

## WHAT DO SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS BELIEVE?

Seventh-day Adventists have no written creed except the Bible; but they hold to well-defined points of faith, for which they feel prepared to give a reason “to every man that asketh them.”  
1 Peter 3:15.

“To the Law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them.” Isaiah 8:20

In these days of doubt, unbelief, and irreligion, it is supremely important that everyone who names the name of Christ should reaffirm, and re-establish if need be, his faith in the great fundamentals of the gospel of Christ. We live in times that are all too danger fraught for any person to go unthinkingly on with no definite, clear cut ideas of God, man, life, or destiny. The tides of rationalistic infidelity are too strong for any man to withstand unless he is moored to the certainties of the Christian religion. In an age when a “Know-nothing-for-sure” attitude is thought to be the hall mark of intellectual superiority, and when, in the names of “science” and “progress” it is thought necessary to cast into the discard of all truth that has come down to us from centuries gone by, it is paramount that each of us should determine whether or not there are eternal verities, and what they are.

This little tract endeavours to set forth what one body of Christians—Seventh-day Adventists—after diligent seeking of the Bible and a prayerful seeking for a knowledge of God's will, are convinced are truths pertaining to God and His plan for the salvation of men. We are setting forth this confession of faith not as a test of allegiance or a standard of orthodoxy, with the anathema affixed, “Let him who denieth these tenets be accursed,” but only as a statement of belief around which those who love the Son of God and His Word, may rally. Such a declaration is not intended merely for the promotion of orthodoxy, but to deepen the spiritual dynamics of the Christian. Any tenet or group of tenets subscribed to by individuals or by a denomination is worthless except as it results in Christ-like living.

The denomination publishing this tract hold no doctrine or belief that is not based upon the solid foundation, “It is written.” We take our stand upon the proposition propounded by the Founder of Christianity, and formerly stated by the Protestant princes at the Diet of Spires, April 19, 1529: “There is no sure doctrine but such as is conformable to the Word of God: that the Lord forbids the teaching of any other doctrine; that each text of the Holy Scripture's ought to be explained by other and clearer texts; that this holy Book is in all things necessary for the Christian, easy of understanding, and calculated to scatter the darkness.”

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Our theology can be summed up in two words—*Christ* and the *Bible*—Christ as the incarnate Word, and the Bible as the written Word of God. In these two Words, we have a complete revelation of God.

We do not base our system of belief on the Bible because of an unthinking and superstitious reverence for that book, but because the Book displays Christ. In other words, the focal point of our faith is not a book but a person revealed in a book. As John Oxenham has written:—

Not what, but whom, I do believe,  
That, in my darkest hour of need,  
Hath comfort that no mortal creed'  
To mortal man can give—

“Not what, but whom!  
For Christ is more than all the creeds,  
And His full life of gentle deeds  
Shall all the creeds outlive.”

We would not give the impression that this statement of belief is considered by us to be the ultimate of truth; for, “the path of the just is just as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day,” and sorry is the man or the denomination that is not finding a fuller revelation of God's will from a daily study of His Word.

### SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS BELIEVE IN—

#### *1. The Supernatural and Plenary Authority of the Scriptures.*

We believe that the Scriptures of the sixty-six books of the Old and the New Testament, when freed from possible errors of translators, copyists, and printers, are the very Word of God; that all the truths revealed therein are given by inspiration of God, though expressed in the words of men; that the whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for His own glory and man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or may be deduced therefrom; that the Scriptures are therefore the only infallible and authoritative rule of faith and life; that the rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself.

#### *2 God and the Trinity of the Godhead.*

We believe that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons: God the Father, God the Son; and God the Holy Spirit; that God is all-good, all-loving, all-merciful, al-wise, all-powerful, infinite, and eternal, everywhere present through His Spirit.

#### *3. The Substitutionary Death of Jesus Christ.*

We believe that God, who is rich in mercy, “so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son” to be the Saviour of sinners; that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, voluntarily took on Himself human flesh, being conceived by the Holy

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spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, yet without sin, so that He is both God and man, and the only perfect mediator between God and man, by whom alone we come to the Father; that by a life of perfect obedience and by His sacrificial death, He satisfied divine justice, and made provision for atonement for the sins of men; that the salvation thus provided is freely offered to all men, and is sufficient for all, but becomes efficacious only in those who believe in Jesus Christ; that Christ rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, where He, as our mediator and High priest, makes continual intercession for us in the sanctuary, in “the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man”; that in the final day of counting, He will formally blot out the sins of men, and they will be remembered no more for ever.

