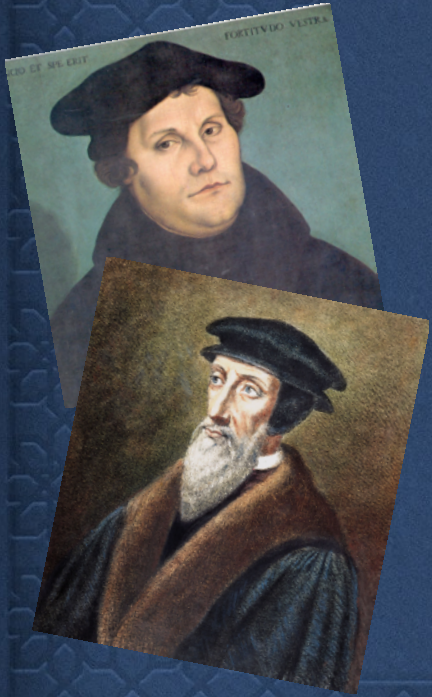
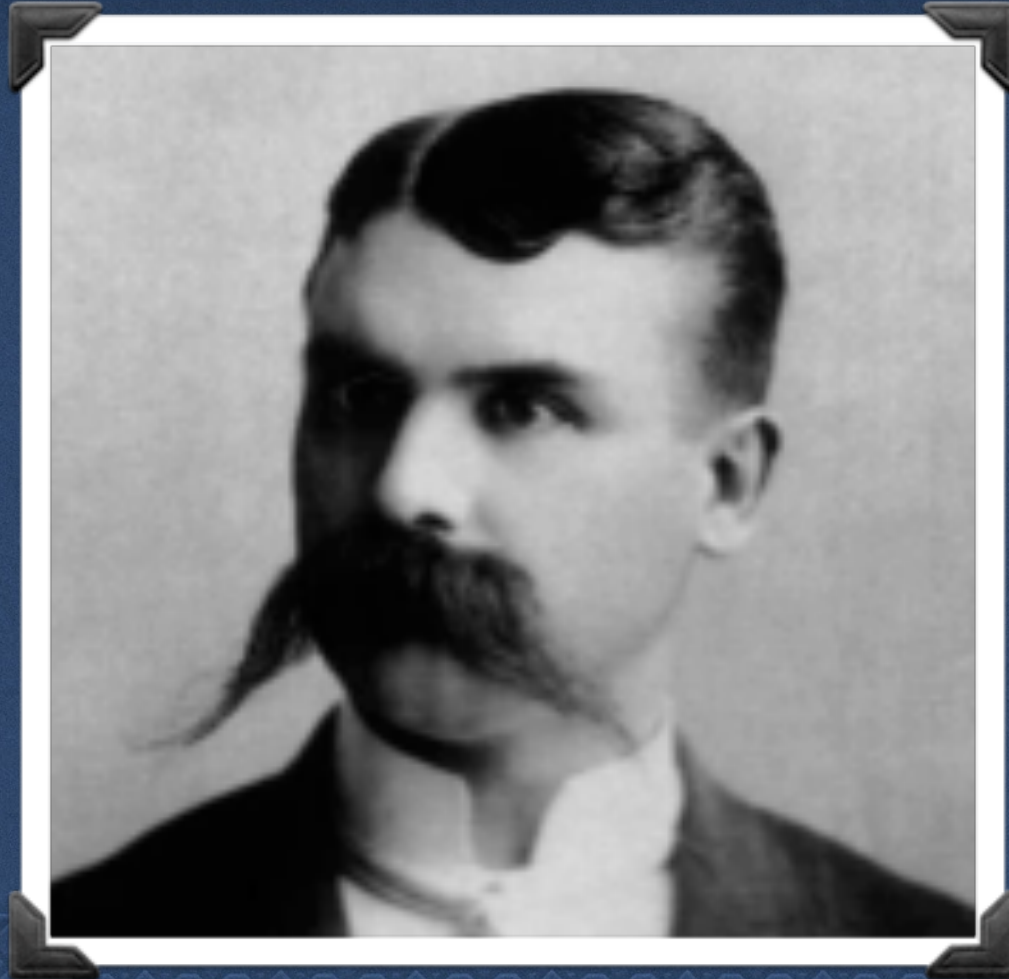


8



Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

i.e.,

Albion Ballenger & Friends

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

THE INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT:

- One of the most controversial Adventist doctrines
- Questioned and criticized more than any Adventist belief
- Contrasted with *sola gratia et fides*

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

OBJECTIONS:

1. Historicism is no longer a viable and relevant method of prophetic interpretation

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

OBJECTIONS:

2. The investigative judgment doctrine cannot be sustained from the biblical text

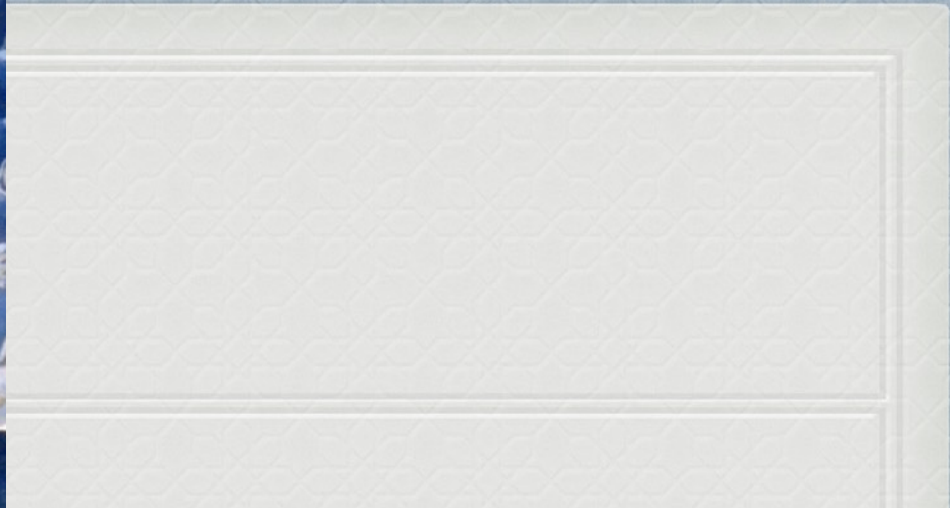
“The [investigative judgment], to me, is the most colossal, psychological, face-saving phenomenon in religious history... [I] personally do not believe that there is a suspicion of a verse in Scripture to sustain such a peculiar position” (Raymond F. Cottrell).

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

OBJECTIONS:

3. The investigative judgment doctrine has a detrimental effect on assurance of salvation

“Taken at face value the investigative judgment robs a person of any real assurance about personal standing with God” (Jerry Gladson).



Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

OBJECTIONS:

4. The investigative judgment doctrine jeopardizes the Biblical teaching that we are saved by grace alone



Steps to Christ
Faith and Works
“Justification by Faith”



Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

OBJECTIONS:

5. The investigative judgment doctrine is theologically **redundant** and should be discarded

“The only purpose of this unique theory is to discipline Christians by the threat of impending judgment and condemnation upon those whose cases are decided upon unfavorably by our Lord” (Walter Martin).

~~Sola Scriptura & Fides~~

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

OBJECTIONS:

“Adventists needlessly subscribe to a doctrine that neither solves their difficulties nor engenders peace of mind” (Walter Martin).

~~Sola Scriptura Fides~~

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

FOCUS OF THIS PRESENTATION:

Sola Gratia et Fides



The investigative judgment
REDUNDANT

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment



Albion Fox Ballenger
1861-1921

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment



What was Ballenger reacting to?

- Uriah Smith
- Ellen White

People. of. God. Are. Not. Judged!

♦ *Anti-Gospel*

♦ *Unbiblical*

THE TRUE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment



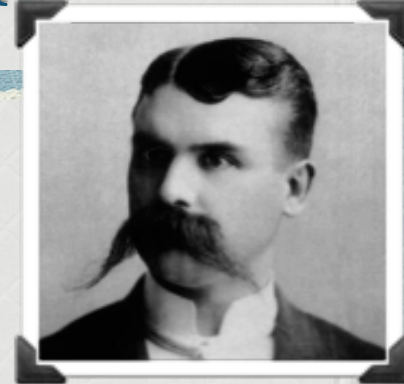
Ballenger's Theology in a Nutshell:

- All humanity sinned with Adam and deserved death
- At the Cross of Christ, God saved all humanity without their knowledge or consent
- Thus: no human involvement in the process of salvation



Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

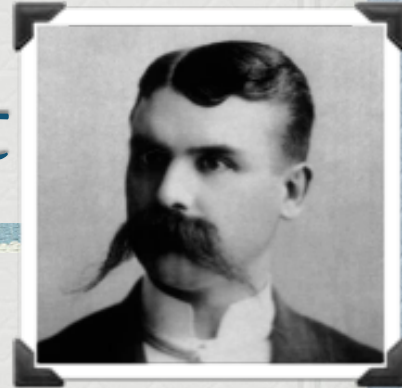
Ballenger's Theology in a Nutshell:



- Atonement was **completed** at the cross of Christ
- Those who accept what Christ accomplished are saved
- **Nothing to review!**



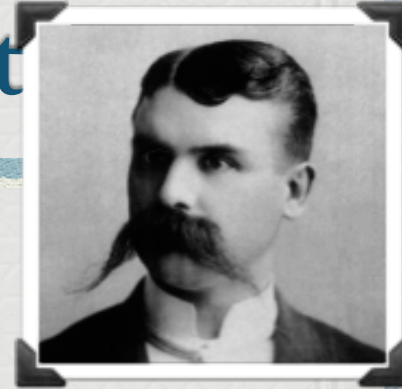
Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment



Ballenger's Criticism of the Investigative Judgment:

1. According to SDA theology, salvation was “dependent on what man had done for God instead of what God had done for man.”

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment



Ballenger's Criticism of the Investigative Judgment:

2. A review of the lives just before the Second Coming suggested that Christ's sacrifice for sin was **incomplete, imperfect and conditional**

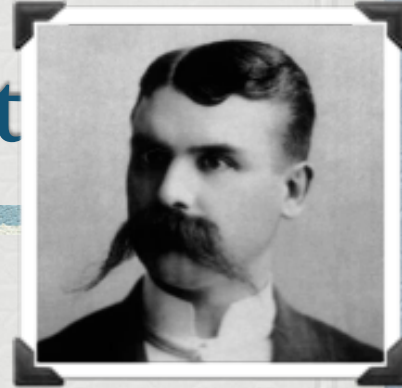
Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment



Ballenger's Criticism of the Investigative Judgment:

2. A review of the lives just before the Second Coming suggested that Christ's sacrifice for sin was **incomplete, imperfect and conditional**

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment



Ballenger's Criticism of the Investigative Judgment:

- The **completed** work of Christ on the cross **ensured salvation** the moment a sinner believed
- This provided **full assurance** that Christ's sacrifice was sufficient.

