Finneman). It is totally wrong however to accuse them of teaching the heresy of “Universalism,” for they recognized that the vast majority spurn the blessing through unbelief. They agreed fully with the position taken in *Steps to Christ* that the sinner must resist this grace in order to be lost (see Appendix E). The 1888 message recognized that the Holy Spirit brought a deeper conviction or sharper definition of sin in those initial “showers from heaven of the latter rain” (see *Waggoner on Romans*, pp. 69, 101; *The Glad Tidings*, pp. 11, 13, 14; Jones in *General Conference Bulletin, 1895*, pp. 268, 269; *Steps to Christ*, pp. 26, 27).

Sequeira lists a number of texts to support his statement that the whole human race was incorporate in Christ so that “in Christ’ all humanity was redeemed—legally justified and reconciled to God.” Thus he glories in the cross of Christ, but the question is, does he glory too much? We must take the trouble to look at each of these texts and see what they actually say;

Romans 5:18: **“By the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.”** The language of the text appears to support Sequeira’s statement, and one prominent speaker quoted earlier who opposes Sequeira frankly confesses he is puzzled by it, dismissing it as one of Peter’s “hard to be understood” statements. He cannot explicate it. But Sequeira believes it is as clear as sunlight.

2 Corinthians 5:18, 19: **“God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.”** Again, it is clear—the “reconciliation” took place at the cross, and the gospel is simply the news about it. If the “trespasses” of the whole world were imputed to Christ, it follows that they can not be imputed to the world. In other words, for God to impute the worlds trespasses unto Christ requires that they *not* be imputed to us, and that equals a

“verdict of acquittal,” a legal justification, for “all men.” No sinner has as yet borne the full burden of his guilt because none has as yet died the second death. Christ actually did something for “every man,” not merely offering him something tentatively or provisionally.

1 Timothy 4:10: **“God ... is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.”** A prominent speaker has misquoted this text in his Paradise, California, tape, objecting to what he supposes Paul said when in fact he misreads it. He reads into it that God *will* save even those who do not believe, and rightly concludes that is wrong. He even suggests that Paul causes confusion. But the verb “is” is not future tense—it is present tense. Paul says Christ is *already now* “the Saviour of all men.” How? The conclusion is inescapable: He has legally redeemed, “bought,” the human race and elected “all men” to salvation. (All of these clear texts our opponent relegates to the back burner, saying they belong in Peter’s category that Paul wrote “some things hard to be understood”)

Titus 2:11: **“For the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men”** (RSV). There again Paul’s idea comes through of a universal atonement, a universal legal justification, with God taking the initiative for the salvation of “all men.” Shocking as this gospel may be to some Seventh-day Adventist ears, it is Bible truth.

1 John 2:2: **“[Christ] is the propitiation for our sins, and not for our’s only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”** The Apostle John echoes the same idea. Something was “finished” at Calvary, accomplished for the entire human race—not the atonement, but the sacrifice! Faith simply appreciates what is already an accomplished fact.

We conclude that it is indeed safe to “glory” in the cross as did Paul.

**Some vigorously oppose Sequeira’s presentation of this “in Christ motif.”** His conclusion is expressed on p. 33 that “the central theme of the apostle Paul’s theology regarding the gospel is the ‘in Christ’ motif or idea.” To get a correct view, one must carefully read his discussion that follows (pp. 33-35). The Scripture support he cites deserves close attention. The problem is that his opponents have confused the *experiential life* of the believer abiding “in Christ”

(John 15:4-7) with the *corporate involvement* of the whole human race “in Christ” as their “second Adam.” As believers, we experientially “abide in Christ” *through the exercise of our own consent*. But without any consent of our own we are incorporate “in Adam” by birth, and also by redemption (thank God!) we are likewise legally incorporate “in Christ” as members of the human race. By unbelief we reject that blessed privilege which was already made a fact by His sacrifice. Thus our own unbelief becomes the only reason for eternal perdition. It is highly significant that Sequeira found his initial impetus for studying this pure Bible “motif” in the writings of Jones and Waggoner.

Another statement Sequeira makes is arresting: “Jesus Christ can abide in you through the Holy Spirit ... and fulfill in your life the demands of God’s holy law ... only because of the objective fact that ‘in Christ’ you have already met all the requirements and demands of the law” (p. 35). The first half presents no problem; the second raises a prominent opposers concern. He thinks he sees antinomianism here—that because you were “in Christ” corporately 2,000 years ago and He kept the law, therefore he thinks that Sequeira implies that obedience to God’s law is unnecessary and irrelevant to Christian living.

**Sequeira’s key word must not be overlooked—“objective.”**

He states that the believer in Christ’s objective obedience will surely obey *subjectively* “all the requirements and demands of the law.” To the careful reader Sequeira makes clear that he believes in sanctification and obedience to the law. He is insisting only that no sinner can truly meet those “demands” except by living faith in *Christ’s* life of obedience and His sacrifice. Sequeira teaches the possibility of total obedience, of complete character transformation, of perfect sanctification in this life (pp. 63, 64, 71, 90-98). Further, he teaches the certainty that the much more abounding grace of Christ *will accomplish* this work in God’s faithful people prior to the return of Christ (pp. 102, 105, 118, etc.).

**Any suggestion that *Beyond Belief* is a “resurgence of new theology” is denied by a careful reading of Chapter 4.** Here is a convincing rebuttal of the “Reformationist” view of righteousness

by faith which has permeated the Seventh-day Adventist Church in recent decades.<sup>2</sup> And the task is accomplished simply by using “the sword of the Spirit,” the Bible alone. The author sets forth Christ as our Example in holy, sinless living.

But the situation created by opponents is phenomenal: in our current denominational literature today here is an unusually clear, convincing Biblical defense of the view that Christ took our fallen, sinful nature, and that complete victory over sin is possible for the believer, a view that overthrows the key doctrine of the “Reformationist theology.” Yet those who have supported this view for decades now strangely wish to condemn this powerful presentation of it. This is unprecedented in Seventh-day Adventist history.

Sequeira accurately details how the common Evangelical idea of “substitution” ends in cheap grace, yet his opponents accuse him of teaching “cheap grace.” His view demonstrates that God’s grace is very expensive. He also demonstrates why injection of the popular “vicarious” idea into Christ’s substitution is not scriptural (Ellen White never uses the word). Christ came to save the fallen Adam, not the sinless Adam. To say that He died “as us” is closer to the truth than to say He died only “instead of us.” “I am crucified with Christ,” says Paul (Galatians 2:20). “If One died for all, then all died” (2 Corinthians 5:14).

When Ellen White occasionally uses the phrase “instead of” she is not supporting the Roman Catholic doctrine of a vicarious sacrifice, that the Father punished His Son “instead of us.” All that Christ accomplished “instead of us” He accomplished intimately “as us,” having taken our fallen, sinful nature by identifying Himself with the corporate stream of our present humanity. Sequeira does more than merely condemn error; he explains why it is wrong. Through life-long association with Muslims in Kenya he understands how the non-biblical Catholic-Calvinist views are an unnecessary stumbling block to them as well as to Western secularists. The evidence is clear

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2      Idem.

that Sequeira has been emancipated from Catholicism. But are his opponents free of it?

**Is this “in Christ motif” “Satan’s masterpiece of deception,” as a prominent opposer says?** Before answering, the reader should carefully examine pp. 33-35, reading the Scripture texts listed. Once the biblical idea is understood of the human race being both incorporate “in Adam” and by grace “in Christ,” the problem vanishes. We must look at the texts:

Hebrews 7:10: Levi paid tithes “in Abraham” before he was born. Here is corporate identity.

Romans 5:12: Adam’s fall plunged the entire race into sin and death; here is corporate involvement.

2 Corinthians 5:14: “If One died for all, then were all dead” (the Greek says, “all died”).

1 John 5:11: “God *has given* to us eternal life [past tense] ... in Christ.” Here again is corporate involvement. One has to reject the gift in order to be lost (SC 26, 27).

2 Corinthians 5:17: The “new creation” is “in Christ.”

Ephesians 2:5: The “quickenings” took place while we were still “dead in sins.” Again, it is past tense.

2 Corinthians 5:21: Only “in Him” can we be “made the righteousness of God.”

Ephesians 1:4: God “chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world,” without our consent at that time. By faith we ratify that choice that He made.

Romans 5:18: All that Satan did to the race, Christ reversed; thus a “verdict of acquittal” “came upon all men.”

1 John 3:1: The love was bestowed upon us before we believed.

Ephesians 2:6: We sit together “in Christ” even now; this is corporate involvement.

2 Timothy 1:8-10: Our Saviour has abolished [the second] death. For “all men” He has brought life to light; for those who believe He has also brought “immortality.”

2 Corinthians 8:9: He became “poor” for all of us.

Hebrews 2:6-12: Christ has already tasted [the second] death for “every man.”

Romans 8:17: We are already joint-heirs with Christ by virtue of the cross.

***There is a contrast between the “historic Adventist” view of righteousness by faith and Sequeira’s view.***

The “historic Adventist” view is thoroughly orthodox, for it has been taught for a century virtually unchallenged: we *must* be fully obedient to the law of God, and we *must* experience sanctification, or we *will be lost* in perdition. Sequeira does not deny that such obedience and sanctification are necessary, but he states his view in quite a different way: When we understand and believe the pure truth of the gospel, we *will* be fully obedient to the law of God, and we *will* experience sanctification, and we *will* serve gladly. The key issue becomes motivation.

Sequeira believes that the effective motivation is not fear of being lost in hell or hope of reward in heaven. Instead, it is the constraint imposed upon the heart by the *agape* of Christ (see *The Desire of Ages*, p. 480). That *agape* was revealed at the cross where the sacrifice of Christ’s blood justified us “while we were yet sinners” (Romans 5:8-10). Therefore everything depends on understanding and appreciating that *agape*, which is the key element of this book.

We do not know the times or the seasons, but we believe it may be possible that it is the Lord’s will that the Seventh-day Adventist church worldwide should now understand this motivation and sense its powerful constraint. Perhaps Heaven has decided that the hour is late, too late for another hundred years to go by.

## Section 4

## Is the “Two Adams” Parallel True? (*Chapters 5 and 6*)

The first sentence of chapter 5 is pathetically true—this idea of “the two Adams” is indeed “one of the most neglected and misunderstood doctrines of the Bible.” As a consequence of “our” rejecting “in a great degree” the 1888 message, for the better part of a hundred years we have been starved for this most fundamental truth of Scripture. “Historic Adventism” fully shares this famine. In fact, it was “historic Adventists” who initially rejected the message a century ago. Christ’s appeal in the Laodicean message applies to them as well as to all others of us. Without this truth, justification by faith loses a powerful motivation to make the believer “obedient to all the commandments of God” (see *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 91-93).

Sequeira seeks to shed light on this passage of Scripture that has perplexed Adventists—Romans 5:12-18. He examines the popular theories about it and finds them wanting. Conclusion: the 1888 view is the only one that “makes sense” of all its otherwise perplexing details.

We cannot overthrow Paul’s analysis of the “second death” as the condemnation passed on Adam and the human race being incorporate in him. If one admits that truth, the corollary follows immediately—the human race is likewise incorporate in Christ as our second Adam, and in that sense has been “redeemed” and legally justified.

We might differ with the author in one particular, but believe that he would possibly revise the sentence himself: “Only those who by faith receive God’s gift of justification will enjoy the benefits of Christ’s obedience” (p. 55). If by “obedience” the author means His sacrifice, then we would have to recognize that “all men” already “enjoy its benefits” in the physical life and temporary happiness they now enjoy. Every loaf of bread is stamped with the cross. But this is a

minor objection. We agree of course that only those who have faith will enjoy *eternal* benefits.

Those who feel they must oppose this book say they are “aghast” at the alleged “satanic deception” in it. As we time and again re-read these two chapters word by word, we cannot join them in condemning what is so obviously scriptural truth.

