**Bradon Ladd**

**David Thomas**

**Christian Beliefs RELT 202**

**Autobiography [late submission]**

**Bradon Ladd – Autobiography**

**1: Personal Religious Experience**

My personal experience with religion has been a long one. I was adopted into my Adventist family soon after being born, so I’ve been reading and hearing about God and Adventism since I could remember. Having been kept in that bubble since I was a child, I never questioned much about my own personal beliefs, and instead continued believing without doubt what I had been taught growing up. My spiritual life never grew because of it. Until I was around 17, I simply adopted anything I heard about the Bible into my own personal life without question, but after that age, I started to really challenge what I believed. I started to ask questions about why we worshipped on the Sabbath, why we even bothered to worship God and not someone else, and whether He was there in our lives. I answered these questions for myself one by one, and it made my faith stronger, but even to this day, I hold a lot of healthy skepticism about the things that I believe.

**2: Experience with Organized Religion**

Church was also a big part of my life growing up, and my belief in the Adventist system held a similar timeline to my personal spiritual growth. Around that age of questioning, I started attending UCA Adventist Academy. It was here that my belief in the Adventist system was shaken down to its core. After being immersed in the culture every waking moment of the day, I started to really question from an objective standpoint the culture of the organized church. Those questions led me to disagree with certain aspects of their interpretation of the Bible that I still hold today. Things like their view on the outside world, views on alcohol and homosexuality, how the upper level management was structured, etc. I won’t go into detail here for the sake of brevity, but I continue that pattern of questioning and figuring out for myself what I believe is right and wrong in not just Adventism, but the idea of organized religion in general.

**3: Experience with the Bible and Ellen White**

My Biblical experience has, again, followed a similar pattern. What differs here, however, is that through all my questioning and learning, I still hold the Bible as being the most important book we have access to. I’ve always studied it on my own to draw my own conclusions and have read it cover to cover twice in my lifetime. Ellen White, however, is a completely different story. I have a read a few chapters in the Great Controversy, but that is about it. I know who she is and the general idea of some of her teachings but have very little experience in her writings.

**4: Religious Affiliation and Final Remarks**

I am a Christian. I don’t believe in structured, organized religion, but I continue to hold onto my personal belief that God is real and that He works in our lives. I also believe that, even though I have my questions and doubts now, that they may be wrong, and that as I get older my faith and knowledge will continue to grow.