

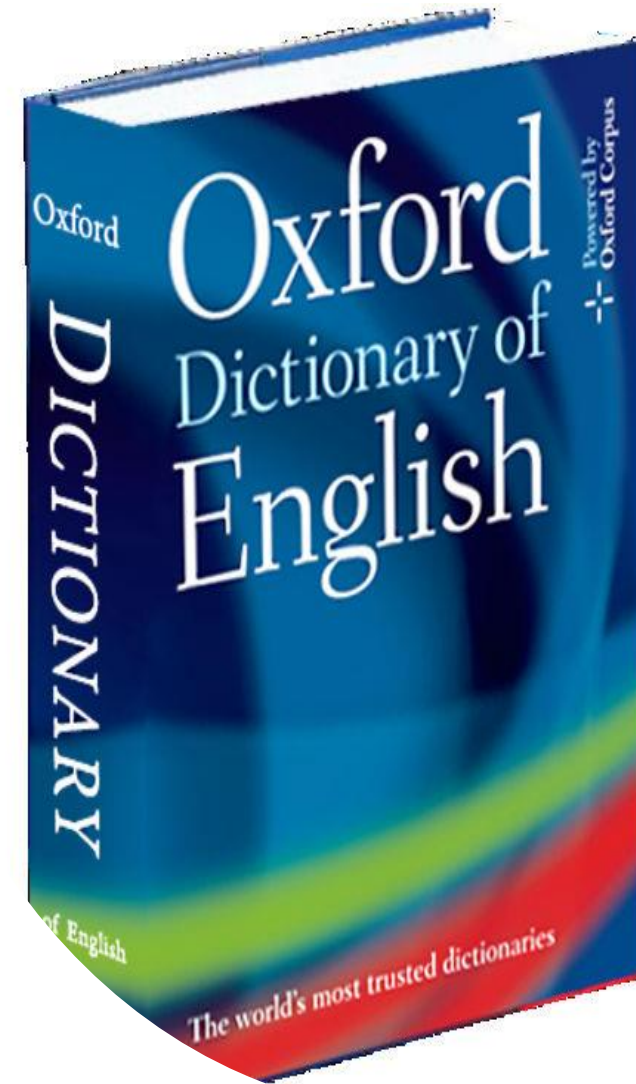
# Ellen G. White's Significance in the 21 Century



Elliott A. Williams PhD

# Meaning of the word “significance”

The quality of  
being worthy of  
attention;  
importance



# Rediscovering Adventist Identity and Mission in the 21 Century





# Rediscover

”discover (something forgotten or ignored) again: *he was trying to rediscover his Gaelic roots.*”

# Rethinking



# “Adventism is a rethinking movement”

Dr D. Duda





# Rediscover: Christ Apostolic Heritage Mission



**Key Thought: When the Church loses confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy it loses its Identity and sense of mission.**





# Adventism faced an Identity Crisis after death of Ellen White

Ellen White was the visible sign that  
Christ was with the Church.





# Adventism faced an Identity Crisis after death of Ellen White

**Without the Spirit of Prophecy the Church lacks legitimacy and significance.**

**It would be just another offshoot from Romanism.**



# Adventism faced an Identity Crisis after death of Ellen White

**Dark cloud of FEAR, IGNORANCE & SUSPICION over Adventism**





# Adventism faced an Identity Crisis after death of Ellen White

**Theological flexibility OR Caution?**

**Advance or Conserve?**

**Was open theological debate possible without Ellen White?**

**Were NEW theological insights acceptable?**





# Adventism faced an Identity Crisis after death of Ellen White

Some felt we must “stand by the old landmarks”



# Adventism faced an Identity Crisis after death of Ellen White

**Fundamentalism movement in United States 1910 to 1920**

**The movement's purpose was to reaffirm key theological tenets and defend them against the challenges of liberal theology and higher criticism.**





# Adventism faced an Identity Crisis after death of Ellen White

**Modernist-Fundamentalist controversy**

**Some afraid that liberal theology, higher criticism and the world were entering the SDA Church.**





# Adventism faced an Identity Crisis after death of Ellen White

To some extent the 1919 Bible Conference & The Bible and History Teachers Council were reactions against extreme fundamentalism.



# Adventism faced an Identity Crisis after death of Ellen White

Was 1919 Bible Conferences serving a “diet of doubt”?

Accusations and Reactions – extreme or measured?





# Adventism faced an Identity Crisis after death of Ellen White

Uniformed Adventist believed that Ellen White was verbally inspired.

Sabbatarian Adventists inherited William Miller's high view of Scripture as the infallible and unerring Word of God.





# Adventism faced an Identity Crisis after death of Ellen White

**Tension Between**  
**High View of Scripture!**  
**&**  
**Reality of inspiration!**



# Adventism faced an Identity Crisis after death of Ellen White

A major concern was the nature of inspiration:

Dictation method (Orthodox)

Verbal inspiration

Thought inspiration

Neo-Orthodox (Encounter) method





# Adventism faced an Identity Crisis after death of Ellen White

Through the influence of Ellen White SDA hold the thought inspiration view

But Adventist academic tensions about the nature of inspiration continues today.





# Adventism faced an Identity Crisis after death of Ellen White

Extremes and ignorance have coloured our view of Ellen White's writings

Source of much misunderstanding and disillusionment in Adventist history!



