

full authority and accuracy of the Bible as Word of God. The terms are not understood to refer in any sense to a dictation/verbal theory of Biblical inspiration.

Article 3 reads: "We endorse the use of historical-grammatical Biblical interpretation recognizing the necessity of the Holy Spirit's aid in so doing. We reject the use of any form of the 'historical-critical' method in Biblical study." As a co-founder of *ATS* I am particularly pleased by the inclusion of this Article, as I witnessed first hand the devastation to faith and mission the historical-critical method produced in my former Church. Recent events in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and the Southern Baptist Convention underscore similar devastation, which has, fortunately, been courageously and successfully reversed in those denominations. As one in the early joys of acceptance of the Adventist message I appreciated immensely the rejection of the historical-critical method by the 1974 Bible Conferences, and later by the "Methods of Bible Study Report"—(*Adventist Review*, Jan. 22, 1987), which reinforced my confidence that I had found a secure Bible-based spiritual home in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. *All the presenters at the 1974 Bible Conferences contributed to that confidence.*

I wish to extend to Dr. Leo R. Van Dolson, who has served as distinguished editor for the first six issues of *JATS*, the most extensive word of appreciation for his outstanding service and dedicated labor. He has taken on new duties in revising a major SDA resource volume, forcing him to relinquish the editorship of *JATS*. Elder Frank B. Holbrook has been elected as editor and several associate editors have kindly consented to assist him. We wish them God's blessings for their volunteer ministry in editing *JATS*.

May this issue of *JATS* prove to be a rich source of reading pleasure, and may the Lord continue to empower by His Spirit the message and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church!

Yours in the service of the Master,

C. Raymond Holmes

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THE ROLE OF SDA EDUCATION IN THE FORMATION OF ADVENTIST LIFESTYLE

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Because Seventh-day Adventists believe that *the work of redemption and the work of Christian education are one and the same*, we have in that very belief the conceptual construct for a theology of education: the Christian Gospel—in theory and application. Parents *are* expected to train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; that is an unmistakable injunction in both Testaments (Deut 6:3-5; Prov 22:6; Isa 54:13; Eph 6:4).

From Eden onward we know that the home school is clearly mandated as a residual base for spiritual instruction (about God—theology). We know also that in Old Testament times the prophet Samuel, under divine inspiration, raised up a small network of prophetic schools to ensure the spiritual prosperity of Israel (2 Kings 2). This appears to be the first institutionalized expression of religious instruction. And the cathedral schools of medieval times, under the auspices of the Catholic church, perpetuated the custom, broadening it to include popular education, as well as pre-seminary studies. The great Protestant reformer, Martin Luther, established and encouraged such schools, with the same spiritual objectives as Samuel. We are in the train of that noble legacy since Ellen G. White re-enshrined this grand legacy as a centerpiece of Adventism. Her able articulation of the role of Chris-

tian education as a prime vehicle for the transmission of religious values and purpose constitutes a profound theology of Christian education, and is probably best expressed in her landmark volume *Education*, particularly Part 1, entitled "First Principles" (pp. 13-22). Unknown to most Adventists, however, are the six chapters in *Ministry of Healing* (pages 396-475), which vie with her better known prime piece, in terms of incisive insight and literary majesty.

Establishing the link between theology and pedagogy is not all that difficult, for it is clear from His Word that *God has transparent educational objectives*—and preferred instructional modalities—in mind for the restoration of the race. And that is "curriculum" in anybody's language!

If genuine education means being molded—or perhaps we should say re-molded in the likeness of our Creator, then the mission and goals of education are settled. God is out to repair the damage, to re-model, to overhaul His creation, with a special focus on His creatures. The Bible is saturated with expected learning and lifestyle outcomes; they are clearly enunciated. What role does education play in that overhaul? We will attempt to answer that question in terms of (1) the core curriculum, (2) the content of the core curriculum, (3) teaching the core curriculum, (4) redemptive discipline, (5) modern schools of the prophets, and (6) confronting lifestyle issues.

The Core Curriculum

Every corporate effort is at first—and last—wound around some central organizing concept, or principle, which anchors and focuses the whole endeavor. Some of our scholars have dealt with this paradigmatic reality under the rubric of presuppositions. They have examined the powerful gravitational pull of central ideas, and the foundational theological studies that inherently flow from such an ideological commitment. No less true is this of education, which educators refer to as "core curriculum"—that is, the anchor concepts and studies that organize and give meaning to the whole educational experience. These become the studies that define, organize, and illuminate all others. Theology is indeed such a discipline.

