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What About the Trinity? – 2

George R. Knight

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What About the Trinity? — 2

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God (John 1:1 KJV).

If the old line leadership of Seventh-day Adventism appears to have been almost unanimously antitrinitarian, what about the reformers at Minneapolis?

Here, interestingly enough, is a theological point on which E. J. Waggoner could agree with Uriah Smith, “There was a time,” Waggoner wrote in his 1890 book entitled *Christ and His Righteousness*, “when Christ proceeded forth and came from God, . . . but that time was so far back in the days of eternity that to finite comprehension it is practically without beginning.”

His statement remarkably parallels one that Smith made that same decade: “God alone is without beginning. At the earliest epoch when a beginning should be — a period so remote that to finite minds it is essentially eternity — appeared the Word.”

Now, if Smith and Waggoner were on the same side in regard to the Trinity, we need to ask, Where did the stimulus for change come from?

Here is where one of the other 1888 reformers comes in. The 1888 experience literally transformed Ellen White’s writing ministry. It was in the events surrounding that General Conference session that she fully realized the ignorance of the Adventist ministry and laity on the plan of salvation and the centrality of Christ.

The years following would see the publication of her most important books on those topics.

1892 — her classic, *Steps to Christ*

1896 — *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, which treated the Sermon on the Mount

1898 — *The Desire of Ages*, her book on the life of Christ

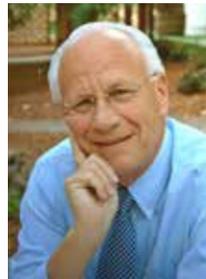
1900 — *Christ’s Object Lessons*, a volume on the parables

1905 — *Ministry of Healing*, in which the opening chapters focus on the healing ministry of Jesus

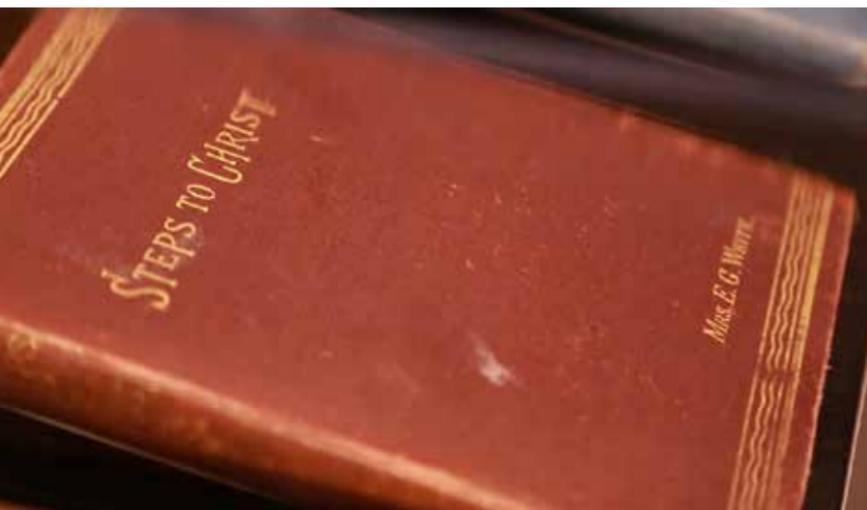
Nowhere in any of those books did Ellen White offer a chapter or even a paragraph on the Trinity or the full divinity of Christ, but they set forth phrases and words that would drive Adventists back to the Bible to restudy the topic. That Bible study would eventually transform Adventism on the Trinity and related issues.

Thank you, Lord, for Your gentle guidance. You take Your church forward only as fast as it can absorb what you have for it. ■

George R. Knight is a retired professor of Church History at the Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. This article is from his book, *Lest We Forget*, a daily devotional, published by the Review and Herald Publishing Association, page 289.



▲ George R. Knight



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Lucille’s Healing

Writing with the pen of inspiration, Ellen White asked what seems to be a rhetorical question: “Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock Heaven’s storehouse where are treasured the boundless resources of omnipotence?”

As a child growing up on the island of Jamaica, my parents were strong prayer warriors. Early mornings and late afternoons began and ended with long prayer sessions. I have occasionally tried to practice this with my children but they were not always very receptive.

In the fall of 2015, while serving on the LUC Executive Committee, President Don Livesay asked me to serve on the NAD Church Governance Committee. During these sessions, prayer was the primary feature in all our deliberations, discussions and debates. In those three years, I made great friends and renewed old acquaintances.

In the fall of 2016, I received a call from one of these friends, Dennis Williams from Seattle, Washington, asking me to visit and pray with a lady, Lucille Rhoads, in Indianapolis. She desperately wanted prayer and a visit from an Adventist church member. I quickly responded with food supplies and much intercessory prayer. Her only son was incarcerated in New Castle, Indiana, which brought her great sorrow and heartache. Our prayer was not only for the healing of Lucille, but for the early release of her son.

Weeks went by. Then one day we received a call that her son had been released. We celebrated with joy and thanksgiving. Our visits and prayers with food baskets continued until a few months ago when we received a call from her son that Lucille had taken a turn for the worse, transferred to hospice care and given only three

days to live. My wife and I quickly rushed to the house and offered prayers for Divine intervention. The following Sabbath, immediately after the worship service, Kevin Rogers (our pastor), my wife and I, rushed over to the house, anointed and prayed for her, and again sought heaven’s interposition. With only days to live, funeral arrangements also were discussed. We left with the expectation of funeral services later that week.

Weeks went by with no call from Lucille’s son. Then one Sabbath, I revisited the house. I knocked on the door, but no one answered. I began thinking that Lucille had died and been buried, but no one had informed us. Suddenly, her son drove up and, in the front seat next to him, was a smiling Lucille. After big hugs, laughter and tears of joy, Lucille informed us that from the moment we had anointed and prayed for her, she was healed. Her energy returned and her organs revived. She threw off her breathing tubes, stopped taking her medicines, discontinued hospice care, sat up and began a new life. God had answered our prayers in a marvelous way.

Today, we continue to give God the praise for His marvelous intervention in the lives of Lucille and her son, and look forward with great anticipation to seeing them in church and becoming members. ■

Clayton Loney is a member of the Lake Union executive committee.



▲ Lucille Rhoads