**The question of the inspiration and Function of Ellen White continues to be an issue in the Church.**

**What is the nature of Ellen Whites inspiration? What is her function and authority?**

**Is she more of a liability today or a great blessings?**





**How do we help young contemporary people see that a 19th century author has a lot to offer them today?**





# Christianity is a faith based Religion

**Joh 1:18 No one has seen God at any time; the Only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him**



# We Believe What We Believe Because of our Faith

**Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.**



# Luke 18:8

**...Yet when the Son of Man comes, shall He find faith on the earth?**





# Luke 18:8

## Literally

### “Shall He find the faith?”



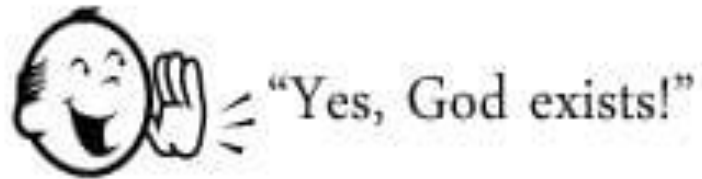


# The Remnant

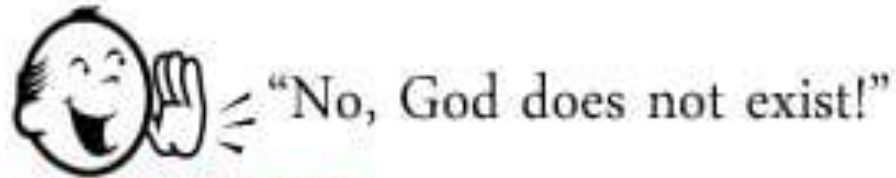


## of Faith

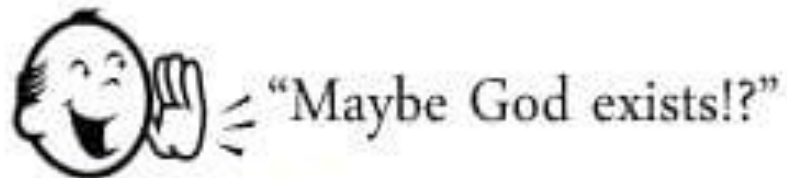




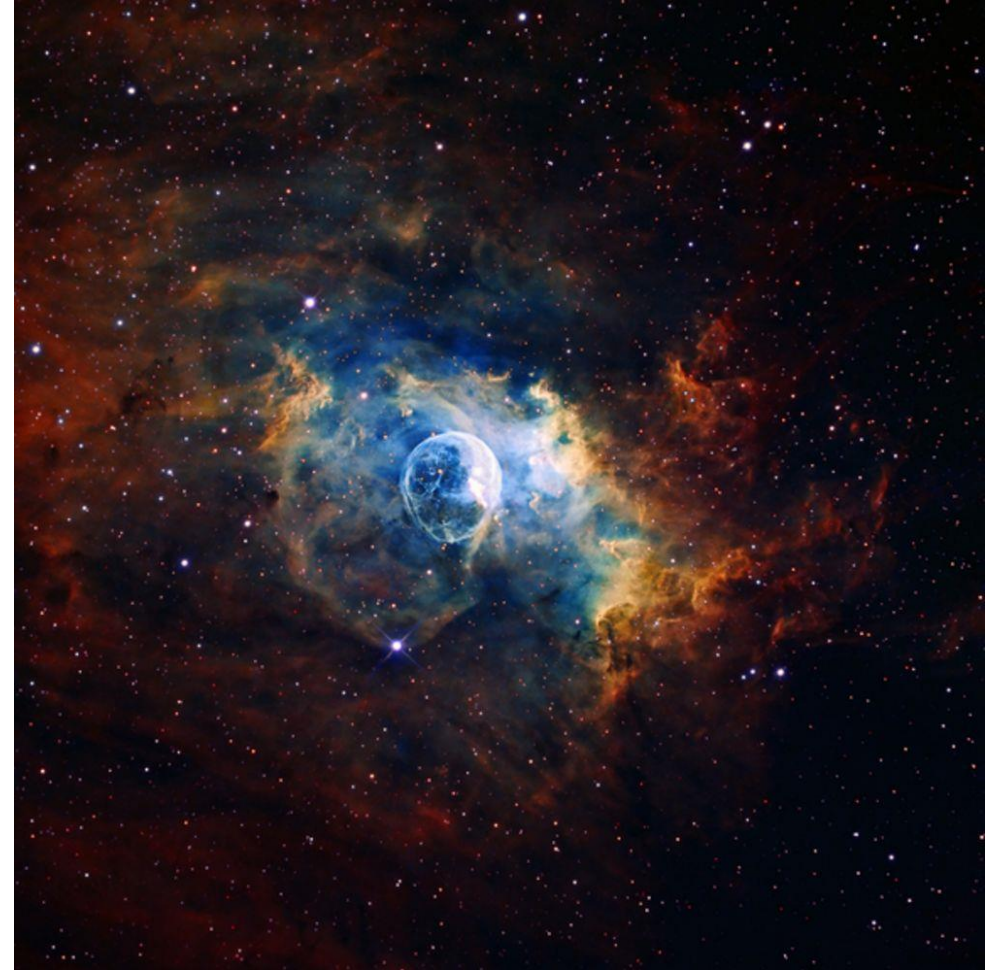
The BELIEVER



The ATHEIST



THE AGNOSTIC

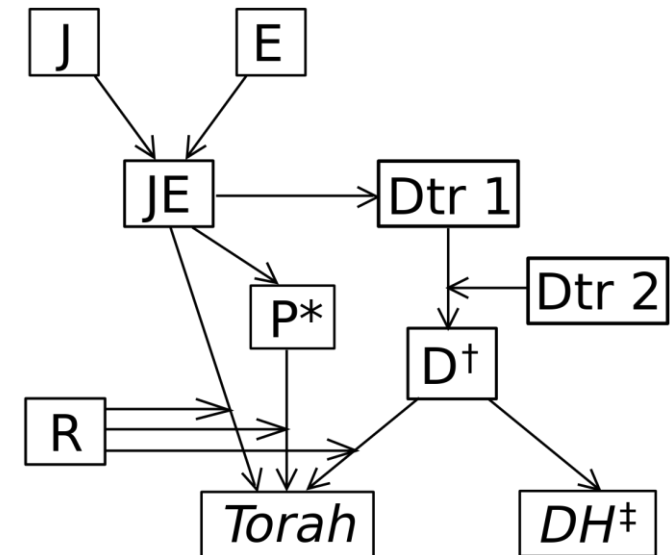






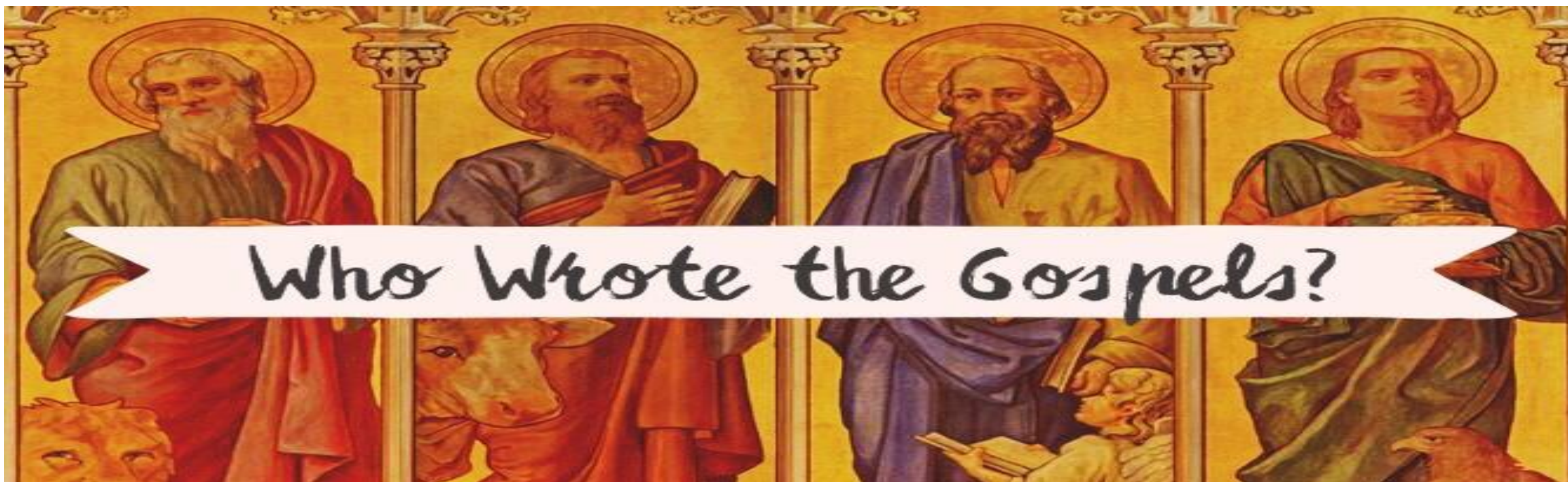
IS THE BIBLE  
*TRULY THE WORD*  
OF GOD? HOW  
DO WE KNOW?

**The Mosaic authorship of the Torah had been largely rejected by leading scholars since the 17th century, and the modern consensus is that it is the product of a long evolutionary process.**





The majority of modern scholars believe that all the gospels have anonymous authors.





Critical scholars have long claimed that most of the 20th-century New Testament scholarship actually represents the views of persons traditionally named as their authors.

# Arguments for & against Faith Decides

(based on tradition)

## Group discussion (2 Minutes Max)

**An ancient pastoral epistle addressed “To the Church in Smyrna” was found.**

**Textual critics and archaeologists have now concluded that it is an authentic Epistle of the Apostle Paul.**

**Should the Epistle To the Church in Smyrna be added to the cannon?**



# The Spirit of Prophecy: God's Gift





# Was Ellen White inspired by God?

# Distinctive Beliefs of the SDA Church

1. Christ's second Advent
2. The seventh-day Sabbath
3. Conditional immortality & State of the dead
4. The Millennium
5. Christ ministers in the heavenly sanctuary,
6. The three angel's message of Rev 14
7. **The Spirit of Prophecy. [That Ellen White was a prophet, inspired by God]**

**“Landmarks” “waymarks,” “pillars of our faith,”  
“the foundations,” “pegs,” and “pins”.**





# Distinctive Beliefs of the SDA Church

**“In SDA thinking, the landmarks are doctrines of such vital importance that they cannot be altered without changing the nature of the SDA Church.”**



[The Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia. \(1996\).  
Review and Herald Publishing Association.](#)



# Distinctive Beliefs of the SDA Church



1. Christ's second Advent

2. The seventh-day Sabbath

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faith,”

**Without Confidence Spirit of  
Prophecy the SDA Church  
loses its Identity and  
legitimacy**

# Work of God or Satan?

Ellen White says that a “power” had “impelled” her ministry.