Every young freshman at a Christian college learns early on

in Bible classes what theology is—the study of God. An awesome, staggering assignment it is (but an ineffable privilege), to be a Bible teacher, to initiate youth into this sacred science. What a way to spend a life! Is there any other study quite like it? May we pose a parallel? Ornithology, the study of birds. So, what does it mean to study birds? It involves learning many things, such as the distinctive shape, size, and coloring of some of the different species, their living patterns, their anatomy and physiology, and what they eat, how they mate and reproduce, their various songs, the assorted flight patterns, etc. And how does one pursue ornithology? By watching birds and by reading about them from those who have watched and written about them.

How then would one pursue theology? Similarly, by watching God and by reading about Him from those who have watched and written about Him. This should lead us to know God—that is, to know what He is like, what He does, what His attitudes are, what His priorities are, what His temperament is, what His abilities are, what His tendencies are, what His procedures are, what His preferences are, what His timetable is, etc. Much of theology focuses on what God thinks, how He thinks, and how He behaves in certain circumstances. It also tries to suggest what is His relationship with beings whom He has created, creatures who are alternately negative and positive in their feelings toward Him.

Why, then, the study of theology as core curriculum in Christian education? Because we believe that we can never really understand the human situation until we place it in the total construct of the divine. The earthly has to take its place congruently in the cosmic. Consequently, theology must be the very core of core curriculum in Christian education. Humanistic studies, rooted as they are in Greco-Roman lore and assumptions for the starting place of a liberal arts education, doesn't begin to take in the whole picture of man in the universe. It just doesn't cut it. Hardly "liberating," in any complete sense of the word, considering the human predicament. Youth instinctively comprehend that.

Surely a pagan center for Christian education must appear as "strange fire on the altar" as far as God is concerned! No, the real Gospel has to be at the center of true Christian education, not out on the periphery. Core curriculum if you please. If it is not so

located, we short-change a whole generation who come to us looking for cosmic, and personal, meaning. For answers, not for more questions.

An observation regarding the general strategy of presentation of “our” theology, *our* Gospel to our youth might be worthy of reflection. It was evident, upon closer inspection of the Valuegenesis research—after the initial euphoric reassurance that our pastors, Sabbath School teachers, and educators are not spiritually derailing their young charges after all—that our young people are indeed confused about the Gospel.¹ Their placement on the “works” scale was, for all practical purposes, as high as that of “grace.” They seemed equally comfortable with either. Disturbing. This certainly indicates that much greater clarity about the central locus of salvation needs attention with the youth in our schools. In fact, would it be too strong to say that what we have on our hands now with the younger generation is, theologically speaking, an emergency situation?

Imagine this Adventist school scenario: two student theology clubs organize on campus, one aggressively liberal and the other arch-conservative, with many of our youth holding *joint membership*, suspecting no ideological dissonance present at all in the circumstance. To which some mugwump theologians among us would cynically ask, “Why not? Then they’d have the whole gospel!” No, decidedly no. The eternal stakes are much too high, and our responsibility as spiritual guides of the young too awesome for any “on-the-one-hand/on-the-other-hand” theology in working with youth today. They are looking for a certain anchor for their young lives, wanting to develop *faith*. Theologizing is far more than an issue of scholarship, a mere matter of academic respectability.

Clearly, the Valuegenesis study revealed that there is a basic need to integrate Seventh-day Adventist formal education and the message of Righteousness by Faith (“Christ, Our Righteousness,” or Justification by Faith). It is this emphasis that will correctly shape, motivate, and guide the educational process. We are talking about a *Steps to Christ* message, framed in the setting of *The Great Controversy*. No “cheap grace” signaled in this type presentation of the divine-human partnership. We’ve heard it all before, but it must

be regularly repeated. Is that not what preaching/teaching is all about?

The law of God demands perfect obedience. This the sinner owes to the law. Christ came, lived, and died to meet the claims of the law for us. His *life* provided the *obedience* that the law required. His *death* paid the *penalty* that the law demanded. This is available to the sinner through *faith*. True faith is both mental assent *and* action based on that belief. Man comes into happy, intelligent cooperation with God’s prescriptions for saving grace, as he/she experiences *the power* as well as the pardon of the Gospel.²

The Content of the Core Curriculum

There is a need for a *balanced, complete* view of this central message. We need to be stirred to *both confidence and obedience*. Prior to 1888 Seventh-day Adventists heard much about obedience, but little about confidence. Since that time we have increasingly stressed the confidence that can be ours, but have simultaneously de-emphasized the obedience by faith that is the prerequisite for obtaining Christ’s imputed righteousness. Little wonder that our youth are confused about the Gospel! At present, the message of love has become focused almost exclusively on the mercy aspect. But, *love has two parts: justice and mercy*.

