The Trinity
I

* Dates to Remember *

in 1992

March 2
Sabbath Hymn Contest deadline

May 16
Sabbath Emphasis Day
“God’s Choice, My Choice”

June 18-22
SCSC Director training

June 19-28
SCSC Worker training

June 15-July 1
Summer Institute

August 5-9
Pre-Con camps

August 9-15
General Conference
Carroll College, Waukesha, Wis.

Attention
C.S. Lewis fans!!

New VHS videos

“The Chronicles of Narnia”

1) The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
2) Prince Caspian and the Voyage of the
Dawn Treader
3) The Silver Chair

Produced by the BBC and presented on
Public Television’s “WonderWorks.” Each video
runs 165 minutes.

Contact the Center for these or other tapes
you can use on a free loan basis.

Missionary Society Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the members of the Seven
enth Day Baptist Missionary Society will be held at the
Pawcatuck SDB Meeting House, 120 Main St.,
Westerly, R.I., on Sunday, March 15, 1992, at 2:00
p.m. for the following purposes:

To elect voting members, a Board of Managers
and officers to hold office until the next annual
meeting and until their successors are elected.

To hear and act upon the reports of the Board
of Managers and officers for the fiscal year Janu-

To ratify the appointment of independent public
accountants for the current fiscal year.

To consider and act upon other matters as
may properly come before said meeting or any ad-
journment thereof.

The Board of Managers has fixed the close of
business on February 28, 1992, as the time at
which members entitled to notice thereof and to
vote at the meeting and any adjournment thereof
shall be determined.

Cindy Nadeau, secretary

The Sabbath Recorder

February 1992
Volume 214, No. 2
Whole No. 6,760

A Seventh Day Baptist publication

The Sabbath Recorder (ISSN 0006-214X) (USPS
474460) is published monthly (combined July &
August) by the Seventh Day Baptist General
Conference’s Tract and Communication Council,
3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI
53547-1678. This publication is distributed at no
cost to members and friends of Seventh Day
Baptist churches and is made possible by dona-
tions from its readers. Second-class postage paid
at Sun Prairie, WI 53590.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The
Sabbath Recorder, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box
1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678.

This is the 147th year of publication for The
Sabbath Recorder. First issue published,
June 13, 1844. Member of the Associated
Church Press. The Sabbath Recorder
does not necessarily endorse signed
articles.

Kevin Butler
Editor

Leanne Lippincott
Assistant Editor

Contributing Editors
Calvin P. Babcock, Ernest K. Bee Jr., Charlotte
Chroninger, Rodney L. Heroy, Leon R. Lawton,
Ruth Anne Pell, Don A. Sanford, Mynor G. Soper

Features

Let God be God
by Kenneth B. Burdick

God, The Father, The Son, The Holy Spirit
by James A. Ayars

On the mystery of the Trinity
by Rodney Henry

The good news about the Sabbath
by Camille Henry

Departments

Women’s Society
President’s Page

Pears from the past
Local News

SR Almanac
Family Flur

Christian Education
Editorial

Focus

Kevin Butler
Editor

Leanne Lippincott
Assistant Editor

Contributing Editors
Calvin P. Babcock, Ernest K. Bee Jr., Charlotte
Chroninger, Rodney L. Heroy, Leon R. Lawton,
Ruth Anne Pell, Don A. Sanford, Mynor G. Soper

Who are Seventh Day Baptists?

If you’ve never read The Sabbath Recorder before, you might be wondering who Seventh
Day Baptists are. Like other Baptists, we believe in:

• the saving love of Jesus Christ.
• the Bible as the inspired word of God and a record of God’s will for man. The Bible
is our authority both for our faith and our daily conduct.

Freedom, as thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

• the congregational form of church government, every member of the church has the
right to participate in the decision making process of the church.

The seventh day

God commanded that the seventh day (Saturday) be kept holy. Jesus agreed by keeping
the Sabbath day as a day of worship. He observed the seventh day of the week (Saturday) as God’s Holy Day
as an act of loving obedience—not as a means of salvation. Salvation is the free gift of
God through Jesus Christ.

It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes Seventh Day Baptists just a
little bit different. If you would like more information, write: Seventh Day Baptist Center, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box
1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678. Phone (608) 752-5055; FAX (608) 752-7711

February 1992
Let God be God
by Kenneth B. Burdick

According to our Seventh Day Baptist Statement of Beliefs, “We believe in one God... who exists eternally in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” Along with other Biblical Christians down through the centuries, we appear to be saying something impossible: that God is both one and three, at the same time. But then, it is not for us to say what is, or is not possible, where God is concerned!

Since God’s ways and His thoughts are “higher” than ours (Isa. 55:8-9), it should not surprise us that the closer we get to what His inner nature is like, the less we can comprehend or explain it. God’s divine nature is beyond human explanation because there is no analogy to it in our experience. All we know is what we ourselves are like.

Among mortals like us, when you have one human being, you have only one person. But God, though He is also one Being (the “Supreme Being”), exists as three persons. We cannot explain how that can be so, but neither can we dispute it since no one has ever seen God, who “lives in unapproachable light” (1 Tim. 6:16).

The fact of the matter is, we know nothing about God except what God has freely chosen to reveal about Himself. In the Scriptures, God reveals Himself to be one God in three persons. Though this is a truth which human reason cannot explain, we must not think that it is an irrational idea. It does not declare contradictory things to be true at the same time.

Theologian Augustus Strong makes that point clear: “This (contradiction) is true only if it declared God to be three in the same numerical sense in which He is said of His being” (Systematic Theology, Judson Press, 1907, pp. 345-346).

Whether or not we are able to follow the sophisticated reasoning of the theologians, every believer ought to have a simple understanding of this truth about God.

The first step in gaining such an understanding is to recognize the manner in which the Bible teaches it. There is no single verse in the Bible which tells us directly that God is one being, who has always existed in three persons. For we cannot explain the trinity by some illustration. But any such illustration must depend upon rational principles, and we have said that the nature of God is beyond the capabilities of human reason to explain. Therefore, illustrations will ultimately fall short of the truth in some important respect, and may lead us into some serious error.

To say that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all God in the same sense that water, ice, and steam are all H₂O is fallacious because the same molecules of H₂O are never water, ice, and steam all at the same time (Isa. 42:8). Trying to “explain away” either the oneness of God or the separateness and complete divinity of the three persons of God may lead to dangerous theological error that undermines our view of salvation and of all God’s actions. One such idea is that God’s nature is divided, and distributed equally among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person in God would then be a third part of Him. But that is no different from saying there are three gods.

Three divine persons of equal divinity are just that: three gods. They are not the God of the Bible. The Bible says there is only one God, who says, “I will not give my glory to another” (Isa. 48:8). Three part-gods are not really God as all, who is the one Supreme Being. Scripture specifically teaches that the persons in God are each fully God. The Son and the Spirit are just as much God as the Father is. This was most called into question re-

In other passages, we find God speaking of Himself in the plural (Gen. 1:26 and 3:22). In those passages, it must be to Himself that God is referring, since He would never have included any other being in a statement like, “Let us make man in our image” (Gen. 1:26). Finally, many passages in the Bible identify three divine persons by their names: Father (Deut. 22:9; Isa. 63:16; Matt. 6:9; 1 Cor. 8:6). Son (Isa. 9:6; Dan. 3:25 and 7:13-14; Matt. 2:17; Heb. 1:1,3), and Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:2; 2 Sam. 23:3; John 14:26; Rom. 8:9).

Because God gave us a mind, and nothing is more worthwhile than using it to think about God Himself, we can draw some conclusions about God from what we are told in Scripture. Since there is only one God, not three gods, who speaks of Himself as “us,” and reveals the existence of three divine persons (the Father, the Son, and the Spirit); and since He is an eternal, unchanging God; then we must conclude that He is one God, who exists eternally in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. No other conclusion fits all the evidence God has given about Himself in the Bible.

A second step we must take to gain a simple understanding of this truth about God’s essential nature is to accept the fact that the “ Doctrine of the Trinity” (as theologians call it) cannot be explained or even adequately illustrated. It can only be stated—one God in three persons—and its implications understood.

Human reason rebels against accepting what it cannot explain. So people have either tried to “explain away” the paradox of three persons being one God, or they have sought to summarize it by some rational illustration. Both methods lead us away from the revealed truth.

