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WARFARE OVER THE MATTER

By Michael McCaffrey

Video Transcript

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[\(00:00:13\)](#):

I want to share this presentation called Warfare Over the Matter. And for me, this was a really interesting way to look at the subject or the warfare or the controversy over the sonship of Christ, really from a big picture perspective, starting with a war in Heaven, following this controversy to the earth and through the life of Christ and even to the end of time.

[\(00:00:34\)](#):

So, let's start with a war in Heaven. Now, we know in Heaven, Lucifer waged warfare against the Father and Son. And we see what this objective of Lucifer was in Isaiah chapter 14 verses 12 through 14. **"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; and finally, he says in his heart, I will be like the Most High."** Isaiah 14:12-14

[\(00:01:17\)](#):

So the aspiration of Lucifer, the motive of Lucifer, that which was driving his decisions and his thought processes was to be like the Most High, to be like God. And we see some more insight from Sister White, who said, **"Well, Lucifer, he was striving. He had glory in the heavenly courts, but he was striving for Christ place next to God. Next he wanted to be God, but he could not obtain that."** {Ms86-1910, August 21, 1910, Par. 30} Lucifer wanted to be God. And that's the thought that's encapsulated in the words, I will be like the Most High. But we read here that he could not obtain that. And the question is why? Why wasn't Lucifer able to obtain a position next to God? Why wasn't he able to be God or as God?

[\(00:02:03\)](#):

And we read the rest of the statement, which says, **"Christ was the only begotten Son of God, and Lucifer, that glorious angel, got up a warfare over the matter, until he had to be thrust down to the earth."** {Ms86-1910, August 21, 1910, Par. 30} So the reason why Lucifer was not able to be like the Most High or like God or to be God, was because Christ was the only begotten Son of God. In other words, Lucifer was not begotten of God. And that is why he got up a warfare over the matter of Christ's Sonship. Christ is begotten of the Father, but Lucifer is a created being. He was not brought forth from the Father's own substance, and therefore he cannot be like God. He cannot be equal to God.

[\(00:02:50\)](#):

So this position, this idea of being like God that he was striving for, was not available to him as a created being. But Christ was the only begotten Son of God. And this is why Christ being the only begotten Son of God has stood in the way of his objectives to be like God. So Lucifer got up a warfare over the matter. A warfare over what matter? And that is of Christ being the only begotten Son of God.

[\(00:03:21\)](#):

So we might ask the question, if Lucifer is going to wage a warfare against the idea of Christ being the only begotten Son of God, it begs the question, what has he got to gain? If Lucifer can convince the other angels and/or other created beings to believe that Christ was not really begotten or not really God's Son, then it would give Lucifer's arguments some validity or some merits. And Lucifer's argument was that, by denying him a position next to God, He was showing partiality to Christ. Because in Lucifer's mind, Christ and himself were on the same position. Coming from the same place. And this is why the answer to Lucifer's assertion, that he should be equal to God or to be like God, the answer was given that Christ was the only begotten Son of God.

[\(00:04:10\)](#):

And what this shows us is that Lucifer, whatever his thoughts are, whatever his deceptions are, it shows us that Lucifer was not begotten of God. He was a created being. So in short, Lucifer couldn't obtain divinity. He couldn't obtain the position of God because he was a created being. And that Christ only was begotten. And ever since then, Lucifer has been waging this warfare against the Sonship of Christ and trying to get others to engage in this warfare with him.

[\(00:04:43\)](#):

And another way he does that is by trying to get us to believe that to be begotten and to be created mean the same thing. And the reason why is because if they mean the same thing, if begotten is the same thing as being created, then that means that Lucifer would have a right to Christ's position. Because if Christ was the only begotten Son of God, and that was synonymous with creation, then Lucifer being a created being would be as equally entitled to the position next to the Son of God. So it's very important that we make a distinction between being begotten and being created, otherwise we will be siding on Lucifer's position, arguing that they mean the same thing, which opens the way up for Lucifer's argument to be valid, as he seeks to try to be like God.

[\(00:05:31\)](#):

In John chapter 8 and verse 44, we read, **"Ye are of your Father the devil, and the lusts of your Father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the Father of it."** John 8:44 So in this passage we see that the devil is a liar. A liar from when? From the beginning. And the reason this is important is because as we look at the subject of Lucifer's warfare over the matter of Christ's Sonship, which began in Heaven, oftentimes it's very easy to look at a statement from Sister White and she just makes it plain and simple.

[\(00:06:13\)](#):

However, we need to be able to see this from the scriptures. And here in John chapter 8 and verse 44, we see that Lucifer was a liar from the beginning. Now the question is, what does the Bible define a liar as? In 1st John chapter 2 and verse 22, we read, **"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also."** 1 John 2:22 So the devil is a liar from the beginning. And we see in 1st John 2:22 that a liar is he who denies the Father and denies the Son. So what that tells us is that from the beginning of his rebellion in Heaven, Lucifer has sought to deny the Son and to deny the Father. So we see this idea of his warfare over the matter of Christ's Sonship right here even in the scriptures, from John chapter 8:44 and 1st John 2:22.

[\(00:07:17\)](#):

So these texts show us that in order to strive to be like God, Lucifer would come up with a lie that would deny the Father and the Son. And now his angels would follow his lead. We read that the **"Angels were expelled from heaven because they would not work in harmony with God. They had come to exalt themselves and they forgot that their beauty of person and of character came from the Lord Jesus. This fact the angels would obscure, that Christ was the only begotten Son of God, and they came to consider that they were not to consult Christ. One angel began the controversy and carried it on until there was rebellion in the heavenly courts among the angels. They were lifted up because of their beauty."** {Lt42-1910.3}

[\(00:08:02\):](#)

So according to the statement, what was the objective of the fallen angels? It was that they would obscure the fact that Christ was the only begotten Son of God. So Lucifer began this warfare in Heaven to deny the Father and the Son. And now the angels that were fallen were engaging with him in this warfare against the Sonship of Christ by seeking to obscure, to conceal or hide the fact that Jesus was indeed the only begotten Son of God.

[\(00:08:34\):](#)

“Lucifer's envy and misrepresentation and his claims to equality with Christ had made necessary a statement of the true position of the Son of God; but this had been the same from the beginning. Many of the angels were however blinded by Lucifer's deceptions.” {PP p.38} So Lucifer was engaging in this massive war against the Father and Son in Heaven. And now that he had deceived a third of the angels into engaging in this warfare with him, it got to be so bad that it made necessary a statement from the Father regarding the true position of the Son of God.

[\(00:09:10\):](#)

And we read, but this, that is this statement, this fact, the position of the Son of God had been the same from the beginning. In other words, nothing had changed regarding Christ Sonship or his position. It had been the same as it was from the beginning. But because of Lucifer's warfare, because many of the angels were blinded by Lucifer's deceptions, this made necessary a statement from the Father on the true position of the Son of God.

[\(00:09:40\):](#)

So how did God handle this controversy in this uprising of Lucifer and his angels? We read, **“But Lucifer, the most glorious angel next to Christ, thought himself equal with God and made the effort, because of his beauty and glory, that he should be next to God, and then he could work out God's plans.” {Lt189-1909.29}** So here we have the answer to the question, why couldn't Lucifer obtain Christ place next to God? Because he, Lucifer, was not equal with God, but Jesus was. Why? Because he was begotten. He was brought forth from the Father's substance.

