



Helping Adventists find their roots thru discernment of truth and error

## William Warren Prescott – 1855 - 1944

William Warren Prescott was an influential administrator, educator and scholar. His parents had been Millerites in New England. He received his academia higher education at Dartmouth, one of only two universities in the country at the time. He taught Latin and Greek while still in his last year in academy. He was the principal of two Vermont high schools from 1877 to 1880. Later he owned and edited the “State Republican” in Montpelier, Vermont.

Prescott at the age of 30 was President of Battle Creek College. He helped form Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska becoming it’s first President in 1891. In late 1892 he became the President of Walla Walla College in Washington as well. In that year he would serve as President for three Adventist colleges.

While traveling abroad in Australia, he helped to start Avondale School for Christian Workers, now Avondale College. In 1901 he became Vice President of the General Conference, chairman of the Review & Herald Publishing board, and editor of the Review. He was field secretary of the General Conference from 1915 till he retired in 1937.

At one time Prescott was a staunch leader that got endorsements from Ellen White with powerful sermons and delivery that only a man blessed of God could give. He was a tall man with a powerful voice. People looked up to him physically and figuratively. Here is a sample of what Sister White wrote on the positive side supporting W.W. Prescott:

*“I know that since coming to this place he has had the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; his lips have been touched with a live coal from off the altar. We know and can distinguish the voice of the True Shepherd. The truth has been poured forth from the lips of the servant of God as the people had never heard it before; unbelievers turn pale and say, That man is inspired. The people do not stroll about the grounds, but go immediately into the tent, and listen as if spellbound.”* – Letter 82- Ellen White to James Edson White (son), November 1895, par. 15

*“The inspiration of the Spirit of God has been upon him. Unbelievers say, “These are the words of God. I never heard such things before.” We have had the truth presented in clear lines. Bro. Prescott has never had such power in preaching the 1 truth as he has had since coming to this meeting. The unbelievers sit with their eyes riveted on him in amazement, as the truth comes forth from his lips, vitalized by the Spirit of God.”* - The Word Became Flesh, W. W. Prescott. The Bible Echo, January 6 & 13, 1896

Prior to this praise and endorsement however, she had to correct him and warn him as she did in Letter 66, written in April 10, 1894. This sort of thing and quote you will not ever see shared by the modern conference churches or leaders. Prescott had written Sister White asking for an opinion regarding schools and education. His background in that field thru his own education was secular. And she had some concern that this influence was not the instruction coming from God, but referred to it as a “Unholy ambition”. She continues asking him to seek God, seek Jesus Christ that everything may be blessed in their efforts. Fanaticism of the day and outside influences that were not of God were knocking at the door every day.

Think about this line that she wrote to him:

*“Satanic agencies in disguise are on the track of every true worker of the Master.”*

Now for a more poignant message to Prescott:

*“This is our work for this time, to open the door to Jesus, and He will so fill the soul that there will be no room for self and selfishness. O listen, Jesus knocks. Will the answer be, “Come in, thou blessed of the Lord. Why standest thou without?” The imputed and imparted righteousness of Christ is a garment sufficient to cover the nakedness of the soul. I scarcely dare not to give counsel or advice, fearing it may not be interpreted aright. I beseech of you, my brother, whom I respect in the Lord, to make Christ your counsellor. You may go to Him in all your troubles, you may rely upon His wisdom, you may know that He will not upbraid you or refuse your prayer. Every burden or uncertainty you may bring to the Burden-bearer.*

*“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.” “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.” “And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true (God in heaven, the Father), and we are in him that is true (God in heaven, the Father), even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children keep yourselves from idols.” **The Lord is soon to come. We want that complete and perfect understanding which the Lord alone can give. It is not safe to catch the spirit from another. We want the Holy Spirit, which is Jesus Christ.** If we commune with God, we shall have strength and grace and efficiency.*

*It is as I have told you; there will be counterfeit messages coming from persons in all directions. One after another will rise up, appearing to be inspired, when they have not the inspiration of heaven, but are under the deception of the enemy. All who receive their messages will be led astray. Then let us walk carefully, and not open wide the door for the enemy to enter through impressions, dreams, and visions. God help us to look in faith to Jesus, and be guided by the words He has spoken.” - Letter 66, April 10, 1894, par. 17, 18, 33 (added by editor for clarification)*

Sadly it is Prescott who is responsible from moving us into what we are today. He knew what the Pioneers knew and believed. Prescott was a by-product of over education by the wrong people. Something happens when you have gained power and harkened to the voice of the enemy. And he moved us into a modern church that was a church that use to be orthodox, pure. He was exposed to worldly views about God and reading books from Sunday keeping scholars and authors poisoned him.

