

Food for the Flock

Who are the Study Busters?

How the Tares Came into God's Church

“Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.” {COL p. 70.1}

“He that sowed the good seed is the Son of man. . . . The good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one.’ The good seed represents those who are born of the word of God, the truth. The tares represent a class who are the fruit or embodiment of error, of false principles. “The enemy that sowed them is the devil.” Neither God nor His angels ever sowed a seed that would produce a tare. The tares are always sown by Satan, the enemy of God and man.” {COL p. 70.3}

In the beginning of the New Testament Christian era, the Devil tried to stop Jesus' work by crucifying Him, killing Steven and “millions of martyrs” (Acts 7:58-60, GC 59:3). But the more Christians he killed, the more others were converted to the Christian faith. So The Devil changed his tactics:

“But when the old dragon saw that persecution {and martyrdom} could not overthrow their faith, he reversed his plan, and devised a more subtle satanic scheme to destroy the {Christian} church.”--2 SRB, p. 134:2 (braces added).

“When the old dragon saw that he could not overthrow that spiritual house by persecution {and martyrdom}, he reversed the scheme and employed his power to undermine the apostolic foundation by donatives and various inducements to the pagans in favor of the Christians. As the pagans rushed to join the church, the current of apostasy turned against the Christians. Instead of the church Christianizing the world, the world paganized the church.”—2SRB p. 135:0 (braces added).

The Spirit of Prophecy explains exactly what the tare is and who planted them:



“But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.” Matt 13:25

The pagans were among the “tares” sown into the Christian church by the Devil. He continued to sow tares into the Protestant Churches that followed thereafter. And it was not too many years after Ellen G. White had her very first vision, the sealing of the 144,000 in the Seventh-day Adventist church, that a spiritual declension occurred where “men slept” and many “tares” became members of the SDA church. The men who slept were the “sleeping preachers” Ellen White spoke of in Testimonies to the Church, vol. 2 p. 337. These sleeping ministers comingled among the faithful ministers who were laboring to bring 144,000 members into their church. E.W. 13, Mt. 13:25

“When the long-sought number (144,000) of living church members was finally reached in the year 1917, and the world had yet but barely been touched by the message, the leaders of the denomination became confused, but only because they lost sight of the truth that there were bad {tares} as well as good {wheat} in the ‘net’ (gospel church), as Christ had predicted.”—5T p. 103:1 (braces added).

The “tares” in the Seventh-day Adventist church began to

multiply in great numbers when “the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman” (Rev. 12:15). The “serpent” is “the Devil, and Satan” (Rev. 12:9); the “water” is “peoples...and nations” (Rev. 17:15); the “flood” is “ungodly men” (Ps. 18:4); and the “woman” is God’s true church today--Seventh-day Adventists. This verse in Rev. 12:15 clearly reveals the irrefutable fact that the phenomenal growth of the Seventh-day Adventist church from 144,000 members to over nine million, is not necessarily work of God, for this reason:

“The Lord does not now work to bring many souls into the truth, because of the church members who have never been converted and those who were once converted but who have backslidden. What influence would these unconsecrated members have on the God-given message which His people are to bear?”--6 Testimonies, p. 371:0

If God is not behind the conversion of millions of people to the Seventh-day Adventist faith, then who is? It can only be the work of the Devil, who is busy using his “sleeping preachers” (2T.337) to bring in an innumerable company of “tares”.

The tare is “the fruit or embodiment of error, of false principles”. The tares are deceived about God’s requirements to enter His kingdom. When the harvest time comes, they are unprepared and reveal themselves to be tares instead of wheat!

“Your {sleeping preachers} bragging about the Denomination’s achievements and of her numerous {millions of} conversions the world over, if it be true, Truth now challenges you to honestly answer the questions that here ensue: Why are you giving them hope of a home in the Kingdom if you positively know that they {tares} cannot be saved? Is not such an ingathering outright deception and the greatest endeavor to infiltrate the church with tares ever heard of? And is it not spiritual whoredom of the worst kind to fill the church of God with devils?”--1 TG, No. 12, p. 21 (braces added).

So why is the Devil bringing the flood of “tares” into the Seventh-day Adventist church? It must be that he has waged a **war on truth and righteousness** on the church. (Rev. 12:15) Satan is a diligent Bible student; he knows that Jesus predicted through His servant John in Revelation 7 that

an “angel” (message) had the “seal of the living God” to seal the 144,000 saints (Rev. 7:2-4). Satan also knows that God predicted through His servant Ellen White in 1890 that another prophet, “Elijah”, was to come to the Seventh-day Adventist church with a message:

“Prophecy must be fulfilled. The Lord says: ‘Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord’ {Mal. 4:5}. Somebody is to come in the spirit and power of Elijah, and when he (a male person--Mal. 4:6) appears, men may say: ‘You are too earnest, you do not interpret the Scriptures in the proper way. Let me tell you how to teach your message’.” --Testimonies to Ministers, p. 475:3 (braces added).



