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God with Us: Discipleship of the Mind

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Discipleship of the Mind

"You will not surely die." With those words, the serpent claimed God is a liar. He's been slandering God's character ever since. Genesis 3 tells us he drew Eve into dialogue by questioning God's commands: "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'" Eve clarified that only one tree was off-limits, lest they die.

Then, the serpent accused God of lying to keep Adam and Eve in the dark, claiming God didn't really want the best for us and couldn't be trusted. Eve faced a choice. Who would she believe? We know all too well the tragedy that followed.

We face a similar choice. Who (and what) will we believe and why? We live in the midst of the Great Controversy, in which Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44), wages a massive disinformation campaign against God's character. Though we live in the information age, in many ways ours is a disinformation age. Especially given our mission, clearly understanding what we believe and why is vitally important, not only for our sake but to help others know God's infinite love.


Scripture repeatedly emphasizes "rightly dividing the word of truth," in 2 Timothy 2:15 (NKJV) and "casting down arguments" and "bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" in 2 Corinthians 10:5 (NKJV). In Ellen G. White's words from her book, *Evangelism*, "There are dangerous heresies that will be presented as Bible doctrines; and we are to become acquainted with the Bible so that we may know how to meet them."

I wrote my most recent book, *God with Us: An Introduction to Adventist Theology*, as a resource for this journey of discipleship of the mind. Commissioned by the General Conference Biblical Research Institute and published by Andrews University Press, this book provides a biblical introduction to Adventist beliefs in the context of the story of redemption—the story of God with us.

The story of Scripture is the story of God's quest to defeat evil so God can be with us in fullness. The book traces Adventist beliefs in the context of the story of God's quest, showing how Scripture emphasizes God's presence

with us in time and space (highlighted in the Sabbath, the sanctuary, the promise of the Second Coming and much more).

Intending this book for use in the local church, I wrote it in a style of accessible theology—theology for everyone (whether already familiar with Adventism or not). Some have told me they're enjoying using the book in reading groups and prayer meetings and they believe it should be on every Adventist's bookshelf. I dream this book will help people see the profound beauty of Adventist theology, not merely as discrete doctrinal points, but how the pieces together form a beautiful picture, greater than the sum of its parts.

To me, studying theology is an act of worship, and I pray this book will not only draw readers to a deeper understanding of Adventist beliefs but also to love and worship God with all their heart, soul, strength and mind—and to serve Him accordingly (Luke 10:27). 

John Peckham is associate editor of Adventist Review Ministries and Research Professor of Theology and Christian philosophy at Andrews University. Photos by Ullom Photo.