

# Cult of Ellen G. White #1: Beginnings of the 19th Century Religion

sermonaudio.com

*Beginnings of Seventh-Day Cult*

By Larry Wessels

**Bible Text:** Galatians 1:6-9; Ephesians 2:8-10

**Preached on:** Thursday, October 7, 1993

## **Christian Answers of Austin, Texas**

9009 Martha's Drive

Austin, TX 78717

**Website:** [www.biblequery.org](http://www.biblequery.org)

**Online Sermons:** [www.sermonaudio.com/christiananswers](http://www.sermonaudio.com/christiananswers)

Announcer. If you would like a free newsletter on this or other subjects, just give us a call at Christian Answers. The phone number is (512) 218-8022 or you could email us at [cdebater@aol.com](mailto:cdebater@aol.com). Thank you.

Christian Answers

presents

Seventh Day Adventism

with host

Larry Wessels, Director of Christian Answers

and special guests

Wallace & Carole Slattery

Former Members of the Seventh Day Adventist Church

## Part One - History & Teachings of the Seventh Day Adventists

Larry Wessels. Greetings and welcome once again to our program I'm Larry Wessels, your host, and I want to thank you for being with us today.

Well, if you're familiar with our series that we run here every week on this channel at this time, you'll know that we cover a wide range of subjects and tonight we have a very special subject, one that we've never really dealt with before. It's a topic that I've been wanting to cover for literally years but never really had the opportunity to cover it in a way I like to cover things which is usually in some really indepth detail, going through the matter almost with a fine-tooth theological comb, you might say. So the topic today and if you have any friends out there that may fall into this topic, give them a call and have them tune in, get your VCR recording this show or something and show it to them later, but the topic is Seventh Day Adventism.

We're gonna go into this in some detail. We've got a series we're producing here. This is show #1 on this topic and I think it's gonna be very enlightening indeed because I, as far as I know, not many people know a whole lot about this topic, the Seventh Day

Adventists. They know a few general things like, "Well, don't they go to church on Saturday?" and stuff like that, but really beyond that almost complete ignorance reigns out there on what this particular group believes, teaches and what they understand about the Bible.

So to produce this program, this series we're doing, I've got some very special guests with me in studio today and I want to take this opportunity right now to introduce them to you because we went to some, at least I did to get some good pains to get them down here, they're from up north in Pennsylvania so they've come a long way to film this show down here in Texas, and I want to just thank them for being with us today, Wallace and Carole Slattery.

Wallace, it's great to have you here on the program.

Wallace Slattery. We're happy to be here.

Larry. Carole, thank you very much for being here. It's a joy to have you here. I wanted y'all here for a long time as I was expressing to you before we even started taping. And for our viewers' sake, Wallace, I'd like to have you just say a few things about yourself and then, Carole, just give a little, you know, brief background history of yourselves and tie in Seventh Day Adventism with what we're gonna be talking about in this program coming up.

Wallace. We were both born Seventh Day Adventist in devout Seventh Day Adventist families. We're basically westerners, in fact, I was joking to my wife that we came down here from Pennsylvania to get our accent straightened out. But we grew up in Seventh Day Adventism, we attended Adventist high schools and colleges. Carole's family were both workers in the denomination and, in fact, I worked for them as a teacher and school principal for 10 years starting in the early 1970s, and it was only in the middle to late 70s when my college roommate, Larry B., who was an Adventist minister, left Adventism and came to visit us in California where he received a very chilly welcome from my devout Seventh Day Adventist wife. Larry began to ask me questions that I suddenly realized I could not answer about Seventh Day Adventism, why Ellen White's the Adventist prophet, why were her visions not coming true? Why were her prophecies not really seeming to pan out?

Larry. Now Ellen G. White...

Wallace. She is the founder and the great prophetess of Seventh Day Adventism and we're going to have a lot to say about her tonight.

Larry. I see, and in fact, let me just say at this moment for our viewers out there that Wallace, my special guest here, has written this book, it's called "Are Seventh Day Adventists False Prophets: A former insider speaks out." Now this is, in my opinion, the best book on the market right now on Seventh Day Adventism. I'm sure there are other books that are thicker or whatever, but as far as what I've read now, Wallace has read

more than I have so he might say there's something else and I'm sure he will during the course of this program, there's another book I think you mentioned earlier. I haven't had a chance to read it yet but at the time of this filming, as far as something short, easy to read, easy to understand and comprehend, this is the best book I've seen on Seventh Day Adventism. It's not gonna bore you with a lot of theological stuff, it's short and to the point. It gets right to the nitty-gritty of the whole matter.

Now I got a plug in there for your book there, Wallace, but I don't want to take the opportunity away from your wife, Carole, to say a few words also about, a little bit about your background and so forth.

Carole Slattery. Well, like Wally said, I was born into a Seventh Day Adventist family and all my life that's all I knew, and not until he started checking into it did I even think that there might be a problem. I just automatically believed it and it was just amazing when he brought some documentation and showed me that there were some problems with Adventism.

Wallace. I got to spend some nights on the couch over that.

Larry. I mean, you actually made Wallace sleep on the couch?

Carole. Oh yeah, sure.

Larry. I mean, you were kind of one of those types that are determined to...well, I was, you've heard it before, "I was born a Catholic, I'm gonna die a Catholic," or in this case, "I was born a Seventh Day Adventist, I'm gonna die a Seventh Day Adventist," and then he starts questioning some of the teachings and doctrine and so forth of this organization and it obviously got you very upset.