**Were our founders: Ellen White, James White, Joseph Bates, J. N. Andrews and John Loughbrough deluded liars? And, therefore agents of Satan?**



# Work of God or Satan?

**Is the SDA Church the Work of Satan or God?**

**Are we victims of the “White Lie?”**

**Walter Rea believes that her writings did not originate in Heaven.**





## Visions and Dreams

**“As God has shown me in holy vision the travels of the Advent people to the Holy City, and the rich reward to be given those who wait the return of their Lord from the wedding, it may be my duty to give you a short sketch of what God has revealed to me.” (WLF 14)**

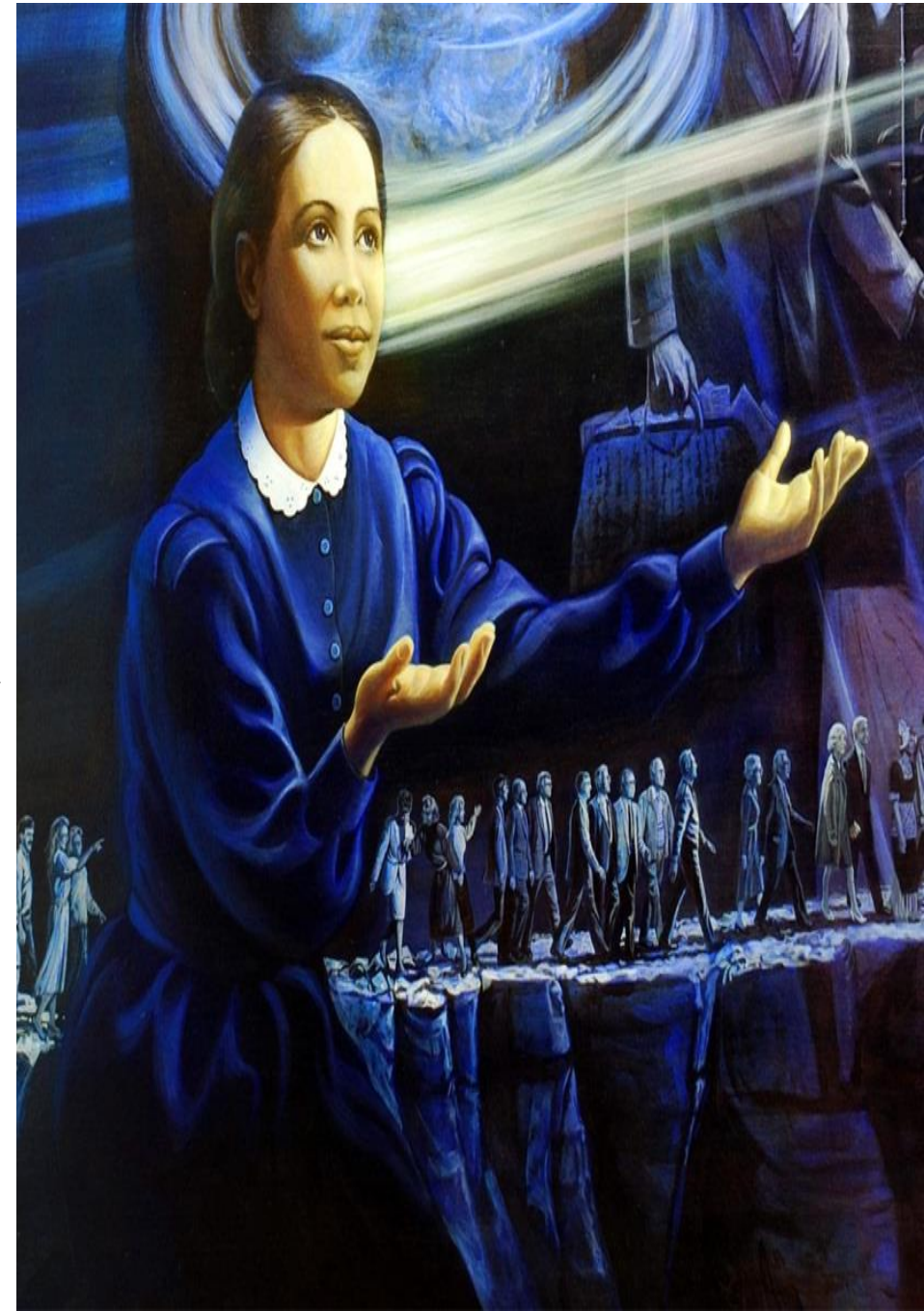


# Visions and Dreams

Regarding her books she said

[Colporteur Ministry, page 125]:

**“Sister White is not the originator of these books. They contain the instruction that during her lifework God has been giving her. They contain the precious, comforting light that God has graciously given His servant to be given to the world.”**

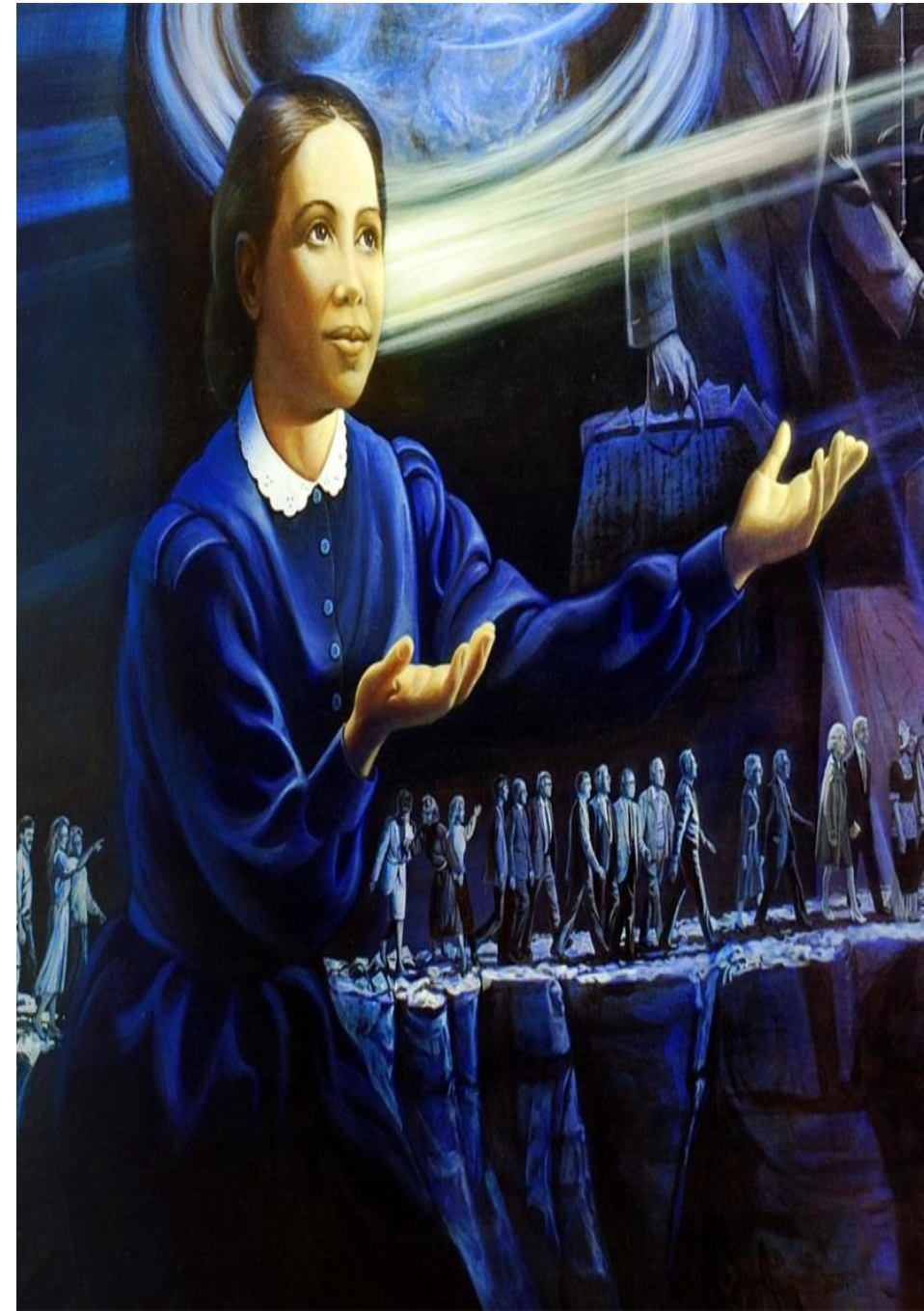




## Visions and Dreams

Regarding Her periodical articles, she said: [Testimonies to the Church, volume 5, page 67]

