THREE KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING BLACK SDA HISTORY

Oakwood University 101
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Presenter: Delbert W. Baker, Ph.D.
Times Changed and Things Happen
But We Have to Respond Accordingly

$E + R = O$

Event + Response = Outcome
MISSION STATEMENT
Oakwood University, a historically Black Seventh-day Adventist institution of higher learning, provides quality Christian education that emphasizes academic excellence; promotes harmonious development of the mind, body, and spirit; and prepares leaders in service to God and humanity.

AIM: Education, Excellence, Eternity
MOTTO: Enter to Learn, Depart to Serve
Legacy of Service

Adell Warren (1920-1988)
Business Manager of Oakwood College for 29 years. Founder of the "Committee of 100." He made strategic and lasting contributions to the financial solvency of Oakwood College.

Etta Beatrice Dykes (1895-1986)
First African-American female to meet requirements for a doctoral degree in the United States. She served Oakwood College in the English Department from 1944 to 1975.

Anna Knight (1874-1972)
First woman of color to serve as a missionaries to India. She was a pioneer, educator, advocate, author, missionary, nurse, and church leader. She taught and inspired the students of Oakwood College.

Erie C. Ward (1924-2004)
Gave 60 years of service to the Seventh-day Adventist Church as pastor, evangelist, teacher, administrator, organizer, and builder. He was the driving force behind the construction of the Oakwood College Church.
Three KEYS to Understand . . .

♦ First: PROVIDENCE
  – God Delivers a People from Bondage

♦ Second: DELIVERANCE
  – A New Movement and a Liberated People

♦ Third: EDUCATION
  – The Plan, People, Place

♦ (Progress Today)
For Further Study on SDA Black History

2. *Righteous Rebel* (1990), Walter Fordham
4. *We Have Tomorrow* (1988), Louis Reynolds
7. *Angels in Ebony* (1975), Jacob Justiss
9. *Crucial Moments in Adventist History*, Benjamin Baker
FIRST KEY: Providence
10 The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect.

11 The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations.

12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people He has chosen as His own inheritance. (NKJV)
Nations and Providence

♦ In the annals of human history, the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as if dependent on the will and prowess of man; the shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, above, behind, and through all the play and counterplay of human interest and power and passions, the agencies of the All-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will.  {PK 499}
PROVIDENCE
Black SDA History: Four Pillars

1. God Guided People of Color

2. God Became Personally Involved Oppressed People

3. God Provided Resources and Events to Accomplish His Desired End

4. God is Still Providing Direction for People of Color in the SDA Church.
Israel/African American Parallel

- "Those who study the history of the Israelites should also consider the history of the slaves in America . . . .” (SW 42, 41)

- "The Hebrew nation is not the only nation that has been in cruel bondage, and whose groaning have come to the ears of the Lord of hosts. The Lord God of Israel has looked upon the vast number of human beings who were held in slavery in the United States of America."

- "God spoke concerning the captivity of the colored people as verily as He did concerning the Hebrew captives, and said: ‘I have surely seen the affliction of my people . . . , and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them.’ The Lord wrought in freeing the Southern slaves; but He designed to work still further for them as He did for the children of Israel, whom He took forth to educate, to refine, and ennoble.”
SECOND KEY: Deliverance
A New Movement

The Seventh-day Adventist Church began forming in the 1840s but officially formed and adopted the name Seventh-day Adventist in the middle 1860s.
Key People Who Influenced Adventism . . .

William Miller 1782-1849
Joseph Bates 1792-1872
Hiram Edson 1806-1882
Sojourner Truth 1797-1883

James White 1821-1881
Ellen White 1827-1915
William Foy’s First Vision: 
VICTORY January 18, 1842

♦ Place of reception:
  – Southark Street, Boston, while meeting with the 12th Street Baptist Church, George Black, Pastor.

♦ Focus:
  – The vision was about glory and reward to come.
  – It also warned the early Advent believers to be faithful regardless of circumstances.
  – It showed the early Advent movement traveling to the new earth.
Ellen Harmon Hears Foy

♦ In 1842, Ellen Gould Harmon (White), a teenager, and her father, Robert Harmon, heard Foy speak at Portland, Maine, during his several trips to that area.
Hazen Foss’ Vision

- The vision depicts the travel of the Advent people and Foss was clearly instructed to deliver what the message said to others.

- Unlike Foy, he declined to relate what he was shown.

Hazen Foss
The SDA Movement Begins

♦ In December, 1844, Ellen White received her first revelation for the Advent believers

♦ Thus began Ellen White’s ministry and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
Ellen White and Foy

♦ Ellen White met and conversed with Foy in 1845.
♦ Later that evening, Foy heard her relate what she had seen.
♦ When Foy heard her relate her experience, he jumped for joy and exclaimed, “it is just what I’ve seen.”
♦ Ellen White later spoke of how Foy had a “genuine experience” As to what become of Foy, she said, “I do not know what became of him.”
William Foy Dies, November 9, 1893

Facts
♦ Lived until 75
♦ Faithfully was a Pastor in the Maine area
♦ Preached 2nd Advent (till death)
♦ Buried-Birch Tree Cemetery

Frontal view of the Birch Tree Cemetery. The Foy marker is in the rear to the far right.
Epitaph

♦ Foy’s epitaph reads:

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of life.”