Carole. Yeah, I thought he was rebellious. I thought I had a rebellious husband on my hands. I didn't know what I was gonna do with him.

Larry. So you rebuked him to the couch.

Carole. Yeah, he landed on the couch.

Larry. Well, how did he get his way off the couch and back into your good graces?

Carole. Well, he finally I think had enough courage to...well, he told me one day, he said, "Come in here, I want to tell you something." He said, "I want to, I have some things to tell you," he said, "I'm not so sure how you're gonna take them." So I immediately thought, well, he probably is gonna tell me about some affair he's having or something.

Wallace. Me?

Carole. It seemed very wild at the time but he told me, he said he had some papers he wanted to show me and the first thing he said was he was having trouble with Ellen G. White.

Larry. The prophetess.

Carole. The prophetess, Ellen G. White.

Larry. The one really that started it along with her husband, James White, that started the Seventh Day Adventist Church I think in, what, 1861?

Wallace. Well, I think it was incorporated in 1862-3, but it had been a movement since the late 1840s.

Larry. Okay. The Millerite movement.

Wallace. Well, we'll get into all of that. We'll get into that.

Larry. So anyway, you weren't looking to attack Seventh Day Adventism or get out of it or anything, it was just that your husband here had some questions, he had some things he showed you and you almost against your wills, came across this material and what was it about some of the things he showed you that started to take your mind away from such devotion to Seventh Day Adventism to start having maybe some doubts about some things?

Carole. Well, he had a whole stack of papers and he said that the papers had come from Walter Rea, the pastor from....

Larry. A Seventh Day Adventist Church?

Carole. Yes.

Larry. Now Walter Rea, now he's, I've got it right here. In fact, Wallace, why don't you say a little bit about this book and Walter Ray and tie that into what Carole was just telling us.

Wallace. Well, briefly, Walter Rea was a Seventh Day Adventist minister, very very involved with Ellen White. He believed her whole-heartedly, but as it happened, he had turned out a commentary on her works which one Adventist family in gratitude for the fine work he had done, gave him a book out of Ellen White's library. When he went through this book, he suddenly discovered that a lot of the material written by this other author were things that suddenly had shown up in Ellen White, and then he began doing research and he found tremendous amounts from all kinds of Victorian religious writers had suddenly appeared in Ellen White's writings and he realized that this woman had taken these writings for her own and had claimed that they had come straight from God.

Walter Rea was stunned, angered, and he began publicizing what he was finding and needless to say, it caused a tremendous commotion in Seventh Day Adventism.

Rea worked or lived about 20 miles away from where I was teaching at that time, and I might say that things were so well hidden in the Adventist background, in their history, that although I had started having questions, as I said, in 1977, I had been spending summers working on an advanced degree and meanwhile in my spare time I was also working trying to find out the truth about Ellen White and I was getting nowhere. The facts about Ellen White were very well hidden, however, it seemed that all roads seemed to lead to Walter Rea, so in August of 1980, I made an appointment to...

Larry. And we have it on our monitor here. Here's Walter Rea's book.

Wallace. "The White Lie" which he had come out with and had so stunned the Adventist leaders.

Larry. And that's the book where he documents...

Wallace. ...tremendous amounts of copying, enormous amounts of copying.

Larry. Basically just outright plagiarism from other authors.

Wallace. Legally the Adventists have made a case that he did not, that she did not plagiarize, that perhaps back then it was acceptable to do as far as the legal requirements go, the problem is that that does not answer the ethical, moral and theological questions. If it's all supposed to come straight from God and you find that it came from the suppositions from another divine, another writer, you've got a serious problem then.

Larry. Right. Right, and that was the problem Walter Rea found himself having with Ellen G. White.

Wallace. That's correct. Anyway, I made an appointment, went over and saw Walter Rea and came back with a stack of papers that just blew me out of the water. I was just stunned and these are the materials that I shared with Carole the next day.

Larry. Okay, so that's what you saw. You saw actual documented papers from Ellen G. White's estate, perhaps.

Wallace. No.

Larry. Not from them.

Wallace. From here would be comparisons side-by-side. I think I... well, I have them later. I'll show them to you later on.

Larry. Okay. Well, it's a lot in this book too, he shows one book and across the page you'll have Ellen G. White just paraphrasing.

Wallace. Even to the point of illustrations. I think I can show these very quickly here.

Larry. Oh, yeah, where she took the actual even pictures, pictures out of one book and put it in her own book.

Wallace. Here they are. There is one picture from "The Great Controversy," perhaps you can see it there, and here is from "The History of Protestantism," the same picture lifted and no credit given whatever.

Larry. No credit at all, just taking the same from this.

Wallace. Even the table of contents, the whole thing just lifted.

Larry. Huh. And no credit given.

Wallace. I showed it to Carole and she was just as.. thank God she was as stunned as I was and she saw that we had a serious problem immediately.

Larry. And so now the doubts were there.

Carole. Right.

Larry. And you got off the couch. [laughter]

Wallace. Right.

Larry. Alright, so and through all this, this led you eventually in just a continuing research of your own...

Wallace. That's correct.

Larry. ...even beyond what Walter Rea had given you?

Wallace. Adventism you might describe like peanut butter, it is hard to scrape off. It takes time, especially when it's been inculcated in you since infancy. I began having questions in 1977. I met with Walter Rea in the summer of 1980 and we finally left Adventism in the spring of 1984, which gives you an idea of a lot of the pain and soul searching we went through before we ever resigned from this organization.

Larry. What year did you resign?

Wallace. 1984.

Larry. 1984. Man, so during all this time you did all this, a tremendous amount of research....

