

The Watchman



# EXPOSITOR

Special Reprint Edition

The Clear Word Bible  
Is It Really The Word of God?



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# The Watchman Expositor

A Magazine of Christian Discernment

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## The Clear Word Bible: Is It the Word of God?

By Dale Ratzlaff and Verle Streifling

The Seventh-day Adventists express a firm belief in the authority and inerrancy of Scripture. Their statement of beliefs claims, “The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration through holy men of God who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. In this Word, God has committed to man the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are the infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the test of experience, the authoritative revealer of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God’s acts in history.”<sup>1</sup> Despite this affirmation of the character of the Bible, the SDA Church demonstrates a different approach to Scripture in its popular *Clear Word Bible*. The many changes made to the biblical text in the *Clear Word Bible* are ultimately destructive to the integrity of God’s Word.

The gravity of deliberately changing the meaning of God’s word cannot be overemphasized. Psalm 138 equates the sacredness of God’s Word with His holy name: “Thou hast magnified Thy word according to all Thy name.” Deuteronomy 4:2 says, “Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it.” Proverbs 30:5-6 reiterates this point: “Every word of God is pure...Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” Since God’s Word is pure and truth,<sup>2</sup> any changes to His Word will ultimately change the truth of God into a lie, with disastrous consequences.<sup>3</sup>

Christians should inquire as to why anyone would want to make numerous additions, deletions, and changes to God’s word. True, some Christians allow paraphrases that interpretively present God’s Word in order to make it plain for the current generation. What is indicated, however, when a paraphrase deliberately revises God’s Word? The belief that additions, deletions, and changes need to be made is a clear sign of doctrinal weakness. This article will show that *The Clear Word Bible* has changed God’s Word so that it supports Adventist doctrines in general and writings of their prophetess, Ellen G. White, in particular. Her writings are still held by the SDA church to be “a continuing and authoritative source of truth.”<sup>4</sup> Following are just a few examples where the *Clear Word Bible* alters the statements of Scripture to make it line up with Adventist theology. To illustrate this assertion, several passages in the CW (*The Clear Word Bible*) will be compared with the KJV (King James Version or Authorized Version).

## Seventh day Sabbath

Adventists teach that observing the seventh-day Sabbath is the seal of God and will become the final test of loyalty to Christ for all Christians.

### *Genesis 2:2-3*

KJV — And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

CW — Then on the seventh day of creation week, God stopped to enjoy what He had made and to rest in the beauty of it all. So He blessed the seventh day and set it apart as a day of spiritual refreshment and joy.

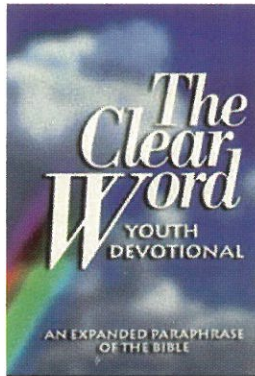
*Note* — The CW makes the seventh day part of “creation week” rather than the celebration of a finished creation.

### *Exodus 5:5*

KJV — And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and ye make them rest from their burdens.

CW — You’ve created enough problems by making them rest every week on your Sabbath.

*Note* — The CW describes the rest as occurring every week on the Sabbath, whereas in reality Moses requested an isolated three day period in which the Israelites could worship God (see verse 3 in the KJV).



### *Exodus 16:5*

KJV — And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.

CW — On the sixth day they should gather twice as much as on the other days so as to have enough for the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, the day I set aside for worship and rest.

*Note* — The addition “which is the Sabbath, the day I set aside for worship and rest,” does not appear in any biblical manuscript.

### *Exodus 31:13-14, 16*

KJV — Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people ...Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.

CW — Say to the people, “Most importantly, remember to keep the Sabbath holy because it is a very special day for me, and it’s a day of rest for you. It’s a sign between you and me for all time to show that you are the people whom I have chosen and set apart. The Sabbath is holy and anyone

who desecrates it by working on that day will be put to death, since that would be an act of treason against God's government. My people are to keep the Sabbath, celebrating it as a sign that they belong to me."

*Note* — The CW purposefully revises the text to make it appear that the Sabbath is intended for all people, not just for Israel, as the Bible teaches. In verse 13 it changes "children of Israel" to "people" and in verse 16 it changes "children of Israel" to "My people," and "a perpetual covenant" to "a sign that they belong to Me." To justify making the Sabbath observance a universal requirement it also adds, "since that would be treason against God's government," to verse 14.

### *Leviticus 23:3*

KJV — Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.

CW — There has always been the weekly Sabbath.

*Note* — The CW replaces the biblical institution of the Sabbath with the statement that the Sabbath has always existed.

### *Ezekiel 45:17*

KJV — And it shall be the prince's part to give burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and drink offerings, in the feasts, and in the new moons, and in the sabbaths, in all solemnities of the house of Israel: he shall prepare the sin offering, and the meat offering, and the burnt offering, and the peace offerings, to make reconciliation for the house of Israel.