In these two chapters there is no antinomian sentimentalism. We must confess that years ago we too took a deep breath when we first read Sequeira’s view of Romans 5:12. Since it was so different from what we had traditionally understood, we can sympathize with those who find this unsettling to their preconceived ideas. (That was the opposing brethren’s initial reaction to what Jones and Waggoner taught a century ago). But isn’t it time that we learn our lesson from our own history? Luther said that if a humble ass comes telling us the truth we should believe her. We note twenty logical, progressive, irrefutable scriptural facts that Sequeira cites in establishing this idea of our corporate identity “in Adam” and “in Christ.” This “motif,” far from being “satanic,” solves the problems raised by original sin and the nature of Christ. It glorifies Him, humbles human pride in the dust, and grips the believing heart with total dedication to Christ. **On pp. 63, 64 Sequeira again gives full recognition to sanctification.** “At conversion, or the new-birth-experience,” we begin to live out *subjectively* the life that Christ lived, “a life that has perfectly obeyed the law of God in every detail. ... Sin will be put to death in our lives. ... The fruits of this doctrine lead to holy living, or sanctification.” Amen! This again is clear evidence, although his opponents say this book fails to give sanctification its due emphasis.

## Section 5

## Is This “the Cross of Satan”? (Chapters 7 through 9)

It is true that Satan has counterfeited the cross and made its emblem the insignia of his kingdom. But it is also true that the principle of the cross is totally absent in Spiritualism and in apostate Christianity—the cross on which self is crucified “with Christ.” A prominent opposer attributes to Sequeira (and by implication, the 1888 Message Study Committee) the suspicion of Spiritualism, because we speak so much about the *agape*-love revealed there. They warn us that if we hear someone talking about the love of Christ, get your guard up—beware.

Jones and Waggoner understood that “Christ and Him crucified” is the essence of the “third angel’s message in verity.” Ellen White agreed. How does Sequeira view the cross? This must now be the focal point of our investigation, because if Satan has inspired this book as his “masterpiece of deception,” surely in this section we will find evidence of his slimy trail of deceit.

### We note several points:

(a) “God took this apparent defeat [of Christ’s cross] and turned it into a glorious victory by which the whole human race could be saved” (p. 73). Clearly, Sequeira does not teach that the “whole human race” *will be ultimately* saved. He says, “could be.” By “saved” he means saved from premature death, saved in the same sense that a drowning man is saved from death by his rescuer. This “salvation” Christ has secured for “all men.” *In this sense* He is “the Saviour of all men” in the present tense (1 Tim. 4:10).

(b) “At the cross ... Satan ... was totally defeated, judged, and condemned,” past tense. Ellen White also recognizes that at the cross Satan suffered his determining defeat (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 69, 70; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 679, 761). The fact that Satan was defeated at the cross does not deny that the closing issues of

the great controversy are yet to be determined as God’s people also defeat him “by the blood of the Lamb.”

(c) Sequeira teaches a view that some Seventh-day Adventists have difficulty accepting—that the death of Christ was the equivalent of the second death. He arrays Scripture evidence to support this view, and relates this to practical Christian living: “Through the cross, we have said goodbye forever to the life we inherited in Adam. In exchange we have received the life of Christ. This truth, above any other, will determine whether we remain carnal Christians, living like ordinary men and women (see 1 Corinthians 3:1-3), or become spiritual Christians bearing the fruit of Christ’s life (see John 15:4-8)” (p. 86).

(d) This view of the significance of Christ’s death is totally different from that of the Evangelicals, and cannot be a “resurgence of the ‘new theology.’” On the contrary, it is a “resurgence” of the view of Jones and Waggoner. It exalts the cross and inspires the receptive heart to exclaim, “God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” The result: total obedience to the commandments of God, joyously motivated.

As we study every sentence of these three chapters, we believe the careful reader will be convinced they are not inspired by Satan.

## Section 6

## What Is Righteousness by Faith? (Chapters 10 through 14)

The first paragraph of Chapter 10 contains another statement that shocks opponents: “In Christ, all humanity has obtained full and complete salvation . . . .” They understand this again to imply that the author does not support sanctification, or the necessity for holy living, and that he teaches “cheap grace” or Universalism. However, by the phrase “in Christ” he means corporate involvement as a part of the human race; “obtained” means that all are elected to “full and complete salvation.” But the sinner can choose to neglect, reject, despise, discard, yes disbelieve, the gracious birthright that he has objectively “obtained” by his corporate involvement in the human race “in Christ.”

**What does the author mean here by “full and complete salvation”?** He has already defined it in his Chapter 3, pp. 30-35, as consisting of several “aspects.” There is objective salvation “in Christ” and subjective also, which become clear as we note his next paragraph on p. 89: “In this chapter, we will turn our attention to the *subjective* aspect of the gospel—salvation as a personal experience. . . . In other words, the subjective gospel is making real in our experience the objective facts of the gospel.” Are these two words difficult? Hopefully, some careful thought can make them clear.

**There is a fundamental objective truth.** Christ has abolished the second death for the entire human race (2 Timothy 1:10), tasted it “for every man” (Hebrews 2:9), borne the iniquity of us all which was laid on Him (Isaiah 53:6), and given the gift of a legal justification to “all men” (Romans 5:18).

**A powerful subjective experience now follows believing that objective truth.** The believer’s heart is now reconciled to God by a heart-appreciation of this objective truth. The meanings of “objective” and “subjective” are now seen in their importance. In other

words, Sequeira is saying that sanctification can never be effective and complete *until justification is far better understood and appreciated*. This entire section is now concerned with sanctification—the truth that one opponent accuses Sequeira of neglecting so seriously that his book is “satanic.”

Our author notes rightly that at present “the church is spiritually bankrupt (see Revelation 3:17). That is why it is so tremendously important that we understand the objective facts of the gospel, the truth as it is in Jesus. Without this understanding, we can never experience genuine faith that is motivated by love (see Galatians 5:6)” (p. 91).

**What is the essence of Sequeira’s view of a “practical godliness” kind of righteousness by faith, that is, a subjective experience?** He tells us in pages 90-98:

- (a) Genuine faith is dependent on the revelation of the gospel in Christ, the truth of His cross.
- (b) It is a heart-appreciation of that revelation of *agape*, and goes far beyond the common definition of faith as “trust” which implies an immature self-centered concern.
- (c) Such faith transcends our fear of hell or hope of reward; thus it delivers from spiritual lukewarmness.
- (d) Such faith motivates the believer to endless good works.
- (e) Thus this righteousness by faith is the true gospel.
- (f) This faith identifies with Christ on His cross; it replaces the helpless word “relationship” with the vital one that is so essential— “union with Christ,” that is, “it unites us with Christ.” This true term implies our corporate identity with Him. (Incidentally, the popular word “relationship” almost never appears in this comprehensive explanation of righteousness by faith!)
- (g) Faith is not itself a work.
- (h) But faith itself does work. It is dynamic, energizing.
- (i) A true motivation is the difference between “works of faith” and “works of law.”

“Works of law” are motivated by selfishness; they “appear externally to be legitimate commandment keeping. . . . [But they] always originate from a concern

with self; they are therefore always polluted by self no matter how good they may appear to ourselves or to others” (p. 97).

Astonishingly, at this point opponents find what they believe is an example of “deadly heresy” in Sequeira’s next sentence: “Performing works of law is a subtle form of rebellion against God.” They portray this to congregations as an example of a frightful denial of obedience, building revulsion for this book. In the transcript of one such sermon a prominent opponent says, “Look at p. 97 Any attempt to keep God’s law is a fatal trap of Satan.” But this is not a correct representation of what Sequeira says.

In fact, the statement attributed to the author does not appear on p. 97, nor anywhere else in the book! If one so easily misreads what Sequeira says, there is question if perchance he might misread or misunderstand what Ellen White says, and even what the Bible says.

What Sequeira actually says is this: “Many of God’s people today have fallen in the same subtle trap of Satan” *as did the Galatians*—which “trap” he defines in the same paragraph as “trying to perfect their characters through the flesh,” or by self-motivated “works of law.” Sequeira explains why “performing works of law is a subtle form of rebellion against God” when he says that “such works are actually independent of Him. In the judgment, God will condemn all such works as iniquity, works motivated by self-interest.” Waggoner also makes clear that Paul’s phrase “the works of the law” does not mean true obedience to the law (see Galatians 3:10; *The Glad Tidings*, pp. 55-60). This again is in harmony with Ellen White’s position in MS 36, 1890 (*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, pp. 810ff).

Sequeira’s extended discussion of justification and sanctification (pp. 101-108) recognizes both are necessary, both are by faith, both fill vital roles in the believer’s preparation for eternal life in heaven. “The legal justification effected at the cross ... is something we receive as a free gift. Sanctification ... is something we personally experience as we walk by faith ... sanctification ... actually produces righteousness in us” (pp. 101, 102). He confounds his critics: “Anyone ... who stops with justification and makes it the entire gospel experience has received only half of the good news. ... God did not

send His Son merely to ... declare us righteous ... [but] to set us free from sin and restore His image in us” (p. 102).

**But some say that Sequeira teaches deadly error in this section.** Under “Common Misunderstandings” Sequeira makes a statement that our prominent opponent misrepresents to his congregation thus: “Look at page 103: ‘All we need for heaven is justification.’ So my conference president is right when he says that Sequeira says that sanctification is not part of salvation.” Sequeira’s actual statement on p. 103 reads as follows: “Justification means *all* of Christ’s righteousness that He provided for us so that nothing more is required of us to qualify for heaven.” Have we finally lighted upon the “satanic deadly heresy” we have been looking for all this time?

Sequeira does mean what he says, for he adds in his next sentence: “In other words, we stand perfect in Him. If we are not absolutely clear on this point, we will continue to be victims of self-concern, constantly fearful about our eternal security. In this condition it is impossible to have a real heart-appreciation for Christ’s cross or to experience genuine sanctification by faith.”

**Now we come to our continental divide.** The opponents regard this as inspired by Satan; Sequeira believes this is essential for true Christian experience. How much further apart can people be? The opponents sincerely believe that Sequeira is teaching the heresy that godly living, obedience to the law, sanctification, are unnecessary as a preparation or “fitness” for heaven. They see Sequeira’s teaching as opening the floodgates of iniquity.

But let us take another look at what Sequeira actually says in that provocative sentence: “Nothing more” than “all of Christ’s righteousness ... is required of us *to qualify for heaven*.” His context is clear: “Christ also kept the whole law on our behalf. All this becomes ours the moment we are justified by faith.” Note: he is not talking about the legal justification which “came upon all men” at the cross; he is talking about the experience of *justification by faith, which is known only by believers*. What does he believe about justification by faith? It makes one obedient to all the commandments of God. “Justification remains effective all our *believing* lives.” It means far more than

the forgiveness of past sins (as many have superficially assumed); it delivers from the power of sin as well.

Instead of satanic deception, here is a powerful presentation of true Christian experience—faith in both imputed righteousness and imparted righteousness, all of Christ, and all in harmony with MS 36, 1890 (*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, pp. 810-812). Our *qualification* for heaven is our “title to heaven,” purchased for us by Christ’s sacrifice, with no contribution from ourselves. Our *fitness* for heaven is another matter—sanctification by faith.

Opponents have said that Sequeira teaches the heresy of “once-saved-always-saved,” giving the impression that he means that justification by faith remains effective all our *unbelieving* lives. If that were so, we also would oppose such a statement. In fact Sequeira has specified the word “believing.” By such misreading of Sequeira’s words opponents build their case that this book is “satanic.”

