

BAPTISMAL VOWS

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Appendix A

Baptismal Vows Suggestion, R.A. Underwood, 1920

1. Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour and his word as your teacher in all things pertaining to your moral obligations to God and to your fellow beings?

2. Have you the evidence that Christ has accepted you and forgiven your sins?

3. Do you take the Bible, including both the Old and the New Testaments, to be the supreme guide in your Christian life? (This, of course, would not exclude reading or instruction from outside sources that might be of worth.)

4. Do you recognize in your baptismal vow that you are taking upon yourself the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and that these omnipotent powers are pledged to you, as a child of God, to give you faith and power to live the Christian life?

5. Do you take the Bible, above all other books and above all other teaching and counsel of men, to be the standard of your daily living in the development of a perfect Christian life, and do you hereby promise to make the Bible your daily study and companion?

6. Do you recognize your baptismal vow as a fitting memorial of the death of the old man of sin and of a resurrection to a new life in Christ Jesus, and further, that the baptismal sacrament also shows your faith in a resurrection from the dead to a life that shall know no end? Rom. 6: 3-6.

7. In accepting membership in the body of Christ, his church, do you recognize your obligation to become a co-worker with Jesus Christ in the work of saving others; and that you are to follow in the steps of your Master in self-denial and sacrifice, for the good of those about you?

8. Do you recognize that the Scriptures place obligation upon every person to render to God an amount equal to at least one tenth of his income, for the support of the gospel; that this is a personal recognition that Jesus Christ has "bought us" and all that we possess, and that we are simply his "stewards" and not our own, and that in rendering to him a portion of our substance we are recognizing Christ as the one that has purchased us with his own blood? 1 Cor. 7: 23; Lev. 27: 30.

9. Do you recognize that the Scriptures teach that we are to preserve the body given us by the Lord in the most perfect condition for service, and therefore, that we are to eat and drink and dress, and conduct our daily lives in a manner that will be becoming to a perfect follower of Christ? 1 Cor. 6: 19, 20. This leads us to eat "for strength and not for drunkenness." Eccl. 10: 17. It leads us, as Christians, to dress in modest apparel and not for show and the gratification of human pride. 1 Tim. 2: 9.

10. Do you understand that in prayer we are invited to come into the presence of our Creator, the great "I AM," and there "shut the door," and hold sweet communion with God? In this blessed privilege and duty is found the secret of power and success in the Christian life. Matt. 6: 6.

11. So far as you have studied the Scriptures, are you in harmony with the teaching of Seventh-day Adventists as a denomination, and do you desire to connect with this Christian body of believers, and to pledge your moral and financial assistance in extending the gospel at home and abroad as far as God shall give you the ability?

R. A. UNDERWOOD.

Appendix B

Baptismal Vow, 1932 Church Manual

Suggestive Outline for Examination.—The following statement forms a suggestive outline of the principles to be understood and accepted by candidates for baptism. This is not in any sense intended to be a formation of a creed. Its purpose is solely to help workers and church officers in performing a necessary duty in the examination of candidates for baptism and church membership.

1. Do you believe in the existence of God as a personal being, who is our heavenly Father?
2. Do you believe in the Lord Jesus as the eternal Son of God, and as the Saviour and Redeemer of mankind? Have you fully accepted Him as your personal Saviour, and the salvation He offers through grace?
3. Do you believe in the Holy Spirit and in His work in leading to repentance and obedience to all God's requirements?
4. Do you accept the Bible as the inspired word of God, and will you study faithfully its teachings and by the grace of God practice them in your life?
5. Do you believe in conversion as an experience spoken of by Christ as the new birth?
6. Have you confessed your sins to God, as far as they have been made known to you; and have you on your part, as far as in you lies, tried to make wrongs right with your fellow men?
7. Do you claim by faith in Christ that God for Christ's sake has forgiven your past sins, and that He is yours and you are His?
8. So far as you have studied and investigated the doctrines as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, do you believe in and accept them?
9. Do you believe in the second coming of Jesus, which is taught in the Scriptures as the blessed hope, and that this event is soon to take place, and that you should prepare for His coming by being purified from sin and evil?
10. Recognizing obedience as the fruit of faithful love, do you believe that all ten of the commandments as spoken by the Lord are still binding, and by God's grace will you keep those commandments, the fourth with the rest, observing as sacred the seventh-day Sabbath from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday?
11. Do you recognize the fact that God claims one tenth of all our substance as His for the support of His work in advancing the gospel of Christ; and will you faithfully render to Him His own—the tithe and offerings in the support of the world-wide work of the church?
12. Do you believe that man by nature is mortal, and that immortality and eternal life come only through the gospel and are bestowed as the free gift of God through Christ at His second coming?
13. Do you believe that we are living in the time of the investigative judgment, which began in 1844, and that Christ, as our High Priest, is closing His ministry in the most holy apartment of the heavenly sanctuary in preparation for His coming?
14. Do you believe that the closing gospel message is now going to the world and will be finished in this generation; and will you use your means, as God impresses you, your time, and your talents, that others may be blessed with the light of truth that has brought blessing and light to you?*
15. Will you seek to build up the interests of the church by attendance at its meetings and ordinances, and by adding your influence to extend its work while the church, on their part, exercise their watchcare over you?
16. Do you understand the principles of Christian temperance as taught by Seventh-day Adventists, and will you carry out those principles in your life, abstaining from the use of intoxicating liquors, tobacco in all its forms, swine's flesh, and all other unclean foods and habit-forming drugs?*
17. In matters of dress will you follow the Bible rule of plainness and simplicity, abstaining from the wearing of gold as ornaments and costly array, observing the principles of modesty and Christian dignity?
18. Do you believe the Bible doctrine of "spiritual gifts" in the church, and do you believe in the gift of the Spirit of prophecy which has been manifested in the remnant church through the ministry and writings of Mrs. E. G. White?
19. Do you believe in baptism by immersion, and is it your desire, by going forward in this ordinance, to manifest your faith in the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ?

