

Dear Friends

10 days ago I send out an apology and confession to the church.
http://www.adrianebens.com/?page_id=189

This apology has raised questions for some concerning my relationship to the church. This email contains the answer to that question.

I wish to lay out before you my understanding of my relationship to the Adventist church.

The Adventist Church is a covenant people raised by God to give the three angels messages and prepare a people ready to meet the Lord.

"God has called His church in this day, as He called ancient Israel, to stand as a light in the earth. By the mighty cleaver of truth, the messages of the first, second, and third angels, He has separated them from the churches and from the world to bring them into a sacred nearness to Himself. He has made them the depositaries of His law and has committed to them the great truths of prophecy for this time. Like the holy oracles committed to ancient Israel, these are a sacred trust to be communicated to the world." 5T 455

The prophet says that His church today is called AS He called ancient Israel. The organisation of Israel was based upon the family covenantal structure given to Abraham in Gen 12. Through Israel all the families of the earth were to be blessed. The promises of the covenant were given to Abraham upon the the basis of the well ordering of his family.

Gen 18:18,19 since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."

The commanding of his children and household was [the central pillar](#) that would enable God to bring to Abraham all the promises of the covenant. The blessings that come through this structure is [the glory of children](#) Prov 17:6. The greatest blessing we can receive is to know our identity as children of God (John 1:12) and that we are loved and accepted by Him. The greatest preachers of this messages were to be the fathers of each home, they were to be the greatest evangelists of all.

The Father reignited this great truth at the commencement of the Christian Church by declaring the acceptance of humanity in His Son through the blessing of a Father - You are my Son in whom I am well pleased. This is the heart of the

gospel message proclaimed through the Elijah of the last days as he turns the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers.

It is upon this platform The apostle Paul lays down a clear basis for the leadership of the church.

1Ti 3:2-5 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

The family structure of the church is vital for the blessings of the covenant made with Abraham to flow to us. An elder must rule his house well, meaning he is the head of his house and he draws down the blessing of God for his wife and children and repeats the Father's words, "You are my child in whom I am well pleased" This is the work committed to the leaders of the church. For people who come to the church with a broken home, the elders of the church were to extend this blessing to them by visiting the fatherless and the widows James 1:27.

The critical ability of a father (who knows his identity to bless) to bless those under his leadership rests upon of his wife. Her submission to her husband establishes his authority and enables him to pass the blessing of the Father to the family. If she refuses to submit or becomes confused in her identity in relation to her husband in a manner that she openly challenges him and second guesses his decisions, the minds of his children will learn to also challenge him and second guess his decisions and question his wisdom.

The role of the wife who knows her identity is to pray for her husband to speak words of blessing to her and her children. Her submission to him and encouragement of him will open wide the blessings of his mouth and she will receive an abundant harvest through her ability to nurture such seed from her husband.

This is the pattern for the home as is the pattern for a church to its leaders. Every time the membership resists the authority of the leadership, it [closes down the blessing channel and the curse takes place](#). It is the responsibility of the church to pray for its leaders and appeal to them in matters where they feel that there are things being taught that might be harmful. If a member has unburdened their conscience full of respect to their leaders and still their conscience can't see the reasons given, then they must ask for judgment from the leaders and from God. The only one who may openly challenge the church is God Himself either directly or through the mouth of his prophets. An open attack on the leadership of the Adventist church and a questioning of their authority will surely bring about the collapse of the blessing structure.

It is in this context that I have tried to appeal to the leaders of the church.

1Ti 5:1 Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren;

I have become convicted in my conscience that as a church we have taken a wrong course of action concerning the worship of God. I have taken my appeal to the leaders fully recognising their position as leaders of the covenant people of God. I recognise their leadership because we are a covenant family with a history, not simply an intellectual collection of beliefs, where acceptance means a passive submission to a creed. Family members have the right to lovingly intreat an elder as if they were a father and pray for them that they will make the decisions that God wishes them to make.