Wallace. Lots of research. Lots of pain.

Larry. ...and it just seemed to get worse and worse. The more you researched the worse the situation got.

Wallace. That's right. Well, for a while we thought that Adventism would accept the new findings that were coming out, many findings which we'll get into, not merely copying but major major mistakes in her theology and her teaching, things that she had said that had never come true, that had never been true in the first place, and yet supposedly had come straight from God. So many things and the last thing to go finally was when Carole and I sat down in the spring of '83 and began going through the doctrines of the Seventh Day Adventist organization in comparison with the church, I'm sorry, with the Bible, and again we were stunned. We found it just didn't hold up.

Carole. You see, we thought what we would do was just, when we found out that Ellen White was a false prophet, that we would just be Seventh Day Adventists but we would not pay any attention to Ellen White.

Wallace. We would be evangelical Adventist.

Carole. But it doesn't work that way.

Wallace. The church closed its rank and froze people like us out. Hundreds of workers and probably thousands of members were frozen out during that period.

Larry. Now what year is it you're talking about, this period?

Wallace. Right, say '80 to maybe '83-84.

Larry. So this is the big purging, you might say?

Wallace. You might say it was a big purging.

Larry. Now how did they do it? How did they go about getting you out of the church?

Wallace. Well, in the first place jobs suddenly became very scarce.

Larry. So they were getting people that actually worked for them and putting them in a financial squeeze by way of their job position?

Wallace. Walter Martin stated, the famous CRI leader, stated that he had a list of at least 200 Seventh Day Adventist workers who had been purged of their positions. I'm sure that it was much higher than that.

Larry. Now what do they do, just send you a notice in the mail saying, "Oh, by the way, your job....?"

Wallace. Well, suddenly my job no longer existed.

Larry. Oh, okay.

Wallace. And no other job existed and I got off easy compared to some of them. I know many were just outright fired and were given maybe a couple weeks severance and were out of a job. When you realize that Seventh Day Adventism is the highest paying denomination as far as the ministers go, you can see what a painful odyssey this might be for an Adventist minister. They're paid very well and the working conditions are comparatively good, give a sermon once a week, conduct some meetings, things of this sort and you're doing just fine, and suddenly to find out that the facts, but realizing that you're trained for nothing but Seventh Day Adventist minister, a lot of ministers underwent a lot of pain in that time, I'm sure you can imagine, and it's still going on.

Larry. And they're still purging.

Wallace. Oh yes, absolutely.

Larry. And what is it that's gonna get you purged? What do you have to do as a Seventh Day Adventist to have the hammer come down on your head? Is it just question Ellen G. White, is that all it takes?

Wallace. That's basically it. Whether you like it or not, she is the rock of the denomination, she is the cornerstone and that's where it revolves, that's where it started and that's where it's going to end.

Larry. So if you're in a church, let's say at a Sabbath school or something like that, I guess that's what they call it, maybe, you know, it's Sabbath school instead of Sunday school, and you're in there and you just happen to mention off the cuff you disagree with Ellen G. White on some doctrine, then you might assume that perhaps then the grapevine carries that to somebody else and they find out more about how you feel about the situation, and the next thing you know.... Is there any kind of like, I know the Jehovah's Witnesses, they practice something called shunning where they start to kind of, you know, act cold.

Carole. It's not as organized in the Adventist church.

Wallace. They don't formally shun.

Larry. Okay, so, but you can kind of....



Carole. It makes a difference if you're a worker in the church or if you're in the school system or a worker. Then it makes a difference as to what you believe. If you're just a church member, they might, they may take a while.

Wallace. They'll basically freeze you out. We've had a lot of friends who have had that happen to them, I might add.

Larry. Man, so it sounds like they're playing for keeps on this situation.

Wallace. I know of other workers right now who are going through, undergoing this same process. It's almost like throwing a rock in the ocean, it takes time for that wave to spread but as it goes through, it takes the workers with them. I know of workers right now going through this process.

Larry. So what we're seeing right now in Seventh Day Adventism is a more rigid polarization around Ellen G. White as a true prophetess and her interpretations as being almost infallible.

Wallace. To use a good Western term, they've tended to circle the wagons.

Larry. Yeah, I guess, yeah, that's a good way to illustrate it for sure. Well, I just want to point out to our audience one more time, we've got these two excellent books up here on the chart, the chartboard. My special guest, Wallace Slattery's book, "Are Seventh Day Adventists False Prophets: A former insider speaks out." We're going in this video series get into a lot of material that you'll find in this book. And of course, Walter Rea's "The White Lie" coming off of Ellen G. White, kind of a take-off on her name and put this title of this book, "The White Lie" together. But incredible documentation in both counts. So if you have a chance to contact either our minister, Wallace, by the way, you have a ministry that someone might want to write.

Wallace. Yes, if people are interested in our book, they can contact us at Stepping Stone Ministries, Box L1124, Langhorne, PA 19047 and we'll get right out to you.

Larry. Very good. Or if you can't get it that way or through us, there's always the Christian bookstore.

Wallace. That's correct. It's put out by Presbyterian and Reformed Press.

Larry. Very good. And so those are available one way or another. So please get your hands on that particular book if you are very interested in this subject. It'll be of immense help to you.

