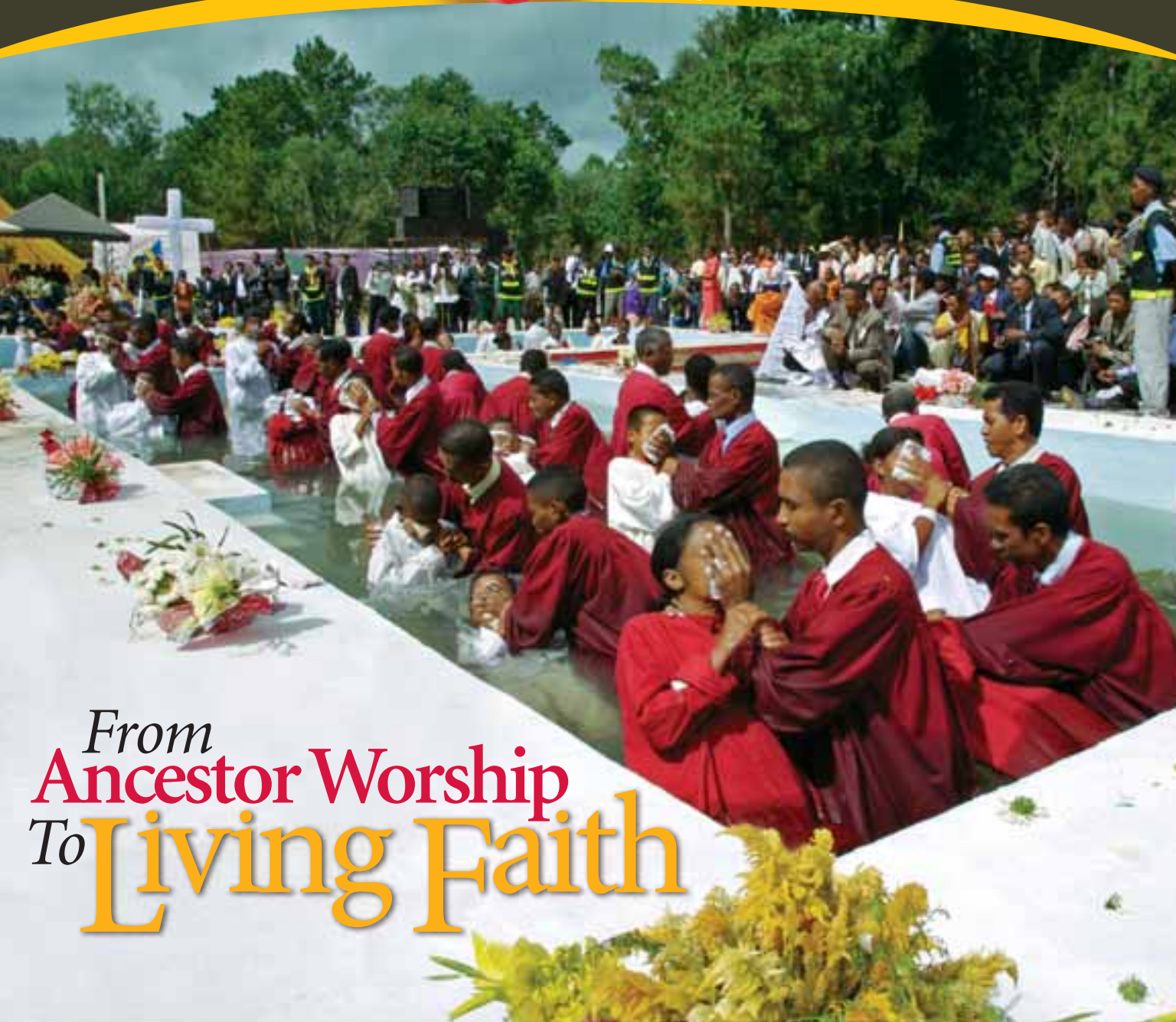


August 2007

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DICK DUERKSEN

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ON THE COVER: New Adventist believers are baptized in Madagascar, part of a campaign expected to add 30,000 members to the church there.



From the EDITOR'S PEN

Those Three-Way Conversations

He was the school clown, I decided after only a week of knowing him—a shallow creature living off the laughter he provoked with daily pranks and jokes. In the wondrous mix of nationalities attending Newbold College 30 years ago, this puckish fellow was all the things that I was not—fit, blond, gregarious, and funny. I knew with all the certitude of self-congratulating righteousness that he was lacking in the sober qualities so necessary to a life with God.

And then one night the chance division of our worship room paired me with him for prayer. I knelt beside him on the well-worn dormitory carpet, sure that the poverty of his soul would show itself when it came his turn to pray.

Instead, I heard the passionate pleading of a man much used to talking with his God, a man whose depth of spiritual understanding, even in English, certainly exceeded my own. He spoke to God without the affectations I had practiced, not troubled whether “Thees” and “Thine” got matched with

“You” and “Yours.” He prayed from deep within a covenant of friendship, and, ashamed as I was, I felt included in the grace and breadth of what he said to God.

From that autumn day three decades ago, I began to check my usual rush to judgment, to give the Spirit space to break the prejudice and haste that sometimes settled in my heart. The habit of praying with other believers became a welcome opportunity to renew my own openness to God, to hear the Holy Spirit giving me counsel and insight through the words of men and women who knew Him better than I did.

Your story, too, will be enriched by every time you pray with someone else. The Lord who promised to meet wherever at least two are gathered in His name has many things to teach us through the ministry of praying together. Courage, grace, humility—these qualities are caught—and taught—whenever we make room for three-way conversations with the risen Lord.

Do not let this day end without some moments deep in prayer with one of God's elect. Your joys will be at least doubled, and your sorrows trimmed by half.

—BILL KNOTT

WORLD REPORT

Euro-Africa: New Outreach Efforts, Seminary Program Reported

■ Outreach in the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Euro-Africa region is moving forward, regional church leaders were told during recent annual business meetings. At the same time, two Adventist schools in the region are uniting to develop an advanced theology degree program that is expected to help pastors enhance their skills.

One of the most important and interesting reports concerned the new Romanian Speranta TV station, which began operation a few weeks ago. Teodor Hutanu, Adventist Church in Romania president, explained, “For Romanian Adventist families, the Romanian Hope Channel is a providential gift and a God-given challenge to bring the everlasting gospel to this end-time generation.”

At the same time, leaders of two regional publishing

Two new and exciting books to share with today's people

WITNESSING TOOLS: Two new books from the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Euro-Africa region (pictured in from a projection presentation) are intended to introduce Adventists, and Christian faith, to people.

KAREL NOWAK/AR

WORLD REPORT

houses, Elí Diez-Prida and Eckhard Boettge, from Advent-Verlag and Saatkorn-Verlag in Germany, presented a multifaceted program of publications and plans that would enable the church to share the good news of salvation in a new way.

The first part of the project, a book titled “*Vibrant Christianity—Living the Faith in Today’s World*,” was presented to the committee in its original German version. The editor of the book, Diez-Prida, explained, “This is a new and easy-to-read public relations book and also an exciting witnessing tool. It introduces the Seventh-day Adventist Church in an unobtrusive way with the main emphasis lying in presenting Jesus Christ and His love for humanity.”

This book will be followed by a second volume, *Journey of Hope—An Adventist Confession of Faith*. This second book will contain an easy-to-understand explanation of the 28 Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists. The whole project encompasses further products such as CDs, DVDs, brochures, and magazines.

During the Frankfurt Book Fair to be held in October 2007, a consultation of Adventist publishing houses in Europe will take place. During this conference, the publication program will be presented along with the English version of the books and information pertaining to further translation and adoption for use in other territories and linguistic areas.

The second exceptional event that took place during the regional executive committee session was the signing of a contract between Friedensau Adventist University in Germany and Salève Adventist



JOINING FORCES: Adventist educational leaders in Euro-Africa and officials of Friedensau Adventist University in Germany and Saleve Adventist Institute in France sign agreement to create a Master of Arts degree for French-speaking students, with the hope of expanding it across the church region.

ELI DIEZ-PRIDA/AR

Institute in France. These two institutions, owned and operated by the church, have the common mission of preparing future pastors and other employees for the church and its subsidiaries.

Udo Worschech, director of the Friedensau University, explains: “The cooperation agreement between the Theologische Hochschule Friedensau (ThHF) and the Campus Adventiste du Salève in Collonges, France, allows the Salève campus to grant a Master of Arts degree to its students. The degree is a state-recognized program from Friedensau and, according to the Bologna agreement, is accepted by all European universities. Besides the state recognition that gives a positive profile to theology students of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, it also allows students who do not continue in the pastoral ministry to take up further studies in related fields.”

Richard Lehmann, director of the Campus Adventiste du Salève in France, added: “The agreement between Friedensau and Collonges underlines the reinforcement of the bond that links these two institutions of higher education in the Euro-Africa Division. It brings a rich prospect of future and progress. Because of its international influence and more particularly that of its [theological faculty], Salève can, with this agreement, offer the possibility of education leading to a master’s degree that is recognized by all European States. This master’s degree is available to all French-speaking students as well as to those who speak other Latin languages. This model of synergy can serve as an example and inspire the exploration of other agreements between our two campuses for the benefit of all parties involved.”
—Karel Nowak/Euro-Africa Division/AW Staff.

South Pacific: 900 Churches Get Web Sites in Internet Outreach Effort

■ More than 900 new Web sites belonging to Seventh-day Adventist churches, schools, conferences, and various ministries in the South Pacific Division (SPD) were due to be launched on July 21, 2007.

The new Web sites are interconnected through common software, making the SPD the first division in the world to develop fully functional interactive Web sites that will link its entities throughout the region. The Web sites, including hosting requirements, have been given to entities for free for 12 months. The South Pacific Web Network project is an initiative of the Adventist Media Network, the media and communication arm of the SPD.

“We have been working on this

Web network project since late last year, ensuring that the Web site is as easy to manage as possible,” says Jeanelle Isaacs, electronic media officer of the Adventist Media Network. “Web sites were ready to use when entities received them, and all that was needed was for them to make some customizations to localise the content.”

Churches with Web sites on the AMN network can easily put photos and sermon recordings online and have access to a variety of resources such as online Bible study courses and an events calendar. The Web sites can also be updated automatically with news from other churches, conferences, the South Pacific region, and even the world church and other Adventist entities.

According to Ms. Isaacs, the soft-

ware used on the Web network means anybody with basic computer knowledge can make simple updates such as adding events or news. Members, especially ministry leaders, can be authorized to input content into their Web site. Web sites can also be customized so that the public and church members will see different information on the same page.

The South Pacific Web Network project is using netAdventist software, developed by TAGnet (Three Angels Global Networking), an organization operated by a group of Seventh-day Adventists, based in Fallbrook, California, U.S.A. Churches in several regions of the Adventist Church in North America also use netAdventist.—Melody Tan/South Pacific Division/AW Staff.

NEWS COMMENTARY

As Crowd Watches, Thoughts Burn

BY FYLVIA FOWLER
KLINE, *writing from
Medford, Oregon*

Fifty minutes went by before the Kansas City Fire Department arrived. By then the fire had engulfed hundreds¹—hundreds of books, that is.

This was a deliberate destruction of good books, full of knowledge and information. It was “the funeral pyre for thought in America today,” according to Tom Wayne, who started the blaze. Wayne, owner of a large used bookstore, had had enough of society’s disregard for books. With more than 20,000 books in surplus and no place to store them any longer, he contacted everyone from libraries to Goodwill stores in an effort to donate the books. These were not cheap dime novels; he had everything from today’s best sellers to “obscure titles like a bound report from the Fourth Pan-American Conference held in Buenos Aires in 1910.” Yet no one wanted them.