**When do we become “unjustified”?** Sequeira labels as a “monstrous” error the belief that “every time we fall or sin we become unjustified.” What does he mean? Is he saying that King David can presumptuously commit adultery and still go to heaven if he dies in the act? No. We must remember that Sequeira sees there is one justification, *legally effective* at the cross for “all men,” and manifested in the *experience* of justification by faith which only the obedient believer knows. Until probation closes, thank God, the repentant sinner still has an Advocate with the Father, who pleads His justifying blood in his behalf (see Rom. 5:9). No one as yet has the right to close that door against the *repentant* sinner. He must be given hope that Christ’s sacrifice still avails for him. Sequeira explains: “God does not reject us every time we make a mistake or fall into sin. ... Such a concept is based on the idea that we are justified because of our obedience—what Christ is doing in us—and not because of what He has already accomplished for us by His doing and dying on the cross. Such an idea makes the gospel good advice instead of good news.”

**The sinner always needs the gospel.** Sequeira says that “justification ... remains effective all our believing lives.” He is speaking of the legal justification effected at the cross, which remains meritorious until the sinner irrevocably rejects it. Waggoner also says some-

thing that critics of today would probably find abhorrent: “There is but one thing that a man needs, and that is justification. ... It is the gospel.” “To preach justification by faith does not detract from or lower the law of God, but is the only thing that exalts it” (*General Conference Bulletin*, 1891, Sermon Nos. 4, 10). “There can be no higher state than that of justification [by faith]. It does everything that God can do for one, short of making him immortal, which is done only at the resurrection” (*Signs of the Times* May 1, 1893). Did Waggoner neglect sanctification? If so, Ellen White would never have supported him. But he also had a very high regard for genuine justification by faith.

**What is involved in the cleansing of the sanctuary?** *Our Firm Foundation* disparages the idea that there can be remaining “unknown sin” beneath the conscious surface when one is truly converted (October, 1993). 1 John 1:9 does not say that a blanket confession of sin when we are converted means that no further conviction of sin becomes possible. The great High Priest through the Holy Spirit constantly brings sin to our knowledge, sin that has not yet been seen or confessed. Laodicea is to experience this special work in this time of the cleansing of the sanctuary. Sin that we may commit tomorrow has been buried in our hearts today (*The Desire of Ages*, 301; *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 4, pp. 85; *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 5, p. 1152; etc.). That conviction of deeper sin and deeper repentance continues until the seal of God is received at the close of probation. A clearer recognition that the Lord hath laid on Christ the iniquity of us all, that He died our second death, that His justification came upon us all totally undeserved—this clearer appreciation of what it cost the Son of God to save us will melt the heart in ever deeper repentance. This is what Sequeira is saying.

**On page 134 he makes a statement into which some think they can read original sin:** “Sinful man is not lost because he has committed sins, but because he is without Christ—that is to say, because he is born of Adam and therefore stands condemned in him even before he commits sins of his own.” That one sentence must not be wrested from the author’s close context where he says a few paragraphs earlier that by Christ’s sacrifice we are “legally delivered from

our condemned status ‘in Adam’” (p. 128). Sequeira maintains that all that Adam did to bring the human race under “condemnation” Christ reversed by bringing the race under “justification,” or as the NEB renders it, under “a verdict of acquittal.” That is light-years away from Augustinian or Calvinist original sin.

By misreading the following statement, some accuse Sequeira of teaching that “Satan is pleased to have us believe” in true sanctification: “[A] **Common misunderstanding** ...3. *It takes a lifetime or more to reach the goal of sanctification.* This is how many interpret the familiar expression, ‘Sanctification is the work of a lifetime.’ Satan is pleased to have us believe this error. ...” (pp. 103, 104). A closer look will show that the author says that the “error” is the statement in italics. Sequeira’s point is the opposite of his opponents’ accusation. He believes it is possible to “reach the goal of sanctification,” that is, holy living, *now*. We must not excuse our continued unchristlikeness of character by assuming that it is impossible to overcome all sin until we have come to the end of our lives. We grant that a hurried reader could misunderstand that passage and that more careful editing could have made such misunderstanding impossible. But even so, this is an example once again of making a man “an offender for a word,” which Isaiah says we should not do.

***Do we claim any perfection or infallibility for this book?***

*Certainly not.* There may be places where it could be clearer, where the message the author seeks to express could be more readily apparent to the reader. But the same is true of any author’s work, or any editor’s work. Seldom can one book contain all the truths that need emphasis. For example, *Steps to Christ* says nothing about the sanctuary truth, neither does *The Ministry of Healing*. (Incidentally, opponents charge Sequeira with neglecting the sanctuary, yet he speaks of it on pp. 138-140 in a manner in harmony with Jones’s *The Consecrated Way to Christian Perfection*.)

**Is it possible that someone can wrest Sequeira’s book to excuse indulgence in sin?** People have done this for centuries with Paul’s writings; some do it today with Ellen White’s. A superficial

reader might do it with this book. That’s a risk that the pure gospel always must take.

It is a risk that the Lord Himself took in giving Himself for us, because many “receive ... the grace of God in vain” (2 Corinthians 6:1).

## Conclusion: Are We Repeating the History of 1888?

We do not question the sincerity of those who condemn this book as “satanic,” nor do we wish to create alienation where brotherly harmony should prevail. But we do question the accuracy of their statements. No one should be stampeded to condemn something until he/she has carefully examined its actual content. We find that opponents have generally on a massive scale misunderstood, distorted, and misconstrued the message of this book. We find no evidence of satanic inspiration, of “a masterpiece of deception,” of “most deadly heresy.” Instead, we find evidence that after decades of “famine in the land ... the Lord [may have] visited His people in giving them bread.”

We are encouraged that there is hope for this organized church that repentance and reformation can come through the sunlit, genial message of the gospel of Christ's righteousness, rather than by the dark thunders and terrors of Sinai. This presentation of the gospel as Good News can appeal to candid readers in all levels of the “pluralism” that now prevails in the world Seventh-day Adventist Church. It uses modern terminology and vocabulary in order to reach confused people.

It's encouraging to believe that Ellen White's prediction does make sense when she speaks of God's work in the last days: “One interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up every other, — CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (*Review and Herald Extra*, Dec. 23, 1890). This, we believe, is the true reason for the phenomenal success of this new book. Could it also account for the phenomenal opposition to it? If so, that is a very sobering thought!

Ellen White counseled her brethren who thought that Jones's and Waggoner's message was a masterpiece of deception.

They too superficially assumed that her *Testimonies* condemned it:

“When I have been made to pass over the history of the Jewish nation and have seen where they stumbled because they did not walk in the light, I have been led to realize where we as a people would be led if we refuse the light God would give us. . . Now brethren, light has come to us and we

want to be where we can grasp it. ...” (MS 9, October 24, 1888; *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 152).

“If [Dr. Waggoner] is in error, you should, in a calm, rational, Christ-like manner, seek to show him from the Word of God where he is out of harmony with its teachings. If you cannot do this, you have no right as Christians to pick flaws, to criticize, to work in the dark, to prejudice minds with your objections. This is Satan's way of working. ...

“You are not now calm; there are many who do not know what they believe. It is perilous to make decisions upon any controverted point without dispassionately considering all sides of the question. Excited feelings will lead to rash movements. ... Many ... have imaginings that have no foundation in truth. ... If there are any among us who become stirred up because ideas contrary from what they have believed are presented in this meeting, then stop your unsanctified criticisms and candidly investigate the subject, and it will sanctify the soul. ... There are but few, even of those who claim to believe it, that comprehend the third angel's message, and yet this is the message for this time. ...

“Those who have not been in the habit of thinking and investigating for themselves, believe certain doctrines because their associates with them in the work believe them. They resist the truth without going to the Scriptures for themselves to learn what is truth. Because those in whom they have confidence oppose the light, they oppose it. ... We should not reject or oppose the views of our fellow laborers because they do not agree with our ideas until we have used every means in our power to find out whether or not they are truth, comparing scripture with scripture” (MS 15, November 1, 1888; *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 163).

**Can we see the possibility of a providence?** Could the Lord have sent us a “missionary” from the once-Dark Continent to wield a razor-sharp “sword of the Spirit,” to cut the Gordian knot of confusion with legalism and antinomianism that for decades has fettered Seventh-day Adventist thought? We believe that readers who give this book a careful reading will not see it as deception. We believe it is an evidence of re-awakening spiritual vitality within the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

## Waggoner and Jones on Justification

by *Gerald L. Finneman*

Some say that because Jones and Waggoner in their later years lost their way, this somehow invalidates nearly everything they wrote during the time when Ellen White endorsed their message. She disagrees. Some even try to make them responsible for the “Holy Flesh” movement that became prominent at the turn of the century. The evidence is contrary. Some openly attack their teaching on the human nature assumed by Christ in His incarnation.

Most recently the point of attack has been on what Jones and Waggoner taught about justification. This may prove to be the most heated discussion yet, for this deals with the nuts and bolts of salvation. The 1888 message taught two aspects of one justification: that which was for all mankind; and the other, for those who believe. The first was universal and corporate in scope; the other conditional, and by faith.

First we will notice what Waggoner taught on justification by faith and then will follow with what he taught about universal justification.

### *On Justification by Faith*

Waggoner’s teaching was very different from that which is preached by Evangelicals within and without Adventism. To him, justification by faith meant to make righteous, or make obedient to God’s law. He writes this six times in sixteen pages in *Christ and His Righteousness*.

1. “To justify means to make righteous, or to show one to be righteous” (p. 51).
2. “Let us first have an object lesson on justification, or the imparting of righteousness” (p. 57).
3. “Christ says that he [the publican] went justified, that is, made righteous” (p. 58).
4. “We are justified [made righteous] freely by his grace” (p. 60).

5. “. . . Forgiveness is something more than a mere form, something more than a mere entry in the books of record in heaven, to the effect that the sin has been canceled. The forgiveness of sins is a reality; it is something tangible, something that vitally affects the individual. It actually clears him from guilt; and if he is cleared from guilt, is justified, made righteous, he has certainly undergone a radical change. He is, indeed, another person. . . . And so the full and free forgiveness of sins carries with it that wonderful and miraculous change known as the new birth” (p. 66).

6. “Again, what brings justification, or the forgiveness of sins? It is faith. [Rom. 5:1 quoted]” (p. 67).

### *Justification by Faith and the Law*

“When the apostle says that we do not make void the law of God by faith, but that, on the contrary, we establish it, he means that faith does not lead to violation of the law, but to obedience. No, we should not say that faith *leads* to obedience, but that faith itself obeys. Faith establishes the law in the heart. . . . Instead of faith leading to antinomianism, it is the only thing that is contrary to antinomianism. . . . The man of faith is the only one who truly honors the law of God” (*ibid.*, p. 95).

“Justification carries the law on the face of it. . . . It establishes the law in the heart. Justification is the law incarnate in Christ, put into the man, so it is incarnate in the man” (“Letter to the Romans, No. 5,” *General Conference Bulletin*, 1891).

Clearly Waggoner taught early on that justification by faith is a change not only in one’s standing with God, but that the heart is changed. This is not acceptable to many, if not most, Evangelicals today.

### *Universal Justification*

Jones and Waggoner were crystal clear in their presentations on universal justification. Some arguments against them cast doubt on their writings within a very short time after 1888. Waggoner’s *The Glad Tidings*, published in 1899, has come under attack because of his unequivocal statements there. Let’s first look at some of them and then notice an argument against Waggoner and this book.

“It is true that all are redeemed, but not all have accepted redemption. . . . All have been purchased by the blood—the life—of Christ, and all may be, if they will, free from sin and death.

“Stop and think what this means; let the full force of the announcement impress upon your consciousness. ‘Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law,’—from not continuing in all its righteous requirements. We need not sin any more. He has snapped asunder the cords of sin that bound us, so that we have but to accept His salvation in order to be free from every besetting sin” (*ibid.*, p. 116).

“Christ has, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man (Heb. 2:9), so that every man in the world has received the ‘unspeakable gift’ (2 Corin. 9:15). ‘The grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus, Christ, hath abounded unto many,’ even to all; for as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. Rom. 5:15, 19” (p. 16; revised edition, p. 11).

