

2010 Seventh Day Adventist General Conference Agenda Addendum by
Doug Mitchell

Description

Is the Holy Spirit A Person?



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Seventh Day
Adventist
General Conference
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There are times when the best efforts of men fall short of that which God would have them do. In determining which issues would be on the agenda for discussion at this 2010 conference, some of the issues that hold significant import to the church have been set aside as being either too controversial and divisive, or are thought to be unimportant. The purpose of this Addendum to the agenda is to address one specific doctrine that has been the subject of controversy from the earliest days of this movement, and actually long predates it. It addresses the issue of whether the Holy Spirit is a Person, an influence, or both.

At the 2005 General Conference meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, a group was there passing out their literature in which they presented many quotes from early SDA leaders to the effect that the Holy Spirit was not a distinct Being, but only an influence. While that view was prevalent among the early Adventists for quite a while, Ellen White later made some specific statements to the effect that the Holy Spirit was, in verity, “as much a person as God is a person.” *Manuscript 66*, 1899, *Evangelism*, p. 616.

Regarding the Person of God, she was shown the following in a vision:

“I saw a throne, and on it sat the Father and the Son. I gazed on Jesus’ countenance and admired His lovely **PERSON**. “the Father’s **PERSON** I could not behold, for a cloud of glorious light covered Him. I asked Jesus if **THE FATHER HAD A FORM LIKE HIMSELF**. He said **HE HAD**, but I could not behold it ...” *Early Writings*, p. 54.

If the Person known as God, the Father, has a “form,” then the Person of the Holy Spirit must also have a “form” so as to be “as much a person as God is a person.” ¹For more evidence that early SDAs (including Ellen White) understood “personhood” to require bodily form, see our video series [The Personality of God: An SDA Pillar Doctrine](#) and our [Personality of God Tag](#).

“You are baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. ... You are born unto God, and you stand under the sanction and the power of the **three holiest BEINGS in heaven**, who are able to keep you from falling.” *Manuscript Release*, Vol. 7, No. 480, p. 267; *Sermons and Talks*, Vol. 1, p. 367.

It is clear that Ellen White understood the Holy Spirit to be both a “person” and a “being.” Yet, in spite of her statements in that regard, some of the leaders in her day stumbled over what she said, including her own son, Willie, who, in 1935, said this:

“In your letter you request me to tell you what I understand to be my mother’s position in reference to the personality of the Holy Spirit. This I cannot do because I never clearly understood her teachings on the matter. There always was in my mind some perplexity regarding the meaning of her utterances which to my superficial manner of thinking seemed to be somewhat confusing. I have often regretted that I did not possess that keenness of mind that could solve this and similar perplexities, and then remembering what Sister White wrote in ‘Acts of the Apostles,’ pages 51 and 52, ‘regarding such mysteries which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden,’ I have thought best to refrain from discussion and have endeavored to direct my mind to matters easy to be understood.

“As I read the Bible, I find that the risen Saviour breathed on the disciples ‘and saith unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost.’ The conception received from this Scripture, seems to be in harmony with the statement in ‘Desire of Ages’, page 669, also Gen. 1:2; with Luke 1:4; with Acts 2:4 and also 8:15 and 10:44. Many other texts might be referred to which seem to be in harmony with this statement in ‘Desire of Ages.’

“The statements and the arguments of some of our ministers, in their effort to prove that the Holy Spirit is an individual as are God the Father and Christ, the eternal Son, have perplexed me, and sometimes they have made me sad. One popular teacher said ‘we may regard Him, as the fellow who is down here running things.’ My perplexities were lessened a little when I learned from the dictionary that one of the meanings of personality, was characteristics. It is stated in such a way that I concluded that there might be personality without bodily form which is possessed by the Father and the Son. There are many scriptures which speak of the Father and the Son and the absence of Scripture making similar reference to the united work of the Father and the Holy Spirit or of Christ and the Holy Spirit, has led me to believe that the Spirit without individuality was the representative of the Father and the Son throughout the universe, and it was through the Holy Spirit that they dwell in our hearts and make us one with the Father and with the Son.” Letter, W. C. White to H. W. Carr, April 30, 1935.