Ellen White says plainly that “God’s love has been expressed in His justice no less than in His mercy.”³ With the present de-emphasis of obedience, there is a playing down of the sinful human condition which requires a Savior. We have come *NOT* to see our need. Thus, we have come to devalue God’s love.

The young people in our schools need to hear—and will respond to—a demanding message, one that shows we are indeed sinners but which, at the same time, shows the sinners’ hope. Only those who are sick need a physician. The problem is that many of our youth leaders, pastors and teachers, have become afraid to tell the youth of their, our, desperate need. Thus, we have come to lightly value the Savior. We need to hear much more concerning the standards and principles of the Law of God *while* we hear no less of the marvelous righteousness that is ours through Christ, and His resurrection power working in our lives. It’s all His work, as Paul

correctly understood (Col.1:29). What assurance and confidence in God this balanced theology can bring to our youth!

To focus only on God's mercy or his justice is to rob The Gospel of its power. This, it seems, we have consistently, almost universally done. Without God's mercy, we have no hope. Without His justice, we have no need. Need is the progenitor of hope. We will never really hope without need. The implication is clear for Christian educators, particularly Bible teachers, that greater clarity and balance must attend our teaching about The Good News. As we have observed previously, the Valuegenesis research clearly indicates that today's Adventist youth hold a rather murky theology in this respect.

Another aspect of this Adventist youth confusion about the gospel deserves our attention. Our youth must not be permitted to confuse culture with grace, be it private or corporate, whether it touches matters of self-discipline or group discipline. House rules, dorm rules, school rules, etc., which have so much to do with lifestyle must not be equated with God's rules, lest the necessary and natural youthful rebellion of self-identity (one of the "developmental tasks" of adolescents) eclipses the higher need to *discover who they are in Christ*. Somewhere in Adventism, our sociology seems to be tincturing our theology (or vice-versa?). At any rate, we're talking about "lifestyle!"

Before we come down too hard on pastors and teachers, though, we need to take a closer look at the Valuegenesis data, particularly the open-ended responses. When we do, another picture comes into focus: apparently it is not the Bible class that is the prime suspect, giving the foul tip toward righteousness-by-works, but rather the general legalistic *ambiance* of many of our congregations and the homes from which Adventist youth come. The immediate fall-out effect of this mixed message might likely be a plateauing and postponement of our young people's graceful transition into mature Christian adulthood. If this is true, it certainly represents a developmental distortion that cannot be taken lightly!

Teaching the Core Curriculum

Does all this relate directly to our topic of lifestyle? Definitely. If we believe that our theology dictates our lifestyle, then we must address the basic theologic tenets; for what is believed inwardly will

play itself out in the life. One does not need a Ph.D. in social psychology to comprehend that inherent cause-effect relationship. We know, as Christian educators, that we are sending back from the campuses—academy and college (yes, even from the little one-room elementary schools!)—children and youth who will become leaders in their congregations. Members who will materially influence the lifestyle of the body politic. Their leadership role, particularly their modeling, will be based on their concept of *what is important to God*. We're talking about the church of tomorrow, which is already here today, sitting in our classrooms. So the matter is vitally important.

Most philosophers are of the opinion that systematic theology is merely a specialized subset of the general inquiry of philosophy. Religious philosophy, that is. It all has to do with the conceptual search for *meaning*, particularly the cosmic and the moral dimension of that quest. So we constantly find ourselves dialoguing somewhere along the continuum of *the ideal* and *the real*, the "is" and the "ought." As with most of the imponderables of such discussion, we are pulled between inherent ideologic tensions, assessing the polarities rather than determining a given point on a line. There is little doubt where theology and sociology as disciplines fall with respect to finding neat little categories from which to argue. It's a slippery slope, but we have no choice except to walk it with our youth. So we frequently find ourselves talking with them about the polarities—and the choices these ultimately dictate. All true educational endeavor wrestles with this choice: the phenomenalist stance of contemporary popular science today, contrasted with the absolutist aspects of biblical revelation.

Let there be no doubt about it, Adventists are incurable idealists when it comes to the training of the younger generation, believing that God Himself has set the benchmarks for Christian education. They are timeless and are not circumstantially adjustable. Accordingly, unapologetic idealism is at the center of all our educational endeavor.