“He gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us, and He did not die in vain. Deliverance is ours. Christ was sent ‘to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.’ Isa. 42:7. Accordingly He cries out to the captives, ‘Liberty!’ To them that are bound He proclaims that the prison doors are open. Isa. 61:1. To the prisoners, He says, ‘Go forth.’ Isa. 49:9. Each soul may say, if he will, ‘O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid; thou has loosed my bonds.’ Ps. 116:16. The thing is true, whether we believe it or not. We are the Lord’s servants, even though we stubbornly refuse to serve; for He has bought us; and having bought us, He has broken every bond that hindered us from serving Him. If we but believe, we have the victory that has overcome the world. 1 John 5:4, R.V., John 16:33. The message to us is that our ‘warfare is accomplished,’ our ‘iniquity is pardoned.’ Isa. 40:2. We have but to shout, as Israel did before Jericho, to see that God has given us the victory. God ‘hath visited and redeemed His people.’ Luke 1:68. ...

“All this deliverance is according to the will of our God and Father. The will of God is our sanctification. 1 Thess. 4:3. He willeth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. 1 Tim. 2:4. And He ‘worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.’ Eph. 1:11. ‘What! Do you mean to teach universal salvation?’ We mean to teach just what the word of God teaches, that ‘the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men.’ Titus 2:11, R.V. God has wrought out salvation for every man, and has given it to him; but the majority spurn it, and throw it away. The judgment will reveal the fact that full and complete salvation was given to every man, and that the lost have deliberately thrown away their birthright possession. Thus every mouth will be stopped” (*ibid.*, pp. 21-23; revised edition, pp. 13, 14).

“Faith does not make facts; it only lays hold of them. There is not a single soul that is bowed down with the weight of sin which Satan hath bound on Him, whom Christ does not lift up. Freedom is his; he has only to make use of it. Let the message be sounded far and wide. Let every soul hear it, that Christ has given deliverance to every captive. Thousands will rejoice at the news” (pp. 199, 200; revised edition, p. 107).

The argument that seems to hold sway with some is that Waggoner can not be trusted at this date (1899). Waggoner was still a well-known writer and speaker to Adventists. He held responsible positions in the church at this time and some years later. But somehow, so the argument goes, he was doing something sinister and was going into apostasy in the future and therefore this book can not be trusted.

Very well. Let’s look at what he wrote several years preceding this eventful year, and find if he taught something different about corporate justification. He wrote for nearly a year on the book of Romans in *The Signs of the Times* in 1895 and 1896. The purpose of the articles was then what it is today—evangelistic. This paper was not an in-house journal. Waggoner had this to say concerning the much discussed verse in Romans 5:18:

“There is no exception here. As the condemnation came upon all, so the justification comes upon all ... the free gift comes upon all” (*The Signs of the Times*, March 12, 1896).

One man told me that he would not accept Waggoner at this time. So I presented a thought from a sermon from Jones of a year earlier in 1895 at the General Conference. Part of that sermon is given here to show what Jones taught concerning Romans 5:18:

“Adam, then, was the figure of him that was to come. That one to come is Christ. Adam was the figure of him. Wherein was Adam the figure of him? In his righteousness?—No; for he did not keep it. In his sin?—No; for Christ did not sin. Wherein, then, was Adam the figure of Christ?—In this: That all that were in the world were included in Adam; and all that are in the world are included in Christ. In other words: Adam in his sin reached all the world; Jesus Christ the second Adam, in his righteousness touches all humanity. That is where Adam is the figure of him that was to come. ...

“Whatever he should have done embraced us; and what he did made us what we are.

“Now, here is another Adam. Does he touch as many as the first Adam did? That is the question. That is what we are studying now. Does the second Adam touch as many as did the first Adam?—And the answer is that it is certainly true that what the second Adam did, embraces all that were embraced in what the first Adam did. What he should have done, what he could have done, would embrace all. ...

“The question is, Does the second Adams righteousness embrace as many as does the first Adam’s sin? Look closely. Without our consent at all, without our having anything to do with it, we were all included in the first Adam; we were there. All the human race were in the first Adam. What that first Adam, what that first man, did, meant us; it involved us. That which the first Adam did brought us into sin, and the end of sin is death; and that touches every one of us, and involves every one of us.

“Jesus Christ, the second man, took our sinful nature. He touched us ‘in all points.’ He became we and died the death. And so in him and by that, every man that has ever lived upon the earth, and was involved in the first Adam, is involved in this, and will live again. There will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust. Every soul shall live again by the second Adam, from the death that came by the first Adam.

“‘Well,’ says one ‘we are involved in other sins besides that one.’ Not without our choice. When God said, ‘I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed,’ he set every man free to choose which master he would serve; and since that every man that has sinned in this world, has done it because he chose to. ‘If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not,’—not them who had no chance to believe; the god of this world blinds no man until he has shut his eyes of faith. When he shuts his eyes of faith, then Satan will see that they are kept shut as long as possible. ... And why did he blind the minds?—Because they ‘believe not.’ ...

“Therefore, just as far as the first Adam reaches man, so far the second Adam reaches man. The first Adam brought man under the condemnation of sin, even unto death; the second Adam’s righteousness undoes that, and makes every man live again. As soon as Adam sinned, God gave him a second chance, and set him free to choose which master he would have. Since that time every man is free to choose which way he will go; therefore he is responsible for his own individual sins. And when Jesus Christ has set us all free from the sin and the death which came upon us from the first Adam, that freedom is for every man; and every man can have it for the choosing.

“The Lord will not compel any one to take it. He compels no one to sin, and he compels no one to be righteous. Every one sins upon his own choice. The Scriptures demonstrate it. And every one can be made perfectly righteous at his choice. And the Scriptures demonstrate this. No man will die the second death who has not chosen sin rather than righteousness, death rather than life. In Jesus Christ there is furnished in completeness all that man needs or ever can have in righteousness; and all there is for any man to do is to choose Christ, and then it is his” (*General Conference Bulletin*, 1895, pp. 268, 269, Paradise View edition, pp. 73, 74).

We observe that both these men held identical views at this time concerning corporate justification for all mankind. There can be no mistaking their message from this time and later, because this aspect of justification did not become hazy in their presentation. It was unequivocal. In order to get away from their clear thinking and biblical presentation on this subject one has to divert the attention away from the presentations to find fault with the presenters.

Some will accept messages closer to the well-known year “1888.” Was this concept of justification presented before 1895? Yes. Waggoner wrote about “universal redemption.” When? 1890:

“Infants that have not come to an age where they can understand right from wrong for themselves, are the special subjects of Gods favor. By virtue of Christ’s sacrifice they share in the universal redemption from the death which results from their being descendants of Adam. They cannot suffer the death which is the penalty of sin for they have never had personal guilt (*The Signs of the Times*, August 25, 1890).

Not only in 1890, but only two months after the General Conference in 1888 he wrote:

“Human nature is sinful, and the law of God condemns sin. Not that men are born into the world directly condemned by the law, for in infancy they have no knowledge of right and wrong, and are incapable of doing either, but they are born with sinful tendencies, owing to the sins of their ancestors” (*The Signs of the Times*, January 21, 1889).

Again in 1891 he said:

“The same power that will make men immortal in the life to come, justifies them—makes them conformable to the law—by being in harmony with it, every day” (*General Conference Bulletin*, 1891, Sermon, No. 7).

“[God’s] own purpose is a purpose of grace, and the free gift by grace comes upon all unto justification of life” (No. 13).

Here is repudiation of the Augustinian doctrine of original sin which condemns babies to hell (or consigns them to limbo) if they are not baptized before death. The idea presented by Waggoner is not universal condemnation in the first Adam, but justification of life for all because of Christ, the second Adam, who undid what the first one did.

God's grace awaits the unborn. It waits to take the newborn by the hand and if that newborn does not resist God's grace, He will hold on with a grasp so firmly that no one will be able to pluck that babe out of His hand!

For one to reject Jones's and Waggoner's clear teaching on corporate justification during the years we have surveyed—1889 to 1899—he or she must do it on other grounds than that of time and consistency.

## APPENDIX A

### Carol Kawamoto Interviews Elder Jack Sequeira

**Kawamoto:** *I am a relatively new Adventist and have been perplexed by the controversy over your new book. Could you please tell me: do you firmly believe in the Seventh-day Adventist doctrine of the sanctuary, including the beginning of the antitypical Day of Atonement in 1844?*

**Sequeira:** Carol, I first came into the Seventh-day Adventist Church because I heard and believed the 2300-year prophecy and the significance of 1844. That was my start, and I have firmly held to that confidence ever since. I accept and believe Ellen Whites book *The Great Controversy*, and the importance of the cleansing of the sanctuary beginning in 1844. I presented 28 studies on the sanctuary when I was a pastor in Walla Walla and the tapes of these studies are still available to anyone (1-800-457-7721). I see *the work* of the great High Priest on the Day of Atonement as distinct and different from His work prior to 1844, and my emphasis is on what He *accomplishes* by His ministry, not on material items such as furniture or geography.

**Kawamoto:** *I have heard reports that you downplay sanctification, that you believe it is not necessary, that it is not a part of our preparation for entrance into God's kingdom. Please comment.*

**Sequeira:** Those who circulate such reports are misreading my statements. Sanctification is essential for a preparation to enter heaven because it is the only genuine fruit of justification by faith. If I don't give evidence in my life of sanctification, I don't give evidence of justification by faith. Those who circulate these reports are confusing the difference between qualifying for heaven, and a fitness for heaven. Sanctification is making real in my life experience, my daily living, what is legally true of me "in Christ" because of His sacrifice for the world. Those who say that justification by faith is only forgiveness for past sins miss its real meaning. It is pardon but also far more

than that; it makes the believer obedient to all the commandments of God. Here is where many “historic Adventists” miss the point—all that Christ accomplished is mine legally because Christ “restored the whole race of men to favor with God” (*Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 343); but sanctification is the subjective experience of knowing and rejoicing in that “favor with God.”

**Kawamoto:** *You do not quote Ellen White in your new book. Is this because you do not accept her writings as the Spirit of Prophecy, or that you doubt her inspiration?*

**Sequeira:** There are four reasons why I don’t quote Ellen White in *Beyond Belief*: (1) I wanted non-Adventists to have access to it so they could see that we do believe in the gospel and can explain it from the Bible. (2) I wanted the book to be a tool for our own people to learn how to use the Bible in presenting “the third angels message in verity” to non-SDA’s. (3) Ellen White herself challenges us to dig deeply into the Word of God, the Bible, and to base our faith on its teachings. (It’s interesting that neither Jones or Waggoner quoted Ellen White in their writings, *Waggoner on Romans*, *The Glad Tidings*, and *The Consecrated Way*.) (4) Ellen White considered her writings to be “the lesser light” to guide us to “the greater light,” the Bible. We do her a great disservice when we stop at the lesser light and neglect deep and thorough study of the greater light.

**Kawamoto:** *When you say the gospel is “unconditional good do you mean that the sinner will be saved eternally without the new birth and without obedience to the law of God?*

**Sequeira:** No. First, Christ is God’s gift to all men, and the gospel is the news about that gift, This does not mean that all men will go to heaven, because God has given us free will. I can choose to disbelieve and to reject what He has already done for me. In the end, God will give me what I have chosen. Secondly, we must make a difference between the gospel itself, and our response to the gospel. God does not say to us, “If you first believe, then I will give Christ to die for you and redeem you.” He has already done so! Christ does not die afresh each time a sinner is converted; He did so “once for all.”

There is a great distinction between Universalism and the universal redemption accomplished “in Christ.” Objectively, God

redeemed “all men.” In Romans 5:12-21 the word “gift” applies only to Christ and what He has done for mankind, not to Adam. Like any gift, you cannot enjoy it if you refuse it. “Historic Adventists” are not distinguishing between the objective reality of what Christ accomplished for “all men” and the subjective experience of the believer “in Christ.” The objective reality is more than merely provisional; they seem to want us to do something before God redeems us “in Christ.” But all that He did for us in His sacrifice on the cross was “while we were yet sinners.” This is the objective gospel.

