M15A1 Manipulation Analysis

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Chapter - 1 The Race To Control Minds

Satan invented mind control through manipulation. Amazingly he convinced a third of his fellow angels to imagine they had been mistreated in heaven and could enjoy a more fulfilling life under his leadership. Ellen White writes in the The Great Controversy, chapter 29 on the Origin of Evil that Satan concealed his “real purpose under an appearance of reverence for God.” He suggested that because by nature the angels were holy, they “should obey the dictates of their own will.” He suggested that in seeking greater honor for himself, he would “secure liberty for all the inhabitants of heaven, that by this means they might attain to a higher state of existence.” This argument is similar to his suggestion to Eve that by eating she could be like God.

The chapter goes on to say, “All the powers of his master mind were now bent to the work of deception, to secure the sympathy of the angels that had been under his command… Satan had represented that he was wrongly judged, that his position was not respected, and that his liberty was to be abridged. From misrepresentation of the words of Christ he passed to prevarication and direct falsehood, accusing the Son of God of a design to humiliate him before the inhabitants of heaven. He sought also to make a false issue between himself and the loyal angels… All whom he could not subvert and bring fully to his side he accused of indifference to the interests of heavenly beings… It was his policy to perplex the angels with subtle arguments concerning the purposes of God. Everything that was simple he shrouded in mystery, and by artful perversion cast doubt upon the plainest statements of Jehovah.” \*1

In preface to telling of these Satanic manipulations, White quotes from Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14. Ellen White doesn’t claim her writings add to scripture or are inherent. I want to remind the reader that White didn’t claim innerency. She says,

Not to Take the Place of the Word. The Lord desires you to study your Bibles. He has not given any additional light to take the place of His Word. This light is to bring confused minds to His Word, which, if eaten and digested, is as the lifeblood of the soul. Then good works will be seen as light shining in darkness. (Letter 130, 1901.) <https://whiteestate.org/legacy/issues-scripegw-html/>

Satan has in the past on earth been limited without omnipresence. Now with advances in communication, especially the internet Satan effectively overcomes this limitation. He can easily influence large masses. He manipulates today, like he did in heaven, to control minds without depending on reason alone. He loses when relying on reason alone.

Mind Control And The Bible

Most of us default to thinking about mind control in regard to politics and government. Putin provides the Russian population a one sided view of the war in Ukraine. He controls the media and arrests even individual protesters. He appeals to the Natzi German attack on Russia and their atrocities, ignoring Stalin’s atrocities, and labels Ukraine leadership as Natzis.

I like the lecturer’s story about the harm we inflict on our children when the primary goal in choosing a school is high academic achievement, ignoring immorality the children may be exposed to. Spiritual understandings are flayed by the course of instruction often taught in such schools, to say nothing about mixed sex dorms.

Paul in 2 Corinthians 11:3 says, "I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your MINDS should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ" (NASB). Revelation 9:4 speaks of God’s protection for those with “the seal of God in their foreheads.” God’s people follow him from a choice based on reason only. Those marked by the beast will have the mark in their hand or their forehead. Revelation 14:9 Satan doesn’t care if those who in essence worship him do so because of any form of reasoned choice but instead *may* worship him for convenience. Those in false worship may “believe a lie”, (2 Thessalonians 2:11) Satan’s lie. Since I believe that God’s elect is everyone, although many will refuse their election, I would understand God sending a strong delusion simply means that God permits Satan the leeway of manipulating human minds with deceit. Again like he did in heaven before being thrown out.

In 1 Peter 3:15, the apostle says that we should "set apart Christ as Lord in our HEARTS". If our obedience has to show in life, it has to originate in our mind. Proverbs 4:23 says, "Keep your HEART with all diligence; for it is the source of all life". -Lecturer The communists and the Catholics for that matter, say give us “the first few years to influence a child, they can ensure that the child will always remain loyal to communist ideology.” -Lecturer For that matter, the Bible says the same: Proverbs 22:6 “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” This is the reason Seventh-day Adventists operate our K-12 schools and universities. We aim to endow our children and youth with a Christian education that strives for academic excellence but that aims first to communicate and instill biblical truth, honesty and ideals.

