

This is an important volume. It is well researched, thoroughly documented, and engagingly written. It meets the author's purposes and reader expectations. On the whole, it presents valuable information that should benefit all readers. Indeed, there is much to learn from the style and methodology of this greater preacher. I enthusiastically recommend this book to homileticians, old and new—pastors, professors, college, and seminary students—as well as to those who want to take another look at King the pastor, speaker, preacher, theologian, leader, and person.

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Wheeler, Gerald. *James White: Innovator and Overcomer*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2003. 288 pp. Hardcover, \$16.99.

White, James, *Life Incidents*. Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 2003. 373 pp. + xv introduction. Hardcover, \$21.99.

These two books are the beginnings of two new series edited by George R. Knight: the first, a series of biographies intended to reach nonscholars; and secondly, a series of reprint editions of significant early Adventist works. The first volumes of these series revolve around James White, cofounder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and organizational genius extraordinaire.

Although James White has much to be praised for (credit is due for starting the first denominational periodical [1849], founding the church's publishing work [1861], and organizing the church [1863], to name just a few), his proclivity to overwork often led to serious health problems. At times, especially during these health crises, he could be critical and exacting of others. White's complex personality may contribute in part to the lack of scholarly work available on his life in contrast to that of his prophetess wife, Ellen. Thus Wheeler accomplishes the once-thought-impossible task of casting a portrait of White with all of his accomplishments and failures. In doing so, he does not try to be strictly chronological, but instead seeks to condense White's life into major themes. Thus Wheeler builds upon the work of Virgil Robinson (Review and Herald, 1976).

Wheeler makes a major contribution by placing White within his own milieu. The author provides detailed information on his early life—of special import is the first major treatment of White as a Christian Connexion minister (29-36). Wheeler also develops early on a conflict with Cyprian Stevens (57-59, 101-102) as a source of early tensions that plagued White the rest of his life. Additional strengths in this book include a detailed description of the Whites' early years after marriage (1846) up through Rochester (1855), which is meticulously researched. After this, the narrative becomes more difficult to follow as it focuses more narrowly on White's organizational accomplishments (chaps. 10 and 15), his health problems (chap. 13), and some of the internal struggles in Battle Creek (chaps. 12 and 14). Wheeler, furthermore, alludes to a final renewal in White's Christian experience with a deeper understanding of righteousness by faith, but does not develop the topic enough. While this biography is an excellent introduction to the life of White, much is still left unresolved. For example, more could be said to describe his charisma that led some early church leaders after his death in 1881 to ask Ellen White if they might pray to raise him from the dead (E. G. White, Lt. 82, 1906). The latter half of the book is missing the continued contextual background that was so masterfully developed earlier. In summary, this is no work of hagiography and helps fill a void in Adventist historiography. One egregious mistake should be noted: Wheeler has both James and

Ellen White calling each other “my crown of rejoicing” (41-42), when in fact it was James who made the statement.

Not to be left out, the new edition of *Life Incidents* is attractively bound and complements Wheeler’s biography with a primary-source account of White’s story in his own words. The pages, enlarged from the original 1868 edition by 25 percent, are much easier to read. Also included is a ten-page critical introduction by Jerry Moon, Associate Professor of Church History at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary.

Berrien Springs, Michigan

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Whidden, Woodrow, Jerry Moon, and John W. Reeve. *The Trinity: Understanding God’s Love, His Plan of Salvation, and Christian Relationships*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2002. 288 pp. Hardcover, \$19.99.

Seventh-day Adventism changed its basic understanding of the Godhead from an early “anti-Trinitarian dominance” to a later “Trinitarian dominance” (190-203). Such a change was well taken by most Adventists, who perceived it as a significant move toward a more biblical view of God. But since the early 1990s an increasing number of Adventist “restorationists” are accusing that denomination of apostasy from its original anti-Trinitarian belief. Their criticisms, initially circumscribed to private publications, eventually reached a worldwide scope through the Internet. This has challenged mainstream Adventists to define more precisely how they relate to their own history and how they justify their present position on the Trinity.

In response to those challenges, three Andrews University professors—Woodrow Whidden, Jerry Moon, and John W. Reeve—joined efforts in producing *The Trinity*, the most comprehensive and thorough mainstream Adventist biblical-historical treatment on the Trinity. Due to its relevance to the contemporary debate, the book has been translated into Portuguese and published in Brazil by Casa Publicadora Brasileira (www.cpb.com.br). Intended primarily to help Seventh-day Adventists respond more effectively to contemporary anti-Trinitarianism, the work has a richness of content that goes far beyond the discussions of the problem within Adventism (limited basically to chaps. 13 and 14).

The book is divided into four major sections, each of them introduced by a specific “Glossary” that helps the reader know in advance the meaning of the technical terms and expressions used in the text that follows. Section 1, “The Biblical Evidence for the Full Deity of Christ, the Personality of the Spirit, and the Unity and Oneness of the Godhead,” was written by Woodrow Whidden in a faith-uplifting style, with frequent rhetorical questions to involve the reader in the overall discussion. The content of this section is essentially biblical, with sporadic references to other commentators and theologians. The author not only explores the meaning of the Bible passages that support the Trinitarian view, including the full deity of Christ and the distinct personality of the Holy Spirit, but also analyzes the most common texts used by anti-Trinitarians to defend their own views.

John W. Reeve wrote section 2, “The History of the Trinity Doctrine from A.D. 100 to A.D. 1500,” in a more formal historical style. This section unfolds the development of early and medieval Trinitarianism, with special attention to the political-ecclesiastical controversies engendered by different philosophical-theological perspectives. The overall discussion helps the reader to understand the various nuances of the term “Trinity” during that period and the way Roman Catholic Trinitarianism ended up heavily loaded with Platonic and Aristotelian philosophical presuppositions.