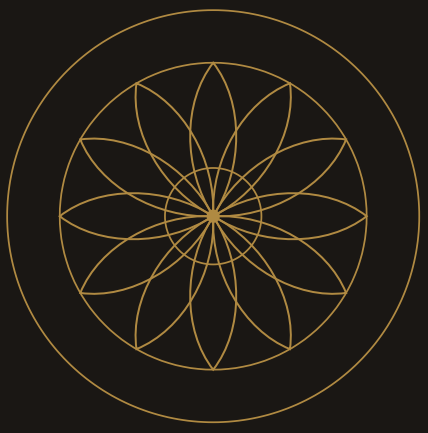


THE SACRED DIVIDE

THE FULL RECORD

Seventh-day Adventism

Restorationist & Adventist family

HONOR THE FAITH · NAME THE MACHINERY

TEXT CHECKED 2026-10-03

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Before you begin

This is the record of Seventh-day Adventism in *The Sacred Divide*. It has 27 sections, the same 27 used for every tradition, so that any section can be set beside the same section for another. Every fact is sourced.

Before each section, a short note says what the section is built to show, so you know what you are looking at before you read the detail.

After each section, a note headed *Why this matters to you* points at the part of the section most likely to touch an ordinary reader: a member, a donor, a parent, a voter, someone thinking about leaving, or someone outside forming an opinion. It usually ends with a question. The questions are not traps. They are the ones a careful reader would ask anyway.

The hard questions in section 23 are set out one at a time: the question, why it is asked, and an example already documented in this record.

Where a note states a fact, the fact comes from this record's own tables and cited sources or, in a few places, from a well-known research finding named in the text. Corrections are logged, with their dates, in the last section, *What changed on this page*.

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How to read this

Every religion in The Sacred Divide is laid out the same way, in the same 27 sections, so that any section can be compared across religions. This file examines institutions, offices, money and power. It does not judge anyone's faith or the truth of any belief.

EVIDENCE GRADES

Each of the 30 techniques carries a grade for how it is established in this tradition.

- **CODIFIED** Written policy, published rule, contractual requirement, or a procedure the institution has confirmed in its own documents. The strongest grade and the hardest to deny.
- **DOCUMENTED** Established by court judgment, government inquiry, regulatory action, or financial filing. Not the institution's own words, but a body with subpoena power.
- **TAUGHT** Repeated leadership instruction from platform, publication, or curriculum, without a formal rule. Deniable as emphasis rather than policy.
- **CULTURAL** Community enforcement the institution neither mandates nor prevents. Real in effect, unattributable by design — the highest-deniability grade. A volume graded mostly Cultural has not been cleared of anything: it means the page names no document that makes the institution responsible. Cultural does not mean minor, and it is not a finding of absence.

- CONTESTED Occurs in some parts of the tradition and is actively opposed in others. Generalizing this grade across a whole tradition is a misuse of it.
- REFORMED Documented historically and materially changed since — policy withdrawn, practice ended, or independent oversight accepted. Recorded because omitting it would be dishonest.
- UNGRADED Present in the source material without a grade assigned yet. Read as an unverified pattern claim, not as a finding.

RECEIPTS

Bracketed labels such as [OFFICIAL POLICY] name the kind of source a claim rests on.

- **Official policy.** The institution's own written rule: handbook, canon, policy letter, catechism, trust deed, temple recommend question. The strongest evidence available, because it cannot be attributed to a rogue individual.
- **Court record.** Judgments, convictions, filings, and testimony given under oath. Adversarially tested, which is more than most religious claims about themselves have been.
- **Government inquiry.** Royal commissions, grand juries, parliamentary and state investigations with subpoena power. Where these exist they are usually the best record of what an institution did rather than said.
- **Regulatory action.** Findings and penalties from bodies like the SEC or consumer-protection regulators. Narrow in scope, unusually precise in what they establish.
- **Financial record.** Filings, audited statements, tax returns, disclosed compensation, property transactions. Frequently the only place an institution tells the truth about its priorities.

- **Leadership statement.** Recorded sermons, conference addresses, published letters. The institution in its own voice, to its own people, on the record.
- **Independent investigation.** Reports commissioned by the institution but conducted externally. Weaker than a court and far stronger than a press release — and notable when the institution publishes them in full.
- **Academic source.** Peer-reviewed history, sociology, and demography. Best for context, structure, and scale; weaker for specific institutional conduct.
- **Former member testimony.** Firsthand accounts from people who were inside. Indispensable and interested at once — graded as testimony, never presented as documentary proof.
- **Pattern observed.** A recurring configuration with no single document behind it. Labeled as an observation rather than a finding, and the weakest claim type in this codex.

METHOD

- Separation of targets. This codex analyzes institutional control patterns, never the worth of believers or the truth of beliefs. Theology is out of scope; behavior, money, and power are in scope.
- Pattern over anecdote. A tactic is attributed to a tradition's high-control expressions only where the mechanism recurs — one bad congregation proves nothing; the same architecture in a hundred proves the architecture.
- Evidence weighting. Every factual claim carries a bracketed source-type label and should carry a grade (A–D). Claims marked SOURCE NEEDED or PATTERN OBSERVED are analysis, not established fact, and must not be published as fact.
- Steelman rule. Every tactic section presents the institution's strongest defense before countering it. If the defense cannot be stated in a form its adherents would recognize, the counter is not yet earned.

- Asymmetry honesty. Similar tactic does not mean identical severity. A shunning policy that costs your entire family is not the same as a community that cools toward doubters, and the codex must never flatten that difference.
- The mirror rule. Any framework this powerful can itself be misused — to smear traditions, flatter one's own, or manufacture grievance. The self-audit and language guardrails apply to this project as much as to any institution it examines.

CITATIONS

A small raised number in the text links to the matching item in this religion's Sources, near the end. Every source was checked, and the date of the last check is shown at the top.

01 At a glance

BEFORE YOU READ

The whole page on one screen: how big Seventh-day Adventism is, who sits at the top, how that person is chosen and whether anyone can remove them, where the money comes from, and what leaving costs. The disclosure scorecard underneath asks six yes-or-no questions any charity or public company would be expected to answer. Every later section expands one of these rows.

SIZE	About 24.4 million baptized members worldwide (2025), with the church's own reporting acknowledging a substantial gap between baptisms recorded and members retained. **OFFICIAL POLICY** · GC statistical report
WHO'S IN CHARGE	The president of the General Conference (the church's world governing body) is Erton Köhler, elected on 4 July 2025 at the General Conference session in succession to Ted N. C. Wilson, who had held the office since 2010.
CHOSEN BY	Delegates from every division (the church's world regions) choose the president, voting in session roughly every five years.
REMOVABLE BY	The session can remove the president, and it has replaced presidents. This row is the strongest in the entire codex.

MONEY IN ONE LINE	Tithe here is unusually structured and unusually opaque at the point where it matters. Ten percent goes not to the local congregation but upward to the conference (the regional body that employs the pastors of a group of churches), which pays pastors' salaries; the local church is funded separately by offerings. That means the money a member gives is deliberately separated from the church they can see, and pastoral employment depends on a body the congregation does not control.
LEAVING IN ONE LINE	Leaving is legally free and, in the concentrated communities, occupationally expensive: where the hospital, the university, and the school are all Adventist, a change of belief can be a change of career.
THE UNANSWERED QUESTION	The church commissioned a study of Ellen White's writings, published its finding of extensive literary dependence (her unattributed borrowing from other authors), and changed nothing about how the prophetic claim is taught. What was the study for?
EVIDENCE	Fourteen of the 30 techniques are sourced to a named document. The grades are Codified 7, Taught 6, Cultural 15 and Reformed 2.
FAMILY	Restorationist & Adventist — mormonism, jehovahs-witnesses, seventh-day-adventism
LAST CHECKED	2026-10-03

Disclosure scorecard

ACCOUNTS	PAY	SAFEGUARDING	EXTERNAL FIRST	REMOVAL	REPLY
PARTIAL	NO	YES	PARTIAL	YES	PARTIAL

Y Yes — established from a public source · **P** Partial — true of some parts of the tradition, or true in some jurisdictions · **N** No — not established from any public source · **?** Not assessable — no institutional apex exists to assess

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The glance table's answer to who chooses the top office is "Delegates from every division (the church's world regions) choose the president, voting in session roughly every five years", and to who can remove its holder, "The session can remove the president, and it has replaced presidents. This row is the strongest in the entire codex". Read that as though it described the board of a pension fund holding your savings. Would you accept the arrangement there? The scorecard finds no public evidence of leaders' pay. It does find a public safeguarding policy and a written removal procedure, and that deserves credit. Each "No" is something the institution could publish tomorrow. Ask yourself why it hasn't.

02 A day inside

BEFORE YOU READ

One ordinary day, told from inside. The person is a composite built from documented patterns, not a real individual. The point is to make the structure visible at human scale: phrases like "removal mechanism" or "giving record" are easy to read past, but a Tuesday organized around them is not.

Marisol · A Friday in September · Loma Linda, California

She closes her laptop at four so the Sabbath (Saturday, kept from sundown on Friday) does not catch her working, and there is a real peace in that, the kind of peace you cannot buy — a full day where nobody can ask her for anything. She would not trade it. She knows people who envy it and she thinks they are right to.

Her father worked forty years at the hospital and her mother taught at the academy (the Adventist secondary school). The tithe went to the conference every month of her childhood and she has never once seen a figure for what the conference did with it, and it has never once occurred to her to ask, and she notices this week that those two facts sit next to each other oddly.

In Sabbath School (the weekly Bible-study class) someone asks about the investigative judgment (the doctrine that since 1844 believers' lives have been under review in a heavenly court) — about whether the 1844 date really means what the pioneers said it meant. The teacher says it is settled and moves on, warmly, and the room relaxes, and Marisol notices that the relaxing is the answer.

She looks up Desmond Ford that afternoon, because the name came up once and nobody explained it. A theologian, a hearing at a place called Glacier View in 1980, his ministerial credentials withdrawn. She reads that he kept attending Adventist churches for the rest of his life. She does not know what to do with that and she does not close the tab.

Her cousin's wife is a pastor in a union (a regional grouping of conferences) that ordains women, and the General Conference voted in 2015 that it may not, and there are committees about compliance now, and at family dinner nobody mentions it while everybody knows. Marisol thinks: we have a word for a room where everyone knows and nobody says. She does not say the word.

At sundown they sing, and the singing is genuinely beautiful, and her father's face is the face of a man who is where he belongs. Marisol wants that. She also wants to know what happened at Glacier View. She has not yet worked out whether those are two wants or one.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Did any moment in that day feel familiar: a cost nobody questions, a door nobody can see how to open? The section of this page that explains that moment is the one to read first. If nothing felt familiar, ask whether that's because it isn't your life, or because the patterns have become normal to you.

03 The forefront

BEFORE YOU READ

The page's thesis in one place. First, the single question the documented record could not answer. Then the widest gap between what the institution says and what the record shows, one cost of leaving set beside how it is officially denied, and the strongest objection to this whole page, answered rather than dismissed.

> If your health, your education, and your community all came from this church, the ledger genuinely does have large entries on the credit side, and this page does not pretend otherwise — the Adventist hospital and school systems are real institutions doing real good. What follows examines two specific things: an authority claim that cannot be tested, and the machinery that has been used against members who tried to test it anyway.

THE UNANSWERED QUESTION

The church commissioned a study of Ellen White's writings, published its finding of extensive literary dependence (her unattributed borrowing from other authors), and changed nothing about how the prophetic claim is taught. What was the study for?

The widest gap between word and record

THEY SAY	THE RECORD SHOWS	RECEIPT
The Bible is our only creed; Ellen White is a lesser light pointing to the greater.	Her writings are used to settle doctrinal disputes, and challenging them costs credentials — as it did in 1980.	OFFICIAL POLICY

One cost of leaving, beside its denial

COST	DOCUMENTED?	DETAIL	THE OFFICIAL DENIAL
Employment	Sometimes	In Loma Linda, Andrews (the town around Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan), and similar concentrations, the church system is the major employer	"Employment is governed by ordinary policy, not belief."

The strongest objection, answered

The objection. You have picked a church with hospitals, universities, an elected leadership, no shunning, and one of the best health records in the world, and you are treating a doctrinal disagreement from 1980 as if it were abuse.

What is true in it. Most of that is true and this page records it as true — several rows here come out better than anywhere else in the codex. The officers are elected and have been replaced by vote. There is no shunning doctrine. The church commissioned research into its own founder's

writings and published findings that hurt. Loma Linda is in the longevity literature.

The answer. None of which touches the specific finding: a claim was made in 1844, publicly falsified, and then relocated to a place where it could not be checked — and when a credentialed theologian checked it anyway, the institution reaffirmed the doctrine in published statements and withdrew his credentials; it has never said what evidence would have counted against it [18]. Every other item on this page grows in that shade. A church this well-governed and this transparent about its money is precisely the one that could answer the question, which is why it is worth asking here rather than dismissing.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Try answering the unanswered question yourself: *The church commissioned a study of Ellen White's writings, published its finding of extensive literary dependence (her unattributed borrowing from other authors), and changed nothing about how the prophetic claim is taught. What was the study for?* If you can't, who could, and would asking them be welcome? How an institution reacts to a fair question often tells you more than the answer does.

04 What healthy looks like here

BEFORE YOU READ

What genuinely works in Seventh-day Adventism, stated first and separately from any critique. That is a standing rule of this book: no tradition is reduced to its worst documented moments. Anything criticized later is measured against the best of what is described here.

> Seventh-day Adventism is a global Protestant denomination of about 24.4 million baptized members (2025). It was founded in the aftermath of a failed 1844 date-setting prophecy, and it is distinguished by Saturday Sabbath observance, a health and vegetarianism tradition, one of the world's largest Protestant education and hospital systems, and the prophetic authority of its co-founder Ellen G. White.