### *4. The Holy Spirit.*

We believe in the personality of the Holy Spirit; that His office is to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and comfort those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

### *5. God as Creator and Sustainer of Our World.*

We believe that God, through His Son Jesus Christ, by the fiat of His spoken word, created the world and all things therein, animate and inanimate; that this creation took place in the space of six literal days, and in the manner and at the time recorded by Moses in the book of Genesis; that man, the lower animals, and inanimate nature came forth from the hand of God mature and fully developed; that the creation of this world was an act done once for all, and is not now going on; that God, the Creator, now upholds “all things by the word of His power.”

### *6. The Inherent Sinfulness of the Human Race.*

We believe that our first parents, being tempted by Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit; that by this sin, they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin and defiled in soul and body; that they being the root of all mankind, the same corrupt nature was conveyed to all their posterity; that this original corruption, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, brings guilt upon the sinner and condemns him to death; that without his approbation of the substitutionary death of Christ, he merits only eternal death, which God in justice will mete out to him.

### *7. The Reality and Personality of Satan.*

We believe that the being now known as the devil and Satan was originally Lucifer, “the anointed cherub that covereth”; that he was full of wisdom and perfect in beauty until the day that iniquity was found in him; That after inciting a rebellion in heaven, he and one third of the angels were cast out; that he introduced sin into this world through his deception of our first parents; that he is the father of all sin and the instigator of all evil; that at the close of the millennium, he and the evil angels will be destroyed in the lake of fire, “and affliction shall not rise up the second time.”

### *8. The Second Coming of Christ.*

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We believe that the truth of the second coming of Christ constitutes one of the cardinal doctrines of the Scriptures; that the numerous “last day” prophecies clearly tell us the second coming of Christ is imminent and will occur in this generation; that it will be universal, visible and literal; that Christ at His appearing will abruptly end the reign of sin, and establish His eternal kingdom of righteousness and peace.

### *9. The Millennium.*

We believe that between the end of the Christian or gospel age and the beginning of the new earth state, there will be a thousand-year period called the millennium; that the second coming of Christ, the first resurrection—the resurrection of the righteous dead—the binding of Satan, and the translation of the righteous to heaven, will mark the beginning of this period; that during this time the wicked will be dead on this earth, Satan and his angels will be confined here in solitude, and the righteous will be in heaven with Christ, sitting in confirmatory judgment on the wicked; that the descent of the New Jerusalem from heaven to this earth with Christ and the righteous, the second resurrection—the resurrection of the wicked—the loosing of Satan, the Executive Judgment, the annihilation of sin and sinners, and the purification of this world by fire, will mark its close.

### *10. The Mortality of Man.*

We believe that God alone has immortality; that man may have immortality, only as a gift from God through Christ; that upon conversion, the Christian receives eternal life by faith in the promises of God; that immortality will be conferred upon the righteous at the second coming of Christ, and the first resurrection.

### *11. The Unconscious State of the Dead.*

We believe that when a man dies, he enters a state of silence, inactivity, and entire unconsciousness; that he remains “asleep,” altogether oblivious to the passing of time or events, until the first resurrection if he is accounted righteous, or until the second resurrection if he is numbered among the wicked.

### *12. The Punishment of Sinners.*

We believe that “the wages of sin is death”: that the punishment meted out to sinners will be eternal death, total extinction by fire, after they are adjudged guilty before the judgment bar of God.

### *13. The Judgment.*

We believe that the work of judgment is divided into two phases, which may be called the Investigative and the Executive, that the Investigative Judgment is now in progress, and will end at the close of the probation of sinners; that the executive Judgment will come at the close of the millennium, when sinners will be punished by death on the lake of fire.

### *14. The Earth Renewed.*

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We believe that after the millennium, this present evil earth will be renovated by fire—the same fire that destroys sin and sinners—and restored to its Edenic state; that the earth, thus made new, will then become the eternal home of the redeemed.

### *15. The Moral Law, The Decalogue.*

We believe that the moral law, the Ten Commandments, is the immutable, irrevocable, and eternal foundation of the kingdom of God; that to conform their lives to its precepts is obligatory upon all men in all ages; that the moral law is not to be confused with or considered part of the civil code given to the Jews, which passed away with the Jewish State, nor with the ceremonial law, which prescribed sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies that pointed forward to Christ and ended at the cross as by a statute of limitation; that the moral law was not given as an instrument of salvation, for “by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified,” but that its prime is to furnish us a divine rule of conduct and to define sin.

### *16. The Seventh-day Sabbath.*

We believe that the seventh-day Sabbath was instituted at the end of the creation of the world in six literal days; that it is a memorial of creation and a sign of recreation, or redemption; that it is a vital part of the moral law, the Ten Commandments; that it is essentially a spiritual institution; that God intended it to be observed in all ages by all men; that Christ and His apostles always, both before and after the crucifixion, observed the seventh-day Sabbath, and therefore it is the rest day of all Christians.

