
AUSTRALIAN FRIENDS OF THE SABBATH CONFERENCE

Friday 5 July to Monday 8 July 1996

SDA Church Chatswood and Revesby Workers Club

• **Larry Walker (UCG - USA)**

Build Bridges

1. Do not focus on differences with others and do not write off others as being heretics.
2. Stress the commonality between people without compromising. Do not build barriers of conflict or walls of exclusiveness. The good seed AND the tares grow together until the harvest. The Lord knows those who are His.
3. Be open and willing to learn. The mark of a Christian is the love of one another and this leaves no room for put-downs of other Christians. Christ said that you are My friends if you do whatsoever I command you.

Colossians 2:16,17 (Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days; Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body of Christ.)

“Meat” and “drink” should be “eating” and “drinking” (with the indication of enjoyment). Gnostics were against any sort of enjoyment or celebration. “In respect of” ie. in any aspect of celebration of holy days or feast days. ...Which *are* a shadow of things *coming*. This passage is actually a very positive endorsement of the sabbaths and feasts. Let the body of Christ ie. the Church be the judge of your activities - rather than letting the Gnostics be the ones who judge what you do.

• **Samuele Bacchiocchi (SDA - USA)**

The Sabbath gives us the time and the opportunity to (1) serve God, (2) serve ourselves and (3) serve others.

The act of resting is a form of worship of God. We keep the Sabbath by working six days and then consecrating the Sabbath TIME to God. Our lives are a space of time. If you love, or even like, someone you want to spend time with that person.

On the Sabbath we need to rest as if all our work is done, ie. don't worry about the work you have not finished. We should rest physically more on the Sabbath because our minds are at rest.

Take time to enjoy the creation on the Sabbath.

• **John Merritt (Founder, Friends of the Sabbath - USA)**

We need to focus on three areas:

1. Study and learn now in order to prepare to teach in the future.
2. Witness to the reality of Christ living today.
3. Cooperate with one another. God is, after all, not working only in ONE organisation.

Don't be afraid to be a radical Christian. Follow the lead of the Holy Spirit.
Australian Friends of the Sabbath Conference - continued

- **Cedric Taylor (SDA, Brisbane, nephew of Robert Brimsmead)**

In 1958 Robert Brimsmead believed that all scripture was inspired by God. By 1971 he doubted this. In 1979 he believed there were no absolutes and by 1987 he was a liberal and a believer in evolution.

He changed from believing in the supreme authority of God's Word (including the Sabbath) to believing in the value of human reason. He dropped his belief in the Sabbath and eventually became an atheist as well.

To survive a spiritual holocaust:

1. Minimise change
2. Resolve areas of conflict
3. Have a support system of friends and prayer partners.

- **Bruce Dean (UCG - NSW)**

200 Years of Sabbath keeping in Australia

In the First Fleet there were between 8 and 14 Jews. 1000 Jews came out as convicts.

In 1836 denominations other than C of E were acknowledged.

In 1844 Jews had first synagogue.

From 1860 SDAs arrived from USA.

In 1956 Herbert Armstrong started to preach the gospel in this part of the world.

Service in SDA Church at Waitara on 10 July 1996

• **Samuele Bacchiocchi**

He spoke about the split in WCG in the USA, where 500 ministers and 50% of the membership left. Also mentioned the public debate on internet between himself and Tkach. Friends of the Sabbath resulted from WCG split. Since then 1,000 exWCG members have joined SDA church.

* **Any future FoS Conference in Australia should be held in SDA churches.** This would minimise costs of hiring halls and also serve to introduce exWCG members to SDA church and SDA environment. SDAs should not be too judgemental of exWCGs but rather warm and encouraging. ExWCGs are very dear people who understand the Sabbath but do need the help of SDAs to understand other truths. For example, there are about 300 exWCGs in Melbourne who need SDA help.

He asked how the SDA church would cope if faced with a similar Sabbath test to that faced by WCG.

* On any future visit he would definitely address the subject of **alcohol**, especially as he has been told that alcoholism in Australia is a major problem. He stated that the Bible teaches very strongly complete abstinence from any alcohol.

Meditation

1. Live with a forward look - not always talking about "the good old days". Phil 3:15 ...forgetting what lies behind.... Don't just live for the present. It is when we think "we have made it" that we become critical of others. We should be pilgrims rather than permanent residents of this world.
 2. Live by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. The more successful you become the greater the temptation to be independent of God.
 3. Live a balanced life style. 1 Peter 4:7 ...keep sane and sober...be mentally diligent. Forget the second job and be content with what you have.
 4. Live lovingly - and less judgementally.
 5. Live industriously - use whatever gifts you have, eg. gift of understanding or encouragement.
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