As the books went up in flames, Wayne vowed to burn more every Sunday as a protest of people not reading books. Drawn by the bizarre fire, people stopped out of curiosity to see what was

being thrown into the fire. Many just stood and watched, but some stopped to rescue a few books.

There was a time before the Xbox and Google when reading a book or writing a letter were preferred methods of unwinding. But now reading and writing are being quickly replaced by aimless Web surfing and impersonal text messaging.

Modern technology is leading to a gradual decline of our potential as God’s creation. We must not compromise ourselves—God created us in His image ... to design and create, to think and reason. To be less is to succumb to being a lost and forgotten art.

¹ Source, “Unwanted books go up in flames,” Associated Press via CNN.com, <http://tinyurl.com/2r4ule>, accessed June 19, 2007.

World Church: Culture of Kindness Can Help Domestic Violence, Paulsen

By JIMMY PHILLIPS, *Adventist World intern*, and MARK A. KELLNER, *news editor*

“It is more important to be kind than it is to be right,” Seventh-day Adventist world church president Jan Paulsen told a cohort of church family ministries specialists from around the world on June 12 during remarks to an “Abuse and Violence Taskforce” convened in Silver Spring, Maryland.

The two-day session drew church leaders from North America as well as the Inter-American and South Pacific church regions. Types of abuse studied included violence against “intimate partners,” such as spouses, as well as child abuse and elder abuse. A chief recommendation was that pastoral resources to help fight abuse need to be strengthened, since a large number of victims approach pastors about abuse but say the response isn’t always optimal.

In informal comments to the group, Paulsen emphasized that while the “rightness” of Adventist doctrine is vital to the church’s mission, it is equally important, if not more so, to leave others, even family members, with an understanding of our care for them as individuals.

“Sometimes we can be so aggressive about our ‘rightness’ that our capacity to communicate the other values Christ wants us to communicate [is] lost,” he added.

“It is very, very important for us, for our own spiritual experience, how we treat one another [and] how we act with one another,” Paulsen said, recalling recent commencement remarks he delivered at church-owned Walla Walla College in Washington State. “It’s important that we know what we believe, but surely it is important that we treat each other well.”

He emphasized that “violence of any kind in the church” is unacceptable: “We need to develop a culture of kindness, care, consideration, [and] non-abuse,” Paulsen said, adding that

abuse “is not just physical; mental abuse can be just as bad.”

While acknowledging the diversity of cultures within the Seventh-day Adventist movement, the world president said there are “elements of humanity that transcend all cultures, and we must stand” for these.

“It matters a lot to Christ how we treat the people who cannot speak for themselves,” Paulsen added.

Dr. René Drumm, a sociologist who chairs the social work department at Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee, was the principal researcher on a field study of abuse in one North American region of the church. The study, which focused on the North Pacific Union Conference, covering the states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington, is believed to be the first of its kind in any denomination.

Drumm surveyed 1,431 adults—men and women—and found some startling results. Nearly 34 percent of women and more than 20 percent of men reported being assaulted by an intimate partner. For women, these numbers were on the high end of previous studies. But for men, the percentage was significantly greater.

Ron Flowers, world church codirector of Family Ministries, believes that the groundbreaking data is a vital piece to “help break the silence on abuse in our denomination.”

Drumm agrees and adds that we must do more than talk about abuse: “Now that we have the data, it is our ethical and moral responsibility to promote peace and healing to ultimately end abuse in the Adventist Church.”

She believes any action toward this goal must be initiated and cultivated by pastoral teams because they are “the center of operations for the Adventist Church.”

Combat Says



JIMMY PHILLIPS/AR



JIMMY PHILLIPS/AR

Above: KINDNESS COUNTS: Jan Paulsen, world president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, emphasizes the need for kindness among church members and with others during a taskforce meeting on abuse and violence held in Silver Spring, Maryland, as Karen Flowers, codirector of the church's Family Ministries Department, looks on. **Left:** RESEARCH DATA: Dr. René Drumm, a sociologist who chairs the Social Work Department at Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee, was the principal researcher on a field study of abuse in one North American region of the church.

Pastors have a unique opportunity to present these messages from the pulpit and work with their unions and conferences to sponsor special antiabuse Sabbaths in their local churches.


However, that is only the threshold, she said. Drumm advanced numerous ideas she would like to see implemented in the global Adventist Church including Adventist shelters for women, greater pastoral education on abuse, and the opportunity for churches to hold parenting and healthy relationship seminars.

While getting these initiatives moving is important, Drumm feels the real key is in the evaluation: "We need to make goals, put things in place, and then measure the success. Then we have systematic things happening; that's what I want to be a part of."

Despite being limited to one church region in the

United States, Drumm says the data is pretty indicative of Caucasian Adventists in North America. One of the reasons she feels confident about this fact is that a smaller survey done at Andrews University had nearly identical results. This she says "adds strength and validity to our survey."

And while the survey is not indicative of the church outside of North America, discussion at the Task Force showed abuse to be a global issue. Drumm suggests how other cultures can use this study as a platform: "This survey can be a starting point for other cultures to sift through and decipher what applies to them. Then they can use similar instruments to gather information about their own people."

In 1995, 1996, and 1997, the world leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church issued several statements on abuse issues, which can be found online at www.adventist.org/beliefs/statements/index.html. 

WORLD VISTA

The life of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is in the local congregation: in the give-and-take of community experiences; in shared worship and shared joys; in facing difficult times; in working together toward common goals and participating in a common mission. It is in the local church—"God's household" (1 Tim. 3:15, NIV)—that faith finds its most compelling expression; where the values and beliefs that define us are most clearly demonstrated.

For every report I receive of a congregation that is thriving and growing, I hear of another that is struggling. And as I talk with church members—especially those of the younger generation—I hear a range of concerns and frustrations, as well as hopes and plans, centered around their local church. So often I am asked, most frequently by those from the secular, post-modern West: "What can be done to breathe new life into my church?"

If we're looking for a perfect faith community—one that exactly models God's ideal—then we have a long search ahead of us. A local church family is made up of less-than-perfect people representing many different backgrounds, and embracing those of vastly different levels of spiritual maturity and experience.

But God has clearly set before us an ideal, a standard, for how His children should function together within a community of believers. In the coming months, I would like to look more closely at the characteristics of healthy churches. What does a robust, productive local church look like? What characteristics define it? How are spiritually healthy communities nurtured and grown?

There are three litmus tests of healthy churches that come immediately to mind: the spiritual condition of individual believers; how these individuals relate to each other within their faith community; and how the congregation relates to the world beyond its doors—to those who are not believers.

Each of these aspects is intertwined. When there is dysfunction in one facet of church life, the whole body is compromised and its ability to fulfill its mission undermined. In this article, I would like to explore the first of these litmus tests: personal spiritual health.



Jan Paulsen is president of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church.

A Healthy Church

PART 1

Healthy believers

Ellen White writes: "A healthy church is composed of healthy members, of men and women who have a personal experience in true godliness."^{*}

What are the characteristics of a healthy believer? How do we pursue an experience in godliness?

1. Be a "serious Christian."

Being a serious Christian does not mean being somber or humorless. A serious Christian can be—perhaps should be—also a laughing person. But if you are a serious Christian, you have made informed choices about how you want to live your life. Your direction is determined by the decisions, both big and small, that you make every day; decisions that keep you moving forward on a path governed by faith. You have weighed the consequences and are clear about the values you want to live by. It is a very deliberate and ongoing process.

Being a serious Christian is not necessarily something that comes only with age; it can come to you very early on. But regardless of age or background, all believers who are growing spiritually are serious about God, serious about themselves, and serious about the choices they make.

2. Move past defeat.

In spite of what you may have heard, the Christian life is not one steady, uninterrupted upward journey. Each one of us experiences our fair share of defeats, as well as victories. And this is life. Spiritual growth is not about keeping score of defeats and victories, and God is not to be viewed as a referee—He is our friend.

I was wonderfully blessed to grow up in a home where Christian values were very uncomplicated. When you felt you had disappointed yourself, disappointed your parents, and disappointed God you didn't get stuck on it. You were loved and embraced and forgiven. You moved on.

Yes, spiritual victories are markers—indicators—of growth. As I take stock of my Christian walk, I am hope-

By JAN PAULSEN

urch



ATHAL TOLHURST

fully able to say: “There was a time when I struggled with certain things—I messed up, I failed. But I’m done with that. That particular struggle is not there anymore.”

But the inevitable defeats are also part of the same growing process. They can be difficult and painful, but they are not the end of the story. When I fail, God reminds me of my value in His sight. He gives me strength by telling me that I’m loved and that, if I stay with Him, He will see me through.

3. Take responsibility.

You cannot nurture spiritual health if you don’t communicate with God—regularly, frequently, openly, and joyously. There is no alternative, no substitute, no shortcut. Healthy Christians are those who take responsibility for their own spiritual lives. They have discovered God for themselves—their faith is not dependent on the opinions or experiences of someone else, whether it is a parent, a spouse, a particular author, or a church leader.

Spiritual dependency on another person is a dangerous enterprise—it produces a skewed perspective that lacks the balance and depth that can come only through direct contact with God through Scripture, prayer, and other spiritual disciplines.

Read God’s Word for yourself; it is amazing what you will find. When I reread passages of Scripture I often say: “Why didn’t I see that earlier?” The words are the same, but things have happened in my life that bring new meaning, a new perspective.

Take also the writings of Ellen White. People are too often accustomed to making judgments based on excerpts, or paraphrases, or others’ interpretations. They do not bother to read her books for themselves—to see the breadth and balance and depth of her comments on a given subject. And they miss the wonderful wholeness and warmth that can be discovered only through personal inquiry.


It is vitally important that we teach our children from a very early age not to become dependent on their parents, their teachers, or anyone else for the development of their faith; that they know: “I have a primary responsibility to go to the Lord myself.” And to Bible teachers, pastors, and church leaders I say: “Do not succumb to the temptation of making personal spiritual disciples—it is a risky business.”

More than anything, I want to see Seventh-day Adventist Church members who are mentally and spiritually strong; church members who can say: “God is my friend.” And friendship with God is developed primarily through communication with Him in prayer.

How should we pray? There is no one “correct” way, or formula, for communicating with God. Approach Him with both awe and confidence. Allow the Holy Spirit to lead you. But don’t expect Him to speak to you in mystical ways, although He can. God usually speaks to us most clearly through our rational mind, through patterns of thinking that have been shaped by disciplined study of His Word.

Safe in Christ

What is the outcome of personal spiritual growth? When you are growing spiritually, you have an unshakable sense of safety, a knowledge that you are loved and wholly accepted by God, that your salvation is secure—a gift of the One whose primary concern is to heal and to save.

It is time for us to revive the spiritual disciplines in our churches and homes. Lives that are grounded in regular communication with our Lord produce strong, secure, and compassionate men and women of God. And it is upon this bedrock that healthy churches are built. 

* Ellen G. White, *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 710.

Next month: Pastor Paulsen continues his look at the spiritual markers of healthy churches.

WINDOW

Into the United Kingdom



The United Kingdom (U.K.) of Great Britain and Northern Ireland comprises England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Isles, and the Isle of Man. Immigration is an integral part of the culture. From as far back as the Celts in 1500 B.C.E., to the Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Vikings, and Normans, immigration continues to the modern day with diverse people groups making up the modern democracy that is the United Kingdom.

The U.K. is the oldest surviving democracy in the world,* making Westminster “the mother of all parliaments.” The height of the U.K.’s political and imperial influence was in the nineteenth century when the British Empire covered a quarter of the world’s surface.

Probably the most famous of many U.K. writers, artists, and composers over the centuries is William Shakespeare. His many plays and sonnets are still performed and recited around the world. However, the most solidly influential piece of literature to be produced in the U.K. is the King James Version of the Bible. The first “authorized” translation of the Bible, originally published in 1611, is one of the most widely circulated volumes in the history of the world.