[\(00:10:18\):](#)

Nevertheless, Lucifer thought himself equal with God. And based on this assessment, that he should be next to God. So, think about this for a moment. If Lucifer wants to vindicate his warfare against Christ and against the Father and obtain that position of God, what does he have to prove? He has to prove that he is equal with God or co-equal with God. So Lucifer was saying, if he should be co-equal with God, then he could work out God's plans.

[\(00:10:53\):](#)

But we read in the rest of the statement, **“Thus Lucifer claimed the position next to the creator, but Christ was the only begotten Son of God.” {Lt189-1909.29}** So here, again, we see the same reason given why Lucifer could not claim that position because Christ was the only begotten Son of God. Lucifer made war in heaven. So here we see, again, Lucifer making warfare over this issue of Christ being the only begotten Son of God.

[\(00:11:20\):](#)

“Lucifer made war in heaven and would not take the position God assigned him, therefore, because he would not take that position that was lower than God, he fell from his high estate and has been in the world, a warring element against God's plans, and has had great power to allure and deceive souls to ruin them. There have been two parties in the world, the true and the false.” {Lt189-1909.29} Therefore, which means for claiming to be equal with God and for warring against the Sonship of Christ, Lucifer fell from Heaven. And where did he fall to? He fell into the world. And now according to the statement, Lucifer has carried on warfare in this world. He has been a warring element in the world. So this warfare that began in Heaven has now transitioned to the earth. And now Lucifer is going to continue to wage that same warfare against the Sonship of Christ on the earth.

[\(00:12:22\)](#):

So let's now look at warfare on the earth, and see how he has continued to wage this war on our planet against the Son of God. We read that **"The prince of fallen angels conducted the warfare against the only begotten Son of God, evil angels leagued with evil men, and earth and hell arrayed their powers against Him in order to overcome Him."** {RH May 23, 1899, Par. 9} So just as Lucifer got the angels, a third of the angels to engage with him in this warfare against the Father and Son and against the Sonship of Christ, now he is leaguing with evil men upon the earth and seeking to wage the same warfare against the Son of God.

[\(00:13:03\)](#):

Now let's look at an underlying principle, which reveals the major idea or deception that the devil will use in waging warfare against the Son of God. So now let's take a look at Genesis chapter 3 and verse 1, which gives us some real insight into the principal methods behind Satan's deception in this warfare that he's now carrying forward on the earth. In Genesis chapter 3 and verse 1 we read, **"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"** Genesis 3:1

[\(00:13:40\)](#):

So when the devil said, yea, hath God said, what he was doing is he was casting doubt upon the words God had spoken. So the strategy here was to place doubt in Eve's mind, which would open her up to receiving alternative understanding or an alternative view about what God had said so that the devil could get her to believe that what God had said was actually contrary to what He meant. And this is a principle which the devil would continue to use throughout the rest of time to deceive God's people and to wage war against the Father and the Son.

[\(00:14:16\)](#):

And we read that the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field. And the word subtil means crafty or deceptive. And it just shows that the devil was going to be crafty and deceptive in the way that he was going to deceive Eve. And this is a strategy, a deceptive and crafty deception that the devil has continued to use throughout time in his warfare against the Father and the Son.

[\(00:14:41\)](#):

In Luke chapter four, we read, **"And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days He did eat nothing: and when they were ended, He afterward hungered. And the devil said unto him, If Thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. And Jesus answered him, saying, it is written, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God."** Luke 4:1-4

[\(00:15:09\)](#):

So in this passage in Luke chapter four, by saying, if thou be the Son of God, the devil is using the same strategy that he used in the Garden of Eden. When he said to Eve, yea, hath God said, he was trying to introduce doubt into her mind. And now here, he's using the same strategy against Christ, trying to place doubt in Christ's mind in regard to His Sonship from the Father.

[\(00:15:34\)](#):

So the devil is challenging Jesus to see if He will believe what God said and take Him at His word, or if He will accept the satanic deception and delusion, that He may not really be God's Son. Or that He may understand that Sonship in a different manner. So you can see how artful and deceptive the devil is and how he's using the same strategy throughout time, even against the Son of God Himself. Here we read that **"Satan flattered himself that he could lead Christ to doubt the word spoken from heaven at his baptism. And if he could tempt Him to question His Sonship and doubt the truth of the word spoken by His Father, he would gain a great victory."** {1SM 275.1}

[\(00:16:16\)](#):

So, what words was Satan attempting to get Jesus to doubt? Of course, the words spoken from Heaven at his baptism. What were those words spoken from Heaven at his baptism? Those words were right here in Luke chapter 3 and verses 21 through 22, **“Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from Heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.”** Luke 3:21-22

[\(00:16:52\)](#):

So the words that Satan was trying to get Jesus to doubt were specifically at His baptism, thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. This was Satan trying to get Jesus to question His Sonship. So here Satan was not able to successfully get Jesus to question His Sonship because Jesus said, **“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”** Matthew 4:4 And in this instance, the word that had proceeded out of the mouth of God were the words, **“thou art my beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased.”** Luke 3:22

[\(00:17:28\)](#):

So rather than question His Sonship, Jesus chose to believe the words of his Father and to take His Father’s words as they were spoken. And we must do the same thing because we can see how the devil, if he can bring in just a little bit of doubt and get us to question Christ's Sonship, what kind of myriad of deceptions we would be exposing ourselves to, that would lead us away from Christ and away from the truth. And furthermore, we read in the rest of the statement, **“And if he could get Him to question His Sonship and doubt the truth of the word spoken by His Father, he would gain a great victory.”** {1SM 275.1}

[\(00:18:03\)](#):

So here in this instance, Satan was not able to gain this victory over Christ. But if we ask a different question, has Satan been able to gain this victory over Christ’s followers? And sadly, as we look to the world and look to the various denominations of the world, almost all of them have fallen to Satan's deceptions. And Satan has gotten the victory over the vast majority of Christians on the earth.

[\(00:18:31\)](#):

So in this passage in Luke chapter three, many missed the fact that when Jesus said, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God, He was specifically referring to the words of God spoken from Heaven, by his Father declaring Him to be the only begotten Son of God. So Jesus was saying, I will not listen to you, Satan. I will believe the words that the Father has spoken from Heaven, declaring Me to be His Son.

[\(00:19:00\)](#):

We read it in The Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 2, **“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased. The words of confirmation that Christ is the Son of God was given to inspire faith in those who witnessed the scene and to sustain the Son of God in his arduous work. Notwithstanding the Son of God was clothed with humanity, yet Jehovah, with His own voice, assures Him of His Sonship with the Eternal. In this manifestation to His Son, God accepts humanity as exalted through the excellence of His beloved Son.”** {2SP 60.2}

[\(00:19:33\)](#):

First of all, you'll notice in this statement that Jesus is called God's Son seven times. We saw that the devil was trying to get Jesus to question His Sonship. So in this passage, we see the words of confirmation that Christ is the Son of God came from Jehovah Himself with His own voice. If God Himself with His own voice declares Jesus to be the Son of God, what excuse has anyone for not believing what Jehovah has spoken from Heaven with His own voice. There is no excuse at all.