While he dismisses his lack of understanding and perplexity regarding his mother’s statements on the personality of the Holy Spirit as being due to what he says is his “superficial manner of thinking,” and that he felt that he “did not possess that keenness of mind that could solve this and similar perplexities,” he does not say that he had ever really taken the matter to God, even with prayer and fasting, so as to obtain the promised wisdom from the Source of all knowledge (James 1:5). His “perplexity” in regards to this matter may have been removed had he done so.

There are many today who, likewise, cling to a superficial understanding of the matter, finding it easier to accept conclusions that are based on a less-than-complete investigation of what the Bible reveals about the matter. Even those who compiled those quotes from the early Adventist leaders missed the obvious conclusions of the comments they made, and even the context in which they were said. That is, most of those whom they quoted were presenting arguments against two specific doctrines – Trinitarianism, and the Roman Catholic teaching on the Trinity, as stated in their creeds. Thus their comments about what they believed to be the nature of the Holy Spirit were not the main point they were speaking on. Additionally, those who they quoted were not in agreement on whether the Holy Spirit was a person or just an influence.

Trinitarianism says that there is “one God” but in three persons. Meaning that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three manifestations of the one and only God, but are not three individual persons. Roman Catholicism teaches that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, though each an individual person, and each with a common divine nature (“consubstantial”), were all also “co-eternal.”

Their arguments against Trinitarianism included points such as:

"The inexplicable Trinity that makes the Godhead three in one and one in three, is bad enough; but that ultra Unitarianism that makes Christ inferior to the Father is worse. Did God say to an inferior, 'Let us make man in our image'?" J. S. White, *Review & Herald*, November 29, 1877.

and,

"Respecting the trinity, I concluded that it was an impossibility for me to believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, was also the Almighty God, the Father, one and the same being. I said to my father, 'If you can convince me that we are one in this sense, that you are my father, and I your son; and also that I am your father, and you my son, then I can believe in the trinity.'" J. Bates, *The Autobiography of Elder Joseph Bates*, pp. 204, 205. (1868).

Their objections to the Roman Catholic teaching on the Trinity mainly focused on the notion that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were all "co-eternal." The following are some of their arguments against that idea.

"The idea of Father and Son supposes priority of the existence of the one, and the subsequent existence of the other. To say that the Son is as old as his Father, is a palpable contradiction of terms. It is a natural impossibility for the Father to be as young as the Son, or the Son to be as old as the Father. If it be said that this term is only used in an accommodated sense, it still remains to be accounted for, why the Father should use as the uniform title of the highest, and most endearing relation between himself and our Lord, a term which, in its uniform signification, would contradict the very idea he wished to convey. If the inspired writers had wished to convey the idea of the co-etaneous existence, and eternity of the Father and Son, they could not possibly have used more incompatible terms. And of this, Trinitarians have been sensible. Mr. Fuller, although a Trinitarian, had the honesty to acknowledge, in the conclusion of his work on the Son-ship of Christ, that, "in the order of nature, the Father must have existed before the Son." J. M. Stephenson, *Review & Herald*, November 14, (1854)

And,

"The Scriptures nowhere speak of Christ as a created being, but on the contrary plainly state that he was begotten of the Father. (See remarks of Rev. 3:14, where it is shown that Christ is not a created being). But while as the Son he does not possess a coeternity of past existence with the Father, the beginning of his existence, as the begotten of the Father, antedates the entire work of creation, in relation to which he stands as joint creator with God. John 1:3; Heb 1:2." U. Smith, *Thoughts on the Book of Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 430. 1882}

Thus we find that their arguments against Trinitarianism were based on the reality that the Father and the Son have to be distinct individuals in order to truly hold the true Father/Son relationship revealed in the Scriptures, and those against the Roman Catholic teaching of their “co-eternal” existence were also based on the same premise in that in order for the Father and Son to have that relationship, the Father had to be older than the Son. But woven within some of their arguments against those particular teachings on the “Trinity” are statements similar to those made by Willie White concerning the Holy Spirit being only an influence, and not a distinct divine person, as are the Father and the Son. To wit,