The U.K. has a strong religious history. Christianity arrived by the second century A.D. Celtic Christianity, with evidence of Sabbathkeeping, was strong until 644, when Catholicism became the predominant religion until the Protestant Reformation. Today 53 percent of those who live in the U.K. identify themselves as Christian,

but only 15 percent of the population attend church regularly. Islam is the next largest religion with adherents numbering 3 percent of the population. Another 3 percent are made up of Hindus, Sikhs, Jews, and Buddhists. Some 39 percent of the population say they have no religion.

John Nevins Andrews was the first Seventh-day Adventist missionary to arrive in the U.K. in 1874. Today some 27,000 members meet each Sabbath across two conferences and three missions. This presents a challenge in reaching out to the secularized British population. The LIFEdevelopment program, with a magazine, *The Evidence* television series, and *Mind the Gap*, was developed as part of a strategy to win friends from the unchurched community (www.lifedevelopment.info).

Adventist institutions in the U.K. include the Stanborough Press, two high schools, eight primary schools, Roundelwood Health Spa, and an active Adventist Discovery Centre (formerly the Voice of Prophecy). The Trans-European Division office and Newbold College are also located within its territory.

U.K. Adventists are committed to mission. In 2006 they collected more than £580,000 (US \$1,155,180) for the ADRA Ingathering Appeal, among the highest per capita figures in the world. Hundreds of U.K. missionaries and mission volunteers have spread the good news of Jesus Christ across the world.

Compiled by Victor Hulbert, Communication director, British Union Conference, Watford, England.

* Greece and Iceland are older democracies, but have not been continuously democratic.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

Capital:	London
Language:	English
Religion:	Christian 53%; Muslim 3%; Hindu, Sikh, Jewish, Buddhist 3%; No religion 39%
Population:	60.2 Million.
Adventist Membership:	27,000





HOPE in the Battle Against HIV

By ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES and PETER N. LANDLESS

I am concerned about the way HIV becomes resistant to drugs. How long can an individual expect to be treated before resistance develops?

We have written about HIV before, but your question throws light on a very important area of concern. HIV is one of those viruses that constantly varies and, consequently, shows multiple genetic expressions of itself. This process, called mutation, allows for changes in sensitivity to the agents used in its control.

Up to now two main groups of agents have been used against the virus. These agents were developed to act at key spots in the process of virus multiplication. HIV does many things in its entrance to the special lymphocytes, called CD4 cells, that it targets. First, it binds to the CD4 cell. Then it enters the cell. Then its RNA (ribonucleic acid) is “written” into the DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) by an enzyme called “reverse transcriptase.” Once the DNA mirror of the RNA has been written, it has to be “integrated” into the nucleus. The altered nucleus now begins to produce messenger RNA, which goes to a subunit in the cell, which makes a stream of new HIV in a long strand. The strand is cut into individual virus particles by an enzyme called “protease.”

The reason we give you this complex trail is so you can appreciate how tailor-made the medicines are.

The two current groups of anti-HIV medications have been agents that block either the reverse transcription or the protease enzymes. The medications are used at least three at

a time. This is so they can, hopefully, combat a given strain of HIV even should it develop resistance to one of the medications. Of course, the medications have to be taken faithfully, at the times and in the combinations ordered. To fail to do this results in the virus escaping from control and developing resistance. Persons who take medicine as directed have been seeing great success in their treatment, and many are living more than 20 years without developing AIDS.

Why don't they treat a person with HIV with the medications as soon as they are diagnosed?

A person may successfully withstand HIV for many years, using their natural immunity. Because HIV is so readily able to develop resistance, holding medication until the person really needs it means that several years go by without the virus having a chance to develop resistance. When the antivirals are started, they are given in combinations, and actually are so effective they sometimes lower the viral load to scarcely detectable levels.

Is there any new hope for people who are on antiviral treatment and starting to have problems with viral resistance?

Actually, although two main groups of antiretrovirals exist (the reverse transcriptase inhibitors and the protease inhibitors), two classes of medications make up each group. Resistance is usually not to the whole group, but to individual medications.

Then, too, research is ongoing. An article in *The Journal of the American*

Medical Association (April 11, 2007, vol. 297, No. 14, pp. 1535, 1536) by Joan Stephenson, reports on new HIV drugs currently being tested. These medications differ from the drugs in the other two groups and classes, and actually represent breakthroughs. They are being tested in large studies, and represent two new strategies. The one medication aims at blocking an enzyme called “integrase,” which plugs the viral DNA into the cell’s DNA. By doing this, the DNA made from viral RNA does not get incorporated into the cell nucleus.

The second group of drugs is called “entry inhibitors.” They act like “locks” on the cell “doors” through which the virus enters the lymphocytes. By doing this, the drug acts to reduce the number of infected cells. So far, the results are very encouraging, though—once again—these medications do not stop the process completely, and are not by any means a cure. The more sites at which the virus can be attacked, the less powerful its assault—but so far the battle promises to be a lifelong process. ●



Allan R. Handysides, M.B., Ch.B., FRCPC, FRCSC, FACOG, is director of the General Conference Health Ministries Department.



Peter N. Landless, M.B., B.Ch., M.Med., F.C.P.(SA), F.A.C.C., is ICIPA executive director and associate director of Health Ministries.

Once *Is Not* Enou

We must experience God daily

By JOHN WESLEY TAYLOR, V

It was after dinner and I was seated at the piano. In the spirit of true democracy, my mother had provided me with a choice. Either I could wash the dinner dishes, or I could practice the piano. The decision wasn't too difficult.

But now I had played through all my pieces, one by one, culminating with the "Indian War Dance." "I'm done, Mom!" I called out.

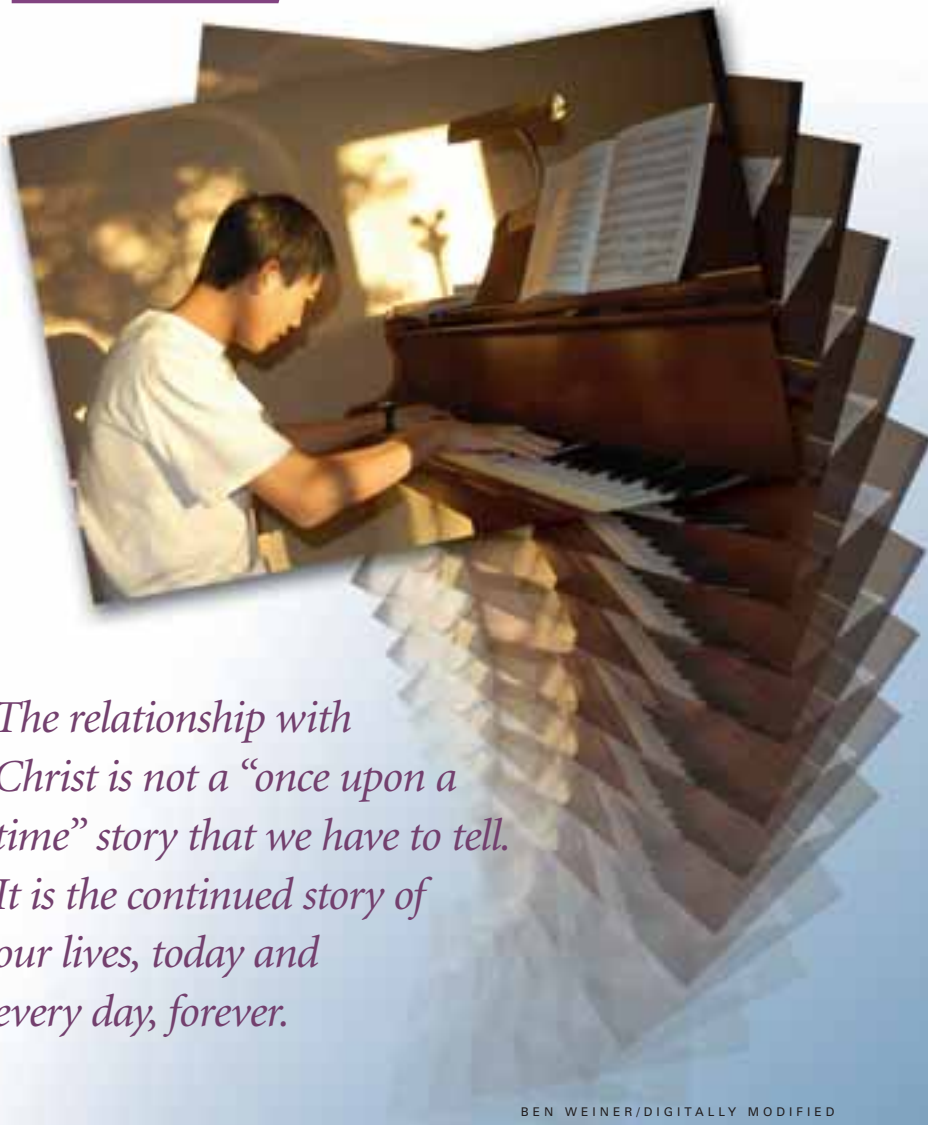
There was a clatter of dishes in the kitchen.

"That's sounding fine, son. But you played them only once. To practice means to play a piece many times, only each time a little better." Then to clinch the argument, she added, "And I'm not quite done with the dishes yet."

I never did understand why it took her so long to do the dishes.... But I did grasp the message: Once is not enough.

Since that day at the piano, I've come to realize that in many aspects of life, once is simply insufficient. I remember seeing a leaf-carrying ant one morning, lugging a clipped leaf toward its nest. A leaf, in fact, that was about 10 times the size of the ant.

All was going quite well until the



The relationship with Christ is not a "once upon a time" story that we have to tell. It is the continued story of our lives, today and every day, forever.

ant came to a branch that had fallen across his path. The ant tried to crawl under the branch, but the leaf was too big. He attempted to drag the leaf along beside the branch, but the branch was long and the grass was thick; and besides, the ant knew that he was headed in the wrong direction.

gh

So the ant tried to tug the leaf up and over the branch, but the leaf was heavy and just as the ant would almost succeed, he would lose his footing and topple back into the grass, still clinging tenaciously to the leaf. He tried again and again, to no avail. Until one time.... This time when he lost his balance and toppled into the grass, it was on the other side of the branch.

So it is with our achievements. In 1857 Cyrus Field attempted to lay a communications cable across the Atlantic Ocean, a distance of nearly 2,000 miles. Only 400 miles out, the cable broke. The next year, three more attempts were made, but each time the cable snapped. The fourth try seemed a success, and messages began to flow across the seafloor. In a matter of only a few weeks, however, the signals began to weaken until they faded out altogether. The insulation had been eaten away, and the cable was dead. Seven years later, Field tried again, loading the cable on the *Great Eastern*, the largest ship then afloat. Halfway across, the cable broke and sank irretrievably to the bottom. But the next year, with a new cable design, Cyrus Field finally succeeded and the Atlantic didn't seem quite so vast anymore.

Similar resolve was evidenced by

Beethoven, who wrote and rewrote almost every bar of his music at least a dozen times. By Michelangelo, who left more than 2,000 alternate drawings over his eight years of work on *The Last Judgment*. By Thomas Edison, the great inventor, who discovered from personal experience more than 6,000 ways in which the electric light bulb didn't work. But he kept searching for two years until the light came on.

The Scriptures themselves illustrate that once is not enough. Noah preached for 120 years, sermon after sermon. The patriarch Isaac dug three wells in succession before his herdsmen were able to water their flocks without strife. The Israelites, following God's command, marched around Jericho for seven days, then seven times on the seventh day, and the walls came tumbling down.

The child Samuel answered God's call four times before God revealed His will. Elijah the prophet prayed seven times before his servant caught sight of a small cloud rising out of the sea. Elisha chided King Joash, telling him that he should have struck the ground with his arrows at least five or six times as a metaphor of vanquishing the Syrians.