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment



Ballenger's Criticism of the Investigative Judgment:

4. The investigative judgment doctrine has no support in the Scriptures

- The judgment was declarative and not investigative

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

In Essence:

The Investigative Judgment:

- *understand the Gospel*
- *integrate it into the doctrine*
- *of the living beings*
- *has*
- *needs to be*

However

Investigative Judgment

“**If** he transgresses the law willfully after he has come to the knowledge of the truth...**then** there will remain no part of my sacrificing deposit for him...**if** he tramples upon my sacrifice for him; **if** he comes to count the giving of my fortune as something given that he may continue in law-breaking; **if** he does deliberately despite the spirit of grace shown him, **then** there remains no deposit of grace for him. **Then** he must fall into the hands of the civil authority, and will be deserving of sorer punishment than **if** he had never known of my abundance.”

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

A Legitimate Question:

What process does God use to determine if His “deposit of grace” has been spent “in vain”?

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

- Two Phases of judgment:

“If” and “then”



Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

Another Legitimate Question:

How did a critic of a “review of believers’ lives” ultimately make it part of his theology?

Answer:

His meta-theological paradigm!

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

Seventh-day Adventists:

- Children of the Reformation
- Embrace *sola gratia et fides* and *soli Deo gloria*

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

The Faith of the Reformation:

MONERGISM



Meta-Paradigms



SYNERGISM



SOLA GRATIA

SOLA FIDE



SOLI DEO GLORIA

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

Monergism

[*monos* (alone) + *ergos* (work)]

God ALONE provides human salvation



Universalism



Deterministic
Predestinarianism

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

Monergism

(double predestinarianism)

- God is responsible for everything; people have no influence on God's decisions
- Humanity plays no role in the process of salvation
- Freedom of will is denied
- Salvation cannot be lost

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

Monergism

• Implications:

- *Sola gratia*
- *Sola fide*
- *Soli Deo gloria*



Humans
Are
Passive

Total Theology of Grace

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

Monergism

- **Justification by Faith:**

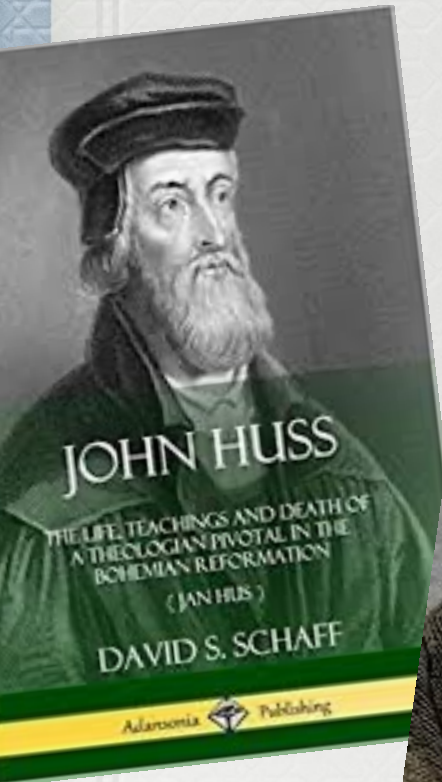


Wow! I am elected!

- An 'aha' moment
- Not a free will decision
that a believer makes

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

The Reformers:



Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

Synergism

[*syn* (with) + *ergos* (work)]

- Humans cooperate with God in the process of salvation
- Genuine free will exists

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

The Shades of Synergism

How much do I contribute to salvation?

Me

Nothing

*Almost
Nothing*

50%+50%

*Almost
Everything*

Everything

Monergism

S y n e r g i s m

Soli Deo Gloria

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

The Shades of Synergism

How much do I contribute to salvation?



Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

Synergism

Grace-centered Synergism

Sola gratia et fides
Soli Deo Gloria



Faith + Works

(Semi-pelagianism)

Pactum Theology



Salvation by Works
(Pelagianism)

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

Grace-centered Synergism

God Alone (*sola*):

- **initiates** salvation
- **restores** human free will
- **enables** sanctification
- **crowns** with salvation those who chose to follow Christ

PREVENIENT GRACE



Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

Grace-Centered Synergism

- **Implications:**

- *Sola gratia*
- *Sola fide*
- *Soli Deo gloria*



Humans
Are
Involved

Sola:

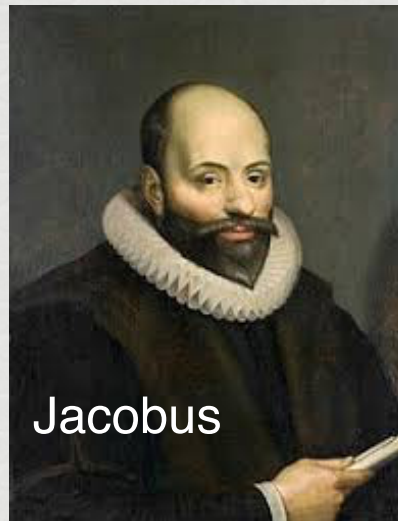
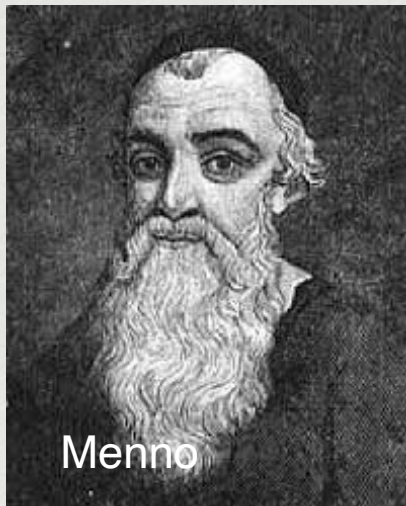
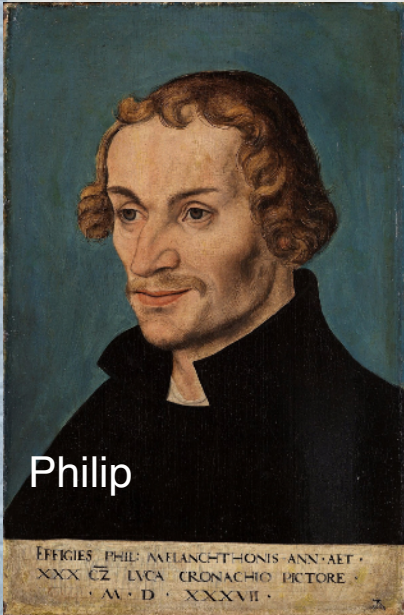
- means different things for monergists and synergists

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

Grace-centered Synergists:

Sola gratia et fides

Soli Deo gloria



Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

Monergism, Synergism, Free Will and the Investigative Judgment

- **Synergism:** requires human response to God's offer—thus an investigative judgment is necessary
- **Monergism:** eliminates human response to God's offer—an investigative judgment is impossible

ATONEMENT COMPLETED AT THE CROSS

of the Investigative Judgment

Monergism, Synergism, Free Will and the Investigative Judgment

- Strongest arguments against the investigative judgment come from monergists
- In reality: the attack on the doctrine of the investigative judgment is a monergist attack on any form of synergism

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

Monergism, Synergism, Free Will and the Investigative Judgment

For grace-centered synergists:
NOTHING to be defensive about...

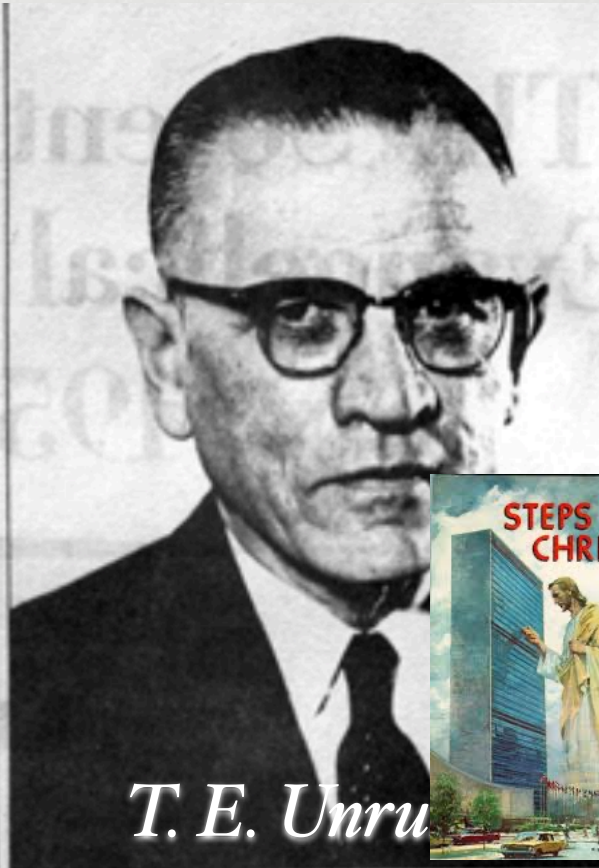
The idea of free will is redundant if there is
no eschatological accountability

