Q & A

Ellen White Said What??

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Sabbath School

Summary

Ellen White’s writings has been a topic of controversy in many churches. Some feel that some of her statements contradict modern understanding on topics and disregard her. How many persons have actually read her writings? This program debunks some of her statements.

Program Aim

To edify the church on the need to study to show themselves approved.

Scripture References

Proverbs 2:1-6

Theme Song(s)

286- Wonderful Words of Life

Program Audience

ALL

Preparations and resources

For The main feature you could choose the following options:

1. Choose to have someone dress as Ellen White and explain the statements.
2. Or you could ask someone of biblical authority to explain her statements. (give the persons the questions before hand)
3. This could also be done with a panel; however, the panellist must receive the questions before hand so they could give prepared answers.

Topic: Ellen White Said What??

Factually confronting what she actually said and meant

Scripture Reading:

Proverbs 2:1-6

My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding— indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Opening Song:

286- Wonderful Words of Life

Welcome:

Opening Remarks:

Ellen White's writings have been a topic of controversy in many churches. Some view her as a false prophet while some hold her in the highest esteem. Some feel that some of her statements contradict modern understanding on topics and disregard her. While some claim there is a deeper understanding required to work.

How many persons have read two or more of her writings?

Some persons have never read her writings for themselves but have taken strong stances for and against her writings. In my formative Christian years, I too shuddered at some of the things I thought she said. However, when I did my research and began to read her writings myself, I found that she had the wisdom and was indeed inspired by God. The knowledge she had on varied topics was way ahead of her time. The church would do well to be admonished by the counsels in books such as Steps to Christ, The Desire of Ages, The Adventist Home, Messages to

young people, The great controversy, and the list goes on and on.

The title of the Sabbath School today is Ellen White said what?

Special Music:

Main Feature:

For The main feature you could choose the following options:

1. Choose to have someone dress as Ellen White and explain the statements.
2. Or you could ask someone of biblical authority to explain her statements. (give the persons the questions beforehand)
3. This could also be done with a panel; however, the panellist must receive the questions beforehand so they could give prepared answers.

Ellen Gould White was born November 26, 1827, and died July 16, 1915. She lived over a century ago. One must seek to understand the historical situation Ellen White was addressing and, if that situation is not applicable today, discern the universal principles and apply them to the present situation. This involves applying correct principles of interpretation. We have a series of statements that Ellen white may or may not have said let us discuss them now.

Topic 1: Bicycles

We have often heard that you said that we should not buy bicycles for our children and that you condemn Christian youth from owning such toys. Did you mention this, please expound on the context?

Ellen White/ Pastor/Panel:

This statement was made in Testimonies for the Church Vol 8, and it was written in 1904.

Let me provide some context. In 1900, the average household income was 438usd /year. This is calculated to be $36.50 per month.(US Embassy website) The average number of persons per household was 4.74 approximately 5 persons (US Census). The cost of one bicycle at that time was $16.75 which was half of one month's wages. Now this price was exorbitant at that time.

In today’s terms; the average salary is about 3000usd monthly. Will you take half of this salary (1500usd) to purchase a toy for your child?

The year was 1895 when I was given a glimpse of all that was happening in Battle Creek. It came to my attention that persons were using the expensive toy called bicycles to race and compete against one another. At that time the bicycle was not an economical form of transportation but a rich man’s toy. The young people were mortgaging their incomes for months in advance to buy what was then an expensive piece of equipment to show superiority and to show off.

In response to this, I penned the following statement: “there seemed to be a bicycle craze in Battle Creek. Money was spent to gratify an enthusiasm in this direction that might better, far better, have been invested in building houses of worship where they are greatly needed. There were presented before me some very strange things in Battle Creek. A bewitching influence seemed to be passing as a wave over our people there, and I saw that this would be followed by other temptations. Satan works with an intensity of purpose to induce our people to invest their time and money in gratifying supposed wants. This is a species of idolatry”.