On the threshold of Canaan; the two reports: Satan will always work through his instruments to counteract the testimony of God’s servants.

“I then saw the third angel. Said my accompanying angel, “Fearful is his word, awful is his mission. He is the angel that is to select the wheat from the tares, and seal or bind the wheat for the heavenly garner.” These things should engage the whole mind, the whole attention.”

The purpose of Devil, of course, is to use these “tares” to fight against Elijah’s message of truth to keep the 144,000 from being sealed. Therefore, every true saint must educate themselves how these “tares” will work to frustrate their labors, so that they may effectively dispute

their false arguments and expose them.

How to Identify the Work of the Tares

“**G**od’s people must learn to detect the voice of the Spirit of Christ {by the saints}, as well as the spirit of Satan {by the tares}. When the two clash, the one will strive for obedience to God’s Word, but the other will excuse the sin and sympathize with the sinner. In this way Satan gains ground, for the sinner loves his sin.”--2 SRB, p. 70 (braces added).

Eve could not “detect” the voice of the Devil in the serpent, and because of this, she sinned. Likewise, those who are not seasoned (full of age, experience Heb. 5:14) will not be able to “detect” the voice of the Devil through his tares. Before the time of the harvest, the tares look exactly like the wheat. There are some in the church who may be fooled by

the “tares” because they do not study the Bible and do not believe all that the Spirit of Prophecy teaches. Therefore, they will not judge a man by the doctrine he teaches, but by his appearance, for the Bible confirms that “man looketh on the outward appearance” (1 Sam. 16:7). And although Sis. White said, “We are not to say what constitutes the wheat, and the tares”¹ yet, there are characteristics by which a saint can detect the voice of Satan working through others. These “tares” work most effectively by attending Bible studies to confuse, disrupt, contradict, detract, and argue. They do whatever they can to keep the truth from being discovered. Therefore, the most fitting name that can be given to all such ones, whether they be from other churches or the Seventh-day Adventist church, is “study-busters”! (T.M. 47:2)

Study-Busters Exalt Themselves

The first thing that a “study-buster” must do to deceive the people of God is to put on a good “outward appearance”. To do this, a false Christian may adopt a title of some sort to make it appear that he is an important person, --an elder, pastor, teacher, or prophet etc.

“These two sins--trust in man, and desire to exalt self--are still the leading sin elements now here on earth. This was Eve’s stumbling block and to many even today it is still the stumbling block.”--2 TG, No. 28, pp. 13, 14

The object, of course, of these “study-busters” is to deceive the “very elect” (the 144,000), but this is impossible (Mt. 24:24); because the 144,000 saints study the message and know that such deceivers are false prophets.

Study-Buster Promote Winds of Doctrine

What do false prophets promote to fight against the message of truth? --Every “wind of doctrine”. These “study-busters” bring forth false doctrines, --private interpretations of scripture to contradict the truth and confuse the students. (2 Pet. 1:20)

“Satan, clothed in angel robes, will deceive, if possible, the very elect. There will be gods many and lords many {false prophets}. Every wind of doctrine will be blowing”—{5 Testimonies, p. 80:1} (braces added).

Study-Busters are Truth Haters

“And so, Brother, Sister, you need not listen to the voices that urge you to shut yourself in from this gentle {latter} rain, or to tuck in under someone’s umbrella....No, you cannot afford to stand dry under the umbrellas of Truth-haters. Get out from under their devilish umbrellas lest you lose out eternally, lest you hopelessly cry out, ‘The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.’ Jer. 8:20.”--1 TG, No. 17, p. 7 (braces added).

Study-Busters Promote Prejudice

“When new light is presented to the church, it is perilous to shut yourselves away from it. Refusing to hear because you are prejudiced against the message or the messenger will not make your case excusable before God.”--Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 32:1

“When new light is presented to the church, it is perilous to shut yourselves away from it. Refusing to hear because you are prejudiced... will not make you case excusable before God.”