Now what we want to get into in this first part of our series on Seventh Day Adventism is more of the detail, going through with a fine theological comb, as I mentioned at the beginning of the broadcast, and basically I want to start first with a question that has been, I think, pretty prominent in evangelical circles for a lot of years because there has

been a big controversy, almost "The Great Controversy." If you understand some of Ellen G. White's books, that's kind of a bad joke but anyway, we'll get into that. But there's been some controversy within evangelical Christian circles about whether Seventh Day Adventism can be classified as a cult or not. Is it just a Christian denomination with a lot of aberrational teachings that aren't so serious, or is it a full-fledged non-Christian cult like Jehovah's Witnesses would be classified or Mormons or Reverend Moon's Unification Church, something along those lines?

And to get us into this subject to try to answer that question, I've got a chart here I want to go through. We've got some questions that pertain to what can be considered theological tests for something to be considered a cult. And looking at the chart here, we have something called patterns in the cults, and then there's questions to ask that pertain to these patterns that you commonly see in a lot of cults like what we just mentioned, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Unification Church, so forth. But point 1 basically asks the question: does the religious group under consideration add to the word of God through indispensable publications that claim to give the Bible's clear meaning or through present-day direct revelation from God? So, you know, do they add to the word of God through their publications that claim to give the Bible's clear meaning? You know, they're trying to really give you the straight and narrow that this is what the Bible really means when it says this?

Wallace. We have a lot to say about that one.

Larry. Or do they, or also do they have some kind of present-day revelation like a prophet or something that says, "Well, God gave me this revelation and this is what it means"? So that's one test of does it classify as a cult or not. 2. The question to ask is: does the examined group subtract from the person or finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ? And so keep that in mind. 3. Does the sect under consideration multiply the requirements for salvation by making works a necessary condition for redemption or salvation? So you go to heaven basically, do they add a lot of requirements that you normally don't see straight, you know, right up in the Bible but they add a bunch of other stuff? 4. Does the religious group in question divide the loyalty of its members between God and itself and its leaders? Is devotion to the group a test of faith or its leaders? Is the organization a vehicle for salvation? In other words, do you have to be in this group to make it to heaven? Do you have to follow their leaders to have the true interpretation to make it to heaven and so forth? Do you need this organization as the true vehicle to get to heaven?

And those are some good questions to keep in mind as we start to analyze the very question I started out with: does Seventh Day Adventism qualify as a full-fledged cult? And we're gonna apply a lot of these questions to the Seventh Day Adventists and see if they fit the bill on some of these things, and I would like to say just for some of you who don't really understand. You know, we all know the word "cult" is kind of a vague term. It just comes from the Latin word cultus which simply means group, and so it is a vague term and what you have to do is feed some theological meaning into that word to give it, you know, some more connotation than it has generally, and for our purposes, I'd like to say basically that a cult in simplest terms is like organized heresy. It's a group, as the

word cultus means in Latin, it's a group of people usually polarized around somebody's interpretation of the Scripture but by polarizing around someone's interpretation of the Scripture, this group gets around either a person's interpretation or some organization's interpretation, but then what they do is they go beyond what the Bible clearly says. They usually violate cardinal Christian doctrine somewhere along the line because instead of following straight-forward what the Bible is teaching clearly, they leave that out basically and polarize around some organization or some infallible interpreter, let's say, and go in that route.

So that's how I'm gonna define cult for our purposes as we move through it. Now keep these questions in mind and we hope this series will start to answer the question: does Seventh Day Adventism qualify as a cult when it comes to how evangelical Christians would view it?

Okay, now with that said, I'm gonna move on to our next chart and I'm gonna let Wallace do a lot of talking here in just a moment. Basically if our camera can come in on this, I want to show a couple of things and then I'm gonna let Wallace expound on it for us. Basically on the chart here we have a photograph and over the top I've got "The spirit of prophecy and her husband." And basically down here we have "The co-founders of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, Ellen G. White and husband James White." There's James and there's Ellen G. White, supposedly the spirit of prophecy, and I'm gonna let Wallace expound on that in just a second but I also wanted to expound after he does that on what I have on the lower part of the chart. We have another photograph here of a man named Hiram Edson who was out of the Millerite movement of the early 1840s and so forth and I'm gonna let you expound on that too. I'm gonna let you just get into a broad history of this whole situation. And he came up with a famous doctrine of the Seventh Day Adventists called "The Sanctuary Theory," and it's expounded right here on the other side in this small print that we'll get into.

But I want to have Wallace now start back up here with the spirit of prophecy. Kind of give us a general overview of the history and different things, and then moving into this Hiram Edson down here with this "Sanctuary Theory."

Wallace. Sure. Millerism is the beginning of Seventh Day Adventism. William Miller was a farmer, a devout person, who in the early probably 1820s decided that the Bible prophecies pointed to the period of 1843-1844, that the sanctuary would be cleansed in his interpretation, that Christ would come and the world would be cleansed to become, you know, a beautiful heavenly place. He began preaching this in the late 1820s, the 1830s, and the movement really seemed to catch fire. Now this would be the middle Atlantic states and the New England states.

The results were that perhaps a million people joined Millerism toward the last part of 1843, getting ready for Jesus to come. First they thought it might be March of 1844, when nothing happened then, William Miller allowed himself to be swayed by the teachings of a man named Snow, a rather strange character who rode around in long garbed robes claiming he was Elijah the prophet. And where Snow took the chronology

of an obscure Hebrew group called the Karaites, that Christ would come in October 22 of 1844.

There was a lot of fanaticism involved with this early Advent movement. Adventists don't like to talk about that. They have always taught that these were the sober Sunday school attending, God-fearing people who sat around reading their Bibles. Actually the history is very plain that these were wild-eyed fanatics and any way you want to call it, hours upon hours of marching....

Larry. Dancing, leaping.

Wallace. ...rolling on the floor, dancing, practicing the holy kiss.