**“I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision—the precious rays of light shining from the throne.”**





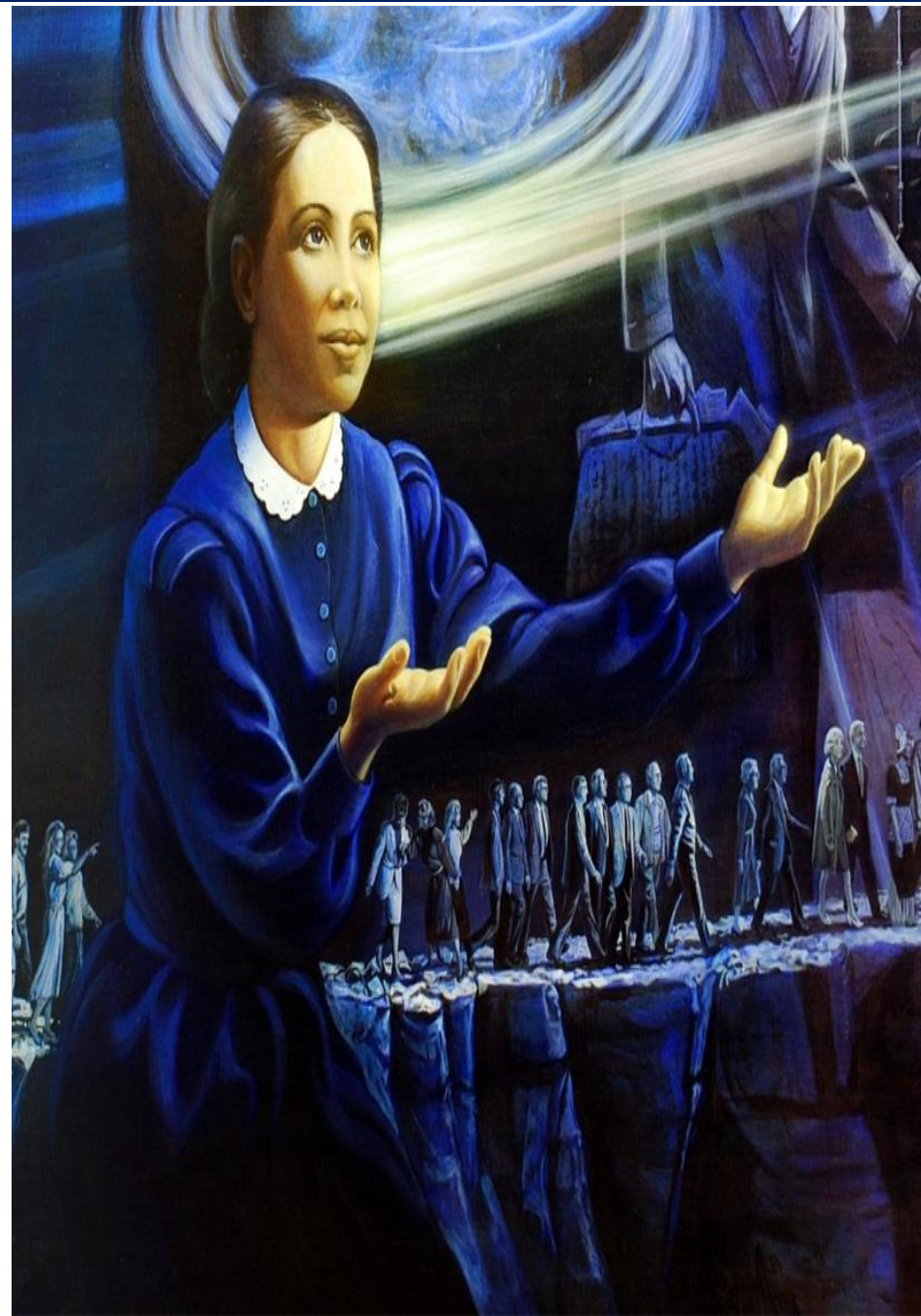
# Visions and Dreams

Personal testimonies also came from

**God:** [Testimonies to the Church, volume 5, page 67]

“Weak and trembling, I arose at three o’clock in the morning to write to you.

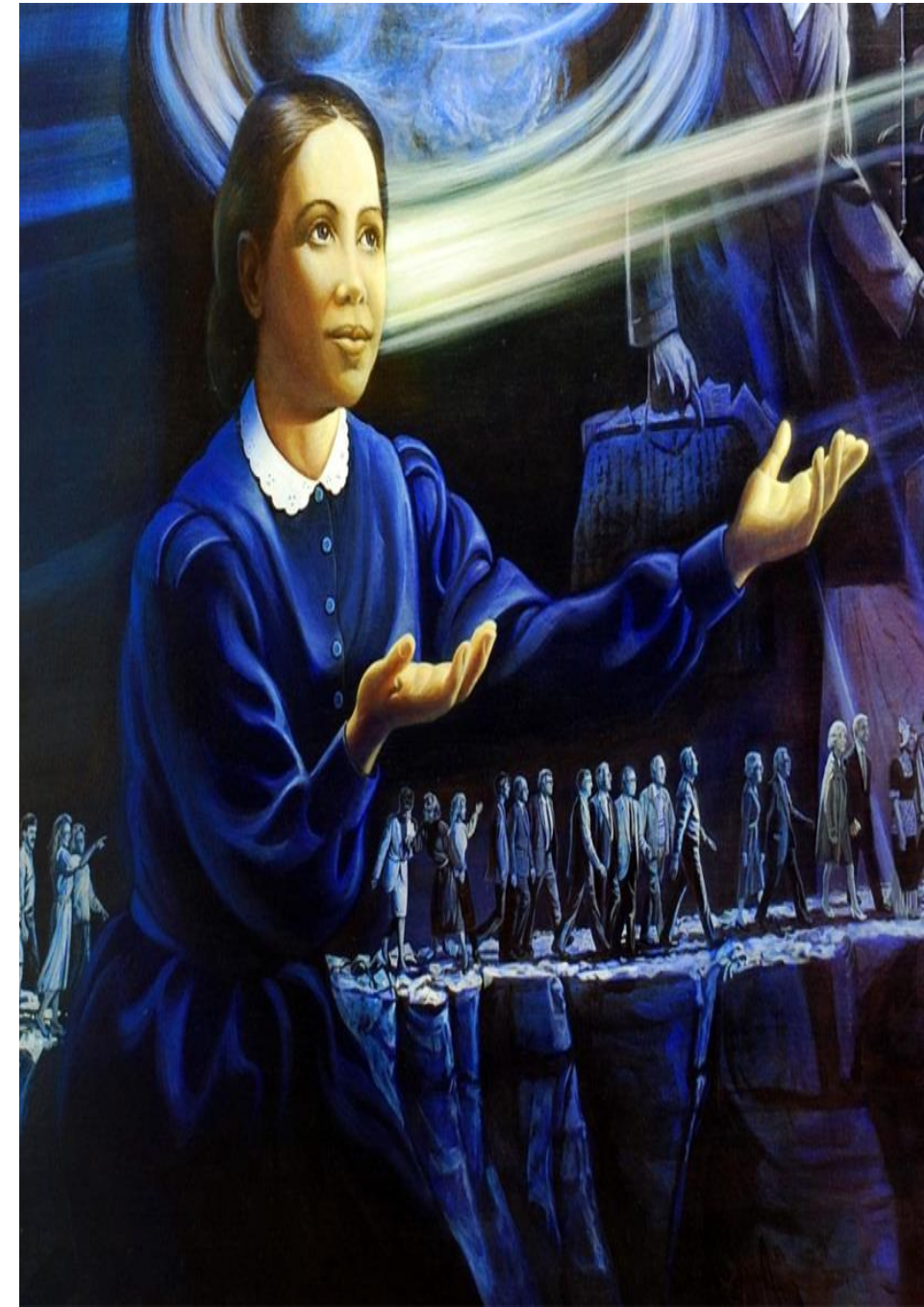
**God was speaking through clay.** You might say that this communication was only a letter. **Yes, it was a letter, but prompted by the spirit of God, to bring before your minds things that had been shown me.** [con’t]



# Visions and Dreams

**Personal testimonies also came from God:** [Testimonies to the Church, volume 5, page 67]

...In these letters which I write, in the testimonies I bear, **I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me.**"





## Supernatural

- 1. In passing into vision, she gives three enrapturing shouts of "Glory!"**
- 2. For a few seconds she would faint, having no strength.**
- 3. She did not breathe during the entire period of a vision that ranged from 15 minutes to 3 hours.**





## Supernatural

**4. Her eyes were always open without blinking; her head was raised, looking upward with a pleasant expression as if staring intently at some distant object.**

**Several physicians, at different times, conducted tests to check her lack of breathing and other physical phenomena.**



# Supernatural

**5. She was utterly unconscious of everything transpiring around her, and viewed herself as removed from this world, and in the presence of heavenly beings.**



## Supernatural

**6. When she came out of vision, all seemed total darkness whether in the day time or a well-lighted room at night.**

**7. Evidence of supernatural strength - Arm Couldn't Be Moved by a Stone Mason**





## Work of God or Satan?

**“God is either teaching His church, reproving their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is not. **God does nothing in partnership with Satan.** My work ... bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. **There is no halfway work in the matter. The Testimonies are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil.**”**

[Testimonies for the Church 4:230.]



