

Letters between H. W. Carr and W. C. White

1935

In 1935, letters passed between H. W. Carr and W. C. White.

W. C. White was Ellen White's third son. He was secretary of the Ellen G. White Estate. At the time of his death in 1937 he was also on the boards of such as the St. Helena Sanitarium as well as the Pacific Union College.

William (Willie) Clarence White was well esteemed for having a tremendous knowledge of his mother's writings. Since his father's (James White's) death in 1881 he had been constantly at his mother's side to help her with her work. He had accompanied her wherever it took her throughout the world. He also indexed her writings and helped compile some of her worked published posthumously (Ellen White died in 1915).

In 1935, it was being promoted by some of our leaders that the Holy Spirit was of the same nature as the Father and the Son. This can be seen from reading these letters. It is obvious therefore that prior to this time (also at that time) it was believed by Seventh-day Adventists that the Holy Spirit was not a person such as were God and His Son. The latter is how the belief was, of Seventh-day Adventists in general, throughout the time of Ellen White's ministry. This was even though she had clearly said that He was a divine personality.

This can be seen in detail in section forty-four (A changed Holy Spirit), also in section twenty-six (The early 1900's crisis - Kellogg and the Holy Spirit) found here

[A Detailed History of the Trinity Doctrine](#)

As will be seen in the latter named sections, contrary to the generally held beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists in the early 1900's, Kellogg came to believe that the Holy Spirit was a person like God and Christ. This was one of the problem factors in the early 1900's Godhead crisis within Seventh-day Adventism.

Ellen White's view regarding the Holy Spirit was that His nature was a mystery not revealed by God therefore 'silence was golden'. This advice was not taken. We know this because our leadership eventually adopted the belief that He was a person like God and Christ. This eventually resulted in adopting the trinity belief that they hold dear today, or at least do the leadership and many of the ministry.

Below are the letters that passed between White and Carr. The first one is from Carr to White dated January 24th 1935.

Letter from H. W. Carr to W. C. White

January 24th 1935

**C. A. SCRIVEN. PRESIDENT
J. B. FRANK SEC'Y-TREAS.**

**NEW YORK CONFERENCE
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS
Union Springs, N. Y.**

**H. W. CARR
SUPT. LOCKPORT DISTRICT
164 SAXTON STREET
LOCKPORT. N. Y.**

Jan.24 1935

Eld. W. C. White
St. Helena, Calif.

Dear Elder White

Your recent reminder of the efficient provision for carrying forward Sr. Whites work, and the gems of thought which accompanied your announcement is very much appreciated, "She being dead yet speaketh". God has lead this people on, and is still leading, through his chosen servant, for which we praise Him.

In the first pages of Great Controversy it is stated that the "Father had an associate – a co worker... The only being that could enter into all the councils and purposes of God. "The Father wrought by His son in the creation of all heavenly beings... "He holds supremacy over them all. "Sin originated with Satan, who next to Christ had been most honoured of God, and was highest in power and Glory among the inhabitants of

heaven. "Next to Christ he was first among the hosts of God. The Son of God had wrought the Father's will in the creation of all the hosts of heaven. "The Son of God was exalted above Satan as one in power and authority with the Father. Christ created Satan. Ezekiel 28:15.

It is urged by some of our leaders now that The Holy Spirit is a third person of the same nature of the Father and son, a member of the heavenly trio, cooperative in creation and personally active with the Father and son. For many years I have used these statements Of (sic) Sr. White in combating false teachings relative to defining the Holy Spirit.

Will you kindly tell me what you understand was your mother's position in reference (sic) to the personality of the Holy Spirit.

Does Sister White's writings any where teach that prayer should only be addressed to the Father, or that we should not address Christ in prayer, only through the Father?

Does she anywhere tell what that power is that "shall plant the tabernacle of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain? Daniel 11:45

I know Brother White you would not depart from your mother's teachings, and that you have as perfect an understanding of them as any one. I shall appreciate your opinion very much.

Assuring you of the high esteem and respect I have had from my childhood in your father, mother and family,

I am very truly yours in the blessed faith,

H. W. Carr

Below is the reply from W. C. White

Letter from W. C. White to H. W. Carr

April 30th 1935

April 30th 1935

Elder H. W. Carr
164 Saxton Street
Lockport
New York

Dear Brother Carr

I hold in my hand your letter of January 24. For some months I have been so heavily pressed with work connected with manuscripts which we were preparing for the printer that my correspondence has had to wait.

In your letter you request me to tell you what I understand to be my mother's position in reference to the personality of the Holy Spirit.

This I cannot do because I never clearly understood her teachings on the matter. There always was in my mind some perplexity regarding the meaning of her utterances which to my superficial manner of thinking seemed to be somewhat confused. I have often regretted that I did not possess that keenness of mind that could solve this and similar perplexities, and then remembering what Sister White wrote in "Acts of the Apostles," pages 51 and 52, "regarding such mysteries which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden," I have thought best to refrain from discussion and have endeavoured to direct my mind to matters easy to be understood.

As I read the Bible, I find that the risen Saviour breathed on the disciples (John 20:22) "and saith unto them, 'receive ye the Holy Ghost.'" The conception received from this Scripture, seems to be in harmony with the statement in "Desire of Ages", page 669, also Genesis 1:2; with Luke 1:4; with Acts 2:4 and also 8:15 and 10:44. Many other texts might be referred to which seem to be in

harmony with this statement in the "Desire of Ages."

The statements and the arguments of some of our ministers in their effort to prove that the Holy Spirit was an individual as are God, the father and Christ, the eternal Son, have perplexed me and sometimes they have made me sad. One popular teacher said "we may regard Him, (the Holy Spirit) as the fellow who is down here running things."

My perplexities were lessened a little when I learned from the dictionary that one of the meanings of personality, was characteristics. It is stated in such a way that I concluded that there might be personality without bodily form which is possessed by the Father and the Son.

There are many Scriptures which speak of the Father and the Son and the absence of Scripture making similar reference to the united work of the Father and the Holy Spirit or of Christ and the Holy Spirit, has led me to believe that the spirit without individuality was the representative of the Father and the Son throughout the universe, and it was through the Holy Spirit that they dwell in our hearts and make us one with the Father and with the Son.

My answer to your second question "Does Sister White's writings anywhere teach that prayer should only be addressed to the Father, or that we should not address Christ in prayer, only through the Father," is that I think not. I have not found such teachings in Ellen White's writings.

Your third question "Does she anywhere tell what the power is that "shall plant the tabernacle of His palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain?" I must answer in the same way, I think not. We have not found any statement regarding this in Sister White's writings nor do we remember any statement made orally in our presence.

Enclosed with this brief and unsatisfactory letter, you will find our News Letter of April 4.

I pray that you may have help from heaven in studying that which is necessary to be known and patience to wait for the revelation of that regarding which we are now in some uncertainty.

With kind regards, I remain,
Sincerely your brother,
W. C. White

WCW:lfw.

My comments

From the above it does appear reasonable to conclude that by 1935, the trinity doctrine, as we know it today, was not accepted by Seventh-day Adventists in general. This is because without the Holy Spirit being regarded as a person like God and Christ, there cannot be a trinity doctrine, at least not as taught by Seventh-day Adventists today.

Website:- <https://theprophetstillspeaks.co.uk/>

Last edited 16th January 2021