“The whole of Psalms 119 is a description of how the Scripture takes control of the human mind to produce a holy life.” - Lecturer

Chapter - 2 Human Mind: A Diagrammatic Approach

The lecturer diagrams categories of human actions:

Forbidden

 Tolerable

 Desirable

 Essential

 Desirable

 Tolerable

Forbidden

The lecturer identifies **essentials** as those God requires - reciprocal love for God and commitment, honesty, and more in a righteousness mirrored from God by us toward fellow humans(our neighbors as expressed in Matthew 22:39). Every believer is supposed to fulfill these requirements from his own free will. Note that essentials is in the center in this diagram of possible human actions but shows only once in the diagram. Essentials are the core actions that identify the Christian as a follower of God.

 I would supply that perhaps the fruits of the Spirit may anchor the desirable actions - love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance. Interestingly Paul concludes this list with the words “against such there is no law.” (Galatians 5:23) These words may indeed suggest that these actions follow the essentials but while sounding like essentials they only approach the core function. In 1 Corinthians 13:13, Paul says “And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.” Most English translations replace *charity* in this list with the word *love*. The implication of Corinthians is that if we show love to others we’re on step one in this list. Or perhaps it suggests that love is the culmination of achieving the three step process where faith is step one.

Paul says no law against but he doesn’t explicitly state there’s a law requiring these fruits. If we are committed the expectation would be that we take on the challenge of the desirable actions. Perhaps two levels for desirable actions in our lives suggests that we have begun to take on some of the fruits of the spirit while we find other fruits a greater challenge. But we fully commit to the ***aim*** to successfully take them on as well.

God does this work of progressive sanctification in us.

It is God who enables us, along with you, to stand firm for Christ. He has commissioned us, 22 and he has identified us as his own by placing the Holy Spirit in our hearts as the first installment that guarantees everything he has promised us. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 New Living Translation

He enables us to choose Essential and Desirable actions. Even as a new Christian we are enabled by Him as he places the Holy Spirit in our hearts as *the first installment that guarantees* life with him.

Then there’s the tolerable actions that God might frown on but are covered by grace. Roman Catholics differentiate between venial and mortal sins. While not a doctrine in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, we differentiate mistakes from rebellious sin. We repent and confess our mistakes. In the case of known mistakes (which are still sin) we enumerate in our confession to God. And we hate knowing we fail to understand sin and not necessarily knowing we do these unknown sins we repent and confess generally. Daniel included himself in his prayer in Daniel 9:3-6

Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. 4 I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession, saying, “O Lord … we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules. We have not listened to your servants the prophets.

I’m not sure this is how the lecturer would define tolerable actions - venial or mistakes. Maybe he’s talking about white lies to make people feel better or to make life easier. But gluttony is a listed venial sin. And Adventists would say overeating rich foods damages our health, making wise choices more difficult, making joy harder to feel and express and thus weakening our witness for God.

The lecturer does define forbidden actions as “all those activities that are sinful, unethical”. And he warns us that indulging minds in such makes us likelier to actually do these things forbidden to the believer. *Actually, these things are forbidden to the unbeliever as well, but the unbeliever is unaware or in fact doesn’t care.*

The enemies of the believer are (1) the world, (2) the flesh, (3) the devil. We must guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:7) Social norms, other believers, and one's own family might put some sort of pressure on us to avoid the forbidden but ultimately the voice is ours. Philippians 4:7 does encourage us that “the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding” can help us choose well.

“And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses.” — Desire of Ages

For thousands of years Satan has used people he influences to develop deviant philosophies and tactics to trap God’s people and entice them under Satan's banner. In the early days of Christianity he enticed pagans to persecute those who steadfastly chose to worship one God in a world celebrating many gods. After Constantine rallied Rome, probably for political purposes, Satan first created the Lord’s day alongside the Sabbath, sanctified at creation, and then encouraged focus on the newly created day of religious celebration and Sabbath keepers were persecuted after religious leaders learned that going along with the emperor was convenient.