[\(00:20:06\)](#):

And we see here at Jesus' baptism this warfare over the matter of Christ being the only begotten Son of God, again, coming to a head between Christ and Satan, with Satan even trying to get Jesus to question His own Sonship. He failed in obtaining that victory, but Lucifer would continue to wage this warfare against the idea of Christ being the only begotten Son of God, even into the fourth century.

[\(00:20:30\)](#):

In 325 AD, there was the Council of Nicaea. Now, at this council, Catholic bishops had gathered together under Constantine to settle a crisis over the issue of whether or not Christ had a beginning. There was one individual called Arius who had been teaching that Christ was brought forth from God, and that, consequently, Jesus had a beginning. But the Catholic bishops didn't like this idea. And it becomes such a controversy in Rome that this council had convened to try to put this issue to bed. To try to bring an end to it and to settle the issue once and for all.

[\(00:21:10\)](#):

And here we read that **“The Nicene Creed was adopted to resolve the Arian controversy, whose leader, Arius, a clergyman of Alexandria, objected to Alexander's (the Bishop of the time) apparent carelessness in blurring the distinction of nature between the Father and the Son by his emphasis on eternal generation.”** https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/nicene_creed Now, when we talk about blurring the distinction of nature between the Father and the Son, this is exactly what the Catholic theology was doing by blurring the distinction or the individuality of the Father and the Son and making them more or less one cohesive entity.

[\(00:21:50\)](#):

So Arius was objecting to this idea of blurring the distinction. He was wanting to maintain these separate individuality and distinction of the Father and the Son. And in reply to Arius' objection to this blurring of distinction of the nature between the Father and the Son, **“Alexander accused Arius of denying the divinity of the Son and also of being too ‘Jewish’ and ‘Greek’ in his thought. Alexander and his supporters created the Nicene creed to clarify the key tenets of the Christian faith in response to the widespread adoption of Arius' doctrine, which was henceforth marked as heresy.”** https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/nicene_creed

[\(00:22:30\)](#):

So this idea of maintaining separate distinction of the Father and the Son was henceforth marked as heresy in favor of the idea of blurring the distinction of nature and making the Father and Son more one cohesive Trinitarian or consubstantial being, is the terminology that the Catholic church uses.

[\(00:22:50\)](#):

The Nicene Creed of 325 explicitly affirms the co-essential divinity of the Son, applying to Him the term consubstantial. And in this one statement, the Catholic church has set a precedent that is still with us 1700 years later to this day. And it has been the root principle of a deadly deception. The precedent is that the Nicene Creed of 325 explicitly affirms the co-essential divinity of the Son.

[\(00:23:18\)](#):

So they're saying that Jesus is divine, but then they're linking His divinity to this idea that He is consubstantial with the Father, one being with the Father. And so if a person denies this idea of a cohesion of one being of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, if a person denies that, then they're denying the divinity of Christ. And that is the precedent that was set 1700 years ago. And that precedent is still being put forth as a leading argument today against those who deny, like Arius, this idea of blurring the distinction between the Father and the Son.

[\(00:23:55\)](#):

We read furthermore, the council condemned Arius, and with reluctance on the part of some, incorporated the non-scriptural word homoousias, of one substance, into a Creed to signify the absolute equality of the Son with the Father. The emperor then exiled Arius, an act that while manifesting a solidarity of church and state, underscored the importance of secular patronage in ecclesiastical affairs.

[\(00:24:21\)](#):

So the conclusion of this council was that any, like Arius, who had rejected the idea of the Father and Son being one solid consubstantial being, that they were marked henceforth as heretics. And so was any theology that taught that Christ was literally God's Son and brought forth in a moment in time. And furthermore, I find it interesting in this statement that it was an act of solidarity between church and state that brought forth this persecution against Arius and his followers that had rejected this Catholic idea of Jesus being consubstantial with the Father.

[\(00:24:59\)](#):

As a result of this persecution, Arius was banned and Constantine ordered his books to be burned. And this was part of the fulfilling of the prophecy from Daniel chapter seven, that the three horns would be plucked up by the roots. Those three horns being the Arian nations or those who believed like Arius in the unique individuality of the Father and the son. And because so much of their writings and their ideas, and that history has been so thoroughly destroyed, there are almost no surviving documents or writings from Arius. However, there are a few just enough to show us that Arius did in fact believe that Jesus was begotten of the Father, but that he did not believe that Jesus was created as he so often accused of doing, and thereby denying the divinity of Christ.

[\(00:25:47\)](#):

So this begs the question, in this controversy, is a literally begotten Sonship a denial of Christ divinity? I read this very interesting statement from Sister White's writings that really answers this question very succinctly. **"To the Savior's words, believest thou? Martha responded, "Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." {HLv 355.1}** In these words, Martha is acknowledging that she believed that Jesus is the Son of God, but furthermore, that he was the Son of God that should, in the future tense, come into the world. So what she's really acknowledging here is the preexistent Sonship of Christ. And what I mean by that is that she's acknowledging that Jesus was God's Son before he was born on earth. So, pre-existent Sonship.

[\(00:26:38\)](#):

Then the next words from Sister White are very revealing. She says, regarding Martha's confession in the preexistence Sonship of Christ, that **"She confessed her faith in His divinity and her confidence that He was able to perform whatever it pleased Him to do." {HLv 355.1}** So here Sister White is telling us that to acknowledge that Jesus was the Son of God before He came into the world, is synonymous with acknowledging His divinity. So Martha's belief that Jesus was the Son of God, was a confession of her faith in His divinity.

[\(00:27:17\)](#):

Now, when we look at the Bible, we see in the book of Genesis, this idea of God bringing forth living creatures and animals after their kind. And we see this in **Genesis 1:24, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind, and it was so."** Also, in **Genesis 1:21, "And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind."** **"And God said, let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind." Genesis 1:11.**

[\(00:27:57\)](#):

So throughout the Genesis account, we see this idea consistently that man, animals and even plants were brought forth after their kind. So, everything on earth brings forth after its own kind or after its own nature. And the same thing is true with the Father and the Son. A divine Father would bring forth a divine Son. And therefore the Son would have the same nature as the Father. And we know in Romans chapter one, **"For the invisible things of Him**

from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.” Romans 1:20 And the Greek word there means divinity.

[\(00:28:43\)](#):

So what we're told is that the visible things from the creation of the world, such as how the man and animals and plants were brought forth after their own kind, is to teach us of God's eternal power and divinity of His divine nature. So a divine Father would therefore, according to the example set forth in nature, bring forth a divine Son. And this is why acknowledging Christ as a literal Son is so important because it is synonymous with acknowledging His nature of divinity.

[\(00:29:14\)](#):

In other words, if we say that Jesus is the preexistence Son of God, just like Martha did, it is synonymous with acknowledging His divinity. But consequently denying that Jesus is the Son of God or denying that He was the Son of God before He was born on earth, is to deny the source of His divinity. The reason why He's divine is that He was brought forth from the Father's own substance. If we deny that, that we are denying His divinity.

