

"Watchman, what of the night?"

"The hour has come, the hour is striking, and striking at you,
the hour and the end!"

Eze. 7:6 (Moffatt)

MONOGENES

CAN THIS GREEK WORD BE
THE BASIS FOR THE
"THE LOUD CRY"?

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Postscripts on the Classic

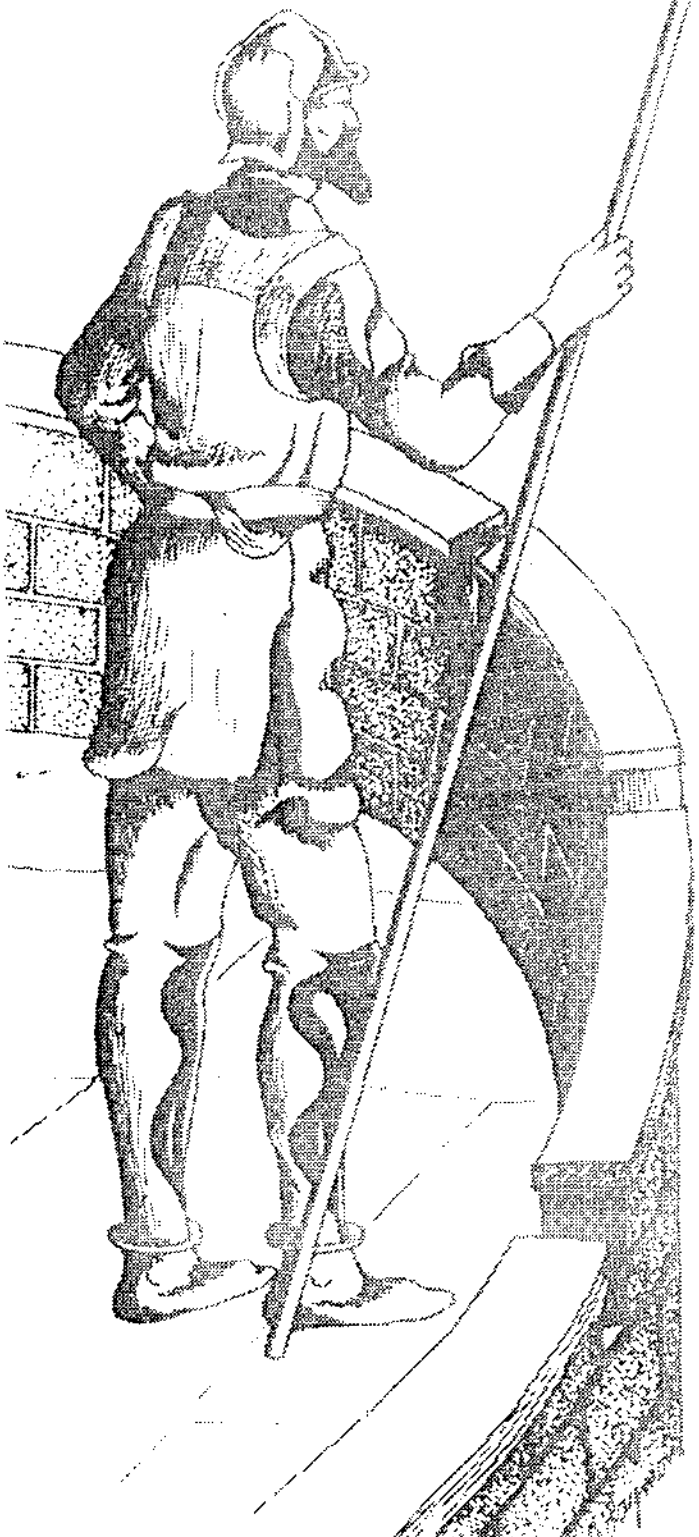
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Editor's Preface

This issue of WVN closes with two quotations from the Writings. They are not only thought provoking in regard to the first essay on "Monogenes", they also call into question the rationale used to justify some of the doctrinal changes in Adventism. When we move from a anti-Trinitarian position through a Tri-Theistic concept to a Trinitarian formulation of the doctrine, is this walking in the advancing light of truth? On the other hand, to bend the Word of God, even the Biblical concept as expressed in the Greek Text, to conform with a previously stated position, is this developing that truth on a higher scale than it has hitherto been done? Both of these questions must be given negative answers.