In the New Testament, Jesus instructed His disciples to forgive seventy times seven. He told them to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matt. 6:11). In His own teaching sessions, Jesus would repeat a single concept many times. The kingdom of heaven, He said, is like a pearl, a mustard seed, a sower, treasure hidden in a field, 10 virgins invited to a wedding. It seems that once through was not enough.

In the early Christian church, believers continued day by day in the temple praising God. The Bereans were commended for daily searching the Scriptures. On his missionary journeys, Paul visited many of the cities in Asia not only once, but two or even three times, and then he wrote them letters.

The "once is not enough" directive seems itself to be a dominant theme

throughout the Bible. We are instructed to pray without ceasing and in everything give thanks (1 Thess. 5:17, 18). We are to die daily (1 Cor. 15:31). Day by day, we are to be renewed by the Spirit (2 Cor. 4:16). "If anyone desires to come after Me," Jesus said, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23).

It is true that we each need to meet the Saviour. We need to be born again. But having met Christ once upon a time is not enough. Having received God's amazing grace, perhaps at baptism, is simply insufficient. Conversion is not an isolated event; it is an ongoing experience. Christianity is not merely a label; it is a warm, vibrant relationship with Jesus.

Recently I was chatting with a friend, and our conversation turned to food and inevitably to durian (known in Southeast Asia as "the king of fruits," durian is a strong-smelling tropical fruit with prickly skin). Living here in Asia, what else is there to talk about? At the mention of the word, however, he recoiled.

"Durian? Ugh! I tried that once. And once is *enough!*"

I wanted to tell him that once is only the beginning. That like moss on a rock, durian is something that grows on you, until it becomes an all-consuming passion. Or so I am told by those who have spent their lives under its influence.

The relationship with Christ, once established, must be maintained. It is not a "once in a lifetime" experience. It is a lifetime experience, a day-by-day encounter. It is not a "once upon a time" story that we have to tell. It is the continued story of our lives, today and everyday, forever. ●



John Wesley Taylor, V, serves as associate dean of graduate studies at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS) in the Philippines.

“Let the little children come to me.”¹

This text has often been stretched beyond its intended meaning. Preachers at times have taken these words as the basis for a sermon about the simplicity of the gospel, and have told their church members: “You must believe the gospel message and accept it as a child. You do not need to understand it. Too much thinking will lead you only into trouble and make you doubt.”

Though many Christians have indeed been suspicious of intellectual endeavors, the Adventist Church has a long tradition of emphasizing education. We have opted for an educated ministry. We have created a network of higher education around the world. Adventists tend to be career people who enjoy their upward social mobility.

I remember that in my childhood in the Netherlands very few professional people made up the Adventist Church membership. Today we have thousands of Adventists throughout the world with university training, which certainly enriches the church.

Discipleship of the Mind

The gospel tells us we must love God with all our heart, all of our spirit, and all of our mind. That is true Christian service.² A love relationship with God has different components. It involves the heart and the soul. It has to do with feelings and emotions, with total commitment, perseverance, and will power. But it also has to do with our mind.

Some evangelical Christians have indeed argued that too much knowledge is dangerous. They ask, “Did not Paul say that knowledge puffs up; that it tends to lead to arrogance and loss of faith?”³

We would do a great injustice to Paul if we make him say that all thinking is negative and ill-advised. He did not oppose good thinking, but inaccurate thinking. Paul counseled us to be intentional in our thinking. “Whatever is . . . excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things,”⁴ he said. And, whatever you do, do it to the glory of God.⁵ So, use your mind to the glory of God.

I came across a challenging book about the lack of thought among many evangelical Christians: *Fit Bodies Fat Minds*. Many modern Christians, Os Guinness argues in this book, have toned up their bodies, but dumbed down their minds. This observation may well be relevant to some



Reinder Bruinsma is president of the Netherlands Union Conference.

Adventists. We emphasize healthful living, care for our body, eating good food. We hear sermons about these topics and read about them in our journals. But when did you last hear a sermon or read an article in one of our publications about the qualities of a sound mind? About thinking in a consistently Christian way? A Christian mind is no luxury. It is part of the abundant life Christ promised us.

Keep on Learning

How do we serve God with our entire mind? First, we should underscore the need for humility. When you first start down the academic path, you may experience a sense of elation, maybe even superiority. You think you know so much more than other people

With All By REINDER You MIND

Challenges for the Adventist

do. This early stage in the process of acquiring knowledge is full of danger. But eventually you begin to realize you do not know everything. In fact, you are soon overwhelmed by the realization of how much more you need to learn and how little, in fact, you do know—even in your own discipline. You meet great minds and sense the difference. So, every reason exists to remain humble and avoid any arrogance.

You should also keep on learning after you have earned a degree or diploma. And not only from books but also from experiences, from life, from all kinds of people—colleagues, peers, and also “common” folk. Appreciate their wisdom and insights. An Adventist intellectual can learn a lot from many of the people in the church who have not had the privilege of attending a university. Always remember: Christ, the greatest teacher of all times, never attended a formal university.

Keep on Asking

If you want to develop as an Adventist intellectual and serve God with all your mind, you must dare to ask questions. Your mind will develop no further if you think you already have all the answers.

This was the genius of early Adventism—going beyond accepted opinion; being prepared to think outside the box, to ask new questions, to go down new paths—uncertain where they would lead.

Serving God with your mind is a lifelong adventure, and you cannot totally be sure where it will lead. There is always more to discover. And you will discover only by asking questions.

You cannot be a theologian or social scientist or any



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kind of Adventist intellectual if you refuse to ask questions—even troubling questions—about the nature of the Bible; about the origin of the world and humanity; about the origin and nature of evil; about matters of life and death; about the paradox between human free will and God’s foreknowledge; and more. But you must learn to live with unanswered questions. You will never get all the answers, but do not let that worry you unduly. After all, you are just a creature, while He is the Creator. Only God knows all the answers.

I have found it a good practice to tackle problems one at a time. I try to concentrate my thinking and reading (and prayer!) on one particular issue, and consciously shelve other issues until later. I will not simply ignore them, but will postpone dealing with them. But when everything is said and done, we must stand ready to confess: Lord, it is OK that I do not know the

answer. And we must not feel ashamed if we have to tell others, “I simply do not know.”

Keep on Changing Your Mind

A Christian mind grows over time, but it will never be perfect or inerrant. Accept that you may have been wrong in holding certain views, and be willing to change your mind when the evidence demands it.

Even though it sounds somewhat contradictory, the fact that you are not perfect in your thinking does not mean as a Christian intellectual you do not have a responsibility as a thought leader. Serving God with all your mind means you open yourself to the great Source of wisdom. As you drink from that Source you develop ideas, you generate vision, you are able to share and give direction. At the same time, be responsible and gentle with others who need time also to change their minds. Be a leader, but do not run ahead so far that people no longer see you.


As we serve God with all our mind, we must allow for a creative tension with others. As an intellectual who is active in the church you will play an important role in the life of the church, but you will also be criticized. Many people have legitimate concerns. So be understanding and patient as you ask others for space to question things and debate issues.

On the other hand, the church needs people who ask questions, who want to delve deeper, and are eager to keep the church in tune with the times.

With Your Entire Being

As you serve God, pray you will never sacrifice your intellectual integrity. Never “sell your soul.” Never change your convictions in order to be given a particular position in the church or to be popular. Never succumb to the temptation to believe one thing in church and another thing at work.

Finally, never separate the life of the mind from genuine spirituality. You can know a lot about the Christian religion without having a relationship with Christ. You can know a lot about the way human beings interact and society operates without having a real love for people. Serving God with our mind is an essential part of our discipleship, but it does not operate in a vacuum. There must always be a close relationship between knowing and doing, believing and obeying.

We are asked to love the Lord with our mind, but *not only* with our mind. We must serve Him with all we have and are—with our heart and with our soul and with our mind. 

¹Matt. 19:14, NIV.

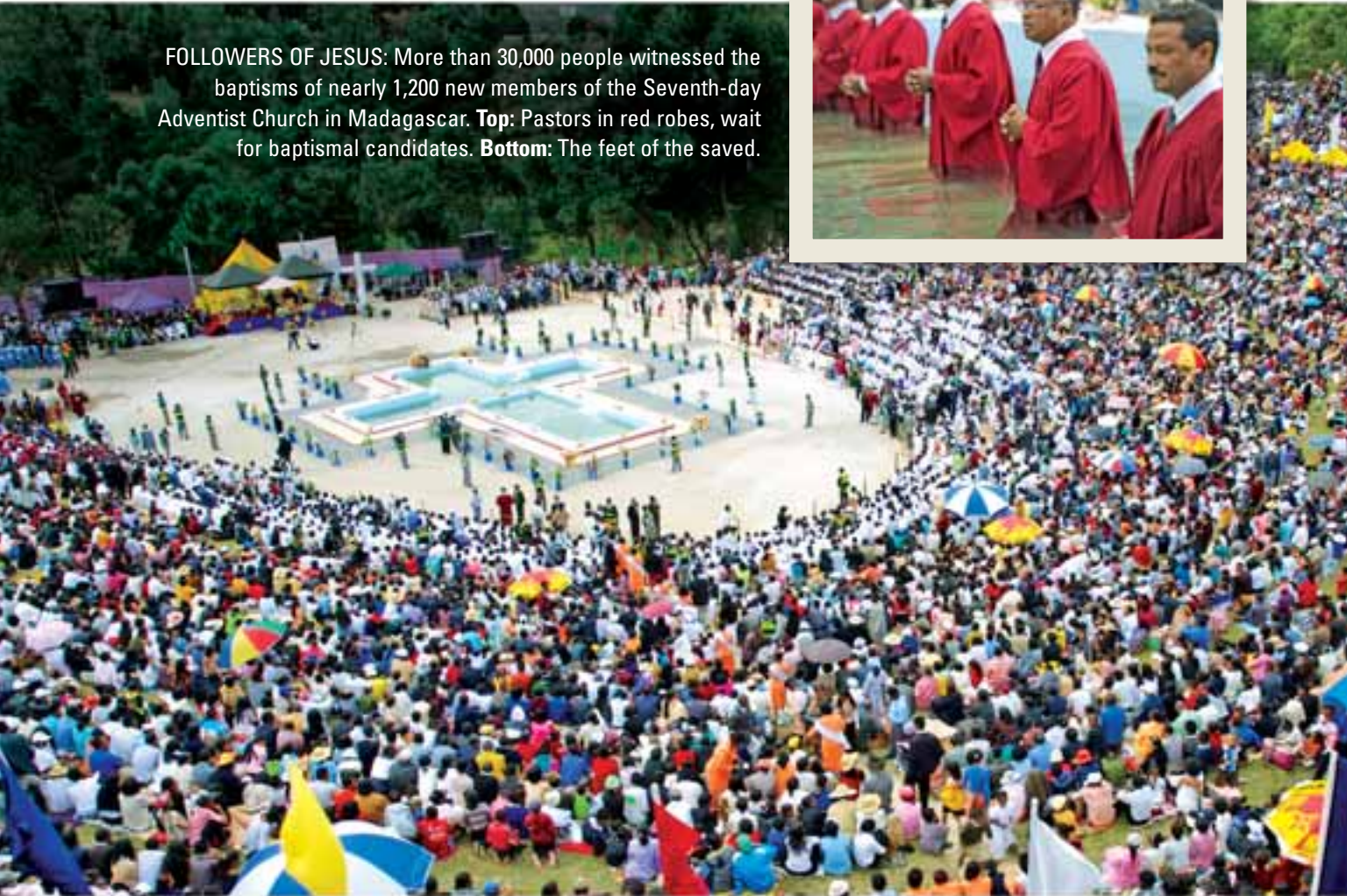
²See Matt. 22:34-38.

³See 1 Cor. 8:1, 2, NIV.

⁴Phil. 4:8, NIV.