[\(00:29:42\)](#):

In another statement from Sister White, she says, **“In the closing events of the crucifixion day, new witness was borne to Christ divinity. When the Savior's dying cry had been uttered, another voice was heard, saying, truly, this was the Son of God.” {HLv 512.4}** So here it was the Roman Centurion that was confessing to Christ divinity. That was bearing witness to Christ divinity. And furthermore, he said, truly, this was the Son of God. In other words, he didn't believe that there was some mystical interpretation or some kind of spiritual or metaphorical idea that Jesus was the son, but truly Jesus was the Son of God, and Sister White says that this statement was bearing witness to Christ divinity.

[\(00:30:26\)](#):

So then if someone questions Jesus' Sonship, what in fact are they really questioning? They're questioning His divinity. In *Desire of Ages*, we read, **“The rocks had known Him and had shivered into fragments at His cry. Inanimate nature had known Christ, and had borne witness to His divinity. But the priests and rulers of Israel knew not the Son of God.” {DA 770.4}** So here, again, we see acknowledging Jesus to be the Son of God is synonymous and has a relationship with acknowledging His divinity. So therefore, denying His Sonship would be equivalent to what? It would be equivalent to denying His divinity. So when the priest and rulers denied that Jesus was the Son of God, they were really denying His divinity.

[\(00:31:16\)](#):

So my question now, as we bring this controversy and this warfare over the matter into present day is, what does the Seventh-day Adventist Church believe about the Sonship of Christ? On the website of the Michigan Seventh-day Adventists conference, I found this statement concerning the divinity of Christ. It says *“Seventh-day Adventists believe in the full divinity of Jesus. We make no apologies for this fact. We believe that there are three members of the Godhead. None were created or brought into existence by the other.”* So you can see right off the bat, they're acknowledging the Arian controversy. The idea of being brought into existence by the other or by the Father, they emphatically deny, which we saw already was a denial of the divinity of Christ.

[\(00:32:00\)](#):

Nevertheless, they continue, *“They have existed side by side forever.”* So they're saying that the Father and Son are coeternal and that the Son never had a beginning. So right off the bat, they're denying the literally begotten Sonship of Christ. They say *“The Bible has many more verses on the subject and none suggest any other interpretation than the one above.”* However, they did not cite any Bible verses to support that.

[\(00:32:26\)](#):

“Yet many within our church have begun to question this belief. Some have even gone so far as to withdraw their membership from their local churches and worship elsewhere. Others work from within and seek to win members to their perspective on the Trinity. There is probably no other fundamental belief that has caused more questions and confusion in recent days than the issue of the Trinity and the nature of Jesus.” In this statement, the Seventh-day Adventist church is acknowledging that even today, this warfare over the matter of Christ being the Son of God is very much a present day controversy, a present day issue.

[\(00:33:04\)](#):

They continue to say on the website, *“Three co-eternal and immortal persons exist side by side and have done so forever. If this is indeed the case, then how do we reconcile the fact that Jesus is called the Son of God? This question is something that the Christian Church has wrestled with since the late AD 200s. Around that time, the belief was taught that Jesus was a created being, essentially denying the divinity of Christ.”* Now, this is the exact same argument that the Catholic church was using all the way back in 325 AD, accusing Arius of believing that Jesus was created.

[\(00:33:40\)](#):

Now, Arius did not really believe that Jesus was created, but that's what he was accused of believing. And in the Catholic mind, because he believed, they thought, that Jesus was created, therefore he was denying the divinity of Christ. And that is now the exact same argument that the Seventh-day Adventist church is stating and using right here on their website. They say the Christian Church rejected that teaching officially in AD 325. But what church was it that rejected that teaching in 325? It was the Catholic church, not the Christian Church. So here you can see the Seventh-day Adventist church leading people astray from thinking that it was the disciples or the believers in Christ that had rejected that teaching and not the antichrist.

[\(00:34:28\)](#):

Nevertheless, on the website, they continue, even though it was officially rejected, this belief has re-emerged within Adventism. Well, the truth of the fact is, is that this was the foundation of Adventist belief in the first 50 years of the movement. This teaching was not officially denied or changed until 1980. There have been many variations of the same teaching claiming Jesus was a created being and not divine in the same way God is. And that is a lie. It's the same false premise that the Catholic church used in 325 AD, accusing those who believe that Jesus was really the Son of God, of believing that He was created, when in fact that is not the case at all.

[\(00:35:11\)](#):

Nevertheless, some say Jesus was created at His birth and reference the phrase from John 3:16, only-begotten Son, as proof. Others say He was created sometime long before His incarnation, going as far as to say that Jesus was born before He was born a baby in Bethlehem. Whatever variation of this teaching, they all still hold that Jesus was created and thus not fully divine like God. This is the exact same argument the Roman Catholic Church was using in AD 325 against Arius. They, the Catholics, the bishops, in their mind, they believe that if Jesus had a beginning or came into existence at any point in time, that that would mean that was created. And if He was created, of course, that means that He cannot be a divine being.

[\(00:36:00\)](#):

So in order to preserve Jesus's divinity, they say that He cannot have any point of beginning in time. That he cannot be a literal Son of God. So they make the scriptural application of the word, Son, to be metaphorical or symbolic. And this same Roman Catholic argument is the underlying premise of the argument being recapitulated by Seventh-day Adventists to this day.

[\(00:36:27\)](#):

So trying to get at the root of what Seventh-day Adventist believe, let's go to the Biblical Research Institute that has been commissioned to uphold, defend and explain the doctrine of Seventh-day Adventists. The BRI says this,

“In the case of the Godhead, however, the Son proceeded from the Father, not as a divine emanation or through natural birth, but to perform a work of creation and redemption. Fifth, the Father-Son image cannot be literally applied to the divine Father-Son relationship within the Godhead. The Son is not the natural, literal Son of the Father. A natural child has the beginning, while within the Godhead, the Son is eternal.

[\(00:37:09\)](#):

The term Son is used metaphorically when applied to the Godhead. It conveys the ideas of distinction of persons within the Godhead and the equality of nature in the context of an eternal, loving, relationship. Ellen White wrote, the Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, existed from eternity, a distinct person, yet one with the Father. This statement summarizes the main purpose of the metaphor.” {“A Question of Sonship” by Angel Manuel Rodriguez}

[\(00:37:34\)](#):

So the question that I'm asking here is, does the Seventh-day Adventist church believe that Jesus is literally the Son of God? And emphatically, the answer is no. *“The Father-Son relationship in the Godhead should be understood in a metaphorical sense, not in a literal sense.”* {Max Hatton, *“Understanding the Trinity,”* p. 97} That's according to Max Hatton, a Seventh-day Adventist in his book, *Understanding the Trinity*. So once again, we see the idea that Seventh-day Adventists, particularly in the Seventh-day Adventist church, do not believe that Jesus is literally the Son of God, but that His Sonship should be understood in a metaphorical or symbolic sense, but not literally.