Larry. Are you saying that it looks sort of like a Benny Hinn healing revival?

Wallace. Just for starters. They also even had the holy laugh. I mean, we're talking about some really wild stuff going on at that time.

Larry. Now they came up with this date, 1844, October 22, based on a false chronology of 2,300 years.

Wallace. They thought that from the time that Jerusalem would be rebuilt in 457 BC, 2,300 days would extend on down with a day for a year to 1844, and as I said, they took the chronology of the Karaites where they said, "Well, it's going to be October 22." The people did have, and again this is contrary to much Adventist history, they did sew for themselves white ascension robes. That night they stood on their housetops, on hills around there. These people were so devout they had sold their belongings, they had sold their homes, their farms, and they sat up all night waiting for Jesus to come. The effects of this, as you can imagine, were tragic. It is well-documented that a lot of people entered insane asylums immediately afterwards. Ellen White herself said that the sound of weeping was just almost universal. People couldn't believe it. Afterwards, William Miller said, "I was wrong." He basically disassociated himself with any kind of movement, Adventist movement of this kind.

The Adventists themselves, those who stayed with it, and as you can imagine many people left it, divided into two groups. One was called the Open Door Adventists. These people continued to set dates that Christ would come and they still exist. I believe there are several thousand adherents up there in the New England areas.

Larry. Despite the Matthew 24 passage that says, "No man knows the date or the hour."

Wallace. That's right, however others, a few dozen began what they called the Shut Door movement. They looked at the story of the bridesmaids and the bridegroom where the door was shut and they said, "Well, somehow or another probation has closed. No more sinners can be saved." Now one of the adherents of this was a young 17 year old girl named Ellen Harmon.

Larry. Okay, that's on our chart. That's her.

Wallace. That's the girl. She had been badly injured by a stone thrown to her head many or a number of years before when she was nine years old. Had always suffered from severe health problems up to this time, but now she began having visions. Her first vision confirmed the Shut Door belief. Probation is closed, no more sinners can be saved, only the few dozen people who adhered to the Shut Door movement can be saved.

Well, of course, that didn't happen. People, babies were born, people wanted to join the movement, marriages occurred where the married person wanted to join it. Time went on, Christ didn't come so they wondered what could be going on here, then? Well, I know that for many years Adventism taught that it was Hiram Edson having a vision....

Larry. He's on our chart down below.

Wallace. He's on the chart down here, in the cornfield which he saw Christ entering from the holy place in heaven, as if there was a temple in heaven just like the old Jewish temple, into the most holy. However today we know that actually or contemporary scholarship knows that it was actually begun by a man named O. R. L. Crosier who began some theological speculation that actually Christ had entered the most holy place and was offering a final atonement for the sins of the world. Now Crosier gave up on this belief. He renounced it later on, however, it was adopted by the young movement and this is the beginning of the 1844 movement within the Adventism church which teaches that in 1844 Christ entered from the holy place into the most holy place and is up there offering in heaven, offering a final investigative judgment. They are going through the books deciding who belongs in heaven and who does not. And instead of, in other words, the final atonement having been offered on the cross as Christianity has always taught, that it is still going on in the courts of heaven today. I might add that this 1844 belief is the only truly unique belief of Seventh Day Adventism. All other so-called unique doctrines are held by some other sect or cult somewhere.

Larry. Right, but this all goes back to that, well, everyone thought it was Hiram Edson...

Wallace. That's right.

Larry. ...it really goes back to this other guy and I guess it wasn't out in the cornfield either.

Wallace. No, it was just theological supposition he wrote up. I believe it was a paper called "The Daystar" from which this came.

Larry. I see, and Ellen G. White just picked up on it.

Wallace. She picked up on it and it was confirmed soon perhaps by vision. I might add that the Shut Door vision was never renounced. God evidently never saw fit to inform her that she was wrong with her first vision.

Larry. And as far as you know, well that was, what's that? About 140-50 years ago.

Wallace. This would be the late, middle to late 1840s.

Larry. So surely they don't hold it, this theological speculation anymore about the investigative judgment?

Wallace. Oh, yes they do. The Shut Door has been allowed to lapse. In fact, for over 100 years Adventism denied that it had ever taken place or that Ellen White, I should say, had confirmed this with a vision. Well, it was only in the 1970s they found a letter of hers as well as other writings of that period which showed that she had confirmed it with a vision. And but, yes, they teach that today.

Larry. How do they deal with that? If she's confirmed with a vision the Shut Door that no one gets saved after, what, 1844 or whatever it was?

Wallace. Right.

Larry. No one is saved. I mean, anyone born after that, you're lost and going to hell and they say she's a prophet, how do they deal with that? Do they just try to sweep it under the rug or something?

Wallace. Well, let's put it like this, I would say that 99% of Seventh Day Adventists had no idea this had ever occurred. Believe me, they don't want it out. The typical reaction of a Seventh Day Adventist to finding this out is that of being stunned.

Larry. Oh really?

Wallace. Yes, the White estate which is the guardian of the Ellen White books, has equivocated, you might say played all kinds of word games with it etc. I have a pamphlet which I quote in my book from 1980 in which they said that Ellen White misinterpreted the vision, that she corrected... Would you like me to read the passage?

Larry. If you've got it, go ahead.

Wallace. Yes, I do.

Larry. That's what we're here for, get into...

Wallace. This is from the book "101 Questions on Ellen White and the Sanctuary," and here it is from the pamphlet. "Ellen misinterpreted this vision. She correctly understood that the day of salvation for the latter two groups, those who had either rejected or

eventually left the Millerites was past. For them, the door was shut. But she incorrectly concluded that no one could accept Christ after October 22, that only the little flock remaining in the household of faith would be saved and that everyone else would be lost."