20. Do you, by going forward in baptism, thus declare that from henceforth you will have no part in such soul-destroying amusements as card playing, theater going, dancing, and all other entertainments and amusements which tend to deaden and destroy the spiritual life and perceptions?
21. Will you submit to the decisions of the body of the church in matters of church discipline?

Appendix C

Baptismal Vow, 1941 Church Manual

Baptismal Vow.—The following questions should be answered in the affirmative before the church by candidates for baptism:

1. Do you believe in God the Father, in His Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit?

2. Do you accept the death of Jesus Christ, on Calvary, as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of men, and believe that through faith in His shed blood men are saved from sin and its penalty?

3. Renouncing the world and its sinful ways, have you accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, and do you believe that God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven your sins, and given you a new heart?

4. Do you accept by faith the righteousness of Christ, recognizing Him as your Intercessor in the heavenly sanctuary, and do you claim His promise to strengthen you by His indwelling Spirit, so that you may receive power to do His will?

5. Do you believe that the Bible is God's inspired word, and that it constitutes the only rule of faith and practice for the Christian?

6. Do you accept the ten commandments as still binding upon Christians, and is it your purpose, by the power of the indwelling Christ, to keep this law, including the fourth commandment, which requires the observance of the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath of the Lord?

7. Knowing and understanding the fundamental Bible principles as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, is it your purpose, by God's grace, to order your life in harmony with these principles?

8. Is the soon coming of Jesus "a blessed hope" in your heart, and is it your settled determination to prepare to meet Him in peace, as well as to help others to get ready for His coming?

9. Do you believe in church organization, and is it your purpose to support the church by your personal effort, means, and influence?

10. Do you accept the New Testament teaching of baptism by immersion, and do you desire to be so baptized as a public expression of your faith in the forgiveness of your sins and of acceptance with Christ?

11. Do you believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church constitutes the remnant church, and do you desire to be accepted into its membership?

Appendix D

Baptismal Vow, 1951 Church Manual

Baptismal Vow.—In the presence of the church the following questions should be answered in the affirmative by candidates for baptism.

1. Do you believe in God the Father, in His Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit?

2. Do you accept the death of Jesus Christ on Calvary as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of men, and believe that through faith in His shed blood men are saved from sin and its penalty?

3. Renouncing the world and its sinful ways, have you accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, and do you believe that God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven your sins and given you a new heart?

4. Do you accept by faith the righteousness of Christ, recognizing Him as your Intercessor in the heavenly sanctuary, and do you claim His promise to strengthen you by His indwelling Spirit, so that you may receive power to do His will?

5. Do you believe that the Bible is God's inspired word, and that it constitutes the only rule of faith and practice for the Christian?

6. Do you accept the Ten Commandments as still binding upon Christians; and is it your purpose, by the power of the indwelling Christ, to keep this law, including the fourth commandment, which requires the observance of the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath of the Lord?

7. Do you believe that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and that you are to honor God by caring for your body in abstaining from such things as alcoholic beverages, tobacco in all its forms, and from unclean foods? (See pp. 33, 54, 200.)

8. Do you accept the doctrine of spiritual gifts, and do you believe that the Spirit of prophecy is one of the identifying marks of the remnant church? (See pp. 34, 54.)