A Clash of Meta-Paradigms

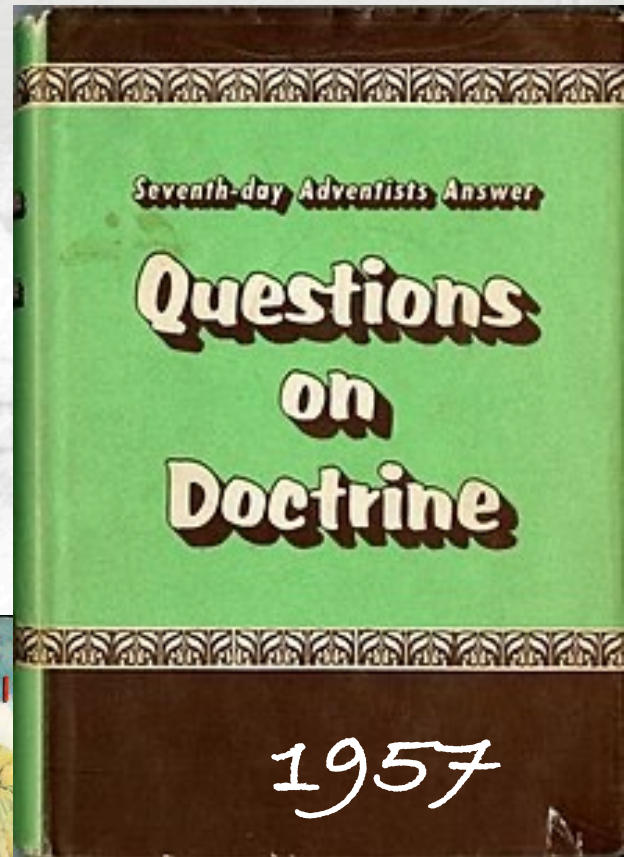


The Great Divide

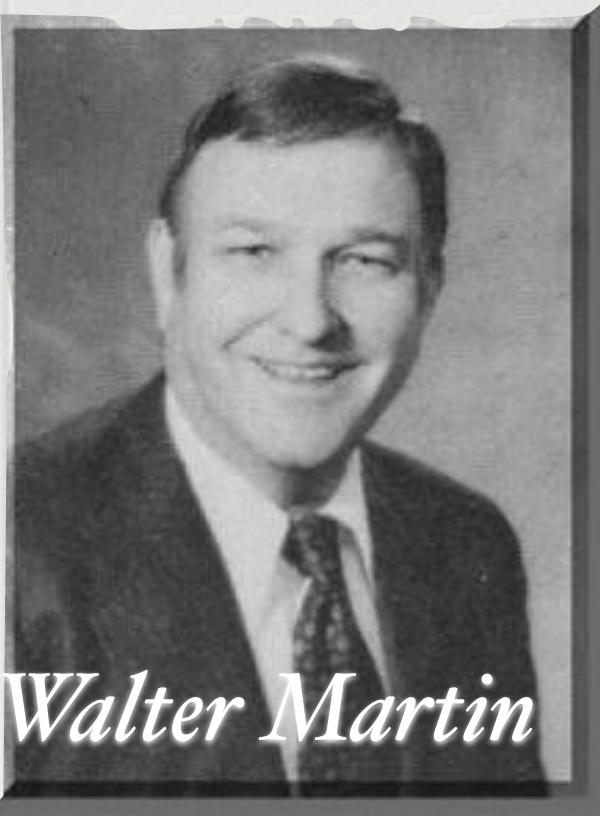
Donald Grey Barnhouse



T. E. Unruh



A Clash of Meta-Paradigms



Walter Martin

“Seventh-day Adventists, we believe, needlessly subscribe to a doctrine which neither solves their difficulties nor engenders peace of mind. Holding as they do to the doctrine of the investigative judgment, it is extremely difficult for us to understand how they can experience the joy of salvation and the knowledge of sins forgiven.”

A Monergistic Investigative Judgment

2 Corinthians 5:10

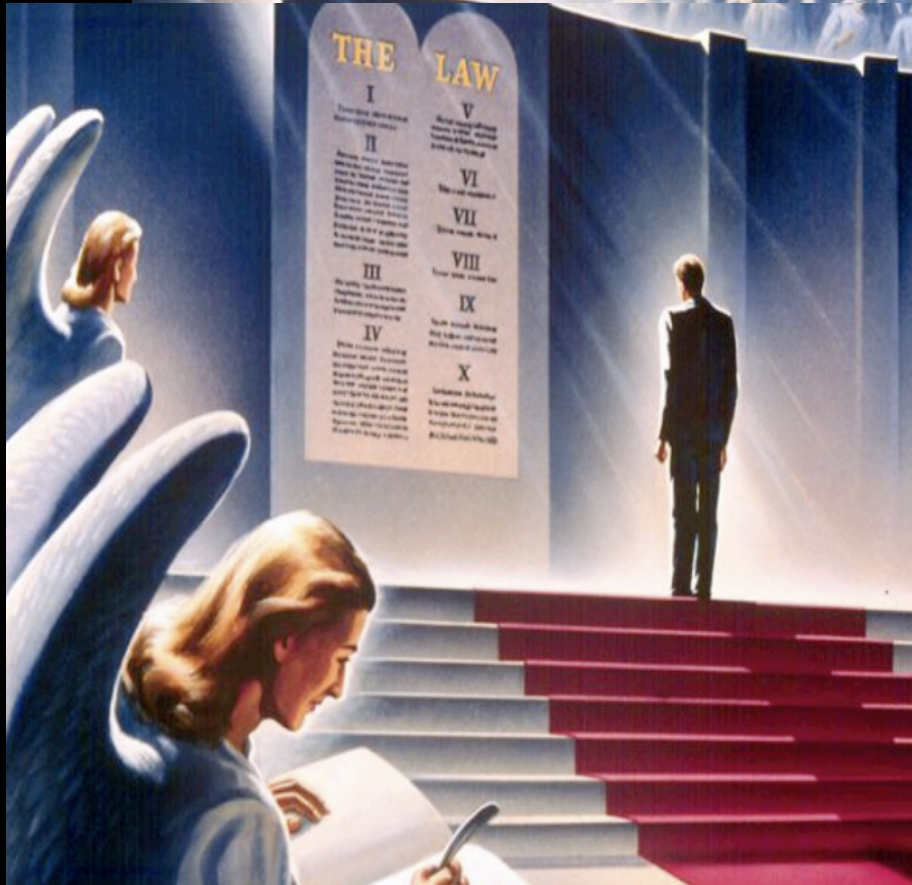
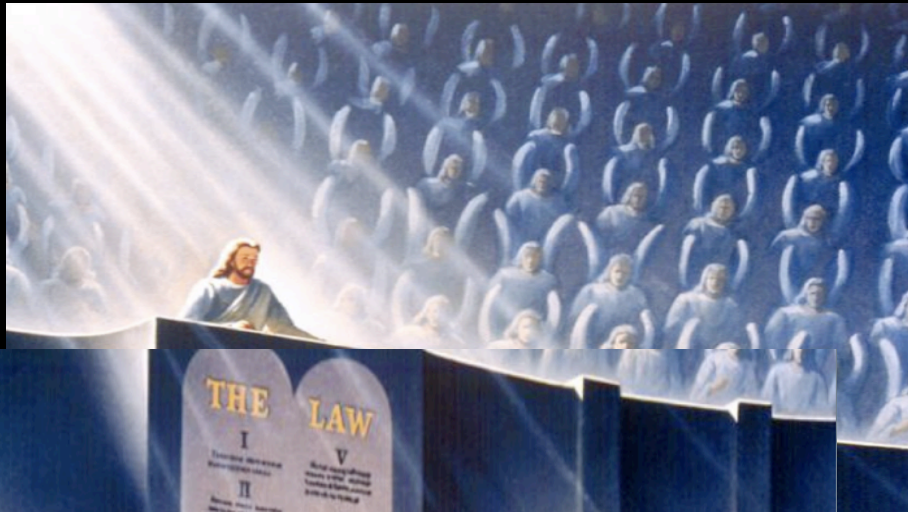
“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.”