- Healthy practice here has an officer who can be voted out, on a published schedule, by delegates the members chose. This tradition already has that practice, and most of this codex lacks it.
- It has a Sabbath School class where the investigative judgment can be questioned and the teacher answers rather than moves on.

- It has a history curriculum that includes the 1919 Bible Conference, the Veltman study (the church-commissioned study of Ellen White's literary sources), and Glacier View, taught to members as ordinary facts about their own movement.
- It has congregations that can obtain a plain statement of what they sent upward and what was purchased.
- It offers health teaching as wisdom rather than righteousness, with pastors who notice when diet has become scrupulosity (obsessive fear of having sinned).
- It has ministerial credentials that cannot be withdrawn for asking a question in good faith and in public.

Some of that standard is already on the record. In July 2025 delegates in session elected a new president in succession to a fifteen-year incumbent [1]. The 2015 vote on women's ordination was taken openly and its count published [3]. The church commissioned the Veltman study of Ellen White's sources, and its conclusions were published in *Ministry* magazine [5][6]. In the United Kingdom the British Union Conference files public accounts [11], and after the Davenport losses conflict-of-interest forms became a yearly requirement [12]. Each is a place where the institution met the standard this page applies, and each is recorded here as credit.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

A bias check before the critique. People tend to read criticism of their own group as an attack and criticism of other groups as simply true. Social psychologists call this in-group bias; it shows up even when the groups are assigned at random (Tajfel's "minimal group" experiments, 1971). If you belong here, did this section feel fair? If you don't, did anything in it surprise you? The surprise is a rough measure of what you had assumed.

05 History

BEFORE YOU READ

A dated timeline and a few moments where the direction changed. Dates matter because they show that most rules had a beginning. A rule that began in a particular year, for a particular reason, is a rule that can be examined, and sometimes retired.

Adventism was born from a specific, dated, public failure. William Miller and his followers taught that Christ would return in 1844; on 22 October that year, tens of thousands of people gave away property, settled debts, and waited. Nothing happened. It is called the Great Disappointment, and it is the movement's honest name for it. What followed is the movement's founding intellectual act: rather than abandoning the date, a group reinterpreted it — Christ had not returned to earth but had entered the heavenly sanctuary to begin an 'investigative judgment.' The event was relocated from the visible world to an invisible one, where it could not be checked. Ellen G. White's visions confirmed the reinterpretation, and her prophetic authority became the movement's load-bearing wall. From that beginning grew something genuinely remarkable: a worldwide health, education, and publishing network, a vegetarian tradition that anticipated modern nutrition science by a century, and a Loma Linda population that appears in longevity research as one of the world's healthiest communities.

Timeline

HISTORY AT A GLANCE



Numbered markers match the timeline below; spacing is proportional to the years.

1 **22 OCTOBER 1844**

The Great Disappointment — the Millerite date passes and Christ does not return

It was the movement's founding falsification, and it was publicly acknowledged. What the movement did next is the subject of the rest of this page.

2 **1844–1850S**

Hiram Edson's sanctuary insight; the investigative-judgment doctrine forms; Ellen White's visions begin and confirm it

A failed prediction is relocated to an unobservable realm. The claim survives by becoming untestable — the single most important structural move in this tradition. ACADEMIC SOURCE

3 **1863**

The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is organized in Battle Creek, Michigan

The movement chooses representative structure with elected officers — the decision that gives this tradition a genuinely removable apex, unlike most pages in this codex.

4 1866–1900S

The Western Health Reform Institute becomes the Battle Creek Sanitarium under John Harvey Kellogg; the health message spreads

The credit side of the ledger begins: a real and early contribution to nutrition, sanitation, and preventive medicine.

5 1907

Kellogg is expelled from the church after doctrinal and institutional conflict; Battle Creek is lost

It was the first demonstration that the structure would separate from its most famous institution rather than lose control of doctrine.

6 1919

The Bible Conference debates the nature of Ellen White's inspiration; the transcripts are then filed away and not published for decades

Leaders privately discussed the limits of the prophetic claim and did not tell the members. The transcripts resurfaced in the 1970s.

ACADEMIC SOURCE

7 1970S

Merikay Silver's equal-pay litigation against Pacific Press; the church's denominational pay practices are challenged in US federal court

A member used civil law against the institution's employment practice and the courts engaged. COURT RECORD

8 1980

Glacier View: theologian Desmond Ford challenges the investigative-judgment doctrine and has his ministerial credentials withdrawn

The tradition's clearest documented case of what happens to a credentialed insider who tests the load-bearing claim in public. Ford attended Adventist churches for the rest of his life. OFFICIAL POLICY

9 1982

Walter Rea publishes The White Lie, documenting extensive unattributed literary borrowing in Ellen White's writings; a church-commissioned study by Fred Veltman later confirms substantial dependence in The Desire of Ages (her book on the life of Christ)

The institution's own commissioned research confirmed the substance of a critic's charge — a genuinely creditable act, and one whose implications for the prophetic claim were never squarely faced in public. ACADEMIC SOURCE

10 1980S

The Davenport affair: church entities lose substantial funds in the collapse of a member's investment scheme; internal reviews follow

It was a financial failure that led the church to enforce conflict-of-interest declarations at every level of the denomination. FINANCIAL RECORD

11 2015

The General Conference session in San Antonio votes against allowing divisions to authorize the ordination of women

A representative body voted, which is more than most institutions in this codex can say — and it voted to keep an exclusion that several of its own unions had already ended.

12 2016–2018

'Compliance' committees are established to address unions ordaining women; the mechanism is contested across the church's own governance bodies

The apparatus turns inward on its own elected regional bodies — accountability machinery used to enforce rather than to examine.

13 2025

The General Conference session elects Erton Köhler as president, succeeding Ted N. C. Wilson after fifteen years

It was a peaceful, contested, scheduled transfer of the highest office. Almost nowhere else in this codex does that sentence appear.

Adventism was born from a specific, dated, public failure.

Moments in the room

22 OCTOBER 1844 — THE GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT

Thousands had given away property and settled their affairs. The day came and went. What happened next is the movement's founding intellectual act: rather than abandon the date, a group relocated the event to the heavenly sanctuary, where nothing about it could be checked.

Why it matters. A public falsification was converted into an unobservable claim in a matter of weeks. Every unanswerable conversation on this page descends from this single move.

JULY–AUGUST 1919 — THE TRANSCRIPTS NOBODY SAW

At the Bible Conference, senior leaders discussed candidly among themselves the limits of Ellen White's inspiration, including her use of sources. The transcripts were filed and remained effectively unavailable to members for roughly fifty years.

Why it matters. Leaders held the honest conversation and did not have it with the members. When the transcripts resurfaced in the 1970s, it was Adventist historians in the church's own archives who found them.

AUGUST 1980 — GLACIER VIEW

Desmond Ford, a credentialed Adventist theologian, presented a documented challenge to the investigative-judgment doctrine at a specially convened conference. His ministerial credentials were withdrawn. He attended Adventist churches for the rest of his life.

Why it matters. The chair ran — against the man, not the doctrine. The committee published consensus statements reaffirming the doctrine and a statement of where Ford's views differed from them; the only binding action it produced was against the man. That asymmetry is the page's central exhibit.

Sources for this section: 1 3 4 5 6 7 8 18

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Pick one rule that shapes your week and look for it on the timeline. If it has a start date, it was decided by people at a particular moment, for reasons of that moment. Were you taught it as timeless? What would it mean for you if it turned out to be younger than your grandparents' grandparents?

06 Branches & variants

BEFORE YOU READ

Seventh-day Adventism is not one bloc. This section maps the main branches and variants, so that nothing documented about one community is read as true of all of them.

Seventh-day Adventism is one unified worldwide organization under the General Conference. It also has historical offshoots, among them the

Davidians and the Branch Davidians, which the church disavows and which are frequently and unfairly used to characterize it.

LAYER	SIZE AND PLACE	WHAT DIFFERS ON THIS PAGE'S QUESTIONS
General Conference	It has 24.4 million baptized members (2025) [20], and its president is elected at a delegate session (Erton Köhler, 2025) [1].	Delegates vote on church-wide questions; in 2015 they voted 1,381 to 977 not to let divisions authorize the ordination of women [3].
Unions and conferences	They are regional bodies, such as the British Union Conference [11].	They receive the tithe and pay pastors, and in the UK they file public accounts [11].
Institutions	They include hospitals, universities, and publishing houses [10] [13].	They are separately incorporated, and one was held liable as an employer under federal law [13].
Historical offshoots	They are small groups the church disavows.	They are not the subject of this page.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

If you know one community of Seventh-day Adventism, you know one community. Most bad generalizations about a religion, and most unfair defenses of it, come from treating one branch as the whole. Which branch is the one you picture when you hear the name? Is that picture yours, or one you were given by news coverage or by the community itself?

07 Structure

BEFORE YOU READ

The organizational chart: how many people and institutions there are, where authority sits, who holds the top office, and who holds what beneath it. The question to keep in mind is simple: if the person at the top got something badly wrong, what written procedure exists to correct or remove them?

Size and shape

Adherents	About 24.4 million baptized members worldwide (2025), with the church's own reporting acknowledging a substantial gap between baptisms recorded and members retained. **OFFICIAL POLICY** · GC statistical report
Regions	The membership is overwhelmingly in the Global South: Africa (the largest bloc by far), Latin America, the Philippines, and India. North America, Europe, and Australia have historically significant but proportionally small memberships.
Trend	The church is growing fast in Africa and Latin America and is roughly flat or declining in North America and Europe. The church's own audits have repeatedly found large numbers of members recorded but not retained.

Participation	Sabbath observance makes participation unusually visible and unusually costly — it structures employment, schooling, and social life in a way weekly attendance elsewhere does not.

Authority

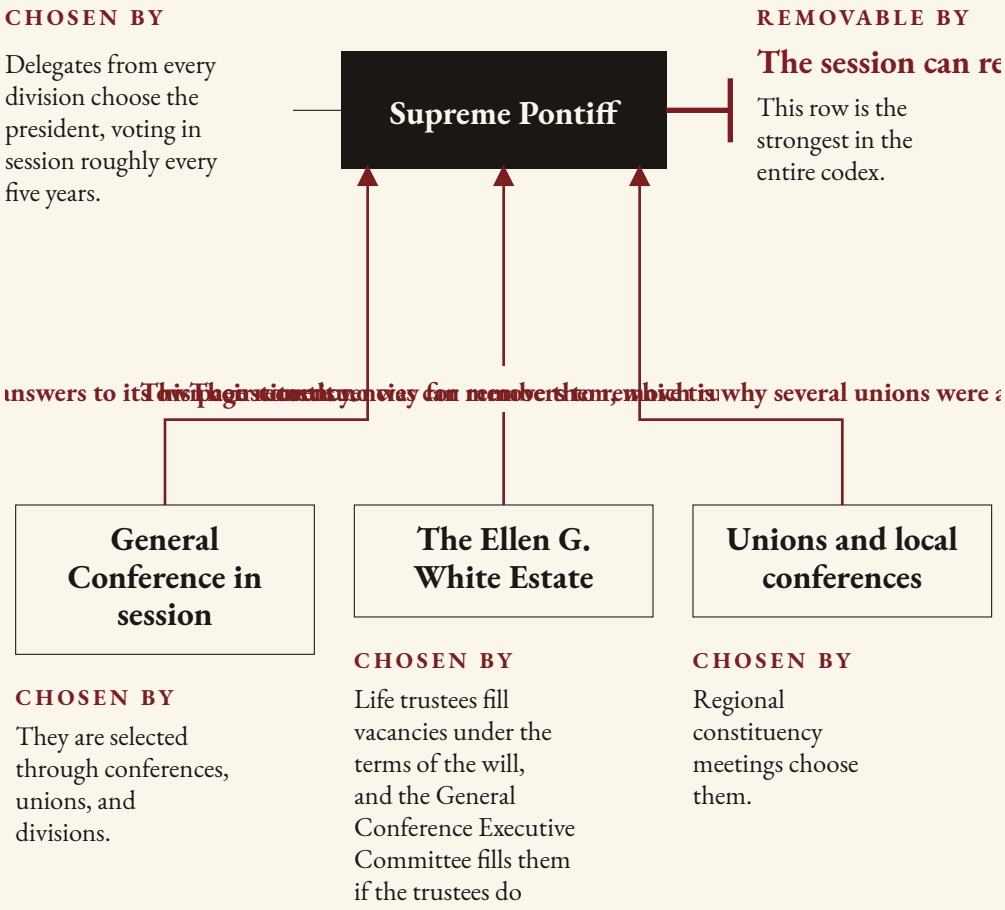
- The General Conference in session is the highest authority, and it is genuinely representative: delegates from around the world elect the president and officers at a session held roughly every five years, and the office has changed hands by vote. On the codex's central question — who can remove the person at the top — this tradition answers better than nearly every other page here, and that should be said plainly.
- Beneath the vote sits a claim that no vote reaches: Ellen G. White's writings are held as the 'lesser light,' authoritative but subordinate to scripture. In practice her writings settle disputes, and a member who challenges their authority is challenging the movement's foundation rather than an opinion.
- The 28 Fundamental Beliefs are the doctrinal boundary, and ministerial credentials are held by conferences and unions — which is where the real disciplinary power sits, and where Desmond Ford's was withdrawn.

The top of the chain

> This is the page where the codex's central question gets a good answer. The apex here is elected, scheduled, contested, and has changed hands by

> vote — which is worth stating before anything else on this page.

WHERE THE ARROWS END



Each arrow points to whoever can remove the office below it. From the table that follows.