2 Timothy 4:7
A Liberated People

Black people are liberated in 1865 during the very year that the Seventh-day Adventist Church was formally organized and named.
Providence, Slavery, and Freedom

- Providential events . . .
  - . . . William Foy receives visions prior to Hazen Foss and Ellen White.
  - . . . Blacks revolt against the system of slavery.
  - . . . David Walker published his famous *Appeal* against slavery.
  - . . . Dred Scott sues for his freedom in the 1850s.

*Picture of slaves working on a southern plantation.*
Solution: Divide territory into two sections: northern with no slavery, southern with slavery.
1800
1811
1820
1834
1836
1837
1843
1846
1850
1852
1854
1856
1857
1858
1861
1862
1863
1865

Dred Scott born
Dred Scott, a slave, lives in Huntsville, AL on the property where Oakwood College now is
Missouri Compromise

Emerson and Scott live in Illinois
Emerson and Scott live in Wisconsin Territory

Emerson dies
Scott sues Eliza Emerson for his freedom
Scott wins; Emerson appeals
Missouri’s highest court rules Scott a slave
Scott appeals to U.S. Supreme Court

February 11: Case begins in Supreme Court

September 17: Dred Scott dies
Congress bans slavery from territories
Emancipation Proclamation frees slaves

Missouri Courthouse
Judge Taney
Civil War

Dred Scott, Oakwood College, and the Civil War

Time Line
Civil War (1861-65): “the irrepressible conflict”
**Appeal of SDA Beliefs to Black People Freed From Slavery . . .**

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THIRD KEY: Education
THE PLAN: Mission to Black America
MORNING STAR
(Moving Headquarters of the Black Work)
Southern Missionary Society: 1895-1901
Secret of Success

♦ *Gospel Herald*, December, 1899
(Printed aboard the *Morning Star*)

James Edson White: “We have ever regarded instruction coming from this source (*Spirit of Prophecy*) as the very highest authority. The instructions have been plain and explicit, and when followed, success has ever attended this work.”
THE PEOPLE: Three Change Agents
THE PLACE: Oakwood College
The Training Center
In regard to this school here at Huntsville, I wish to say that for the past two or three years I have been receiving instruction regarding it—what it should be and what those who come here as students are to become. All that is done by those connected with this school, whether they be white or black, is to be done with the realization that this is the Lord's institution...This is the Lord's land, and it is to bear fruit to his glory. Those who attend this school are to be taught in right lines, on the farm or in the school-room. They are to be taught how to live in close connection with God.

_Ellen G. White_
Morning Star House (1898): Where Ellen White Stayed When On Campus
17 Markers On Campus Identifying Historical Sites

Slave Cemetery
1800s

This cemetery site was used as a burial ground for slaves who lived on both the Peter Blow and Job Key plantations from 1811 to 1865. Dred Scott's first wife and their two children are believed to have been buried here. The cemetery continued to be used through the early 1900s.

Oakwood Historical Site

King Speech Site
1962

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., spoke here at a civil rights rally in 1962. Scenes of the Selma-to-Montgomery march are the only meeting place. The parking lot was constructed in a manner not expected by the state of Alabama, was honored to host the event.

Oakwood Historical Site
110 Years of Commitment to Service

The Eternal Flame symbolizes the legacy of Christian education passed from one generation of students to the next. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the passion of truth is to forever burn in the hearts of Oakwood man and Oakwood women.

Oakwood College
A Place of Beauty, Growth, and Learning
Progress Today
REGIONAL STATISTICS

♦ Membership
  – Approximately 300,000 members (83% of members are located in Regional or Black Administered Conferences)

♦ Tithe
  – Representing the second largest tithe base in the SDA world Church

♦ Ministry
  – Nine Black administered Regional (Black) Conferences (four entities-Calif & Bermuda), five Regionally supported ministries (e.g. OC, BOL, MM, RV, PF)

♦ Governance
  – Regional President’s Council and the Black Caucus of SDA Administrators (the Regional Ministries Office, headquarters for the Regional work, is located at OC)
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LOCATION OF CEMETERIES
SOUTH OF THE B&T COMPLEX OFF WYNN DRIVE
VISIT SLAVE CEMETERY—SOUTHERN PART OF CAMPUS OFF WYNN DRIVE (Approx. 30 minutes)

READ HEADSTONES AND THINK/VISUALIZE MEANING FOR THE PAST AND PRESENT

WRITE 1-2 PAGES (TYPEWRITTEN) OUTLINING YOUR REACTION AND WHAT THE SPOT MEANS TO YOU—TURN IN BY MONDAY, OCTOBER, 2008

TURN IN YOUR ASSIGNMENT TO YOUR INSTRUCTOR AS A PART OF YOUR CLASSWORK

INSTRUCTOR WILL SELECT/SUBMIT TWO FROM EACH CLASS FOR A SPECIAL CHAPEL AWARD . . .
To God be the glory!

Monument to Service
Enjoy Good Health

Have a Blessed Year!

FITNESS
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