People have either tried to “explain away” the paradox of three persons being one God, or they have sought to summarize it by some rational illustration. Both methods lead us away from the revealed truth.
As we consider God's nature, let's take divine revelation as our authority, not human rationalism. Let's accept, at face value, what God says He is like, even if it is very different from ourselves.

It has extremely important implications. If the Son were not fully God, He would not have possessed the authority to forgive our sins (Mark 2:7). If the Holy Spirit were not fully God, we would have no basis for thinking the Spirit-inspired Bible expresses God's truth. Because, "no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:11).

Another method that has been used to "explain away" the trinity has been called "confusing the persons." This is the idea that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all just the same divine person appearing, as it were, in different disguises. So, it is said, the Son and the Spirit are really just the Father "manifesting" (in a religious-sounding word, right?) Himself in different forms. That idea attempts to clear up the problem of how one God can exist as three persons, and make God like us (in that we are each just one-person beings).

God is greater than our wildest imaginations can ever conceive. When formulating our beliefs concerning Him, we may go with certainty only so far as the Bible leads us. Where the Bible is silent, so must we be; however, where the Bible speaks, then so may we, with full confidence. Moses declared, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever..." (Deut. 29:29).

The Bible is silent, so must we be; however, where the Bible speaks, then so may we, with full confidence. But it is the nature of "counterfeits" to resemble the true without actually being the true. God has given many of us the ability to unmask spiritual "counterfeits." At the same time, however, the hyper-seals among us try to protect everyone by burning the true because it looks like the counterfeit. The devil thereby wins a double victory: he not only corrupts our universe with counterfeit, but also strips us of what is our rightful inheritance because it looks like his counterfeit.

God: The Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit
by James A. Ayars

God is greater than our wildest imaginings can even conceive. When formulating our beliefs concerning Him, we may go with certainty only so far as the Bible leads us. Where the Bible is silent, so must we be; however, where the Bible speaks, then so may we, with full confidence.

The reasons for the continued controversy over the doctrine of the "Trinity" are varied. We forget, for example, how God originally led His people to the discovery of this truth. Every truth in the Christian faith has fought an uphill battle against both denial from those who choose not to believe, and abuse from those who carry it to fanatical extremes. A knowledge of God's providential leading in Christian history is essential to an understanding of the Trinity.

The simplest attack against truth has always been to deny the plain meaning of Scripture revelation. Sometimes we do it by re-translation of the sacred text; other times we do it by redefinition of biblical terms. But the effect is the same: we deny what the Bible really says.

Another reason for denial of the Trinity is that we demand an understanding of God that fits into the categories of our own human logic. But this is dangerous. We may end up worshiping an imaginary "idol" by scaling to the level of absolute truth an image about God created by our own logical limitations. Just because something does not fit our logical categories does not mean that it is not true. We constantly discover that the known universe is far bigger and amazing than we ever imagined. So is the One Who created this incredible universe.

We may also be suspicious of truths which find counterparts in the counterfeits of paganism. But it is the nature of "counterfeits" to resemble the true without actually being the true. God has given many of us the ability to unmask spiritual "counterfeits." At the same time, however, the hyper-seals among us try to protect everyone by burning the true because it looks like the counterfeit. The devil thereby wins a double victory: he not only corrupts our universe with counterfeit, but also strips us of what is our rightful inheritance because it looks like his counterfeit.

Finally, we are sometimes suspicious of what we assume are later, historical doctrinal developments within Christianity, but which do not find literal, explicit statement within the pages of Scripture. This is the most subtle danger of all. Just because the Apostle Paul did not compose an epistle which details the nature of God in modern terms, it does not mean that Paul didn't believe in a doctrine of "the Trinity."

The Bible reveals truth on two levels: there are explicit doctrinal statements, and there are implicit assumptions behind the explicit statements. Christian faith is based upon both. Furthermore, we now know that, prior to the rise of the Christian Church, there were streams of Jewish thought which assumed the plurality of God on the one hand, and the divinity of the promised Messiah on the other. Judaism only began to deny these ideas after the rise of the Church.

Also, archaeological discoveries of Christian tombs outside of Jerusalem have proven beyond all doubt that the early Jewish followers of Jesus believed, immediately after His resurrection, that Jesus was none other than "YHWH Himself. (More on that later.)

We need to look closely at what the Bible itself teaches about the Trinity. We will look at several "revelations" from the Bible, and draw some "tentative conclusions" based upon those "revelations."

Revelation #1
The first, most obvious teaching of the Bible is the fact that there is only one God, whose name is "YHWH." The Shema, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord," has become the credo of Judaism. It was stated not only by Moses in Deuteronomy 6:4, but also quoted by Jesus in Mark 12:29.

This is the prologue to the "first commandment," and it is the foundation of faith for both Christians and Jews.

Paul also restates this explicit, biblical teaching: "There is one God and Father of all, who is above..."
“And God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness’” (Gen. 1:26). Other texts which follow this phenomenon occur include Genesis 3:22, where God drove Adam and Eve from Eden; and Genesis 11:7, where God condemned the languages of man at the Tower of Babel. Some have proposed that this is a “plural of majesty,” as when individuals in government may at times refer to themselves in the plural when making important pronouncements. Examples include the Pope of Rome and Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany. That is, all well and good, as long as we remember that in every example, while only one person is speaking, there is a large body of governmental advisors and cabinet persons with whom each ruler has consulted before making his pronouncement. When he says “we,” he really means it.

Furthermore, the Pope of Rome believes that he is speaking as the divinely ordained representative of “the Trinity” (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), and therefore has every right to say “we.” Consequently, the idea, “plural of majesty,” does not deny the existence of “the Trinity,” rather, it supposes it, and is even based upon it. It is a human image of it.

Tentative conclusion #1

On the basis of these two revelations, Christians concluded that “God” is a single, unified, plurality whose name is “YHWH.” Remember that they did not try to explain this: they only accepted it in good faith, and described it based upon the authority of God’s revealed word, the Bible.

Revelation #2

Along with YHWH, we find the word “God.” Throughout the Old Testament, “God” is translated from the Hebrew word, “Elohim,” which is plural. This leads us to the second fact in the Bible’s revelation of the Trinity: God speaks of Himself in the plural.

“God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness’” (Gen. 1:26). Other texts which follow this phenomenon occur include Genesis 3:22, where God drove Adam and Eve from Eden; and Genesis 11:7, where God condemned the languages of man at the Tower of Babel. Some have proposed that this is a “plural of majesty,” as when individuals in government may at times refer to themselves in the plural when making important pronouncements. Examples include the Pope of Rome and Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany. That is, all well and good, as long as we remember that in every example, while only one person is speaking, there is a large body of governmental advisors and cabinet persons with whom each ruler has consulted before making his pronouncement. When he says “we,” he really means it.

Furthermore, the Pope of Rome believes that he is speaking as the divinely ordained representative of “the Trinity” (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), and therefore has every right to say “we.” Consequently, the idea, “plural of majesty,” does not deny the existence of “the Trinity,” rather, it supposes it, and is even based upon it. It is a human image of it.

Tentative conclusion #1

On the basis of these two revelations, Christians concluded that “God” is a single, unified, plurality whose name is “YHWH.” Remember that they did not try to explain this: they only accepted it in good faith, and described it based upon the authority of God’s revealed word, the Bible.

Revelation #3

Even with these revelations, Christians did not avoid questions about the nature of God. They wanted to know what He was like. In answer, they found that the Bible also reveals that the divine nature of God has several unique characteristics. We know, with absolute certainty, that if any of these characteristics are not present in the “nature” of the persons we are studying, then they are something less than divine.

A first characteristic of God revealed in the Bible is His Eternity. (He has no beginning nor an end—See Psa. 90:2; 102:24-27; Rev. 1:8.)

A second characteristic is God’s Omniscience. (He is eternally present with all of His creation—See Psa. 139:7-12; Jer. 23:23-24.)

A third quality of God is His Omnipresence. (He is eternally present with all of His creation—See Psa. 139:7-12; Jer. 23:23-24.)

A fourth characteristic is God’s Omniscience. (He is eternally present with all of His creation—See Psa. 139:7-12; Jer. 23:23-24.)