When we consider that the doctrine of the Incarnation, which the reprinting of Questions on Doctrine once again brings to the fore, is at the heart of the Gospel of God, we have cause to pause and think. Paul declared that "the gospel of God" concerned "His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. 1:1,3). Does bending the Writings as well as the Scriptures to conform to what an Anglican clergyman called "the Orthodox Doctrine" represent the development of truth on a higher scale than has hitherto been done? Do we dare distort historical fact so as to represent that which we want to personally sustain as the advancing light of truth?

How far dare we go in absurdities, such as asking which God is older than the other? Is not "God" eternal? Does the verbal name by which Jehovah designated Himself - the I AM - convey no definitive concept of Himself, as the "self-existent" and "ever-existent" One?



Monogenes

(Μονογενής)

Can this Greek Word be made the basis for "the Loud Cry"?

In the February issue of WWN we noted a booklet which had been included in a packet sent from Smyrna Gospel Ministries to those who responded to their card placed in a TriMedia advertising card deck. This booklet, *The Return of the Fourth Angel*, was a reprint of an article in *Old Paths*, January 2002, written by David Clayton. It set forth that the anti-trinitarian message being proclaimed by Allen Stump, Lynnford Beachy, and himself was "The Return of the Fourth Angel," in other words, "The Loud Cry." This is a serious and questionable assumption which cannot be taken lightly.

Clayton lists nine characteristics of the Fourth Angel's message. He indicated that he knows of only one message being given in the Community of Adventism which bears all these nine characteristics. He writes:

Many of the independent ministries, as well as the official Seventh-day Adventist Church, are coming out against these teachings. But, interestingly, there is one belief that everybody is opposing above anything else (p. 24).

This one belief is Number 1 of his nine characteristics of the Fourth Angel's message, and reads - "A teaching that Christ is the literal Son of God, begotten before the ages as an individual Being, separate from the Father." He then quoted from ten independent ministry publications and two official church sources. As we noted in the February issue of WWN, we were included in these quotations through a manipulation of statements by Clayton. It could be concluded from the quotations chosen by Clayton that the belief in question was simply Trinitarianism; however, this is not the issue, but rather the issue is - the "self-existence" of Jesus Christ from all eternity. Stump made this very clear in an E-mail letter to Australia. He stated:

Concerning the honesty of David Clayton's quoting WHG: The truth is that the quotation very accurately reflects his thinking. WHG has stated personally to me that he is a

tritheist. The quotation is accurate and fair. Further, in Clayton's article, he never said that WHG was a Trinitarian or that he believed as any of the others quoted. He actually quoted from a variety of views, all of which denied that *Jesus was the literal, begotten Son of God* (Feb. 09, 2004 1:44 AM; emphasis supplied).

[At this point two questions should be interjected: 1) Does not the definitive designation - "the heavenly trio" - by Ellen White (Series B, #7, p. 62) to define the Godhead, express a tritheistic concept? 2) Why did Clayton not include her in his statements from Adventist sources?]

In the February 2004 issue of *Old Paths*, the defining issue is again raised by Allen Stump as he discusses the Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide of the regular church for the first quarter's lessons of 2004. Charging that the lesson on the Gospel of John "muddies the Gospel waters," he adds to the murkiness of the waters by his failure to recognize how the designation "only begotten Son of God" is first used by John, as well as insisting on the position that Jesus Christ is God's "only begotten Son" in a literal sense. He wrote - "To be begotten means to be born or brought forth. (*This is not the same thing as created.*" p. 4; emphasis his). But by his use of "born" and "brought forth" he raises more questions than he answers. Then he asks - "What does 'only begotten' mean?" In answering this question we must not only make a careful study of the word used in the Greek from which "only begotten" is translated, but also the context in which John first used the word in his Gospel. This is where the Greek word μονογενής (monogenes) enters the picture.