[\(00:38:14\)](#):

In *Signs of the Times* in 1985, we read, *“It may be inferred from the scriptures that when the Godhead laid out the plan of salvation at some point in eternity past, they also took certain positions or roles to carry out the provisions of the plan.”* {Pastor Frank B. Holbrook, *Signs of the Times, July 1985, “Frank Answers”*} Now, not only is the Father-Son relationship metaphorical and not literal, but they just simply took on different roles, the role of the Father or the role of the Son.

[\(00:38:40\)](#):

And in the *Adventist Review* in October 31st, 1996, we see this explained in more detail. *“A plan of salvation was encompassed in the covenant made by the three persons of the Godhead who possessed the attributes of deity equally. In order to eradicate sin and rebellion from the universe and to restore harmony and peace, one of the divine beings accepted and entered into the role of the Father, another the role of the Son.”* So here's put forth this idea that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three divine beings, and that they're all the same. There's no difference about them, except that they've just taken upon themselves different roles or titles, one called a Father, another the Son, another the Holy Spirit.

[\(00:39:30\)](#):

In fact, this idea is carried to another extreme in the *Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* in 2008, where it was said, *“But imagine a situation in which the being we have come to know as God the Father came to die for us, and the one we have come to know as Jesus stayed back in heaven. Nothing would have changed except that we would have been calling each by the name we now use for the other.”* {*Sabbath School Bible Study Guide, Lesson for April 10, 2008*}

[\(00:39:52\)](#):

And once again, the *Biblical Research Institute* said in 1999, *“The sonship of Jesus, however, is not ontological, (meaning not having to do with origins) but functional. In the plan of salvation, each member of the Trinity has accepted a particular role.”* {*“The Trinity in Scripture”* by Gerhard Pfandl, *Biblical Research Institute, Silver Spring, MD. June 1999*} That, again, is coming from the *Biblical Research Institute*. So from the Seventh-day Adventist Church, according to the pastors, according to their own publications, according to their own periodicals and their own *Sabbath School Study Guide* and the *Biblical Research Institute*, this Father, and Son, and the Holy Spirit are

three divine beings that have just taken upon themselves roles that are metaphorical, but not literal. So that Jesus is not literally the Son of God, it's just what we call that individual, and just a title, but nothing more.

[\(00:40:41\)](#):

“There is a global church which has built a foundation upon the false premise that Jesus was in some way inferior to His Father and that He was created. They stand not alone upon the idea that Jesus was created. This was the mainstay belief of the Seventh-day Adventist Church back in the beginning, with the notable exception of Ellen G White, who came from a Trinity-believing Methodist background and W.W. Prescott who wrote the famous phrase which ended up in the Desire of Ages, in Christ is life unborrowed, underived.” {Adventist Today <https://atoday.org/nature-of-Christ/>}

[\(00:41:15\)](#):

So in this statement, Adventist Today publication is saying that the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the beginning believed that Jesus was created, of course, with the exception of Ellen White. But is that true? Now, it's really interesting that Adventist today would make such an accusation saying that the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the beginning believed Jesus was created. Oftentimes this was an accusation that was made against Seventh-day Adventists, again, recapitulating the same argument that was made in 325 AD by the Roman Catholic bishops. Saying that if they believe Jesus was literally the begotten Son of God, that therefore He was created, and therefore they were denying His divinity.

[\(00:41:54\)](#):

And being non-Trinitarian, in the beginning, the Seventh-day Adventist church often received such accusations saying that they believe that Jesus was created. So in a response, W.H. Littlejohn, a Seventh-day Adventist response to such an accusation saying this, **“You are mistaken in supposing that S.D. Adventists (the Seventh-day Adventist) teach that Christ was ever created. They believe on the contrary that He was begotten of the Father and that He can properly be called God and worshiped as such. They believe also that the worlds and everything which is, was created by Christ, in conjunction with the Father.**

[\(00:42:32\)](#):

They believe, however, that somewhere in the eternal ages of the past, there was a point at which Christ came into existence. They think that it is necessary that God should have antedated Christ (that is come before Christ) in His being in order that Christ could have been begotten of Him, and sustained to Him the relation of Son. They hold to the distinct personality of the Father and Son, rejecting as absurd, that feature of Trinitarianism which insists that God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit are three persons, and yet but one person.” {RH April 17, 1883}

[\(00:43:10\)](#):

So what's being said here in 1883, it was that Seventh-day Adventists do not believe that Jesus was created. Now, this is contrary to the article from Adventist Today that was just read. So here in 1883, we read that Seventh-day Adventists on the contrary, believe that Jesus was begotten of the Father. And what that meant is explained right here, that somewhere in the eternal ages of the past, long before the earth was created, that there was a point at which Christ came into existence.

[\(00:43:38\)](#):

And the understanding of Seventh-day Adventists was that this was necessary in order for the Son to be begotten of the Father and sustained to Him the relation of Son. And they rightly recognized that this is necessary in order for Christ to be a literal Son of God. They, Seventh-day Adventists, also hold to the distinct personality of the Father and Son. In other words, Seventh-day Adventists, like Arius, reject this idea of blurring the distinction of nature between the Father and the Son and making them consubstantial. The Seventh-day Adventists, contrary to that, believe that the Father and Son were unique in their individuality and were not one being, but that were two individual separate beings.

[\(00:44:25\)](#):

Uriah Smith also said in 1882, **“The scriptures nowhere speak of Christ as a created being. But on the contrary plainly state that He was begotten of the Father.”** {Uriah Smith, 1897, Daniel and the Revelation, p. 430} So what Uriah Smith is saying here is that he didn't believe that creation and begotten were the same thing, but that they were different things. He says, see remarks in Revelation 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 (or again, comes before) the entire work of creation, in relation to which He stands as joint creator with God.”** {Uriah Smith, 1897, Daniel and the Revelation, p. 430} So Uriah Smith is also denying the accusation that Seventh-day Adventist believe Jesus was created. On the contrary, instead of believing that He was created, that they believe that He was begotten.

[\(00:45:19\)](#):

Now, what about Ellen White? What was her understanding of this conflict between being created and being begotten? Obviously in beginning, the Seventh-day Adventist church received this accusation quite a number of times since it was addressed by a Seventh-day Adventist quite a number of times, stating explicitly they do not believe that Jesus was created, but that He was begotten of the Father.

[\(00:45:43\)](#):

So, what was Ellen White's understanding of this issue? She said in 1895 in Signs of the Times, **“A complete offering has been made; for God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son.”** {ST May 30, 1895, Par. 3} Now, she's going to explain what that means. She said 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.”** {ST May 30, 1895, Par. 3} And in order for that to happen, you are brought forth from the individual in whose image you are brought forth from.

[\(00:46:20\)](#):

So in this instance, Christ was brought forth from the Father and consequently was begotten in the express image of the Father's person. **“And in all the brightness of His majesty and glory, one equal with God, because He was begotten from the Father in the same nature as God. One equal with God in authority, dignity, and divine perfection. In Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”** {ST May 30, 1895, Par. 3}

[\(00:46:46\)](#):

In this statement, Ellen White shows us that in her understanding, creation and being begotten were two different things. They had two different meanings. And that Christ, as opposed to being created, was in truth begotten of the Father in the express image of the Father's person. And consequently, in this statement, she also acknowledges that because Christ was brought forth from the Father, that He was equal with God, because He had the same divine nature. As she said, divine perfection. So she's acknowledging that Christ has the same divine nature as God, because He was brought forth from him.