A third quality of God is His Omnipresence. (He is eternally present with all of His creation—See Psa. 139:7-12; Jer. 23:23-24.)

A fourth characteristic is God’s Omniscience. (He is eternally present with all of His creation—See Psa. 139:7-12; Jer. 23:23-24.)

A third quality of God is His Omnipresence. (He is eternally present with all of His creation—See Psa. 139:7-12; Jer. 23:23-24.)

A fourth characteristic is God’s Omniscience. (He is eternally present with all of His creation—See Psa. 139:7-12; Jer. 23:23-24.)

A third quality of God is His Omnipresence. (He is eternally present with all of His creation—See Psa. 139:7-12; Jer. 23:23-24.)

A fourth characteristic is God’s Omniscience. (He is eternally present with all of His creation—See Psa. 139:7-12; Jer. 23:23-24.)

A third quality of God is His Omnipresence. (He is eternally present with all of His creation—See Psa. 139:7-12; Jer. 23:23-24.)
Believing makes a difference

There was a time when God the Father revealed Himself to His people as a mighty and awesome God, a God to be feared and worshiped. Then a time came when God the Father needed God the Son to minister directly to the people on earth. Those people were able to see Jesus in the flesh, and thus were able to have a glimpse of God the Father.

Through Jesus, another aspect of God was revealed—that God taught truth and lived truth, and provided a way of salvation to those who believed. Now is the time when God the Spirit is needed to help believers to be bold in their witness. I need to believe in all three persons of the Godhead—I can’t believe in one and not another. Each person of the Godhead is fully divine and holy and awesome. God the Son took on the human nature for about 33 years. Jesus never lost His deity when He became human, but He voluntarily limited His power for about 33 years. Jesus never completely understood this, but in faith we can believe it.

As we believe more and more, and as we yield more and more, we as Christian women and Seventh Day Baptists will begin to experience abundant life and joy, as well as make a tremendous difference in our families, communities, churches, and denomination.

God the Spirit tries to lead and guide me in my daily living so that I might be a good testimony for God. Unfortunately, I don’t always let the Holy Spirit have His way in my life. I prevent Him from giving me the boldness I need, along with the comfort and joy I can have, to receive the good news with those around me.

Without the Holy Spirit’s empowering and guidance, I will fall very short of doing what God wants me to do. God the Spirit stands ready to give me comfort and encouragement. He wants to do the same for you.

I think there are many of us who have not fully grasped the doctrine of the Trinity. We probably will never completely understand this, but in faith we can believe it.

The doctrine of the Trinity is a difficult and complex subject. It is important to understand the unity and diversity of the persons who make up the Godhead. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct persons, yet they are one in essence. This is a mystery that can only be understood by faith.

There was a time when God the Father revealed Himself to His people as a mighty and awesome God, a God to be feared and worshiped. Then a time came when God the Father needed God the Son to minister directly to the people on earth. Those people were able to see Jesus in the flesh, and thus were able to have a glimpse of God the Father.

Through Jesus, another aspect of God was revealed—that God taught truth and lived truth, and provided a way of salvation to those who believed. Now is the time when God the Spirit is needed to help believers to be bold in their witness. I need to believe in all three persons of the Godhead—I can’t believe in one and not another. Each person of the Godhead is fully divine and holy and awesome. God the Son took on the human nature for about 33 years. Jesus never lost His deity when He became human, but He voluntarily limited His power for about 33 years. Jesus never completely understood this, but in faith we can believe it.

As we believe more and more, and as we yield more and more, we as Christian women and Seventh Day Baptists will begin to experience abundant life and joy, as well as make a tremendous difference in our families, communities, churches, and denomination.

There was a time when God the Father revealed Himself to His people as a mighty and awesome God, a God to be feared and worshiped. Then a time came when God the Father needed God the Son to minister directly to the people on earth. Those people were able to see Jesus in the flesh, and thus were able to have a glimpse of God the Father.

Through Jesus, another aspect of God was revealed—that God taught truth and lived truth, and provided a way of salvation to those who believed. Now is the time when God the Spirit is needed to help believers to be bold in their witness. I need to believe in all three persons of the Godhead—I can’t believe in one and not another. Each person of the Godhead is fully divine and holy and awesome. God the Son took on the human nature for about 33 years. Jesus never lost His deity when He became human, but He voluntarily limited His power for about 33 years. Jesus never completely understood this, but in faith we can believe it.

As we believe more and more, and as we yield more and more, we as Christian women and Seventh Day Baptists will begin to experience abundant life and joy, as well as make a tremendous difference in our families, communities, churches, and denomination.

We need to experience all three persons of the Godhead in order to begin reaching our fullest potential as Christians. God the Father loved me enough to send His Son into the world that I might find redemption. God the Holy Spirit empowers and guides me in my daily living so that I might be a good testimony for God. Unfortunately, I don’t always let the Holy Spirit have His way in my life. I prevent Him from giving me the boldness I need, along with the comfort and joy I can have, to receive the good news with those around me.

Without the Holy Spirit’s empowering and guidance, I will fall very short of doing what God wants me to do. God the Spirit stands ready to give me comfort and encouragement. He wants to do the same for you.

I think there are many of us who have not fully grasped the doctrine of the Trinity. We probably will never completely understand this, but in faith we can believe it.

The doctrine of the Trinity is a difficult and complex subject. It is important to understand the unity and diversity of the persons who make up the Godhead. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct persons, yet they are one in essence. This is a mystery that can only be understood by faith.

There was a time when God the Father revealed Himself to His people as a mighty and awesome God, a God to be feared and worshiped. Then a time came when God the Father needed God the Son to minister directly to the people on earth. Those people were able to see Jesus in the flesh, and thus were able to have a glimpse of God the Father.

Through Jesus, another aspect of God was revealed—that God taught truth and lived truth, and provided a way of salvation to those who believed. Now is the time when God the Spirit is needed to help believers to be bold in their witness. I need to believe in all three persons of the Godhead—I can’t believe in one and not another. Each person of the Godhead is fully divine and holy and awesome. God the Son took on the human nature for about 33 years. Jesus never lost His deity when He became human, but He voluntarily limited His power for about 33 years. Jesus never completely understood this, but in faith we can believe it.

As we believe more and more, and as we yield more and more, we as Christian women and Seventh Day Baptists will begin to experience abundant life and joy, as well as make a tremendous difference in our families, communities, churches, and denomination.

There was a time when God the Father revealed Himself to His people as a mighty and awesome God, a God to be feared and worshiped. Then a time came when God the Father needed God the Son to minister directly to the people on earth. Those people were able to see Jesus in the flesh, and thus were able to have a glimpse of God the Father.

Through Jesus, another aspect of God was revealed—that God taught truth and lived truth, and provided a way of salvation to those who believed. Now is the time when God the Spirit is needed to help believers to be bold in their witness. I need to believe in all three persons of the Godhead—I can’t believe in one and not another. Each person of the Godhead is fully divine and holy and awesome. God the Son took on the human nature for about 33 years. Jesus never lost His deity when He became human, but He voluntarily limited His power for about 33 years. Jesus never completely understood this, but in faith we can believe it.

As we believe more and more, and as we yield more and more, we as Christian women and Seventh Day Baptists will begin to experience abundant life and joy, as well as make a tremendous difference in our families, communities, churches, and denomination.

On the mystery of the Trinity

Martin Luther:
I have learned, not only through the Scriptures but also from severe inner struggles and trials, that Christ is God and has put on flesh, and likewise I have learned the doctrine of the Trinity. Today, therefore, I don’t so much believe as I know through experience that these doctrines are true. In the worst temptations nothing can help us but faith that God’s Son has put on flesh, is bone (of our bone), sits at the right hand of the Father, and prays for you. There is no mightier comfort. From the beginning of the world God has defended this doctrine against all heretics. He always confirms it by miracles, allows us to call his Son the Son of God and true God, and hears us all when we call upon Him in Christ’s name.

