

The Pioneers Speak - Part 3 of 4

About the Son of God

From the pen of Inspiration: ***“The Word of the Lord has guided our steps since the passing of the time in 1844. We have searched the Scriptures; we have built solidly; and we have not had to tear up our foundations and put in new timbers.”***
(Letter 24, 1907)

“The time has come when we must firmly refuse to be drawn away from the platform of eternal truth, which since 1844 has stood the test.” (Letter 277, 1904)

What the Pioneers Wrote About the Son of God

JAMES WHITE - “The Father was greater than the Son in that he was first. The Son was equal with the Father in that he had received all things from the Father...” (RH Jan. 4, 1881)

J. N. ANDREWS - “And as to the Son of God, he would be excluded also [Paul’s description of Melchisedec’s existence in Hebrews 7:3], for he had God for his Father, and did, at some point in the eternity of the past, have beginning of days. So that if we use Paul’s language in an absolute sense, it would be impossible to find but one being in the universe, and that is God the Father, who is without father, or mother, or descent, or beginning of days, or end of life....” (RH Sept. 7, 1869)

C. W. STONE - “The Word, then, is Christ. This text speaks of his origin. He is the only begotten of the Father. Just how he came into existence, the Bible does not inform us any more definitely; but by this expression and several of a similar kind in the Scriptures, we may believe that Christ came into existence in a manner different from that in which other beings first appeared; that he sprang from the Father's being in a way not necessary for us to understand.” (The Captain Of Our Salvation [1886], 17)

E. J. WAGGONER - “In arguing the perfect equality of the Father and the Son, and the fact that Christ is in very nature God, we do not design to be understood as teaching that the Father was not before the Son. It should not be necessary to guard this point, lest some should think that the Son existed as soon as the Father, yet some go to that extreme, which adds nothing to the dignity of Christ, but rather detracts from the honor due him, since many throw the whole thing away rather than accept a theory so obviously out of harmony with the language of Scripture, that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. He was **begotten**, not created. He is of the substance of the Father, so that in his

very nature he is God; and since that is so 'it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.'

"Col. 1:19.... "...While both are of the same nature, the **Father is first in point of time**. He is also **greater** in that **he had no beginning**, while **Christ's personality had a beginning**...." (ST April 8, 1889)

Note – Sister White never said E.J. Waggoner was wrong as she was aware of every word published in the periodicals. So, we just read that Waggoner stated that the Son was begotten, not created. Trinitarian SDA's say that the Father and the Son are role playing, co-eternal gods, therefore neither came first. But Waggoner also stated the Father was first in point of time and had no beginning, but Christ's personality had a beginning. Who do you believe?

"The Word was 'in the beginning.' The mind of man cannot grasp the ages that are spanned in this phrase. It is not given to men to know when or how the Son was begotten; but we know that He was the Divine Word, not simply before He came to this earth to die, but even before the world was created.... [Micah 5:2 quoted.] We know that Christ 'proceeded forth and came from God' (John 8:42), but it was so far back in the ages of eternity as to be far beyond the grasp of the mind of man." (Christ And His Righteousness [1890], 9)

"...As the Son of the self-existent God, he has by nature all the attributes of Deity.

"It is true that there are many sons of God; but Christ is the 'only begotten Son of God,' and therefore the Son of God in a sense in which no other being ever was, or ever can be. The angels are sons of God, as was Adam (Job 38:7; Luke 3:38), by creation; Christians are the sons of God by adoption (Rom. 8:14, 15); but Christ is the Son of God by birth." (Ibid., 11-12)

"...All things proceed ultimately from God, the Father; even Christ Himself proceeded and came forth from the Father...." (Ibid., 19)

"The Scriptures declare that Christ is 'the only begotten Son of God.' He is begotten, not created. As to when He was begotten, it is not for us to inquire, nor could our minds grasp it if we were told. The prophet Micah tells us all that we can know about it, in these words: 'But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from old, from the days of eternity.' Micah 5:2, margin. There was a time when Christ proceeded forth and came from God, from the bosom of the Father (John 8:42; 1:18), but that time was so far back in the days of eternity that to finite comprehension it is practically without beginning." (Ibid., 21)

W. W. PRESCOTT - "As Christ was twice born, once in eternity, the only begotten of the Father, and again here in the flesh, thus uniting the divine with the human in that second birth, so we who have been born once already in the flesh, are to have the second birth, being born again of the Spirit, in order that our experience may be the same, the human and the divine being joined in a life union." (RH April 14, 1896)

Note – Sister White never said that W. W. Prescott was wrong, as she always read every word published in the Review and Herald. Prescott so clearly stated that Christ was born twice, once begotten of the Father in eternity, then born here in the flesh. It makes sense what he is saying since Christ is our example in all things. We must be born twice, once in the flesh, a second birth in the Spirit, the human and the divine being joined in a life union. That quote of Prescott had to have heaven's blessing. But the trinitarians say Christ was not begotten until Bethlehem.

Who do you believe? The pioneers who were taught by God and confirmed by HIS prophet or intellectual philosophy? **"We ought to obey God rather than men."** Acts 5:29 AMEN!