# Ellen White's good Fruits

Matt. 7:15 Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 16 **You will know them by their fruits...**



## Ellen White's good Fruits

Act 5:38 And now I say to you, Withdraw from these men and let them alone. For if this counsel or this work is of men, it will come to nothing. 39 But if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it, lest perhaps you be found even to fight against God.





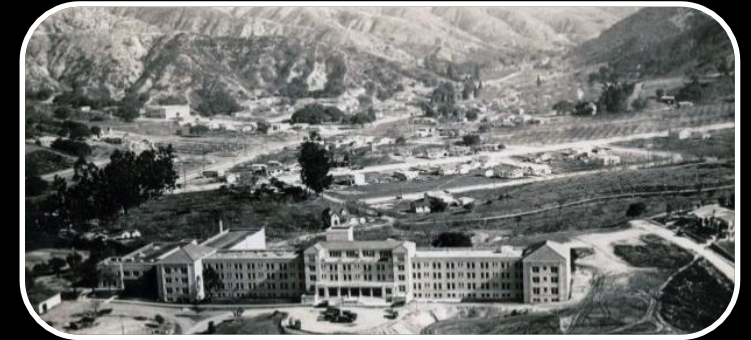
# Ellen White's good Fruits



**Membership: 100,000**



**Publishing Houses: 37**



**Sanitariums: 34**



**Colleges & Academies: 70**



**Elementary Schools: 510**



**Languages: 36**

## Ellen White's good Fruits

“The prevailing sentiment of the speakers who addressed the congregations at St. Helena and at Richmond [at her funeral] was that **Mrs. White's most enduring monument, aside from her godly life and conversation, was her published works, which tend to the purest morality,** *Con't*





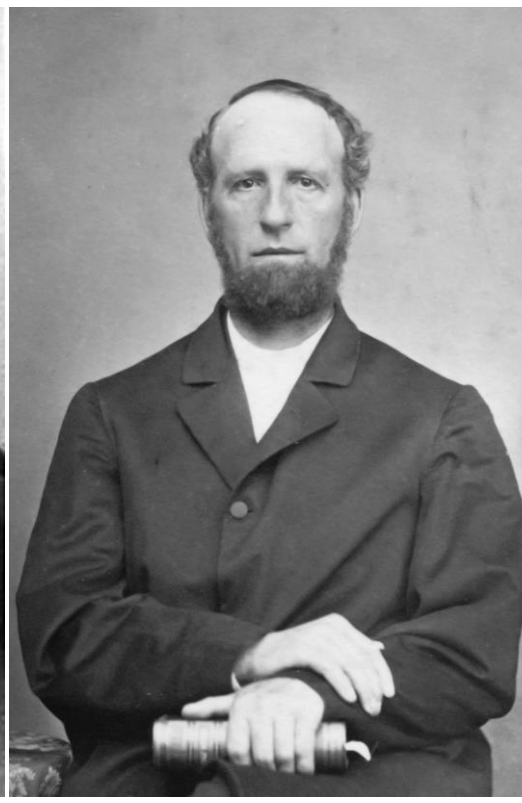
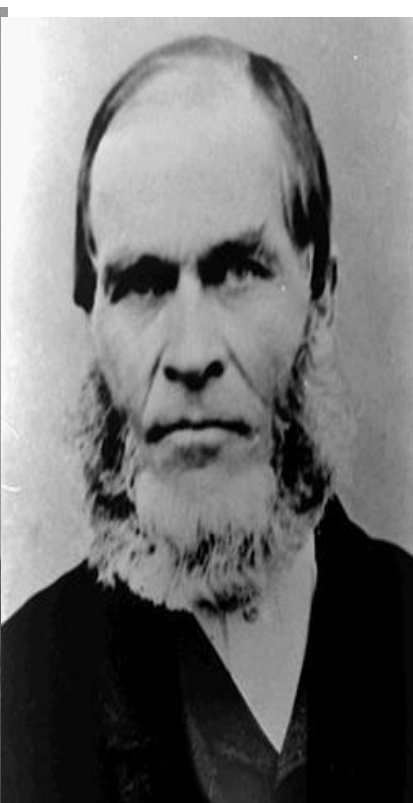
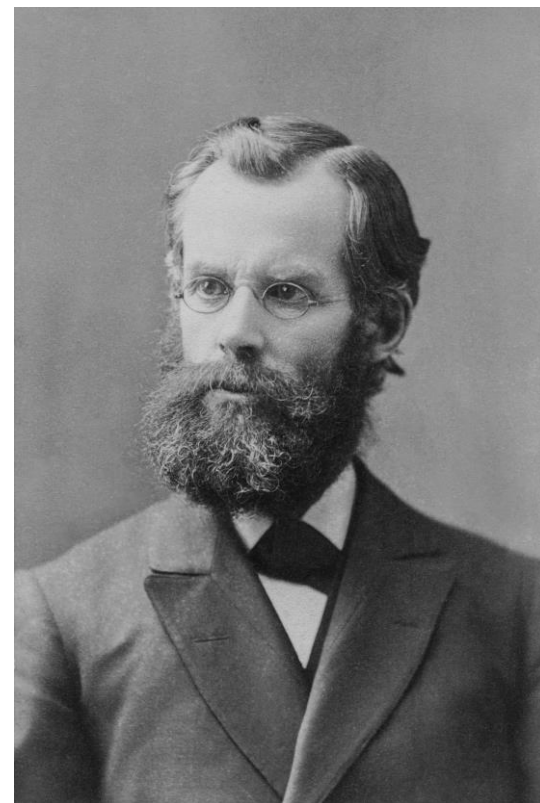
# Ellen White's good Fruits

**lead to Christ and to the Bible, and bring comfort and consolation to many a weary heart.** 'She hath done what she could,' and **now** **'being dead, she yet speaketh .''** (WV 550)