OFFICE	WHO SITS IN IT NOW	CHOSEN BY	REMOVABLE BY
General Conference President	Erton Köhler holds it. He was elected on 4 July 2025 at the General Conference session in succession to Ted N. C. Wilson, who had held the office since 2010.	Delegates from every division choose the president, voting in session roughly every five years.	The session can remove the president, and it has replaced presidents. This row is the strongest in the entire codex.

General Conference in session	Several thousand delegates from around the world sit in it.	They are selected through conferences, unions, and divisions.	It answers to its own constituency.
The Ellen G. White Estate	A board of 15 trustees sits in it, constituted by White's own will. Five are life trustees; the other ten serve terms tied to General Conference terms [19].	Life trustees fill vacancies under the terms of the will, and the General Conference Executive Committee fills them if the trustees do not [19].	This page records no way for members to remove trustees by vote. The elected structure reaches the office only through the General Conference, which funds the Estate and receives the royalties from White's books [19].
Unions and local conferences	Elected officers and executive committees sit in them and hold ministerial credentials and employment.	Regional constituency meetings choose them.	Their constituencies can remove them, which is why several unions were able to ordain women against the world vote.
Adventist Health and the university systems	Corporate boards sit in them, with intricate links to church governance.	Board members are appointed.	The boards can remove their officers. Executive compensation here is the least-surfaced number in Adventist life.

THE TELL

Follow the elected chain and it works. Follow the prophetic claim and it terminates in a trust created by the prophet's own will, funded by the General Conference but not answerable to any member vote. One tradition, two structures, and every unanswerable question in it lives in the second one.

Who holds what

ENTITY	TYPE	HOLDER	HOLDS	WHY IT MATTERS TO YOU	RECEIPT
General Conference in session	Elected assembly	Delegates from every division, voting roughly every five years	The presidency, the officers, and the Fundamental Beliefs	It decides who leads the world church.	OFFICIAL POLICY · GC Constitution and Bylaws
General Conference President	Elected office	Erton Köhler, elected July 2025	Executive leadership of the world church	It sets doctrinal direction and makes appointments.	OFFICIAL POLICY
Unions and local conferences	Regional governance	Elected officers and executive committees	Ministerial credentials, employment, and church schools	They decide whether your pastor keeps their job.	OFFICIAL POLICY · Church Manual
The Ellen G. White Estate	Trust	A board of trustees created by White's own will	Her writings, their publication, and the framing of her authority	It shapes how the founding claim is presented to you.	OFFICIAL POLICY
Adventist Health and the hospital systems	Health corporations	Corporate boards linked to church governance	One of the largest Protestant hospital networks in the world	They provide your medical care and often your employment.	FINANCIAL RECORD

The education system	Schools and universities	Conferences, unions, and the General Conference	Thousands of schools and more than a hundred tertiary institutions	It provides your children's schooling and your own credentials.	OFFICIAL POLICY
The publishing houses	Media	Denominational corporations	The literature economy and the literature-evangelist workforce (members who sell church books door to door)	They decide what Adventist material you encounter.	FINANCIAL RECORD

Succession watch

OFFICE	NOW	MECHANISM	PREDICTION	WHAT WOULD FALSIFY IT
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists	Erton Köhler, elected July 2025	Elected in session by delegates, roughly every five years	It is included as the control case. The codex predicts the next transfer is scheduled, contested, peaceful, and reported — and that it happens on time. The last session, due in 2020, met in 2022 after a pandemic postponement [22].	A postponed, uncontested, or unreported transfer would falsify it. This row exists to demonstrate that the instrument can predict a good outcome as readily as a bad one.

Sources for this section: [1] [2] [19] [20] [22]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

This is one of the few pages in the book where you really do have a vote. Delegates elect the General Conference president, and sessions have replaced presidents. The glance table calls it the strongest row in the entire book. But a vote only protects you if you use it. If you are a member, do you know who represents your congregation at constituency meetings, and what they voted for last time?

08 Law & state here

BEFORE YOU READ

What states actually do. That includes how they fund, protect, regulate or enforce the tradition, and which outside body, if any, can compel an answer from it. For most readers, this is where the institution meets their own passport.

COUNTRY	WHAT THE LAW DOES	WHAT HAPPENED
United States — employment	Title VII (the federal law against discrimination in employment) applies to religious employers' non-ministerial staff [13]	The Adventist publishing house Pacific Press was held to have denied a woman allowances paid to men and to have fired her in retaliation for joining a co-worker's discrimination case (1982) [13]

United States — bankruptcy	Bankruptcy courts and investigators, not church rules, dealt with the Davenport collapse [12]	Church entities had $17.8m in loans outstanding when the developer filed for bankruptcy in 1981 [12]
United Kingdom	Charity law applies [11]	The British Union Conference files public accounts [11]
Worldwide — internal	The General Conference session is the highest authority, with elected delegates [1 3]	Delegates can and do vote leadership and policy [1 3]

Who can compel an answer

Uniquely in this codex, start inside: the General Conference session, the union constituency meetings, and the elected executive committees are real bodies with real power that members actually select. Outside, answers can be compelled by charity regulators where entities are registered, education authorities over the school system, health regulators and employment law over the hospital corporations, and the courts, where Merikay Silver's equal-pay litigation established that denominational employment practice is justiciable.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Adventists have used the civil courts against their own institutions and won. In the 1970s two women at Pacific Press, Merikay Silver and Lorna Tobler, took the church's publishing house to federal court; in 1982 the appeals court upheld findings that Tobler had been denied allowances paid to men and fired in retaliation. When the Davenport investment scheme collapsed, bankruptcy courts, not church rules, sorted it out. If you work for a church institution, ordinary employment law may protect you more than you realize. Do you know which parts of your job it covers?

09 Money

BEFORE YOU READ

Where the money comes from, how each flow is justified, how it can be used to control, and who benefits. Read it the way you would read any organization you give to: what is disclosed, what is not, and who decides.

Where it comes from

- Tithe here is unusually structured and unusually opaque at the point where it matters. Ten percent goes not to the local congregation but upward to the conference, which pays pastors' salaries; the local church is funded separately by offerings. That means the money a member gives is deliberately separated from the church they can see, and pastoral employment depends on a body the congregation does not control.
- The system is professionally audited by the General Conference Auditing Service, and summary financial reports are produced — this is real, and it puts the tradition ahead of most in this codex. What is not routinely available to an ordinary member is a plain, local answer to a plain question: how much did this congregation send upward last year, and what specifically was it spent on.
- The health and education systems are enormous revenue enterprises. Their governance is corporate, their relationship to church governance is intricate, and executive compensation in the hospital systems is the single most reliably under-discussed number in Adventist life.
- Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) work is substantial and independently evaluated in many jurisdictions — a genuine and checkable credit entry.

Follow the money

FLOW	STATED PURPOSE	HOW IT CONTROLS	WHO BENEFITS
Tithe (10%)	Supporting the worldwide gospel work through the conference	Medium — the flow is upward and away from local visibility, and it pays the salary of the pastor the congregation did not hire	The conference and union structures benefit.
Local church budget offerings	Running the congregation you actually attend	Low — visible, local, and usually reported to the members	The local congregation benefits.
Church school tuition	Educating children in the faith	Medium — a substantial recurring cost, and a strong retention mechanism as well as a genuine service	The education system benefits.
Health system revenue	Hospital and clinic operations	Medium — large corporate entities whose executive pay is public in tax filings where the entity files but rarely surfaced to members	The health corporations and their executives benefit.
Publishing and literature evangelism	Spreading the message and employing colporteurs (literature evangelists)	Medium — a sales workforce paid on commission, historically with weak labour protections	The publishing houses benefit.
ADRA and disaster offerings	Relief and development	Low — independently evaluated in many jurisdictions and among the more checkable flows in this codex	The people it serves benefit, substantially and verifiably.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES, AND WHAT IT HOLDS

Tithe (10%)

STATED PURPOSE
Supporting the worldwide gospel work through the conference

HOW IT CONTROLS
Medium — the flow is upward and away from local visibility, and it pays the salary of the pastor the congregation did not hire

→ The conference and union structures benefit.

Local church budget offerings

STATED PURPOSE
Running the congregation you actually attend

HOW IT CONTROLS
Low — visible, local, and usually reported to the members

→ The local congregation benefits.

Church school tuition

STATED PURPOSE
Educating children in the faith

HOW IT CONTROLS
Medium — a substantial recurring cost, and a strong retention mechanism as well as a genuine service

→ The education system benefits.

Health system revenue

STATED PURPOSE
Hospital and clinic operations

HOW IT CONTROLS
Medium — large corporate entities whose executive pay is public in tax filings where the entity files but rarely surfaced to members

→ The health corporations and their executives benefit.

Publishing and literature evangelism

STATED PURPOSE
Spreading the message and employing colporteurs (literature evangelists)

HOW IT CONTROLS
Medium — a sales workforce paid on commission, historically with weak labour protections

→ The publishing houses benefit.

ADRA and disaster offerings

STATED PURPOSE
Relief and development

HOW IT CONTROLS
Low — independently evaluated in many jurisdictions and among the more checkable flows in this codex

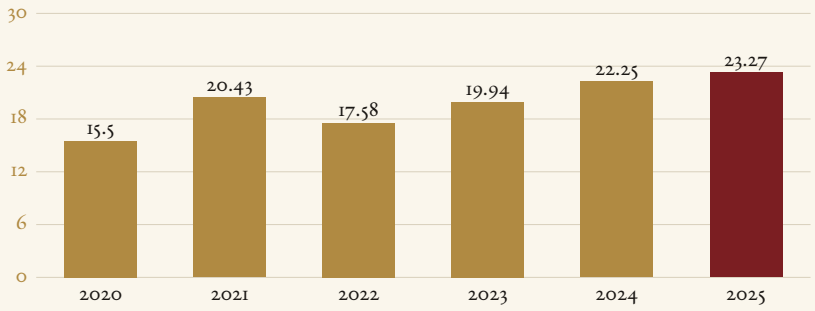
The people it serves benefit, substantially and verifiably.

Not to scale. The table gives one figure, the German church tax of €6.75bn in 2025; the other flows are shown without amounts.

Sources for this section: [8]

Money in numbers

BRITISH UNION CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS: INCOME



£ million, years to 31 December — The figures cover the UK union only; its local conferences file separately. They are public because charity law requires it. [11]

- **British Union Conference, 2025:** Of £23.27m income, £16.16m came from donations and legacies, and spending was £20.29m [11]. In 2024

income was £22.25m, of which £14.91m came from donations and legacies, and spending was £19.02m.

- **The Davenport losses:** Church entities had $17.8 million in loans and $3.3 million in accrued interest outstanding in 1981 [12].
- **Tithe** goes to the conference, not the local congregation (see "Where it comes from" above).

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Here is the fact most members never think about: your tithe does not stay in your church. It goes up to the conference, which pays pastors, while your local church runs on separate offerings. So the money you give is deliberately separated from the church you can see. And the structure table calls executive pay in the health and university systems "the least-surfaced number in Adventist life." Have you ever seen what your conference did with last year's tithe?

10 Genealogy

BEFORE YOU READ

Rules with a history. Each card asks the same three questions: what was this rule originally for, has that reason expired, and who benefits from the rule continuing anyway?

THE INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT

Origin. It formed in 1844–45 to explain why a publicly announced date had passed with nothing visible happening.

What it was for. It rescued a devastated community. Thousands of people had given away everything and needed a way to understand the day after — and the reinterpretation gave the disappointment meaning rather than ridicule.

Why that reason expired. It works by relocating the event to a place no one can look. A claim built specifically to be unobservable cannot be tested, and when a credentialed theologian tested it anyway in 1980, the response was to reaffirm the doctrine in published statements and withdraw his credentials, without saying what evidence would count against it.

Who benefits now. The doctrinal structure and the offices that rest on it benefit. A doctrine that cannot be checked cannot be lost, and the people who administer it cannot be wrong.

PROPHETIC AUTHORITY — THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN G. WHITE

Origin. It rests on visions, beginning in 1844, that confirmed the sanctuary reinterpretation and shaped doctrine, diet, education, and health practice.

What it was for. It gave cohesion and direction to a scattered, humiliated movement with no leaders, no institutions, and no reason to expect survival. Her health counsel was, in substance, decades ahead of the medicine of her time.

Why that reason expired. The church's own commissioned research confirmed extensive literary dependence in her writings. That finding — creditably published — was never squarely reconciled with the authority claim built on them, and the claim continued unchanged.

Who benefits now. Whoever cites her to close a discussion benefits. An unreviewable authority is most useful to the person invoking it, which is why it appears at the end of arguments rather

than the start.

TITHE FLOWING UPWARD TO THE CONFERENCE

Origin. It began as nineteenth-century systematic benevolence (a plan of regular, proportional giving), designed so that poor congregations could still have trained pastors.

What it was for. It was genuine solidarity: a rich church's tithe paid for a poor church's pastor, which is a good idea and worked.

Why that reason expired. The solidarity mechanism became a control mechanism. Pastors are employed by the body that receives the money, not the congregation that gives it, so a pastor's livelihood is structurally independent of the people they serve and structurally dependent on the office above them.

Who benefits now. Conference and union administration benefits. The mechanism's original beneficiaries — poor congregations — still benefit; so does every officer whose authority over pastors runs through payroll.

THE PARALLEL INSTITUTION SYSTEM

Origin. Schools, sanitariums, and publishing houses were built because Adventists were excluded from, or unwilling to use, the surrounding society's institutions.

What it was for. It provided survival and service for a Sabbath-keeping minority that could not take Saturday examinations or Saturday shifts.

Why that reason expired. The exclusion has largely ended; the parallel world has not. A member can now be born, schooled, employed, treated, and buried entirely inside the system — which converts a shelter into an enclosure, and makes leaving a career decision as much as a spiritual one.