[\(00:47:24\)](#):

So what did Ellen White believe about Jesus being the literal Son of God? Did she believe that He was literally the Son of God before the earth was created? Or did she believe that Jesus was the Son of God after He was born on earth? In this statement, she says, **“When Christ first announced to the Heavenly host His mission and work in the world, He declared that He was to leave His position of dignity and disguise His holy mission by assuming the likeness of a man, when in reality He was the Son of the infinite God.”** {Lt303-1903.13}

[\(00:47:54\)](#):

In this statement, she says Jesus was the Son of the infinite God and says that He was the Son of the infinite God in reality. In other words, she didn't believe it was metaphorical. She didn't believe it was a title. She didn't believe it

was a role-play. She believed that His Sonship was real. And furthermore, she believed that Jesus was really, in reality, the Son of God, when Christ first announced to the heavenly host His mission and work in the world. In other words, before Jesus had come to the earth, Ellen White believed that He was, in reality, the Son of the infinite God.

[\(00:48:32\)](#):

Furthermore, she says, **“Christ is the star that should arise out of Jacob, and the one in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed. As the first born of Heaven, and the only begotten of the Father, filled with all the treasures of eternity.”** {Lt101-1896.7} So here the phrase, the first born of Heaven, and the only begotten of the Father are used interchangeably to describe the same event. In other words, what it means that Jesus was the begotten of the Father, was that He was born of the Father, born of Heaven and filled with all the treasures of eternity. So here Sister White is telling us very clearly that she believed that Jesus was born and that that meant begotten. And furthermore, the other way around, that because Jesus was the only begotten of the Father, meant that he was indeed born.

[\(00:49:26\)](#):

She also says in the Desire of Ages, **“Christ desired all to know His relationship with his Father. ‘Father,’ he said, ‘I think thee that Thou has heard me. And I knew that Thou hearest Me always, but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me.’ Here the disciples and the people were to be given the most convincing evidence in regard to the relationship between Christ and God. They were to be shown that Christ's claim was not a deception.”** {DA 536.1} So in other words, once again, His Sonship was real and it was not a deception.

[\(00:50:00\)](#):

She says, **“The Bible to me is the voice of God. I have the witness in myself that the word of God is true, and that Jesus Christ is the divine Son of God. I am following no cunningly devised fable.”** {ST September 3, 1894, Par.4} And what is a fable? It is something that is metaphorical, something that's allegorical, something that's symbolic. So when Sister White says that Jesus Christ is the divine Son of God, and that she's following no cunningly devised fable, she's saying that she believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in reality, and that it is not metaphorical.

[\(00:50:37\)](#):

So what does the Seventh-day Adventist church today then believe about the begetting of Christ, about the word begotten, about this concept of Him being brought forth from the Father? Once again, I'm going to go back to the Biblical Research Institute to get the theologians' perspective on what the Seventh-day Adventist Church believes. *“Christ as God's monogenes,”* which is the Greek word for begotten. *“When the term is used to describe Jesus, it's simply means unique or one and only. John 1:18 is particularly difficult because the manuscript provides at least two different textual variants.*

[\(00:51:12\)](#):

Some argue that the original text reads ‘only son’ and others, that the original is only God. If one accepts ‘only God,’ then monogenes could refer to the uniqueness of Christ as God and as God's means of revelation. If we accept the reading ‘only son,’ His uniqueness as a revealer of the Father would be emphasized. Monogenes also identifies Jesus as the only and unique means of salvation. The relationship between Christ and the Father is unique. He is God's one and only son, and He is God's only means of salvation. God gave us the most precious gift He had, His only and unique Son to redeem us. Based on the root meaning of the term and the context in which it is used, one could suggest that the most probable translation is ‘unique, one and only.’” {Angel Manuel Rodriguez, Biblical Research Institute, July, 2006}

[\(00:52:06\)](#):

So here we see the Seventh-day Adventist understanding according to the Biblical Research Institute, is that the word begotten does not mean born, as we saw that Ellen White understood it to mean, but that the word begotten means, now, unique. The Seventh-day Adventist Church now is applying a different definition to the word and therefore coming to a different conclusion. One conclusion that Sister White believed begotten meant born, and therefore Jesus was literally the only begotten Son of God. But here the Seventh-day Adventist church is saying that the term monogenes, the Greek word for begotten, means unique, and therefore Jesus is not really the Son of God, but is unique Son of God.

[\(00:52:49\)](#):

Now, what is Proverbs 8 verse 22 through 26 say? We read in Proverbs chapter eight, **“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: While as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.” Proverbs 8:22-26**

[\(00:53:19\)](#):

Here we see in Proverbs chapter eight, Jesus speaking about himself saying that when there were no depths, I was brought forth. And when there were no fountains abounding with water, before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth. So before the earth existed, before the earth was created, Jesus is saying, I was brought forth. Now, according to verse one in Proverbs chapter eight, we read, **“Doth not wisdom cry? And understanding put forth her voice.” Proverbs 8:1** And in verse 12, we read, **“I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.” Proverbs 8:12**

[\(00:53:56\)](#):

So in Proverbs chapter eight, it is wisdom that is speaking and saying, I was brought forth, but wisdom is a symbol for Jesus. And we see this in 1st Corinthians 1 and verse 24, **“But unto them which are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:24** And we also see this in verse 30, **“But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” 1 Corinthians 1:30** So Jesus Christ is made unto us wisdom. So in Proverbs chapter eight, it is Jesus speaking of himself when he says, I was brought forth before the earth was created.

[\(00:54:36\)](#):

Furthermore, Sister White confirms this for us. In Patriarchs and Prophets page 34 we read, **“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. {PP 34.1}**

[\(00:55:01\)](#):

So Proverbs chapter eight is the Son of God Speaking about Himself when He said, when there were no depths, I was brought forth. And before the mountains were settled and before the hills was I brought forth. And of course we know he was brought forth from the Father. As Jesus said in John chapter 8 and verse 42, **“For I proceeded forth and came from God.” John 8:42** Now, when we look at John 3:16, the most well-known verse in the entire Bible, **“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16**

[\(00:55:40\)](#):

So my concern here is that the Seventh-day Adventist Church cannot take the Bible as it reads, especially John 3:16. They cannot believe that Jesus is begotten, because they don't believe that begotten means brought forth. They believe it means unique. And they cannot believe that Jesus is really God's Son, because the word Son is to be understood in a metaphorical sense and not a literal sense.

[\(00:56:03\)](#):

So when it comes to those basic fundamental teaching and all of Christianity, that God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, is that those who believe that begotten means unique and Son is metaphorical, they don't believe John 3:16. They cannot believe it because their theology prohibits them from believing it. So do you remember in the Garden of Eden in Genesis chapter three, when the serpent who is subtil and crafty and deceptive came to Eve and said, yea, hath God said? He was implanting doubt into Eve's mind so that he could insert into her understanding, a different interpretation of what God had said.