**Kawamoto:** *Some of your opponents, one a former General Conference leader, say that you use techniques (Neuro- Linguistic Programming) to plant seeds of disobedience in your readers’ minds, so that they will be programmed later to accept the mark of the beast. Have you ever taken NLP training?*

**Sequeira:** No, never. When I first came to America the Idaho Conference leaders called us ministers to a meeting where they had an NLP practitioner talk to us. I sensed something was wrong and I resisted it. When they gave us copies of the book about “Frogs and Princes” I threw mine in the trash. Careful reading will resolve what some think are contradictions in my book. Regarding the mark of the beast, the only motivation that will hold God’s people in that time of trial will be the *agape* constraint (2 Corinthians 5:14, 15). The fear motivation will fail.

**Kawamoto:** *Some are saying that your idea of a legal justification at the cross contradicts Selected Messages, Book One, p. 366: “God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place.” Can you comment?*

**Sequeira:** There is no contradiction. Whatever happened to Christ in His life and death has legally happened to me. Faith is more than a mere mental assent to that truth. Baptism is my confession of my acceptance of the objective reality of Christ’s life and death as mine. This statement in *Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 366 is speaking of the subjective application of the gospel to the life of the believer. In *Beyond Belief* I define faith as (1) knowledge of the truth, (2) believing the truth, and (3) obedience to the truth of the gospel. So *Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 366 is speaking of the subjective experience of

justification by faith—all of which rests on the solid foundation of the objective truth of what Christ accomplished 2000 years ago.

**Kawamoto:** *Reports are being circulated that you have said that your understanding of the gospel is the same as that of Dr. Desmond Ford. Are these reports based on fact?*

**Sequeira:** No, they are not. There are great differences in Fords understanding and mine. For example, he does not accept the view—which I teach—that Christ took the fallen, sinful nature of man, nor does he teach the possibility of complete victory over sin in this life and the certainty of such a victory for a corporate body of Christs people before the close of probation. Further, he does not recognize the fundamental reality that Christ effected a legal justification for “all men” at the cross so that justification by faith is more than a legal declaration—it makes the believer obedient to all the commandments of God, so that it is possible to overcome all sin in this life in preparation for the second coming of Christ. And there are other serious differences.

**Kawamoto:** *Thank you!*

**Sequeira:** Thanks for contacting me directly before passing on these rumors!

(Carol Kawamoto was baptized in 1992, and has been happy to discover that the 1888 message has strengthened her confidence in the special mission of this church. She lives in Chicago Park, California. Elder Sequeira gave this interview on the phone from his home in College Park, Maryland.)

## APPENDIX B

### What Did Christ Accomplish By His Sacrifice?

*How Legal Justification Has Become an Issue:  
A Brief Look at Recent History  
by Robert J. Wieland*

It is ironical that some are opposing the idea of a legal justification made effective at the cross for “all men” because of their zealous rejection of the “Reformationist” or “new” theology. The truth is that this doctrine is an effective refutation of what they wish to oppose.

In the 1970’s Desmond Ford and Robert D. Brinsmead were prominent champions of the Reformationist view, especially after the Palmdale Conference of 1976. In agreement with David McMahon, they saw Waggoner as teaching Roman Catholicism because he had maintained that justification by faith makes the believer righteous, or makes him obedient to the law of God. The biblical law-court language, they insisted, required that “justification” could not make one righteous because the ancient Hebrew judge could never “make” an accused person “righteous,” but only “declare” him so (Deuteronomy 25:1). They maintained that justification by faith therefore is only a legal declaration. This is the reason why so many see a red flag when they hear the phrase “legal justification.” They have failed to see the distinction maintained by the 1888 Message Study Committee. Hopefully this glimpse of the history may help to dispel suspicion.

I was serving in the 1970 s as the pastor of a church in the San Diego area, part of the Southeastern California Conference. Many of my fellow-pastors were enthusiastic supporters of the Reformationist views. Ford and Brinsmead were speaking in such prestigious Adventist venues as the Loma Linda University and Paradise Valley churches. Ford and Brinsmead appeared on the surface to prove that Jones

and Waggoner were Roman Catholic in their theology, and because I supported the 1888 message this placed me before my congregation in a ridiculous light. Having begun to appreciate something of the potential of the 1888 message I sensed that the Reformationist views were a denial of it, but at the time I had not read very deeply into it. I countered that the ancient Hebrew judge indeed could not *make* the accused to be “righteous,” but neither could he “declare” a man righteous until he had carefully examined all the evidence of the case. Therefore the true sense of Deuteronomy 25:1 was that he must *recognize* that the innocent person was “righteous.” Waggoner saw this (*Christ and His Righteousness*, p. 51), and the evidence proved that Waggoner was not Roman Catholic in his view.

The Reformationist view insisted that any change in the believer’s heart takes place not in justification by faith but in sanctification; and since sanctification is never complete in this life, the believer can never hope to overcome sin completely until glorification takes place at the second advent. The corollary of this view required that Christ in His incarnation must take only the sinless nature of Adam before the Fall, because if He had taken our fallen, sinful nature as the 1888 message said, the Reformationist view insisted that He would have been forced to participate in sin and thus could not have been our sinless Saviour. Implicit in this view is the idea that total victory over sin is impossible so long as man has a sinful nature or “sinful flesh,” and this must apply to Christ as well as to us. I began to see that there are serious differences between the Reformationist view and that of the 1888 message.

About this time someone at Loma Linda kindly xeroxed for me Waggoner’s 1895-96 *Signs* articles on Romans. I had never before read them. His comments on Romans 5 impressed me deeply. I re-read *The Glad Tidings* and began to understand that the legal justification took place at the cross, long before the sinner repents and believes. And if it took place at the cross, it must objectively apply to “all men.” It follows therefore that justification by faith must be experiential, and must be a change of heart that makes the believer obedient to all the commandments of God. It dawned on me that this was the reason why Ellen White so enthusiastically supported

the 1888 message when she first heard it (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 91-93; MS 5, 1889; *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, pp. 348, 349). She had never before heard this message presented publicly in the past 45 years, and sensed that it must yet lighten the earth.

It was apparent that the Ford-Brinsmead views in the 1970’s were undermining the people’s confidence in the sanctuary message which teaches the possibility of overcoming sin (not the sinful nature!) completely before the return of Christ. Wanting to help my congregation at Chula Vista to realize what the issues were, I wrote a little tract giving biblical evidence that the legal justification or “declaration” took place at the cross and therefore applied objectively to “all men,” and that justification by faith had to be the subjective experience of change of heart and reconciliation with God that produces complete obedience. My xeroxed tract somehow found its way to the General Conference and attracted the attention of Dr. Arnold Wallenkampf of the Biblical Research Committee. He wrote me a letter of appreciation, noting that this truth is the effective refutation of the Reformationist doctrine. (He has presented it forcefully in his book, *What Every Christian Should Know About Being Justified*, with very little difference, Review and Herald, 1988.)

About this time, unknown to me, Elder Jack Sequeira had been diligently xeroxing Jones and Waggoner material in the Heritage Room at Andrews University. Taking these documents back to Uganda, he found an opportunity to study them when Idi Amin expelled him and he was forced to wait in the Middle East four months for a visa to enter Ethiopia. He spent the time in deep study of Romans and Galatians, following up through biblical exegesis the new convictions that Jones’s and Waggoner’s writings had impressed upon him. Thus the two of us through our separate paths had come to virtually the same conclusions quite independently.

In 1978 or 1979 I wrote *The 1888 Message—An Introduction*, which was accepted for publication by the Southern Publishing Association of Nashville. In chapter seven I clearly set forth the same view of a legal justification at the cross as I seek to proclaim today, in the same terminology. When the Review and Herald took over the work of the SPA and this book went out of print, they decided

to drop it. Elder Ron Spear persuaded them to reprint it, as he was employed there at that time. To date, this reprinted volume has sold some 20,000 copies, mostly in our ABC's.

Opponents of Sequeira's book object to the phrase "legal justification effected at the cross," and condemn it as "deadly heresy." They say it does not appear in those precise words in Ellen Whites writings. They fail to realize that it was called into being to refute the Reformationist teachings of our time, which is why we have used it. For "historic Adventists" to reject this biblical truth is to undermine the foundation of the very doctrines they wish to support.

## APPENDIX C

### **A Summary of Principal Objections to *Beyond Belief With Brief Answers***

(1) Some say that Sequeira denies the substitutionary atonement, that we die for our own sins and pay their penalty, thus denying the need for a Saviour (pp. 39-49). Sequeira devotes an entire chapter to "Christ Our Substitute." He does not deny substitution, but clarifies it. When Christ died for us it was not primarily "instead of us" but also "as us" (Ellen White almost never used the word "vicarious" in speaking of Christ's substitution: in fact, the word never got into any of her books). Christ's corporate involvement with the human race does not mean that we make our own atonement or pay for our own sins. The true idea is that of 2 Corinthians 5:14, "if One died for all, then all died," and Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ."

Ellen White is clear: "Christ wrought out a redemption for men. This was not done by going out of Himself to another, but by taking humanity into Himself. ... To bring humanity into Christ, to bring the fallen race into oneness with divinity, is the work of redemption" (*Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 250). Sequeira explains this more clearly in his latest book, *Saviour of All Men*, pp. 25, 26, 34. We do not die for our own sins, but we do identify with Christ as *He* died for our sins!

(2) Opponents say he downgrades sanctification. They quote, "Imparted righteousness, sanctification, does not contribute in the slightest way to our qualification for heaven" (p. 32). Sequeira defines his word "qualification" as "our title to heaven," not as "our fitness for heaven." In this he is in harmony with Ellen Whites famous statement in *Messages to Young People*, p. 35: "The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed; the righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted. The first is our title to heaven, the second is our fitness for heaven." Sequeira agrees that sanctification is as much

by faith as is justification, but it also includes our works as cooperation with Christ. He insists that there is no merit in those works. Imparted righteousness comes from Christ and not from self.

(3) Opponents say he teaches that salvation for the entire human race at the cross involves irresistible grace and Universalism (pp. 8, 30, 31, etc.). But nowhere does Sequeira teach that there is eternal salvation for unbelievers. Christ did redeem the entire human race from the death which would have been our portion were it not for His sacrifice. Sequeira teaches that what Christ accomplished for the entire human race can be resisted and rejected by the sinner. Those who are lost at last will be lost because of their unbelief (John 3:17-19).

(4) He is charged with teaching that no transformation of life is necessary (p. 103). Reading the entire page shows that this charge is totally untrue.

(5) “It’s hard to be saved and easy to be lost,” his opponents insist. The answer is that the difficulties in the way become “easy” when the *agape* of Christ constrains the believer to live “henceforth” not for self, but for Him (2 Corinthians 5:14, 15). The more we appreciate what it cost the Son of God to save us, the lighter the burden becomes as we are yoked together with Him. No Christian dares to deny what Jesus said in Matthew 11:28-30.

(6) Opponents say that Sequeira teaches “two kinds of justification.” In fact, he teaches one—effected at the cross, which legally applies to “all men” but is experienced by the believing sinner in justification by faith (which reconciles him to God and to His holy law).

(7) He teaches that we can continue to live in sin “under grace.” A careful reading of his context shows that his opponents misconstrue his meaning. His teaching gives no license to sin, not even by remote implication. But when one who believes in Christ stumbles into sin he realizes that he brings shame and disgrace on the Saviour. Then he learns of a new and more powerful motivation for overcoming sin—more powerful than the oldself-centered motivation

based on fear. Sequeira makes this even more clear in his latest book, *Saviour of All Men*, p. 42.