“There is one question which has been much controverted in the theological world upon which we have never presumed to enter. *It is that of the personality of the Spirit of God.* Prevailing ideas of *person* are very diverse, often crude, and the word is differently understood; so that unity of opinion on this point cannot be expected **until all shall be able to define precisely what they mean by the word, or until all shall agree upon one particular sense in which the word shall be used.** But as this agreement does not exist, it seems that a discussion of the subject cannot be profitable, especially as it is not a question of direct revelation. We have a right to be positive in our faith and our statements only when the words of Scripture are so direct as to bring the subject within the range of positive proof. **We are not only willing but anxious to leave it just where the word of God leaves it** . From it we learn that the Spirit of God is that awful and mysterious power which proceeds from the throne of the universe, and which is the efficient actor in the work of creation and of redemption.” *The Spirit Of God; Its Offices And Manifestations*, J. H. Waggoner, p. 8, 9. (1877).

In saying that they were wanting to leave the issue of the personality of the Holy Spirit “just where the word of God leaves it,” they were really only saying that they wanted to leave it where *they believed* the Bible leaves it, and not necessarily where the Bible actually leaves it. This is so because even when that statement was made, there were others among them who were putting forth their own Bible-based arguments to the effect that the Holy Spirit is truly just as much an individual person as are the Father and Son.

Elder Waggoner said that since there was no agreement on what the word “person” means, they could not expect any unity on the question of the *person* of the Holy Spirit, “especially as it is not a question of direct revelation.” But God, evidently, had something else in mind for He not only gave Ellen White a “direct revelation” concerning the “person” of the Father (that He, as a Person, “had a form”) but also had her say that the Holy Spirit is “as much a person as God is a person.”

So, the real heart of the matter lies in the answer to the question, If the Holy Spirit is a *person* (a “being”), and has “a form” (as do the Father and Son), what part does that *person* have in the relationship between the Father and Son? To understand this, we must look at what we have been given to believe in regard to that relationship. Of this, Ellen White has said the following:

“Christ is the pre-existent, self-existent Son of God.... In speaking of his pre-existence, Christ carries the mind back through dateless ages. He assures us that there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God.” *Signs of the Times*, Aug. 29, 1900. (*Evangelism*, p. 615)

He was equal with God, infinite and omnipotent. . . . He is the eternal, self-existent Son.”
Manuscript

101, 1897. (*Ibid.*)

“While God’s Word speaks of the humanity of Christ when upon this earth, it also speaks decidedly regarding His pre-existence. The Word existed as a divine being, even as the eternal Son of God, in union and oneness with His Father.” *Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906. (*Ibid.*)

“Jesus declared, “I am the resurrection, and the life.” In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. “He that hath the Son hath life.” The divinity of Christ is the believer’s assurance of eternal life.” *The Desire of Ages*, p. 530 (1898) (*Ibid.*, p. 616)

So, on one hand, we have some elders saying that the Son

“... did, at some point in the eternity of the past, have beginning of days.” J. N. Andrews, *Review & Herald*, September 7, 1869

While on the other, we have Ellen White saying such things as,

“there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God.” *Signs of the Times*, Aug. 29, 1900. (*Evangelism*, p. 615)

But that which really, seemingly, confounds the matter are other statements made by some elders and by Ellen White regarding the relationship between the Father and the Son, such as,

“As Christ was **twice born, once in eternity, the only begotten of the Father**, and again here in the flesh, thus uniting the divine with the human in that second birth, ...” W. W. Prescott, *Review & Herald*, April 14, 1896, p. 232.

“He who was **born in the form of God** took the form of man.” A. T. Jones, *G. C. Bulletin* 1895, p. 448.

“He came from heaven, **God’s first-born**, to the earth, and was born again. ... He whose goings forth have been from the days of eternity, **the first-born of God**, was born again in order that we might be born again.” *Christian Perfection*, A Sermon by A. T. Jones, *Review & Herald*, July 18, August 1, 1899.

“The Word was “in the beginning.” The mind of man cannot grasp the ages that are spanned in this phrase. **It is not given to men to know when or how the Son was begotten** ; but we know that he was the Divine Word, not simply before He came to this earth to die, but even before the world was created. ... We know that Christ “proceeded forth and came from God” (John 8:42), **but it was so far back in the ages of eternity as to be far beyond the grasp of the mind of man.**” E. J. Waggoner, *Christ And His Righteousness*, p. 9.