# Ellen Whites Significance Today



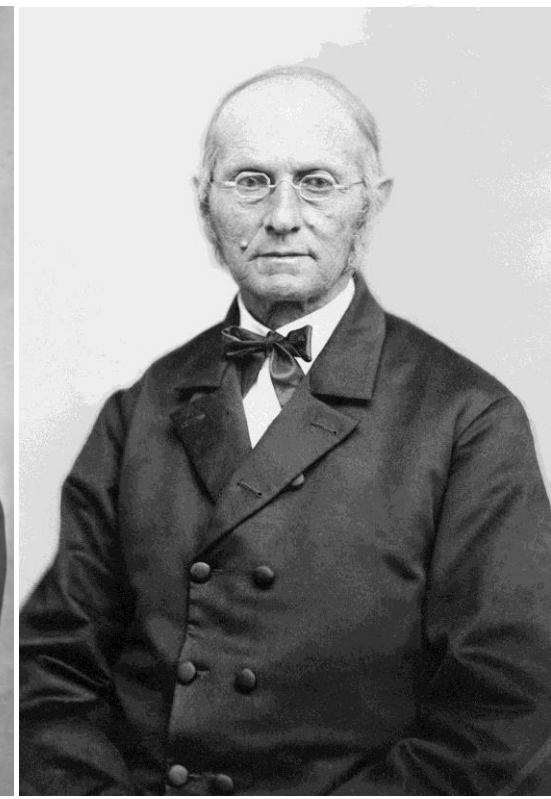
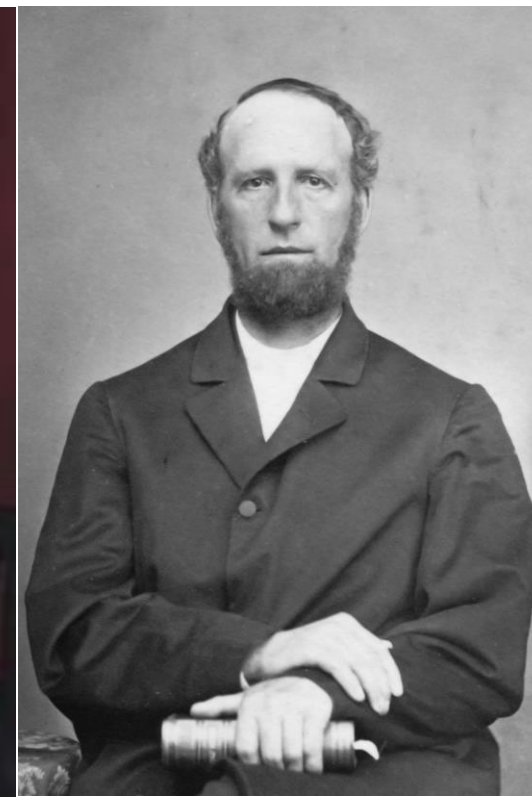
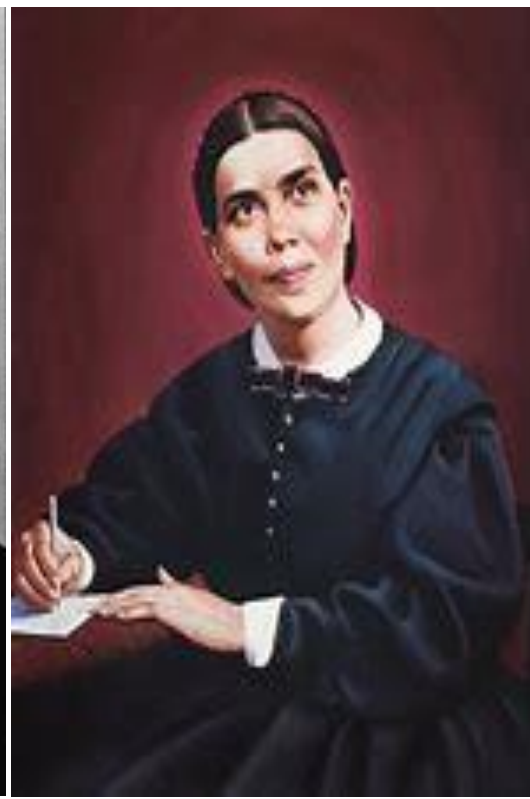
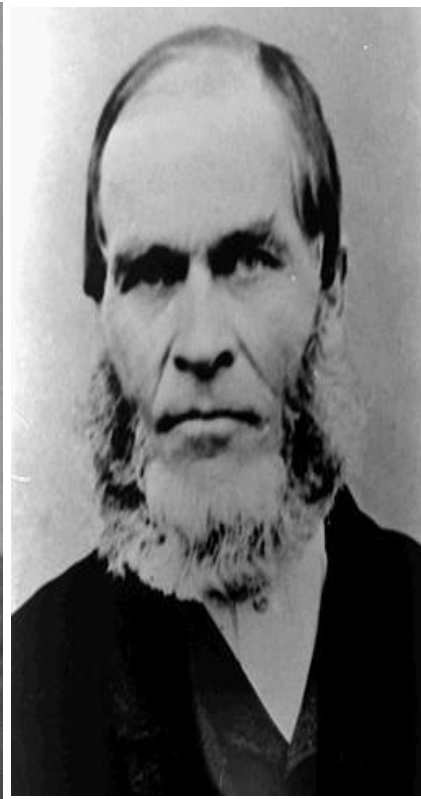
**Which of these pioneers would the average SDA recognize?**





**Which current GC leader would the average SDA recognize?**





Ellen White is the most prominent and important  
Founder of the SDA Church



# Ellen Whites Significance Today

**Total Accessions in 2017 = 1,352,931**

**Membership: 20,727,347**

**Publishing Houses: 59;**

**Medical Facilities: 527;**

**2 Chon 20:20 . . . Believe in Jehovah your God, and so you shall be established. Believe His prophets, and so you shall be blessed.**

**Universities & Colleges: 165**

**Schools: 8,450**

**Countries: 209**

# Ellen Whites Significance Today



Smithsonian (2014) -The 100 Most Significant Americans of all time

The magazine named Ellen G. White among 100 Most Significant American Figures, in an acknowledgement of her influence on religion.





# Ellen Whites Significance Today

Smithsonian (2014) -The 100 Most Significant Americans of all time

The magazine gave Ellen White the distinction of being the **most interesting religious figure in U.S. history.**



# Ellen Whites Significance Today

Historian Randall Balmer has described White as **“one of the more important and colourful figures in the history of American religion.”**





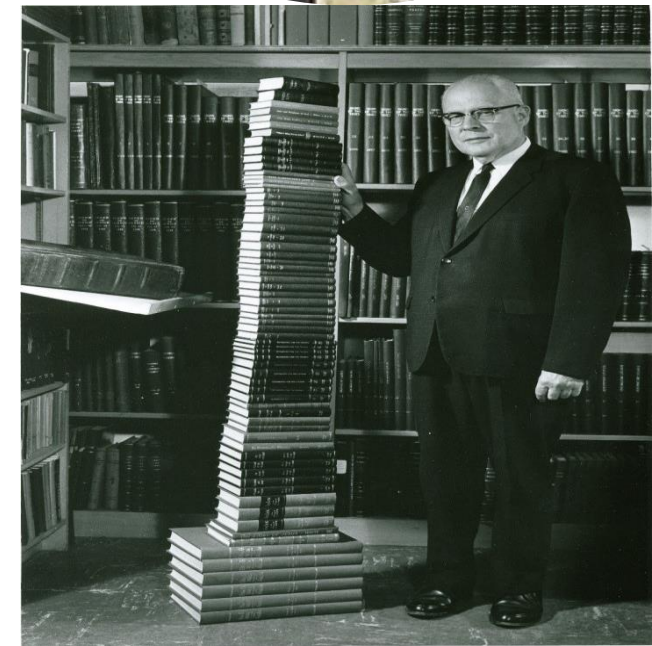
# Ellen Whites Significance Today

Walter Martin (godfather of the anti-cult movement) described her as **"one of the most fascinating and controversial personages ever to appear upon the horizon of religious history"**



# Ellen Whites Significance Today

Arthur L. White, her grandson and biographer, writes that Ellen G. White is the **most translated female non-fiction author in the history of literature, as well as the most translated American non-fiction author of either gender.**





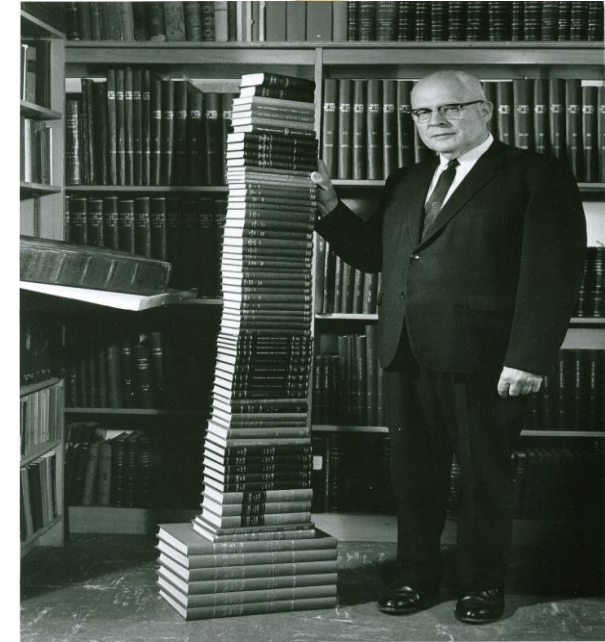
# Ellen Whites Significance Today

- 2018, Ellen White books in 131 languages.
- Users of [egwwritings.org](http://egwwritings.org) has grown from 30,000 unique visitors per month to 1.2 million worldwide!
- An average 70 million “online only” search and book requests per month from EGW Writings apps and Websites.



# Ellen Whites Significance Today

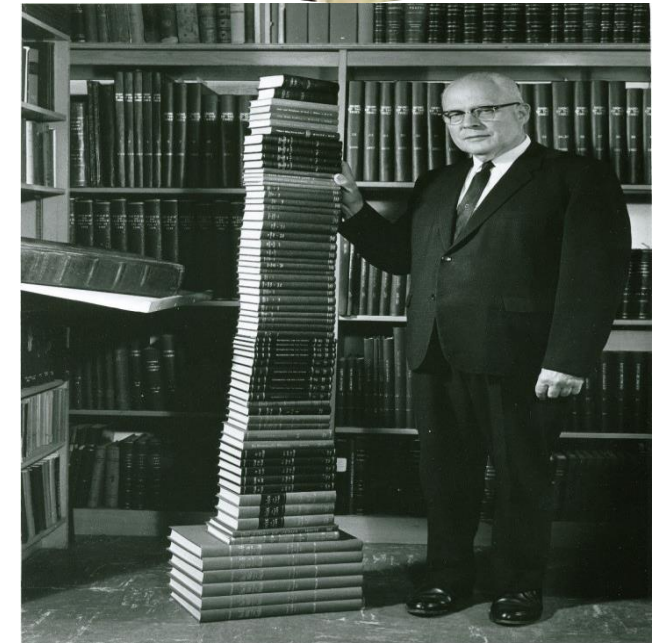
- Phenomenal growth in demand require large increase in EGW cloud capacity.
- In October 2018, users downloaded 1.4 million books to their EGW Writings apps.
- 1.8 million EGW Writings users of our Android apps, plus another 750,000 users of our Apple iOS apps.





