

# WHO IS TELLING THE TRUTH?

By Terry Hill

At the end of this little article you will find a link to a 9-minute video by Doug Batchelor. He is the senior minister of the Granite Bay Hilltop SDA Church in Rocklin, California. He is a very popular minister. He has many followers. His private ministry – AMAZING FACTS – also has a very large following.

In his video, Doug Batchelor attempts to have people believe that (a) begotten means created, and that (b) Christ, in His pre-existence, was not begotten of God (therefore He is not truly the Son of God), and that (c) Proverbs 8:22-31 is not speaking of Christ.

So let's take a look at what we have been told through the spirit of prophecy. We can then compare this with what Doug Batchelor is leading people to believe.

During the entire time of Ellen White's ministry, Seventh-day Adventists were often accused of not believing in the divinity of Christ. This is more than likely because we rejected the idea of God being a trinity as depicted in the trinity doctrine. One of these occasions was in 1893 when Ellen White was in New Zealand. She related this experience in the Review and Herald. She explained that our people had tried to hire a hall to hold some evangelist meetings but permission had been refused (hereon my emphasis in red)

“For instance, an effort was made to obtain the use of the hall at a village four miles from Hastings, where some of our workers proposed to present the gospel to the people; but they did not succeed in obtaining the hall, because a schoolteacher there opposed the truth, and declared to the people that Seventh-day Adventists did not believe in the divinity of Christ.”  
(Ellen G. White, Review and Herald, 5<sup>th</sup> December 1893, 'An appeal for the Australasian field')

She went on to say

“This man may not have known what our faith is on this point, but he was not left in ignorance. He was informed that there is not a people on earth who hold more firmly to the truth of Christ's pre-existence than do Seventh-day Adventists.” (Ibid)

This is so plain and simple that a child can understand it. According to Ellen White, SDA's were teaching the truth about Christ's pre-existence. How else can her words be understood?

So what were SDA's teaching at that time? In keeping with Scripture, it was that in eternity, before anything was created, Christ was begotten of God therefore He was truly the Son of God. Here is an example. It is from E. J. Waggoner's book *Christ and His Righteousness* (1890)

“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. ... There was a time when Christ proceeded forth and came from God, from the bosom of the Father (John 8:42 and 1:18) but that time was so far back in the days of eternity that to finite comprehension it is practically without beginning. But the point is that Christ is a begotten Son and not a created subject. (E. J. Waggoner, 'Christ and His Righteousness', pages 9, 21-22 1890)

In the same book he wrote

“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* page 12)

Eighteen months after her New Zealand experience, also in confirmation of what SDA’s were then teaching about Christ, Ellen White wrote the following

“A complete offering has been made; for “God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son,”-- not a son by creation, as were the angels, nor a son by adoption, as is the forgiven sinner, but a Son begotten in the express image of the Father’s person, and in all the brightness of his majesty and glory, one equal with God in authority, dignity, and divine perfection. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” (*Ellen G. White, Signs of the Times, 30<sup>th</sup> May 1895, ‘Christ our complete salvation’*)

Note the similarity to Waggoner’s statement (see above).

Six weeks later, again confirming SDA’s in their begotten belief, Ellen White wrote

“The Eternal Father, the unchangeable one, gave his only begotten Son, tore from his bosom Him who was made in the express image of his person, and sent him down to earth to reveal how greatly he loved mankind.” (*Ellen G. White, Review & Herald 9<sup>th</sup> July 1895 ‘The Duty of the Minister and the People’*)

Ellen White obviously regarded “begotten” as being synonymous with “made” yet denied that Christ was created as were angels.

That Ellen White was referring to Christ’s pre-existence is not in question. As she explained to the SDA youth of her day

“Before Christ came in the likeness of men, he existed in the express image of his Father”. (*Ellen G. White, Youth’s Instructor, 20<sup>th</sup> December 1900 ‘Christ’s humiliation’*)

Notice here two very important things. One is that Ellen White said that Christ, in His pre-existence, WAS BEGOTTEN. The second is that she said that begotten is NOT THE SAME as created. What she wrote here is exactly the same as what SDA’s were teaching throughout her ministry across the entire spectrum of their publications.

In keeping with this begotten concept, it was also believed by SDA’s that Proverb’s 8:22-31 is referring to Christ. On a number of occasions, through the spirit of prophecy, this belief was confirmed as true. As Ellen White wrote on just two of those occasions

“And the Son of God declares concerning Himself: “The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting.... When He appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.” Proverbs 8:22-30. “ (*Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, page 34, ‘Why was sin permitted’*)

**“Through Solomon Christ declared:** "The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth." (*Ellen G. White, Signs of the Times, 29<sup>th</sup> August 1900, 'Resistance to light. No. 3)*

So as we can see, Ellen White said that these verses in Proverbs chapter 8 are speaking of Christ.

In summary therefore:

Doug Batchelor says that BEGOTTEN MEANS CREATED. Ellen White said that BEGOTTEN DOES NOT MEAN CREATED.

Doug Batchelor says that Christ, in His pre-existence, WAS NOT BEGOTTEN. Ellen White says that Christ, in His pre-existence, WAS BEGOTTEN.

Doug Batchelor says that Proverbs 8:22-31 IS NOT SPEAKING OF CHRIST. Ellen White says that Proverbs 8:22-31 IS SPEAKING OF CHRIST.

So who is telling the truth? You decide. Here is the Doug Batchelor video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oh90pOMNXcU>

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