John Calvin:
Refutation of antitrinitarian heresies
Satan, in order to tear our faith from its very roots, has always been instigating great battles, partly concerning the divine essence of the Son and the Spirit, partly concerning the distinction of the persons. He has during nearly all ages stirred up ungodly spirits to harry orthodox teachers over this matter and today also is trying to kindle a new fire from the old embers. For these reasons, it is important here to resist the perverse ravings of certain persons. The truth which has been peaceably shown must be maintained against all the calumnies of the wicked. Let us use great courage. He wants to do the same for you.

C.S. Lewis:
The union between the Father and Son is such a live concrete thing that this union itself is also a Person. I know that among human beings, when they get together in a family, or a club, or a trade union, people talk about the “spirit” of that family, or club, or trade union. They talk about its “spirit” because the individual members, when they are together, do really develop particular ways of talking and behaving which they would not have if they were apart. It is as if a sort of communal personality came into existence. Of course, it is not a real person: it is only rather like a person. But that is just one of the differences between God and us. What grows out of the joint life of the Father and Son is a real person, in fact the Third of the three Persons who are God.

This third Person is called... the Holy Ghost or the “spirit” of God.

Gleason Archer:
The concept of God as a triune person in its entirety—what the Greek church referred to as three hypostases and the Latin church as the person—exists in the work of human thought. No other culture or philosophical movement ever came up with such an idea of God as this—an idea that remains very difficult for our finite minds to grasp. Yet the inability to comprehend fully the richness and fullness of God’s nature should not diminish any solid ground for skepticism as to its truth. For if we are to accept and believe only what we can fully understand, then we are hopelessly beyond redemption. Why? Because we shall never fully understand how God could love us enough to send His only Son to earth in order to die for our sins and become our Savior.

Harold Brown:
The doctrine of the Trinity is a theological necessity because of the doctrine of the Atonement. Apart from the Trinity, which permits Christ to be understood as distinct from the Father and yet as God, we cannot understand how He can represent us to God or make atonement for our sins. If we were not able to believe in the doctrine of the Atonement, Christ might be our teacher or example, but He could not be our substitute. The doctrine of the Atonement is necessary to permit us to reconcile the biblical emphasis on the wrath of God with the equally biblical emphasis on His mercy. The doctrine of the substitutionary atonement, in which...
The good news about the Sabbath
by Rodney Henry

(Last lesson in the series.)
Salvation is by Grace through Faith

Seventh Day Baptists believe that the Sabbath is important to God and to mankind. However, we also believe that we are not saved by observing the Sabbath. In fact, we are not saved by keeping any of the Ten Commandments. The Apostle Paul says, "so one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law" (Romans 3:20).

Seventh Day Baptists believe that we are saved because "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son" (John 3:16). God loved the world to the point of giving His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to mankind. By observing the Sabbath, we are not saved, but we keep the Sabbath holy because we are loved by God and to mankind. However, we believe that we are not saved by God and to mankind. However, we believe that we are not saved by keeping the Sabbath holy. We believe that we are saved by loving God with all one's heart, soul, and mind. The sacrifice of the intellect is a lent affront to the integrity of one's love God with all one's heart, soul, and mind.

Questions
1. Are we saved by keeping the Sabbath holy? Do we become Christians by observing the Sabbath?
2. How is a person saved, or how does a person become a Christian?
3. If a person is not saved by keeping the Sabbath, then why should Christians keep the Sabbath holy?
4. What assistance is available to us in order to help us observe the Sabbath?

Review
- The Sabbath is a day of rest and service. This could be possible on any other day. But God has not committed Himself and all the resources of the Kingdom to setting us free from work on any day but the seventh day Sabbath. It is only by faith that we can take His resources and be set free from the work of the world on the Sabbath. This faith can only be built upon a relationship with the Son of Man, who is Lord even of the Sabbath day. God provides all of these resources, setting us free to give Him our undivided attention for 24 hours a week.
- God wants our attention every day of the week. But because God wants our undivided attention on the seventh day Sabbath, He sets us free from the work of the world. Does all this for us because He loves us, and He knows that we need it. And we keep His Sabbath holy by spending time with Him because we love Him.

Because God wants our undivided attention on the seventh day Sabbath, He sets us free from the work of the world.

Mystery (cont. from page 11)

Christ identifies Himself with us and stands in our place before the Father, resolves this problem. It in turn depends on the doctrine of the Trinity. Even if one does not know the doctrine explicitly, one must have at least some experience of the work of each of the Persons in order to be a Christian. One must acknowledge oneself as a sinner before God, and one must come to Jesus as the Saviour. Finally, one must have experienced a measure of the work of the Holy Spirit in order to do these two things.

God does not require a sacrifice intelligently, a "sacrifice of the intellect," as part of faith. Because the sacrifice of the intellect is a violent affront to the integrity of one's soul, it is always dangerous and certainly is a poor way to begin to love God with all one's heart, soul, and mind. All the major doctrines are interdependent. The doctrine of man as sinner implies the doctrine of man's need of salvation; the doctrine of salvation requires an adequate Saviour, I.e. an adequate Christology. A sound Christology requires a satisfactory concept of God, I.e. a sound special theology—which brings us back to the doctrine of the Trinity.

Taken from TableTalk, March 1991. Used by permission of Logiasion Ministries, Orlando, Fla.
Certain nonnegotiables
by Don A. Sanford, historian

...true God of true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father..."

That creed also "anthematized" those who held that:

"...the Son of God is of another substance or essence or created, or changeable, or alterable..."

The Creed of Nicaea was the direct result of the teachings of Arius, who was classified as a rationalist, and whose controlling interest was intellectual rather than religious. In essence, Arius claimed that only God was eternal; the Son was created in time by an act of God's will. He considered that the Son was the first of all creatures and belonged to a higher order of being than any others.

According to Arthur C. McGiffert, "The historic doctrine of the Trinity contains two elements, representing two independent and diverse interests, the precedence of the Son of God in the Christian Church, and the full deity of this preexistent Son of God." These were considered the nonnegotiables of orthodox Christianity, and Arius denied both.

Diognetus of Alexandria, who served as Bishop of Rome from 259–268, wrote against those who denied and cut up the doctrine of the Trinity by reducing it to three powers and separated substances and three deities. He also censured those who held that the Son was a work, and came into being, for this also denied the preexistence of Christ. Sabellius was criticized for his attempts to explain the Trinity by analogy, comparing it to the sun:

"It is one substance, but it has three manifestations, light, heat and the orb itself. The heat is analogous to the Spirit; the light to the Son; while the Father himself is represented by the actual substance. The Son was at one time emitted, like a ray of light; he accomplished in the world all that pertained to the dispensation of the Gospel and man's salvation, and was then taken back into heaven, as a ray is emitted by the sun and then withdrawn again into the sun. The Holy Spirit is still being sent forth into the world and into successive individuals who are worthy to receive it."  

Most of the views labeled as heretical by the Church stemmed from diverse interpretations of the mystical relationship of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which was used in the liturgy and teachings of the Church. They came about as men tried to translate this relationship into logical terms that could be grasped by those to whom they were speaking.

Whenever people try to use logical explanations from their own experience or observations, they run the risk of humanizing and over-simplifying that which is divine and mystical. Some of these explanations crossed the bounds of orthodoxy and thus were dismissed as being heretical.

---

2McGiffert, p. 346.
4Bettenson, p. 54.

---

One year ago—February 1991

Writers open up their hearts as they share about "Death in the Family."

"Pastor Jim Stans," on the Board of Christian Education page, explains the Sabbath as the third sacrament.

Leon Lawton recaps first Missionary Society journey to SDB ministries in Finland and Estonia.

Report of reconciliation in the Philippines shared by Gabriel Bejani and Rodney Henry following their trip there.

South Atlantic churches gather for first general meeting.

Five years ago—February 1987

The Ronald Barrons of Auckland, New Zealand, visit churches and contacts in India, enroute home from World Federation sessions.

David Larsen shares the "Parable of the Oak."

The National Congress on Christian Education is reviewed by Pastor David Taylor.

New Brocas format features a youth group of the month, book review, and Bible study helps.

Rev. Don Sanford begins work as SDB Historian. Special thank-you honors Memorial Fund trustee Fred Bakker at his retirement.

10 years ago—February 1982

Editor John Bevis welcomes many new readers—Tract Society begins to send the SR to every SDB home.

Twenty workers and seven projects are highlighted for Summer Christian Service Corps.

Fourteen new churches (organized since 1975) and their progress analyzed.