CW — It will be his duty to provide these national offerings on all appointed festivals with their special Sabbaths, including the monthly festival of the New Moon. He is to bring grain offerings, whole burnt offerings and peace offerings for an atonement for the nation as a whole.

*Note* — The "feasts," "new moons," and "sabbaths" respectively signify the yearly, monthly, and weekly celebrations. The phrase is a virtual formula used in numerous places in the Old Testament in both ascending and descending order. In order to prevent the weekly sabbath from being associated with the whole sacrificial system done away with by the New Covenant, the CW destroys the word order to make "sabbaths" refer to the yearly feasts instead of the weekly.

### *Acts 20:7*

KJV — And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

CW — After sundown on Saturday night, the believers got together for a fellowship meal and to say good-bye to Paul. That evening he spoke to them until midnight, after which he hoped to get a few hours sleep before leaving early Sunday morning.

*Note* — The CW calls this a Saturday night meeting, changes "break bread", a term used by the early church for communion, to a fellowship meal, and to say good-bye to Paul. Such revision of Scripture completely changes the focus of this verse to fit Adventist theology.

### ***Colossians 2:16***

KJV — Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days.

CW — Don't let anyone control your life by giving you a set of ceremonial rules about what to eat, what to drink and what monthly festivals or special Sabbaths to keep. All these rules were given as a shadow of the reality to come and that reality is Jesus Christ.

*Note* — Colossians 2:16 is a very important verse in that it shows clearly that the Seventh-day Sabbath is only a shadow of Christ. This verse should be studied in its context and also compared to its Old Testament parallel, Ezekiel 45:17 (above) When the terms “festival” (or equivalent), “new moons” and “Sabbaths” are used together in the Old Testament the word “Sabbath” always refers to the seventh-day Sabbath. Also, these terms are usually used in either ascending or descending sequence: festival (yearly) new moons (monthly) Sabbaths (weekly) or Sabbaths (weekly), new moons (monthly), festivals (yearly).

These two well established patterns make it certain that the seventh-day Sabbath is in view in Colossians 2:16 and this fact undermines the whole SDA emphasis on the seventh-day Sabbath. Note how the CW alters both Colossians 2:16 as well as the Old Testament parallel text.

### ***Hebrews 4:4***

KJV — For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

CW — That's why at creation He gave man the seventh-day Sabbath, not only as a reminder of creation week, but also as a symbol of spiritual rest. According to the Scriptures, God Himself rested on the seventh day and enjoyed this special time with man.

*Note* — The CW states “according to the Scriptures,” but then adds to the Scriptures such phrases as the “symbol of spiritual rest” and the “special time with man.”

### ***Hebrews 4:9***

KJV — There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

CW — So there still remains the offer of spiritual rest that God intends for each generation to have, of which the Sabbath is a symbol.

*Note* — The biblical manuscripts make no reference in this verse to spiritual rest or the Sabbath as a symbol.<sup>5</sup>

### ***Revelation 1:10***

KJV — I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day.

CW — On Sabbath morning when I had gone to the rocky island shore to meditate and worship.

*Note* — The CW adds the concluding clause to reinforce Adventist liturgical practices.

One can see by the examples listed above that The Clear Word Bible makes numerous deletions and additions, revising the Word of God to make the Bible teach what it does not teach: the Adventist doctrine of required universal observance of the seventh-day Sabbath for all peoples.

## Death and Hell

Adventists, like Jehovah's Witnesses, believe in soul sleep and do not believe in hell. Note how they have changed the word of God to fit their theology.

### *Isaiah 66:24*

KJV — And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

CW — They will see the dead bodies of those who have rebelled against me lying outside the city. It will be an abhorrent sight. But just as worms don't stop until they devour the dead and fire doesn't stop until it destroys, so the fires of the Lord will destroy the wicked and consume them all.

*Note* — Christ quotes this verse on several occasions. Never, however, does He give this interpretation. Rather, He uses it as a description of hell.<sup>6</sup> A similar change can be seen in Matthew 5:22, 29, 30, where the CW changes "hell fire" to "lose eternal life".

### *Matthew 10:28*

KJV — And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

CW — Don't be afraid that you might be killed. They can kill your body but not your spirit or your loyalty to me. Now if there is some thing to be concerned about, it's that you don't lose your faith in God.

*Note* — The CW deletes the segment referring to eternal damnation, and instead alters the text to make it solely an exhortation to retain one's faith in God.

### *Matthew 18:9*

KJV — And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.

CW — If, for example, your eye places a wrong value on things, be willing to lose your eye to keep your moral innocence. If you have to make a choice, it's better not to be great in this life and yet live forever than to lose your childlike innocence and have everything end with this life.

*Note* — Not only does this verse do away with "fiery hell" but it also inserts "moral innocence" and "childlike innocence," neither of which are mentioned in Scripture.

