

05-Fanning the Flames of LGT: 1957 to the Historic Church Movement

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November 7, 2020; 4:00 PM, Sabbath Afternoon

I-The Evangelicals Seek Out the Adventists

1. A Radio Program on the way to the 1955/1956 Evangelical Meetings with the Adventists.
 - a. Donald Grey Barnhouse (March 28, 1895 – November 5, 1960), Editor of Eternity Magazine (1950) and pastor of the Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania from 1927 to his death in 1960. As a pioneer in radio broadcasting, his program, The Bible Study Hour, continues today and is now known as Dr. Barnhouse & the Bible.
 - b. **Walter Ralston Martin** (September 10, 1928 – June 26, 1989), was an American Baptist Christian minister and author who founded the Christian Research Institute in 1960 as a para-church ministry specializing as a clearing-house of information in both general Christian apologetics and in counter-cult apologetics. As the author of the influential *The Kingdom of the Cults* (1965), he has been dubbed the "godfather of the anti-cult movement".
 - c. **T. E. Unruh** () When these events took place, Unruh was president of the East Pennsylvania Conference. He was driving home listening to Barnhouse's program on his car radio. He was speaking on Righteousness by Faith from the book of Romans. Unruh wrote him a letter on **Nov. 28, 1949** to compliment him and express how much he had enjoyed the program.
2. The Heresy of Steps to Christ
 - a. "Barnhouse was surprised to get a glowing review from an Adventist regarding Righteousness by Faith because he knew they were legalists. In his reply to my letter Barnhouse expressed astonishment that an Adventist clergyman would commend him for preaching righteousness by faith, since in his opinion it was a well known fact that Seventh-day Adventists believed in righteousness by works. He went on to state that since boyhood he had been familiar with Adventists and their teachings, and that in his opinion their views about the nature and work of Christ were Satanic and dangerous. He concluded by inviting this strange Adventist to have lunch with him."¹
 - b. They were never able to arrange a lunch date because of their busy schedules so Unruh mailed him a copy of *Steps to Christ* by Ellen White. Being a Calvinist or Reformed Theologian; Barnhouse blasted the book in his Eternity Magazine for its Arminianism. When Unruh saw that article, he just dropped the whole connection with Barnhouse and thought that was the end of it.
3. Our Hope Magazine, November, 1956 issue
 - a. First clearest affirmation of Adventism by E. Schuyler English in Our Hope Magazine, November, 1956.
 - b. Walter R. Martin in the same issue wrote a 12 page article, "Seventh-Day (sic) Adventism Today." In it, he list four major misconceptions about Adventists
 - i. That the atonement of Christ was not completed upon the cross
 - ii. That salvation is the result of grace plus the works of the law
 - iii. That the Lord Jesus Christ was a created being, not from all eternity
 - iv. That He partook of man's sinful fallen nature at the incarnation