Pastor Robert Harris installed in Albion, Wis.; Gordon Lawton starts to serve in Boulder, Colo.; John Bevis accepts call to Denver.

SDB Convention of the Philippines receives legal status from the government.

25 years ago—February 1967

Missionaries Dr. and Mrs. Victor Burdick return to their work in Makenya Station.

---

Publicity begins for August Conference at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich.

First photos of SDB church groups in Ghana, Africa, are received and printed.

Pastoral calls accepted: Harmon Dickinson to Richburg, N.Y.; John Conrod to Marlboro, N.J.

Leeland Davis guest edits special evangelistic issue.

Young people across the country conduct church services on Youth Day Sabbath.

50 years ago—February 1942

News from the home field shared from six missionary pastors.

Excerpts of tributes by Alfred University's Dean A.J.C. Bond and President J. Nelson Norwood follow the passing of President Emeritus Dr. Booth Colwell Davis.

Daily Bible meditations prepared by Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Roed.

Mizpah Greene's letter exchange column full of children's joyful Christmas remembrances.

"Missions" column agrees that Conference recommendation for more pictures in the SR is good, but finances prohibit any change.

Some sermon titles include: "What is God?"; "The Creed of Lincoln's Church;" "Did Christ Come Too Soon?"; and "A Man of Valor."

...where are we headed?

---

Pray...

- for those who have recently lost loved ones
- for our brethren in Europe and Asia
- with thanks for faithful servants
- for the ministry and impact of the SR
- that pastorless churches fill their pulpits (and pew)
- for our Board of Extension and new groups
- that we train and utilize our young people...
Spiritual education of God’s people: Worship

Deacon Faithful could feel the tension as Pastor Jus Start asked the deaconate to join him in prayer. The deaconate had been called together to listen to Mr. Newmember’s request for a change in the church’s worship practices.

Deacon Faithful found it difficult to focus on Pastor Start’s prayer. He thought, “How should I chair this meeting? What is appropriate in our worship of God? How do we decide what we do in worship?” Pastor Start’s ‘Amen’ lifted every pair of eyes in the room to the deaconate chairman.

Deacon Faithful introduced the special meeting agenda: the lifting up of hands during the Sabbath morning worship service. He explained, “Mr. Newmember has talked with the Pastor and me. He feels that the congregation has not accepted him and his worship needs, and was hurt by some members’ comments about his practice of lifting up his hands during the worship. We’ve invited him to discuss his concerns.”

Mr. Newmember explained that his practice of raising his hands was a custom from his former church. “I don’t really know why we had this custom. I just liked it and wanted to continue it here in my new church. At first, no one seemed to mind, but then I started to feel quite alone. Especially when Mrs. Oldmember stepped me one day and asked why I raised my hands. After that, it seemed to me that everyone was staring at me. I wish the church would join me in lifting up hands in praise to God during our worship services.”

Deacon Willing explained that the only time when hands are lifted during the worship service is during the benediction. This was in keeping with the biblical blessing given by the ordained ministry in Leviticus 9:22.

Mr. Newmember responded that the lifting up of hands in worship has a biblical basis. “In Nehemiah 8:6, the people lifted up their hands during worship. In Ezra 9:5, the priest Ezra lifted his hands to the Lord during prayer. The Psalms speak of lifting hands to God (28:2; 63:4; 89:5; 154:2; 154:5; Isaiah 1:16; and Lamentations 2:19).”

Deacon Faithful interjected, “I feel that the issue before us is not whether lifting up hands is a biblical worship practice, but whether the covenant community may expect an individual or a small group to follow the customary worship forms and practices of our church. What if every member had a worship practice which he or she insisted upon the privilege of doing at their own choosing? What would worship be like then?”

In Mr. Newmember’s Scripture passages, I see the priest Ezra not only lifting his hands but also tearing his clothing, falling on his knees, weeping, and casting himself down. Should our pastor be doing all of these during our Sabbath worship? And in Nehemiah 8, the people responded to Ezra’s prayer by saying a double ‘Amen,’ lifting up their hands, and bowing with their faces to the ground. Should we do all these, too?”

Pastor Start suggested that the deaconate recommend that the members study the church’s worship practices. Hopefully, we’ll come to a consensus about what we feel are acceptable forms during worship.”

European Free Street Mission—SDB, Heisinki, Finland

Pastor Risto Sorsa writes: “We succeeded in gathering enough funds to take a truck of supplies amounting to 7,000 kilograms (15,432 pounds) to Romania (in the fall of 1991). We drove through Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Ukraine, and Romania. About one-half of the supplies were left with the Romanian Seventh Day Baptists, along with 1,000 copies of the Gospel of John in Romanian. The rest of the supplies were donated to three hospitals.

‘While in Romania, we spent one night in the Seventh Day Baptist church. The rest of the time we slept in the truck. The printing of the Gospel of John cost us about 10 cents a copy. ‘It is our intention to make another trip with aid supplies as soon as funds permit (under $6,000). We pray that we shall find funds to continue our work effectively. Our churches are poor, and pastors receive no financial support. But there is plenty of work!”

National field

On the national field, projects are currently being developed in the Jefferson City, Mo., and Memphis, Tenn., areas, while three other projects are in the early planning stages. Additional projects are already being considered for implementation in 1993.

God continues to put us in contact with experienced pastors and leaders from other backgrounds asking how they can fit in among Seventh Day Baptists, and how they can best start churches in their areas. We would ask for your prayers that God will guide the answers given to each contact.

National Field Development Team applications will soon be mailed to those who have indicated a desire to invest themselves for the Lord on the national field. Participation in projects is determined by the worker’s availability and by the need and opportunities on a planned project.

Missions are possible because of you. Are you actively part of Christ’s mission to reach all the world?

Nellore, A.P., India

Dr. B. Vishwar Kumar wrote on November 20, 1991, “It has hit again (mid-November 1991). The cyclone. This time with a vengeance, as it were. The worst-hit districts are Nellore, Chittoor, Prakasam, and Cuddapah. These districts contain many of our fields (like Asiasociations). The havoc it played is indescribable since there is nothing to describe except the pathetic results, particularly in rural areas, left in its wake. It was worse than the last one in May 1990.

‘In the disaster, many of our Seventh Day Baptist brethren were among its victims. Soon after full communication is restored, we will be getting reports from the SDB Field Officers. It is not difficult to estimate the extent of misery these poor and helpless ones are in. Help to them cannot be compared to what they lost. Recovery and rehabilitation take some time, and in the case of petty farmers, it is a long-time process.

The special thanksgiving offering last November may help meet such a need.”
The importance of revival

by Mynor Soper

Leon R. Lawton—Forty-one years of service

Revival and renewal of commitments are critical even for good people who fear the Lord.

Leon R. Lawton

Leon R. Lawton was born on May 21, 1924, in Battle Creek, Mich. He attended the Battle Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church as a child and became a member at the age of 15. He graduated from Lakeview High School where he was a member of the National Honor Society and had become an Eagle Scout.

Leon attended college for two years at Western Michigan University. As World War II escalated, he entered the military service for three years as a non-combatant (due to religious convictions) in the army medical corps in Holland and England. He was awarded Holland's highest honor, the Gold Medal of Honor, for service there and completed his military commitment as First Sergeant. It is important to note that during Leon's entire school, work, and military career, he never worked a Sabbath, but was rewarded by God for his faithfulness by being allowed to work other days (such as Sunday).

After discharge from the army, Leon married Dorothy Glee Brannon on September 1, 1946. From that union were born four children: Duane, Gordon, Patricia, and Jeffrey. Leon returned to school, attending Salem (W.Va.) College and the University of Chicago, graduating from Chicago in 1947. Having felt God's call to ministry many years earlier, Leon finally yielded and began seminary at Northern Baptist Seminary in Chicago. While there, Leon served as co-pastor of the church in Chicago with Melvin Nida. He also served at Walworth, Wis., during this time. After accepting the call to pastoral ministry at the Los Angeles Seventh Day Baptist Church, he transferred to California Baptist Seminary and completed his seminary education there. It was in Los Angeles that Leon was ordained in 1951 and accredited that same year. After serving in Los Angeles from 1950-56, he was called to serve on the mission field in Jamaica. There, he and his family served for two terms (1956-59 and 1959-64). They pastored at Lest Creek/Roukoko, W.Va., for one year during their furlough between terms; and, following their return from Jamaica in 1959, served as Director of Evangelism work until 1969. Leon also served as SCSC training director from 1964-1977, and as pastor of the Denver, Colo., SDB Church from 1969-1970.

