

“For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, “I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE, AND THE CLEVERNESS OF THE CLEVER I WILL SET ASIDE.” Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.”

(1 Corinthians 1:18–24 NAS95)



“Between the school established in Eden at the beginning and the school of the hereafter there lies the whole compass of this world's history--the history of human transgression and suffering, of divine sacrifice, and of victory over death and sin. Not all the conditions of that first school of Eden will be found in the school of the future life. No tree of knowledge of good and evil will afford opportunity for temptation. No tempter is there, no possibility of wrong. Every character has withstood the testing of evil, and none are longer susceptible to its power. "To him that overcometh," Christ says, "will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God." Revelation 2:7. The giving of the tree of life in Eden was conditional, and it was finally withdrawn. But the gifts of the future life are absolute and eternal.” {Ed 301-302}

The Spectrum of Religions					
Monotheism	Competing Dualism	Polytheism	Balancing Dualism	Monism	Atheism
Concept of God					
One transcendent God	Two opposing gods	Many gods	Two interacting forces	Impersonal oneness	No god
View of Humanity					
Part of creation, but a level above the animals	Made to battle evil	Can be influenced and even possessed by the spirits	A microcosm of the two forces	Caught in the illusion of separateness, but identical in essence to the oneness	A complex form of matter
Humanity's Primary Problem					
Breaking God's law; rebellion against God; failing to seek God's guidance	Choosing to do evil	Angering the gods	Living out of harmony with the ways of nature	Ignorance of one's innate divinity	Superstition and irrational thinking
The Solution					
Being Justified before God; living according to God's law; seeking His guidance.	Choosing to do right	Appeasing the gods	Living in harmony with the ways of nature	Realizing that our essence is the same as the oneness (enlightenment)	Applying rational thinking
The Afterlife					
Personhood continues in either heaven or hell	Personhood continues in either heaven or hell	Spirit world	Usually some form of the spirit world	Either to be reincarnated or to lose one's individuality by merging into the oneness	Nonexistence

“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.” (1 Corinthians 11:23–26 NAS95)

- “For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love” (Ephesians 3:14–17 NAS95)

“For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love,” (Ephesians 3:14–17 NAS95)

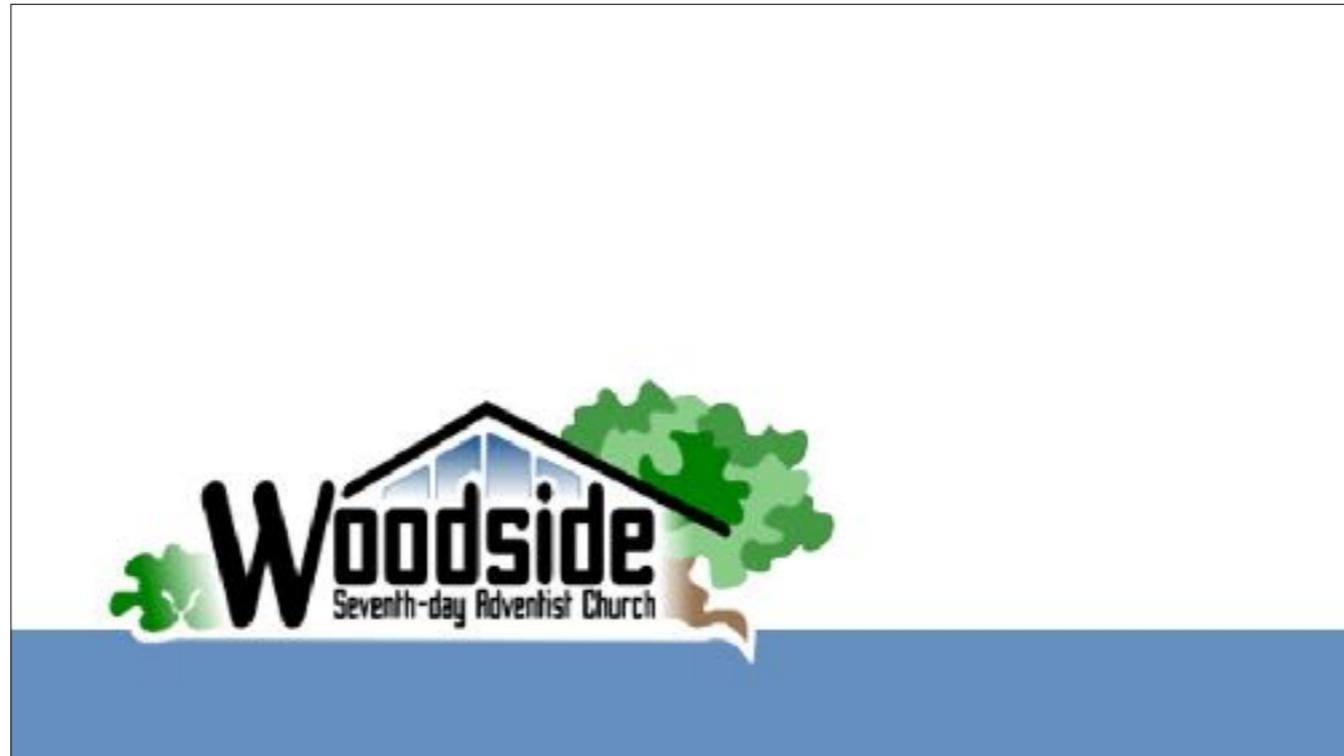


Illustration: The Banana Tree

The banana tree is sturdy and resilient even if it looks weak. Unbelievable as it seems to be, no fire or typhoon can kill it. Even if one cuts its body into a thousand pieces, it still can survive. The only way by which a banana tree can be prevented from growing again is to uproot it completely.

Tan, P. L. (1996, c1979). Encyclopedia of 7700 illustrations : A treasury of illustrations, anecdotes, facts and quotations for pastors, teachers and Christian workers. Garland TX: Bible Communications.