# Ellen Whites Significance Today

- More than 500,000 use EGW CD-ROM, and 60,000 users access the EGW Writings apps on their Windows and macOS platforms.
- Users currently download on average 50 Terabytes of data per month from the EGW Writings apps and websites.
- The White Estate sends out 130,000 in-app subscriptions daily and 69,000 daily devotional and daily thought emails.



# Ellen Whites Significance Today

A survey –82% of the readers usually or always have daily personal Bible study.

While only 47% of the non-readers study the Bible daily.

*Evidence that Ellen White's writings lead people to the Bible*





## Ellen White's Function

Are Ellen White's writings  
Relevant Today?



## 1. Fulfilment of God's Promise

- **Guide through Prophetic Gift**
  - Joel 2:28-29
- **Remnant would have the Gift**
  - Rev 12:17
- **Daniel's prophecies were to be understood at the Time of the End. Dan 12:4,9**





## 2. Confirm God's Leading

**Last books of the Bible  
written 98AD**

**Over 1900 years ago!**

**Where is God?**



## 2. Confirm God's Leading

The remnant need  
assurance of God's  
leading





### 3. Encourage the Remnant

**“We needed great patience, for the scoffers were many. We were frequently greeted by scornful references to our former disappointment.”**



## 4. Guide in Bible study

**Millerites from diverse  
theological backgrounds**





## 4. Guide in Bible study

### 21 Century – One Bible

- . Over 30,000 Christian denominations
- . Over 500 Sabbath keeping denominations
- . **Division & Confusion**



## 4. Guide in Bible study

### SDA Controversies Today:

1. Creation
2. Sabbath observance
3. Salvation
4. Sexual freedom
5. Divorce & Remarriage
6. Methods of Church growth
7. Style of worship
8. Lord's Supper
9. Ordination
10. Gender and Sexuality
11. Ellen White,
12. Etc

**MEMBERS DIVIDED**





## 5. Unite the Remnant

Eph 4:11 And he gave ...

**prophets** ... 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 **Till we all come in the unity of the faith**, and of the knowledge of the Son of God ...

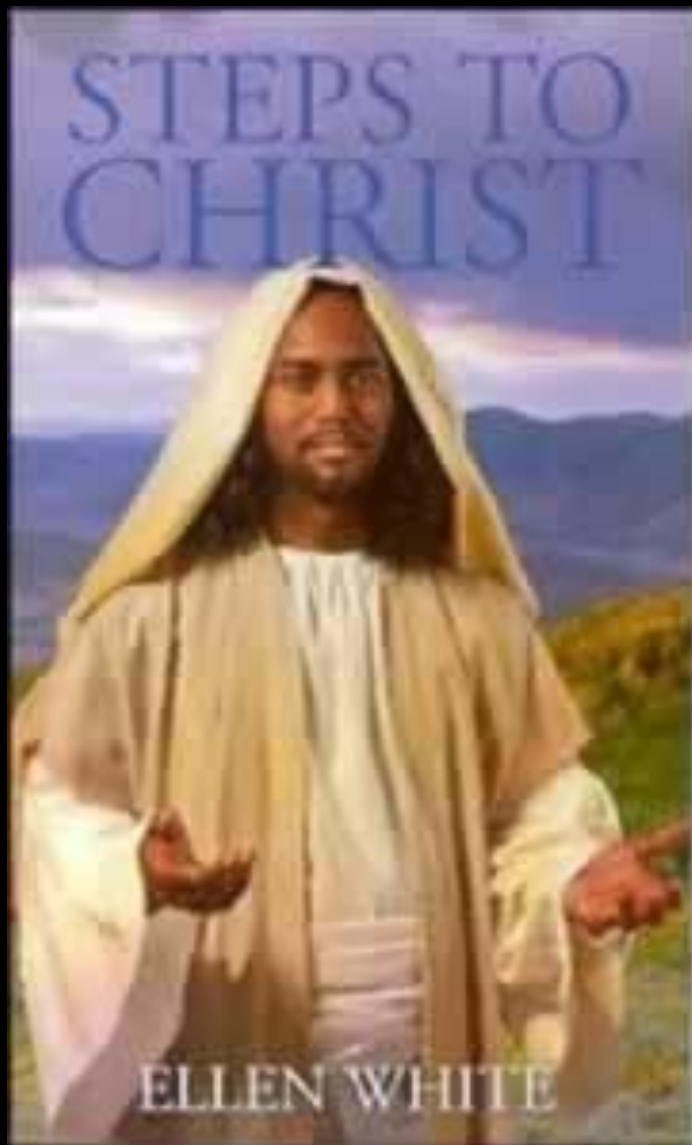


## 6. Identification Mark

Rev 19:10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have **the testimony of Jesus**: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus **is the spirit of prophecy.**







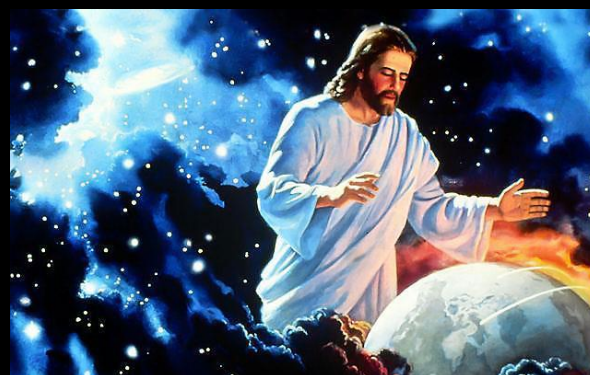
## 7. Prepare disciples for the Second Advent

Best selling book – Steps to Christ  
120 languages

# The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan

CONFLICT OF THE AGES  
BOOK FIVE

## Ellen G. White



## 7. Prepare disciples for the Second Advent

### The Great Controversy



## 7. Prepare disciples for the Second Advent

The book **Great Controversy**,  
I appreciate **above silver or  
gold**, and I greatly desire  
that it shall come before the  
people.



## 7. Prepare disciples for the Second Advent

**“The Lord told her that the paralysis was an attempt by Satan to kill her so she could not write what she had seen.”** CTr 6.2



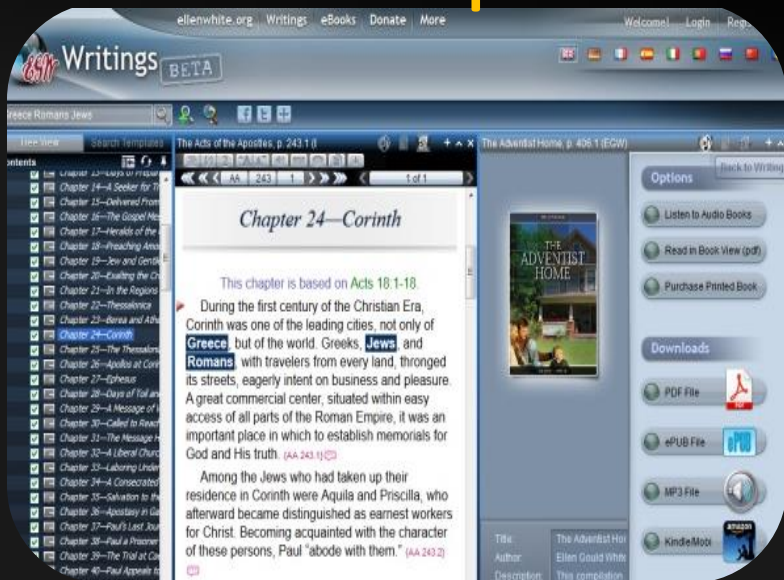


## 7. Prepare disciples for the Second Advent

In The Great Controversy, the **last message of warning to the world** is given more distinctly than in any of my other books.—Letter 281, 1905. {CM 127.1}