In the New Testament, *only* in the Gospel and first Epistle of John do we find the word used in reference to Jesus Christ. It is used by Luke (7:12; 8:42; 9:38) to refer to an only child. Paul uses the word once to refer to Isaac (Heb. 11:17), who was not an "only child," but a son of Abraham in a unique sense, inasmuch as the birth of Isaac was by divine empowerment. This leaves John's use of the word *distinct* from both Paul and Luke. Its meaning in John must be determined by the law of first use. He used it four times in his Gospel and once in his First Epistle. Stump, in his article, does not consider the law of first use, but seeks rather to transfer Luke and Paul's literal human use to John's

theological application (*op.cit.*, p. 5). This can be forgiven inasmuch as Stump is not a theologian but rather a High School Driver Education teacher turned preacher. This is not to be considered a "minus," for in the final work there will be "young men taken from behind the plow and from the fields to preach the truth as it is in Jesus" (*Medical Ministry*, p. 305). However, *take careful note* that in the context of this promise there is found a warning. It reads:

While the solid truth of the Bible came from lips of men who had no fanciful theories of misleading science to present, there were others who labored with all their power to bring in false theories regarding God and Christ (*ibid.*).

This we see being fulfilled before our very eyes. This is the real issue at stake – the deception of sincere people who want truth, pure and unadulterated, which is the righteousness of Christ (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 65). But what is taking place? Under the guise of "the return of the Fourth Angel" "false theories regarding God and Christ" are being proclaimed.

John's first use of the word in his Gospel (1:14) determines its use in the other four references. It was *after* John had declared "the Word (Λογος) was made flesh, and dwelt among us," that he writes of Him as "the only begotten of the Father" (μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός). John begins his prologue by placing Jesus Christ as the Word who was with God "in beginning" (ἐν ἀρχῇ) and declaring that He, too, was God (καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος). I repeat, John did not use the word, μονογενής to designate Jesus Christ until after Bethlehem. The pre-existent Christ, the Λογος, was the self-existent Christ, the I AM (ἐγώ εἰμι) of John 8:58.

Before considering the second use of *monogenes* in the final verse of John's preface to his gospel, let us analyze the word itself. It is a compound word: a combination of μονος (monos) meaning *alone* or *only*, and γένος (genos) meaning *kind*. John uses the word, *monos*, in the high priestly prayer of Christ – "the *only* true God" (17:3), for the Logos had become a God-man at Bethlehem!

The word, *genos*, is used in the LXX in Genesis chapter one, where it reads that God made living creatures each "after his kind" (vs. 21, 24-25). The sense of "begotten" as being "born" as stated by Stump is not found in this word use. Thayer cites two other words that John could have used had he intended, "begotten," in the sense of being generated. One, is γεννησις (genesis), a begetting, a birth, and is so used in reference to Jesus by Matthew (1:18) and Luke (1:14). The other word is γεννητος (gennetos) "begotten, born." John used neither! (See *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 113.)

What then is the meaning of *monogenes*? Moulton and Milligan in *The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament* state: "Μονογενής is literally 'one of a kind,' 'only,' 'unique,' (*unicus*), *not* 'only begotten,' which would be μονογεννητος (*unigenitus*), and is common in the LXX in this sense" (p. 416-417; emphasis supplied). Thayer comments:

In the writings of John the title ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ is given only to the historic Christ so called, neither to the Logos alone, nor Jesus alone, but ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐνσαρκωθεὶς or Jesus through the λόγος united with God is ὁ μονογενὴς υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ (p. 418).