“It is true that there are many sons of God, **but Christ is the “only begotten Son of God,” and therefore the Son of God in a sense in which no other being ever was or ever can be.** The angels are sons of God, as was Adam (Job 38:7; Luke 3:38), by creation; Christians are the sons of God by adoption (Rom. 8:14, 15), **but Christ is the Son of God by birth.**” *Ibid.*, p. 11-13.

“All things proceed ultimately from God, the Father; **even Christ Himself proceeded and came forth from the Father**

, ...” *Ibid.*, p. 19.

“...The Scriptures declare that Christ is “the only begotten Son of God.” **He is begotten, not created.** As to when He was begotten, it is not for us to inquire, nor could our minds grasp it if we were told. ... There was a time when Christ proceeded forth and came from God, from the bosom of the Father (John 8:42; 1:18), but that time was so far back in the days of eternity that to finite comprehension it is practically without beginning.

“But the point is that **Christ is a begotten Son and not a created subject.** He has **by inheritance** a more excellent name than the angels; He is “a Son over His own house.” Heb. 1:4; 3:6. And since He is the only-begotten son of God, **He is of the very substance and nature of God** and possesses **by birth** all the attributes of God, for the Father was pleased that His Son should be the express image of His Person, the brightness of His glory, and filled with all the fullness of the Godhead....” *Ibid.*, p. 19-23.

“In arguing the perfect equality of the Father and the Son, and the fact that Christ is in very nature God, **we do not design to be understood as teaching that the Father was not before the Son.** It should not be necessary to guard this point, lest some should think that the Son existed as soon as the Father; yet some go to that extreme, which adds nothing to the dignity of Christ, but rather detracts from the honor due him, since many throw the whole thing away rather than accept a theory so obviously out of harmony with the language of Scripture, that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. **He was begotten, not created**. He is of the substance of the Father, so that in his very nature he is God; and since this is so ‘It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.’ Col. 1:19...While both are of the same nature, the Father is first in point of time. He is also greater in that he had no beginning, while Christ’s personality had a beginning.” E. J. Waggoner, *Signs of the Times*, April 8, 1889.

“The angels are sons of God, as was Adam...by creation; Christians are the sons of God by adoption (Rom. 8:14, 15), but **Christ is the Son of God by birth. ... and so Christ is the “express image” of the Father’s person.**” *Ibid.*, p. 12.

Note that in the following, Ellen White’s language is almost identical to Elder Waggoner’s.

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son,”— not a son by creation, as were the angels, nor a son by adoption, as is the forgiven sinner, **but a Son begotten in the express image of the Father’s person...**” E. G. White, *Signs of the Times*, May 30, 1895.

So there we have the basis for the dilemma our forefathers, and we, ourselves, face in regards to understanding the Father/Son relationship as revealed in the Scriptures, and how the person of the Holy Spirit fits into that relationship. That is, how can the doctrine that there was a time when Christ was, literally, the “only begotten” Son of God, be reconciled with the doctrine that He was always “in union and oneness with His Father,” and that, “there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God?”

First, it is not for us, on our own, to try and harmonize those doctrines, but we are to simply look to God’s word and accept what it teaches on the matter. Yet, many Christians today who have not been able to see the answer which the Scriptures supply have taken the position that the words “only begotten” don’t mean exactly that, but go so far to leave the word “begotten” out of their expositions and translations, thus giving to the word “only” the meaning “unique.” But in order to that they have to deny the fact that the Greek word translated “only begotten” (

monogenes) is a compound word derived from the words *mono* (“only”) and *genes* (begotten”).

With those things said, it is somewhat understandable why Willie White was perplexed in trying to comprehend the matter. Though the diverse statements may seem to be beyond reconciliation, such is not really the case when we look at the matter from the only perspective the Bible gives us for knowing the mystery of the Godhead. That being,

“That which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, **being understood by the things that are made**, even his eternal power and Godhead.” Romans 1:26, 27.