Who benefits now. The institutional system benefits, and it is also one of the largest Protestant employers on earth. Every exit cost on this page runs through it.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The expired-reason test works on any rule. Take one you follow or enforce, name what it was originally for, and ask whether that reason still exists. If it doesn't, and the rule survives anyway, the section's last question is the one that matters to you: who benefits from it continuing?

11 Reach

BEFORE YOU READ

How far the institution's authority extends into three private areas: what members may read and hear, how children are raised and schooled, and decisions about their own bodies.

Information

- The 1919 Bible Conference transcripts, in which leaders candidly discussed the limits of Ellen White's inspiration, were filed and effectively unavailable to members for roughly half a century. Members were not told what their leaders had said among themselves.
  ACADEMIC SOURCE
- The Veltman study, commissioned by the church, confirmed substantial literary dependence in The Desire of Ages. Commissioning it was creditable; its findings have never been integrated into how the prophetic claim is taught to ordinary members.
- The denominational press is substantial and the independent Adventist press — publications and forums run by members — is genuinely lively and critical. That independent sector is a real strength and is worth naming as one.
- Church school curricula present the movement's history in a form in which the 1919 conference, the Veltman findings, and Glacier View are largely absent.

Children

- The church school system is extensive and often academically strong; it is also the primary retention mechanism, and tuition is a significant recurring cost.

- Children are taught the investigative judgment — a doctrine in which one's life is under review in a heavenly court — at ages where it reliably produces scrupulosity. This is among the most consistently reported harms in former-member accounts. FORMER MEMBER TESTIMONY
- End-time and persecution teaching aimed at children produces documented anxiety, particularly around the 'time of trouble' (a period of persecution expected before Christ's return) and Sunday-law scenarios (the expectation that states will one day enforce Sunday worship).
- Sabbath observance shapes a child's entire social world — no Saturday sport, no Saturday activities — which builds a strong in-group and a narrow out-group by design.

Bodies

- Women were central from the founding: the movement's most authoritative voice was a woman, and Adventism ran on female labour, teaching, and writing from the beginning.
- The world church nevertheless voted in 2015 not to permit divisions to authorize women's ordination, and then created compliance machinery aimed at the regional bodies that had already done so. The founder's authority is unquestionable; women holding the founder's kind of authority is not.
- Merikay Silver's litigation in the 1970s established that denominational employment practices could be examined in a civil court — a member forcing the question the institution would not answer internally. COURT RECORD

- Modesty and health teaching are applied more intensively to women's bodies than to men's, and diet culture inside Adventism can shade into disordered eating in ways the health message is not equipped to notice.

Sources for this section: [3] [4] [5] [6] [7]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

If you are a parent, this is the section about your children: what they may read, what they are taught about their bodies, and who else has a say in their schooling. Ask what your child would need to do at sixteen to hear the strongest case against what they were taught. Would they be allowed? Would they know it existed?

Members were not told what their leaders had said among themselves.



12

The 30 techniques

How the thirty techniques are established here

7	6	15	2
CODIFIED	TAUGHT	CULTURAL	REFORMED

STAGE 1 Idealize	1 Love Bombing CULTURAL	2 Weaponized Generosity REFORMED					
STAGE 2 Hook	3 Future Faking TAUGHT	4 Hoovering CULTURAL					
STAGE 3 Devalue	5 Devaluation CODIFIED	6 Gaslighting CULTURAL	7 Double Bind CODIFIED				
STAGE 4 Confuse	8 Intermittent Reinforcement TAUGHT	9 Moving the Goalposts TAUGHT	10 Strategic Ambiguity CODIFIED	11 Projection CULTURAL			
	12 DARVO CULTURAL	13 Normalization / Desensitization CULTURAL					
STAGE 5 Isolate	14 Isolation CODIFIED	15 Triangulation CODIFIED					

STAGE 6 Extract	16 Flying Monkeys CULTURAL	17 Smear Campaign CULTURAL	18 Silent Treatment / Stonewalling CULTURAL	19 Manufactured Consent REFORMED
	20 Trauma Bonding TAUGHT	21 Learned Helplessness CULTURAL	22 Benevolent Control TAUGHT	23 Infantilization CULTURAL
	24 Identity Erosion CULTURAL	25 Spiritual Bypassing CULTURAL	26 Financial Control CODIFIED	
STAGE 7 Discard	27 Manufactured Crisis TAUGHT	28 Discard CODIFIED		
STAGE 8 Replace	29 Replacement CULTURAL	30 Plausible Deniability CULTURAL		

Thirty named techniques from domestic-abuse and social-psychology research, applied to institutions, in the eight stages of the cycle.

BEFORE YOU READ

A fixed checklist of thirty influence and control patterns from research on coercive control and social psychology, applied here to institutions rather than to individual people. Every entry carries an evidence grade. The grade matters more than the name of the technique: Codified or Documented means there is a paper trail; Contested means the claim is disputed.

Thirty named techniques from domestic-abuse and social-psychology research, applied to institutions, in the eight stages of the cycle. Each carries an evidence grade for this tradition.

Stage 1 · Idealize

You arrive with a need and are met with more warmth than you have had in years.

A community that will genuinely feed you, visit you in hospital, and hold your Sabbath with you — one full day a week where no one may ask you for anything. For many members this is the best thing in their life and this codex is not going to pretend otherwise.

What it asks of you: The rest is real. It also arrives packaged with a doctrinal system, and the package is not itemised at the door.

1 · Love Bombing

Overwhelming affection on arrival to create emotional dependency before terms are revealed.

How it shows here

- Bible studies in your home, meals brought, hospital visits, and a Sabbath community that will hold a full day with you — for many members the genuine best of their week.
- Rapid absorption into Sabbath School, Pathfinders (the church's youth club), and church roles.
- A whole social world offered at once, and it is a good one.

The strongest defense. This is ordinary Christian fellowship and it is offered without expectation.

The counter. Most of it is exactly that, and this page says so plainly. The disclosure question stands anyway: were the investigative judgment, the tithe structure, and the school tuition described before or after the community became your social world?

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Fellowship warmth is congregational, not policy.

2 · Weaponized Generosity

Giving help that installs unspoken obligation.

How it shows here

- Practical help through the church network — jobs in the system, school places, hospital access.
- ADRA's genuine and independently evaluated relief work cited in appeals.
- The health message given freely and, in substance, correct.

The strongest defense. We serve because we are told to serve, and the evaluations are public.

The counter. Several of them are, which is more than most pages in this codex can say. The narrower question is whether institutional good is used to close governance questions it does not answer — whether a hospital's excellence is offered as a reply to a question about a withdrawn credential.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> REFORMED ADRA's work is independently evaluated in many jurisdictions and the evaluations are public — a genuine and checkable improvement over the codex norm. *(sourced)*

Stage 2 · Hook

You are given a future that cannot be verified, and a rope for whenever you drift toward the door.

Bible studies lead to a decision, then to baptism, often quickly and often before the investigative judgment, the 1919 conference, the Veltman study, or Glacier View have been mentioned once.

What it asks of you: You committed on the strength of what you were shown. What you were not shown was also chosen.

3 · Future Faking

Promising a future that keeps you invested but never has to arrive.

How it shows here

- Prophetic certainty about the last days, the time of trouble, and a Sunday law — imminent for a century and a half.
- Baptism sought before the investigative judgment has been explained.
- A future no member can check, presented with dates removed after 1844.

The strongest defense. We proclaim what scripture teaches about the end; no one sets dates.

The counter. No one sets dates now — and the movement began by setting one. That is the relevant history, and it is the tradition's own. Ask what evidence would count against the framework, given that the first attempt produced a public falsification the movement renamed rather than abandoned.

EVIDENCE GRADE

TAUGHT End-time expectation is taught in the Fundamental Beliefs and in every evangelistic series. *(sourced)*

4 · Hoovering

Pulling someone back after they've started to leave, through guilt, love, or fear.

How it shows here

- Lapsed members visited, revisited, and invited to revival weeks and reaping campaigns (evangelistic meetings aimed at baptisms).
- Family and school networks bring drifting members back without anyone needing to be asked.
- Re-baptism offered as a clean restart.

The strongest defense. Pastoral visitation is care for people we love.

The counter. Largely it is, and this row scores lower here than in neighbouring traditions. The test is whether the visit answers the question that caused the drift, or only invites the person back to a room where the question cannot be asked.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CULTURAL Visitation practice is pastoral and varies by conference.

Stage 3 · Devalue

You are taught that you are broken, that your perception is unreliable, and that both exits from the trap lead back inside.

The investigative judgment: your life is under review in a heavenly court, and the standard is the law you keep failing. Health teaching adds a second axis on which you are falling short before breakfast.

What it asks of you: A permanent audit you cannot see the results of is not a doctrine of assurance. It is a doctrine of vigilance, and vigilance is expensive to the person doing it.

5 · Devaluation

Reducing your sense of worth so you become dependent on the institution for identity.

How it shows here

- The investigative judgment: your record is under review in a heavenly court, and the outcome is not disclosed to you.
- Health and diet teaching creating a second axis of daily inadequacy.

- Perfectionist strands teaching that character must be flawless before the close of probation (the point after which, in Adventist teaching, no one's destiny can change).

The strongest defense. The judgment is about vindicating God's character, not about terrorising believers.

The counter. That is the intended reading and many members hold it. The documented effect on children raised inside it is scrupulosity, reported consistently by former members. Ask what pastoral practice exists for the child who cannot stop checking — and whether the doctrine is ever taught with that risk named aloud.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED The investigative judgment is Fundamental Belief 24 — written, published, and central. *(sourced)*

6 · Gaslighting

Making you doubt your own experience so you trust the institution's interpretation instead.

How it shows here

- A member cites the church's own commissioned study on literary dependence and is told they have misunderstood inspiration.
- The 1919 conference transcripts described as unimportant after being unavailable for fifty years.
- Glacier View recast as a personnel matter rather than a doctrinal one.

The strongest defense. These are complex historical questions being flattened by critics.

The counter. Then publish the complexity to the members. The transcripts exist, the Veltman study exists, and both came from inside the institution. The objection is not that the answers are hard; it is that the questions were kept out of the curriculum.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Deflection of the 1919 and Veltman material is a documented pattern rather than a written instruction.

7 · Double Bind

A trap where both options lead to compliance. No exit serves you.

How it shows here

- Ellen White is subordinate to scripture — and citing her ends the argument.
- Sincere inquiry is welcomed; the theologian who inquired lost his credentials.
- Question the judgment and demonstrate the faithlessness the judgment examines.

The strongest defense. Every church has doctrinal boundaries and ours are published.

The counter. Published boundaries are a genuine strength and most of this codex lacks them. The bind is narrower: the formal status of the prophetic claim ('lesser light') and its working status (decisive) differ, so a member cannot know which rule they are being judged by until after they have spoken.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CODIFIED The 'lesser light' formulation is official and its operational effect was established at Glacier View. *(sourced)*

Stage 4 · Confuse

The rewards become unpredictable, the standard keeps moving, the answers stop meaning anything, and the accusation gets turned around.

Ellen White is a lesser light, subordinate to scripture — and her writings settle the argument. The church commissions research confirming literary dependence and the teaching does not change. Both things are true at once and nobody explains how.

What it asks of you: The gap between the formal status of the prophetic claim and its working status is where every unanswerable conversation in this tradition happens.

8 · Intermittent Reinforcement

Unpredictable reward that creates addictive emotional dependency.

How it shows here

- Assurance offered and then qualified by the judgment; peace available and always provisional.

- Revival campaigns producing intense certainty, followed by long ordinary stretches of doubt.
- Health success experienced as blessing, health failure absorbed as a lapse.

The strongest defense. Christian assurance genuinely coexists with sober self-examination.

The counter. It can. The structural question is whether the examination has a stopping point. A judgment whose outcome is never disclosed produces permanent vigilance, and permanent vigilance is exactly the intermittent pattern this tactic describes.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT Assurance qualified by ongoing judgment is explicit doctrine. *(sourced)*

9 · Moving the Goalposts

The standard of success keeps shifting so you can never arrive.

How it shows here

- The Sunday law is imminent — for over a century, without the framework being revised.
- Standards of dress, diet, and entertainment shift by era while always being presented as timeless.
- 'Perfection of character' defined differently by different eras of teaching.

The strongest defense. Prophetic understanding grows with light; that is our own doctrine of present truth (doctrine as currently understood, open to growing light).

The counter. Present truth is a genuine and honest principle. Apply it consistently: publish what the church now believes it got wrong, and when. A doctrine of growing light that never records a correction is not growing.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT 'Present truth' as a moving standard is itself a taught doctrine. *(sourced)*

10 · Strategic Ambiguity

Language that sounds profound but means nothing specific — functioning as a shutdown to real questions.

How it shows here

- 'Lesser light' — authoritative but subordinate — a status never operationally defined.
- 'The church's position' cited without saying which body decided it or when.
- Compliance requirements whose scope was contested by the church's own governance bodies.

The strongest defense. Our beliefs are published in 28 clear statements.

The counter. The Fundamental Beliefs are genuinely published, which is creditable. The ambiguity sits elsewhere: what precisely follows from 'lesser light' when the two lights disagree. That is the question Glacier View turned on, and it remains undefined.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CODIFIED The undefined operational scope of 'lesser light' is a written formulation whose ambiguity is the mechanism. *(sourced)*

11 · Projection

Accusing the outside world of the exact thing the institution practices.

How it shows here

- Critics are described as bitter, faithless, or seeking to excuse sin.
- Members who leave are said to have wanted a lower standard.
- Those raising historical questions are characterised as lacking spiritual depth.

The strongest defense. We do not attack people who disagree; that is not our culture.