⁵See 1 Cor. 10:31.

FOLLOWERS OF JESUS: More than 30,000 people witnessed the baptisms of nearly 1,200 new members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Madagascar. **Top:** Pastors in red robes, wait for baptismal candidates. **Bottom:** The feet of the saved.



From Ancestor Worship To

By MARK A. KELLNER, news editor, with reporting from Henriette Randriamanantena and Andre and Penny Brink

Living Faith

Adventists in Madagascar Grow Church By Asking God to Send Seekers



aith

Antananarivo, Madagascar—In a land where ancestor worship still dominates—to the point at which many of Madagascar’s Malagasy people still disinter the remains of their relatives to re clothe them in new garments—becoming a Christian, let alone a Seventh-day Adventist Christian, isn’t a step taken lightly.

“This is not an easy choice. It will turn your life inside out. Everything will be different,” declared Seventh-day Adventist pastor and regional church president Paul Ratsara, himself a Malagasy. “Jesus will make your life better. But everything will be different.”

Ratsara made that declaration during a May 12 outdoor event at which nearly 1,200 new Adventists—the first wave of an expected 30,000 new church members—were baptized. Many from a crowd of 3,000 who came forward that May afternoon are due to be baptized June 9, and by the end of the year, the balance are expected to become members. Adding 30,000 members would raise Adventist membership in the nation of 19 million people by about one third, from about 92,000 in 2005. That would still make the ratio of Adventists to non-Adventists roughly 1 in 155 people. But that’s far better than the 1 in 206 figure of just two years ago.

The current evangelistic wave in Madagascar is unlike those occurring in other places at earlier times. Instead of simply inviting an overseas speaker to fly in for a series of meetings, the Antananarivo experience is the result of the uniting of several different projects, in which the church focused on the island nation’s spiritual needs as well as the preparation for baptism of the new candidates.

How to find the prospective church members? Well, that was different, too, and extended beyond just the traditional methods. A significant amount of the effort came from a mass media advertising campaign in the Central Madagascar Conference, which includes Antananarivo and the

surrounding area, and used billboards and mass distribution of Bible study invitations. Those who enrolled in the correspondence courses were visited by nearby Adventists.

But there was another approach undertaken, and that, observers say, made all the difference. Ratsara and his colleagues went beyond traditional evangelism methods. Malagasy Adventists were urged instead to pray: “God, send our neighbors to us to ask us about You.” Those 11 words, spoken with sincerity and conviction, kicked off a drive that has brought the 30,000 prospective members—and perhaps a total of 50,000 people—into contact with the Adventist message.

Those who ask their Adventist friends and neighbors about the differences now visible in their lives are met with home Bible studies that are simple, Christ-oriented, grace-centered, and truth-filled. Some 2,000 church members were trained in daily, four-hour meetings to present the studies and nurture new contacts.

The spiritual soil of Madagascar is markedly different from that of other nations. The country of 587,000 square kilometers (226,657 square miles, slightly twice as large as the American state of Arizona) has a majority of its population involved in what one authority calls “indigenous beliefs,” centering on the worship of deceased ancestors. The tombs of these dead relatives, according to an authority, are often more elaborate than the homes of the living: “Among the Merina and Betsileo peoples of the central highlands, the custom of *famadihana* (‘placing’ or ... ‘turning’ of the dead) reaffirms the link between the living and the dead,” the report



Mark A. Kellner is news editor of *Adventist World*.



DICK DUERKSEN

EVERYTHING WILL BE DIFFERENT: Regional Adventist Church leader Paul Ratsara, himself a Malagasy, told new believers a total life change is expected. Lolona Raharilaia, with her husband and daughter (below) gave up customs of ancestor worship to follow Christ in baptism.



PENNY BRINK/SID

states. “This occurs when a person is taken from a temporary to a permanent tomb in the *tanindrazana* [family burial ground] and the remains are taken out of the tomb to be wrapped in new shrouds, or when a body is moved from one tomb to another.”

Moving from such a belief and practice to an affirmation of the Adventist belief in the “state of the dead”—that death “is an unconscious state for all people”—is a challenging transition, but according to one on-scene observer, becomes easier when the question is framed in terms of truth.

“The most important truth for [the Malagasy] is the Sabbath,” Dick Duerksen, whose photographs accompany this report, explained in an interview. “The idea of a weekly appointment with God, that ‘He wants me there,’ spoke to them. Then,

it was the idea of Jesus being their Savior and their friend. And at the core is the Bible—they’re so into it!”

A reflection of how “into” the Adventist message some Malagasy people are became evident one evening. An Adventist member of the Senate, Raberdison Jeanot, visited the region to support a small children’s Bible study in an Antananarivo neighborhood.

“Walk this way with me,” he said after the meeting.

“Isn’t it dangerous to walk here with all their equipment?” asked a visiting church leader.

“I am well known in this area,” Jeanot said, “because my home is here among the people. It will be fine.”

Jeanot took the small party up a cobbled street and stopped outside what would be a food stall by day, selling baguettes and other traditional food. A

church member and her two daughters were using their business space as a venue for a small group by night—with a difference. This space was just for children—about 50 of them, crammed into about 2.5 by 2 meters square (or 8.2 by 6.56 feet), singing the zinc roof off. The goal is to have regular Sabbath school classes after the campaign.

Duerksen, who works with church-constructing organization Maranatha Volunteers International, urged, “There is going to be a huge need” for new churches in Madagascar as well as the rest of the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Adventist Church region. While Maranatha may not get to Madagascar immediately, Duerksen said the Adventist lay organization will certainly consider projected needs there; right now, it’s concentrating on a 1,000-church building program for nearby Mozambique.

But before buildings are constructed, disciples must be made. The Adventist Church in Madagascar is committed to fully discipling its new believers, says pastor Robert Rasolonomenjanahary, treasurer of the local union.

“The Church in Madagascar has a strict policy with regard to discipling. Before a candidate may be baptized, they have to understand and accept the Adventist beliefs and practice the Adventist lifestyle, and refrain from following [certain] cultural practices,” he said.

Those beliefs center on accepting the Sabbath—customarily a school day and trading day in the nation—and abandoning *famadihana*, Rasolonomenjanahary said, but also concern marriage and family relationships.

“The practice of common law marriage is often the way in which families are bound in Madagascar, and polygamy is common practice, especially in the more traditional and rural areas,” Rasolonomenjanahary noted. “The church accepts baptismal candi-

PENNY BRINK/SID



Nation's President Challenges Adventists "to be Green"

BY ANDRE BRINK, *Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division*

dates with only monogamous marriages and legal [marriage] licenses.”

Lolona Raharilaia, who along with her husband and daughter was being baptized May 12, said that giving up famadihana was a choice she readily made: “Well, we decided to give it up now and follow [Adventist] beliefs,” she said. While her family had attended Adventist worship “on and off for a number of years,” it was only during this time of personal outreach by church members that the Raharilaia family decided to follow Jesus through believer’s baptism.


“A neighbor, who is an Adventist but attends a smaller church farther away, gave us the Bible study lessons and began visiting us often,” Rharilaia said. “She shows [so] much care for us. She invited us to attend a small group. And now we have decided to get baptized.”

Malagasay native Doraine Mazava is a theology student at Zurcher Adventist University, just south of Antananarivo, and a pastor’s daughter. During the campaign she was involved in working with some who were interested in joining the church. It was a “small group,” Mazava said, just 90 people getting together.

They used a local version of the movie *The Book That Wouldn’t Burn* and studied Bible lessons provided by the Voice of Prophecy, a Seventh-day Adventist media ministry. How did she get so many to attend?

Neighbors were invited, and in turn they brought friends and family, she said. The house was very full.

“A campaign like this is important,” Mazava continues. “One of my relatives, who has been resisting all his life, came to the meetings and approached my father, asking him to baptize him! Some people are just waiting for that call.”

More of those calls are expected to be made during the rest of 2007. If the anticipated number of people answer, one Adventist family will more than double, and an entire nation will be blessed as a result. 

“I have a vision for our country,” Madagascar’s president, Marc Ravalomanana, told some 30,000 Seventh-day Adventists gathered on May 5 for the opening day of an outreach effort in Mahamasina (or, sacred) Stadium in Madagascar’s capital.

Referring to the effects of deforestation on the island nation, Ravalomanana urged those gathered to help make Madagascar a “green island” once again.

He indicated that the Adventist Church can and is playing a significant role in the environmental development and moral health of the country and its people. He especially noted the work of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in Madagascar.

Turning to the spiritual impact of Adventists in the country, Ravalomanana congratulated them for “daring to share your faith in such a large public gathering, and in such a place as this.” He then urged the audience to “convey such a faith not only here, but in the rest of the country.”

President Ravalomanana was joined by the president of the Senate and the prime minister. Several other high-ranking government officials were also present, including Adventist Senator and member of the Pan African Parliament, Raberdison Jeanot.

While Ravalomanana was pleased with the church’s role in the environmental development and moral health of the country and its people, he was concerned about the condition of Adventist church buildings.

“People will judge your faith by the appearance of your buildings,” he said. “Lift up Christ through your places of worship, too.”

He then thanked the church for the special offering taken up at the meeting for the victims of the recent cyclones that devastated parts of the countryside.

[This wasn’t the first time the national president had participated in an Adventist meeting. Nearly four years ago, Ravalomanana had “dropped in” on a women’s ministry conference whose theme was “Women victorious, united in Christ.”

[“I am unexpected by you people, but not by God,” the state president declared at the time. “You would like to be victorious, ladies. You cannot do it by yourselves, but God will do it.” Recognizing the commitment of Adventist women in the country, Ravalomanana pledged a personal donation of US\$40,000 to their efforts to be used in the fight against AIDS.]

The 2007 Adventist outreach meeting was held in the same place where Queen Ranavalona, who ruled Madagascar from 1828 to 1861, used to throw Christians off cliffs. That infamous place formed the backdrop for this Christian gathering with “Lift up Christ” as its theme.

The May 5 Adventist meeting marked the first day of a one-week series of public meetings that is the culmination of four months of small-group evangelism and Bible study programs. In January church members handed out Bible study invitations in their communities.

The NUMBER 24 PRE-ADVENT Judgment¹ *Should we be scared? Or filled with hope?*

By ROY ADAMS

Seventh-day Adventists speak about a pre-Advent judgment (some prefer the term “investigative judgment”) taking place right now in the heavenly sanctuary. This judgment, as we understand it, represents the second and final phase of Christ’s priestly ministry for us. It includes the examination of the individual lives of God’s professed people, dead and alive.

The reaction of non-Adventist theologians to this teaching has been almost totally negative. Some see it as a face-saving move on our part to explain away the failure of 1844. Others see it as hostile to righteousness by faith and Christian assurance. Are they correct? How sound is this teaching?

Idea of Judgment in the New Testament

The notion of judgment permeates the New Testament. From a plethora of passages on this theme, here are a few:

In Romans 2:5, 6, Paul warns those

who, because of their “hardness” and “impenitent” hearts, were storing up for themselves “wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God who ‘will render to each one according to his deeds.’”

The book of Hebrews says: “For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment.... For we know Him who said, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay.’ ... And again, ‘The Lord will judge His people’” (Heb. 10:26, 27, 30).

And Peter says: “For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?” (1 Peter 4:17).

Think of the countless innocent men, women, and children taken away from their families in the dead of night by cold-blooded assassins and never heard from again. Think about the heinous crimes committed daily against innocent children and other helpless people in society. Is there to be no accounting? Are the wicked miscreants of the world to go free, laughing decency and morality in the face?

What the above passages suggest is that we live in a moral universe, and every rational person will have to give

account of themselves before the divine tribunal. Indeed, elementary human justice, quite apart from Scripture, cries out for judgment. Righteousness by faith and Christian assurance are indeed fundamental New Testament teachings. But so also is judgment.