The conclusion is inescapable that, as stated above, the designation "the only begotten Son of God" is applied in the Gospel of John only to Christ in the incarnate state and not to the Logos before Bethlehem. Further, Thayer declares plainly that this designation – Son of God – is a "title" and does not indicate a generated Being from God. This accords with Luke, who quotes Gabriel as saying to Mary that "the Holy One which shall be born of thee *shall be called* (not "is" or "was") the Son of God." He had not yet been manifest in the flesh, thus the name, "Son of God," according to Luke, would become His designation after, not before, Bethlehem.

John's second use of *monogenes* is in the last verse of his preface to the Gospel, John 1:18. It reads:

No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom the Father, he hath declared him (KJV).

There is another reading which has "no inconsiderable weight of ancient testimony" (Thayer, *op. cit.*), that needs to be considered. It reads:

No man hath seen God at any time; (an) only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

Bruce M. Metzger, in *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, stated regarding John 1:18:

With the acquisition of Papyri 66 and Papyri 75, both of which read θεός, the external support of this reading has been notably strengthened (p. 198).

The significance of this alternate reading is that the God begotten in flesh is the only One who can reveal God; for "no man hath seen God." The God-man (the only One of a kind) is the full revelation of God in the flesh. He "hath . . . spoken unto us in a Son" (Heb. 1:2, Gr.) in Whom "dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). John is stating further that the God-man was, at the time of his writing of the Gospel, not in Abraham's bosom, the preferred place for a Jew, but in the bosom of the Father – at the right hand of God (Heb. 1:3).

The next use of *monogenes* is in the familiar John 3:16. We must note the context. The beginning verses of chapter 3 give the setting - the night visit of Nicodemus to Jesus. The report of the conversation ends with verse 15. John's comment on this experience follows in verses 16-21. The "one of a kind" Son, God gave to be lifted up even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. The failure to separate the time frame in these verses can cause a faulty interpretation of what is written. John is writing from the perspective of time late in the first century, looking back on an experience some sixty years previous. In that context John 3:16 is saying, God gave the Logos (the Word) as He came to be in the flesh, the "one-of-a-kind (monogenes) Son" for the salvation of man. This looking back on the past and putting it in the perspective of the time of the writing of the Gospel is illustrated in verse 13. Jesus said - "And no man hath ascended

up to heaven (so as to reveal heavenly things) but He that came down from heaven." Then John parenthetically adds - "even the Son of man which is [now] in heaven."

While John 3:16 reveals in simplicity the provision for man's redemption, it does not define God. Stump well knows that Driver Education is not the same as a course in Auto Mechanics; neither are John 3:16, and John 1:1-2, 14 focusing on the same concept.

Stump next turns to Andreasen's comments in regard to "time" and "space" (*The Sabbath*, pp. 54-55), concluding that Christ who created "all things visible and invisible" including time, thus existed before time, and therefore, Christ has existed "throughout all time with God" (*op. cit.*, p. 6). This is suggesting that Christ was begotten in the sense of being ("birthed") by God before time began. Evidently, Stump is unaware that Isaiah declares that He who was the "son" to be given (John 3:16) was "the Father of Eternity" (9:6; *Young's Literal Translation of the Holy Bible*).

The next question raised by Stump is the one that Beachy bungled so badly in his booklet, *What did the Pioneers Believe?* p. 45. We discussed this carefully in a previous issue of *WWN* 2(04), p. 4. The problem is still the same, that of assuming one's self to be what one is not, a Biblical linguist; and trying to use a Bible concordance with abbreviated linguistic helps as the basis for questionable assumptions, besides not even being able to use the concordance correctly. This can lead only to erroneous conclusions and deception. Those who are truly seeking truth, pure and unadulterated, need to carefully consider where this is taking them in the light of the warning noted above from *Medical Ministry*.

Even to ask the question as to whether the Logos is the same age as the Theos borders on absurdity. One of the aspects of Deity is immortality. Moses the man of God sang, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God" (Ps. 90:1-2). Both are God, from

everlasting to everlasting! How can One be older than the Other? Isaiah declares that the high and lofty One inhabits eternity. I am sure that Stump would want to limit this to the Theos, but the testimony of the Logos to John on the Isle of Patmos is that He is the First and the Last (Rev. 1:17), stating that He is The Living One (ὁ ζῶν) Verse. 18, Gr.