### *17. Sunday as a Pseudo Rest-day*

We believe that the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday, was dedicated by ancient paganism to the worship of the sun; that as the Christian church fell away from the true doctrine in the early centuries, the seventh-day Sabbath was gradually displaced by the pagan holiday, Sunday, which, with other pagan institutions, was eventually incorporated into the ecclesiastical law of the Roman Catholic Church, and by her transmitted to the reformed churches; that because it is based on pagan custom and church tradition only, and is nowhere countenanced in the Bible, Christians are in error in observing it at the weekly rest-day.

### *18. The Rite of Baptism by Immersion.*

We believe that the ordinance of baptism was given to the Christian church as a memorial of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; that after repentance and confession on the part of the sinner, his baptism is the outward sign to the world of his conversion, and the beginning of a new life by faith in Jesus Christ; that because of what it signifies the only proper mode of Baptism is by immersion once in water, as the Bible teaches; that only those persons who are come to the age of accountability should be baptized, because only they appreciate the significance of this rite.

### *19. The tithing System.*

We believe it to be God’s plan that the gospel work and ministry should be supported by tithes and free will offerings; that to set apart one-tenth of the net income for the

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advancement of God's kingdom on earth is both a Christian duty and a privilege, and brings spiritual and temporal blessings to the tither.

### *20. The Gift of Prophecy.*

We believe it is God's plan that the gift of prophecy, together with the other gifts of the Spirit, should be manifested in the church at every age; that the "remnant church" especially should not come behind in this gift, but should have the Spirit of Prophecy in its midst for the spiritual encouragement and upbuilding of the church.

### *21. Liberty of Conscience and Religion*

We believe that a man's conscience should at all times be free; that any attempt on the part of the state to dictate in the domain of religion is altogether wrong and subversive to the fundamentals of liberty; that any organic or working union of church and state is contrary to divine principles, and such a union always imperils freedom, and fosters tyranny, and the persecution of dissenters.

### *22. The Maintenance of Bodily Health.*

We believe that the Scripture teaching that the human body is designed to be the temple of the living God; that the maintenance of health is a Christian duty; that the body should not be defiled with liquors, narcotics, harmful drugs, tobacco, or unhealthful foods.

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There are some Christian people who make special effort, by voice and pen to inveigh what they term "dangerous beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists." Whether they are sincere and genuine in their convictions, we shall not question, but we shall state in brief compass a few of the things that we do not believe; and he who says that Seventh-day Adventists do hold these views, is ignorant of the truth in the matter, or guilty of willful misrepresentation.

## **SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS DO NOT BELIEVE—**

### *1. That They Alone Will Be Saved.*

We believe that every man, regardless of his name or sign, who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ with all his heart, and who performs whole will of God so far as it is revealed to him will be saved.

### *2. That All Sunday Keepers have "the Mark of the Beast."*

We believe that thousands upon thousands of Christians have kept and do conscientiously keep Sunday, not knowing the Sabbath Truth, and that these will be saved. But we do believe that if any man knowingly and deliberately rejects any truth (including the seventh-day Sabbath) that God may reveals to him, he cannot be accounted worthy of salvation; and that in the days to come, when, just before the second coming of Christ, the Sabbath is made a peculiar test to all the world, those who then reject the truth will receive "the Mark of the Beast."

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### *3. That Christ does Not Make Atonement for Sin.*

We believe that Christ, and He alone, by His vicarious death, makes atonement for the sins of men. (see section 3 in the foregoing.) We believe that He made full provision for this atonement when He died on the cross; and that by virtue of this fact, upon confession, every man's sins are immediately forgiven him, and will be formally blotted out when Christ closes His work as our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, as typified in the service of the Levitical priesthood.

### *4. That Satan Lays any Part in the Atonement for sin.*

We believe that Christ, and He alone, makes the complete atonement for the sins of men. We believe that in the consummation of the history of sin, upon Satan, as the Father of all evil, God will lay the immeasurably heavy guilt of bringing sin, with all its train of tragic consequences, into the world, and this will bear out the type found in the ancient sanctuary service (see Leviticus 16:7-10, 21, 22.)

### *5. That Mrs. E. G. White's Writings Constitute Another Bible.*

We believe that any church claiming to be a true church must have manifested in it the gift of prophecy. (see section 20.) We believe that Mrs. White had the gift of prophecy, and that her writings are given (as she herself explicitly states) to lead the church back to the Bible, with its complete revelation of the will of God, and that her writings are not in any sense to take the place of the Bible. or to be considered as a part or an addition to it.

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