Case for a Pre-Advent Judgment

In Daniel 12:1 we hear about a final time of crisis from which only those “found written in the book” will be rescued. And in Jesus’ pivotal statement about the end in Matthew 24, we learn that at the time of the Second Coming a loud trumpet call will gather together the “elect from the four winds” (verse 31). The contexts of those two passages clearly imply a prior determination of the spiritual standing of the individuals involved.

In Revelation 16 the seven last plagues, like guided missiles, pursue only those who have “the mark of the beast.” Obviously there had to be a prior assessment in order legally to affix the mark to some and not to others.

In Daniel 7 the prophet observes in vision the evil activities of the “little horn” on earth and simultaneously views a judgment scene in heaven. The writer switches back and forth from earth to heaven, studying these two engaging scenes, until the notorious



Roy Adams is an associate editor of *Adventist World*.

“little horn” is destroyed and judgment given in favor of the saints (Dan. 7:22). In a 1979 dissertation Australian scholar Arthur Ferch successfully demonstrated that these two activities take place within historical time and that, therefore, the judgment of Daniel 7 occurs prior to the Advent—in other words, is pre-Advent.²

It’s not wise to argue, as some do, that since God knows everything, a pre-Advent judgment is pointless. Such an approach, carried to its logical conclusion, repudiates the whole biblical notion of judgment—and not simply the idea of a pre-Advent judgment. There are intelligences beyond our own planet—created beings who, if the universe is to be secure, must be satisfied with the integrity of the divine process through which some people are saved and others lost.

So the pre-Advent judgment concerns much more than our personal standing before God, a point that becomes evident from a consideration of Daniel 7. In this chapter the “little horn” is clearly a major target, which immediately gives this pre-Advent activity a broad frame of reference.

A Broader Perspective

Revelation 12 and 13 unmask the power behind the beast (the “little horn” of Daniel 7), portraying that

power as the dragon, the “ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world” (Rev. 12:7-9, RSV; Rev. 13:1-3). Through his operatives this evil genius utters blasphemies against God, God’s name, God’s sanctuary, and the inhabitants of heaven (Rev. 13:6). In other words, God Himself stands accused!

This pre-Advent judgment separates God’s true saints from the multitudes who falsely claim His name. In this solemn proceeding “books” are opened, suggesting the idea of evaluation, of scrutiny—of *investigation*, if you please. It was this evaluation/investigative aspect of the pre-Advent judgment that particularly impressed Adventist pioneers, reminding them of the afflicting of the soul during the ancient Day of Atonement (see Lev. 23:26-32).


But the scope of this judgment is broader than they perceived it. Its wider concern is with vindication—vindication of God, of God’s sanctuary, of God’s name, of God’s people.

The full meaning of all this is far beyond us, of course. But certainly the focus is the heavenly sanctuary—the seat of God’s law and government, the nerve center of human salvation.

Upon its vindication hangs the security of the universe. Hence the awesome

theological significance of that cryptic statement in Daniel 8:14: “For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.”

The judgment now in session will settle the question of God’s love and justice prior to the Second Advent. It will confirm the validity and legality of the plan of salvation. And it will carry in its verdict the final vindication of God’s people.

As believers in Jesus, we view the pre-Advent judgment from two perspectives. Seeing it, on the one hand, as the antitype of the ancient Day of Atonement in Israel, we “afflict our souls,” realizing the solemn times in which we live. On the other hand, however, with our faith firmly planted in Jesus Christ, our great High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, we have absolutely nothing to fear. And understanding the whole activity from the perspective of vindication, as revealed in the books of Daniel and Revelation, we not only *have nothing to fear* but, indeed, have the deepest cause for rejoicing and exceeding joy. 

¹This article is a condensation and modification of chapter 8 of Roy Adams, *The Sanctuary: Understanding the Heart of Adventist Theology* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald, 1993).

²Arthur Ferch, *The Son of Man in Daniel 7* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1979). For a summary of Ferch’s findings, see “the Pre-Advent Judgment,” *Adventist Review*, Oct. 30, 1980, pp. 4-6.

Christ’s Ministry *in the* Heavenly Sanctuary

available to believers the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross. He was inaugurated as our great High Priest and began His intercessory ministry at the time of His ascension. In 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, He entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry. It is a work of investigative judgment, which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin, typified by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. In that typical service the sanctuary was cleansed with the blood of animal sacrifices, but the heavenly things are purified with the perfect sacrifice of the blood of Jesus. The investigative judgment reveals to heavenly intelligences who among the dead are asleep in Christ and therefore, in Him, are deemed worthy to have part in the first resurrection. It also makes manifest who among the living are abiding in Christ, keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and in Him, therefore, are ready for translation into His everlasting kingdom. This judgment vindicates the justice of God in saving those who believe in Jesus. It declares that those who have remained loyal to God shall receive the kingdom. The completion of this ministry of Christ will mark the close of human probation before the Second Advent. (Heb. 8:1-5; 4:14-16; 9:11-28; 10:19-22; 1:3; 2:16, 17; Dan. 7:9-27; 8:13, 14; 9:24-27; Num. 14:34; Eze. 4:6; Lev. 16; Rev. 14:6, 7; 20:12; 14:12; 22:12.)

There is a sanctuary in heaven, the true tabernacle which the Lord set up and not man. In it Christ ministers on our behalf, making

The Great Sympathetic Nerve of the Church

By
ELLEN G. WHITE

*Jesus puts
Himself in the
place of His
injured, oppressed
children.*

In His life Christ has given an example of how we should treat one another. He went about “doing good,” ministering to the suffering and teaching the ignorant. He did not come to this world to save the righteous; for there was none righteous. He came to save all who felt their need of a Saviour. For this end He worked untiringly, never thinking of Himself.

Christ labored unceasingly to save men from delusion. To this end His servants must work. God has given to every man a measure of light, and he is to let this light shine forth to others. No Christian lives to himself. He who is devoted to self-serving has not yet learned of the divine Teacher, though he may profess to be a Christian. It is one thing to passively assent to the truth, and another to apply the truth to the practical life. There are many hearers, but few doers.

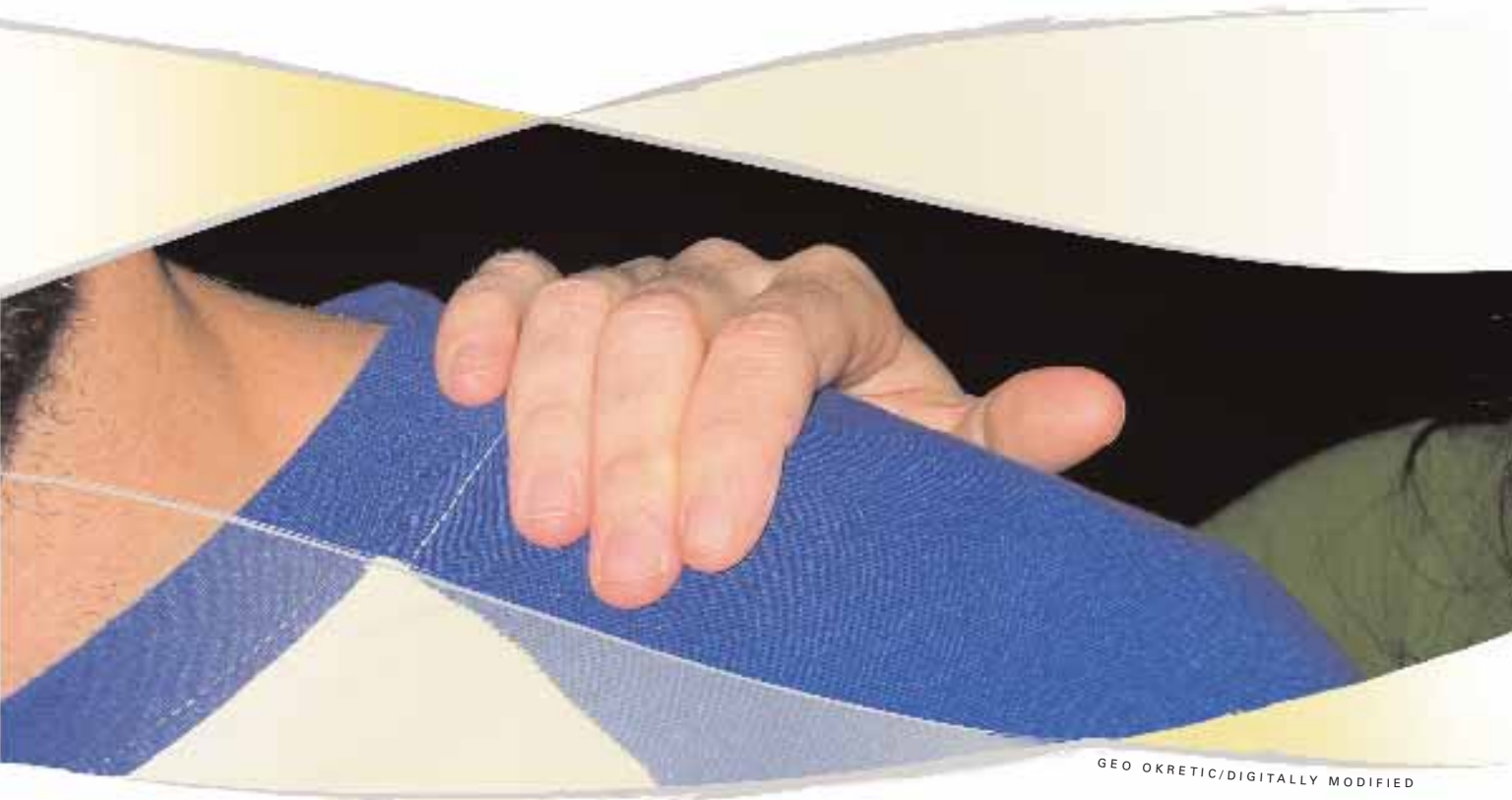
God is measuring the temple and the worshipers therein. There are those who in the providence of God have been placed in positions where they have opportunity to do much good with the blessings they have received. Upon these He places the responsibility of ministering to those who have few blessings and little encouragement. “Freely ye have received,” He says; “freely give.” Human beings in their suffering are crying to God, and their prayers are just as surely ascending before Him as did the blood of Abel. God is not indifferent to the needs of His children, wherever they may be; and His angels are waiting to see what testimony they can

carry to the courts above regarding the help which those who are highly privileged have given to these suffering ones.

God never forsakes His children. Jacob obtained his birthright by fraud, and then fled to escape his brother’s wrath. He knew that he had sinned. Sad and despondent, he lay down to sleep. But God had not forsaken him. That night he saw a ladder reaching from heaven to earth, the base of it planted firmly on the earth, and the topmost round reaching to the highest heaven. And continually angels of shining brightness ascended and descended this ladder. Jacob understood the meaning of this dream, and he said: “This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.” “Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.”

There are in our Lord’s discourses numerous places where He speaks of being personally injured by an injustice done to His followers. He is affected by all that befalls them; for He has identified Himself with them. He is never an indifferent spectator of the doings of men. He puts Himself in the place of His injured, oppressed children. His soul throbs with compassionate pain as the members of His body suffer; for He is the great sympathetic nerve of the church. All the suffering of the members is felt by Him. At the last great day He says to the selfish, “Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me.”

In the “new commandment” Christ has laid down the rule we are to follow in dealing with our fellow-men. “A new



GEO OKRETIC/DIGITALLY MODIFIED

commandment I give unto you,” He said, “That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.” If we do not obey this command, we shall not glorify our Redeemer. It should be our ambition to excel in all that is noble and good and unselfish. Never should we do anything that will mar our representation of God’s character. We are to hold the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end. The friends of the truth are friends of one another. By the golden links of love they are bound with one another and with Christ. Each one is to labor earnestly for the highest good of his brother.