(8) His opponents charge him with “reliance” on non-SDA theologians. In fact, he relies totally on Scripture, which troubles his opponents (see objection number 10). He teaches in harmony with the unique 1888 concepts and the Spirit of Prophecy. When he cites some non-SDA theologians it is only in an illustrative way. In particular, some such as T. F. Torrence, Anders Nygren, and C. E. B. Cranfield have steadily been coming to understand the truth of the nature of Christ as Jones and Waggoner did. This is encouragement to believe that the time will come when many non-SDA leaders will take a stand on the right side.

(9) Opponents say that the sacrifice of the cross did not effect a legal justification for “all men.” They insist that it only extends grace to “all men,” and is a call to the sinner to “come.” We reply that grace that does not rest upon the legal foundation of satisfaction for the broken law becomes the essence of antinomianism. The Bible truth is, “by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.” What Christ has accomplished is done; it is not contingent on anything we can do. The “call” to the sinner is not for him to take the initiative in his salvation, but for him to respond by faith to that initiative which God has already taken at the cross in His “verdict of acquittal” for “all men” (Romans 5:16, 18, NEB).

(10) Sequeira relies too much on Scripture, not enough on the writings of Ellen White. The answer to this objection is simply that Ellen White herself urges us to base our doctrine on the Bible, not on her writings. Her writings are “the lesser light” to guide us to “the greater light.” It is possible to wrest statements out of her context in such a way as to force her to contradict the plain words of Scripture. This she would never want us to do. The time has come for God’s people to become “mighty in the Scriptures,” and Sequeira would encourage us to that end.

## APPENDIX D

## The Vance Ferrell Attack On Sequeira's Ministry

As we go to press, Ferrell's "Waymarks" attack against *Beyond Belief* has come to our attention. Anyone who has read *Beyond Belief* carefully will immediately see how wildly inaccurate is this supposed expose of Sequeira's teachings.

A striking example of how Ferrell misrepresents Sequeira can be seen in his Part Three (p. 12). He says: "Sequeira ... equates sinful human nature with sin. **'A sinful human nature is itself sin.'** (BB 42). Did you know that your nature was sin?

He did not say 'sinful,' but 'sin itself.' That appears to be a step lower than Augustine's view of the matter" (emphasis is Ferrell's). But, that brief quotation is *Sequeira's statement of what the Reformers taught and also "many Evangelical Christians today,"* which he opposes! One does not like to believe that this misrepresentation on Ferrell's part is deliberate; but if not, then it has to be gross carelessness. And to publish such pseudo-scholarship is morally irresponsible. Unfortunately, it is characteristic of Ferrell's entire presentation.

He begins with a wild accusation that again is untrue: "[Sequeira] ridicules Ellen White's writings, and says we should not use them." In fact, Sequeira believes her writings and urges us to read them, follow them, and use them privately or publicly in the way that Ellen White herself wants us to use them—as the "lesser light" to guide us to the "greater light." Never does she say we should use her writings as a substitute for diligent Bible study or as an excuse for lazy or careless study of it. She specifically asks us not to use her writings to settle a controverted point of Bible interpretation (*Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 164). Sequeira does not refuse "to use the Spirit of Prophecy in his sermons, papers, books, or replies to critics." Ferrell slanders Sequeira, who refuses only to use her writings

out of context or to allow others to wrest them in an effort to contradict plain Bible teaching, or as a substitute for diligent Bible study.

Ferrell charges Sequeira with teaching that "Christ's atonement was totally finished on the cross, and our salvation was assured and fully completed at that time." Sequeira actually says the opposite, that the atonement was not finished at the cross: "The work of the Holy Spirit could not begin in the fullest sense until Christ's sacrifice of atonement was complete. Now that Christ is in heaven, having prepared salvation full and complete by a perfect sacrifice, it is the work of the Holy Spirit to finish the work of atonement in sinful men and women who are willing to believe (see Romans 5:11)" (p. 135). Never does Sequeira say that the "atonement was totally finished" at the cross; the "*sacrifice*" was.

Ferrell charges Sequeira with saying "that cooperation with God in working out our salvation is 'Galatian legalism.'" Again, this is distortion. What Sequeira actually says is that the idea of salvation by faith plus works is the Galatian heresy, because such "works of the law" are motivated by self. Never does he disparage "cooperation with God" in genuine obedience by faith.

Ferrell makes another wild charge: Sequeira, he says, "insists that the Final Crisis will be fought over acceptance of the finished atonement, instead of over obedience to the law of God." What he says is this: "The final showdown ... will occur in the great controversy between salvation by faith, symbolized by God's Sabbath, versus salvation by works, symbolized by man's Sunday. ... The conflict will be between the seventh-day Sabbath, signifying salvation by faith alone, and Sunday, signifying salvation by human effort. ... The true nature of the controversy between God's Sabbath and man's Sunday is also not clearly understood. But when the two opposing methods of salvation come clearly into focus, then the true importance of the Sabbath will also be clearly seen. At that time Sabbath keeping will become a test of faith" (pp. 182, 185, 186).

A powerfully true statement! It is in harmony with Ellen Whites prediction that the final message which will meet the final issue will

be “CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (*Review and Herald* Extra, Dec. 23, 1890).

One can appreciate how stern denunciation of heresy may sometimes be appropriate in the final crisis. But it must be honest, accurate, and always spoken in Christian charity. It must never be harsh and vicious. While Seventh-day Adventists maintain great reverence for Ellen White’s writings, it is a phenomenal “sign of the times” that 100 years after 1888 some have no respect for simple, obvious truth.

Vance Ferrell’s attack on Jack Sequeira’s ministry gives no evidence of accuracy. Instead of such an attack he should have demonstrated a common Christian charity that even a genuine heretic deserves.

Ferrell misrepresents Sequeira as teaching that “the work of the Holy Spirit within us has no effect on whether or not we will be saved. Our salvation was totally completed 2,000 years ago.” He charges Sequeira with teaching total moral irresponsibility, that “it is all right to sin under grace,” that “we don’t have to keep the law anymore,” “it is not necessary to keep the Sabbath. You can just as easily be a Sundaykeeper and be just as assured of salvation. If you try to keep the Sabbath ... you will be condemned in the judgment as a legalist. ... There is no such thing as imparted righteousness, but you can totally lack it and still be fully saved in the kingdom. ... You need only profess Christ one time in your life, and you will be eternally saved because of it” (pp. 13-15). One wonders, where did Ferrell get such ideas? These charges are simply false: they are serious distortions of what the book actually says.

Another example of such misquoting is on his p. 16:

“Did you know you were born to receive eternal death? At least, that is how Sequeira sees it. ... Sequeira says that God condemns [men] to the flames for what their ancestors did thousands of years before. ... Jack: All humanity stands condemned to death in Adam.—*Beyond Belief* 53. Jack: Adam’s sin brought all humanity under the death sentence—both the first and second deaths.—*Beyond Belief*, 61.”

According to Ferrell, Sequeira is teaching a monstrous heresy worse than anything from the Dark Ages. But what does his book say?

“Just as Adam’s sin affected all humanity for death, likewise, what Christ did as the second Adam also affected all humanity for life. ... Christ ... brought the verdict of ‘justification of life’ to all men” (pp. 54, 55).

Ferrell cites tapes of sermons Sequeira preached some years past, alleging heresy. This present critique is concerned with the actual published book, *Beyond Belief*. Statements from tapes can be notoriously wrested from context. If Ellen White were living in this age of tapes, she would doubtless repeat what she said—that if one wants to know what she believes, “read my published writings” rather than crediting hear-say or word of mouth reports. Sequeira solidly affirms his belief in the two-phase ministry of Christ as High Priest, the second phase beginning in 1844 (see Appendix A). He has never denied the two-apartment reality of the heavenly sanctuary, but simply refuses to get bogged down in an over-literal discussion of the architecture of the “two rooms.” He insists that our primary concern should be the spiritual application to human hearts of Christ’s Day of Atonement ministry.

In his Parts Four, Five, and Six, Ferrell demonstrates how selective quotations from Ellen White can be twisted to force her to deny not only the plainest teachings of the Bible, but her own writings as well. In her MS 36, 1890, she establishes an unequivocal truth:

“Salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ alone. ... Should faith and works purchase the gift of salvation for anyone, then the Creator is under obligation to the creature. Here is an opportunity for falsehood to be accepted as truth. If any man can merit salvation by anything he may do, then he is in the same position as the Catholic to do penance for his sins” (see pp. 19, 20 of this book).

Nevertheless, Ferrell would have Ellen White say that faith and works do purchase salvation. Rightly understood, she taught that our “title to heaven,” or qualification for heaven, was totally the work of Christ by His great sacrifice, and that our good works in sanctification have no merit whatever but simply demonstrate “our fitness for heaven.”

On page 19 Ferrell falsely charges Sequeira with teaching that “the law is no longer binding on Christians.” The fundamental issue between Ferrell and Sequeira narrows down to whether (a) salvation is by faith and works, or (b) salvation is by faith alone which works.

Ferrell seems mysteriously alarmed at the clear teaching of (b), and is motivated to attack it and denigrate it by any way possible, even by misrepresentation. The spirit of these attacks is phenomenal, suggesting an unprecedented arousal of the same principalities and powers that rose to attack the message of Jones and Waggoner in the 1888 era. However, historical records do not indicate that any of the opposition Jones and Waggoner had to meet was as ruthless as what we meet today.

Ferrell strongly dislikes Sequeira's last chapter about the Sabbath:

“Although he gives lip service to the true Sabbath, Sequeira claims the [final] issue is ... the importance of not obeying! Commenting on the Final Crisis, he says: Jack: ‘The fundamental issue throughout Scripture is salvation by faith versus salvation by works. At the heart of the Bible message is salvation by grace made effective through faith alone.’—*Beyond Belief*, 185”

Sequeira's last chapter clearly upholds true obedience to the Sabbath commandment without the slightest doubt or hesitancy.

For example:

“The only way we can acceptably keep the fourth commandment, the Sabbath commandment, is by faith—entering by faith into God's rest. The Sabbath becomes, in this context, the seal of righteousness by faith. ... In the end time, those who have deliberately turned their backs on God's free gift of salvation in Christ will worship the dragon that gives power to the beast. ... They will exalt Sunday as man's day of rest in defiance of God's rest day. The issue, then, in the final conflict will not be between two groups of Christians, or even between two rest days, but between two opposing methods of salvation. The conflict will be between the seventh-day Sabbath, signifying salvation by faith alone, and Sunday, signifying salvation by human effort. ... Every person will have to make a choice—either for or against Christ. ... At that time, the Sabbath will become God's seal, representing righteousness by faith. Sunday keeping, in contrast, will represent the mark of the beast, signifying mankind's rejection of God's saving grace in Christ. ... Those who will stubbornly cling to the seventh-day Sabbath will manifest a faith in God that is unshakable” (pp. 184, 185).

Any further comment is superfluous, as has perhaps been any of this comment on Ferrell's attacks.

**A pattern is becoming visible.** In order to sustain their positions, critics of *Beyond Belief* are rather consistently misquoting,

taking statements out of context and in general misrepresenting the author. Their common method is to tear down without offering a more credible “good news” message. They share a disregard, sometimes disdain for the *agape* motivation that constrains the believer to serve Christ apart from a fear of being lost or a hope of reward. However we may view this strange phenomenon, it is increasingly evident that a sharply defined principle is emerging out of the fog of confusion. The issue has become Galatianism versus the pure gospel of righteousness by faith.

## APPENDIX E

### **Can Babies That Die in Infancy “Resist” God’s Love?**

Some wish to condemn the doctrine of a legal justification effected at the cross by saying that it requires all babies that die in infancy to be eternally saved. This objection is raised when we quote *Steps to Christ*, p. 27: “The sinner may resist this love, may refuse to be drawn to Christ; but if he does not resist, he will be drawn to Jesus, ... to the foot of the cross in repentance.” They say that since no such babies can consciously or purposefully “resist” the love of Christ, therefore they must be automatically saved if Christ’s sacrifice effected a legal justification for “all men.