In 1970, the Missionary Society called Leon to serve as its Executive Vice President, where he has remained for the past 21 years overseeing the mission work of missionaries David and Bettie Pearson (Malawi), Leroy and Marjorie Bass (Guyana), John and Joyce Conroy (Malawi), Audrey and Menzo Fuller (Malawi), Douglas and Jane Mackintosh (Jamaica), Rodney and Camille Henry (Philippines), Tom and Rita McEwan (Nordic area), and Ian and Trudy Ingoe (Malawi). Their efforts included Ken Burdick (Jamaica) and Elizabeth Perez (Malawi).

In addition, short-term missionary included Ken Burdick (Jamaica) and Elizabeth Perez (Malawi). Short-term projects were served by many others in Guyana, Jamaica, Malawi, and the Philippines. These short-term projects were begun under Leon's direction, and continue as needs arise. Leon and Rev. Alton L. Wheeler made a worldwide ambassadorial trip over a three-month period in 1974, visiting nearly all of our sister Conferences in the World Federation.

Leon has made many significant contributions to the Missionary Society. His interest in missions was evident long before he served as a missionary. He and Melvin Nida edited the Chicago Call, begun in 1949 as a newsletter which focused on missions, which later became the Nyaasaland News, Mission Notes, and now is Missions. It was obvious that Leon had a special heart for missions. It is impossible to talk of Leon's service without pointing out Dorothy's unsfailing support for Leon. Without her, he would have had great difficulty carrying out God's call. Much of Leon's responsibilities included extensive travel, and it was necessary to leave home. While away, Dorothy filled in at the Missionary Society office in addition to raising their four children. It is to her credit that Leon had four children.

From that union were born four children: Duane, Gordon, Patricia, and Jeffrey. Leon returned to school, attending Salem (W.Va.) College and the University of Chicago, graduating from Chicago in 1947. Having felt God's call to ministry many years earlier, Leon finally yielded and began seminary at Northern Baptist Seminary in Chicago. While there, Leon served as co-pastor of the church in Chicago with Melvin Nida. He also served at Walworth, Wis., during this time. After accepting the call to pastoral ministry at the Los Angeles Seventh Day Baptist Church, he transferred to California Baptist Seminary and completed his seminary education there. It was in Los Angeles that Leon was ordained in 1951 and accredited that same year. After serving in Los Angeles from 1950-56, he was called to serve on the mission field in Jamaica. There, he and his family served for two terms (1950-59 and 1959-64). They pastored at Lest Creek/Roukoko, W.Va., for one year during their furlough between terms; and, following their return from Jamaica in 1959, served as Director of Evangelism work until 1969. Leon also served as SCSC training director from 1964-1977, and as pastor of the Denver, Colo., SDB Church from 1969-1970.

In 1970, the Missionary Society called Leon to serve as its Executive Vice President, where he has remained for the past 21 years overseeing the mission work of missionaries David and Bettie Pearson (Malawi), Leroy and Marjorie Bass (Guyana), John and Joyce Conroy (Malawi), Audrey and Menzo Fuller (Malawi), Douglas and Jane Mackintosh (Jamaica), Rodney and Camille Henry (Philippines), Tom and Rita McEwan (Nordic area), and Ian and Trudy Ingoe (Malawi). Their efforts included Ken Burdick (Jamaica) and Elizabeth Perez (Malawi).

In addition, short-term missionaries included Ken Burdick (Jamaica) and Elizabeth Perez (Malawi). Short-term projects were served by many others in Guyana, Jamaica, Malawi, and the Philippines. These short-term projects were begun under Leon's direction, and continue as needs arise. Leon and Rev. Alton L. Wheeler made a worldwide ambassadorial trip over a three-month period in 1974, visiting nearly all of our sister Conferences in the World Federation.

Leon has made many significant contributions to the Missionary Society. His interest in missions was evident long before he served as a missionary. He and Melvin Nida edited the Chicago Call, begun in 1949 as a newsletter which focused on missions, which later became the Nyaasaland News, Mission Notes, and now is Missions. It was obvious that Leon had a special heart for missions. It is impossible to talk of Leon's service without pointing out Dorothy's unsfailing support for Leon. Without her, he would have had great difficulty carrying out God's call. Much of Leon's responsibilities included extensive travel, and therefore, absence from home. While away, Dorothy filled in at the Missionary Society office in addition to raising their four children. It is to her credit that Leon had four children.
Our heritage and beyond

South Atlantic churches gather

by Jasmine J. Lynch

October 26, 1991, marked the third annual concert. Once again the members rose to the occasion and filled the sanctuary till it overflowed into the fellowship hall. Guest artists from Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., and Miami donated their time and talent to help raise $2,000 for our building fund.

Brother Ronald Arneaud, a newcomer to our church, led the drive to raise the highest amount ever collected at an annual concert, challenging each keyworker and committee member to set an example by pledging $100 each. He also directed the Youth Choir and personally arranged for some of the guest artists. Needless to say, we were pleased with the results as we met both our financial and attendance goals.

Three weeks later, a banner stretched across theaisle with a welcome to Miami Seventh Day Baptist Church, “Our Heritage and Beyond,” Guest Speaker: Rev. Don Sanford, Historian, November 16, 1991. That evening marked the second South Atlantic Churches Day, an event which started last year at Daytona Beach, Fla.

On Sabbath morning, we assembled in the sanctuary of the Miami church and faced the colorful, artistically designed banner. The theme was clear: “Our Heritage and Beyond.”

The Mission Spotlight time of Sabbath School featured a skit by the Bradenton church in which Grandpa Leland Bond told his “grandchild,” Lettie, a humorous, heartwarming, and enlightening history of Seventh Day Baptist schools and universities. Then, Historian Don Sanford gave us a brief history of early church singing. SDB songwriters, and the history of Seventh Day Baptist songs. The theme for the annual event was “Body Building for Eternity.”

Myron Soper, General Conference President, gave the Sabbath morning message on “Lifting Up Jesus.” In the afternoon, six workshops were held, including one on “SDB Missions,” led by Leon R. Lawton, Executive Vice President of the SDB Missionary Society. Ron Davis, Association President, felt gratified with the attendance of nearly 200 and the cooperation of all the churches.

Dr. Ron Davis was granted a license to preach the Gospel by the Lake Elsinore church. As leader of the Hemet, Calif., Fellowship, he not only leads the midweek home Bible study group, but often preaches in Hemet on Sabbath afternoons. He has spoken on several occasions to our churches in the Los Angeles area.

The theme chosen for this joyous celebration was “Proclaiming the Whole Counsel of God.” James Ayars from Thousand Oaks, who is the new president of the Association, gave the sermon and sang a solo, “Take My Life and Let It Be.” U.S. Navy Chaplain Hal Scott from Coronado, Calif., a former student with Pastor Palmer at Southwestern Theological Seminary, read the Scripture. The charge to the candidates was given by John Rau, associate pastor of the Temple Baptist Church, Fullerton. The charge to the church was given by Gabriel Ayars, pastor of the Riverside SDB Church.

The Hemet group began meeting at the Church of the Open Bible in San Jacinto, at 1501 South Jacinto Ave. The new location will enable them to expand their ministry.

As a result of the bus ministry and two weeknight Bible Clubs for boys and girls, additional Sabbath School rooms were urgently needed in Lake Elsinore. Besides the two-room modular, a part of the front porch of the church has been enclosed for a classroom. With Leland Davis as teacher, the Junior boys are meeting there.

Seventy-five persons attended the Ordination Service for Pastor Dennis L. Palmer on Sabbath afternoon, December 14, 1991, in Lake Elsinore. Pastors and representatives from five other Seventh Day Baptist churches in Southern California were present. The ordination was held on the fourth anniversary of the church’s organization.