This brings us to one of the most telling philosophy-of-education questions: should the school just mirror and conform to the society in which it finds itself, or is it assigned the task of transforming that society? It's the old "reflect or reform?" debate, and we cannot enter the dialogue regarding corporate responsibility

until we have thought down to ground zero our real philosophy of education on that bottom-line consideration. You can always count on the idealists and the realists quickly sorting themselves out on *that* starting line! Once that paradigmatic presupposition is established, organizing a supporting rationale follows with hardly a hitch.

In considering the impact of our schools on the lifestyle of the church, we have to deal also with the ever-present reality of the impact of the Adventist society on our schools, which do not exist in isolation but in context. These young people are coming out of our homes; we can only work with what the homes send us. This disclaimer does not constitute a cop-out or transfer blame as a professional form of buck-passing, but rather recognizes the complexity of our problem. We are partners in a common challenge, inextricably involved. Like Siamese twins who cannot say to one another, "You go your way and I'll go mine." Longfellow, in commenting on the relationship of man and woman, husband and wife, described our situation so aptly in his epic poem *Hiawatha*: "Though she bends him, she obeys him, Though she draws him, yet she meekly follows." One is inclined to add: "Like the bow with the arrow, each useless without the other!"

But let us talk from the school side of the partnership. Yes, the schools do indeed have a responsibility to lead Adventist society; that assignment is inescapable. And we do accept it. We believe that our Christian institutions have been providentially founded and are called to be transformers of society, truly a spiritual leaven, with incalculable "lifting power"! Discussions of the "ought," therefore, do not constitute an attack on the educational system for its shortcomings, but rather a review and refreshment of the vision that inspires to greater commitment. Our schools are meant to be lighthouses, islands in a sea of iniquity; and despite the pressures to assimilate into the materialistic, hedonistic world about us, we must continue to steer by the stars. Let me tick off just a few:

First. The over-arching purpose of our schools, the macro effect, when it's all said and done, is to give our youth a *Christian world view—to see everything from God's point of view*, as revealed in His inspired Word. It's giving our students a "Christian mind." Teaching them how to "think Christian." The integration of faith

and learning is not some special teaching method; *it's general teacher behavior (modeling!)*. Presuppositional thinking, brought to bear on every study in the student's educational exposure. Passing everything under Christian critique. Students practicing it together under the example and coaching of a benign Christian teacher. If there is a secret driving force that gives true Christian education its peculiar potency, it is this. Have no doubt about it, this natural, unfeigned, pervasive integration of faith and learning is *the* distinguishing mark of a truly Christian school, at whatever level. Deeply spiritual teachers talking as naturally about the supernatural as they do about the weather, without awkwardness or apology. And it really hits home!

The credibility of such teacher life style, absorbed at close range and for prolonged exposure, is indisputably authentic and has a tremendous molding power on impressionable young minds. This is a lifestyle consideration that flows right off the campus into our churches. Sadly the obverse of this is true also: either way, the influence is formative. Indeed, it is a staggering and sobering responsibility to be such a model to youth. We as SDA educators carry this awareness heavy on our hearts everyday.

Second. As Christian educators, we recognize that we are as much in the inspiration business as we are in the information business. Because we comprehend this "hidden curriculum" dimension of our schools, we want to bring as many inspiring ideals and goals as possible before these youth— Not only to impact on them personally, but to model for them *all kinds of inspiring, uplifting programming* that honors God and refreshes man. This goes back home with the student also, and helps transform the worshipping church in a significant way. This infers intentional, "confrontive," programming. That word used to be an altogether respectable word before the protest generation claimed ownership of it. It was regularly used by pastors, therapists and physicians who lovingly and responsibly confronted their clients, facing them with the truth about themselves, nudging them toward wholeness and health and true self-dignity. Let us remember: The Gospel *is* confrontive. True Christian education *is* confrontive. Both demand radical life re-adjustments. Jesus modelled that.

Third. We all sense that so much of what passes for worship

services today with our youth is nothing more than religious entertainment, frothy and conspicuously devoid of Spirit-blessed *unction*. When Peter preached at Pentecost, the audience moaned under the hammer blows of the Second Person of the Godhead, and they were constrained to plead, "Men and brethren, what must we do to be saved?" That's confrontation, in the highest and most positive sense of the word; and it, too, is a kind of corporate lifestyle, modeling religious programming and worship that our campuses export. It's a role that is formative, alright, and our schools have a definite responsibility in modeling for the church worship services that are arresting, substantial, and sobering.