I tried very hard to listen to the counsel of my brethren. I prayed earnestly about it but I found no relief for my conscience. My next appeal was for the leaders to discipline me according to the power granted them by God. As I found that I could surrender my conscience that was captive to the Word of God, I willingly surrendered my credentials - which I treasured extremely highly and surrendered with tears. I do not in any way question the leaders decision concerning me and I fully respect their decision and their process of evaluation concerning my manuscript - the Return of Elijah.

I have continued to appeal to God that under this discipline that if this is truly His discipline that He will correct me and free my mind from my error, but if there is validity in my appeal that as my dear Heavenly Father, He would hear my appeal and overturn this decision. This is His work and not mine.

I am extremely thankful to be allowed to be a member of the Adventist community of faith. I continue to love and pray for those in leadership over me. I pray that God will grant them wisdom and that they will bless me with wise counsel and consider whether they have taken the right course of action. Now that my appeal is in God's hands I trust that He will either show me my error or bless my brethren to bless me and hear my heart felt cry to them.

I believe with all my heart that the Adventist church is still the covenant church of God and I will not divorce myself from it, for I find no Bible evidence that I am free to marry another. I repeat that I believe I am part of a covenant family and families can take time to work through issues but they seek to maintain the discipline of respect for the roles that they hold. Many feel that I am attacking the church with the expression of my conscience. This is not the case. I love the church and its leaders and I believe that as a member of the family I have the right to appeal and the right to judgment.

I know that others have felt deeply hurt by the church and have withdrawn from its membership. Please see this as a sign of the authority of the leadership to

bles within the covenant. Their refusal to listen to your appeal certainly brings a curse. I know the feeling well, it stings like an adder. I appeal to you to not forsake the family and despise this legitimate authority. It is God who gives authority and God who takes it away. I am not in a place to decide when that authority should be taken away. God makes such things plain if and when they are needed.

If we find ourselves in the position of being formally separated from the church, this in no way prevents us from being part of the covenant people of the Adventist Community of faith. Our heart felt prayers for the leaders and praying for their wisdom still places us in that channel. It is the act of prayerful submission to this authority that keeps us in the channel, not formal membership. I know that some of us feel deeply cursed by the way we have been treated and feel no desire to submit to praying for these leaders. I humbly ask you to reconsider and ask our heavenly Father to give you grace to forgive and believe that you have the love of the only begotten submissive Son to place yourself in the channel again and pray for these leaders.

The forsaking of the church family is a forsaking of the family covenant system given to Abraham and those who leave do not carry with them the power to bless those they influence. Yes they can bless with knowledge of the truth, but they cannot impart the truth that God is well pleased with us and make us secure in His love. A removal from the family does not allow the blessing to extend to marriages and restore true authority, because to remove oneself from God's legitimate authority is to resist His authority and cut off His power to bless. An organisation that is erected in such a situation will be hard pressed to avoid the process of self justification through attacks on the church leadership. This lack of submission is watched by converts and they then act in like manner and the blessing structure can never work.

If we truly wish the Spirit of Elijah we must turn our hearts to the Father's of Spiritual Israel, entreat them with affection and love, show a spirit of submission and pray for them that the Lord will bless their counsel to us. This submission must be held in a tight tension with the demands of conscience which alone is captive to the Word of God. Our leaders can only guide us through this authority. The Bible is the only authority to guide my conscience, but the church leadership is the authority that brings the blessing of the covenant. This is what was promised to Abraham in Gen 18:19.

God has promised to open springs in the valleys of depression and also upon the mountains of pride. These springs call us back to the family kingdom of Abraham. Until we do this, we will stay in the desert and keep up our murmuring and complaining against the leaders, be bitten by serpents and complain about the manna.

Let us submit ourselves to leaders in love and appeal to them to hear our concerns with affection and grace. This is my prayer.