This does not necessarily follow. In fact, the opponents’ position (to be logical) would require that no infants who die can be saved because they cannot consciously or purposefully “believe.” This would be a terrible conclusion, equally untrue.

This objection is irrelevant to these discussions of righteousness by faith. We can safely leave such infants to the care of a loving God who can rightly judge if they would have “believed” or “resisted” should they have come to the age of accountability. Grieving parents should not worry. They should make their own “calling and election sure,” trusting that the resurrection day will be a happy one for them. The parents’ faith covers the child.

## APPENDIX F

### **Can the Good News Be Too Good? THE UNIQUE 1888 IDEA OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH: DOES ELLEN WHITE SUPPORT IT? *By Robert J. Wieland***

Is it possible to drive a wedge between Ellen White and the clear concepts of the 1888 message? If we try to do so, we distort her words out of their true context. Without realizing it, sincere people can choke the third angel’s message in the process.

The problem comes when they insist that the Good News can’t be as good as the 1888 messengers said it is—that Christ bore the condemnation of the sin of “all men,” setting them legally free from condemnation. They insist that when Christ died on the cross, He could not have done something for “the whole world,” for “all men.” He could not justify “all men.” The best He could do was to make a *provision* whereby justification *might* come upon those who first do something to activate it. They sincerely fear that the 1888 message of Christ’s righteousness will lead to Universalism, “new theology,” or to relaxing the demands of the law.

But there is no other way to “establish the law.” The 1888 view of justification by faith and that of the “new theology” are as different as day and night.

Briefly stated, the 1888 view says that the sacrifice of Christ on the cross accomplished for “all men,” “the whole world,” a *legal* justification, and this is the reason why “all men” can enjoy the present gift of life. If they now had to bear the full burden of condemnation due to their sin, they would perish in a moment. Whether or not they know and confess Christ, they already owe everything to Him, for He already has taken their sin upon Himself, died for it, and given

them their present life instead. Writing with the 1888 idea obviously in mind, Ellen White said:

To the death of Christ we owe even this earthly life. The bread we eat is the purchase of His broken body. The water we drink is bought by His spilled blood. Never one, saint or sinner, eats his daily food, but he is nourished by the body and the blood of Christ. The cross of Calvary is stamped on every loaf. It is reflected in every water spring (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 660).

Therefore “all men” owe everything to Christ because the Father imputed their “trespasses” unto Him as He hung on His cross (2 Corinthians 5:19). No sinner has ever yet borne the full burden of his true guilt. “By the grace of God” Christ has already tasted “death for every man” (Hebrews 2:9). That’s why “every man” can live here and now, whether or not he believes.

When the sinner hears the news and appreciates it, he *believes* this gospel. This is the experience of justification *by faith*. It is a change of heart which forthwith makes him obedient to all the commandments of God. Instead of weakening obedience to the law, this truth is the only way to obey it (cf. *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 91, 92).

**The opposite view denies this.** It says that justification by faith is itself only a legal declaration of acquittal. Thus, when the sinner “accepts Christ,” he activates the heavenly process which *then* proclaims the legal sentence that Christ *now* takes upon Himself the sinner’s condemnation.

But, says this view, the sinner is not and never will be truly just until the resurrection, or until translation at the coming of Christ. Any change of heart takes place not in justification by faith, but in a subsequent work known as *sanctification*. And because sanctification is never complete in this life, the believer is doomed never to become fully obedient to the law of God. According to this view, true obedience always remains a legal assumption, a substitution “in Christ,” never a reality in personal life. Currently this view is widely upheld. One example is Helmut Ott’s *Perfect in Christ* (Review and

Herald, 1987), which has been hailed by “new theology” supporters as a denial of “historic Adventism.”

But there is a problem with so-called “historic Adventism.” It is vulnerable if it does not recognize the greater light of the 1888 message. Ellen White said we must have that “light” if the Adventist message is to become complete. The “new theology” view could never have made effective headway among us if “historic Adventism” for the past century had understood and accepted the 1888 view. This is evident as follows:

(1) Justification is a term that no one can honestly deny has a legal meaning. The sinner has transgressed the law of God and must suffer the consequent condemnation of death. Therefore for him to be “covered” so he can live even for a moment requires a legal justification. The question of questions is: *When does this take place?*

(2) The “Reformationist” and the “historic Adventist” views both agree on a superficial answer: not until the sinner “accepts Christ.” *But if a legal justification takes place only when the sinner accepts Christ, justification by faith has to be only a legal acquittal.* One moment the sinner supposedly bears the total guilt of all his sins; the next moment after he “accepts Christ,” his legal liability is suddenly gone and he is considered totally just. And the “historic Adventist” doesn’t realize that his position has played into the hands of the so-called “new theology.”

(3) The reason is that both views are still logically mired in the essence of legalism: *salvation is due to the sinner’s initiative*. He has *done* something, performed a work, which activates his legal justification. His decision to “accept Christ” has started the heavenly machinery, which so far as he is concerned has stood idle until this moment. His justification is therefore the consequence of his own initiative.

Paul says, No: “I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness [*justification*, Greek] come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain” (Galatians 2:21). If justification comes by any human initiative, says Paul, then we frustrate grace and “Christ is dead in vain.”

Failure to embrace the true view negates true faith and thus true obedience (sanctification) as well.

(4) According to the Bible and Ellen Whites writings, justification comes by God's initiative, not man's. When the Saviour hung on His cross, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word [news] of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:19).

"The word" is not a promise of a provisional "maybe" or "perhaps," contingent on the sinner's success in doing something right first. It is the Good News of a reconciliation *already accomplished*. Christ "is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2). John is positive. He does not say that *provisionally*, possibly, maybe, Christ can be "the propitiation for the sins of the whole world" *if, and not until*, the sinner does something first. Christ already is that "propitiation."

**Paul agrees.** "Our Saviour Jesus Christ ... hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Timothy 1:10). For all men He has brought "life;" for those who believe, He has also brought "immortality."

(5) A centuries-old battle between Calvinism and Arminianism finds an extension among us today. It focuses on Paul's statement in Romans 5:18: "As by the offence of one [Adam] judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness [justification] of one [Christ] the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Calvinism says the grace of justification must be effective, "irresistible," and therefore cannot be true for "all men" because many obviously will be lost. Christ died to justify only "the elect."

**Arminianism objects.** You can't wash Paul's "all men" down the drain so easily, it says. True, many will be lost; therefore this "justification" must be only provisional, a possibility, not effective or sure, but only *available* to "all men." But what is "available" never becomes real for the sinner until he does something first.

Generally speaking, "historic Adventism" has favored Arminianism because we want to steer away from "easy- believism." But in missing the 1888 view, we have invited confusion and entrenched

our apathy and lukewarmness. Waggoner's 1888 view of Romans 5:18 corrects the error in Arminianism:

There is no exception here. As the condemnation came upon all, so the justification comes upon all. Christ has tasted death for every man. He has given himself for all. Nay, he has given himself to every man. The free gift has come upon all. The fact that it is a free gift is evidence that there is no exception. If it came upon only those who have some special qualification, then it would not be a free gift. It is a fact, therefore, plainly stated in the Bible, that the gift of righteousness and life in Christ has come to every man on earth. (*Signs of the Times*, March 12, 1896; *Waggoner on Romans*, p. 101).

(6) The reason Ellen White rejoiced so in the 1888 message of justification by faith is that she saw how it is a breakthrough which solved the *impasse* of both Calvinism and Arminianism. When Christ died, He accomplished something positive, effective, for "all men." Our present physical life is a benefit of His sacrifice. It is not only *available* for all men—they already enjoy it. *For "all men" He has "brought lif3 ... to light."*

Thus the whole world is in His debt, not merely potentially or provisionally. He already tasted the second "death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9), and suffered the imputation of all our trespasses. He bore the burden of the guilt that should have killed us all, and He has purchased for "all men" the otherwise forfeited gift of life itself. This is the "justification of life" that Paul speaks of. All of us live because of the legal imputation of our sin upon Christ.

**Furthermore, He delivered this grace to us.** He placed it in our hands, not merely *offering* it to us as something "available" if we will do something first. Says *Steps to Christ*: "In the matchless gift of His Son, God has encircled the whole world with an atmosphere of grace as real as the air which circulates around the globe."

**"If the Good News is so good, why will many be lost?"**

Because they choose to resist and reject the justification already given them: "All who *choose to breathe* this life-giving atmosphere will live, and grow up to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus" (*Steps to Christ*, p. 68, emphasis supplied). *For those who believe, Christ has "brought ... immortality to light"* (2 Timothy 1:10). It is

those who don't believe who suffer "condemnation" (John 3:18, 19). Not-believing is a deliberate evil choice.

For "all men" that grace is as "free as the rain and sunshine" (*The Mount of Blessing*, p. 97). All owe everything to it (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 250; *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 268). Only those who resist it can be lost (*Steps to Christ*, p. 27). That's what sin is—a constant resistance of that grace of Christ. Says the 1888 message:

Faith is dealt to every man [Romans 12:3], even as Christ gave himself to every man. Do you ask what then can prevent every man from being saved? The answer is, Nothing, except the fact that all men will not keep the faith. If all would keep all that God gives them, all would be saved (Waggoner, *Signs of the Times*, January 16, 1896; *Waggoner on Romans*, p. 69).

There is not the slightest reason why every man that has ever lived should not be saved unto eternal life, except that they would not have it (*Ibid.*, March 12, 1896; *Waggoner on Romans*, p. 101).

One of Ellen White's favorite illustrations of this truth is President Lincoln's *Emancipation Proclamation* of 1863. When he signed it, every slave was legally free. But not until the slave heard the good news and believed it was he experientially free. So with Christ's sacrifice. At the cross "with His own blood He has signed the emancipation papers of the race" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 90).

(7) By recognizing the 1888 message, we place justification by faith in its true light. It is effective, life-changing, transforming the believer into an obedient doer of "all the commandments of God." Ellen White whole-heartedly agrees. In her view, our "accepting Christ" does not activate the heavenly machinery that has previously stood idle. God has already been at work in behalf of every sinner, and faith now responds to that on-going work of grace. Christ "took in His grasp the world, ... and ... restored the whole race of men to favor with God." "He has snatched the race as a brand from the fire." "Christ made satisfaction for the guilt of the whole world" (*Selected Messages*, Book One, p. 343, 392; *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 169; emphasis added).

"Faith ... is belief rooted in the heart" (*Selected Messages*, Book One, p. 391). It is a heart-appreciation of the sacrifice made for "all men" and of the High Priestly ministry in their behalf. "With the

heart man believeth unto righteousness," and such faith "works a radical change of mind and spirit and action" (Romans 10:10; *ibid.*, p. 393).

**Justification by faith is more than a legal pronouncement.**

The "new theology" view is mired in confusion. It has not embraced the glorious breakthrough that "the Lord in His great mercy sent" in the 1888 message. "The mind can only be freed from error when every thread is cut that binds it to ... fallacy" (*Manuscript Releases*, Book 7, p. 189. Dr. Arnold Wallenkampf supports the 1888 view in his book, *What Every Christian Should Know about Being Justified* [Review and Herald, 1988]. He is probably the first prominent Adventist book author to do so in this century.)

When Ellen White speaks of "conditions" for obtaining or retaining "justification," her meaning is clear: *she speaks of justification by faith*. "Justified by Faith" in *Selected Messages*, Book One, pp. 389-398, in its entirety demonstrates her complete harmony with the 1888 idea. Our personal faith does not force Christ to die for us again; He already did that "once for all." (It was not necessary for each slave to apply individually to President Lincoln for freedom, at which time the President would again sign a legal document for him.) The "condition" she speaks of is faith, a heart-response to what Christ has already done for us. Persistent unbelief (which causes disobedience) frustrates the grace already given to "all men."