Fourth. Christian character development, consciously pursued, must ever be a centerpiece of holistic SDA education. The conventional wisdom of so-called "liberal studies" abounding today hardly comprehends it's pivotal import, placing personal Christian character development so far out on the periphery as to be non-curricular. Even in many Christian schools today.

Redemptive Discipline

Have you ever thought of redemptive discipline as corporate lifestyle? It is integral to school management, to be sure, but it is a whole lot more than that; it probably says more to answer the great theological question, "What is God like?," than anything else we do. It is corporate modeling of a most powerful sort and shapes the church of tomorrow. It is a powerful statement also about the justice and mercy of God and how the Family of God on earth operates. Yes, campus discipline is corporate lifestyle, and in the long run it will definitely shape the congregational life of our people. It's so crucial to our unified goals that we must never permit it to become the exclusive province of the dorm dean, or the principal, or the college dean of students. And especially not the discipline committee! No, it must be the on-going burden of every teacher who regards students as his/her own surrogate children. In the truest sense of the word, discipline is not punishment but discipling. One of the great dangers that lurks on a close horizon is that our faculties, even Bible teachers, become so preoccupied with their scholarship that they forget their call to make disciples for Christ. The solemn obligation of the school administrator is to be as concerned about

principle as about policy. Advanced teachers of religion who are powerful mentors and models for their hero-worshipping apprentices, cannot teach theology with the same cold precision of a nuclear scientist, without due regard for the sacred oracles they handle. It's an inherent hazard of our profession, one to which we must be ever alert, that we can easily grow casual about such matters and lose our sense of the sacred. That's when heaven writes "Ichabod" over our doorpost.

Faculty recruitment is of such paramount importance. We aren't buying degrees by the yard, we are commissioning youth evangelists. They are clerics of the classroom and campus—professionals who understand that their teaching lectern is their specialized pulpit, the schoolroom their sanctuary. Such Christian teachers understand that they operate on at least four levels *beyond* the mere professional: the levels of parent, pastor, prophet, and priest.

Modern Schools of the Prophets

This prophetic/priestly role of the faculty, when taken seriously by them, is what makes a modern School of the Prophets. It starts with a faculty who are the real prime-movers. So contagious is it that the example and influence moves out to the field, and *the school itself begins to rise to the full stature of its assignment in the prophetic role with our people*. Thus the corporate lifestyle of the school touches and molds the lifestyle of our people. That's when we lead the popular culture, not follow it!

When the professional/prophetic roles on campus become discreet and specialized (and separated), students quickly see our modelled compartmentalization of the religious and secular as an attractive option for them personally, and the "hidden curriculum" lesson is not lost on them. Deep down in the fifth sub-basement of the evolving psyche and religious commitment of that young life registers the instruction from the establishment: "You can learn how to keep religion in its place in your life just like we do here at school." The apostle Paul certainly knew about Greek dualism in his day; he had to combat it constantly. We have it on a much more subtle plane today. We tend to think it only has to do only with linguistics and hermeneutics, and arcane theological distinctions.

Skewed symbolic statements having to do with the sense of the sacred, or dichotomized Christian/worldly living, can be just as disastrous to the graduate student as to the teen-ager. Both, of course, eventually pass it through to the church.

Yes, we can write it down in our book: anytime we divide up a campus between the sacred and the secular we fracture reality and create a cleavage in wholeness from which the student may not fully recover. Rarely does this kind of institutional lifestyle modeling flood out to congregations, however. It's often imperceptible; it just seeps out. But it is nonetheless "formative" and impacts our church at large.

True, we prepare youth to "make it" in the world, by giving them the essentials of an informed and cultivated mind, and tools for a livelihood in hand. Any school worth its salt must surely do that. But what we're talking about here are those "distinctives" that characterize a truly Christian school and materially shape the lifestyle of its sponsoring church.

Confronting Lifestyle Issues

Time does not permit an in-depth examination of each of these lifestyle considerations, but we can cite a few.

A. Long-range family indebtedness over school financing. Our schools and our people together will soon have to address this lifestyle crisis of our times.

B. The extent to which we buy into the secular, materialistic motivation for acquiring an education. Selfless service to mankind is what we are primarily about. Giving, not getting. That's a lifestyle issue of immense magnitude for the Christian, and pastors and teachers must each work from their own side to keep our noble purposes in education ever before the youth and their parents.