The murkiness of the waters becomes denser as Stump begins to cite some historical data. He quotes from E. J. Waggoner's book, *Christ and His Righteousness*, p. 9 which states that Christ came forth from God "so far back in the days of eternity as to be far beyond the grasp of the mind of man." Stump writes that this book published in 1892 was "based on part of his 1888 General Conference lectures (p. 6). [No documentation!] Which "part" of his 1888 presentations? Where does one find these lectures so we can know just what he said at Minneapolis as well as what he did not say? The context of Waggoner's statements on pages 9 and 22 is based on Micah 5:2, not the book of Galatians, yet the *Minneapolis Journal* in reporting the Conference on two successive days indicated that Waggoner "resumed his instruction on the law in Galatians" (10/20/88, p. 4; 10/23/1888, p. 3). His studies on Galatians were not published until 1900 as *The Glad Tidings*. The assumption made by Stump that Waggoner's presentation at the 1888 GC Session was published in the book, *Christ and His Righteousness*, is based on questionable authority. But this assumption must be maintained by Stump so as to justify Point #1 made by Clayton and to link the Stump-Beachy-Clayton teaching as is found in "The Return of the Fourth Angel" with 1888, as well as to bolster the further assumption, that Ellen G. White's endorsement of Waggoner's Message on righteousness by faith at the Session is an endorsement of their position on "the Son of God." But the link of the chain which connects Waggoner's position on Christ's pre-existence with 1888, and thus possibly an Ellen G. White endorsement, is missing.

Between quoting what Waggoner supposedly said at the 1888 GC Session, and Ellen G. White's supposed placing of her imprimatur on

what Waggoner said in regard to Jesus Christ as the Son of God, Stump turns to a "thought paper," clearly, "*Watchman, What of the Night?*" January, 2004, p. 7. There I compared the Nicene (catholic) Creed with Waggoner's position as published in 1892. Jumping from one meaning of the word, "catholic" to another, Stump assures his devotees that Waggoner's view is not (Roman) Catholic," thus inferring that the "Thought Paper" had so stated. The Roman Catholic position is as Stump stated it. See *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd Edition, p.64, #242. That was not the point of the statement and documentation given in the "Thought Paper." We stated that Waggoner's position in his book published in 1892 was "a direct echo of the Nicene Creed," and documented the same. The Nicene Creed was formulated by the Ecumenical Council of AD 325, and incorporated into the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed at the Ecumenical Council of AD 381. Surely Stump knows that the word "catholic" means "universal" while the word, "Catholic" defined as Roman, refers to the Papal Church. This is a pure attempt to discredit as well as to deny the facts as documented, thus deceiving his readers.

So that the comparison between the Nicene Creed and Waggoner's position might be clearly seen, we will copy what was written in WWN (XXXVII - 1(04), p. 7):

The Creed: "The only begotten Son of God... very God of very God, begotten not made, being of the same substance with the Father,"

Waggoner: "And since He is the only begotten Son of God, He is the very substance and nature of God" (p. 22).

On the previous page (21) Waggoner had already written, "He is begotten, not created." The similarity of Waggoner's position with the Nicene Creed to the point of being identical with the Creed cannot be denied. Stump's premise is built on the assumption that Waggoner stated His position regarding Jesus Christ as the Son of God begotten prior to time at the 1888 General Conference Session. This assumption cannot be documented. What we are seeing are men untrained as theologians laboring "with all their

power to bring in false theories regarding God and Christ," just as Ellen White had warned in 1906 would be (Ms. 33; *Medical Ministry*, p. 305).

POSTSCRIPTS ON THE CLASSIC *Questions on Doctrine*

In 1975, the General Conference and the Review and Herald Publishing Association reviewed the possibility of reprinting *Questions on Doctrine*. It was rejected. Now with the Annotated edition, Knight has made an "end run" around that decision, and used the Andrews University Press to do so.