[\(00:56:44\)](#):

And is not that exactly what is going on here with John 3:16 and this Trinitarian theology that reinterprets the meanings of the words and suggests that God perhaps didn't mean what He said, but that He meant something else. That is the underlying premise that Satan has been using in this warfare over the matter of Christ Sonship from the beginning of this war in Heaven. Now, remember how the serpent worked with Jesus in the wilderness in the same way, trying to implant into Jesus' mind, doubt over His Sonship?

[\(00:57:20\)](#):

And now when you read John 3:16, how do you read it? Do you believe that Jesus was the Son of God as it says? As the Father had spoken from Heaven with His own voice, assuring Christ of His Sonship with the eternal, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased? Or do you believe that Jesus is not really a Son, that this is just a metaphorical role play, some kind of theatrics that are being played out? This is an absurd interpretation, and it is a doctrine of devil's.

[\(00:57:53\)](#):

In The Great Controversy, we are warned of such methods like this, and it's called mysticism. Now in The Great Controversy we read, **"The truths most plainly revealed in the Bible have been involved in doubt and darkness by learned men, who, with a pretense of great wisdom, teach that the scriptures have a mystical, a secret, spiritual meaning not apparent in the language employed."** {4SP 416.3}

[\(00:58:18\)](#):

Now, look at the statement, because this defines for us what mysticism is. It is taking a secret, spiritual meaning not apparent in the language employed, and applying it to the word. And that is exactly what has happened with the word Son and with the word begotten, is we're taking another secret spiritual meaning and applying it to the word begotten so that it no longer means brought forth, and applying it to the word Son, so that Son no longer means a literal Son, but that it means a metaphorical Son.

[\(00:58:50\)](#):

Sister White says, **"These men are false teachers. It was to such a class that Jesus declared, ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God. The language of the Bible should be explained according to its obvious meaning unless a symbol or figure is employed. Christ has given the promise, if any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine. If men would but take the Bible as it reads, if there were no false teachers to mislead and confuse their minds, a work would be accomplished that would make angels glad, and that would bring into the fold of Christ thousands upon thousands who are now wandering in error."** {4SP 416.3}

[\(00:59:28\)](#):

In short, Sister White is telling us and warning us that those who apply mystical secret, spiritual, metaphorical, symbolic meanings to those things that are understood to be literal, that these men are false teachers. They are practicing mysticism. And an interesting thing about mysticism is it is applying a secret spiritual meaning to something that is to be understood literally, such as in this case, in the begotten Sonship of Christ. And this premise of mysticism and applying to the words a different meaning other than what they say, is the very premise

that the devil used in the garden of Eden when he deceived Eve. Trying to introduce doubt into her mind so that she would possibly apply a different interpretation or a different understanding to what God had said to lead her astray from the truth.

[\(01:00:19\)](#):

And there is another word that we often use when somebody takes a spiritual meaning and applies it to something that's supposed to be literally understood, and that word is spiritualism. Spiritualizing a way that was literal or making that which is literal to be understood in a spiritual sense, so it's no longer literal. When it comes to spiritualism, there is a very solemn warning concerning the Sonship of Christ and spiritualism.

[\(01:00:45\)](#):

We read in Patriarchs and Prophets that **“Modern spiritualism, resting upon the same foundation, is but a revival in a new form of the witchcraft and demon worship that God condemned and prohibited of old. Peter, describing the dangers to which the church was to be exposed in the last days, says that as there were false prophets who led Israel into sin, so there will be false teachers who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them. And many shall follow their pernicious ways.**

[\(01:01:16\)](#):

Here the apostle has pointed out one of the marked characteristics of spiritualist teachers. They refuse to acknowledge Christ as the Son of God. Concerning such teachers, the beloved John declares, who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father. Spiritualism, by denying Christ, denies both the Father and the Son, and the Bible pronounces it the manifestation of antichrist.” {PP 686}

[\(01:01:51\)](#):

Now, this is a very interesting statement for a lot of reasons. One of which is that she quotes 2nd Peter chapter 2 and verse 1, where Peter talks about damnable heresies, and people even denying the Lord. And here Sister White gives us a definition or a deeper understanding as to how these false teachers would deny their Lord. And she says, they refuse to acknowledge Christ as the Son of God. And this false doctrine that would appear at the end of time, leading people to deny the Lord by refusing to acknowledge Christ as the Son of God as Sister White calls spiritualism. And this is denying the Father and the Son, and is a doctrine of anti-Christ.

[\(01:02:34\)](#):

One leading theologian in Seventh-day Adventist church says this, *“Is it not quite apparent that the problem texts become problems only when one assumes an exclusively literalistic interpretation of such expressions as Father, Son firstborn, only begotten, begotten and so forth? Does not such literalism go against the mainly figurative or metaphorical meaning that the Bible writers use when referring to the persons of the Godhead? Can one really say that the Bible writers meant such expressions as the only true God and one God the Father to exclude the full deity of the Son, Christ Jesus?”* {Woodrow Whidden, *The Trinity, 'Biblical Objections to the Trinity,' p. 106, 2002*}

[\(01:03:14\)](#):

Do you not hear in this statement the devil whispering, yea, hath God said? Aren't not these questions calculated to get us to doubt the literal interpretation of scripture that Jesus is literally the only begotten Son of God? This statement is exactly what we have been talking about. It is introducing the ideas of mysticism, applying to the literal words of God another meaning, a secret, spiritual meaning other than the words themselves employ.

[\(01:03:43\)](#):

In other words, he's saying that Christ is not literally the only begotten Son of God. He couldn't possibly be because it would be denying the full deity of the Son, Christ Jesus. So he's producing doubt in the mind so that he can insert

other interpretations, a spiritualistic idea of the Sonship of Christ. This is what Sister White warned us about. This is the spiritualism that she says was likened unto demon worship and witchcraft. And these men, she warned us, are false teachers. The Bible tells us, **“Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” Proverbs 30:6** And we know what the Bible defines a liar to be. One who denies the Father and the Son.

[\(01:04:29\)](#):

So now let's take a look at the warfare over the matter of the time when Jesus became a Son. Now, the Trinitarian understanding of Christ Sonship is that he did not become a Son until he was born on earth. And about a year and a half or two years ago, there was more of this controversy over abortion in the church, which is still going on. But in this controversy, the Seventh-day Adventist church released a statement on abortion. And in this statement, we read, that *“Of Jesus, the angel Gabriel explained to Mary, therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. In His Incarnation, Jesus Himself experienced the human prenatal period and was recognized as the Messiah and Son of God, soon after His conception.”*

[\(01:05:15\)](#):

Now, what I want you to notice is that right here, the Seventh-day Adventist church is telling us that Jesus did not become the Son of God until soon after his birth on earth. And this is consistent with the Trinitarian understanding of Christ sonship. Now, J.R. Hoffman, the Seventh-day Adventist minister said in Ministry Magazine in 1982, *“The title, Son, refers to his entry into time and does not deny at all his eternal origins. There are references in the Old Testament to Sonship, but these are always in anticipation of the Incarnation.”*

[\(01:05:49\)](#):

So is it true that all the references to Jesus being the Son of God before His Incarnation, before His birth on earth are in fact prophetic in anticipation of His birth? What did Ellen White believe? She says that **“Angels that were loyal and true sought to reconcile this mighty, rebellious angel to the will of His creator. They justified the act of God in conferring honor upon Christ. And with forcible reasoning sought to convince Lucifer that no less honor was his now than before the Father had proclaimed the honor which He had conferred upon His Son. They, that is the loyal and true angels, clearly set forth that Christ was the Son of God existing with Him before the angels were created.” 1SP 19.1**

[\(01:06:38\)](#):

Unequivocally, Sister White and the true and loyal angels, believed that Jesus was the Son of God before the angels were created. This contradicts entirely, the theology of the corporate Seventh-day Adventist Church today, which teaches that Jesus did not become a Son until he was born on earth, but clearly the loyal and true angels during this warfare that began in Heaven before the earth was created were trying to convince Lucifer that even before they, the angels were created, that Jesus Christ was the Son of God.