We need as never before to pray with heart and voice for the indwelling of the Spirit, that we may be used in God’s service. We are to unite with our fellow-workers in the upbuilding of God’s kingdom. We are never to be satisfied with present attainments, but are ever to press upward and onward, seeking greater fervency and purer zeal. Our greatest desire should be to be found faithful to the Master.

Do you wish your heart to overflow with the love of God? Then cultivate grateful thanksgiving for the unspeakable privilege of knowing the truth. Lose sight of self by beholding Christ. Then you will be changed from glory to glory into His image. Bridle your disposition. Then peace and contentment will fill your soul.

God desires His church to be firmly united in the bonds of Christian unity. The want of harmony is the result of the development of the root of bitterness. Unless every fiber of this is eradicated, many will be defiled.

James wrote to his brethren: “Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”

The spirituality of many is being killed by their selfishness. Many cherish a spirit of self-sufficiency, which leads them to treat harshly the purchase of Christ’s blood. Unless such are converted, they can never see the kingdom of heaven. God says: “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another.” “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.” “The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, . . . to the end He may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

This article first appeared in the February 13, 1901, edition of the *Signs of the Times*, the oldest continuously published Adventist evangelistic magazine. Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

As we look back upon the great Advent movement, with its joyful expectations and bitter disappointments, its prosperity and adversity, its triumphant victories and its trials, it appears just like the work of God in separating a people from the world, to purify, make white, and try, and thus make them ready for the coming of their Lord. Have Adventists been disappointed? So were the Israelites, in not immediately entering Canaan. And the disciples, as Jesus died upon the cross. Have the faith and patience of Adventists been tried? So were the faith and patience of the Israelites tried in their term of forty years' wandering in the wilderness. And that of the disciples was severely tested in the unexpected death of their beloved Teacher. Have but comparatively few of the once happy expectants of the King of glory held fast their faith and hope? And have many cast away their confidence in this work and drawn back to perdition? Caleb and Joshua alone, of the six hundred thousand male adults that left Egypt, entered the goodly land. And what of the chosen twelve in the hour of our Lord's apprehension? "Then all the disciples forsook him and fled" [Matt 26:56].

God has never been able to make anything very great or very good of man. It has been His plan to prove His people in every age, to test their faith and patience. This has been for the good of man and the glory of His name. It was necessary that such noble characters as Noah, Abraham, Job, and Daniel should suffer the severest tests. And how unlike the work of God in all past time, had the many thousands of Adventists triumphantly entered the kingdom at the point of expectation, with hardly a single trial. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life" [James 1:12]. This is God's



James White (1820-1881), along with his wife, Ellen G. White, and Captain Joseph Bates, is considered one of the cofounders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and served as its most prominent early leader, including several

terms as president of the church's General Conference. Born in Maine, (U.S.), White was a Millerite preacher of the second coming of Jesus in the 1840s. In 1846, he married Ellen Gould Harmon, and for the next 35 years their lives were inextricably connected to the growing Advent movement and the organization of the denomination. Founder of the *Present Truth* and the *Review and Herald* journals (now the *Adventist Review*), James White was a prolific author, entrepreneur, editor, and evangelist. This selection is from his autobiographical work, *Life Incidents*, first published in 1868. All Scriptures quoted are from the King James Version.

First the Cr Cro

*The Adventist
what it means*

plan. First the cross and the trial, then the crown of un fading glory. As I "call to remembrance the former days," touching the Advent movement, and see its adaptation to the wants of the people, and God's great plan of saving men, my soul says, "He hath done all things well."

It was necessary, in order that the first message should arouse the people and separate those who should receive it from the spirit of the world, that it should not only relate to the fearful realities of the judgment, but also to the period when it might be expected. "Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come." The proclamation of the time was a part of God's plan. This brought the coming of the Lord very near. This was right. This was necessary to move the people. And when the time passed, instead of calling the attention of believers to some period in the future to which they might look for the coming of the Lord, the Spirit of God sweetly and powerfully applied to their consecrated minds and hearts such passages as, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry" [Heb. 10:35-37].

How long this little while would be, no one knew. It was not best that any one should know when it would terminate. And more, it was God's plan that this should not be known; but that they should move along through the period of the patience of the saints [Rev. 14:12], up to the coming of the Lord, ever keeping that event just before them. Those who have taught the three messages the past twenty years, have all the way presented the coming of Christ at hand. This has been as God designed. And those who would murmur at God's ministers for this, murmur against the providence of God.

It is painful to hear those who have their faces set toward Egypt complain that the message was not properly preached to them. The coming of the Lord was presented

By JAMES WHITE

OSS, Then the Wn

Church's co-founder reflects on
to wait for Jesus




CINDY KURTZHALS

ADVENTIST FOUNDERS: Just outside the William Miller Chapel on the campus of Atlantic Union College (South Lancaster, Massachusetts, USA), hangs a woodcarving by Adventist artist Wayne Hazen that portrays six of Seventh-day Adventism's early leaders. From left to right they are: John Nevins Andrews, *Review* editor, scholar, and the church's first official missionary; Stephen and Mary Haskell, leaders of New England's Adventists for nearly 50 years; Captain Joseph Bates, first proponent of Sabbatarian Adventism; James White, *Review* founder, administrator, and evangelist; and Ellen White, the church's prophetic messenger and most prolific author.

too near. And that if they had understood the matter, they should have laid their plans for the future differently, and now their property might be double its present value. These murmur against the direct providence of God. The coming of the Lord was brought very near in 1844, to rid men of the love of this world, that they might share the love of the Father, and seek a preparation for the coming of his Son. They cannot have both. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" [1 John 2:15]. And it was designed that the coming of Christ should be viewed near by believers, every step of the Way from the disappointment in 1844 to the gates of the golden city, to keep them free from the love of this world.

An energetic Advent minister, on visiting the believers at Roxbury, Mass[achusetts, United States], being asked, "What is your message now, Bro. B.?" answered, "Come out of her my people." Soon after the passing of the time he visited that people again, and in reply to the inquiry, "What is your message now, Bro. B.?" made the apt and appropriate reply, "Stay out of her my people." So Heaven designed that the coming of Christ should be brought very near to tear from men the love of this world, and that in their faith they should ever hold His coming just before them all the way till faith should be lost in the blazing glories of the coming of the Son of man. If we keep the coming of Jesus ever near, and live consistently with such a faith, keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, we may be saved. But remove the coming of the Lord to the distant future, become imbued with the love and spirit of this world, and remain in such a state, and perdition is certain. Let the painful history of the past relative to those who have said in their hearts, "My Lord delayeth his coming," have apostatized and have been scattered to the world and to Satan, be a warning to all to be ever "looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God" [2 Pet. 3:12].

When the warning voice of the first angel was first heard, it found the nominal churches asleep upon the subject of the Second Advent, dreaming of the world's conversion. But the truth was clear, and, in the hands of devoted men, was powerful. Everywhere the message was proclaimed it produced general conviction. The Scriptures were searched as never before; a great revolution in religious belief took place in a few short years; and at least fifty thousand in America alone became decided believers. The prophetic times in connection with that message served their purpose, and terminated with that message. The first angel's message was a time message. The second and third are not time messages. That aroused men in view of the fast approaching judgment. These tell them what they must do to be saved. 

QUESTION: *My friends are divided about the interpretation of the term “continual” in Daniel 8. Does that refer to pagan Rome, or to the mediation of Christ?*

This is an old debate among Adventists; and it’s not going away. What makes this particularly difficult is that at times individuals develop conspiracy theories around it in an attempt to demonize those whose views differ from theirs. This is spiritually dangerous. I cannot deal with the history of this topic, but I will share with you my personal view of the biblical materials.

1. Usage of the Term in the Bible: The Hebrew word for “continual” is *tāmîd*. Translators use different terms to render it into English. As an adverb it commonly means “always,” “daily,” “continually” (e.g., Deut. 11:12). It is also used as a substantival adjective, that is, in conjunction with another noun it functions as a noun. In those cases we find, for instance, the following translations: “continuance,” “unceasing,” “daily,” “regular.” Daniel used it as a noun with the article (Dan.

8:11, 13). In general we could say that *tāmîd* designates what happens continuously, or at regular intervals, or in perpetuity.

2. Use in the Context of the Sanctuary: Most of the usages of the term are found in relation to the sanctuary services and the role of the priest as mediator. Aaron was always/continually to wear the breastpiece and the plate of gold attached to his turban (Ex. 28:30). He was to keep the fire burning on the altar continuously (Lev. 6:13), keep the bread of the presence before the Lord regularly (Ex. 25:30; Lev. 24:8), burn incense daily (Ex. 30:8), and keep the lamps burning (27:20; Lev. 24:2-4). *Tāmîd* is also used to refer to the daily burnt and cereal offerings (Num. 28:3, 6; Ps. 50:8; Lev. 6:20; Num. 4:16). Those activities were performed by the priests on a daily and regular basis. A summary of those services is found in 1 Chronicles 16:37, NIV: “David left Asaph and his associates before the ark of the covenant of the Lord to minister there regularly [*tāmîd*], according to each day’s requirements.” That was the priests’ daily service of mediation.

3. *Tāmîd* in Daniel: First, in the case of Daniel, *tāmîd* has an article and should probably be translated as “the continuance.” Most Bible translations find in the term an abbreviated reference to the “daily sacrifice.” Such rendering is arbitrary, because in the context of the sanctuary the term is employed in connection with a multiplicity of priestly activities, not exclusively one of them.

Second, the *tāmîd* is directly connected to the work of the Prince of the heavenly hosts (chap. 8:11). As we noted, the term is primarily related to the sanctuary services performed by the priest. In Daniel and the Prince is a heavenly high priest performing a work of mediation. It is to this same activity that Hebrews refers when it states that Jesus “always lives to intercede for them” (Heb. 7:25, NIV).

Third, the Hebrew verb translated “to take” (*rûm*) means “be high, arise, exalt, be removed, lift up.” The verbal form used in Daniel 8:11 means “be removed, exalted.” The meaning of the verb in Daniel can be further defined by the preposition used with it; the continual is removed “from.” Whenever the verb *rûm* is accompanied by that preposition, it always expresses the idea of separa-

tion. Something is removed from someone or something (see Ex. 29:27; Lev. 4:10; 1 Sam. 2:8; Ps. 113:7; Isa. 57:14). At times removing, or separating, someone from others results in exaltation (see 1 Kings 14:7; Ps. 113:7, 8), but the fundamental idea of the verb continues to be that of “removing from.” Only the context will indicate whether the idea of exaltation is also present. The little horn removed the continual from the Prince by usurping His priestly work. The conflict described in the text is between Christ and the little horn, not between the two phases of Rome.

The *tāmîd* is never used in the Old Testament to refer to a pagan system of religious mediation. It describes the work of the priest on behalf of God’s people. It is therefore contextually and linguistically inappropriate to apply it to pagan Rome. ●

What is the “Continual?”

By ANGEL MANUEL
RODRÍGUEZ



Angel Manuel Rodríguez is director of the Seventh-day Adventist Biblical Research Institute.



Sanctuary Shadows

By MARK A.
FINLEY

Throughout the Old Testament God's people brought animal sacrifices as an offering for sin. Each sacrifice symbolized Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. The shed blood of the sacrifices pointed forward to the shed blood of Christ. This month we will study important lessons for our lives today from the sacrifices in the ancient Hebrew sanctuary.

1. What instruction did God give Moses regarding the plan of salvation? Fill in the blanks below:

"And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them (Ex. 25:8).

a. Israel was instructed to _____.

b. So God would _____.

2. Where did David look to discover God's power and glory? Circle the correct answer in the text below.

"So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory" (Ps. 63:2).

God's power and the glory of His love are seen in the plan of salvation revealed through the sanctuary.