At the same time we were reviewing the republication of *Question on Doctrine*, we received through the mail two issues of *Our Firm Foundation (OFF)*, one of which contained an article which we assume was the first of a series by Dr. Ralph Larson on the Annotated edition. [No other current issues of OFF are presently available to us.]

Larson's opposition to this Annotated edition is surprising, due to his track record. After bringing together, in a monumental work, the documentation of "one hundred years of Seventh-day Adventist Christology, 1852-1952, he endorsed the book, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe...* In the early 1990s, Larson wrote a booklet on "The Tithing Problem." In it he stated twice his endorsement of the book and specifically mentioned its position on the nature of Christ. Note:

My theology is precisely and specifically the theology set forth in the book, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*. If I am divisive, that book is also divisive (p. 3).

We pause to point out that the true doctrine of the nature of Christ is set forth in the new *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*, pages 37-56. Check and see (p. 32).

The book teaches the doctrine of the Incarnation set forth as the "orthodox doctrine" by the popular evangelical Anglican preacher, Henry Melvill (see pages 47 & 57). This is the same teaching which Knight seeks to substitute for the doctrine on the Incarnation as taught in the

book, *Questions on Doctrine* (see Annotated edition, pp. 522-524. Now Larson is opposing the Melvill teaching which he once embraced as "the true doctrine of the nature of Christ."

In 1986 a Bible conference was held at Hartland Institute in Virginia to discuss the Doctrine of the Incarnation. T. A. Davis presented the concept taught by the Holy Flesh men of Indiana in regard to the doctrine, which when concisely formulated stated that Jesus came into humanity "born, born-again." Dr. Larson was invited to the Bible Conference but declined to attend because, having received an advance copy of Davis' presentation, he was not comfortable with that position. But the editor of OFF attended the conference since he, too, embraced that teaching. Dr. Larson, who would not identify himself with the teaching, presented by Davis at the Hartland Bible Conference in 1986, now places his influence behind a publication whose editor so holds.

The situation becomes even more serious when the nuances of the Incarnation, which the editor of OFF holds are placed in the picture. In his book, *The Waymarks of Adventism*, R. D. Spear wrote:

He (Christ) was born with the nature that becomes ours when we are born again. ...

[a paragraph from ST October 29, 1894 is then quoted]

As God, He chose Mary to be His mother. She was chosen because of her piety and her devotion and love to God. She was everything that God could find in a human mother, a sinner, but filled with love for God and her fellow men. In the prenatal experience, while in her womb, Christ was inheriting Mary's love for God. In the post natal experience, He saw God through his mother. (p 39).

The conundrum does not end with Spear's Mariology - the prenatal impartation of Mary's love for God to the unborn fetes - but Dr. Larson wrote an approving Foreword to the book when serving as pastor of the Campus Hill Church at Loma Linda. This brings us to - - -

SOME LESSONS FOR US:

Whether we like or don't like what the documented facts of this issue of WWN reveal, there are some important lessons in regard to truth that need to be carefully considered.

It is commendable when men leave mundane vocations to respond to the call of God to preach. But when those answering such calls seek to place themselves in roles for which they are not qualified, nor trained - such as a theologian, or Biblical linguist - they open the door to "self deception" and so deceived, in turn, become deceivers rather than teachers of truth, "as it is in Jesus." The warning has been given and dare not be over looked that while some men "called from the plow and from the fields" will preach "the solid truth of the Bible," others will labor "with all their power to bring in false theories regarding God and Christ" (*Medical Ministry*, p. 305). The "Divine Instructor" indicated that what was being described concerning the work for Chicago in 1906 was "a parable of what should be, and what will be."