“Those who allow prejudice to bar the mind against the reception of truth cannot receive the divine enlightenment.”--Testimonies to Ministers, p. 105:3

“But if the Bible is opened with irreverence, with a feeling of self-sufficiency, if the heart is filled with prejudice, Satan is beside you, and he will set the plain statements of God’s word in a perverted light.”--Testimonies to Ministers, p. 108:1

Devious Methods Study-Busters Use to Deceive Others

Devious Method #1--Ridicule, Laughter, Sporting

“If the minister when before his congregation sees a disbelieving smile upon the faces of opponents, let him be as one who sees not. If any should be so impolite as to laugh and sneer, let not the minister, by voice or attitude, reflect the same spirit. Show that you handle no such weapons.”--Testimonies to Ministers, p. 248:1

“If a brother differ with you on some points of truth, do not stoop to ridicule {and make fun of him}, do not place him in a false light, or misconstrue his words, making sport of them {by laughing at him}; do not misinterpret his words and wrest them of their true meaning. This is not a conscientious argument. Do not present him before others

as a heretic, when you have not with him investigated his positions, taking the Scriptures text by text in the spirit yourself to show him what is truth.”--Counsels to Writers and Editors, p. 50:2 (braces added).

“As soon as a preacher comes down from the position a minister should ever occupy, and descends to the comical to {ridicule and} create a laugh over his opponent, or when he is sarcastic and sharp, and rails upon him, he does that which the Saviour of the world did not dare to do {Jude 9}; for he places himself upon the enemy’s ground.”--3 Testimonies, p. 220:2 (braces added).

“To ridicule his ideas would not weaken his position in the least if it were false, or strengthen your position if it were true.”--Testimonies to Ministers, p. 107:2.

“Opponents to the truth will show skill in misstating their opponent. They will make the most solemn, sacred truths the subject of ridicule. They will generally sport {make fun of} and deride precious, sacred truth, and place it in so false a light before the people that minds that are darkened by error and polluted by sin do not discern the motives and objects of these designing men in thus covering up and falsifying precious and important truth.”--3 Testimonies, p. 424,425

“There are some who indulge in levity, sarcasm, and even mockery toward those who differ with them.”--Testimonies to Ministers, p. 108:2

The saints should not be deceived when they attend a study group, because the Lord will help them to see the “study-busters” for what they are. When prayer is offered to invite the presence of the Holy Spirit and the angels as unseen guests, those who are really searching for truth will not manifest a self-righteous spirit. They will not ridicule and laugh at the teacher or anyone with whom they disagree. Those who twist what another person is teaching and make fun of their beliefs by acting the part of a comedian, are exposing themselves as study-busters. They show by their actions that they are not led by the Holy Spirit, but by the spirit of the enemy to break up the study. When the saints observe this behavior, they will not be fooled by their jeering. Such comical behavior is blasphemy against God and a sin against the Holy Ghost, for it “derides” the sacred and solemn truths taught by the teacher. Let the saints mark these people and beware of them, for they cannot be a blessing to any Bible study. Do not invite them to a Bible study, lest you be found guilty of helping the cause of the enemy, for this reason:

“One sinner (or study buster) may diffuse darkness that will exclude the light of God from the entire congregation.”--3 Testimonies, p. 265:1 (braces added).

Devious Method #2--Refusing to Admit a Point Well-Sustained

The saints will also see another kind of “study-buster” at Bible studies. Their purpose is to refute the truth which is being taught by the teacher. They try keep honest truth-seekers from understanding sacred subjects by asking “question after question” to disrupt the study. The saints, however, will realize this line of questioning is dishonest. When the teacher answers the questions honestly by irrefutable evidence from the Bible, instead of acknowledging its truthfulness, the “study-busters” continue with another question! Let the saints mark these kinds of people and beware of them, for they cannot be a blessing to any Bible study, because they are “study-busters”, put there by the enemy.

“One sinner may diffuse darkness that will exclude the light of God from the entire congregation.”

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.’ But if it is according to this test, do not be so full of prejudice that you cannot acknowledge a point simply because it does not agree with your ideas.”--Testimonies to Ministers, pp. 110, 111

“No matter by whom light is sent, we should open our hearts to receive it with the meekness of Christ. But many do not do this. When a controverted point is presented, they pour in question after question, without admitting a point when it is well sustained.”--Gospel Workers, p. 301:2 (bold emphasis, braces added).

“Others present an array of objections to any new view; and when these objections are plainly answered by the words of Scripture, they do not acknowledge the evidence presented, nor allow themselves to be convinced. Their questioning is not for the purpose of arriving at truth, but was intended merely to confuse the minds of others.”--Testimonies to Ministers, p. 108:2

Devious Method #3--Using Controversy & Arguments to Perplex Minds

Here is another type of “study-buster” who works for the enemy in a different manner. They are “combatants” who attend Bible studies and employ false “arguments” on the “wrong side” because they love “controversy.” They “seize any argument” and “misstate” what others say to create “dishonest quibbles.” And they resort to “subtlety of argument” which is “not wholly sound” to “perplex minds” and discredit what is being taught from the Bible. The saints will recognize these people as “study-busters”, for when their questions and “quibbles” are “fairly answered” by the teacher, they too “turn the subject [and] bring up another point to avoid acknowledging the truth.” These “study busters” do not come to a study to find out the truth, but rather for argument’s sake. Let the saints mark these people and beware of them, for they cannot be a blessing to any Bible study, for they are “study-busters”, put there by the enemy.

