

Chapter 5

Do You Know You Live by the Gospel of RGB?

“But now abide faith, hope, and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”

1 Corinthians 13:13

Well, here we are again, comfy chairs and all. (I pray that you are in a comfortable position wherever you are.) I hope you had a good rest and took a little time to think about what we discussed last time. Even as an overview, I know it was a lot to absorb in one sitting. But I’m trying to limit my discussion to only a review of the characteristics that you and I—as Seventh-day Adventists—share with Christians in general. I am praying that you’ll take some time when you are alone to think about and to solidify in your own mind these basic concepts.

And I’m going to trust that you and I don’t need to read all of our Bible texts together. We’ll read some because the words speak directly to a concept I will share. But please don’t let me get away with dropping in Bible texts that you’ve not checked out for yourself. This is not about my

opinion of what the Bible says. Be a good Berean (Acts 17:10, 11). Study “to see whether these things were so.”

Having said that, let’s look at Genesis 3:1.

It’s a beautiful day in the garden where Eve is wandering by herself. She finds herself near the tree—the tree that Adam and Eve were told to avoid. She wonders to herself why they should have to avoid it. She comes closer. She remembers that she and Adam were told often enough to stay away. Something called “death” will happen if they touch it or eat it.

She is standing right under it. It certainly looks harmless enough.

A voice speaks. Eve is startled. She has never heard any voice but the voice of Adam and the

voice of God. It's a pleasant voice. Where is the voice coming from?

"Has God said you shall not eat from every tree of the garden?"

Of course not, she thinks. "From the trees of the garden we may eat," she says. *To whom am I talking?* she wonders. Then she recites from memory, "But from the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, for then you will die.'"

She's not sure what "die" means. She has never seen anything dead. She has heard the story of the war in heaven. She knows about the unhappiness and the loss of contact with God. But did anyone die? She has never seen anything stop living.

"You will not surely die," the voice says.

Now Eve can see that it's a serpent which is talking to her, a serpent in the tree, a serpent that is obviously eating the forbidden fruit. And he isn't dead. He's very much alive—and talking!

"For God knows that in the day you eat from it—your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil," the serpent says.

"And when Eve saw that

1. The tree was good for food
2. That it was a delight to the eyes
3. And that the tree was desirable to make one wise,

she took from its fruit and ate" (Genesis 3:1–6).

Let's stop right here. Did you see those three go by? Good for food; delight to the eyes; desirable to make one wise. Let's see the same three in 1 John 2:16. Turn there with me. "For all that is in the world, [1] the lust of the flesh and [2] the lust of the eyes and [3] the boastful pride of life." Here are the same three in a slightly different form.

Please note: it's a set of three. Sin came into the world in a set of three. And the solution to the Sin problem came in a set of three. If we were to turn to Matthew 4 (you can turn there if you like and see it for yourself), we would see that Jesus

overcame the temptations of the evil one in a set of three. I want you to consider this concept—a set of three. The Gospel is always presented in a set of three. The plan of salvation is always presented in a set of three. And I call this set of three—R-G-B.

Maybe you have a DVD player or a fancy television at home; most everyone does. Have you ever looked at the variety of ways to hook up things to it? If you looked on the back of your DVD player or television, you would find that one of the plug-in options is a section with three colors—red, green, blue—R-G-B. I want to plant this in your brain so that every time you see R-G-B you will think of God, the plan of salvation, and the gospel.

As I have studied my Bible over the years, I have found a great many instances of a set of three. Ephesians 2:5, 6, Titus 2:11–13, and 2 Peter 1:1–4, 5–9, 10, 11 would be three quick examples as well as multiple instances in Revelation 1, but I will not attempt to mention them all. Instead I want to introduce the concept of R-G-B to you through one of Paul's famous scriptures. "But now abide Faith, Hope and Love, these three; but the greatest of these is Love" (1 Corinthians 13:13, NKJV).

In our last conversation we talked about the Covenant Grace-Faith Relationship as a single concept. Today I want to break that concept down into its three parts and look at the contribution each one makes to the whole.

*The Gospel is always presented
in a set of three.*