A. T. JONES - "He was born of the Holy Ghost. In other words, Jesus Christ was born again. He came from heaven, God's first-born, to the earth, and was born again. But all in Christ's work goes by opposites for us: he, the sinless one, was made to be sin, in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He, the living one, the prince and author of life, died that we might live. He whose goings forth have been from the days of eternity, the first-born of God, was born again, in order that we might be born again.

"If Jesus Christ had never been born again, could you and I have ever been born again? No. But he was born again, from the world of righteousness into the world of sin; that we might be born again, from the world of sin into the world of righteousness.

"He was born again, and was made partaker of the human nature, that we might be born again, and so made partakers of the divine nature. He was born again, unto earth, unto sin, and unto man, that we might be born again unto heaven, unto righteousness, and unto God." (RH Aug. 1, 1899)

Note – The church today says the pioneers were in error, but the pioneers had it right and intellectual philosophy has it all wrong!

JAMES WHITE - "Paul affirms of the Son of God that he was in the form of God, and that he was equal with God. 'Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God.' Phil. 2:6. The reason why it is not robbery for the Son to be equal with the Father is the fact that he is equal....

“The inexplicable trinity that makes the godhead three in one and one in three, is bad enough; but that ultra Unitarianism that makes Christ inferior to the Father is worse. Did God say to an inferior, ‘Let us make man in our image?’” (RH Nov. 29, 1877)

JAMES EDSON WHITE (second son of James and Ellen White) - “The angels, therefore, being created, are necessarily lower than Christ, their Creator. Christ is the only being begotten of the Father.” (Past, Present and Future [1909], 52)

J. M. STEPHENSON - “To be the only begotten Son of God must be understood in a different sense than to be a Son by creation; for in that sense all the creatures he has made are sons. Nor can it refer to his miraculous conception, with the virgin Mary, by the Holy Ghost; because he is represented by this endearing title more than four thousand years before his advent in the village of Bethlehem. Moreover, he is represented as being exalted far above the highest orders of men and angels in his primeval nature. He must therefore be understood as being the Son of God in a much higher sense than any other being. His being the only begotten of the Father supposes that none except him were thus begotten; hence he is, in truth and

verity, the only begotten Son of God; and as such he must be Divine; that is, be a partaker of the Divine nature. This term expresses his highest, and most exalted nature....

“...The idea of Father and Son supposes priority of the existence of the one, and the subsequent existence of the other. To say that the Son is as old as his Father, is a palpable contradiction of terms. It is a natural impossibility for the Father to be as young as the Son, or the Son to be as old as the Father. If it be said that this term is only used in an accommodated sense, it still remains to be accounted for, why the Father should use as the uniform title of the highest, and most

endearing relation between himself and our Lord, a term which, in its uniform signification, would contradict the very idea he wished to convey. If the inspired writers had wished to convey the idea of the co-etaneous [def.: of the same age or duration] existence, and eternity of the Father and Son, they could not possibly have used more incompatible terms. And of this, Trinitarians have been sensible. Mr. Fuller, although a Trinitarian, had the honesty to acknowledge, in the conclusion of his work on the Sonship of Christ, that, ‘in the order of nature, the Father must have existed before the Son.’...” (RH Nov. 14, 1854, italics original)

D. M. CANRIGHT - “‘For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son,’ etc. According to this, Jesus Christ is begotten of God in a sense that no other being is; else he could not be his only begotten Son. Angels are called sons of God, and

so are righteous men; but Christ is his Son in a higher sense, in a closer relation, than either of these. God made men and angels out of materials already created. He is the author of their existence, their Creator, hence their Father. But Jesus Christ was begotten of the Father's own substance. He was not created out of material as the angels and other creatures were. He is truly and emphatically the 'Son of God.'... [Heb.1:1-8 quoted].

“By this we see that a very plain and great distinction is made between the Son and all the angels. They are all commanded to worship him. No created being can ever be worthy of worship, however high he may be, neither would it be right nor just for God to bid one order of his creatures to worship another. Divinity alone is worthy of worship, and to worship anything else would be idolatry. Hence Paul places Christ far above the angels, and makes a striking contrast between them....” (RH June 18, 1867, emphasis original)

R. F. COTTRELL - “But if I am asked what I think of Jesus Christ, my reply is, I believe all that the Scriptures say of him. If the testimony represents him as being in glory with the Father before the world was, I believe it. If it is said that he was in the beginning with God, that he was God, that all things were made by him and for him, and that without him was not anything made that was made, I believe it. If the Scriptures say he is the Son of God, I believe it. If it is declared that the Father sent his Son into the world, I believe he had a Son to send....

“It may be objected, if the Father and the Son are two distinct beings, do you not, in worshipping the Son and calling him God, break the first commandment of the Decalogue?

“No; it is the Father's will ‘That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.’ We cannot break the commandment and dishonor God by obeying him. The Father says of the Son, ‘Let all the angels of God worship him.’ Should angels refuse to worship the Son, they would rebel against the Father. Children inherit the name of their father. The Son of God ‘hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than’ the angels. That name is the name of his Father. The Father says to the Son, ‘Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever.’ Heb. 1. The Son is called ‘The mighty God.’ Isa. 9:6. And when he comes again to earth his waiting people will exclaim, ‘This is our God.’ Isa. 25:9. It is the will of the Father that we should thus honor the Son. In doing so we render supreme honor to the Father. If we dishonor the Son we dishonor the Father; for he requires us to honor his Son.