The counter. Largely true at congregational level and worth saying. At institutional level, a credential was withdrawn rather than a case answered — and that is the form the charge takes here.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CULTURAL Characterisation of critics is congregational rather than institutional.

12 · DARVO

Deny the wrongdoing. Attack the person who raised it. Reverse victim and offender.

How it shows here

- Glacier View retold as a theologian's failure rather than a doctrine's examination.
- The Veltman findings acknowledged and then not integrated, with those who cite them treated as the problem.
- The institution as defender of truth; the questioner as the disturbance.

The strongest defense. The church responded to a genuine doctrinal challenge through its established process.

The counter. It did, and the process was real — which makes the outcome more informative, not less. The process produced a reaffirmation of the doctrine and a decision about the man; it did not publish what evidence would have counted against the doctrine. Ask which of those the challenge was actually about.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The reframing of Glacier View as a personnel matter is how it is retold; no institutional document is named for it on this page.

13 · Normalization / Desensitization

Practices that would seem extreme to an outsider feel normal to insiders because they were installed before critical evaluation developed.

How it shows here

- Fifty years of unavailable transcripts, absorbed as normal archival practice.
- A curriculum without 1919, Veltman, or Glacier View, experienced as simply the history.
- Tithe leaving the congregation for decades with no local accounting ever requested.

The strongest defense. Nothing was hidden; the material is available to researchers.

The counter. Available to researchers is not the same as taught to members, and the distinction is the mechanism. Ask why a member has to be a researcher to learn their own movement's history.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Normalisation through curricular omission is a pattern across educational materials.

Stage 5 · Isolate

Your world narrows until every voice you hear is inside the system, and everything you came for now runs through a middleman.

Saturday empties the calendar of everything outside: no sport, no Saturday work, no Saturday friendships. Church school, church college, church hospital, and church employer follow. The parallel world was built as shelter and it functions as enclosure.

What it asks of you: Nobody instructed you to narrow your life. The architecture did it, which is why this row scores high on deniability.

14 · Isolation

Shrinking your world until the only voices you hear are inside the system.

How it shows here

- Sabbath removes Saturday sport, Saturday work, and Saturday friendship for an entire childhood.
- Church school, church college, church hospital, church employer — a full parallel life.
- Marriage strongly encouraged inside the community.

The strongest defense. Sabbath is a gift, not a restriction, and the institutions exist because we were excluded.

The counter. Both are true, and the shelter was built for a real reason. The finding is that the exclusion has largely ended and the enclosure has not — so a structure built to protect a minority now functions as the exit cost.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> **CODIFIED** Sabbath observance and the parallel institution system are written policy and constitutive practice. *(sourced)*

15 · Triangulation

Inserting intermediaries between you and the thing you came for, so the institution is always in the middle.

How it shows here

- Comparison between members on diet, dress, and Sabbath strictness.
- Conservative and progressive congregations played against each other institutionally.
- Unions ordaining women set against unions that do not.

The strongest defense. Diversity of practice across a world church is inevitable.

The counter. Inevitable, yes. Compliance committees aimed at elected regional bodies are not inevitable — they were created. Ask who created them and what problem they were designed to solve.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CODIFIED Compliance committees aimed at unions ordaining women are documented in General Conference actions. *(sourced)*

Stage 6 · Extract

Now the harvest: your labor, your money, your identity, your silence, your children's schooling, your capacity to trust yourself.

The harvest here is tithe flowing past your congregation to the conference that employs your pastor, school tuition, local budget offerings, unpaid institutional labour, and, historically, the work of literature evangelists selling on commission.

What it asks of you: The tithe is audited at the top and opaque at your own doorstep. Ask what your congregation sent and what it bought — that is the whole test.

16 · Flying Monkeys

The community enforces the institution's norms without being asked — mobilized by culture, not memos.

How it shows here

- Family and school reinforce the doctrinal package without any instruction to do so.
- Members police one another's Sabbath, diet, and jewellery.
- Congregations pressure their own pastors toward the conference line.

The strongest defense. That is a community holding shared values.

The counter. It is — until it becomes the mechanism by which a question cannot be asked in a room. The test is whether a member can voice doubt about the investigative judgment in Sabbath School and have it engaged rather than deflected.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Peer reinforcement of standards is community practice.

17 · Smear Campaign

Rewriting your character after departure to protect the institution from the implications of your leaving.

How it shows here

- Walter Rea lost his church employment in 1980, after his findings were reported in the press; the church's own later study substantially confirmed them.
- Desmond Ford's credentials withdrawn; his continued attendance at Adventist churches rarely mentioned.
- Independent Adventist media characterised as disloyal.

The strongest defense. Ministerial credentials carry doctrinal requirements, as they do everywhere.

The counter. They do. The specific finding is that a critic's substantive claim was later confirmed by the institution's own commissioned research, and his standing was never restored. Ask what the process is for a critic who turns out to have been right.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The credential actions against Walter Rea and Desmond Ford are on the record (sections 5 and 19), but they are credential decisions, not a documented campaign against character; describing critics and independent Adventist media as disloyal is observed practice, with no written rule behind it.

18 · Silent Treatment / Stonewalling

Refusing to engage with legitimate questions in order to maintain control.

How it shows here

- Direct questions about the investigative judgment answered with 'it is settled' and a change of subject.
- Requests for local tithe accounting met with the summary report instead.
- The 1919 transcripts unavailable for half a century with no explanation given at the time.

The strongest defense. Church finances are audited and reported; the reports are public.

The counter. The audit is genuine and this tradition scores well on it. The unanswered question is smaller and specific: what did *this congregation* send, and what did it buy? That answer exists in the treasurer's records.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Local financial opacity is a practice gap rather than a stated policy — the audit itself is real.

19 · Manufactured Consent

Creating the appearance of choice when the conditions of choice were shaped before you could evaluate them.

How it shows here

- 'The church has spoken' following votes many members did not know were happening.
- Delegate selection processes that produce predictable majorities.
- Compliance framed as the will of the world church.

The strongest defense. Our General Conference session is a genuinely representative vote — more than most churches have.

The counter. That is true and this codex records it as a real strength. Manufactured consent here is narrower: a real vote used to close a question that the same body's own regional bodies had already answered differently, with machinery then built to enforce it.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> REFORMED Consent here is produced by a genuinely representative elected session — the strongest governance row in this codex, recorded as such. *(sourced)*

20 · Trauma Bonding

The wound and the bandage come from the same hand.

How it shows here

- Judgment anxiety relieved by the same church's assurance teaching, weekly.
- Health fear and health hope delivered by one institution.
- End-time dread and Sabbath peace in the same twenty-four hours.

The strongest defense. The gospel addresses real fear with real comfort.

The counter. It does. The structural note is that both the fear and the comfort originate in one institution, which is the bonding pattern this tactic names — and the reason it is hard to evaluate the fear from inside.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT Judgment anxiety and assurance from a single source is the doctrinal structure.

21 · Learned Helplessness

Teaching you that your own judgment is unreliable until you stop trusting it entirely.

How it shows here

- Members conclude their perceived spiritual failure is permanent and unfixable.

- Long-time members who cannot imagine any life or employment outside the system.
- Doubt experienced as a defect in oneself rather than a question about a claim.

The strongest defense. We teach grace, and any member who feels otherwise has misunderstood us.

The counter. Then the misunderstanding is systematic and worth investigating rather than dismissing. Ask what pastoral practice exists for the member with scrupulosity, and whether the doctrine is ever taught with that risk named.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Scrupulosity emerges from formation rather than instruction.

22 · Benevolent Control

Control wrapped in the language of care, so that resisting the control feels like rejecting the love.

How it shows here

- Health teaching genuinely good for you and enforced as righteousness.
- Education, healthcare, and employment provided by one body that also sets belief requirements.
- Care that is real and comes bundled with a doctrinal package.

The strongest defense. Caring for the whole person — body, mind, spirit — is our founding principle and it works.

The counter. Measurably so, and Loma Linda is in the longevity literature. The question is whether any of the care can be declined without cost. If diet compliance affects standing, it has stopped being health advice.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT The health message as both genuine benefit and standard of righteousness is explicit teaching. *(sourced)*

23 · Infantilization

Positioning the adult believer as permanently childlike and dependent on institutional authority.

How it shows here

- Members told historical and theological questions are for scholars, not for them.
- Curriculum that omits the material a member would need to evaluate the claim.
- Adult members deferred to the conference on matters they could read for themselves.

The strongest defense. We provide age-appropriate and context-appropriate teaching.

The counter. Fifty years is not a matter of pacing. Ask at what age a member becomes entitled to the 1919 transcripts and the Veltman study — and why that age was never announced.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CULTURAL Withholding of historical material from members is a curricular pattern.

24 · Identity Erosion

Gradually replacing your identity with a role the institution provides, until you can't separate who you are from where you belong.

How it shows here

- Sabbath, diet, education, employment, marriage, and social life all inside one system.
- A leaver must reconstruct diet, weekly rhythm, career, and community simultaneously.
- Identity so fully constituted by the movement that doubt registers as self-loss.

The strongest defense. A comprehensive way of life is a feature of serious religion, not a defect.

The counter. It is. The measurement is whether anything remains that the system does not supply — one friendship, one Saturday, one income. Where nothing does, the exit cost is total, whatever the doctrine says about freedom.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CULTURAL Total-system identity follows from the parallel institutions rather than from doctrine.

25 · Spiritual Bypassing

Using spiritual language to avoid engaging with real pain, real questions, and real accountability.

How it shows here

- Depression answered with diet, prayer, and Bible study rather than treatment.
- Trauma addressed as a spiritual condition inside a church with a world-class hospital system.
- Mental health historically under-served relative to physical health in the movement's own institutions.

The strongest defense. We run hospitals; we do not oppose medicine.

The counter. Which is exactly why this row is answerable. The movement has the clinical capacity to do better than any of its neighbours in this codex. Ask why mental health has lagged the physical health message, and what the church's written practice is on referral.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Mental health lag relative to physical health is an observable institutional pattern.

26 · Financial Control

Extracting money through spiritual obligation while offering no transparency about where it goes.

How it shows here

- Tithe flowing past the local congregation to the conference that employs the pastor.
- School tuition as a substantial recurring cost and a retention mechanism.
- Health-system executive compensation not routinely surfaced to members.

The strongest defense. Our finances are professionally audited and the summaries are published.

The counter. They are, and this tradition is ahead of most of the codex here. The gap is local and specific: a member cannot readily learn what their own congregation sent and what it purchased. That number exists. Ask for it in writing.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED Tithe structure flowing to the conference is written policy in the Church Manual (the church's book of rules for congregations). *(sourced)*

Stage 7 · Discard

You become expensive — too many questions, too much independence — and the urgency ramps up until you are removed.

Ask about the investigative judgment in public, or hold credentials and publish a challenge, and the mechanism is formal: credentials withdrawn, employment ended, committee minuted. Glacier View is the named precedent.

What it asks of you: This tradition does not shun. It de-credentials — which is quieter, more legal, and lands hardest on the people best equipped to ask.

27 · Manufactured Crisis

Creating urgency to suppress critical thinking and generate loyalty.

How it shows here

- The time of trouble and the Sunday law as a permanent, imminent emergency.
- Urgency framing sustaining giving and mission for a century and a half.
- Each geopolitical development read as the crisis arriving.

The strongest defense. We take prophecy seriously; the world's condition speaks for itself.

The counter. A crisis that has been imminent for a hundred and fifty years and never revised is not a forecast. Ask what would have to happen for the framework to be considered mistaken — the same question 1844 posed, and the one the sanctuary doctrine was built to avoid.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT Imminent-crisis framing is doctrinal and continuous. *(sourced)*

28 · Discard

Removing members who become too costly — too many questions, too much independence, too visible a contradiction.

How it shows here

- Credential withdrawal for doctrinal dissent — Glacier View is the named precedent.
- Employment ending when belief changes in institutional towns.
- Formal disfellowshipping (removal from church membership) used rarely, but available.

The strongest defense. Employment and credentials carry requirements; that is not a discard.

The counter. It is when the requirement is not to ask. This tradition does not shun, which matters and is recorded — but de-credentialing lands hardest on the people best equipped to raise the question, and that is a discard aimed with precision.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CODIFIED Credential withdrawal for doctrinal dissent is a formal, minuted act with a named 1980 precedent. *(sourced)*

Stage 8 · Replace

Your seat is filled before the door shuts, and nobody is responsible for any of it because the authority was attributed to God.

The seat fills, the school teaches the same curriculum, and the omitted history stays omitted for another generation.

What it asks of you: Replacement here is curricular. What is not taught in year one does not need suppressing in year twenty.

29 · Replacement

Your seat is filled before the door closes behind you.

How it shows here

- The role refills; the curriculum continues unchanged; the omitted history stays omitted.
- New members arrive without ever encountering the material that troubled the last one.

- Departures absorbed as individual spiritual failures rather than institutional signal.

The strongest defense. People's spiritual journeys are their own.

The counter. They are. But an institution that never asks why a well-informed member left has chosen not to learn. Ask whether exit interviews exist anywhere in the structure, and what is done with them.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Curricular continuity after departures is a pattern, not a policy.

30 · Plausible Deniability

The institution is never responsible, because the authority is attributed to God — who isn't available for cross-examination.

How it shows here

- 'Lesser light' as a formal status that functions as a decisive one — the gap is the deniability.
- Fifty years of archival unavailability describable as ordinary practice.
- Credential withdrawal describable as a personnel matter rather than doctrinal suppression.

The strongest defense. Everything here is governed by published policy and voted process.

The counter. Much of it genuinely is, and that gives this tradition unusually low deniability on governance — a real strength. The deniability concentrates in one place: the distance between what the prophetic claim is formally said to be and what it actually does in a room. That distance has never been written down, which is what makes it useful.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CULTURAL The gap between the formal and operational status of the prophetic claim is the deniability, and because it is nowhere written down it is observed practice rather than taught doctrine.