A Monergistic Investigative Judgment

*An Investigative Judgment is necessary...
after the Second Coming...*

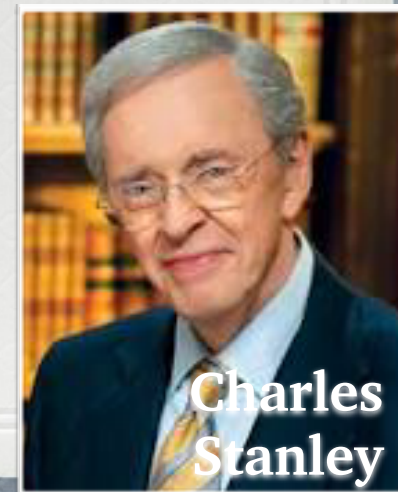
*...to determine the degree
of reward or punishment.*

After the Second Coming



Rank in
Heaven

“The kingdom of God will not be the same for all believers. Let me put it another way. Some believers will have rewards for their earthly faithfulness; others will not. Some believers will be entrusted with certain privileges; others will not. Some will reign with Christ; others will not. Some will be rich in the kingdom of God; others will be poor...Some will be given true riches; others will not...some will be given heavenly treasures of their own; others will not ...Privilege in the kingdom of God is determined by one’s faithfulness in this life. This truth may come as a shock. Maybe you have always thought that everyone would be equal in the kingdom of God. It is true that there will be equality in terms of our inclusion in the kingdom of God but not in our rank and privilege” (Charles Stanley, *Eternal Security*).



The Difference Between Monergism and Synergism

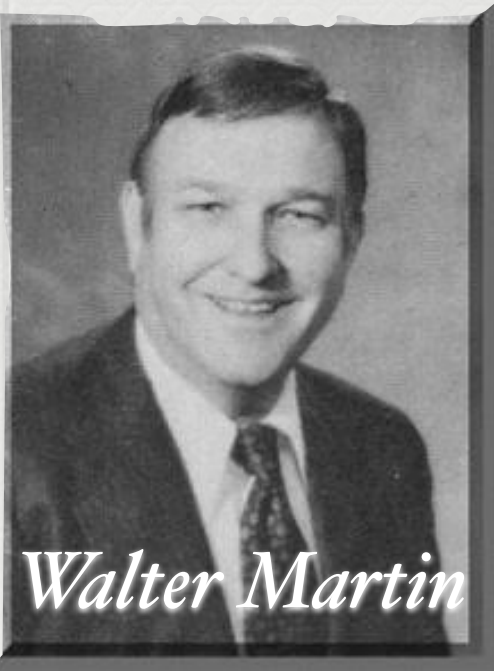
Synergism:

- an investigative judgment *before* the Second Coming

Monergism:

- an investigative judgment *after* the Second Coming

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

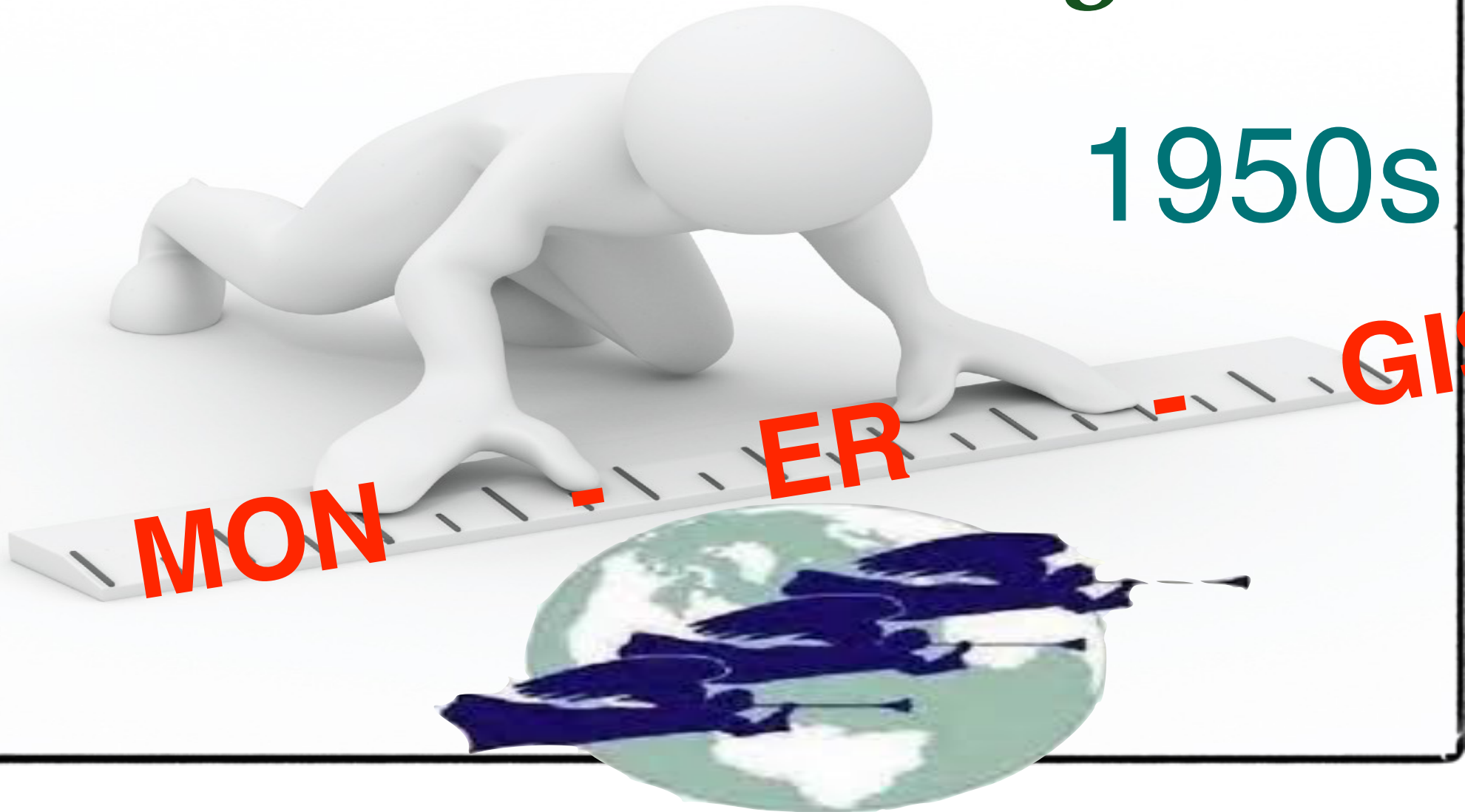


Walter Martin

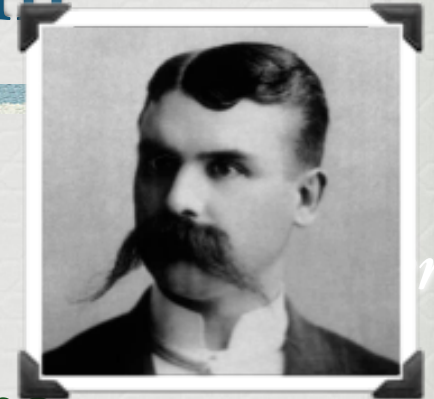
“Christians need not anticipate any investigative judgment before the Second Coming. True, we shall ‘all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the deeds done in the body’ (II Cor. 5:10), *but this has nothing to do with any [Adventist] investigative judgment. It is judgment for rewards.*”

A Clash of Paradigms

1950s



Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment



Mimicked monergistic arguments

- Charged that salvation depends on humans
- The investigative judgment doctrine diminished the value of the cross
- Negatively impacted Christian assurance

**THEOLOGICALLY
REDUNDANT**

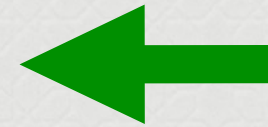
Monergism

**Post-Second
Coming
Investigative
Judgment**

The Great Divide

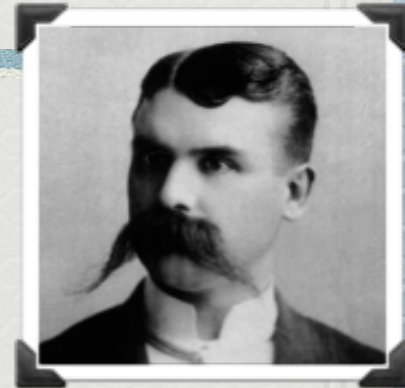
Synergism

A. F. Ballenger



**Pre-Second
Coming
Investigative
Judgment**

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment



- **AND YET:**

- He could not free himself from the investigative judgment

- **BECAUSE HE REMAINED A SYNERGIST**

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

Critics of the investigative judgment doctrine:

- Do not clearly perceive the great Protestant divide between **Monergism** and **Synergism**

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

The idea of believers' responsibility before God is inherent and necessary in synergism...