These scriptures give you a point to ponder on this topic of Prescott:

Romans 1:25 - **“Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator?”**

Romans 1:21 - **“they glorified Him not as God, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.”**

Did James White have a doctors degree? No. Did John Loughborough have a doctors degree? No. Did J.N. Andrews have a doctors degree? No. Do you see the problem or sense it? People with doctors degrees’ can and do look down on others without, as ignorant. They are just hicks. Uneducated. Even today our church’s “scholars” and “professors” make those claims. But the Pioneers were men led by God thru earnest and honest bible study. There were no scholars with Jesuit influence. No theologians with that trace of Romanism in them.

So in 1895 we have Ellen White thinking favorably about William Prescott and 15 years later she is writing negatively about him and Conference President Arthur G. Daniells.

Soon after becoming leader of the church in 1901, Elder Daniells was brought into close association with W. W. Prescott, former president of Battle Creek College. As editor of the Review and Herald and vice-president of the General Conference during the period of 1901 to 1909, Prescott worked closely with Daniells. So along the way Prescott picked up an audience in Daniells and influence.

And now they were treading and tending to where the enemy was leading them. Starting to scrutinize the books, the writings of our pioneers. Questioning the personality and nature of God. This will come to a full effect once Sister White passes away five years later in 1915. And in 1919, they would lead a charge to question the inspiration and writings of Sister White herself at a conference.

*“At this stage of our experience we are not to have our minds drawn away from the special light given [us] to consider at the important gathering of our conference. And there was Brother Daniells, whose mind the enemy was working; and your mind and Elder Prescott’s mind were being worked by the angels that were expelled from heaven. Satan’s work was to divert your minds, that jots and tittles should be brought in which the Lord did not inspire you to bring in. They were not essential. But this meant much to the cause of truth. And the ideas of your minds, if you could be drawn away to jots or tittles, is a work of Satan’s devising. To correct little things in the books written you suppose would be doing a great work. But I am charged, Silence is eloquent.”*

*“And I was shown from the first that the Lord had given neither Elders Daniells nor Prescott the burden of this work. Should Satan’s wiles be brought in, should this “daily” be such a great matter as to be brought in to confuse minds and hinder the advancement of the work at this important period of time?.....Satanic agencies would commence his work, and there would be confusion brought into our ranks. You have no call to hunt up the difference of opinion that is not a testing question; but your silence is eloquence.”*

*“Your loud proclamation was not under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. I was instructed to say to you that your picking flaws in the writings of men that have been led of God is not inspired of God. And if this is the wisdom that Elder Daniells would give to the people, by no means give him an official position, for he cannot reason from cause to effect. Your silence on this subject is your wisdom. Now, everything like picking flaws in the publications of men who are not alive is not the work God has given any of you to do. For if these men—Elders Daniells and Prescott—had followed the directions given in working the cities, there would have been many, very many, convinced of the truth and converted, able men that [now] are in positions where they never will be reached.”* - Manuscript 67 - 1910, par. 2, 6, 7

**Calling out Arthur G. Daniells:**

*“I have been instructed that such hasty movements should not have [been] made [such] as selecting you as president of the conference even another year. .... you had no moral right to blaze out as you did upon the subject of the “daily” and suppose your influence would decide the question.”* - Manuscript 67 - 1910, par. 11

Daniells was President for 10 years when Sister White said he shouldn’t be president for even another year. Yet he would go on for another 10 years! The “daily” that is being discussed here is the daily sacrifice mentioned in Daniel 8. Uriah Smith (Adventist Pioneer) had wrote extensively on it and Sister White endorsed it among others. Now Prescott and Daniells were out to change the meaning of it, which is the result of today’s teaching on the daily.

Referring to not counseling with Elders Haskell and Irwin who did all the heavy lifting of the church, Sister White scolded Daniells and Prescott:

*“Where was your respect for the men of age? What authority could you exercise without taking all the responsible men to weigh the matter? But let us now investigate the matter. We must now reconsider whether it is the Lord’s judgment, in the face of the work that has been neglected, of showing your zeal to carry the work even another year. If you should carry the work another year with the help that shall unite with you, there should be a change take place in you (Daniells) and Elder Prescott. And humble your own hearts before God. The Lord will have to see in you a showing of a different experience; for if ever men needed to be reconverted at this present (time), it is Elder Daniells and Elder Prescott.*

*“Let the books alone. If any change is essential, God will have the harmony in that change consistent; but when a message has been entrusted to men with the large responsibilities involved, [God] demands faithfulness that will work by love and purify the soul. Elders Daniells and Prescott both need reconversion. A strange work has come in, and it is not in harmony with the work Christ came to our world to do; and all who are truly converted will work the works of Christ.”*

- Manuscript 67 - 1910, par. 12, 14

Here she says, “Let the books alone”. In other words, leave them alone. Stop messing with them. Stop even thinking about messing with them.