Sources for this section: [8] [9]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Count grades, not names. A long list of Contested entries says something very different from a short list of Codified ones. A bias to watch for in yourself: people rate the same pressure as "normal" when their own group applies it and as "manipulation" when another group does. Before you judge an entry, try imagining it applied by a group you distrust. Does it look different?

13

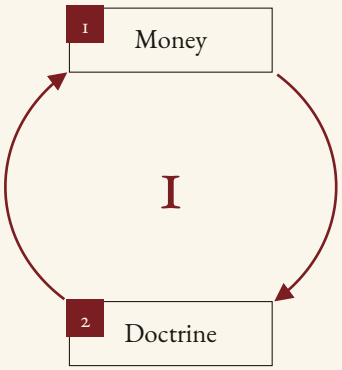
The loops

BEFORE YOU READ

How the techniques connect into cycles. A single practice can look harmless on its own. The loops show how one step feeds the next, so that, for example, a newcomer's welcome turns into an obligation.

> The seven loops below show how the practices connect, so that each step makes the next one easier and the last step feeds the first. The loops are analysis built from findings recorded elsewhere on this page PATTERN OBSERVED; each step names the section or technique where its fact is recorded.

1 · Money to Doctrine to Money



Members fund the institutions, the institutions employ the members, and employment makes belief change costly, which protects the institutions.

How it runs.

1. Members give a tenth of their income as tithe, which goes past the local congregation to the conference, and pay school tuition and local offerings besides (section 9).
2. The conference uses the tithe to pay pastors' salaries and holds their ministerial credentials (sections 7 and 9).
3. Pastors are asked to teach the doctrinal package as settled and to route difficult questions upward, and credentials can be withdrawn for doctrinal dissent (section 18; technique 28).

4. The hospitals, schools and universities employ members in towns where the church system is the major employer, so a change of belief can be a change of career (sections 10 and 15).

5. Members who stay inside keep tithing to the same conference, and the institutions go on employing them (section 9; technique 26).

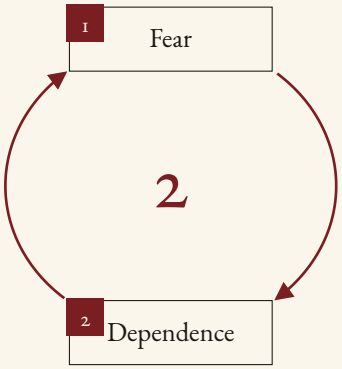
Techniques that feed it. 26 · Financial Control, 14 · Isolation, 24 · Identity Erosion, 28 · Discard.

Why it closes. The body that receives the money also employs the pastor and, through the institutions, many of the members. A member cannot see what their congregation's tithe bought (section 14), and a member who works in the system cannot change belief without risking the income that pays the tithe.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens wherever the money becomes visible at the level of the congregation. The treasurer's records already hold the figure (technique 18), so a conference could publish each congregation's statement, and a member can ask for it in writing (section 23). It also weakens wherever a member's livelihood does not depend on the church system (section 15). This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. In section 2 Marisol's father worked forty years at the hospital, the tithe went to the conference every month of her childhood, and she has never seen a figure for what the conference did with it.

2 · Fear to Dependence to Fear



An unobservable doctrine cannot generate disconfirming evidence, so every year of no evidence is absorbed as the judgment continuing.

How it runs.

1. Children are taught the investigative judgment, in which their lives are under review in a heavenly court, at ages where it reliably produces scrupulosity (section 11).
2. The outcome of the review is never disclosed, and perfectionist strands teach that character must be flawless before the close of probation (technique 5).
3. The same church offers assurance, and the assurance is then qualified by the continuing judgment (technique 8).
4. Relief comes from the institution that installed the fear, weekly (technique 20).
5. The doctrine was built where nothing can be checked, so no year without evidence can end it, and the vigilance returns (section 10).

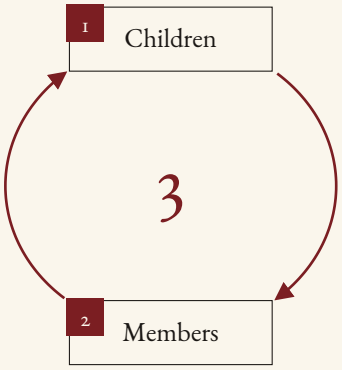
Techniques that feed it. 5 · Devaluation, 8 · Intermittent Reinforcement, 20 · Trauma Bonding, 21 · Learned Helplessness.

Why it closes. The fear and the comfort come from one source, and the claim that generates the fear cannot be tested. A member can obtain relief only from the office that keeps the review open.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where the doctrine is taught with the risk of scrupulosity named aloud and a pastoral practice for the child who cannot stop checking (technique 5), and where the church states what evidence would count against the investigative judgment, which section 20 names as a change that would revise this page. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. Section 14 renders the investigative judgment in plain words: 'You are being assessed and you will not be told the result.'

3 · Children to Members to Children



Children schooled inside the church absorb its teaching and its omitted history, and grow up to teach the same curriculum to the next generation.

How it runs.

1. Children go to church schools that are often academically strong, cost their parents substantial recurring tuition and serve as the primary retention mechanism (sections 9 and 11).
2. They are taught the investigative judgment and end-time teaching at ages that produce scrupulosity and anxiety (section 11).
3. The curriculum presents the movement's history without the 1919 Bible Conference, the Veltman findings or Glacier View (section 11).
4. Sabbath observance fills the child's social world inside the church, with no Saturday sport, work or friendships outside it (section 11; technique 14).
5. Those children become the teachers, pastors and parents who pass on the same curriculum, and the omitted history stays omitted for another generation (sections 12 and 18).

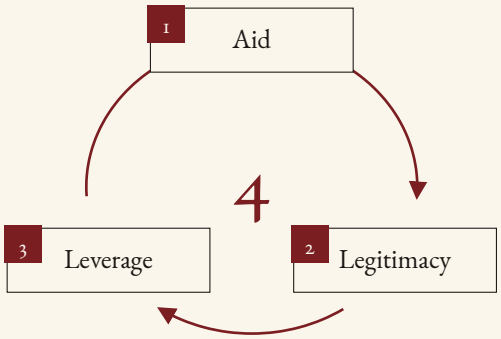
Techniques that feed it. 13 · Normalization / Desensitization, 23 · Infantilization, 14 · Isolation, 29 · Replacement.

Why it closes. What is not taught in year one does not need suppressing in year twenty (section 12, stage 8). Each generation learns the history from teachers who learned it the same way, so the omission renews itself without anyone having to decide it.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. Section 18 names the church school teacher's refusal to teach a history they know to be partial as the single highest-leverage refusal on the page. Section 20 names the other break: integrating the 1919 transcripts and the Veltman findings into the standard church-school history curriculum. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. In section 2 Marisol's mother taught at the academy, and Marisol learns about Glacier View only by looking up Desmond Ford herself, because the name came up once and nobody explained it.

4 · Aid to Legitimacy to Leverage to Aid



The church's hospitals and relief work earn real standing, and that standing is offered in place of answers to governance questions.

How it runs.

1. The church runs hospitals, universities and relief work at scale; ADRA's work is independently evaluated in many jurisdictions (sections 9 and 16).
2. That work earns real standing: Loma Linda appears in the longevity literature, and the health message anticipated modern nutrition (sections 5 and 16).
3. The standing is deployed as an answer to governance questions it does not address, such as a withdrawn credential or a congregation's tithe (section 16; technique 2).
4. The questions go unanswered while the institutions continue under corporate boards whose executive pay is public in tax filings where the entity files but rarely surfaced to members (sections 7 and 9).
5. Members' offerings, tuition and trust keep funding the institutions and the relief work, and the standing renews (sections 9 and 16).

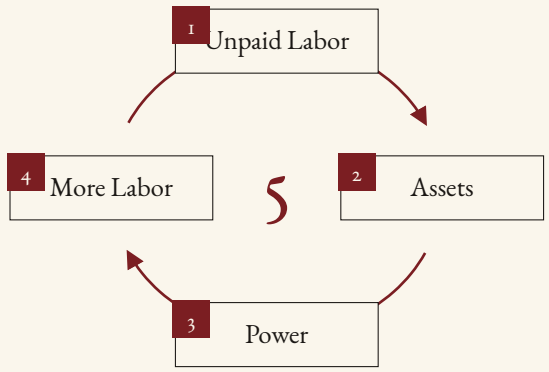
Techniques that feed it. 2 · Weaponized Generosity, 22 · Benevolent Control, 30 · Plausible Deniability.

Why it closes. The good work is real, so pointing to it is persuasive, and each time it is offered in place of an answer the question it displaced is harder to raise again.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens when members treat the institutions' record and the governance questions as separate ledgers, as section 16 does. The health corporations already file where the law requires (section 22), and a member can ask for executive compensation in writing (section 23). This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. Section 16 puts it directly: 'That a hospital system saves lives is not information about whether a theologian's credentials should have been withdrawn, or about what a congregation's tithe purchased.'

5 · Unpaid Labor to Assets to Power to More Labor



Women's and commissioned labour built the church's institutions, and the offices that hold those institutions set the terms of the work.

How it runs.

1. Adventism ran on female labour, teaching and writing from the beginning (section 11).
2. The publishing houses were built on literature evangelists paid on commission, historically with weak labour protections, and institutions also draw on unpaid labour (section 9; section 12, stage 6).
3. At Pacific Press, women were denied allowances paid to men (sections 8 and 19).
4. The assets that labour built sit in separately incorporated institutions governed by boards and by conferences the workers do not control (sections 6 and 7).
5. When two women challenged the pay practice, one had her duties reduced and was dismissed, and the practice was examined only when a federal court took the case (sections 8 and 19).

Techniques that feed it. 26 · Financial Control, 22 · Benevolent Control, 28 · Discard, 17 · Smear Campaign.

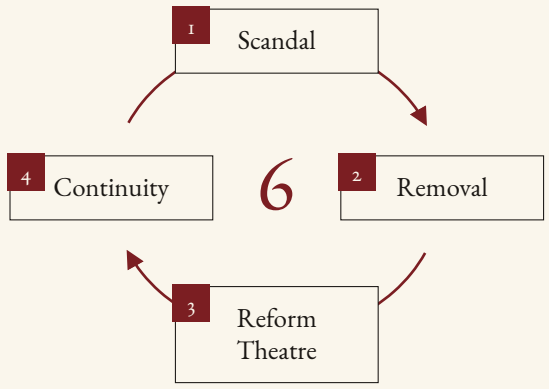
Why it closes. The people who do the work hold no office over the assets it produces, and the offices that hold the assets set the terms of the work. A worker who contests the terms risks the job that the terms govern.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It was broken once from outside: the federal courts held that Title VII applied to the church's publishing house and affirmed the findings of pay discrimination and retaliation (sections 8 and 19). Section 24 notes that the same law still protects most non-ministerial

staff in the United States against sex discrimination and retaliation, though religious employers may prefer members of their own faith. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. Lorna Tobler, an editorial secretary at Pacific Press, was dismissed after she took part in proceedings brought by her co-worker Merikay Silver (section 19).

6 · Scandal to Removal to Reform Theatre to Continuity



A critic is removed, a study is commissioned, and the teaching does not change.

How it runs.

1. A challenge surfaces in public: Walter Rea's findings on Ellen White's sources, and Desmond Ford's challenge to the investigative judgment at Glacier View in 1980 (sections 5 and 19).
2. The person is removed. Ford's ministerial credentials were withdrawn and Rea lost his church employment in 1980 (section 19; technique 17).
3. A process follows. Glacier View was a specially convened conference, and the church commissioned the Veltman study, which confirmed substantial literary dependence (sections 5 and 19).
4. The finding is not carried into teaching. The Veltman findings have never been integrated into how the prophetic claim is taught, and Rea's standing was never restored (section 11; technique 17).
5. The curriculum continues without 1919, Veltman or Glacier View, and the teaching is unchanged (sections 11 and 14).

Techniques that feed it. 12 · DARVO, 17 · Smear Campaign, 18 · Silent Treatment / Stonewalling, 29 · Replacement, 30 · Plausible Deniability.

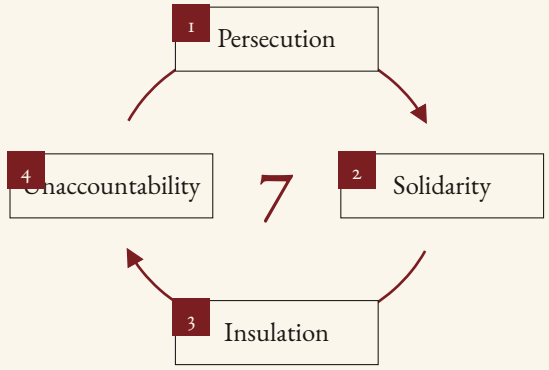
Why it closes. The process ends with a decision about the person, so the demand for action is met while the doctrine stays where it was. On finance the same structure has produced real change (section 14); on the founding claim it has not.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. Section 20 names what would revise the page: a General Conference statement of what evidence would count against the investigative judgment, integration of the 1919 transcripts and the Veltman findings into the curriculum, and restoration of a critic's standing

where the church's own research confirmed his claim. The Davenport case shows the structure can act: conflict-of-interest forms became a yearly requirement (section 19). This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. Walter Rea lost his church employment in 1980, after his findings were reported in the press; the church's own later study substantially confirmed them, and his standing was never restored (technique 17).

7 · Persecution to Solidarity to Insulation to Unaccountability



Teaching that expects persecution, and institutions that enclose members, lead criticism to be read as confirmation rather than information.

How it runs.