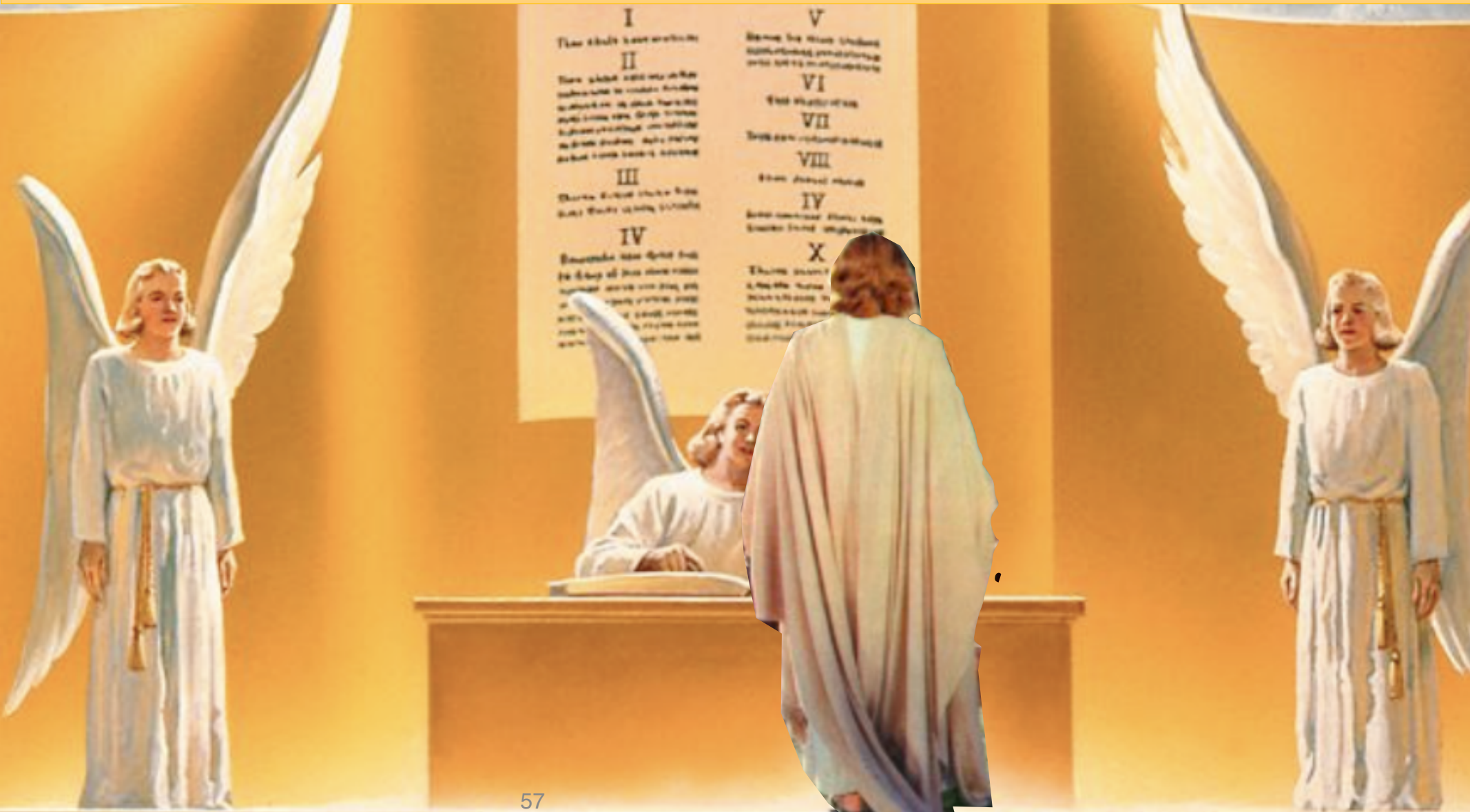
...otherwise, the existence of human free will becomes theologically redundant

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment



Grace
Centered
Synergism

“Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them” (Rom 4:7-8).



57

“Jesus will appear as their advocate, to plead in their behalf before God.”
“Christ will clothe His faithful ones with His own righteousness, that He may present them to His Father, a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.” (GC 482, 484)

Theological Necessity of the Investigative Judgment

“Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them” (Rom 4.7-8).



“Jesus will appear as their advocate, to plead in their behalf before God.”
“Christ will clothe His faithful ones with His own righteousness, that He may present them to His Father, a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.” (GC 482, 484)



The Problem of Human Nature



A photograph of a bride and groom in wedding attire, kissing under a large archway decorated with pink and white flowers. The bride is on the left, wearing a white dress and veil, and the groom is on the right, wearing a dark suit. The background is a soft-focus green landscape.

Conceptual Framework for Seventh-day Adventist Theology

The Problem of Human Nature