You see in squandering money- God’s money- it affects your profession of Faith, it affects your witness. What I urge us is to have a burden for the advancement of the work of God.

Topic #2: Sports

We heard that you have condemned all forms of exercise and are totally against sports. Please explain?

Ellen White Justification.

I offer counsel on sports in different literature. It is important in the life of a Christian to know that it is easy to lust after other things that are not necessarily sinful in themselves, but something that is made FIRST instead of the kingdom of God. Whatever attracts the mind from God, whatever draws the affections away from Christ, is an enemy to the soul. (CSA 22.3)

Do you think that Sports can draw the affections away from God?

As Christians, we are called to be set apart. The answer to most of our questions is found in the soil. We are the soil, how then can we cultivate good habits to ensure that our soil is fruitful and ready for the kingdom of God?

In Adventist Home chapter 80 I titled the chapter; what shall we play? In that chapter, I focused on the topic of sport. I admonished parents to restrain our children from worldly pleasures that tend to corrupt and mislead, we ought to provide them innocent recreation, to lead them in pleasant paths where there is no danger. No child of God needs to have a sad or mournful experience.

While we shun the false and artificial, discarding horse racing, card playing, lotteries, prize fights, liquor drinking, and tobacco using, we must supply sources of pleasure that are pure and noble and elevating.

I advised against the lifelong injuries that can be caused by gymnastics. I advised that exercise in a gymnasium shouldn’t replace open-air and recreation.

I am not against exercise or fun for the youth, in many of my writings, I advised parents to play sport with their children.

I categorically stated that I do not condemn the simple exercise of playing ball; but this, even in its simplicity, may be overdone (AH 499). Sports can be expensive and we must be cognizant that these funds can be used to further the gospel.

So exercise in the fresh air and be cognisant of the dangers of being fanatical and competitive in sports and most importantly make nothing your idol.

Topic # 3: Wearing of Wigs

Question: In many parts of the world women wear wigs, we heard that you said wigs can make you insane. Is this true? Please provide context?

Answer

In the October 1871 issue of the Health Reformer, I wrote about the issue of wearing wigs calling them “hurtful indulgences” that militate against the highest interests and happiness of women. Among these “indulgences” she included wigs that, “covering the base of the brain, heat and excite the spinal nerves centering in the brain.” As a result of “following this deforming fashion,” I said, “many have lost their reason, and become hopelessly insane.” MOL 495

In 1871, the wigs I described were monstrous bunches of curled hair, cotton, seagrass, wool, Spanish moss, and other multitudinous abominations.” The materials of these wigs caused extreme heat and could cause damage. Persons complained of this heat that caused headaches, some of the wigs were infested with insects that bit through the scalp causing hair loss and rawness (MOH 495.7)

It was with the extreme side effects of those particular wigs the admonition was given to refrain from them to maintain your health.

Anything in a fashion that could cause harm to health we are advised as humans and as Christians to refrain from.

Topic 4: Bathing of the Sabbath

Question: There is a statement that you were quoted saying all preparations must be made on Friday including cooking, shining of shoes, and bathing. Are you saying as Modern Christians we should not bathe on Sabbath?

Answer:

Testimonies for the Church, volume 6, pages 355, 356 was written in 1901. The exact statement was “On Friday let the preparation for the Sabbath be completed. See that all the clothing is in readiness and that all the cooking is done. Let the boots be blacked and the baths be taken. It is possible to do this. If you make it a rule you can do it. The Sabbath is not to be given to the repairing of garments, to the cooking of food, to pleasure-seeking, or to any other worldly employment. Before the setting of the sun let all secular work be laid aside and all secular papers are put out of sight. Parents, explain your work and its purpose to your children, and let them share in your preparation to keep the Sabbath according to the commandment.”