“Many delight in finding something in the Scriptures to puzzle the minds of others. Some at first criticize and reason on the wrong side, from a mere love of controversy. They do not realize that they are thus entangling themselves in the snare of the fowler. But having openly expressed unbelief, they feel that they must maintain their position. Thus they unite with the ungodly, and close to themselves the gates of Paradise.”--Great Controversy, p. 526:1

“It is important that in defending the doctrines which we consider fundamental articles of faith, we should never allow ourselves to employ {false} arguments that are not wholly sound. These may avail to silence an opposer, but they do not honor the truth.”--Gospel Workers, p. 299:2 (braces added).

“There are men who have educated themselves as combatants. It is their policy to misstate an opponent and to cover up clear arguments with dishonest quibbles. They have devoted their God-given powers to this dishonest work, for there is nothing in their hearts in harmony with the pure principles of truth. They seize any argument they can get with which to tear down the advocates of truth, when they themselves do not believe the things they urge against them. They bolster themselves up in their chosen position, irrespective of justice and truth. They do not consider that before them

is the judgment, and that their ill-gotten triumph, with all its disastrous results, will appear in its character. Error, with all its deceptive policies, its windings and twistings and turnings to change the truth into a lie, will then appear in all its deformity.”--3 Testimonies, p. 425:1 (braces added).

“Some have thought it an evidence of intellectual keenness and superiority to perplex minds in regard to what is truth. They resort to subtlety of argument, to playing upon words; they take unjust advantage in asking questions. When the questions have been fairly answered, they will turn the subject [and] bring up another point to avoid acknowledging the truth.”--Testimonies to Ministers, p. 108:2



God's people should behave themselves "not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." 1 John 3:12

the study.

“But no tirade is to be made against the doctrines of others. In our association with worldlings we are to recommend our faith by living, in all true modesty, the principles of Christianity.”--8 Testimonies, p. 156:0

“The Lord has not given His people the work of making a tirade against those who transgressing His law. In no case are we to make a raid on the other churches.”--9 Testimonies, pg. 236:2

“How dare finite human intelligences speak careless and venturesome words that will stir up the powers of hell against the saints, when Michael the archangel durst not

Devious Method #4--Tirades & Railing Accusations

There is yet another kind of “study-busters” who come to Bible studies. Their purpose is to “stir up the powers of hell against the saints” by their “tirades”. A tirade is a “protracted speech usually marked by intemperate, vituperative, or harshly censorious language” (Webster’s Dict.). The spirit they manifest in criticizing the doctrines of truth comes from the “powers of hell”! They come to studies, not to learn the truth, but to bring a “railing accusation” against those who teach different than what they believe. Let the saints’ mark these people and beware of them, for they cannot be a blessing to any Bible study. They are “study-busters” put there by the enemy to condemn the truth, deceive the saints, and break up

bring against Satan a railing accusation, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke thee’?”--Gospel Workers, p. 327:1

Saints Manifest Proper Behavior in a Study

When the saints come together for Bible studies, they pray for the Holy Spirit and the angels as unseen guests to be with them. They humbly ask that He will bless all that is to be said and done to the honor and glory of God. Their conduct is Christ-like; they sit calmly and quietly and discuss the Word of God to learn what truth is. If they need further clarification, they ask questions in a manner in which the teacher can answer fairly. True saints are humble enough to accept a “point” of truth that “is well sustained” by the Bible. If they disagree with someone’s point of view, they do not “ridicule” him, or make “comical” remarks to cause others to laugh at him. Neither do they resort to subtlety of argument, misstatements, or engage in “dishonest quibbles to perplex minds. They do not love controversy, nor are they combatants who would engage in a tirade or railing accusation against those with whom they disagree. And above all, they do not say or do anything that will confuse the minds of others. It is these kinds of saints who cannot be deceived by the study-busters.

“If there is a point of truth that you do not understand, upon which you do not agree, investigate, compare scripture with scripture, sink the shaft of truth down deep into the mine of God’s word. You must lay yourselves and your opinions on the altar of God’s word, put away your preconceived ideas, and let the Spirit of Heaven guide into all truth. Testimonies to Ministers p. 476