

AN OPEN LETTER

Returning to the **Old Landmarks**

*Why I Have Withdrawn My Membership from
the Seventh-day Adventist Church*



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PART ONE

A Personal Statement

On September 12, 2026, I delivered a letter to the elders of the McMinnville Seventh-day Adventist Church requesting that my name be removed from its membership. I had joined that congregation immediately after moving from Los Angeles in September 2010, and for most of the sixteen years that followed I served as an Adult Sabbath School teacher.

My request did not arise from any bad experience at the church. Quite the contrary—my experience there was a very good one. The two pastors who served during those years led the congregation well and treated me kindly, and the members were likewise friendly and loving.

Rather, my decision was purely doctrinal. I could no longer subscribe to the church's 28 Fundamental Beliefs as published in 2020. As I explain in the article "Apostate Adventism" in my book, *The Chiastic Word: Core Principles*, I discovered that the church has departed from historic Adventism in significant respects. Having studied these differences in great detail, I found myself holding to the historic position over against the present-day one. The most significant of these differences are summarized in the pages that follow.



PART TWO

Historic and Modern Adventism

A Summary of the Principal Differences

The comparison below sets historic Adventism (before 1915) beside modern-day Adventism (after 1980). Throughout, historic Seventh-day Adventists are abbreviated **HSDA**, and Apostate Adventists **AA**.

I. CREEDALISM

HSDA held to no creed but the Bible, whereas AA use their 28 Fundamental Beliefs as a creed. The difference is explained in detail in my Resource article, “Doctrines, Dogma, and Creedalism.”

II. THE NATURE OF GOD

HSDA were clearly *anti-Trinitarian*. They believed in only two divine beings, the Father and the Son—the Father being supreme and the Son subordinate. The Holy Spirit was understood not as a being but as an essence. AA, by contrast, are clearly *Trinitarian*. They hold to three co-equal beings, in which the Father and the Holy Spirit are *immaterial* divine beings.

III. THE DIVINE NATURE OF CHRIST

HSDA believed in a literal, begotten Son of God. AA believe in an unbegotten God; to them, the title “Son of God” is a metaphor.

IV. THE HUMAN NATURE OF CHRIST

HSDA believed that Christ took a post-Fall human nature, so that Jesus is our Example in all things. AA believe that He took a pre-Fall nature and, therefore, that He is not our Example in all things.

V. THE DEATH OF CHRIST

To HSDA, Jesus *did not* partake of the second death, and it was Satan—not the Father—who killed Jesus. To AA, Jesus *did* partake of the second death, and the Father *did* kill Jesus.

VI. THE ATONEMENT

HSDA believed in a dual and relational atonement, whereas AA believe in a single atonement and in penal substitution. This is explained in the articles “Atonement,” “The Two Covenants,” and “Penal Substitution.”

VII. THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN G. WHITE

To HSDA, Ellen G. White was a true and authoritative prophet, and, according to her, the “pillars of faith” established in the first fifty years of Adventism did not change. To AA, Ellen G. White is pseudo-authoritative: her writings shifted with “advancing truth,” and her book *The Desire of Ages* represents a “paradigm shift” on the teaching of the Trinity.

VIII. THE THREE ANGELS’ MESSAGES

To HSDA, the three angels’ messages were the central mission of the church, and their meaning was clear. To AA, there is no clarity of mission, since they pursue ecumenism and have adopted Babylonian teachings such as the Trinity.

IX. APOSTASY

Ellen G. White described an Alpha and an Omega of apostasy within the Adventist church. In the historic era, the Alpha of apostasy occurred during the Kellogg crisis (1903–1907). In modern Adventism, the Omega of apostasy was fully revealed after 1980 through a change in doctrinal beliefs and the appearance of “books of a new order.”

X. ECUMENISM

HSDA were *unaligned* with Babylon and her daughters, and they actively exposed Babylon's false teachings. AA are *aligned* with Babylon through ecumenism and have adopted some of her false teachings.

XI. THE UNITED NATIONS

HSDA remained unaligned with governmental agencies. AA are aligned with the United Nations and the U.S. government through General Conference declarations and through ADRA.

XII. CHURCH GOVERNANCE

HSDA practiced a bottom-up form of church governance in which the members owned and ran the church; the clergy did not run the local church board, and ministers served largely as evangelists and itinerant preachers. AA practice a top-down form of governance in which the church's corporate entity owns and runs the churches, and the clergy are employees who "hover" over the congregations and run the local church board.

XIII. ABORTION

HSDA were adamantly opposed to abortion. AA have no policy other than affirming that women have the right to choose.

XIV. THE "MAN OF SIN"

HSDA identified the Papacy as the "man of sin." AA make no mention anywhere in their Fundamental Beliefs of the "man of sin" or of his identity as the Papacy.



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