Now this is very interesting, isn't it? Please notice that Ellen misinterpreted the vision. Think about it. In 1 Peter or 2 Peter 1:20, the Bible clearly states that the true prophet of God never interprets his visions. Ellen not only interpreted her visions, she misinterpreted her vision. I've also heard Robert Olson state that God...

Larry. Who is he?

Wallace. Robert Olson is the, has been the head of the White estate. His explanation was that God deceived the group.

Larry. God deceived the group?

Wallace. Yes. Now to me that's the mark of a true fanatic.

Carole. They'd rather blame God than Ellen White.

Wallace. Blame God.

Larry. Well, what it looks like to me is there's actually some outright suppression of information being....

Wallace. It has been. There's been a great deal of deceit. F. D. Nichols wrote a book called "Ellen White and Her Critics" in the early 1980s. The man had access to and knew of that 1847 letter. I have a copy of it, would you like to see that?

Larry. Yeah, go ahead.

Wallace. Here it is. These are statements written first by James White in 1847. Can you focus in on that?

Larry. Let's see what we've got here. James White in 18... Now this is...

Wallace. 1847.

Larry. This is Ellen G. White's husband.

Wallace. He writes, "When she received her first vision, December, 1844, she and all the band in Portland, Maine where her parents then resided, had given up the Midnight Cry and Shut Door. They had given up on it as being in the past. It was then that the Lord shew her in vision the error into which she and the band in Portland had fallen. She then related her vision to the band and about 60 confessed her error and acknowledged their

seventh month experience to be the work of God." In other words, they had been wrong when they had given up on the Shut Door.

Now here is Ellen White writing to Joseph Bates, another early Adventist leader in 1847. "The view about the bridegroom's coming I had about the middle of February, 1845. While in Exeter, Maine in meeting with Israel Damon," about whom I'll have a lot to say later, "James and many others, many of them did not believe in a Shut Door. I suffered much at the commencement of the meeting. Unbelief seemed to be on every hand. There was one sister there that was called very spiritual." This is, incidentally, a rival, an early rival to Ellen White's visions. "Sister Derbin. She had been truly a mother of Israel but a division had arisen in the band on the Shut Door. She had great sympathy and could not believe the door was shut. I had known nothing of their difference. Sister Derbin got up to talk. I felt very sad." Going on the next page.

Larry. Next page. Next page.

Wallace. "At length my soul seemed to be in agony and while she was talking, I fell from my chair to the floor." This was Ellen's first vision. "It was then I had a view of Jesus rising from his mediatorial throne and going to the holiest as bridegroom to receive his kingdom. They were all deeply interested in the view. They all said it was entirely new to them. The Lord worked in mighty power sending the truth home to their hearts. Sister Derbin knew what the power of the Lord was for she had felt it many times, and in a short time after I fell, she was struck down and fell to the floor crying to God to have mercy on her. When I came out of the vision, my ears were saluted with Sister Derbin singing and shouting with a loud voice. Most of them received the vision and were settled upon the Shut Door." Notice her vision confirms the Shut Door.

Now in 1884, this is what she says, and please notice that, the statements say that her vision corrected her error and made her give up disbelieving the Shut Door doctrine. But look what she says in 1884, "For a time after the disappointment in 1844, I did hold in common with the Advent body that the door of mercy was then forever closed to the world. This position was taken before my first vision was given me. It was the light given me of God that corrected our error and enabled us to see the true position." She's saying just the opposite.

Larry. Man, that's pretty heavy-duty stuff.

Wallace. And people want to believe she never changed her position.

Larry. Never changed her position or anything else. So basically the Shut Door is something that mainly the hierarchy of the Seventh Day Adventist Church know about but the little guys, they are not given access to this information.

Wallace. Interestingly and I happen to know this from firsthand knowledge, nearly all of the leaders of the Adventist movement up until a few years ago had no idea of this, but there were always a few people on the inside who knew about this. F. D. Nichols I



mentioned a few minutes ago, knew about this. He knew about this letter. Arthur White, Ellen White's great grandson, just grandson, not great grandson, knew about this letter and was very careful to keep this thing hidden. It was people who were unsympathetic to this position who managed to sneak this out and get it out into the open. Incidentally, I have a copy of the original autograph of her letter that says the same thing.

Larry. So it's there, it's available, and they've got that locked up in a vault.

Wallace. They did.

Larry. Now that's an interesting thing. You know, it just makes sense to me that if a person's a prophet of God and what they write are oracles of God, revelations from God, why lock up a lot of things in a vault somewhere where people can't see it? Why not put it out on display maybe in a museum and have it all where people can come by by the thousands every day and look at everything and see all these oracle manuscripts from God? And why lock it up where, and suppress things and not let people see what supposedly was given by God?

Wallace. The White estate has been very very secretive up until the last few years. In fact, as of I believe it was 1982 or 83, they admitted that approximately one-third of the writings of Ellen White were still not available for the public to see.

Larry. One-third.

Wallace. Approximately one-third. Now I believe since then there has been a great deal more openness because, let's face it, after the cow's out there's not much sense in keeping the barn door closed. But I'm still not positive that everything has been released.