¹ T. E. Unruh, *The Seventh-day Adventists Evangelical Conferences of 1955-1956*

- c. “After an exhaustive examination of the history and theology of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination covering a seven-year period, the last year and a half of which have been spent in top-level conferences with officials [representatives] of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, this writer as a research polemicist has no hesitation whatsoever in stating that those previous [individual] positions so widely seized upon by the enemies of Adventism have been totally repudiated by the Seventh-day Adventist denomination for some years. To charge the majority of Adventists today with holding these heretical views is unfair, inaccurate, and decidedly unchristian!”²
 - d. English noted in his affirmation of Adventist that we believed in the verbal inspiration of the Bible. Martin, in the same *Our Hope Magazine* article stated a number of common beliefs which included the belief by Adventists of biblical inerrancy. While both views are held within Adventism by a number of people, usually the very conservative; the two positions are not officially held by the denomination, and for several reasons.
4. *The Road to Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine* (1957)
 - a. Walter Martin was preparing for a book on the errors within Adventism. Barnhouse suggested he contact the Adventists first, remembering the letter from Unruh in 1948. Martin requested a series of interviews with representatives of the denomination and requested some literature as part of his research. This was granted to him. He had drawn up a list of about 40 questions, and wanting to be fair, he wanted to have the facts before writing. The questions were drawn largely from reading material from former Adventists such as D. M. Canright, E. B. Jones and E. S. Ballenger, brother of the late Albion Fox Ballenger who was dismissed in 1905 from the denomination for his teaching on the Sanctuary Doctrine.
 - b. After a phone call with T. E. Unruh, Martin set up the first meeting with Unruh sitting as chair. Martin came with Dr. George Cannon of Nyack College, a college on the Hudson who taught Greek and met with Leroy Froom and Roy Allan Anderson. This was the first of some 18 meetings which would last two to three days each. The meetings were held between Washington, D.C. (Tacoma Park, MD offices for the denomination), Reading, PA; and New York City.
 - c. The meetings were held in context of three categories of Adventism’s structural foundation.
 - i. Beliefs held in common (list of 19)
 - ii. Beliefs held in common with other Protestant denominations (list of 12)
 - iii. Beliefs held only by Adventists (list of 5)
 1. Two areas of teaching Barnhouse and Martin pointedly asked
 - a. Deity of Christ
 - b. Atonement as a completed Act on the cross.
5. *The Book Feared by Many* comes into its own
 - a. The questions were organized for publication in order to be shared with non-Adventist institutions and libraries. The questions were answered in such a way, so as to communicate our beliefs to non-Adventists; in a language they would readily understand. To some Adventists, these answers fell upon deaf ears.

² LeRoy E Froom, *Movement of Destiny* (Tacoma Park, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association -1971), page 473.

- b. The meetings were not generally known outside of top leadership. But when it was decided to introduce what was happening, a number of articles were published in Ministry Magazine. But it was Donald G. Barnhouse's article in his September, 1956 magazine, *Eternity* that the Evangelical Meetings came to light for Andreasen.
 - i. "Andreasen was further disturbed by Barnhouse's declaration that those who opposed the "new position" taken by Adventist leaders belonged to the "lunatic fringe," and "wild-eyed irresponsibles."³
 1. The book had two main areas that cut across Andreasen's LGT theology. That of the atonement and the nature of Christ.
 - ii. Andreasen was not part of the 250 who were sent manuscripts of QoD to review. I believe he was purposely kept out of the loop because of his last generation theology.
 - iii. "What actually prompted Andreasen to voice his concerns, however, was LeRoy Edwin Froom's February 1957 article in *Ministry* entitled "The Priestly Application of the Atoning Act."
 - iv. Began with the October 15, 1957 Letter on the Atonement. First of 9 on Jan. 15, 1958. The Letters to the Churches were printed together in August 1959. The first set was only to those in the Adventist Year book. The letters were to the general membership when he felt he could get nowhere with the official leadership of the church.
 - c. The book *Seventh-day Adventist Answer Questions on Doctrine* (1957) was to be sold side-by-side in our ABCs with Walter R. Martin's book, *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism* (1962). The Adventists reneged.
6. QoD Gives Birth to the Historic Church Movement
- a. "In the years between 1957 and 1971, Leroy Edwin Froom, W. E. Read, and Roy Allan Anderson, the three primary participants of the dialogues and key contributors to the original draft of Questions on Doctrine, were particularly active in their defense of the conferences and the book. In response to Adventist critics who felt that the book had deviated from historic Adventist orthodoxy, they were quick to assert that Questions on Doctrine did not teach any new doctrine, but was simply a new presentation of the same historic teachings that Adventists had long held."⁴
 - b. "However, the theological heirs of Andreasen have found such developments deeply troubling. Since 1971, several independent ministry groups have arisen within the Adventist church that have self-consciously embraced Andreasen's postlapsarian views and the accompanying theology of the final generation, which they believe is supported by the writings of Ellen White. Since their inception, these groups have warned against the evangelicalization of Adventism and have issued calls to the church at large to return to the Adventism of the pre-Questions on Doctrine era."⁵

³ Julius Nam, *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, vol. 46, no. 2, 229-244. Copyright © 2008 Andrews University Press. Page 230.