# 7. Prepare disciples for the Second Advent



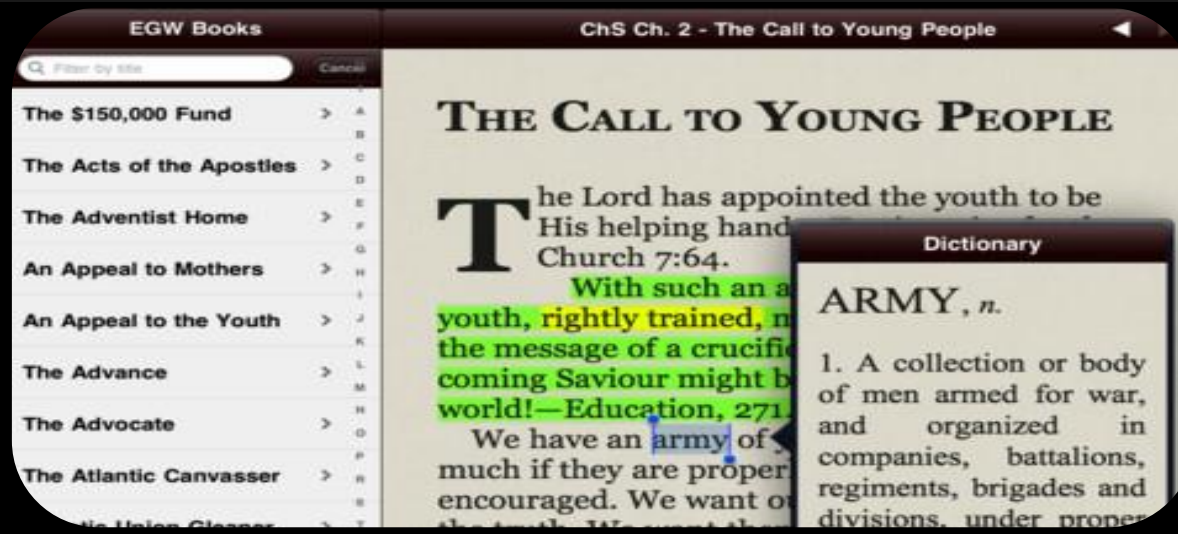
Internet / PC



Devotionals



Android



iPhone

iPhone/  
Mac



# How to Read the Testimonies in 21 Century

## Four Rules:

1. Begin with Prayer
2. Take all prophet has said about a topic under consideration before drawing final conclusion.
3. - Study the context.

Difficulty passages, asks questions such as:

To whom was the statement written?

When was it written?

Why was it written?

What were the circumstances?



# How to Read the Testimonies in 21 Century

## Four Rules:

### 4. Find the principle.

Ellen White wrote: [Education, page 216]

“If girls [...] could learn to harness and drive a horse, and to use the saw and hammer, as well as the rake and hoe, they would be better fitted to meet the emergencies of life.”

- **The principle?**
- Be ready for life:
- Young adult men and women should know how to
- change a tire - change oil - make nutritious meals - sew on a button - use a computer.





# How to Read the Testimonies in 21 Century

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION by George Knight

1. Begin with a Healthy Outlook
2. Focus on the Central Issues
3. Emphasize the Important
4. Account for Problems in Communication
5. Study All Available Information on a Topic
6. Avoid Extreme Interpretations



# How to Read the Testimonies in 21 Century

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION by George Knight

7. Take Time and Place into Consideration

8. Study Each Statement in Its Literary Context

9. Recognize Ellen White's Understanding of the Ideal and the Real

10. Use Common Sense

11. Discover the Underlying Principles

12. Realize That Inspiration Is Not Infallible, Inerrant, or Verbal





# Confidence in the Testimonies

Mrs. White's most enduring monument, aside from her godly life and conversation, was her published works, which tend to the purest morality, lead to Christ and to the Bible, and bring comfort and consolation to many a weary heart. **'She hath done what she could,' and now 'being dead, she yet speaketh.'** (WV 550)



# Confidence in the Testimonies

General Conference, 1882 resolution:

That we express our unabated confidence in the Testimonies which have been so graciously given to this people, which have **guided our ways and corrected our errors**, from the rise of the third angel's message to the present time; and that we especially express our gratitude for Testimony No. 31, which **we accept as a token of the care of God**



**If Christianity isn't changing people,  
it will lose its significance, importance and relevancy!**

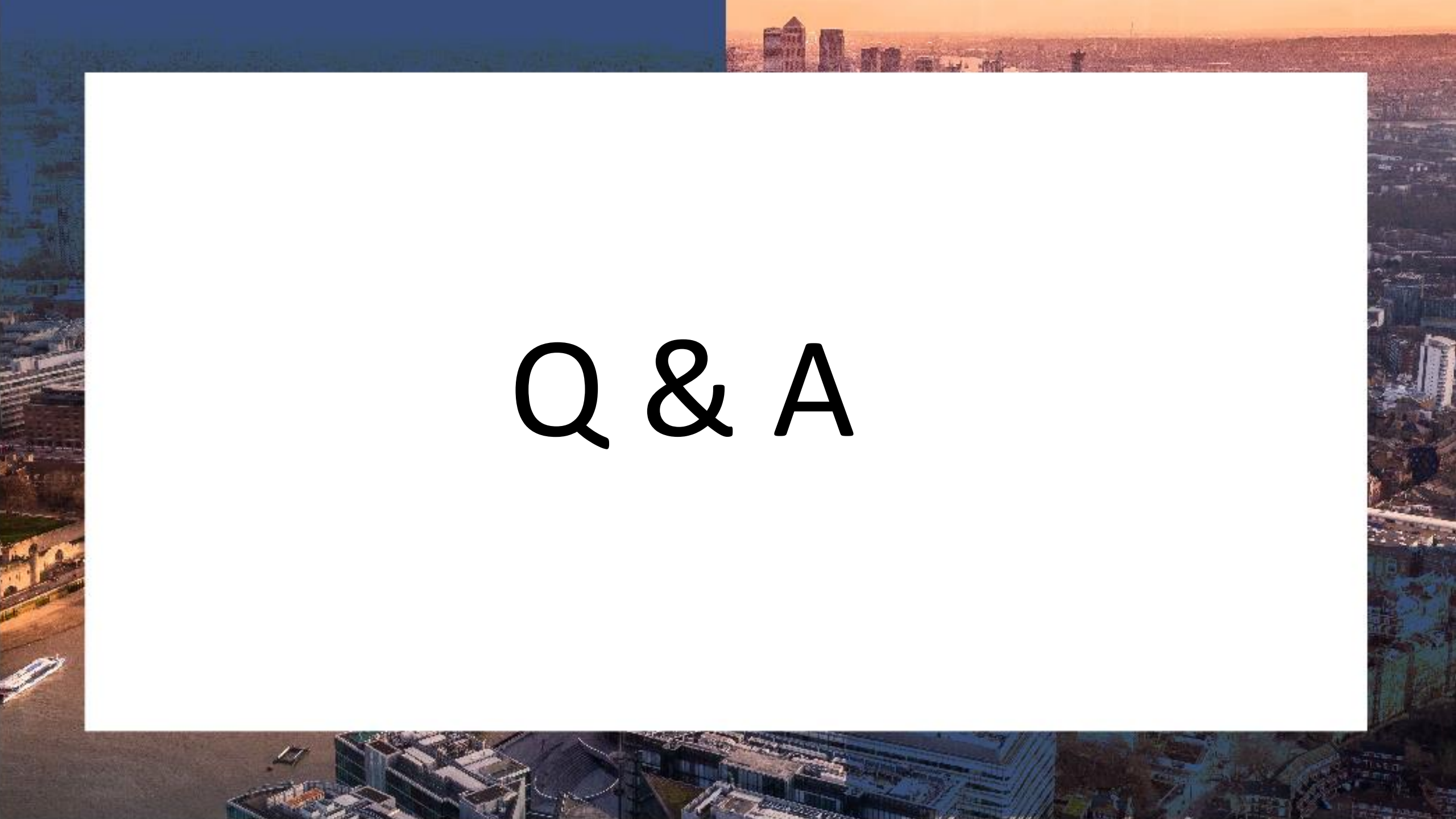
# Confidence in the Testimonies

**Talk Faith and Encouragement**—Let us take heed to our words. **Let us talk faith, and we shall have faith.** Never give place to a thought of discouragement in the work of God. Never utter a word of doubt. It is as **seed sown in the heart of both speaker and hearers**, to produce a **harvest of discouragement and unbelief.**—Letter 77, 1895. Ev 633.1



**Our CHILDREN mirror our UNBELIEF**



An aerial photograph of a city skyline at sunset, with a large white rectangular box in the center. The text "Q & A" is written in a large, black, sans-serif font within the white box. The background shows a dense urban landscape with various buildings and a river in the foreground.

Q & A



**ADVENTISM OF FOR 21<sup>ST</sup> C EUROPE**

Rediscovering Adventist Identity and Mission in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Europe