Larry. Man, that's an amazing thing and I'm sure what you've just said here has been already kind of a blockbuster for a lot of Seventh Day Adventists that may have never known this information was here. Of course, now how is a standard Seventh Day Adventist little buy gonna get this kind of information? I mean, we know he's not gonna trust us right now if he's watching this show. He's gonna think, "Well, these guys are out to get us," you know? But now what if he were in there in the Seventh Day Adventist Church and he wants to go do some research on his own to try to find out what you just said and what you were showing, is it really true or not, how is he gonna do it?

Wallace. Perhaps the simplest way, of course, is to get a copy of my book where I have a lot of the writing in there. Also....

Larry. But what if he doesn't trust your book and he wants to try to get the primary documentation some other way?

Wallace. He can contact the White estate directly and ask for a copy of their manuscript of all the documents on the Shut Door. They do put it out.

Larry. Oh, they do? Okay....

Wallace. Fairly recently, again.

Larry. He can get his hands on it through his own organization without depending on us.

Wallace. That's correct. Right.

Larry. So these things can be verified beyond what we're saying here.

Wallace. He could also contact them for a copy of the "101 Questions" that I mentioned. I believe the quote I gave is from page 49.

Larry. Okay. Okay.

Wallace. And of course, this always again raises the question. You know, one of the tests of a Bible is found in Deuteronomy 18:21-22....

Carole. The Bible prophet.

Larry. Of a Bible prophet.

Wallace. ...which says, of a Bible prophet which says that if a person or a prophet claims to be a prophet and says something and it turns out not to be so, then pay no attention to him. In fact, don't even respect him.

Larry. Right.

Wallace. And here we have a case, you can't say that it was a conditional prophecy because supposedly it already had happened, you know, in the fall of 1844. Probation had closed. No more sinners would be saved. A very flat out blanket statement of the period and she was wrong.

Larry. And wrong very early in her ministry.

Wallace. That's right.

Larry. Right off the bat almost.

Wallace. Over a period of years, she seems to have become, we suspect she may have become discredited because of this. People began to realize her vision was wrong. And it's interesting, there is a period from about 1851 to 1855 in which it's called the silent period. She really doesn't seem to have turned out any writings over this period or have been very active, and our suspicion is that that is the reason.

Larry. I see. But then over the sands of time and people start to forget things, you can start to start up again.

Wallace. Well, as I said, then for many years they did deny that this was happening.

Larry. Right. Okay, well, that was a fascinating discourse. It's amazing what you can get out of a couple of pictures on a chart board. Well, let me take this down here and go on to our next chart and take a look at just for a lot of viewers who don't know a thing about Seventh Day Adventism, just a brief overview, you might say, on just some of the distinctive doctrines, although you'd already mentioned that some of these other than the sanctuary doctrine and investigative judgment that you mentioned a minute ago, all these can be found in other groups, other cults, whatever.

Wallace. That's correct.

Larry. Wallace, why don't you take a summary survey of these teachings of the Seventh Day Adventists.

Wallace. Seventh Day Adventists keep the Sabbath very similar to the way it is offered in the Old Testament. That is, from Friday night until Saturday night, both times about sundown, many non-religious activities are disallowed. They don't want you listening to secular programs, watching tv, carrying on your vocation, anything that basically is fun, except perhaps eating is disallowed. They're very strict on this.

Larry. Now why is that so important?

Wallace. Well, because they believe that the 10 Commandments of God are still...

Carole. Binding.

Wallace. ...are still binding and that they, we are to keep them in the modern world and, of course, that includes the fourth commandment which states that remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy etc. The seventh day.

Larry. So what if you're a Seventh Day Adventist and after a couple of years you just say, "Well, I don't really feel like keeping the Sabbath"? Is there any consequence?

Wallace. Well, yes. It is certainly grounds for dismissal from the organization.

Larry. Okay, so you can get kicked out if you don't....

Wallace. That's it.

Larry. ...go to church on the Sabbath? Now I've often heard, maybe you can clarify this, what about this mark of the beast thing? Where do they get that from? I've heard, clarify this for me because I've never really heard anyone really define this thing. I've often

heard that, well, Seventh Day Adventists say you've got the mark of the beast if you go to church other than on the Sabbath or something like that. Can you expound and clarify that?

Wallace. Well, in the Revelation it mentions the mark of the beast and to Seventh Day Adventists the mark of the beast, which they used to be very heavy on and they still are if you really get into their theology, is keeping Sunday instead of Sabbath for the Sabbath. And incidentally and we'll get into this under prophecy here, they teach that in the last days there will be a worldwide law passed that everyone is to keep Sunday for the Sabbath, and incidentally that marks, again, the close of probation. They're gonna give it another shot. I might add that only the Seventh Day Adventists and the Mormons teach that there is a close of probation some time before the end of the world.

Larry. I see. Alright, you clarified that one for me. Okay, Wallace, why don't you continue here with some of these.

Wallace. Well, briefly going on. They also teach that the Old Testament dietary laws are still to be adhered to. No pork eating, every similar to the Jews, although not Kosher per se. No pork, no catfish...

Carole. No shellfish.

Wallace. ...no shellfish. The interesting thing is, again, that all the time that Ellen White was telling others that not only was she not eating these non-acceptable meats, the fact that she was vegetarian, we have on good proof or good evidence that she was eating among other things, pork sandwiches and she loved oysters. You know, she was born on the seacoast of Maine and we actually have a letter from her in 1885 where she told her daughter to send her some good oysters, among other things.

Larry. Now these doctrines, like this vegetarianism, these dietary laws...

Wallace. They do teach vegetarianism too.

Larry. ...is this coming basically from Ellen G. White and her interpretation?