The task listed are cooking, blackening of boots that is now an outdated practice, mending of clothing and bathing. All these tasks have been grouped because at that time they were all labour intensive tasks. Particularly bathing at the time was not as convenient as it is now and so it was done once per week. Bathing included fetching water then heating it on a stove if you had one then transporting it to the bathing area.

This is a far cry from today when persons have water running from showers in their homes. For this reason, we should take the spirit of the law, which is to ensure all laboured preparations are completed before the Sabbath. However, bathing is no longer considered labour and so it is encouraged that persons bathe often unless otherwise advised by a physician.

Conclusion:

The bible admonished us in 2 Timothy 2:15 Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

The bible also admonishes us to apply wisdom to all things. Ellen White always regarded herself as the lesser light and that the bible is the greater light. She always directed the church to study scripture. Her writings can bring clarity to some biblical mysteries for those who are seeking truth.

However, her words cannot replace the need for us to earnestly study scripture and spend time on our knees seeking God’s directions in our life and on spiritual matters. The purpose of this Sabbath school was not to elevate Ellen White as infallible but to bring clarity to popular statements that are often misquoted and misunderstood. And to encourage all of us to read one chapter of any of her books for ourselves. Ask the heavenly Father to guide you and to lead you into all truth whenever you study his word.

Sabbath School is now adjourned until next Sabbath.

Tags
Ellen White

- Add new comment

Jimaimah Ken (not verified), Apr 28 2021 - 8:58pm
That was wonderful

- Reply

Anonymous (not verified), Apr 29 2021 - 12:44am
Amen, thank you for sharing this message brother... What a reminder. God bless your ministry

- Reply

Prosper A. Kamara (not verified), May 03 2021 - 7:21am
Thank you for sharing it's quite understood God bless you brethren

- Reply

Permalink

Gloria C. Tuangco (not verified), May 12 2021 - 6:48pm
Thank you for sharing and reminding us parents. God bless you.

- Reply

Joseph (not verified), May 28 2021 - 5:55am
Really some of the councils she gave was in her time. And we really have to ask the holy spirit for guidance and clarity on the things we are reading. If not we can go off track. Thank God. It is inspiring program hummm think it can be used as an AY program as well ?.

- Reply

Buay Tong (not verified), May 28 2021 - 8:36am
thanks a lot for sharing and reminding us for this amazing message God bless you

- Reply

Anonymous (not verified), Jun 24 2021 - 1:26pm
Wow, very enlightening.

- Reply

Marina (not verified), Jun 26 2021 - 9:52am
Thanks for sharing these explanations with me. Looking forward for more on other topics.

- Reply

Permalink

Naomi (not verified), Jul 17 2021 - 12:56am
Thank you so much for sharing looking forward for the next/other topics. May God bless you with more wisdom ?

- Reply

Kiki Puruto (not verified), Aug 06 2021 - 1:21pm
Discerning heart enlightens thank you indeed for this power message.

- Reply

Daniel Odongo (not verified), Nov 19 2021 - 2:00am

I'm so delighted with the amazing explanations, very well understood may the Almighty God richly bless you so much

- Reply

Shanel (not verified), May 20 2022 - 5:23am
I am truly grateful I signed up to receive these programs. Thank you so much.

- Reply

Herman Urquhart, (not verified), Jun 18 2022 - 5:41am
I'm greatly thankful for such wonderful experience from this program, thank God,,

- Reply

Permalink

Vickie Wright (not verified), Oct 22 2022 - 3:19am
Wow. What an eye opener. Thanks again for this programme. God bless your work always.

- Reply

David Gesaka Zablon (not verified), Apr 13 2023 - 1:44pm
Thanks for such wonderful explanation, very delighted.
Could you also enlighten about cooking and which cooking on Sabbath.
Best regards

- Reply

R Scott Holder (not verified), May 10 2024 - 9:14pm

Back in the day when Ellen White walked the Earth, things were much different. It has helped to dispel controversial subjects, and I think it will do that for others too. That info was a real eye-opener for me. Thank you!

- Reply

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Your name

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