1. The church teaches a coming time of trouble and a Sunday law, a permanent and imminent emergency for a century and a half (section 11; technique 27).
2. Children absorb the persecution teaching as anxiety, and the Sabbath builds a strong in-group and a narrow out-group (section 11).
3. The parallel institutions, built when Adventists were excluded, now hold members' schooling, employment and care inside one system (section 10; technique 14).
4. Critics are described as bitter or faithless, and independent Adventist media as disloyal (techniques 11 and 17).
5. Questions raised inside are deflected, and the member who keeps asking meets the formal mechanism: credentials withdrawn, employment ended (section 12, stage 7).

Techniques that feed it. 27 · Manufactured Crisis, 11 · Projection, 17 · Smear Campaign, 14 · Isolation, 16 · Flying Monkeys.

Why it closes. A community taught to expect persecution reads pressure from outside as confirmation, and the enclosure that once sheltered it leaves few outside voices to hear. Each step reduces the chance that a criticism is received as information.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. The independent Adventist press is lively and critical (section 11), and members can read it as their own movement's record rather than an attack. Section 10 notes that the exclusion that justified the enclosure has largely ended. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. In section 2 Marisol's family does not mention the compliance committees at dinner, although everybody knows about them.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The loops explain why good people stay in arrangements they would never sign up for from scratch. The more you have already put in, the harder it is to walk away. Researchers call this the sunk-cost effect (Arkes & Blumer, 1985), and it works on time, money and relationships alike. Ask yourself: if you were starting today, knowing what you know, would you join?

The seven loops below show how the practices connect, so that each step makes the next one easier and the last step feeds the first.

14 Say versus do

BEFORE YOU READ

Direct, checkable comparisons: a public statement on one side, the documented record on the other, and the receipt that links them. This is the most falsifiable section on the page, because each row either matches its source or it doesn't.

What they say, what the record shows

THEY SAY	THE RECORD SHOWS	RECEIPT
The Bible is our only creed; Ellen White is a lesser light pointing to the greater.	Her writings are used to settle doctrinal disputes, and challenging them costs credentials — as it did in 1980.	OFFICIAL POLICY
We welcome sincere theological inquiry.	A credentialed theologian who inquired into the investigative judgment had his ministerial credentials withdrawn after a hearing.	OFFICIAL POLICY · Glacier View
Ellen White's writings were given by inspiration.	The church's own commissioned study documented extensive unattributed literary dependence, and the teaching did not change.	ACADEMIC SOURCE · Veltman study
The church is fully audited and financially transparent.	The audit is real and the summary reports exist; an ordinary member still cannot readily obtain a plain accounting of what their own congregation sent upward and what it purchased.	FINANCIAL RECORD
We believe in religious liberty for all — it is one of our defining public commitments.	The commitment is real, well-funded, and has defended other faiths in court; the same body has restricted its own unions' decisions on who may be ordained.	OFFICIAL POLICY

Accountability or theatre?

Last time the chair ran. It last ran in 1980, at Glacier View, and it ran against the theologian: the committee reaffirmed the doctrine and the only binding action fell on the man. In finance it has run more honestly: the Davenport affair produced real conflict-of-interest rules.

Who holds the chair now. The chair is genuinely occupied. An elected president and elected officers hold it, replaceable in session, most recently in 2025.

Prediction. On finance and governance, expect a real process with a published outcome — this structure does that. On the founding doctrinal claim, expect the chair to remain empty, because the claim was built where the chair cannot reach.

Words used here

TERM	WHAT IT MEANS INSIDE	WHAT IT DOES	SAID PLAINLY
The Spirit of Prophecy	The phrase means Ellen G. White's writings.	They are formally a 'lesser light' subordinate to scripture and functionally decisive. The gap between the two statuses is where every unanswerable conversation in the tradition happens.	'This settles it, and I retain the option to say it does not.'

Present truth	It means doctrine as currently understood, subject to growing light.	It is a genuinely honest principle. Watch whether it is ever used to record something the church got wrong, or only to explain change after the fact.	'Our position moved and we would like that read as progress.'
The investigative judgment	It is the doctrine that lives have been under review in a heavenly court since 1844.	It installs permanent vigilance with no disclosed outcome. Clinicians recognise the resulting presentation and call it scrupulosity.	'You are being assessed and you will not be told the result.'
Standards	They are the practices of dress, diet, and entertainment that mark faithfulness.	They convert era-specific cultural norms into markers of spiritual condition, applied more intensively to women.	'What you eat and wear is evidence about your soul.'

Sources for this section: [8]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Test one row yourself. Pick a "they say" line you have actually heard said in person, then read the receipt. If the record matches the statement, this page is wrong about that row, and you should tell us. If it doesn't, what does it mean that you had never seen the receipt?

15 Cost & cover

BEFORE YOU READ

What leaving actually costs here, in family, work, housing, money and legal status, and how each of those costs is officially denied. Where the cost is low, the page says so plainly.

What leaving costs

- Leaving is legally free and, in the concentrated communities, occupationally expensive: where the hospital, the university, and the school are all Adventist, a change of belief can be a change of career.
- There is no shunning doctrine and no formal disfellowshipping for simple non-attendance — an important and creditable difference from several neighbouring pages in this codex. The cost is social, familial, and professional rather than mandated.
- The heaviest reported burden is internal: an end-time framework and an investigative-judgment doctrine absorbed in childhood do not switch off when attendance stops, and health anxiety around diet often outlives belief.

The ledger of exit

COST	DOCUMENTED?	DETAIL	THE OFFICIAL DENIAL
Employment	Sometimes	In Loma Linda, Andrews, and similar concentrations, the church system is the major employer	"Employment is governed by ordinary policy, not belief."
Family closeness	Sometimes	Sabbath structures family life; a leaver becomes absent from its central weekly event	"Nobody is disfellowshipped for missing church."
Community	Yes	Saturday observance builds an all-encompassing social world; leaving empties the calendar	"Our members are free to worship as they choose."
Formal membership	Mostly free	Disfellowshipping exists but is not automatic for lapse; there is no shunning requirement	"Membership is voluntary" — and on this line the claim substantially holds
Psychological cost	Yes	Investigative-judgment scrupulosity and end-time anxiety frequently persist long after departure	"That is a personal matter of conscience."
Ministerial career	Yes	Credentials are held by conferences and can be withdrawn for doctrinal dissent	"Credentialing standards apply to everyone equally."

How the cost is denied

CHANNEL	LEVEL	NOTE
Explicit policy	Low	The Church Manual, the 28 Fundamental Beliefs, and the Glacier View outcome are documented.
Leadership accountability	Low	Uniquely in this codex, officers are elected in session and have been replaced by vote. This row is the tradition's strongest.
Financial transparency	Medium	It is audited and summarized at the top, but hard for an individual member to trace at the level of their own congregation.
Doctrinal discipline	Low	Credential withdrawal is a formal, recorded act with a named precedent.
Prophetic authority	High	It is formally a 'lesser light' and functionally decisive, and the gap between the two is where deniability lives.
Health teaching	Medium	It is genuinely beneficial in aggregate; harms appear as individual scrupulosity, which is easy to attribute to the individual.
Gender exclusion	Low	The exclusion rests on a recorded vote of a representative body. Nothing here is deniable, which is why this row is unusual.
Childhood formation	High	It is absorbed at home and school and attributable to no policy and no person.

Sources for this section: [8]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

There is no shunning doctrine, and the page credits that. The cost is your livelihood. In towns like Loma Linda, where the hospital, the university and the school are all Adventist, a change of belief can mean a change of career. If you work in the system and your beliefs shifted, could you say so out loud and keep your job?

16 The ledger

BEFORE YOU READ

The balance sheet. It shows who benefits, who pays, and what leverage flows back to the institution in return for what it gives.

Who benefits

- The conference and union administrative structures benefit, and their authority over pastors runs through payroll.
- The health-system corporations and their executives benefit, operating large revenue enterprises with governance that is intricate and rarely surfaced to members.

- The education system benefits, and it is both a genuine service and the movement's principal retention mechanism.
- The doctrinal structure itself benefits, because it rests on a claim built to be unobservable and therefore cannot be lost.

Money out, leverage back

- The hospitals, the universities, and ADRA are real, substantial, and in many places excellent. Loma Linda's longevity research is cited in mainstream science and the health message anticipated modern nutrition by a century. None of that is a cover story.
- It is nonetheless deployed as an answer to questions it does not answer. That a hospital system saves lives is not information about whether a theologian's credentials should have been withdrawn, or about what a congregation's tithe purchased.
- The parallel institution system also creates the exit cost. The same network that shelters a Sabbath-keeping minority from an indifferent world is the network a leaver has to resign from.

Who pays

- Members pay when they ask about the investigative judgment in a room where it is settled.
- Theologians and pastors pay, because they hold credentials that a conference can withdraw, the tradition's real disciplinary lever.

- Women called to ministry pay, told by a recorded vote of a representative body that the answer is no.
- Children pay, carrying scrupulosity from a doctrine in which their lives are under heavenly review.
- Employees in concentrated Adventist towns pay, because for them belief and livelihood share an address.

Sources for this section: [10]

The conference and union administrative structures benefit, and their authority over pastors runs through payroll.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Find yourself in this table. Are you among those who benefit, those who pay, or both? Most readers are both. The question is whether the exchange was ever explained to you in these terms, and whether you would agree to it if it had been.

17 Who gets hurt most

BEFORE YOU READ

Where the weight lands hardest, and what it compounds with: poverty, childhood, gender, a lack of civil alternatives. This is the human stakes stated plainly.

Where the weight lands

The costs in section 15 do not fall evenly. They fall hardest where a person has the least power inside the institution and the fewest places to go outside it. The table names who carries the most, how, and what makes it worse.

WHO	HOW	WHAT IT COMPOUNDS WITH
Employed members in Adventist institutions	Belief change becomes a career risk	It compounds in Loma Linda, Andrews, and similar single-employer towns.
Theologians and credentialed pastors	Doctrinal dissent is answered by credential withdrawal rather than argument	It compounds where the credential is also the visa, the housing, and the pension.
Women in ministry	They face a world vote against ordination, followed by compliance machinery aimed at their own regional bodies.	It compounds in divisions where the local church supports them and the world church does not.
Children in church schools	They receive investigative-judgment and end-time teaching at ages that produce scrupulosity.	It compounds where home, school, and church deliver the same message with no outside voice.
Members in the Global South	They are the overwhelming majority of the membership and a minority of the institutional wealth and governance staff	It compounds where the local conference depends on funds decided elsewhere.

From The Children's Codex

- *Education* — Adventist and evangelical school-history curricula: Curricula across several traditions in this codex omit the institution's own documented controversies — the 1919 Bible Conference and the Veltman study in Adventism; the Gospel Topics material in its pre-2013 form for Latter-day Saint youth. The omissions are not disputed; they are simply not discussed.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The table names employees whose careers depend on belief; pastors and theologians whose dissent is met with credential withdrawal; women in ministry, voted against at world level in 2015; children taught end-time doctrine at ages that produce anxiety; and members in the Global South, who are most of the church but hold little of its wealth. If you are one of those children grown up, did anyone ever tell you that the doctrine that frightened you was once debated and questioned by leaders who didn't tell the members?

18 The middle tiers

BEFORE YOU READ

The people in the middle: local clergy, teachers, officials and volunteers who apply rules they did not write. The section exists so that an institution is not collapsed into a monolith, and so that people in the middle can see their own position in it.

Most of the institution's work is done below the General Conference, by people who see decisions without making them. Local pastors, church school teachers, conference treasurers, hospital administrators and union officers each carry part of the load, and each stands at one point where the next decision could be declined. The table sets out what each tier does, what it sees, what it is asked to do and where it could refuse.

ROLE	DOES	SEES	IS ASKED TO	COULD REFUSE
Local pastors	Run congregations, often several at once, on a conference salary	That their employment depends on the conference, not the congregation	Teach the doctrinal package as settled and route difficult questions upward	Present the investigative judgment as beyond question when they know the 1919 transcripts exist

Church school teachers	Educate the next generation inside the system	Which parts of Adventist history the curriculum omits	Teach the pioneer narrative without the 1919 conference, the Veltman findings, or Glacier View	Teach a history they know to be partial — the single highest-leverage refusal on this page
Conference treasurers and auditors	Handle tithe flow and institutional accounts	Exactly what each congregation sent and where it went	Report upward in summary form only	Decline to give a congregation a plain statement of its own money
Hospital administrators	Run large revenue health corporations under church-linked governance	Executive compensation and the true relationship between corporate and church governance	Keep the two ledgers politely separate in public	Keep what the church's name earns hidden from the members who own that name
Union and division officers	Govern regionally, hold credentials, sit on committees	Whether compliance machinery is being used to examine or to enforce	Comply	Comply; several unions already have refused, which is why this row is not hypothetical

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

If you are a local leader, a teacher or a volunteer, this section is about you. It is not an accusation: most of the people who carry out a rule did not write it. But the middle tier is also where a rule is most often quietly softened, or quietly enforced. Which do you do, and what would happen to you if you chose differently?

19 Documented cases

BEFORE YOU READ

Named, dated, sourced incidents: court records, government inquiries, regulators' findings and on-the-record reporting. Read the outcome lines in particular. They show what actually changed, if anything.

The Davenport collapse (United States, 1981)

WHEN: 1981–1983

WHAT: Dr Donald Davenport, a physician and developer, ran what the church's own encyclopedia calls "an elaborate Ponzi scheme" with some $71 million missing. Church entities and employees had lent him money, and accusations were made that leaders pressed members to invest. He filed for bankruptcy on 22 July 1981 [12].

RECORD: *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, "Davenport Scandal" [12]

OUTCOME: A church committee wrote a 624-page report that was never made public; the General Conference president called the discipline that followed "the most sweeping discipline ever attempted within the church" [12]. Conflict-of-interest forms became a yearly requirement [12].