“But though the Son is called God, yet there is a ‘God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.’ 1Pet. 1:3. Though the Father says to the Son, ‘Thy throne, O God, is forever and

ever,' yet, that throne is given him of his Father; and because he loved righteousness and hated iniquity, he further says, 'Therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee.' Heb. 1:9. 'God hath made that same Jesus both Lord and Christ.' Acts. 2:36. The Son is 'the everlasting Father,' not of himself, nor of his Father, but of his children. His language is, 'I and the children which God hath given me.' Heb. 2:13." (RH June 1, 1869)

JOHN MATTESON - "Christ is the only literal son of God. 'The only begotten of the Father.' John 1:14. He is God because he is the Son of God; not by virtue of His resurrection. If Christ is the only begotten of the Father, then we cannot be begotten of the Father in a literal sense. It can only be in a secondary sense of the word...." (RH Oct. 12, 1869)

URIAH SMITH - "...The Scriptures nowhere speak of Christ as a created being, but on the contrary plainly state that he was begotten of the Father. (See remarks of Rev. 3:14, where it is shown that Christ is not a created being.) But while as the Son he does not possess a co-eternity of past existence with the Father, the beginning of his existence, as the begotten of the Father, antedates the entire work of creation, in relation to which he stands as joint creator with God. John 1:3; Heb 1:2. Could not the Father ordain that to such a being worship should be rendered equally with himself, without its being idolatry on the part of the worshiper? He has raised him to positions which make it proper that he should be worshipped, and has even commanded that worship should be rendered him, which would not have been necessary had he been equal with the Father in eternity of existence. Christ himself declares that 'as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.' John 5:26. The Father has 'highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.' Phil. 2:9. And the Father himself says, 'Let all the angels of God worship him.' Heb. 1:6. These testimonies show that Christ is now an object of worship equally with the Father; but they do not prove that with him he holds an eternity of past existence." (Thoughts on the Book of Daniel and the Revelation [1882], 430, italics original)

"God alone is without beginning. At the earliest epoch when a beginning could be, - a period so remote that to finite minds it is essentially eternity, - appeared the Word. 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' John 1:1. This uncreated Word was the Being, who, in the fullness of time, was made flesh, and dwelt among us. His beginning was not like that of any other being in the universe. It is set forth in the mysterious expressions, 'his [God's] only begotten Son' (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9), 'the only begotten of the Father' (John 1:14), and 'I proceeded forth and came from God.' John 8:42. Thus it appears that by some divine impulse or process, not creation, known only to Omniscience, and possible only to Omnipotence, the Son of God appeared...." (Looking Unto Jesus [1898], 10)

JOSEPH BATES - "My parents were members of long standing in the Congregational church, with all of their converted children thus far, and anxiously hoped that we would also unite with them. But they embraced some points in their faith which I could not understand. I will name two only: their mode of baptism, and doctrine of the trinity. My father, who had been a deacon of long standing with them, labored to convince me that they were right in points of doctrine.... I said to my father, 'If you can convince me that we are one in this sense, that you are my father, and I your son; and also that I am your father, and you my son, then I can believe in the trinity.'... "...In a few days I was immersed and joined the Christian church." (The Autobiography of Elder Joseph Bates [1868], 204-205)

JAMES WHITE - "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for THE faith which was once delivered unto the saints....' Jude 3-4 ...So the exhortation to contend for the faith delivered to the saints, is to us alone. And it is very important for us to know what the apostle meant, that we may know what for and how to contend. In the 4th verse he gives us the reason why we should contend for THE faith, a particular faith; 'for there are certain men,' or a certain class who deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.... The way spiritualizers this way have disposed of or denied the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ is first using the old unscriptural trinitarian creed, viz., that Jesus Christ is the eternal God, though they have not one passage to support it, while we have plain scripture testimony in abundance that he is the Son of the eternal God...." (The Day Star, Jan. 24, 1846)

"Here we might mention the Trinity, which does away with the personality of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ...." (RH Dec. 11, 1855)

D. W. HULL - "The inconsistent positions held by many in regard to the Trinity, as it is termed, has, no doubt, been the prime cause of many other errors. Erroneous views of the divinity of Christ are apt to lead us into error in regard to the nature of the atonement." (RH Nov. 10, 1859)

God has privileged us living in this final generation, with such a cloud of witnesses, whose writings show us what were the God-given beliefs, the early Adventist church had, as a sure foundation. Our light has truly come.

We have this assurance from God's messenger Ellen White: "*When men come in who would move one pin or pillar from the foundation which God has established by His Holy Spirit, let the aged men who were pioneers in our work speak plainly, and let those who are dead speak also, by the reprinting of their articles in our periodicals. Gather up*

the rays of divine light that God has given us as He has led His people on step by step in the way of truth. This truth will stand the test of time and trial.” (1MR [1905] 55)