Everyone here is looking forward to the third South Atlantic Churches Day in Charleston. We hope to see many friends there the third Sabbath in November.
God: The Father, (cont. from page 9)

Revelation #5
In all fairness, however, we have to another dimension to our discovery of Jesus’ divinity: the Bible reveals that Jesus is subordinate to His Father. Jesus said, “My Father is greater than I” (John 14:28). As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do” (John 14:31). Paul makes this a voluntary submission which is a model for our own behavior (see Phil. 2:5-6).

Tentative conclusion #2
Based upon all of this, these Christians have concluded that Jesus is eternal, is divine, is YHWH, is the Son of someone Whom He calls His Father, and is obedient to His Father, Who is God over all. Already, the basic affirmations of the doctrine of the Trinity are becoming clear.

Revelation #6
While the Bible tells us less about the Holy Spirit than the Father and the Son, it still reveals much that is significant. He is called “the eternal Spirit” in Heb. 9:14. He is Omnipresent in that we can never escape from His presence (Ps. 139:7). He is Omniscient: “Who hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God” (1 Cor. 2:10).

He is Omnipotent: “Who hath directed the spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and whom instructed him? With whom took he counsel, yea, the deep things of God: What is the counsel of the Lord, and the deep things of the Father, and is obedient to His own behavior (see Phil. 2:5-9). He commands, even so I do” (John 14:31). Paul makes this a voluntary submission which is a model for our own behavior (see Phil. 2:5-6).

Revelation #7
Just as we found that Jesus is subordinate to His Father, we also find that the Holy Spirit is subordinate to both the Father and the Son. He is sent by the Father (John 14:16, 26; 15:26) and is obedient to Jesus, “For he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you” (John 16:7-14).

Tentative conclusion #4
Thus we find that the Holy Spirit has all the characteristics of the divine nature, has all the aspects of personality, and yet is subordinate to both the Father and the Son.

Revelation #8
The Bible also uses what have become known as “Trinitarian” formulas: “In the name [singular] of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” (see Matt. 28:19; Rev. 1:4-6). This is very important. Why must entrance into the Body of Christ through baptism be in the name” (see Acts 2:38). Why is it that “the name of God cannot be explained, but only stated, based upon the total revelation of Scripture?

A. We believe in One God, Who is Eternal, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent, and Immutable, as well as perfectly Righteous in all dealings with the universe.

B. This One God is a plurality of persons, consisting of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, with each sharing the same name, YHWH.

C. These three persons are indivisibly one in terms of their nature or substance (i.e., the spiritual divinity “stuff” of which they are composed).

D. These three persons are separate in terms of their personality and function (i.e., the Son, our Savior, talks to the Father, our Creator, Who sends the Holy Spirit, our Comforter).

E. These three persons are equal in terms of their age, nature, power, intelligence, and personality (i.e., they’ve been around for the same amount of time, have the same abilities, and are made up of the same spiritual substance).

F. These three persons are ranked in terms of their relative Authority (i.e., the Son obeys His Father; the Spirit obeys both the Father and the Son; the Father is over all).

G. These three persons are One in terms of their will, purpose, and nature (i.e., they operate at all times in full agreement with each other).

The doctrine of “the Trinity” is a sacred, priceless gem of truth.

What does this mean to us:
How we think of God affects our worship, our faith, and our prayers. When Christians who understand “the Trinity” speak of God, they have the following things in mind:

A. When praying, our prayers are brought to the Father by the intermediating Son under the influence of the Holy Spirit. To pray to one is to pray to all, and involves each of them equally.

B. When we say that God created the heavens and the earth, we mean that the Father did so through the Son by the power of the Holy Spirit. All three were lovingly present at our creation.

C. The Father, Who is over all, is our Creator, our Sustainer, and our loving Sovereign, the King of the Universe.

D. The Son, Who is the express image of His Father, is our Mediator, Intercessor, and Savior. He reveals His Father to us, and restores us to fellowship with Him.

E. The Holy Spirit, Who knows both the mind of the Father and the Son, is our Life-giver, Sanctifier, Renewer, Teacher, and Comforter.

F. How we think about God also affects the way we view the universe. Those religions which have a multiplicity of “gods” constantly at war with each other, end up with a chaotic universe with no ethics or meaning. Plato’s “Dialogue with Timeaus” reveals that graphically.

Those religions which have only an abstract one God experience a difficult time with a “god” who existed before creation; they are forced to conclude that either the universe is co-eternal with this single God, or He is at one time, less than a moral being, with no love, mercy, or creativity. These aspects could only come into being when there was another object outside of himself which could be the object of affection.

Love cannot exist when there is only a single being. The Allah of Islam and the “One” of modern Judaism both have these limitations. He becomes a moral/ethical/loving being only after He has begun to create, or if he faces a co-eternal universe.

The revelation that came to us through Jesus—that there was more to God than a single entity—solved all of the greatest moral/ethical dilemmas in all religion and philosophy. Our God did not create love when He created something to love. He has always loved; first, His Son, within the sacred framework of the Holy Spirit, and then the incredible array of beings His Son created in the divine image, under the power of the Holy Spirit. The moral consistency of these three divine beings within the one Godhead provided a consistent ethical base for all humanity.

The doctrine of “the Trinity” is a sacred, priceless gem of truth which has been given to us by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is our privilege to treasure it.

James Aryan is a member of the Santa Barbara, Calif., SDB Church. He has an M.Div. degree from Andrews University Theological Seminary, and is a member of "The Herald's" quartet music ministry.
ACCESSIONS

Battle Creek, MI
James Galanaugh, pastor
Joined after baptism
Kenneth Baker
Susan Baker

Bay Area, CA
Steven Crouch, pastor
Joined after testimony
Roy Vanya
Rene Vanya

Centertown, MO
Jon Warren, pastor
Joined after testimony
Edith Mize

Births

Rootes.—A son, Cameron Robert Rootes, was born to Sidney and Debra Rootes of Kalamazoo, MI, on November 27, 1991.

Hentges.—A son, Christopher Lee Hentges, was born to Nick and Alice Hentges of Battle Creek, MI, on December 15, 1991.

Obituaries

Cavinder.—Elise M. (Pratley) Cavinder, 71, of Tekonsha, Mich., died on October 26, 1991, at Oaklawn Hospital, Marshall, Mich., after a long illness. She was born on August 30, 1920, in Marengo Township, the daughter of Harold G. and Marlin B. (Spinlaw) Pratley. She married Lisle Richard Cavinder on October 5, 1939, and was a lifelong resident of the Marshall-Tekonsha area, living in Tekonsha the past 45 years. Elise had been employed at the old Tekon Grill and then at Needham Dry Cleaners in Marshall before being stricken with multiple sclerosis in 1967. She was a member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Battle Creek, Mich., and the Multiple Sclerosis Society. She enjoyed crochet and needlework, selling many of her crafts.

Besides her husband, she is survived by three daughters, Joanne Benson of Union City, Mich., and Diana Randall and Linda Steuart, both of Tekonsha; two sons, Stephen and Jon, both of Tekonsha; one sister, Helen Field of Deford, Mesa, Ariz.; and two brothers, Howard of Pratley, Michigan, and Jack of Tecumseh, Michigan. She is also survived by 12 grandchildren, and 17 great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents and one brother, R. Clair.

Funeral services were held on November 9, 1991, at the Seventh Day Baptist Church in North Loup, with the Rev. Kenneth Burdick officiating. Additional services were provided by the P.B.O. Chapter BB of Ord. Burial was in the Hillside Cemetery in North Loup.

Barber.—Lucinda Barber, 92, of Westerly, R.I., died on November 12, 1991, at the Westerly Health Center.

A native of Westerly, she was born on April 17, 1899, the daughter of the late Hiram W. and Elizabeth (Denison) Barber. She was born in the Barber homestead and lived there all of her life. Lucinda worked as a member of the Pawcatuck Church of Battle Creek, Mich., and was also a member of the Ralph R. Rich American Legion Post #295. She was dearly loved by her step-children and step-grandchildren.

Survivors include her wife, Delores, of North Loup; four step-children, Lynette Luther of Beatrice, Delores Lee Cording of Callaway, Neb., Keith Vore of North Loup and a member of the Rev. Kenneth Burdick officiating. She was preceded in death by her parents and one brother, Lester.