Note Ellen Whites clear 1889 statement supporting the truth of salvation by only one "condition"—faith, faith understood in its true Biblical sense, "which works by love" (*agape*):

Says one, "you cannot be accepted unless you repent." Well, who leads us to repentance? Who is drawing us? ...

Here we look at the cross of Calvary. What has made us look at it? Christ is drawing us. Angels of God are in this world, at work upon human minds, and the man is drawn to the One who uplifts him, and the One who uplifts him draws him to repentance. It is no work of his own; there is nothing that he can do that is of any value at all except to believe (Manuscript 5, 1889; *Manuscript Releases*, Book 6, pp. 7, 8).

The question will come up, How is it? Is it by conditions that we receive salvation? Never by conditions that we come to Christ. And if we come to Christ, then what is the condition? The condition is that *by living*

*faith* we lay hold wholly and entirely upon the merits of the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour. When we do that, then we work the works of righteousness [the fruit of justification by faith: sanctification]. But when God is calling the sinner in our world, and inviting him, there is no condition there; He draws by the invitation of Christ, and it is not, Now you have got to respond in order to come to God. The sinner comes, and as he comes and views Christ elevated upon that cross of Calvary, which God impresses upon his mind, there is a love beyond anything that is imagined that he has taken hold of. ...

Christ is drawing every one that is not past the boundary. He is drawing him to Him today, no matter how great that sinner is, He is drawing him (Manuscript 9, 1890; *ibid.*, p. 32; emphasis supplied).

What is our problem? We do not sense the heart-humbling, heart-melting implications of the concepts that so fired Ellen White in the 1888-1896 era.

Sometimes she has articulated Arminian ideas; there is some truth in Arminianism. But such statements do not deny that she also recognized in the 1888 message a greater truth that was the “beginning” of the light yet to lighten the earth with glory. The ultimate test that must come to Seventh-day Adventists is whether they will accept the fourth angel’s message to complete the third angel’s message. The ancient Jews had to decide whether or not to accept the New Testament to complete their Old.

The Bible principle is that lesser truth never negates greater truth, but greater truth always defines lesser truth.

Reprinted from *Adventism Triumphant*, Vol. 2, No. 1, page 3.

## APPENDIX G

### **Good News for Everyone Who Is Alive Who Knows He Could Be Dead** *By Robert J. Wieland*

*American Heritage* recently reported a meeting in East Anglia, England, of World War II Air Force veterans who gathered to reminisce their dangerous bombing stories. Local Britons remember the waves of B-17 Flying Fortresses and B-24 Liberators and fighter planes that took off each morning. Always more went out than came back.

“Each one here was a proxy for those who weren’t,” says John McDonough. Veteran Dan Coonan remembers: “When you’re in a plane getting shot at, you become very close to your associates.” When Don MacGregor’s B-17 was strafed by a Messerschmitt, three of his crew were killed, but he survived. “I had such a tremendous sense of guilt over those three guys it took me forty-three years to ... talk about it.” In September 1944, A1 Ball was part of a crew that became lost. He found three of his buddies years later in a cemetery in the Ardennes, and wondered why he was alive and they were in their graves. Air Force veteran Roland Webber says, “As a POW I had a lot of time to think about fate. ... I tried to ... find the combination of factors that made it favor some and not others. ... I never found it.”

*American Heritage* sums up the feelings of these men who survived: “Many of the men who were here had the disturbing sense that they had lived on time borrowed from the ones who were not” (April, 1990, p. 108).

If you survive a war in which your buddies didn’t, you are forced to look at life very soberly unless you are completely hardhearted. You ponder those crosses “row on row” “in Flanders fields” with an

ever-intruding conviction that you could easily be there too. A serious sense of reality invests all of life with a different color.

The same feeling is shared by survivors of an air crash. And many who escaped the Holocaust are like the WWII veterans; they feel an indefinable sense of guilt—they too should be dead. If they had been in a different seat, or flown a different mission, or sailed on a different ship, or stood in the line that went to the gas oven, they would be dead. They don't deserve to live. In some instances, veterans know that someone else deliberately took the bullet that should have been theirs.

When these survivors sense that they are living on time “borrowed” from others who lost life, they realize that they don't own their life. Every new day becomes an undeserved dividend. Nothing they have done has motivated them to adopt this new attitude toward life; they have simply seen something that others have never seen. If they could articulate their deepest feelings they would say, “I was strafed, I was torpedoed, I crashed, or was gassed, together with my buddies. Nevertheless I live, yet not I; and the life I now live is the life I ‘borrowed’ from someone else.”

**The Larger Reality of Life: the Cross of Christ** This was precisely the apostle Paul's gut feeling about his own life after his Damascus road experience. “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live,” he proclaims, “and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20, NKJV).

He adds forcefully: “The love of Christ constrains us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died” (2 Corinthians 5:14). The reality that Paul discovered is that Christ died the death that “all” deserve, and which all would have died if He had not died their death instead. He saw himself as the survivor of the greatest Death that anyone ever died, the death of the Son of God in which death he also died corporately. “He is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe” (1 Tim. 4:10).

By His righteousness “the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life” (Rom. 5:18). It is “acquittal and life for all men” (NEB). Thus it is a legal justification for “all men,” for “He Himself

is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world” (1 John 2:2).

When the apostles saw this grand truth, the cobwebs and fog were blown from their minds. Just to be alive when you know you should be dead is itself good news aplenty. But they saw much larger Good News implicit in this obvious truth—a new motivation that will deliver us from the curse of self-centeredness that poisons our life otherwise: “He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again” (2 Corinthians 5:15). The “should” is the motivation of that *agape*. It's not a works trip.

An insensate animal that escapes out of a trap where another one perishes can feel no sense of gratitude, no sense of dedication, although it may indeed enjoy a renewed lease on life. But a human being created in the image of God can sense an entirely new motivation imposed by grace. He must live henceforth for the One who died his death and rose again!

This is phenomenal. It completely negates all legalism. Hope of reward and its converse, fear of hell, are transcended. From the moment that this fact of life becomes real to the myopic, self-centered sinner who has up to now wallowed in his or her worldly pride, a new purpose in life takes over. The previously dominant motif of What-can-I-get-for-myself? becomes instead, What-can-I-give-for-the-One-who-gave-His-all-for-me?

The affluent “take thine ease ... and be merry” citizen of the First World can no longer look upon his materialistic treasures as his own “hard-earned” wealth. He realizes he is no more deserving of what he has than are the impoverished denizens of cardboard shanties in the Third World. The same imponderable “fate” has blessed him that has blessed the survivor of the Holocaust or our Air Force veteran.

Are well-fed Americans really more righteous than starving famine refugees in Ethiopia? Maybe our blessings are a consequence of the “accident” of living under a Constitution given us by liberty-loving founding fathers, something we don't deserve, an advantage others can never know. Maybe prosperous Western Europeans have also inherited some happy fall-out from a Marshall Plan of a previous

generation, and are no more “deserving” than are the hungry ones left in Eastern Europe.

This new motivation of grateful service in response to the cross of Christ is no fanatical goody-goodyism. Newly envisioned people who feel the constraint of His love still have a sinful nature, still are tempted as anyone else is tempted to indulge the clamors of self. They are “alive” in every sense of the word, even more sensitive to subtle temptations to indulgence than are the often besotted, semi-conscious victims of worldliness. Like strings of a finely tuned piano, they are not flabby but taut with a constantly heightened sense of obligation in life; but they make beautiful music. They are an honor to Christ.

This new life is not a “works trip”. The first idea of merit being earned is instantly repulsed. The burning vision of the cross of Christ cauterizes all thought of reward.

This new motivation makes service for Christ and others “easy” rather than “hard.” Many Adventists scour the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy for little snippets lifted from context in a desperate attempt to make it seem “hard” to follow Christ. They have not seen the true dimensions of “the width and length and depth and height” of “the love [*agape*] of Christ” revealed at His cross. They think they are forced to disbelieve His Good News declaration: “My yoke is easy, and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:30). A glance into that open grave that is our just desert renews our gratitude to Him for the life we now have, and makes all burdens henceforth to be light.

The gospel is not an instruction manual of “do-this” or “do- that” in order to go to heaven. It is Good News of One who took our rightful death and gave us the grace of His life instead.

The only decent thing I can do is to give Him my life and my all. Won’t you join me in that response?

Reprinted from *Adventism Triumphant*, Vol. 1, No. 2, page 10.

## APPENDIX H

### **Why Our Publications Focus on Good News**

#### *A Statement by the 1888 Message Study Committee*

From time to time readers inquire what our relationship is to various “independent ministries” whose points of emphasis have a different focus than ours. Is there some contribution that the Lord would have us make to the work of preparing a people for the return of Christ?

We believe wholeheartedly in the special mission the Lord has assigned to the Seventh-day Adventist Church—that of proclaiming the unique “everlasting gospel” of the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14. A fourth angel is to give “great power” to the “third angel’s message in verity.” Prophecy calls for the world to be “lightened with his glory” (Revelation 18:1-4).

However, after 150 years, the vast proportion of those who “dwell on the earth” have no intelligent grasp of what that message is. All our best efforts, evangelistic and institutional, have not succeeded in preparing our people to receive the latter rain outpouring of the Holy Spirit, nor to give “the loud cry” message to the world.

At this writing there are hundreds of “independent ministries” that have sprung up, most in recent years, each convinced it has a contribution to make. Could it be that the Lord has something to do with this phenomenal multitude of rocks crying out?

Ellen White recognized this possibility, while at the same time warning all and sundry not to rush into “irregular” ministry without deep humbling of heart to make sure that the real motivation is not an unconsecrated desire to “arise and shine.” In the final tragic years of the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah there were many “prophets,” some few of which were true (such as Jeremiah), while many were false. But all were “independent ministries” in that the kings, princes, and priests did not control them. The Lord said of most of

them, “I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.”

Although He was “against” them, each vainly imagined in his “Laodicean” blindness he had a divine commission. (An example was “Hananiah the son of Azur the prophet” who arrogantly thought he could speak “in the name of the Lord,” but who made “this people to trust in a lie” and died for his crime.) “They shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord” (Jeremiah 23:21, 30-32; 28:1-17).

The term Ellen White used for “independent ministries” was “irregular lines.” Especially in regard to new work in the South she supported such “irregular lines” against the thinly veiled opposition of brethren in the “regular lines” (see page 30).

It is tragic to waste time and energy fighting others who may be led of the Lord. The work that must be done is so vast that no group, no committee, can embrace all its ramifications. God forbid that we should hinder His Holy Spirit.

On the other hand we must not encourage fanatical, disloyal elements who are in reality self-motivated “false prophets.” God’s people have a right to demand what are the “credentials” of any “irregular ministry.” One of Laodicea’s crying needs is “eyesalve” with which to exercise sanctified discernment.

Someone must awaken us. The ecumenical movement will bring the Protestant churches within the aegis of the Roman Catholic Church. The movement is seen especially in the widespread growth of the “charismatic renewal” and its Celebration liturgy, Neuro-Linguistic Programming, subtle hypnotic techniques of pastoral “celebrants,” doubt cast upon the inspiration of the Bible and the prophetic ministry of Ellen White, historical criticism undermining Biblical history, and a counterfeit of genuine justification by faith. As crime and immorality abound, the world is fast becoming another Sodom and Gomorrah. Genuine threats to the survival of the human race cause many thoughtful people to fulfill our Lord’s prophecy that “men’s hearts [will be] failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth” (Luke 21:26).

Warnings to “flee the wrath to come” are legion. They should be heeded. But the 1888 Message Study Committee see our mission as

unique: to proclaim the much more abounding grace of righteousness by faith as the Lord wanted us to understand it in that “most precious message” of 1888. Fear is understandable as a powerful motivation; but fear will not bring lasting revival and reformation. Only a true justification by faith will grip the human heart and motivate to never-ending devotion to the One who died for us.

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