The main place in the creation where we find a revelation of the Godhead is in the creation of Adam and Eve, as we read,

“And God said, Let us make man in **our image**, after **our likeness**: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

“So God created man **in his own image, in the image of God** created he him; **male and female** created he them. – Genesis 1:26-27

It’s from the creation of mankind (male and female) and the *family* relationships that followed thereafter that we have received the definitions of the words “father” and “son.” Therefore, we are bound to accept those definitions in regards to the relationship of the Father and Son, or else accuse God of using terms so *mystical* that they are beyond our comprehension, and that He has thus led us into a state of continual uncertainty and speculation as to their meanings.

That is, either “the invisible things of him” “are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his ... Godhead,” or they are not. There is no middle ground. Either the family image and likeness in mankind is a representation of the Godhead, or the apostle Paul was wrong, and so was Moses. So we are left with the fact that we must accept the simple revelation of what is involved in a father and son relationship (the *parent/offspring*) and let that be our guide to understanding this matter. This is not making God in our image an likeness, but merely acceding to the fact that God has chosen to be known to the universe in a certain “form” and has created mankind in that image and likeness.

In Hebrews 7:9, 10, it is written

“Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For **he was yet in the loins of his father**, when Melchisedec met him.”

There we find that which explains how Christ could be “the eternal, self-existent Son,” “in close fellowship with the eternal God,” “in union and oneness with His Father,” and have in Him, “life, original, unborrowed, underived,” and yet also be “a Son begotten in the express image of the Father’s person,” when He “proceeded and came forth from the Father” “so far back in the ages of eternity as to be far beyond the grasp of the mind of man.”

That is, Christ was in the “loins” of His Father (who “has a form”) as His living Seed, just as Levi was in Abraham’s loins as his living seed. Levi did not derive his life from Abraham any more than Abraham derived his life from Adam. Adam’s seed was alive within him when he was created. He didn’t give life to his seed any more than the Father gave life to His Seed (Christ) when He was within Him. That’s what nature (i.e., the creation) teaches us about the Godhead. We’ve been given nothing else by which to understand the mystery of God. We can either accept that revelation and rejoice in it, or be as a ship afloat at sea without an anchor, being blown about by every wind of doctrine in the darkness of mystical speculation and unbelief.

Therefore, in accepting the simple revelation of what is involved in a father and son relationship (the *parent/offspring* relationship), we must also acknowledge that such a *family* relationship involves **a mother**, through whom a begotten son is born.

Considering that the Hebrew word for Spirit (*ruah*) is **feminine**, then the mystery of Christ being called the “only begotten” Son, is solved. And, likewise, so is the issue of whether or not the Holy Spirit is a Person and has a form. Woman had to be made in the “image” and “likeness” of someone feminine, or those words have no real meaning at all.

This is further borne out by the fact that the Hebrew word that’s translated “God” (*Elohim*) is not only plural, but also contains both masculine and feminine elements. That is, *Elohim* has the feminine base, *Eloah*, and the masculine/plural ending, *im*. Were the Father and Son the only ones whom mankind were made in the image and likeness of then the Hebrew word translated “God” in Genesis 1:26, 27 would be *Elim*, masculine base/masculine plural ending.

“Created to be ‘the image and glory of God’ (1 Corinthians 11:7), ADAM AND EVE had received endowments not unworthy of THEIR high destiny. Graceful and symmetrical IN FORM, regular and beautiful IN FEATURE, THEIR countenances glowing with the tint of health and the light of joy and hope, **THEY BORE IN OUTWARD RESEMBLANCE THE LIKENESS OF THEIR MAKER** (the Godhead, parenthesis mine). NOR WAS THIS LIKENESS MANIFESTED IN THE **PHYSICAL NATURE ONLY.**” *Education*, p. 20. (See also, Adult Sabbath School Lesson Sept. 27, 1982, p.. 2 , 4).

“In the beginning, man was created **in the likeness of God**, not ONLY IN CHARACTER, BUT IN **FORM AND FEATURE.**” *The Great Controversy*, p. 644, 645.

“Man was to bear **God’s image**, BOTH IN **OUTWARD RESEMBLANCE AND CHARACTER.**” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 45.