Later, after the Roman church taught that spiritual truth could only be understood and taught by those ordained in the church, any laity who studied the few pages of scripture available before the printing press existed were persecuted as heretics. By the reformation even priests who preached from scripture instead of church tradition were persecuted. Eventually the citizens of France rebelled against the church’s overbearance in the 1700s.

Francisco Ribera, a Jesuit, I will say invented a futuristic explanation of Revelation, a teaching by those who preach a secret rapture today that adopts Rivers’s premillennialism teaching. This teaching was intended to deflect the anti-Christ from the papacy and the pope to the future of the end times. <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_Ribera> This teaching interferes with recognition of who the beast is and the image to the beast might be. I’m not terribly literate on these teachings but this teaching interferes with Revelation 1:7

“Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him.” And people won’t be prepared to recognize events and choices facing us with this deflecting belief in their minds.

Darwin’s pseudo science mixing truth with supposition that creation was a long time process utilizing the unChristian concept of the survival of the fittest mischaracterizes the concept of a loving God. The picture of a terrorist God who finds amusement in human wars and atrocities is easily adopted by persons who put science as we know it today above the Bible. This long history of evolution fits in the fearful idea of a hell that is never extinguished. Even I would find it difficult to want to believe in a God who inflects pain into eternity after a life of little more than 70-100 years.

As an aside, I’m confident Darwin would have been ignored if in his lifetime Christians had been worshipping on the Sabbath remembering God in our worship weekly as our creator. Satan effectively removed God as creator in weekly worship. He effectively repositioned the day of worship to the day elevated by the Roman emperor Aurelian in Ad 274 to worship Sol Invictus (interestingly inaugurated on December 25). Even Roman emperor “Constantine decreed (March 7, 321) “dies solis” — the day of the Sun, "Sunday" — as the Roman day of rest.” Earlier, he authorizes the adoption of this Sol image on coinage as “the "’Unconquered Sun’" as a companion to the Emperor. https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sol\_Invictus

Undermining scriptural morality, we mustn’t miss an episode in a soap opera that constantly depicts sexual behavior outside of marriage, mentoring married dissatisfaction and divorce.

I’m thankful for the science of medicine we have today. We even have Christian doctors who pray before performing procedures. We often fail to expect heavenly miracles and instead praise medicine for successes. I have a friend who tells of missing out on a payment of thousands of dollars over this. His surgeon wanted his testimony in an infomercial. My friend declined because he wouldn’t be permitted to also praise God for healing in his testimony.

Archeological discoveries in the last hundred years have diminished most of the historical complaints against the Bible. Many complaints now come from science. And few of us are sufficiently knowledgeable to comfortably respond in this area. A difficult area of attack has grown bid in recent years, that of sexual identity and homosexual relationships. Biblical explanation is met with the response that this is hate speech. **The devil has created a morality to conflict with biblical morality.** Even Christian churches adopt the devil’s morality. It certainly seems like the end time is rapidly arriving.

Chapter 3 Principles Of Mind Control -- I

The lecturer enumerates 6 principles used to control minds in this chapter. They are 1-Blinding 2-Imprinting 3-Desensitization 4-Expansion 5-Fear Creation 6-Value Shifting. Skillful use of leading questions can be used to diffuse these principles of attack.

1-Manipulating By Blinding

We should study ideas objectively without bias. However under prejudices we begin to wrongly understand subjectively. Our responses based on subjective reasoning may lead to wrong actions.

I once worked with a woman who smoked to control her weight. And for her at least it seemed to work. She of course prioritized weight control, a good health condition, over other health conditions that could negatively hurt her. Tobacco ads focus on what we desire and avoid mention of what we fear.

We risk being blinded by emotion. David was blinded because of his preference for his son Absalom, a younger son from a foreign wife of David. He was a wicked son who slept publically with his father’s concubines. 2 Samuel 16. David almost lost his kingdom because of his misguided inaction during Absalom’s rebellion. Absalom was unfit to be king of God’s people. David’s emotions blinded him. I will note that many kings kill their sons to retain their kingdom. I’ve never highly admired David and commiserate with him in this conundrum. David never worshipped other Gods, unlike many of his successors.

