

RG 58: UEP
REF. 1920-50s
TRINITY FLS.

Trinity

Sept. 28, 1931

"You ask me in yours of August 19 in regard to what the position of our earlier men was on the subject of the Trinity. I do not think any of our earlier men took the position that seems to have been taken lately by the denomination on this question of the Trinity.

"I think, as is suggested in some of the writings of Mrs. White, that on the question of the discussion of the Trinity, or of the Godhead in general, that 'silence is golden.' When it comes to finite men, with six thousand years of degeneracy behind them, discussing the infinite God, who is from everlasting, and undertaking to define His qualities and parts, it seems to me that we are clear afield."

A.O. Tait

General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
ARCHIVES
NOT FOR DUPLICATION OR PUBLICATION

Rec'd Sept. 21
EARLY TEACHING ON TRINITY

National City, Sept 16, 1931.

Elder L. R. Froom,

Takoma Park, Washington, D. C.

Dear Brother Froom,--

ARCHIVES
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
NOT FOR DUPLICATION OR PUBLICATION

From my personal knowledge the doctrine of the "Trinity-Godhead" was not taught by Seventh-day Adventists during the early days of my ministry. I have always been familiar with the teaching of Elder J. H. Waggoner as set forth in his book on the Atonement, which you referred me to in your recent letter. I recall statements made by Adventists and scriptures used to verify their position, that the "Trinity-Godhead" as used by other denominations at that time in the absence of scripture truth therefor was a man-made term.

Will cite a few scriptures used in support, at that time, in behalf of the nontrinity view. "How the birth of Jesus - Christ was on this wise....She was found with child of the Holy Ghost" Mat 1:18. "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."

The conclusion drawn at that time was that the Holy Spirit it was not a person in the sense that God and Christ are persons, if so, the same difficulty would be encountered with the Holy Spirit being everywhere present as is held by the Trinitarians concerning God and Christ as persons being everywhere present, and if it should be so conceded Christ would be the son of the Holy Spirit, rather than of God as the Bible declares him to be.

It was taught and presumably believed to be true that the terms God, Christ, Holy Spirit and Comforter were expressions frequently used in the Bible interchangeably as follows:

"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of

National City, Sept 16, 1931

pg 2

the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Cor. 3: 17. " It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Mat. 10: 20. " But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom 8: 9-12. " I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. " Phil 1: 19. " For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. 2. Pet 1: 21. The Holy Ghost is defined in the following texts as follows: " Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." L. Pet 1:11. " L will not leave you comfort less: I will come to you." Jon 14:18. " The Comforter, which is *whom the Father will send in my name,* the Holy Ghost, ¹ he will teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." Jon 14: 26. " But if I depart, I will send him unto you." " And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Mat 28:20.

Elder Froom, It has been several weeks since I received your letter concerning the "Trinity- the Godhead." I first thought best not to get mixed up in this or similar questions, so concluded not to write, but today there came to my mind a very strong impression that I ought to refer to a few of the Scriptures that were formerly used in favor the view then advocated, at least in the section of country where I labored.

Sincerely yours in Christ.

H. W. Cottrell