⁴ Julius Nam, *Questions on Doctrine Saga: Contours and Lessons*, Paper presented at the Questions on Doctrine 50th Anniversary Conference held at Andrews University on October 24-27, 2007.

⁵ *Ibid.*

7. Several Independent Self-Supporting Ministries Warning of the Apostasy in the Church.
 - a. Hope International
 - i. Ron Spear
 - ii. Founded in 1964 in response to QoD. In 1985, retired evangelist and pastor Ron Spear became speaker/director. Originally based in Eatonville, WA, then Knoxville, IL.
 - iii. Our Firm Foundation was their monthly magazine, started when Spear arrived. It is no longer in print.
 - b. Steps to Life
 - i. Marshall and John Grosball
 - ii. In 1982, Pastor Marshall Grosboll decided to buy his first computer. He produced a set of 30 Bible Lessons he titled, Steps to Life
 - iii. In 1987, Pastor Marshall Grosboll began the Steps to Life television program in Wichita, Kansas, and Steps to Life is still on television every Sunday morning in Wichita on Fox 24. A Monthly Magazine, - Landmarks and a Newsletter – In His Steps.
 - iv. Steps to Life is locally affiliated with the Prairie Meadows Church in the Wichita, Kansas area, and with other churches in several nearby towns. They also sponsor Bible workers and health evangelists around the globe.
 - c. Hartland Institute
 - i. Colin (First president: 1983-2011) and Russell Standish (Colin's twin brother) who headed a similar ministry in their home country of Australia.
 - ii. College establish in 1983 in Rapidan, Virginia. Hartland Publications was started in 1984.
 - iii. Has a training program for evangelists.
 - d. Prophecy Countdown
 - i. John W. Osborne, Jr.
 - ii. PROPHECY COUNTDOWN, INC. has been set up 11/19/1984 in state FL, originally in Dora FL. The company is still active and the registered agent is John W Osborne, Jr., 2527 N Orangewood St., Avon Park, FL, 33825.
 - iii. TV ministry in Florida and became the main vehicle for video outreach for a large portion of the movement's ministries.
8. Other independent Ministries that were not as aggressive towards the GC.
 - a. Amazing Facts
 - i. Joe Crews (1965-1994)
 - ii. Doug Bachelor (1994 – Present)
 - iii. One of the more successful ministries with Radio, TV and Online ministry. Includes AFCE for training lay people in evangelism.
 - b. Three ABN
 - i. Began in the early morning hours of November 15, 1984, by Danny Shelton, a carpenter from Southern Illinois.
 - ii. A very conservative program, they provided a place at the table for others to join them. Always sought to work with the denomination, not against it.

9. Do not let the Message become marred in your hands.
 - a. Since 1957, the Adventist Church has been on a running battle over two distinct gospels. How one understands it will flavor and influence how we handle and deliver the message of the three angles.
 - i. Is the message a warning message and a description of the saved? Are we navel gazing to see who qualifies for eternal life?
 - ii. Is the message a rescue message, heralded to save as many souls as possible on this sinking ship called earth before it's too late? Are we to look out beyond ourselves to evangelize the world with the **εὐαγγέλιον (gospel)**?

Go to: 06-The Last Message of Hope: Are You Prepared to Share It?

Suggested Reading:

Andreasen, Milian L., *Sanctuary Service, The* (Takoma Park, MD: Review and Herald, 1937/1947). See the chapter, "The Last Generation."

Andreasen, Milian L.; *Letters to the Churches* (1959).

LMN Publishing, *The M. L. Andreasen File: Manuscripts and Letters Pertaining to the Evangelical Conference of 1955-1956* (St. Maries, ID: LMN Publishing International – 1993)

Froom, Leroy; *Movement of Destiny* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association – 1971)

Julius Nam, *Questions on Doctrine Saga: Contours and Lessons*, Paper presented at the Questions on Doctrine 50th Anniversary Conference held at Andrews University on October 24-27, 2007.