*“What would you gain if mistakes are brought before the men who have departed from the faith and given heed to seducing spirits? Men who were not long ago with us in the faith, will you stand on the devil’s side? Give your attention to the unworked fields. A worldwide work is before us.*

*I was given representations of John Kellogg. A very attractive personage was representing the ideas of the specious arguments that he was presenting, sentiments different from the genuine Bible truth. And those who are hungering and thirsting after something new were advancing ideas [so specious] that Elder Prescott was in great danger. Elder Daniells was in great danger [of becoming wrapped in a delusion that if these sentiments could be spoken everywhere, it would be as a new world.]” - Manuscript 67 - 1910, par. 17*

And this new world would happen in the decades that would follow.

*“Yes, it would; but while their minds were thus absorbed, I was shown that Brother Daniells and Brother Prescott were weaving into their experience sentiments of a spiritualistic appearance and drawing our people to beautiful sentiments that would deceive, if possible, the every elect. I have to trace with my pen [the fact] that these brethren would see defects in their delusive ideas that would place the truth in an uncertainty; and [yet] they [would] stand out as [if they had] great spiritual discernment. Now I am to tell them [that] when I was shown this matter, when Elder Daniells was lifting up his voice like a trumpet in advocating his ideas of the “daily,” the after results were presented. Our people were becoming confused. I saw the result, and then there were given me cautions that if Elder Daniells without respect to the outcome should thus be impressed and let himself believe he was under the inspiration of God, skepticism would be sown among our ranks everywhere, and we should be where Satan would carry his messages. Set unbelief and skepticism would be sown in human minds, and strange crops of evil would take the place of truth.” - Manuscript 67 - 1910, par. 18*

*“If these men will now be able to discern [their errors, the Lord promises] “I will heal them.” But if they go on picking flaws in the messages God has given, [He declares], “I will remove My Spirit from them.” Our work is not [to] be confined so largely to holding meetings among believers. We must work the cities. I am doubtful of Elder Daniells’ being entrusted [with the work] as president of the conference, because he cannot discern from cause to effect. His position carries a weight of assurance that will make him a man [whom the people will feel is] to be trusted, when I see spiritual blindness has come upon him. Were Elder Daniells genuinely converted at the General [Conference] and Elder Prescott, I could then feel some courage to confide in his judgment when to speak and how to deliver the messages the Lord has for His people.”*

- Manuscript 67 - 1910, par. 18, 19

And the evil one had A.G. Daniells in his grasp with his need for power as he was a GC president for 21 years. At one point Sister White said he should not be the president for even one more year. This besides the fact that she felt we should not have one man at the top as president of the General Conference. And he would remain ten more years as previously mentioned which would extend past her death.

According to Herbert Camden Lacey’s letter response to Leroy Froom on August 30, 1945, he testifies that back in 1896 at Corranbong, W.W. Prescott was doing a presentation and what and how he was presenting, went against the norm of what was being taught in Adventism at the time. With all that education and status that Prescott had earned, he was always referred to as “Professor”.

**“Professor Prescott was tremendously interested in presenting Christ as the great ‘I AM’ of Exodus 3:14, which of course was Christ the Second Person of the Godhead, with the statement of Jesus in John 8:58, which we all agreed to; but then linked it up also with other ‘I ams’ in that Gospel—7 of them, such as ‘I am the Bread of Life’ ‘I am the Light of the World’ ‘I am the Door of the Sheep’**

etc. all very rich in their spiritual teaching—but which those latter cases is merely the copula in the Greek, as well as in the English. **But he insisted on his interpretation.**”

Here you can sense the work of the enemy working within our leaders at the time. What a debacle!

There was at one time, a presentation by “Professor” Prescott, and he brought up the word “beginning” when talking about Christ’s existence. He was planting the thought that Christ did not have a beginning. This was opposite to the beliefs at the time. As his response moved away from the begotten concept, Herbert Lacey asked: **“Can we go one step further and say that the word was without beginning?”** (the “word” here is Jesus)

Prescott responded, **“I was going to raise the question. Are we agreed in such a general statement as this, that the Son of God is co-eternal with the Father? Is that the view that is taught in our schools?”**

Here Prescott is planting a seed and casting doubt. Prescott knew very well what our denominational belief was. And it wasn’t what he was propagating. Our belief was that at some time in eternity, Jesus had a beginning and was brought forth by God, begotten. And Prescott wanted to erase that and make us equal with the rest of Christendom which is part of the Trinity doctrine.

Prescott continued: **“Not to teach that is Arianism. Ought we continue to circulate in a standard book a statement that the Son is not co-eternal, that the Son is not co-eval or co-eternal with the Father? That makes him a finite being. An being whose beginning we can fix is a finite being.”**

They are looking to change and take our beliefs in a different direction. These beliefs are the ones held today. Was it done by God? No. Was it done in an honest way? No. It’s time to take our temperature and see if we are awake.