Wallace. Oh yes, absolutely, and she makes very strong statements about this and most Adventists are at least Kosher, not Kosher but they will not eat the pork etc., the shellfish and so forth.

Larry. Do they tie that in with health concerns?

Wallace. Oh yes, it's very much part of I would say the sanctification of most Seventh Day Adventists.

Carole. The thing is they make that a test of fellowship.

Wallace. It is a test of fellowship.

Larry. Oh, it's a test of fellowship?

Wallace. Oh yes, definitely.

Larry. So if you make the mistake of eating pork or something like that...

Wallace. You can get caught. I might add that other things include they're very strongly against caffeine such as coffee or Coca Cola.

Carole. Alcohol.

Wallace. Very very strongly against alcohol, etc. which is all quite acceptable as far as they're concerned. They do not want you using alcoholic beverages.

The atonement of the sanctuary, Larry, we already mentioned.

Larry. Right, the investigative judgment and the guy and all that stuff.

Wallace. Adventism tends to divide into two groups when it comes to the study of redemption. The left wing is pretty close to evangelical Christianity. They believe that you accept Jesus Christ, your salvation comes strictly from your acceptance of Jesus, and that you, that sanctification is merely the things you do as a Christian. The right wing is much more traditional and they believe that, yes, when you accept Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven to that point. The rest of your life you will spend working toward perfection because in the last days you must be perfect. In fact, Carole has an amazing couple of statements from Ellen White I'd really like her to bring out at this time.

Larry. Okay, we've got less than five minutes in this program, so if she can do that and then we'll have to race through these remaining ones and then maybe pick up with it in the next program.

Wallace. These are two statements from Ellen White which will just probably even blow the minds of most Seventh Day Adventists although Carole and I were both taught this as youth, that this is the way it's going to be.

Here is one, "Those," these are both from Ellen White, "Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above, are to stand in the sight of the holy God without a mediator." You are to stand there without the intercession of Christ.

Larry. No mediator?

Wallace. No washing of our blood by Christ.

Larry. What's that passage in Titus? I think it says that there's one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, but they forget that verse.

Wallace. They do. This is Ellen White. "Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort, they must be conquerors in the battle with evil." That's "Great Controversy," page 425. And here's the other statement, "In that fearful time, the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor." "Great Controversy," page 614.

Larry. No intercessor.

Wallace. That's right.

Carole. This takes Christ out of the picture completely.

Larry. That's a mind-blower. I mean....

Wallace. I believe I might have the statement with me, if I don't I don't. I'll show it to you in our next program.

Larry. Okay, so Ellen G. White actually, I mean, at this point at what you were just talking about, she gets it down to where she takes the Savior Jesus out of the way so that you yourself kind of become your own savior.

Wallace. That's correct.

Larry. You know, doing your own diligent efforts and doing your works.

Carole. You have to be perfect in that time.

Larry. Almost like sinless perfectionism.

Carole. You have to be perfect.

Larry. Does anyone teach that?

Wallace. The Adventists do. Yes, they do.

Larry. Sinless perfectionism.

Wallace. In fact, in California the Ontario church at that time was under the administration of a very perfectionistic pastor. He called in a right wing Adventist organization called "A Better Way," and twice in a meeting, a church board meeting, I heard the leader of "A Better Way" state that he had not sinned for two years. The purpose of the entire program, "A Better Way," was to teach people to live perfect lives.

Larry. Perfect lives.

Wallace. Now you can imagine the paranoia and depression and other problems.

Larry. Well, you know, when I hear a man say he hasn't sinned in two years, I know the best way to get to the heart of the matter is if the man is married, go ask his wife if he hasn't sinned in two years. That's the fastest way to find out if he's telling the truth or not.

Carole. He was bragging about the fact so wouldn't that be conceit? Isn't conceit a sin?

Larry. Oh. Well, I've always said I think it's scriptural here that when a man thinks he can pull himself up by his own bootstraps for salvation, it leads to incredible conceit and pride and arrogance in that you think, "Oh, I'm doing these good works and I'm not sinning and I'm, you know, I'm gonna get the job done. And look how good I've been this week." It just, it destroys any humility you have and you can't be anything, when you look at the Scripture and how it shows us for what we really are, that we're just lost sinners and there's nothing, there's no merit in ourselves that is gonna make us righteous before a holy God, it brings you down to the lowest, almost like to the worm level, you know, and you just realize you need a Savior. There's nothing you yourself can do by yourself.

Oh, by the way, before you go on, Wallace, I'm getting a signal from our crew here that we're virtually out of time. We've just got a few seconds left and I would, we'll just pick up where we left off in the next show so I want our viewers out there to stay tuned in this series. This is only Part 1 of several shows we're gonna do on this subject. But Wallace, just take about 20 seconds and just give us a summary statement as we sign off.

Wallace. Seventh Day Adventism has been teaching its teachings for the last 140 years. It has not been challenged by evangelical Christianity until the last few years and I would say to the Adventist believer, listen to us, do your own checking. You have a lot that was very exciting and is so much a better life than you can have possibly under Seventh Day Adventism.

Larry. Okay, very well said. Please join us again next week at the same time as we continue in this very fascinating topic of Seventh Day Adventism. God bless. Thank you for joining us.

Christian Answers  
P. O. Box 144441  
Austin, TX 78714  
(512) 218-8022

Announcer. Check out our websites: biblequery.org – this site answers 7,700 Bible questions; historycart.com – this site reveals early church history and doctrine proving Roman Catholicism is not historically or doctrinally viable; muslimhope.com – this site is a classic refutation of Islam, a counterfeit religion created by Mohammad.

Free newsletters are also available.