In seeking an answer to the 180 degree turn-arounds of Dr. Larson one is confronted with another factor, friendship. We are advised that the author/editor of *Seventh-day Adventist Believe...*, Dr. P. G. Damsteegt and Larson are very close friends. This relationship has been given as having influenced Larson's judgment. He alone knows the answer, but it remains a questionable judgment, as well as his endorsement of Spear's Mariology. It staggers the comprehension to think that a man who spent hours researching the Christology of the Seventh-day Adventist Church from 1852-1952 would place his imprimatur on a book which combined Mariology and Christology, stating that "in the prenatal experience, while in her womb, Christ was inheriting Mary's love for God!"

You ask, what is a lay person to do when confronted with all these deceptions, whether it be the study of the Incarnation, or the study of God? Jesus' response to Satan is apropos - "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). Let me illustrate. The prophet Isaiah indicates that the Son which is "given" is correctly assigned the designation, "Father of

eternity" (9:6; Young's Literal Translation of the Holy Bible); Or as in the Gospel of John, the "I AM" (8:58). How then could he be "birthed" or "begotten" before He created "time" when He is the Father of eternity? The simple word of God excludes human reasoning.

There are some guidelines in the Writings which can keep us on track if we are willing to heed them:

- 1) "The truth is an advancing truth, and we must walk in the increasing light" (*R&H*, March 25, 1890). [Even here we face dangers. We can advance in assumed light, and find ourselves in papal errors, such as the Trinity; or we can petrify ourselves into past positions, and find ourselves in regression from truth.]
- 2) "The Lord has made His people the repository of sacred truth. Upon every individual who has had the light of present truth devolves the duty of developing that truth on a higher scale than it has hitherto been done" (*HM*, July 1, 1897, par. 1).

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horizon so narrow that they can no longer see the heavens. Rather than being truly satisfied or revitalized, they remain entrapped in a senseless pursuit of the novel and deprived of the perennial freshness of Christ's "living water." Though the secularization of the Lord's day understandably causes you much worry, you can, however, *draw comfort from the faithfulness of the Lord Himself who continues to beckon His people on with a love which challenges and calls.* In urging the dear faithful of Australia – and in a special way the young people – to remain faithful to the celebration of Sunday Mass, I make my own the words found in the Letter to the Hebrews: "Hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, ... not neglecting to meet together... but encouraging one another" (Heb. 10:23-25).

To you as Bishops I suggest that as moderators of the liturgy you give *pastoral priority to catechetical programs which instruct the faithful about the true meaning of Sunday and inspire them to observe it fully.* To this end I refer you to my Apostolic Letter *Dies Domini*. It outlines the pilgrim and eschatological character of the people of God, which can so easily be overshadowed by the shallow sociological understandings of community. As a remembrance of a past event and the celebration of the living presence of the Risen Lord amidst his people, Sunday also looks to the future glory of his return and the fullness of Christian hope and joy (*L'Osservatore Romano, March 31, 2004, p. 3; emphasis his*).

"Arresting the Spiritual Erosion"

This was the title of a news item in the *The Catholic World Report* (May 2004) telling of the ad limina visits of 36 of the 44 Australian bishops to Rome between March 14 and 28, this year. "The tenor of the meetings contrasted with the drama of the previous ad limina visits [1999] by the Australian hierarchy, when the bishops were called on in no uncertain terms to address the crisis of faith among their flocks" (p. 28). While there is little evidence at present that the drift of youth away from active participation in the life of the Church is about to be arrested, the Pope set before the bishops in his "Ad Limina Apostolorum" address to them two suggestions to advance the spiritual life of the Roman Church in Australia. He said:

The Church's witness to the hope she holds is especially powerful when she gathers together for worship. Sunday Mass, because of its special solemnity, the obligatory presence of the faithful and its celebration on the day when Christ conquered death, expresses with great emphasis the Eucharist's inherent ecclesial dimension: the mystery of the Church is made present in a tangible way. Consequently, Sunday is "the supreme day of faith," "an indispensable day," "the day of Christian hope"!

Any weakening in the Sunday observance of Holy Mass weakens Christian discipleship and dims the light of witness to Christ's presence in our world. When Sunday loses its fundamental meaning and becomes subordinate to a secular concept of "weekend" dominated by such things as entertainment and sport, people stay locked within a