3. Why was it necessary for sinners to bring their sacrifices to the sanctuary? Summarize your answer in the space provided.

a. *"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).*

b. *"The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).*

c. *"Without shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. 9:22b).*

d. *"The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7b).*

Sacrifices were necessary because _____

4. Did the sacrifices made by Old Testament believers take away sin? Circle the correct answer.

"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins" (Heb. 10:4).

a. Yes _____

b. No _____



5. When Old Testament sinners brought their sacrifices to the sanctuary, what two things did they have to do? Write your answer on the line below.

“Then he shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him. He shall kill the bull before the Lord” (Lev. 1:4, 5a).

a. He shall _____.

b. He shall _____.

Sinners had to bring their offerings of their own free will; there is no force in the gospel. Believers must come freely with their sacrifice. Once they arrived at the sanctuary they had to put hands on the head of the sacrifice, confess their sins, and slay the sacrifice.

6. How specific was the sinner’s confession to be? Write the answer in your own words on the line below.

“And it shall be, when he is guilty in any of these matters, that he shall confess that he has sinned in that thing” (Lev. 5:5).

_____.

7. How did John the Baptist describe Jesus?

“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29b).

John described Jesus as the _____.

8. What picture of Jesus does the Bible’s last book, Revelation, give? Write the answer on the line below.

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!” (Rev. 5:12).

Revelation pictures Jesus as the _____.

9. How can we receive the forgiveness and grace Jesus provides through His sacrifice? Underline the answer in the text.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins” (1 John 1:9).

Jesus, the slain Lamb, provides full and complete salvation for sinners who come to Him confessing their sins. Salvation is a gift; Jesus the Lamb has provided it. He died on the cross for all humanity, so all can come and receive what He freely provides at an infinite cost. Jesus is our Savior. Through Him eternal life is ours today.



Next month’s Bible study,
“Jesus: Our Compassionate High
will look at another aspect of Christ’s ministry for us.

”

LETTERS

Absolutely Thrilled



I was absolutely thrilled to read the article about the celebration of the three-millionth member in the Inter-American Division! In 1978 we had 3 million

members worldwide and 29 years later, one division has 3 million. This makes me very happy, for IAD was the very first division I visited during my ministry at the GC! The joy and happiness expressed in the face of the young lady baptized by Elder Israel Leito, division president, translates the way we all feel!

LEO RANZOLIN
Florida, United States

More Thoughts on Women in Ministry

I am responding to the interview with Jan Paulsen, in the April 2007 *Adventist World*, on women in ministry. Kimberly Luste Maran asked Paulsen the following: “What should the church be saying to its female members, particularly about the opportunities to serve in leadership roles, for which the Spirit has given women gifts?”

Paulsen stated this as part of his response: “I know the fullest kind of recognition to pastoral ministry—ordination—is a direction the church has said, on at least two different occasions we have met together as a world body, ‘This is not the way to go

now,’ but I would still encourage women to train for the ministry.”

“This is not the way to go now.” Why not, what’s the problem? I’ve been a Seventh-day Adventist for 30 years, and I’ve heard nothing but excuses for not ordaining women in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As far as I’m concerned, this is just another excuse.

MICHAEL L. HUGHES, JR.
Texas, United States

The interaction of the GC president with women has motivated some of our AWM leaders to mount the pulpit and preach the love of Jesus.

In this part of the world, some people believed that women had no business on the altar during divine service. Now the attitude is gradually changing. Thank you for printing the interview with Paulsen, which further supports women being involved in ministry.

JOSEPH NKEMDI
Alimosho District, Nigeria

A Part of the Family Again

I am not an Adventist, but I appreciate so much reading your *Adventist World* magazine. It is very inspiring and soul-satisfying.

I have been happily married for 17 years, and blessed with four children. It is not easy to be a mother and a career woman. The economic situation in our country requires double income families. Fortunately for me, I was able to finish college through the sacrifices of my loving parents.

I work not only because I want to help my husband, but, honestly, I hate

being at home and doing the chores. My career is my temptation. I could work for 20 hours a day without being exhausted. I have been working away from home six days a week, leaving my children behind, cared for by my parents and my husband. I have been exchanging my most precious time that is supposed to be for my growing children with my career—until I found myself sitting in the guidance room of my son’s school. He is not doing well and has almost become a liability to society. I blame myself because I never give them quality time.

When I happened to read the article “Lord, Remember Our Children” (May 2006) in your magazine, I was struck by the message: “the most precious gift we can give to our children is our time.”

Thanks be to God for using your magazine as an instrument to open my heart and make me realize my mistakes. My family is my source of inspiration—it is God’s manifestations of His great love and mercy. I may have lost a career, but I am holding the world’s greatest jewel—my family. I believe there is never a wrong time to do the right thing. I am a part of my family’s life again.

FRANCES JOY ALERIA
Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines

Letters Policy: Please send your letters to the editor to: letters@adventistworld.org. Letters must be clearly written and to the point, 250-word maximum. Be sure to include the name of the article, the date of publication, and page number with your letter. Also include your name, the town/city, state, and country from which you are writing. Letters will be edited for space and clarity. Not all letters submitted will be published.

EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

Waiting for Tomorrow's Flight

A reader shares reasons for properly managing time.

We are advised in Hebrews 12:1 to “run with perseverance the race marked out for us” (NIV). In our “hurry-up” society, however, the race, that lies ahead of us promises constant stress from the pressures associated with our busy lifestyles. Yet even though the stress in our lives may be inevitable, we can learn how to control or minimize the degree to which a situation is stressful to us.

Norman Vincent Peale, in his classic work *The Power of Positive Thinking*,¹ reports on a championship university crew who were told by their coach, “To win this or any race, row slowly.” That hardly seems appropriate advice for a winning crew. Yet they had learned through experience that rapid rowing destroyed their stroking rhythm. When the crew learned to be patient and use consistent, slower stroking, they ultimately won the race.

The renowned nineteenth century poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, also gave advice on patience in his poem of the same title.

“Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.”²

While we’re “up and doing,” we can become more aware of our areas of impatience and actively work to reduce this stress in our lives. We can pray for God’s guidance to give us the wisdom to recognize situations in which we can take action, and to realize our impatience will not resolve issues that are out of our control.

Through proper time management, we can expand our “up and doing” to areas outside of the home and work environments with activities designed to relax mind and body. Participating in sports, reading a favorite book, listening to music, or pursuing hobbies will give balance in our lives. As we relax from our “still



achieving and still pursuing” lifestyles, we should not feel guilty about taking a few moments for ourselves. A relaxed mind and body are more likely to provide us with a patient outlook on life.

Proper time management, besides providing a schedule for this balance of activities in our lives, will also help us to have a “heart for any fate.” Thus when “any fate” comes our way, we can more readily cope with that eventuality with some forbearance when the other areas of our lives already have a semblance of order.

The experience of waiting for tomorrow’s flight would hardly seem to provide a lesson in patience. Yet a woman who lives on an ice-bound island in Western Lake Erie, where the only transportation to the mainland is a daily flight, has learned this lesson well. We can benefit from her positive attitude as she sums up quite succinctly the philosophy for not getting upset over things for which we do not have any control: “I’ve learned over the years there isn’t anything so important that it can’t wait for tomorrow’s flight.”³

Her example can encourage us to examine our circumstances and see if there are many things in our lives for which “tomorrow’s flight” would be quite appropriate (excluding what may be true emergencies). The championship crew realized it’s the steady pace in crewing that wins the race. Can we adopt this strategy for our lifestyles and run with patience “the race which lies ahead”?
—Annie Laura Smith, Huntsville, Alabama, originally published in *Vista*, no. 0822, 1991.

¹Peale, Norman Vincent. *The Power of Positive Thinking*. New York: Foundation for Christian Living, 1968, p. 95.

²Longfellow, Henry W. “Patience,” *Leaves of Gold*, Clyde Francis Lytle, Editor, Rev. Ed., Williamsport, Penn.: The Coslett Publishing Co., 1952, p. 12.

³Engel, Margaret. “The Little Airline of the Lake,” *Air & Space Smithsonian* (February/March 1987): p. 56.

THE PLACE OF PRAYER

I am an Adventist believer. Recently my father-in-law, a retired pastor, 84 years old, diabetic, miraculously escaped an amputation operation. I thank God for answered prayer!

During this period I was not able to work due to Sabbath problems. Our children are in school. Please pray for our family—I need sponsorship for them to continue in school.

BERNABAS, *India*

Please pray for our 33-year-old son who was baptized before but is now addicted to alcohol. Pray that the Almighty God will bring total change in his character and the ability to better serve the Lord through a Christlike life. We believe that “with God all things are possible” (Matt. 19:26).

JERES, *Malawi*

I am requesting that Adventists around the world pray for my family as a whole. I have been having a lot of problems in my family. The problems are really generated due to misunderstanding among us. Please pray that we could have a happy family, and a family that respects God and observes the Sabbath day.

BEN, *Kenya*

I would like to thank you for your prayers during my exams last year. They were answered and it was great! I sat for exams in five courses and passed with five 2.1s (upper second class). I’m among the best students in my class. It is my prayer that God will continue to bless me as I go for exams again this semester. “Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good”—I am seeing it in my life.

CHINODA, *Zimbabwe*

Thanks to God for the peace that exists in my country. Please pray that the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ should reach unreached people who have been in war for the past 22 years.

MODESES, *South Sudan*

Our parents passed away. Please pray for me and my three siblings that God will give us strength and help us get school fees and other basic needs. Thank you.

JIM, *Kenya*

The Place of Prayer: send to prayer@adventistworld.org.

Send us your prayer requests and praise (thanks for answered prayer). Keep your entries short and concise, 75 words maximum. Items sent to this category will be edited for space and clarity. Even though we will pray for each entry during our weekly staff meetings, not all submissions will be printed. Please include your name and your country's name with your entry. You may also fax requests to: 1-301-680-6638; or mail them to *Adventist World*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600 U.S.A.



ANITA PATTERSON

“Behold, I come quickly...”

Our mission is to uplift Jesus Christ, uniting Seventh-day Adventists everywhere in beliefs, mission, life, and hope.

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Technical Coordinator

Merle Poirier

Executive Assistant to the Editor

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Administrative Assistant

Reader Services

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Jeff Dever, Fatima Ameen, Bill Tymeson

Consultants

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To Writers: We welcome unsolicited manuscripts. Address all editorial correspondence to 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600, U.S.A. Editorial office fax number: (301) 680-6638

Email: Internet: worldeditor@gc.adventist.org

Web site: www.adventistworld.org

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WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THIS?



DICK DUERKSEN

The PEOPLE'S PLACE

JUST THE FACTS

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is truly global! Outreach (spreading the good news) around the world has always been part of its mission as it strives to follow the great commission of Matthew 28:19, 20. Here are some interesting facts on how we speak to the world, gathered from the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church Web site, www.adventist.org:

- Countries and areas of the world as recognized by the United Nations: 228
- Countries and areas of the world in which Seventh-day Adventist work is established: 202
- Languages used in Seventh-day Adventist publications and oral work: 885
- Publishing houses and branches: 65
- Literature evangelists, credentialed and licensed: 7,369
- Languages used in publications: 361

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“While cheerfulness and a calm resignation and peace will make others happy and healthy, it will be of the greatest benefit to oneself.”

—Ellen G. White, *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 662

ADVENTIST LIFE

Lost in Translation 2: When we need translators, we have to be aware that sometimes they may not translate or transmit the same message we intend to share. However, sometimes even with wrong or funny translations, the message can get across very well.

I figured this out when I was listening to a sermon in Chinese with a translator speaking in English through the audio phone system. When the preacher mentioned a woman who delivered a baby, the translator said, “She delivered a boy after having him 10 months in her stomach.” It was funny, but we really got the message.

—Dr. Dos Santos, Hong Kong

ANSWER: From Madagascar, many people joined the church during a baptism event held on May 12, 2007. To read the entire story of the Madagascar event, turn to pp. 16-19.