C. "Empowerment" is a new buzz word. Helping specialty groups of all stripes to learn how to get and exercise political clout, and leverage their way to their objectives. Based on the principle of duress (social Darwinianism?), this indeed represents a lifestyle expression, and needs to be unpackaged for the Christian. Empowered for what? To get our piece of the pie? Or to be privileged to be a part of God's final love call to the world? This whole notion of so-called "empowerment" could be the *coup de grace* for the unity

of our Movement, and I hope we deal with its splintering divisiveness in a spiritual and effective manner. Micro-cultures are here too stay, and we are going to have to exercise commanding, irresistible pastoral leadership if we are to keep the Family of God together. Our schools have a clear responsibility to properly educate in this domain, ever keeping in view before our youth what we are in this world to do for God, and not getting caught up in the social/political skirmishes of the times. So easily a derailment of our mission.

D. Bigness vs. smallness is also emerging as a corporate lifestyle issue. Institutionalization is a way of life. Some impressively large world organizations are concluding now that bigness can be a liability, a lifestyle and a luxury they no longer can afford, often coming at the price of true quality and responsible integrity. That review looms over the horizon for us too, I suspect.

E. The work ethic vs. the play ethic is a lifestyle issue, and a number of our schools, and Christian families, are seriously reviewing their real goals in this respect, with a much stronger tilt toward work as a necessary corollary to maturation and character development. I applaud it, and I believe that we are going to see serious re-orientation on this front, and God is going to signally bless it! Meaningful labor is definitely a part of God's plan for the restoration of the race. It is the enemy who wants us to sleepwalk—or better yet—play our way to Armageddon. God has a much better way. To all of us comes the invitation: "Come up higher."

Conclusion

Seventh-day Adventist schools definitely do impact heavily on Adventist lifestyle. Schools, formally assigned or not, are change agents. That's why every movement coming down the pike wants access to our children. So let's look to a wider horizon—The Grand Partnership: the home, the school, and the church pulling together to save our children! That's where the focus has always been, and always will be. Statisticians can provide some marvelous disclosures with their number crunching, and this one came out of the Valuegenesis study, and it's soberingly impressive: when home, school, and church come together and insure that our youth do not live in three separate lifestyle worlds, the combined impact statistically is 800 per cent greater than any one of them standing alone.⁴

Indeed, the formation of an Adventist lifestyle is everybody's business in the Church. Considering the enormous problems—and the enormous potential of partnership—we as a people really have no other options to consider, do we?

Endnotes

1 Dudley, Roger L., and Gillespie, V. Bailey. "Split Personalities," *Valuegenesis: Faith in the Balance*. (Riverside, CA: La Sierra University Press, 1992), pp. 294-5.

2 Scarbrough, Charles D. *To God Be The Glory*. (A composite paraphrase drawn from a 1983 unpublished manuscript. Scripture references include: Isa 53:6; Matt 27:46; Rom 5:10,19; II Cor 5:21; Heb 2:9. E. G. White citations include: *Steps to Christ*, pp. 51, 62; *Selected Messages*, Vol. 1, pp. 20, 34, 344, 366-368, 374, 396, 397.)

3 Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages*, p. 762.

4 Dudley and Gillespie, *Valuegenesis*, pp. 294-95.

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THE ORIGIN OF THE BIBLICAL SABBATH AND THE HISTORICAL-CRITICAL METHOD: A METHODOLOGICAL TEST CASE

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The origin of the sabbath is a fascinating topic for those who consider the Bible as the primary norm for their system of faith. There is renewed interest in the sabbath on the part of persons who either accept the biblical view that the sabbath is the seventh day of the week, rooted in creation,¹ that is, Saturday,² or those who suggest that the sabbath may be kept on any day of the week, preferably on Sunday,³ or must be kept on Sunday as the Roman Catholic Church has officially "decreed."⁴

The purpose of this study is (1) to review the biblical presentation of the origin of the sabbath, its antiquity, divine origin, and resultant suprahuman authority, all of which are rooted in the sabbath's beginning in creation, (2) to show how biblical sabbath origins are replaced by a radical redating of relevant biblical texts in the books of Genesis and Exodus and a radical reinterpretation of ancient prophetic sabbath texts, (3) to present and analyze new claims in the search for sabbath origins by scholars using the historical-critical method in Scripture study, and (4) to reveal the implications of the historical-critical method for the faith of the believer by means of the impact of historical criticism upon the interpretation of biblical sabbath origins.