Solomon lost his dependence on God under the influence of his many foreign wives. In 1 Kings 11 we read Solomon built temples for all his foreign wives. He could not have expected a successor devoted to the God of Israel when doing this. 2 Chronicles 12:13 tells us Rehaboam’s mother was Naamah, an Ammonitess. Thankfully, Solomon repented in old age. But his sons had already been evilly influenced.

Indulging in lust and sexual impurity, bitterness, anger, and malice makes the emotion stronger and suppresses reason. Once a threshold is crossed, people become blinded to truth. This fulfills the prophecy or perhaps the simple truth in 2 Thessalonians 2:11 “And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.” They have created the conditions to believe lies.

2-Manipulation By Imprinting

There is the Sabbath/Sunday school song for little children -

O be careful little eyes what you see

O be careful little eyes what you see

For the Father up above

Is looking down in love…

O be careful little ears what you hear…

If we would actually “be careful” we would by repetition imprint on our minds only the good things of God. We would value the character of God.

Imprinting works in the opposite way as well.



The message learned in American schools and in the media, even in the courts and political messaging today is that it is hateful to limit sexual identity to binary. The above chart demonstrates the extent that repetitive imprinting changes society.

Imprinting happens also through shock and fantasy. The lecturer says that we normally think at the rate of 250 words or fewer per minute but fantasize at up to 1800 words a minute, imprinting via a sensory sock the object of our fantasy. We may fanticize about sex, money, power, position, honour, *etc*. We can vicariously fantasize through watching shocking acts on media that thankfully few of us normally encounter in our lives.

Philippians 4:8 says

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

3-Manipulation Through Desensitization

“Just as people recoil on accidentally touching a hot frying-pan, a sensitive person forcibly removes himself from things that are not right for him.” - lecturer When we live by the principles of Philippians 4:8 we stay away from bars and taverns, XXX- rated and possibly even R- rated films. Unfortunately, large theaters aren’t required to see XXX- rated media today. We can surreptitiously view this media on our phones and tablets. We become desentized. Once we’re desentized there’s nothing to recoil from and nothing to fear.

The lecturer interestingly ties the story of Lot fathering the nations of Moab and Ammon. They had seen so much evil and perhaps public sexuality in Sodom that desensitized citizens they thought little about intimacy with their old man, dad.

I’ve not before heard of the desentized evils the lecturer tells of such as cadaver-eating and drinking fetus-soups. That’s shocking news to me and hopefully it is a hoax. If these actions are true they demonstrate the truth that what thrills today becomes ho-hum tomorrow and practitioners require greater evil to enjoy life.

It was reassuring to me that co-workers chose to not share vulgar jokes with me. They tried to talk without common curse words with me.

Chapter 4 Principles Of Mind Control -- 2

The Christian believer chooses to live within the boundaries defined by God and communicated to us in his commandments and Word and by the example of Jesus and mostly at least in the examples of the men and women of faith. Non-believers don’t understand living within these boundaries sin created by God after his own image. we are capable of both great and small things. Alienated from God, we hate limits. Even Christians can be tempted to exceed God’s boundaries through fantasy and desire when freely indulged. They can magnify the desire for good things into an imagined ***need*** for them as if they were essential to life.

We also risk escape from the boundaries of God when those around us encourage us in an intimidating insistence that we should join them in their activities we know exceed what God teaches us is safe and good. Peer pressure challenges the young to do what they know God forbids. Peer pressure affects the old as well, sometimes in the aspect of fearing to door what is right. We shrink when we face the possibility of becoming a social outcast. We want to belong. We must be careful to continue instead to belong to God when pressured to belong to the crowd.

Mass media and social media can influence us to ignore the boundaries even when our place in direct social contacts is respected. Our generation faces this temptation from media more than any previous generation.

