

## Salvation — How is it Gained? Once Gained, Can it be Lost?

### *Part Ten*

In our last part, number 9, we ended by stating, “What an absolute tragedy for such erroneous thinking.”. So how does error enter into a church, any church? Stated in one word it is COMPROMISE and compromise comes when truths once held are put aside in favor of human convenience. The thinking is that it is expedient for a better good, that the end justifies the means. It usually starts for a supposed *righteous* purpose, good intentions, but ends with tragic results.

But there is no union between the Prince of light and the prince of darkness, and there can be no union between their followers. When Christians consented to unite with those who were but half converted from paganism, they entered upon a path which led further and further from the truth. Satan exulted that he had succeeded in deceiving so large a number of the followers of Christ. He then brought his power to bear more fully upon these, and inspired them to persecute those who remained true to God. None understood so well how to oppose the true Christian faith as did those who had once been its defenders; and these apostate Christians, uniting with their half-pagan companions, directed their warfare against the most [\*essential features of the doctrines of Christ\*](#). {GC 45.1} [Emphasis mine]

In other words, there cannot be success in compromise. A church that starts believing that they can hold to two, three or more ways in which to believe have partaken of this dark union. It starts when some are attracted to error and, either no-one objects, or those that do are told not to stir up controversy by correcting the error. History can be a wonderful teacher if we would but be astute observers.

It required a desperate struggle for those who would be faithful to stand firm against the deceptions and abominations which were disguised in sacerdotal garments and introduced into the church. [\*The Bible was not accepted as the standard of faith\*](#). The doctrine of religious freedom was termed heresy, and its upholders were hated and proscribed. {GC 45.2} [Emphasis mine]

Some would say this is ancient history and certainly could not apply to us as Seventh-day Adventists! Oh really? What makes us so sure we are immune to serious theological hell beckoning error? We have a tendency to look to other denominations and believe they are off track. However, somehow, we would never partake of such error ourselves. Back in the August 2000 Adventist Review it was stated that certain independents had “added a new fundamental belief to the doctrines of the church”. This alleged “new belief” was “that Christ took upon Himself our fallen human nature”. By this time, the false intrusion of Calvinism had so wedged itself within Adventism, via Questions on Doctrine (QOD), that leadership was saying Christ had taken unfallen human nature. This is the same teaching Desmond Ford had introduced to our theology students back in the 1970's. Error has come full circle. The 100 years, from 1852 to 1952, we had consistently taught Christ had taken fallen human nature. 1200 such statements have been recorded from our pioneers of which Sister White herself had written and affirmed 400. It is no secret who changed our theology and that the independents had it correct while church leadership had partaken of error. Then, to satisfy everyone, there came eventually the position that you could believe any one of three different ways: [1] The old belief that Christ took fallen human nature; [2] Christ took unfallen human nature, the accepted Calvinistic belief from QOD; or [3] some combination of the two.

There are those, like a General Conference President, would say that no one really cares, that it essentially makes no difference. But, it does make a difference, for if one holds as do the Calvinist, that Christ took unfallen human nature, then the sanctuary doctrine falls. How can this be? Simply put, if Jesus didn't take our fallen nature then he could not be our true example and sinning is an option for salvation to still take place. The sanctuary shows us not only forgiveness for sin but a removal of it before He returns. If a person believes they can be saved in their sins, then eternity will find them forever absent. Only those who gain victory through Jesus of every sin will be found spending eternity with Jesus. So, there can be only one true belief, all the others are false with soul destroying consequences.

After a long and severe conflict, the faithful few decided to dissolve all union with the apostate church if she still refused to free herself from falsehood and idolatry. They saw that separation was an absolute necessity if they would obey the word of God. They dared not tolerate errors fatal to their own souls, and set an example which would imperil the faith of their children and children's children. To secure peace and unity they were ready to make any concession consistent with fidelity to God; but they felt that even peace would be too dearly purchased at the sacrifice of principle. If unity could be secured only by the compromise of truth and righteousness, then let there be difference, and even war. {GC 45.3}

As humans, we find it very difficult to change our views. Sometimes this is a good thing, other times it is deadly. Error can sneak in upon us if we do not study for ourselves. If we know truth, then we can stand firm upon it. On the other hand, if we partake of error by listening to others over time, it is possible to become comfortable in it and find changing back to truth difficult. There is a statement by Sister White some have used to establish the organized church structure as the one to stay in. However, we need to remember the definition of the church that has been given in a previous editorial in this series. Basically, the church is the people, not necessarily the establishment. The true church are God's people who stand on the pillars of Adventism once given to us in the early years. Compromises are never acceptable. I give you a portion of two statements here. We will explore these thoughts further next week.

I know that the Lord loves His church. It is not to be disorganized or broken up into independent atoms. There is not the least consistency in this; there is not the least evidence that such a thing will be. Those who shall heed this false message and try to leaven others will be deceived and prepared to receive advanced delusions, and they will come to nought. {Mar 203.3}

As well as:

We hoped that there would not be the necessity for another coming out. While we will endeavor to keep the "unity of the Spirit" in the bonds of peace, we will not with pen or voice cease to protest against bigotry. {1888 356.4}

Do we see divergences in God's church today? Is there differences in beliefs systems and behaviors? Are we not already "broken up"? Why are there independent congregations? Is truth the deciding factor or does the establishment determine the rules? Are churches to be centers of social gatherings or teaching tools to their members? Could there be room for both? If so, then which is to have precedence?

Bill Eichner