### *Luke 16:19-30*

This is the familiar parable of Christ about the rich man and Lazarus. The CW introduces teaching with these words: "You keep telling people the Jewish fable about a rich man." The revision makes it appear that Christ is refuting a Jewish myth, when in reality He is proclaiming the truth about man's eternal destiny.

One can readily see how this "Bible" which proclaims by its title, *Clear Word*, to be an accurate rendering of Scripture is perhaps, one of the most deceptive Bibles of recent times. For 150 years Seventh-day Adventists have called the Roman Catholic Church "the beast" for allegedly omitting

two verses of the law against images. Yet they have now made hundreds of revisions in their Bible.<sup>7</sup> Each addition is itself an admission to some part of their teaching that lacks Bible support. Each deletion and change likewise admits to some part of their teachings which the Bible refutes. These changes are made to uphold E.G. White's nonbiblical views. However, by making such changes which God forbids, they place themselves above God Himself. In Revelation 18:4 God calls His people to come out of Babylon, "That ye receive not of her plagues." "Babylon" pictures false religion and false religious practices. Any church that would alter God's Word which He says is "forever settled in heaven", or promote a Bible which does, is thus part of Babylon the Great, which is fallen. If you love Jesus, obey His call to "come out of her"!

1 *Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists*

(Online at <http://www.adventist.org>).

2 Psalm 12:6; John 17:17

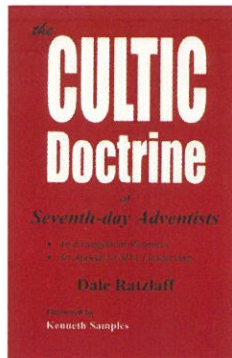
3 Romans 1:25ff; Ezekiel 5:6; Revelation 22:18,19; 21:8

4 *Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists*. Emphasis added.

5 See Dale Ratzlaff, *Sabbath in Crisis*, (Sedona, AZ: Life Assurance Ministries, 1990), pp. 233-248 for a full exegesis of this text.

6 Mark 9:38-48.

7 *The Clear Word* was printed by the Review and Herald Publishing Association and is sold in Adventist Book Centers throughout the country.



## RECOMMENDED RESOURCE

Dale Ratzlaff, co-author of the above article, has written the thought-provoking *The Cultic Doctrine of Seventh-day Adventists*. He provides a clear look at doctrines, such as the Investigative Judgement, that plague the Seventh-day Adventists and greatly concern the Christian community. Heavily documented, with an appeal to SDA leadership. 384 pages.

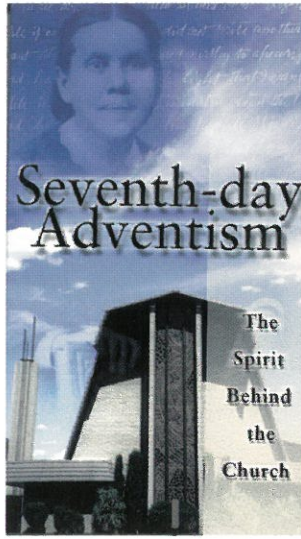
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You may contact Watchman Fellowship at:

PO Box 13340  
Arlington, Texas 76094  
Voice: 817-277-0023  
Fax: 817-277-8098  
[www.watchman.org](http://www.watchman.org)

# AVAILABLE RESOURCES



## Seventh-day Adventism The Spirit Behind the Church

This hard-hitting, eye opening video documentary explores the teaching of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, it's origins and the changes which have occurred throughout the years. It examines the claims of the religion's founder, the late prophetess Ellen G. White, and compares her unique beliefs with Biblical truth.

You will meet a number of former high-ranking church leaders, many of them fourth generation members, and discover what happened when they embarked on a journey to uncover the truth about their organization. You will be shocked by what they found.

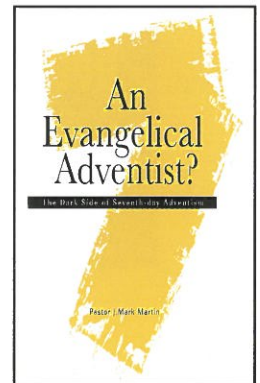
*"For those who may agree or for those who strongly disagree, viewers of this documentary will find it a most fascinating exploration into the cultic aspects of the teachings of Ellen G. White. Recommended for Christians who seek genuine answers based on the best scholarship and firm adherence to the truths of God's Word."*

*-Dr. James Kennedy, Ph.D.  
Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL*

## An Evangelical Adventist?

*"Mark has done a great amount of excellent research on the Seventh-day Adventist Church and addresses some of the doctrinal problems of the writings of Ellen G. White in a very complete and clear fashion. I highly recommend his tapes and booklets on the Seventh-day Adventist organization. I am sure that you will be shocked even as I was at many of the things that he has uncovered. I personally found that the time spent listening to the tapes was very worthwhile."*

*-Chuck Smith, Senior Pastor  
Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa*



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