

SDA Compared to What We Believe Pt2

Topic: Avoid Legalism

Scripture Text: Acts 15:1–10

05/06/2018

Acts 15:1–10 (NKJV) ¹ And certain *men* came down from Judea and taught the brethren, **“Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”** ² Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question. ³ So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, describing the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren. ⁴ And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them. ⁵ **But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, “It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses.”** ⁶ Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. ⁷ And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: “Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. ⁸ So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as *He did* to us, ⁹ and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. ¹⁰ **Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?**

“It takes at least two people to argue but it takes only one to hold a grudge after”

We continue on with part 2 in our series on what the SDA believe compared to what we believe. As I mentioned last week, “there is not a whole lot of differences between the two “TODAY”.

Credibility Questioned

Over the years the SDA have modified their beliefs and are not so privately wed to the views and teachings (prophecies) of its key founder Ellen G White, some still see the written works by Ellen White as "a continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction,"

It is believed by some, that to many Christ-following Adventists, Ellen G. White is a bit of an embarrassment from the early days of the movement, and they don't talk much about her, and quietly feel like the church has moved beyond her heresies and idiosyncrasies.

Some Adventist scholars claim that as much as 90 percent of White's writings were plagiarized, though the White estate claims it is only about 2 percent.

What do they think about God?

They do share the same belief about God as mainstream Christianity does They believe that God, the eternal Father, is the Creator, Source, Sustainer, and Sovereign of all creation. He is just and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

They believe that there is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three coeternal Persons. (The Trinity). God is immortal, all-powerful, all-knowing, above all, and ever present.

Legalism

The idea of imposing additional legalistic rules/laws on people is not new and born out in our focus passage.

¹ **And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”**

Let me stop right here and say. Any religion or denomination that teaches that in order to obtain salvation you must do something other than believe in the Lord Jesus Christ is saying that what Christ did was not enough. It is a Christ PLUS faith and that kind of faith is heretical.

On Salvation

The SDA used to believe that it was essential their followers believed the doctrine the Jesus DID return and entered the Holy of Holies in 1844 in order to be saved, they have since abandon that belief. They now believe and teach that Salvation is solely through Jesus Christ.

The point is that the truth does not change.

<https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1946/05/relation-of-works-to-salvation>

There are not very many doctrinal differences but there are a few.

On their website they have a section on “Seventh-Day Adventist 28 Fundamental beliefs”.

<https://www.adventist.org/fileadmin/adventist.org/files/articles/official-statements/28Beliefs-Web.pdf>

The following are some differences I consider unique:

1. They did and still do, to a lesser degree, believe in the prophetic ministry of Ellen G. White.

Their “Fundamental Beliefs” states, “Her writings speak with prophetic authority and provide comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction to the church”. Though 90% are believed to be plagiarized.

<https://www.epm.org/resources/2016/Jan/20/how-do-seventh-day-adventist-sda-beliefs-differ-ev/>

2. What they believe about Diet

According to the official Seventh Day Adventist Dietetic Association website, SDAs have been vegetarians for over a century. No meats are **allowed** in their diets, including beef, chicken, fish and wild game. The SDAs believe that after alcohol and tobacco – both of which are banned – meat is the next worst item you can put into your body.

<https://www.livestrong.com/article/441583-what-foods-are-on-the-7th-day-adventist-diet/>

Their writing begins by focusing on the health reasons for being a vegetarian.

They say that **God’s preferred diet** for us is a plant-based diet as expressed in the Bible as our original diet (*Genesis 1:29; Genesis 3:18*) and fully explained in **the Spirit of Prophecy** which we will look at below

Not all SDA adhere to this command. They write, while I cannot answer your question regarding why some people (including pastors) choose to eat meat, we do have a wealth of counsel on diet and

health through **the writings of Ellen White**, which we would all do well to follow. This is based on their belief that she was a prophetess.

<http://perspectives.adventist.org/en/questions-answers/questions/go/2016-12-30/is-it-proper-to-eat-meat/>

This tends to put a new or weaker Christian back under legalism.

Although they quote the Bible (Genesis 1:29; Genesis 3:18) as so often false teaching does they do not quote it all.

Genesis 9: 3 (NKJV) ³ Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.

The only requirement regarding the eating of meat related to the blood within it and later the division between the clean and unclean.