9. Is the soon coming of Jesus the blessed hope in your heart, and is it your settled determination to prepare to meet Him in peace, as well as to help others to get ready for His glorious appearing?

10. Do you believe in church organization, and is it your purpose to support the church by your tithes and offerings, your personal effort, and influence? (See also pp. 53, 82, 184-186.)

11. Do you accept the New Testament teaching of baptism by immersion, and do you desire to be so baptized as a public expression of your faith in Christ and in the forgiveness of your sins? (See also pp. 55, 58, 80, 86, 89.)

12. Knowing and understanding the fundamental Bible principles as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, is it your purpose, by the grace of God, to order your life in harmony with these principles?

13. Do you believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church constitutes the remnant church, and do you desire to be accepted into its membership?

Appendix E

Baptismal Vow, 1981 Church Manual

Baptismal Vow and Baptism

Baptismal Vow.—In the presence of the church or in the presence of a properly appointed body (see pp. 59, 60), the following questions should be posed and answered in the affirmative by candidates for baptism, and by those being received on profession of faith.

1. Do you believe in God the Father, in His Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit?

2. Do you accept the death of Jesus Christ on Calvary as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of men, and believe that through faith in His shed blood men are saved from sin and its penalty?

3. Renouncing the world and its sinful ways, have you accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, and do you believe that God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven your sins and given you a new heart?

4. Do you accept by faith the righteousness of Christ, recognizing Him as your Intercessor in the heavenly sanctuary, and do you claim His promise to strengthen you by His indwelling Spirit, so that you may receive power to do His will?

5. Do you believe that the Bible is God's inspired word, and that it constitutes the only rule of faith and practice for the Christian?

6. Do you accept the Ten Commandments as still binding upon Christians; and is it your purpose, by the power of the indwelling Christ, to keep this law, including the fourth commandment, which requires the observance of the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath of the Lord?

7. Is the soon coming of Jesus the blessed hope in your heart, and are you determined to be personally

ready to meet the Lord, and to do all in your power to witness to His loving salvation, and by life and word to help others to be ready for His glorious appearing?

8. Do you accept the Biblical teaching of spiritual gifts, and do you believe that the gift of prophecy in the remnant church is one of the identifying marks of that church? (See pp. 39, 40, 293.)

9. Do you believe in church organization, and is it your purpose to support the church by your tithes and offerings, your personal effort, and influence? (See also pp. 41, 87, 203-206, 292.)

10. Do you believe that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and that you are to honor God by caring for your body, avoiding the use of that which is harmful, abstaining from all unclean foods, from the use, manufacture, or sale of alcoholic beverages, the use, manufacture, or sale of tobacco in any of its forms for human consumption, and from the misuse of, or trafficking in, narcotics or other drugs?

11. Knowing and understanding the fundamental Bible principles as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, is it your purpose, by the grace of God, to order your life in harmony with these principles?

12. Do you accept the New Testament teaching of baptism by immersion, and do you desire to be so baptized as a public expression of your faith in Christ and in the forgiveness of your sins? (See also p. 288.)

13. Do you believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the remnant church of Bible prophecy, and that people of every nation, race, and language are invited and accepted into its fellowship? Do you desire membership in this local congregation of the world church?

Appendix F

Baptismal Commitment, 2000 Church Manual

1. I believe there is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three coeternal Persons.

2. I accept the death of Jesus Christ on Calvary as the atoning sacrifice for my sins and believe that by God's grace through faith in His shed blood I am saved from sin and its penalty.

3. I accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and personal Saviour and believe that God, in Christ, has forgiven my sins and given me a new heart, and I renounce the sinful ways of the world.

4. I accept by faith the righteousness of Christ, my Intercessor in the heavenly sanctuary, and accept His promise of transforming grace and power to live a loving, Christ-centered life in my home and before the world.

5. I believe that the Bible is God's inspired Word, the only rule of faith and practice for the Christian. I covenant to spend time regularly in prayer and Bible study.

6. I accept the Ten Commandments as a transcript of the character of God and a revelation of His will. It is my purpose by the power of the indwelling Christ to keep this law, including the fourth commandment, which requires the observance of the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath of the Lord and the memorial of Creation.

7. I look forward to the soon coming of Jesus and the blessed hope when "this mortal shall . . . put on immortality." As I prepare to meet the Lord, I will witness to His loving salvation by using my talents in personal soul-winning endeavor to help others to be ready for His glorious appearing.

8. I accept the biblical teaching of spiritual gifts and believe that the gift of prophecy is one of the identifying marks of the remnant church.