“...the human mind should become intelligent in regard to the PHYSICAL STRUCTURE. ... HERE JEHOVAH HAS GIVEN **A SPECIMEN** OF HIMSELF; FOR MAN WAS MADE IN THE **IMAGE OF GOD.**” *Medical Ministry*, p. 221.

These inspired statements are contrary to the common Jewish understanding of God (which is also held by many Christians). Maimonides, a medieval Jewish philosopher, says that, "God is not a body, nor can bodily attributes be ascribed to Him, and He has no likeness at all." If that were true, then we would be made in the "image" and "likeness" of someone who has no "image" nor "likeness" at all. No wonder so many people are having "identity" crises and unbalanced relationships today.

"I am that I am." Exodus 3.4. Or, I am continuing to be that which I am continually being.

If God should choose to be of a certain size and shape so that Their creation can relate to Them, what can we do but glory in Their humility?

The last piece in this puzzle is, relatively, the easiest one to understand. That is, why is the Holy Spirit at times referred to as being an influence and a power, and not necessarily a Person? Each one of us who has had a mother bears within us the sanctifying power of her words of wisdom that dwell within us wherever we go. If we abide in her words, and her words abide in us, we will prosper. It's the same with the Holy Spirit's work, whether the words are written in the Bible, or are spoken by men, or angels, or the Son, or even by the Father, or by the Holy Spirit, Herself.

It is written that

"when he [she], the Spirit of truth, is come, he [she] will guide you into all truth: for **he [she] shall not speak of himself (herself)**; but **whatsoever he [she] shall hear, that shall he [she] speak**," John 16:13.²For evidence substantiating the feminine pronouns here, please see our study [It's All Greek to Them: The Holy Spirit – He, She, or It?](#)

Many take that to mean that the Holy Spirit will never say anything about the Holy Spirit, especially as to his (her) nature, so anything said about the nature of the Holy Spirit must not be heaven-inspired. Yet, the Holy Spirit-inspired Scriptures say many things about the Holy Spirit, and preachers speaking by the Holy Spirit do likewise.

Moreover, Jesus said the very same thing about how He was not speaking **of** Himself when He spoke **about** Himself –

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, **whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself**." John 7:17.

"Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that **I do nothing of myself, but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things**." John 8:28 .

"For **I have not spoken of myself**, but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, **what I should say, and what I should speak**." John 12:49.

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? **the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself**. but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." John 14:10.

So, while Jesus spoke of many things **about** Himself, He did not do so **of** Himself. He said, "whatsoever I speak therefore,

even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.” John 12:50. Thus, what Jesus spoke **about** Himself, He did so by “commandment” from the Father, and not **of** Himself. The same is true of what the Holy Spirit says to us –

“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak **of himself**, but **whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak**: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. **All things that the Father hath are mine**: therefore said I, that **he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you**.” John 16:13-15.

Now that we have reviewed the overall controversy regarding the person of the Holy Spirit and Her family relationship to the Father and the Son, and have briefly brought attention to the fact that the Spirit is feminine in Hebrew, the question remains as to how those in responsible positions will respond to the light as it shines from the Bible. It’s been over thirty years since the church was first introduced to the fact that the feminine Holy Spirit is an acceptable and historic Hebrew concept. But, apparently, that seems to be of little import to those who have the responsibility to hold forth the light of truth in this dark world, for, as a body, the church is still speaking of the Holy Spirit as He or it, using the English translations from the Greek and Latin texts while ignoring the Hebrew revelation. To one extent, this was to be expected for Christ said,

“No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, **The old is better** .” Luke 5:39.

Such it is today. The vast majority are saying that the “**old**” way of thinking regarding the gender of the Holy Spirit is “**better**,” thinking that they are rich and increase with goods in doing so. But what will be the end of the matter?

“Said the angel: ‘If light come, and that light is set aside or rejected, then comes condemnation and the frown of God; but before the light comes, there is no sin, for there is no light for them to reject.’” *Testimonies* Vol.1, p.116.

Doug Mitchell

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## THE BRANCH

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For more evidence that early SDAs (including Ellen White) understood “personhood” to require bodily form, see our video series [The Personality of God: An SDA Pillar Doctrine](#) and our [Personality of God Tag](#).
- 2  
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