Shifting values of society around us can influence us to doubt God’s boundaries. For centuries Jesus was respected. Now we have such books as *Lost Gospel* and *The Da Vinci Code* that depict Jesus not crucified but living on as the husband of Mary Magdalene and this mischaracterization is presented as if documented history. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2014/11/10/the-book-that-claims-jesus-had-a-wife-and-kids-and-the-controversial-author-behind-it/> Gay marriage is promoted as promoted by Jesus in books such as *God and the Gay Christian*

*THE BIBLICAL CASE IN SUPPORT OF SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS*. These shifting abominations have entered mainstream society and knock in the door of Christianity - all in the space of one third of my life. Denominations such as Episcopal in America have even had gay denominational presidents.

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Leaving his place in the immediate presence of God, Lucifer went forth to diffuse the spirit of discontent among the angels. Working with mysterious secrecy, and for a time concealing his real purpose under an appearance of reverence for God, he endeavored to excite dissatisfaction concerning the laws that governed heavenly beings, intimating that they imposed an unnecessary restraint. Since their natures were holy, he urged that the angels should obey the dictates of their own will. He sought to create sympathy for himself by representing that God had dealt unjustly with him in bestowing supreme honor upon Christ. He claimed that in aspiring to greater power and honor he was not aiming at self-exaltation, but was seeking to secure liberty for all the inhabitants of heaven, that by this means they might attain to a higher state of existence. GC 495.2

God in His great mercy bore long with Lucifer. He was not immediately degraded from his exalted station when he first indulged the spirit of discontent, nor even when he began to present his false claims before the loyal angels. Long was he retained in heaven. Again and again he was offered pardon on condition of repentance and submission. Such efforts as only infinite love and wisdom could devise were made to convince him of his error. The spirit of discontent had never before been known in heaven. Lucifer himself did not at first see whither he was drifting; he did not understand the real nature of his feelings. But as his dissatisfaction was proved to be without cause, Lucifer was convinced that he was in the wrong, that the divine claims were just, and that he ought to acknowledge them as such before all heaven. Had he done this, he might have saved himself and many angels. He had not at this time fully cast off his allegiance to God. Though he had forsaken his position as covering cherub, yet if he had been willing to return to God, acknowledging the Creator's wisdom, and satisfied to fill the place appointed him in God's great plan, he would have been reinstated in his office. But pride forbade him to submit. He persistently defended his own course, maintained that he had no need of repentance, and fully committed himself, in the great controversy, against his Maker. Great Controversy 495.3

All the powers of his master mind were now bent to the work of deception, to secure the sympathy of the angels that had been under his command. Even the fact that Christ had warned and counseled him was perverted to serve his traitorous designs. To those whose loving trust bound them most closely to him, Satan had represented that he was wrongly judged, that his position was not respected, and that his liberty was to be abridged. From misrepresentation of the words of Christ he passed to prevarication and direct falsehood, accusing the Son of God of a design to humiliate him before the inhabitants of heaven. He sought also to make a false issue between himself and the loyal angels. All whom he could not subvert and bring fully to his side he accused of indifference to the interests of heavenly beings. The very work which he himself was doing he charged upon those who remained true to God. And to sustain his charge of God's injustice toward him, he resorted to misrepresentation of the words and acts of the Creator. It was his policy to perplex the angels with subtle arguments concerning the purposes of God. Everything that was simple he shrouded in mystery, and by artful perversion cast doubt upon the plainest statements of Jehovah. His high position, in such close connection with the divine administration, gave greater force to his representations, and many were induced to unite with him in rebellion against Heaven's authority. GC 496.1

<https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/132.2227#2237>

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1. How this module helped your studies

I’ve previously been aware of manipulative techniques and generally resist them. On the telephone when parrying spam calls I work hard to avoid saying “Yes”. But sometimes I slip and the same can be said of falling for propaganda.

2. What new lessons you learned?

Acts 16 Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

17 For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.

18 Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.

19 And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood.

20 For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take.

Vs

Matthew 27:5

And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself

3. Your critical evaluation on the topic. We mean what is the shortcoming you see in the text, your suggestions for improvement.

4. How does this lesson help you?

Mind manipulation occurs whether we’re aware of it or not. We can actually enjoy the experience. Mind manipulation appeals to our human biases. We must learn to recognize and avoid it.

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