9. I believe in church organization. It is my purpose to worship God and to support the church through my tithes and offerings and by my personal effort and influence.

10. I believe that my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit; and I will honor God by caring for it, avoiding the use of that which is harmful; abstaining from all unclean foods; from the use, manufacture, or sale of alcoholic beverages; the use, manufacture, or sale of tobacco in any of its forms for human consumption; and from the misuse of or trafficking in narcotics or other drugs.

11. I know and understand the fundamental Bible principles as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I purpose, by the grace of God, to fulfill His will by ordering my life in harmony with these principles.

12. I accept the New Testament teaching of baptism by immersion and desire to be so baptized as a public expression of faith in Christ and His forgiveness of my sins.

13. I accept and believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the remnant church of Bible prophecy and that people of every nation, race, and language are invited and accepted into its fellowship. I desire to be a member of this local congregation of the world church.

Appendix G

Alternate Vow, 2005 Church Manual

1. Do you accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord, and do you desire to live your life in a saving relationship with Him?
2. Do you accept the teachings of the Bible as expressed in the Statement of Fundamental Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and do you pledge by God's grace to live your life in harmony with these teachings?
3. Do you desire to be baptized as a public expression of your belief in Jesus Christ, to be accepted into the fellowship of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and to support the church and its mission as a faithful steward by your personal influence, tithes and offerings, and a life of service?

Appendix H

Ellen White's References to Baptismal Vows

A sampling of White's references to baptismal vows are given below.

Baptismal vows are a pledge of our allegiance to God. "As Christians submit to the solemn rite of baptism, He registers the vow that they make to be true to Him. This vow is their oath of allegiance. They are baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Thus they are united with the three great powers of heaven."¹ Here White appears to consider the rite of baptism itself as a form of a vow to God. The way she describes this allegiance to God is through renouncing the world, observing God's law, and choosing to walk in a new life. Those who pledge such allegiance are enabled with God's power to fulfill His desires for them.²

Baptismal vows are a sign of adoption. "All who enter into a covenant with Jesus Christ become by adoption the children of God. They are cleansed by the regenerating power of the Word, and angels are commissioned to minister unto them. They are baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."³ The way we can see this adoption is that the person is dead to the allurements of worldly desire, they engage in heavenly conversation, and through the Spirit, they demonstrate a powerful influence for God. This is what Ellen White describes as the new life that a person enters into upon baptism.⁴

Seek the heavenly things. "Those who have taken part in the solemn rite of baptism have pledged themselves to seek for those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."⁵ To seek the things of heaven means to use the power that Christ gives you to rise to greater spiritual understanding and to make changes in word and action so that your life may become in closer harmony to the life of Christ.⁶

Baptismal vows are a sign of undivided affections to the Lord. "The new converts to the truth should be faithfully instructed in the plain 'Thus saith the Lord.' The Word of the Lord is to be read and explained to them point by point. All who enter upon the new life should understand, prior to their baptism, that the Lord requires the undivided affections."⁷ Here White points out that those who are baptized do so as a sign of their affections to God: that is, that they love God and keep his commandments.

Baptismal vows serve as a renunciation of the world. "Those who are baptized in the threefold name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, at the very entrance of their Christian life declare publicly that they have forsaken the service of Satan and have become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King."⁸ To renounce the world and forsake the service of Satan means to come out of the world and enter the kingdom of God. It means leaving behind worldly ambitions and desires and instead joining Christ in his eternal life.⁹

Baptismal vows mark commitment to do good works. "By baptism they pledged themselves to a ministry of good works."¹⁰ Ellen White instructs new believers to seek out ways to practice their faith after baptism. The commitment at baptism is not only a commitment to hold beliefs, but it is a commitment to put those beliefs into action. One way that we can do this is through supporting and strengthening our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.¹¹

¹ Ellen G. White, *Letters and Manuscripts Vol. 18*: Letter 129, 1903. Retrieved from <https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/14068.7825001#7825002>.

² Ibid.

³ Ellen G. White, *Sons and Daughters Of God* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing, 1955), 15.

⁴ Ibid, 300.

⁵ Ellen G. White, *Messages to Young People* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing), 307.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases Vol. 6*: Manuscript no. 373, 1900. Retrieved from <https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/64.767>.

⁸ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church Vol. 6* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing, 1901), 91.

⁹ Ibid; Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church Vol. 9* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing, 1909), 133-134.

¹⁰ Ellen G. White, *SDA Bible Commentary Vol 6* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing, 1956), 1082.

¹¹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church Vol. 6*, 91-92; Ellen G., White, *Testimonies for the Church Vol. 5* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing, 1889), 480.