TACTICS: 26 · Financial Control, 30 · Plausible Deniability, 18 · Silent Treatment / Stonewalling

GRADE: DOCUMENTED

Equal pay in a church publishing house (United States, 1972–1982)

WHEN: 1972–1982

WHAT: Lorna Tobler, an editorial secretary at Pacific Press, filed discrimination charges; her duties were reduced after she took part in proceedings brought by her co-worker Merikay Silver, and she was dismissed [13].

RECORD: *EEOC v. Pacific Press Publishing Ass'n*, 676 F.2d 1272 (9th Cir. 1982) [13]

OUTCOME: The court held Title VII applied and affirmed the findings of pay discrimination and retaliation [13].

TACTICS: 26 · Financial Control, 28 · Discard

GRADE: DOCUMENTED

Glacier View (1980)

WHEN: 1980

WHAT: Desmond Ford, a credentialed theologian, challenged the investigative-judgment doctrine at a specially convened conference [8].

RECORD: *Adventist Record*, "1975–1980: Towards Glacier View and its aftermath" (24 Aug 2023) [18]; *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists* [8]

OUTCOME: The committee published consensus statements on Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary and on the role of Ellen G. White's writings, and a statement of the main differences between Ford's views and that consensus [18]. His ministerial credentials were withdrawn [8].

TACTICS: 17 · Smear Campaign, 28 · Discard

GRADE: DOCUMENTED

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

These are not hypotheticals. Three documented cases on this page rest on a named record. The most common reaction to documented cases is "that was them, not us." Before settling on that, read the outcome lines. Did anything change in the structure that allowed each case to happen, or did one person leave while the structure stayed?

20 Precedent

BEFORE YOU READ

What has already been broken once, somewhere, and what would count as real change here. It is a benchmark, not a prediction.

It has been broken before

WHAT	WHO	WHEN	WHAT IT COST
The 1919 Bible Conference transcripts brought into the open	Adventist historians working in the church's own archives	1970s	Not recorded on this page. The transcripts were found in December 1974 by the General Conference's own archivist, F. Donald Yost, and excerpts were published in *Spectrum* in May 1979 [4].
The church commissioning and publishing the Veltman study on literary dependence	The institution itself, under sustained pressure from Walter Rea's findings	1980s	Rea lost his church employment in 1980, after his findings were reported in the press; the church did the study anyway, which is genuinely to its credit
Merikay Silver's equal-pay litigation	An employee who went to federal court against her own denomination	1970s	It cost her career inside the system.
Unions ordaining women, before and after the 2015 world vote	Elected regional bodies acting on their own delegates' authority	2012 onward	It brought compliance committees, censure, and years of institutional conflict.
A contested, scheduled, peaceful transfer of the world presidency by vote	The General Conference session	2025	It cost nothing, and that is why this tradition is a useful control case for this entire codex.

What would change this page

A published statement from the General Conference setting out what evidence would count against the investigative judgment, and the integration of the 1919 transcripts and the Veltman findings into the standard church-school history curriculum, would revise this page's core findings. Restoration of a critic's standing where the institution's own research later confirmed his claim would revise the discard section.

Sources for this section: 4 5 6 7

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Some rows here record a change that has already happened somewhere; others name what would count as change here. When you are told something "can't change", it is fair to ask: can't, or won't? And who decided?

21 Voices from inside

BEFORE YOU READ

People from inside Seventh-day Adventism who raised the hard question publicly, often at real cost. They answer the objection that criticism only ever comes from outsiders.

- **Merikay Silver and Lorna Tobler.** They were two women at the church's publishing house, Pacific Press, who took equal pay to federal court and won. The court held that Title VII applied to the church's publisher [13].
- **Desmond Ford.** A credentialed Adventist theologian, he challenged the investigative-judgment doctrine at Glacier View in 1980, and his ministerial credentials were withdrawn [8]. He attended Adventist churches for the rest of his life.
- **Walter Rea.** He wrote *The White Lie* (1982), on Ellen White's use of other writers, having lost his church employment in 1980 after a newspaper reported his findings [8]. The church's own commissioned study later found she used others' writings "consciously and intentionally" [5][6].
- **The 977 delegates.** In 2015 they voted to let each world division decide on ordaining women; 1,381 delegates voted against [3].

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Were these people traitors, or the most loyal members their tradition had? Most were treated as the first at the time, and some are honored as the second now. If someone in your community raised one of these questions tomorrow, how would they be treated, and by you?

22 Regional variants

BEFORE YOU READ

The same tradition under different governments. What a member can say, leave, marry or inherit depends heavily on the state, and these cards show how differently it plays out.

United States

APEX: The General Conference in Silver Spring, Maryland; unions and local conferences hold credentials.

LAW: Church financial exemption applies; the affiliated hospital and education corporations file where required, so their filings are readable even though the church's are not.

DOCUMENTED: The record covers Glacier View (1980) and the credential withdrawal, Merikay Silver's equal-pay litigation, and Adventist Health System filings.

EXIT: Exit costs are moderate generally, and high in Loma Linda, Berrien Springs and similar single-employer towns.

REGULATOR: State attorneys general and the IRS regulate the affiliated entities, and the elected General Conference session is a genuine internal lever.

TELL: The affiliated-entity filings are the workaround: where a church is exempt, its hospital corporation frequently is not.

Africa (as the membership centre of gravity)

APEX: Divisions and unions here hold the largest share of world membership: the three African divisions report about 11.6 million of 24.4 million members (2025), nearly half [20].

LAW: The law varies enormously; charity and education regulation is generally weaker than in North America.

DOCUMENTED General Conference statistical reports show the membership centre of gravity has moved decisively south while institutional wealth and staffing have not.

EXIT: Exit costs vary, and are generally high where church schools and clinics are the available ones.

REGULATOR: National charity and education regulators oversee the church here; this is a card where the codex's own sourcing is thin and says so.

TELL: The majority of this church's members live under the governance of a structure whose institutional resources sit elsewhere. That imbalance is the most under-examined fact about global Adventism.

Sources for this section: [2] [20]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

This page covers the United States and Africa (as the membership centre of gravity). Your country changes what this tradition can do to you, and what you can do about it. If you live somewhere not listed, ask which of these cards your country most resembles. If you are a voter, note that each of these arrangements was chosen by a government.

23 The questions

BEFORE YOU READ

The six questions the documented record could not resolve. Each is set out below: why it is being asked, and a concrete example already on this page that it points back to.

QUESTION 1 OF 6

What did this congregation send to the conference last year, and what specifically was it spent on? May I have that in writing?

WHY THIS IS ASKED

Tithe that flows upward and out of sight is only accountable if someone downstream can see where it went. The question asks for that in writing, at congregation level.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The glance table records that tithe goes to the conference, which pays pastors' salaries, rather than to the local congregation, "deliberately separated from the church they can see."

QUESTION 2 OF 6

What does the church's own commissioned Veltman study conclude about literary dependence in Ellen White's writings, and how is that reconciled with how her authority is taught to my children?

WHY THIS IS ASKED

If the church's own commissioned study found substantial literary dependence, how her authority is taught should reflect that. The question asks whether it does.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The history section records Walter Rea's *The White Lie* (1982), and a church-commissioned study by Fred Veltman that later confirmed substantial dependence in *The Desire of Ages*. The glance table's unanswered question is: "What was the study for?"

QUESTION 3 OF 6

What happened at Glacier View in 1980, and what evidence would have been sufficient for the church to conclude that the investigative judgment was mistaken?

WHY THIS IS ASKED

Asking what evidence would have been enough tests whether the doctrine could ever have been revised. If no evidence would have been enough, the hearing was not an inquiry.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The history section records that at Glacier View in 1980, theologian Desmond Ford challenged the investigative-judgment doctrine and had his ministerial credentials withdrawn.

QUESTION 4 OF 6

Why were the 1919 Bible Conference transcripts unavailable to members for half a century, and who decided that?

WHY THIS IS ASKED

Leaders who privately discuss the limits of a prophetic claim, and then file the discussion away, are deciding what members may know. The question asks who made that decision.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The history section records that the 1919 Bible Conference debated the nature of Ellen White's inspiration, and that the transcripts were filed away and not published for decades.

QUESTION 5 OF 6

What is the total compensation of the senior executives in our health system, and where can a member read it?

WHY THIS IS ASKED

Church-affiliated health systems are large employers funded partly by members' trust. The question asks for the one number the page calls hardest to find.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The structure table lists Adventist Health and the university systems as corporate boards where "executive compensation here is the least-surfaced number in Adventist life."

QUESTION 6 OF 6

Under what circumstances can a pastor's credentials be withdrawn for a theological position, and who reviews that decision?

WHY THIS IS ASKED

Withdrawing credentials over a theological position ends an argument without answering it. The question asks for the procedure and the review.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The who-gets-hurt table records that doctrinal dissent "is answered by credential withdrawal rather than argument," where the credential is also the visa, the housing and the pension.

In closing

This page is unusual in this codex because several of its rows come out well. The officers here are elected and have been replaced by vote. There is no shunning doctrine. The church commissioned research into its own founder's writings and published findings that hurt. The hospitals and the schools are real, the relief work is independently evaluated, and the health message was right about diet before medicine was. An honest instrument has to be able to record that, and this one does.

What remains is narrower and older than any officer: a claim made in 1844 that was moved to a place where nobody could look, and has been protected ever since by withdrawing credentials from people who looked anyway. Everything else on this page — the tithe that flows past the congregation, the history the schools omit, the vote against women who were doing the work already — grows in the shade of that one unfalsifiable claim.

You do not have to leave to test it. Ask what evidence would have counted against the investigative judgment. Ask what the church's own study found. In a tradition this confident and this well-organized, those questions deserve documents — and they exist. Watch whether you are given them or moved past.

Sources for this section: [4] [7]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Choose one question and ask it this month, out loud, to a real person who could answer it. Then write down what happened. Were you answered, redirected, or told that asking was the problem? Whichever it was, the response is information.

24 Leaving safely here

BEFORE YOU READ

Practical, non-theological guidance for someone who needs to step back or step away safely. It is a safety document, not an argument.

Practical guidance, not legal advice.

1. **Leaving is legally free.** You can ask your local church in writing to remove your name.

2. **If you work for a church institution,** get advice on your employment rights first; Title VII still protects most non-ministerial staff in the US against sex discrimination and retaliation [13], but religious employers may lawfully prefer members of their own faith [21].
3. **Children in Adventist schools** can move schools; the costs are social.
4. **If you were abused,** go to the police first.
5. **Find support** [14] [15] [16].

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Even if this section is not for you, it may be for someone you know. Most people who leave a high-demand community say that the first person who listened without trying to argue them back mattered more than anything else. Could that person be you?

25 Where to get help

BEFORE YOU READ

Organizations that can help, each checked directly against its own site, with the date of the check. Nothing here is endorsed beyond that check.

Checked 2026-09-27.

ORGANIZATION	FOR	WHERE	CONTACT
Recovering from Religion	People questioning or leaving faith	US, Canada and online	**(844) 368-2848** [14]
Faith to Faithless	People leaving high-control religion	UK	**0800 448 0748** (freephone; Monday 10:00–13:00, Wednesday 10:00–13:00, Thursday 16:00–19:00 UK time) [15]
ICSA	Former members of high-control groups; families	International	Via website [16]
NAPAC	Adult survivors of childhood abuse	UK	**0808 801 0331** [17]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Save one contact now, before anyone needs it:

Recovering from Religion (people questioning or leaving faith; US, Canada and online). People in crisis rarely have the energy to research options. Having a name ready is one of the most useful things you can do for someone else.



26

Sources

BEFORE YOU READ

Every numbered citation on this page, with a named, checkable source. Spot-check a few before trusting the rest; that is the honest way to read any page in this book, including this one.

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10. Loma Linda and the Adventist Health Studies (a Blue Zone). https://adventisthealthstudy.org/

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WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Don't take this page's word for anything either. People tend to believe a claim more the more often they have heard it, whether or not it is true; this is the "illusory truth effect" (Hasher, Goldstein & Toppino, 1977). Spot-check three citations at random. If any fails, tell us, and it will be corrected and logged.

27 What changed on this page

BEFORE YOU READ

A dated log of what changed on this page: corrections, additions and new sources. Changes are logged in public rather than made quietly.

- **2026-10-03:** Corrected the account of Glacier View, which did publish statements reaffirming the doctrine; corrected how the Ellen G. White Estate's trustees are chosen and funded; updated the membership figure to 24.4 million (2025) and the Africa figure to nearly half; removed an unsupported claim about the 1919 transcripts; regraded three techniques and corrected the count of sourced ones; rewrote five loop summaries to match their steps; corrected which woman the 1982 court ruling concerned, the 2015 vote wording, Walter Rea's dismissal, the Title VII advice and the conflict-of-interest rules; added the 2025 British accounts and the 2022 session date.
- **2026-09-27:** Added Branches, Law & state, Money in numbers (British Union Conference accounts 2020–2024), three documented cases, Voices from inside, Leaving safely and Where to get help.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

This page keeps a public log of its own changes, mistakes included. Does the institution you belong to, give to, or were raised in keep one like it? If not, how would you know what it got wrong, and when?

Colophon

Set in EB Garamond (SIL Open Font License), regular, italic and bold, with true small capitals and old-style figures in text and lining tabular figures in tables. Laid out with Paged.js in Chromium from the same Markdown that feeds the website. US Letter, single-sided, tagged for accessibility and checked against PDF/UA-1 with veraPDF. Built 2026-10-27. Text checked 2026-10-03.

Palette: ink, oxblood, gold, cream, rule. Seven type sizes. Rules of 0.4 pt and 2 pt only.