Services were held on November 15, 1991, at North Loup SDB Church, with the Rev. Kenneth Burdick officiating. Burial was in the Buckler-
Obituaries, cont.

Anderson.—William T. Anderson, 79, died on December 8, 1991, at his home in Little Genoa, N.Y., following a lengthy illness. He was born on February 8, 1912, in Olean, N.Y., the son of Charles and Lillian (Keeler) Anderson. On October 12, 1940, he married the former Evelyne Eaton. Bill was a veteran of World War II, serving with the U.S. Army in the European Theater. Following the war, he was employed by the Dresser Clark Company in Olean. He worked there for more than 30 years, retiring in 1974. Bill and his wife recently joined the First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Genesea. He was also a member of the Kenyon Anderson American Legion Post #772, the Olean Senior Citizens Club of Beliviar, N.Y. Besides his wife, Evelyne, survivors include one son, James, and one daughter, Samantha. Boston of Little Genesee; two daughters, Jackalyn Endres of Genoa, Iowa, and Judith Kennedy of Beverly, Mass.; four grandchildren, one great-grandchild, and a number of nieces and nephews. Services were held on December 15, 1991, at First Memorial Chapel, with the Rev. Mynor Colflesh, the Rev. Ronald J. Elston Sr., and the Rev. Jon Warren, burial will be in Pouke Cemetery.

Stewart.—Leigh Thurston Stewart, 81, of Kirkwood, Mo., passed away on December 18, 1991. He was born on March 31, 1910, in Waterloo, Iowa, the eldest son of Dwight J. and Bessie M. Ford Stewart. He was married to Thelma Evaline Freet on May 5, 1932.

Leigh was a carpenter and a cabinetmaker by trade, and held a lifetime membership in the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, with over 50 years of continuous membership. For many years, he was a member of the conservation federation of Missouri, serving on various state committees and as president of the St. Louis South Side Division. He also served in the Navy in World War II aboard the U.S.S. Vellars. He was baptized and joined the Carlisle Seventh Day Baptist Church of Garwin, Iowa. After moving to Missouri, Leigh joined the Farinas (Ill.) SDB Church. A devout Sabbathkeeper, he helped organize the Kirkwood SDB Church, serving as deacon and moderator.

Survivors include his wife of almost 69 years, Thelma; three sons, Norman of Orem, Utah, Steven of Moscow Mills, Mo., and Dennis of Cherryville, Mo.; four daughters, Nora Tahil of Webster Groves, Mo., Susan Peterson of Springfield, Mo., N.Y., Eleanor (Sally) Moylan of Kansas City, Mo., and Laura Hortig of Festoon, Mo.; three brothers, Dwight Allen of St. Charles, Mo., Neil B. of Richmond Heights, Mo., and William (Skippy) of Houston, Texas; one sister, Margaret Whitaker of Brunell, Fl.; 24 grandchildren, and 17 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by two brothers, Milton and Philip. Funeral services were held in St. Louis, Mo., on December 23, 1991. Officiating were the Rev. Mynor Colflesh, the Rev. Ronald J. Elston Sr., and the Rev. Jon Warren.

Austín.—Alexander Palmer Austín, 88, of Pawcatuck, Conn., died on December 27, 1991, at Westerly (R.I.) Hospital. He was the widower of Elizabeth (Kenyon) Austin. He was born on March 30, 1903, in Stonington, Conn., the son of John H. and Matil Knight Stillman Austin. He had been employed at Electric Boat for 14 years in various design, engineering, research, and development capacities. He retired in 1971.

Alexander was a member of the Pawcatuck Seventh Day Baptist Church in Westerly, R.I. Survivors include one son, Harold, of North Stonington, Conn.; two sisters, Dorcas Van Horn of Westerly and Sally A. Pulver of Pine Plains, N.Y.; and four grandchildren. A graveside service was held on December 29, 1991, in Oak Grove Cemetery, Ashaway, R.I.

Kevin’s

Okay, how do you explain, in one page, what theologians have attempted to articulate for a couple thousand years?

Worse yet, how do you illustrate it on a magazine cover?

Let me begin with a quote that Don Sanford discovered for me. Mystery writer Dorothy Sayers was asked to write a letter explaining her religious beliefs:

“The only letter I ever want to address to average people is one that says: Why don’t you take the trouble to find out what is Christianity and what isn’t? Why, when you can bestir yourselves to learn technical terms about electricity, won’t you do as much for theology before you begin to argue about it?”

“Why do you accept mildewed old heresies as bold and constructive contributions to modern Christian thought, when any handbook on Church history would tell you where they came from?”

“Why do you complain that the proposition ‘God is three in one’ is obscure and mystical, and yet acquiesce meekly in the physicists’ formula: ‘Two P minus PQ equals H over F where H equals the square root of minus 1 plus 1; when you know quite well that the square root of minus 1 is paradoxical and F is in calculable?”

Since I work with words all the time, a quick word study may be in order. The word “trinity” does not mean a “tri-unify.” It comes from the Latin, trinitas, which means “threeness.” There is a “threeness” to God, not three “ones.”

Three “onesenes,” or three “unities,” would mean three separate gods. How would we pray? How would we worship? How would we live, knowing we’d have to think and act differently for three different gods? This “threeness” means that the persons of the Godhead are part of a package—they are “not sold separately.”

When Moses declares to the people in Deuteronomy 6:4, “...The Lord our God, the Lord is ONE,” he does not use the singular meaning of “one.” It does not mean a “one in isolation,” but “one in unity.” One author says the word (echoah) carries the sense of talking about one bunch of grapes, or the people of Israel responding as one people. Nowhere in the Old Testament is that particular word used to denote a stark, singular entity. Our God is ONE; but a plural one.

My theology professor was also interested in words. With the trinity, he would focus on the word “person.” I can hear him asking, in his thick, French accent, “What makes you, a person, different from any other animal?” His answer: “Relationships.” Being a whole “person” means that you are a human being profoundly involved in relationships with others. As no human would be a whole person if isolated from other humans, no One of the three Persons of the Godhead can be in isolation.

God is three persons, in profound relationship with each other. And that unbreakable relationship is lived out in active cooperation. All three Persons cooperated in biblical events: the creation; the Incarnation (Jesus coming to earth); Jesus’ baptism (Matt. 3:16-17); the stone-

lizing (Christ paying the debt for our sins)—through the Spirit, offering Himself to God, Heb. 9:14; our salvation (1 Pet. 1:23); and our mission (the Great Commission—Matt. 28:19).

A trinity of persons; a unity in essence. Math wasn’t my strongest subject. So, I must agree with the great orator, Daniel Webster, as he was challenged with the question, “How can a man of your mental caliber believe that three equals one?”

Webster replied, “I do not pretend fully to understand the arithmetic of heaven now.” I take comfort in the fact that all of our books, illustrations, and analogies will fade quickly from sight once we see our great God, face-to-face. May we be one group of “persons” on that Day.

In the next SR:

SDB Ministries—
How our agencies serve you and the Kingdom
1992 Sabbath Hymn Contest Rules

Why a New Hymn Contest?
We are looking for new and original Sabbath hymns for Seventh Day Baptists. This is a project of the Tract and Communication Council, coinciding with this year’s Sabbath Emphasis issue of The Sabbath Recorder.

Hymn content
Hymn must:
• be new and previously unpublished.
• pertain to the Sabbath (e.g., God’s giving it, its benefits, His grace and love behind it.)

Hymn will be judged by these criteria:
• Singable
• Biblical
• Understandable to laypeople
• Glorifying to God

Contest entrants
Composers/authors names will not be revealed to the judges.
Teamwork is allowed. (e.g., one person writes the words, another writes the music.)
Each entrant agrees to grant permission to have the hymn printed in the May 1992 Sabbath Recorder. The Recorder will insure copyright protection with the © symbol.

Categories
Depending on response, entries may be divided into two categories: "Words only (matching an existing tune)"; and "Hymn words and original music."

Deadline
Hymn entry must be postmarked by March 2, 1992. Mail to address above.

Prizes
First prize:
Don Sanford’s upcoming 448-page history book, A Choosing People: The History of Seventh Day Baptists.

Other prizes:
Authors of published entries meeting contest guidelines will receive gold-plated Parker Pens (made in Janesville, Wis.), fine writing instruments to inspire further compositions.