[\(01:07:14\)](#):

And remember, in the beginning, we looked at this warfare that took place in Heaven and how this warfare over the matter of Christ being the only begotten Son of God began in Heaven and how Lucifer deceived a third of the angels and got them to engage in this warfare by obscuring the fact that Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God. And remember that because of this warfare, it made necessary a statement concerning the true position of the Son of God. And now I want to take a look at that statement. I want to take a look at what God the Father said to all the universe, to all the created beings in the presence of His Son, regarding the true position of His Son.

[\(01:07:57\)](#):

And we read this statement in Patriarchs and Prophets chapter one, which is on page 36. **“The king of the universe summoned the heavenly hosts before Him, that in their presence he might set forth the true position of His Son and show the relation He sustained to all created beings.” {PP p. 36}** See, God knew that Lucifer was deceiving the angels. And He did not want them to be led astray. And even though the truthfulness of the true position of

the Son of God had not changed because it was the same from the beginning, God wanted to reiterate and make a firm declaration concerning the Sonship of Christ in the hearing of all the heavenly hosts, so that none of His creation would be led astray by the deceptions of Satan.

[\(01:08:44\)](#):

Sister White continues, **“The Son of God shared the Father's throne, and the glory of the eternal, self-existent one encircled both.** (In other words, not three gods, but the Father and the Son of God) **About the throne gathered the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng, 10,000 times 10,000 and thousands of thousands. The most exalted angels, as ministers and subjects, rejoicing in the light that fell upon them from the presence of the Deity.**

[\(01:09:15\)](#):

Before the assembled inhabitants of Heaven, the King declared that none but Christ, the only begotten of God, could fully enter into His purposes. And to Him it was committed to execute the mighty counsels of His will. The Son of God had wrought the Father's will in the creation of all the hosts of Heaven; and to Him as well as to God, their homage and allegiance were due. Christ was still to exercise divine power in the creation of the earth and its inhabitants. But in all this He would not seek power or exaltation for Himself contrary to God's plan, but would exalt the Father's glory and execute His purposes of beneficence and love.” {PP p. 36}

[\(01:10:01\)](#):

Here in Patriarchs and Prophets chapter one, we see that God has set forth the true position of His Son in the presence of all the heavenly hosts and declared Jesus to be the only begotten of God. In other words, so that nobody would be deceived, so that none of the angels would be deceived, the Father spoke with His own voice to all of His creation saying, Jesus was the only begotten of God. And we know that this was long before the creation of the world, because we read that Jesus was still in the future to exercise divine power in the creation of the earth and its inhabitants. So even before the earth was created, the Father declared Jesus to be the only begotten of God, and that is the true position of His Son.

[\(01:10:56\)](#):

This declaration in Patriarchs and Prophets chapter one is for God's people today. As Sister White says this, remember **“This fact the angels would obscure, that Christ was the only begotten Son of God.”** {Lt42-1910.3} And this truth from the Father's lips was with the fallen angels still to this day are seeking to obscure and they're leaguings themselves with evil men and all the powers of earth and hell to war against this truth that Jesus is literally the only begotten Son of God.

[\(01:11:28\)](#):

Now, here are three principal ways in which the enemy is seeking to wage this warfare on the earth. One is by saying that Jesus is not really a Son, it's just a title, or it's just a metaphor. Remember this is mysticism, applying the secret, spiritual meaning to a word that the word itself does not employ. That is mysticism. And those who teach these things are false teachers.

[\(01:11:53\)](#):

Secondly, one other way in which the angels are seeking to obscure the fact that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God is by saying that Jesus was not really begotten, and that the word begotten just means unique. Third, it is set forth that all references to His Sonship are in anticipation of His Incarnation, and therefore eliminating any possibility of Jesus being the Son of God before His birth on earth. These are three principal ways in which the devil is seeking to deceive God's people and lead them astray. These ideas, these principles, again, are akin to modern spiritualism to demon worship and witchcraft. And these are doctrines of devils, which we should have nothing to do with.

[\(01:12:43\)](#):

All of these teachings embrace that one premise encapsulated in the serpent's words in the Garden of Eden, yea, hath God said. When the devil can implant that doubt in our minds, then he can introduce another interpretation so that we will no longer take God's word as it reads, but imply to it a secret spiritual meaning, not apparent in the language employed. This is modern spiritualism.

[\(01:13:12\)](#):

And this is what the first chapter in Patriarchs and Prophets was warning us against. Listen to this statement from Sister White. **"Shall Christ be compelled to bear continually the shameful infirmities of his people because they accept the false sentiments proceeding from the first traitor in the heavenly courts? If the angels were deceived by Lucifer's ingenious methods of misrepresenting God, if Adam and Eve were deceived by his declaration that God was withholding from them the higher education that would make them as gods, is there not danger that men today will be deceived? Please read the first chapter of Patriarchs and Prophets and see if the precious truths contained in this book are not given by the Lord to protect his people from the deceptions that are urged upon them just now." {10MR 162.5}**

[\(01:14:06\)](#):

This warning is for Seventh-day Adventist today. If we would read these warnings, if we would take heed to them, then we would have nothing to fear for the future. But we have everything to fear for the future if we should forget the way the Lord has led us and His teaching in our past history. The teaching that Christ was literally the only begotten Son of God, not a created being, but begotten of the Father is the teaching that God gave the Seventh-day Adventist people in our history. These were among the fundamental principles that were sealed by the Holy Spirit of God and testified to by the miraculous working of His power.

[\(01:14:49\)](#):

This statement in Patriarchs and Prophets of the Father declaring Jesus to be the only begotten of God before his birth on earth was to prevent us from being deceived by the modern spiritualism and demon worship and witchcraft that permeates Seventh-day Adventist churches today. And this controversy over whether or not Christ is really the Son of God is the warfare over the matter. It is the issue over which Lucifer initiated his war in Heaven, waging war against the Father and Son by denying them, and by denying Christ of His Sonship of God.

[\(01:15:28\)](#):

And this Great Controversy that began in Heaven over Christ's Sonship has continued upon the earth through the Garden of Eden, through the cross, even trying to get Jesus to question His Sonship. And now he's trying to get Jesus' people to question His Sonship also. Patriarchs and Prophets chapter one is a gift from God to Seventh-day Adventists to protect His people from the deceptions of Satan and to protect them from the deceptions that are urged upon them just now.