Title: Diversity in the remnant concept in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (1841-1931)

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Abstract:

This study endeavors to find an answer to whether the unconventional concept that the SDA Church is not the end-time remnant, but a part of it, has any foundation in the history of Adventism, or is it just purely a new creation? To accomplish this goal, it investigates, traces, and describes the diversity of the remnant concept in the history of the SDA theology.

Chapter 2 describes the development of the remnant concept among Sabbatarian Adventists from 1841 to 1863. The term “a remnant” was generally connoted by Sabbatarians as being a few in numbers, the ones who would go through sufferings, but would be saved in the end. The term “the remnant” indicates the Sabbatarian position of being the whole remnant. However, some Sabbatarians surmised that the remnant concept was applicable to others outside of their company. Others, holding the concept of a remnant of remnants, believed that a final remnant would be gathered from among their ranks.

Chapter 3 examines the development of the remnant concept in the SDA Church from 1863 to 1872. Adventists in this period generally believed the term “a remnant” as the undermined small number of people who would at least be saved. They saw themselves as that definite small company and connected the remnant concept to the Laodicean Church. Some
Adventists declared that the Laodicean message was not only for Adventists but also for other Christians.

Chapter 4 surveys the development of the remnant concept in the SDA Church from 1872 to 1931. Adventists in this period generally accepted the idea that they were “the remnant” or “the last church.” However, some Adventists held that membership in the SDA Church would not guarantee salvation. Still others believed that a sifting process would determine the final remnant.

Chapter 5 concludes that the study found no direct declarations, within the periods covered, that explicitly expressed the SDA Church was a part of the remnant and not “the remnant.”