My Answer to this is:

kill and eat. With the coming of the New Covenant and the calling of the church, God ended the dietary restrictions ¹

*Acts 10:10–16 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance ¹¹ and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. ¹² In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. ¹³ **And a voice came to him, “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.”** ¹⁴ But Peter said, “Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean.” ¹⁵ **And a voice spoke to him again the second time, “What God has cleansed you must not call common.”** ¹⁶ This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.*

As we can see in our focus passage, there may be a tendency for others to put newer or weaker Christians under a form of legalism. Christ has freed us from the Law into liberty

Galatians 5:1 (NKJV) ¹ Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.

In light of Jewish converts trying to put new believers under the Law, Peter response.

¹⁰ Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

Peter reminded them that even they, being Jews and raised under the law, could not keep it.

This is confirmed in their own writings pointing out that even some of their pastors eat meat.

Paul is clearer still

*Romans 3:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ Therefore by the **deeds of the law no flesh will be justified** in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

Hold on to your liberty in Christ. Do not to use it as a license or to be abused, but to use it to glorify God.

¹ MacArthur, J., Jr. (Ed.). (1997). [The MacArthur Study Bible](#) (electronic ed., p. 1652). Nashville, TN: Word Pub.

3. The Litmus TEST – this test always asks the question

What they believe about Jesus?

They believe that God, the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through Him all things were created, the character of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is accomplished, and the world is judged. Forever truly God, He became also truly human, Jesus the Christ. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived and experienced temptation as a human being, but perfectly exemplified the righteousness and love of God.

<https://www.adventist.org/fileadmin/adventist.org/files/articles/official-statements/28Beliefs-Web.pdf>

that all sounds good BUT, many believe that Jesus is Michael the Arch angel. They go on to say, we believe that the term "Michael" is but one of the many titles applied to the Son of God, the second person of the Godhead. But such a view does not in any way conflict with our belief in His full deity and eternal pre-existence, nor does it in the least disparage His person and work. And our views concerning Michael, it might be added, have been held by various eminent scholars through the centuries We are therefore not alone in our understanding. (Jehovah's Witness and Mormons do)

<http://www.sdanet.org/atissue/books/qod/q08.htm>

We've covered this doctrine in our series on the JW's. JW's hold a stronger view that Jesus and Michael are the same.

If Jesus is also Michael, the Arch ANGEL, then we are warned against worshipping angels.

Revelation 22:8–9 (NKJV) ⁸ Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. ⁹ Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God." *Colossians 2:18 (NKJV)*

Despite all our differences with SDA we share one common faith, which is "Salvation only through Jesus Christ", we are all the same.

But there are some very major differences between SDA, JW's and LDS. The Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons categorically get it wrong about Jesus. Ellen G. White said much about Jesus that was true, and other SDA leaders have unapologetically affirmed the trinity and the deity of Christ.

After all, the SDA use the same Scripture. Only our perspectives differ.

Message Scriptures: **Acts 15:1–10**, *1 Corinthians 6:19, Leviticus 11, Deuteronomy 14, Genesis 1:29, Genesis 3:18, Genesis 9: 3, Acts 10:10–16, Galatians 5:1, Romans 3:20, Revelation 22:8–9*

END

RESOURCES

9 Things you Should Know about Seventh-Day Adventist

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/9-things-you-should-know-about-seventh-day-adventism>

History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Seventh-day_Adventist_Church

Famous-seventh-day-Adventists

<https://www.ranker.com/list/famous-seventh-day-adventists/celebrity-lists>

Adventist Official Statements

<https://www.adventist.org/fileadmin/adventist.org/files/articles/official-statements/28Beliefs-Web.pdf>

The Jewish Months

https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/526874/jewish/The-Jewish-Month.htm

How Do Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Beliefs Differ from Evangelical Christian Beliefs?

<https://www.epm.org/resources/2016/Jan/20/how-do-seventh-day-adventist-sda-beliefs-differ-ev/>

What Foods are on the 7th Day Adventist Diet

<https://www.livestrong.com/article/441583-what-foods-are-on-the-7th-day-adventist-diet/>

Is It Proper to Eat Meat

<http://perspectives.adventist.org/en/questions-answers/questions/go/2016-12-30/is-it-proper-to-eat-meat/>

28 Fundamental Beliefs

<https://www.adventist.org/fileadmin/adventist.org/files/articles/official-statements/28Beliefs-Web.pdf>

Seventh-Day Adventist Quote on Doctrine

<http://www.sdanet.org/atissue/books/qod/q08.htm>