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Presenting the Truth as It Is in Jesus

Joel Sarli



The Lord blessed the work of a Bible instructor with seventy precious souls in the first baptism of a series of evangelistic meetings. One day in her enthusiasm for the Lord she expressed her amazement in observing the transformation taking place in the life of so many people. "The more I teach the gospel to people the more I marvel at the transforming power of our message," she exclaimed.

She knew that she was indeed teaching the gospel; going from home to home helping people to understand the doctrines of the Adventist church. Her memory could not separate the many first-hand experiences with the many lives that had been transformed by the power of the Message.

Accompanying her was a young intern who had just graduated from college with a degree in theology. He became the pastor of the new church. As she continued to work, he came to regard her approach with apprehension, eventually deciding that it was a severe detriment to her ministry. He decided to provide new insight to the faithful Bible instructor that she might understand some fresh theological concept that he had just learned from his college courses.

"You're not teaching gospel but Adventist doctrine," he began, "and you're using one of the worst Bible-study methods—the 'proof-text' method." He told her he would have more time to talk about this since he would be remaining there as the coordinator of the follow-up activities for this campaign.

Today, we increasingly face this trend among our congregations. Elders, pastors, administrators, and

theologians are speaking of the gospel as opposed to doctrine. Often we hear statements like, "If we are preaching doctrines we are not preaching the gospel." Ideas such as this have even been repeated in our pulpits, in our publications, and in our schools, thus bringing confusion to many faithful members, while discrediting the loyal work done by our evangelists and Bible instructors.

Insecurity plagues the person who is not sure of the doctrines of the church; one who is not sure that what his church teaches is true, or not sure of his own familiarity with it. The latter has produced fearful witnesses and the former a multitude of apostates.

If it is true that some of our members and preachers have a misconception of certain doctrines, it is also true that, due to the lack of the correct and consistent presentation of doctrines, some of our preaching does not provide the quality of spiritual nurture we intend. Nevertheless, doctrines are part of the solid message of the

Bible and must be given to our congregation through preaching the Word of God. This was Paul's conviction when he said, "Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity" (Heb. 6:1, RSV).

It is the responsibility of every elder to help the members to know the biblical basis for what they believe, and to move from elementary teachings to a deeper understanding of the truth.

E. G. White counsels: "We do not go deep enough in our search. Every soul who believes present truth will be brought where he will be required to give a reason of the hope that is in him. The people of God will

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How to Offer a Pastoral Prayer

C. M. Mellor

O come, let us worship and bow down: O let us kneel before the Lord our maker. For he is our God" (Ps. 95:6, 7). Prayer is the high point of the church service. At this time the congregation is in direct communion with the Eternal. The reading of Scripture, the singing of hymns, and the preaching of the sermon must be secondary as these functions only speak about God; but when we pray, we are in direct conversation with the Almighty.

Prayer is a science and as such demands careful study and understanding. We are told, "There should be an intelligent knowledge of how to come to God in reverence and godly fear with devotional love. There is a growing lack of reverence for our Maker, a growing disregard of His greatness and His majesty."— *Selected Messages*, 2:315.

It is distressing to admit that few of our ministers have had any training either on the college level or in seminary in the discipline, dynamics and techniques of effective prayer. Inspiration states, "Educate and train the mind that you may in simplicity tell the Lord what you need. . . . The Lord desires us to improve in prayer and to offer our spiritual sacrifices with increased faith and power."— *In Heavenly Places*, p. 78. Are we growing in an intelligence of prayer, or are we praying in the same way that we have been doing for the past five, ten, or fifteen years?

There are several prayers offered in the course of a worship service. When the ministers enter the pulpit, it should be with dignity and solemn mien as they commit themselves to God. Then there is the invocation invoking God's blessing upon the service, and the benediction bringing the worship to a close. These are all vital; but the chief concern of this article is with the pastoral prayer or the main prayer. Let us notice some musts for the minister and the congregation to observe when this important prayer is offered.

As to the proper posture in prayer, both congregation and minister should kneel. "And when you assemble to worship God, be sure and bow your knees

before Him. Let this act testify that the whole soul, body, and spirit are in subjection to the Spirit of truth."— *Selected Messages*, 2:314. How thankful we should be that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has not followed the example of popular Protestantism where the worshipers no longer kneel but sit or stand during prayer! There is a blessing in kneeling before the eternal God.

However, we must not become legalistic and rigid in this matter, for there may be times where the ideal is not possible. At some convocations, such as camp meeting pavilions and public auditoriums, kneeling is almost impossible. Thus, we must do the best we can under the circumstances, but the preferred posture of prayer is to kneel. How impressive to see a congregation reverently kneeling as they worship their Creator!

The Bible says several times, "He lifted up his voice." Public prayer should be offered in a clear voice so all present can hear every word. No one can be edified spiritually if the one addressing God cannot be understood. We are counseled, "Let those who pray and those who speak pronounce their words properly, and speak in clear, distinct, even tones. Prayer, if properly offered, is a power for good. It is one of the means used by the Lord to communicate to the people the precious treasures of truth. But prayer is not what it should be, because of the defective voices of those who utter it. Satan rejoices when the prayers offered to God are almost inaudible."— *Gospel Workers*, p. 88.

A prayer uttered hurriedly with excessive speed shows an inner tension on the part of the one in supplication. This attitude is contagious and will affect the entire congregation. Some important instruction is given by the servant of the Lord, "Do not fall into the habit of praying so indistinctly and in such a low tone that your prayers need an interpreter. Pray simply, but clearly and distinctly. To let the voice sink so low that it cannot be heard is no evidence of humility. . . . A prayer uttered so hurriedly that the words are jumbled together is no honor to God and does the hearers no

good. Let ministers and all who offer public prayer learn to pray in such a way that God will be glorified and the hearers will be blessed. Let them speak slowly and distinctly and in tones loud enough to be heard by all so that the people may unite in saying, Amen.” —*Testimonies to the Church*, 6:383.

The one offering the pastoral prayer must remember he is speaking for all gathered in worship, not just for himself! All personal references such as “I,” “my,” and “me” should be omitted. In their place, “our,” “us,” and “we” will be used. Ministers sometimes close their prayers by saying, “I ask in the name of Jesus.” This is proper in private communion, but when public prayer is offered, the entire congregation should be included in “we . . .”

Long prayers in congregational worship are an abomination to the Lord and a trial to God’s children. How often ministers err in this. Some pointed admonition is given, “The long prayers made by some ministers have been a great failure. Praying to great length, as some do, is all out of place. . . . A few minutes’ time is enough to bring your case before God and tell Him what you want; and you can take the people with you and not weary them out and lessen their interest in devotion and prayer. They may be refreshed and strengthened, instead of exhausted.”— *Ibid.*, 2:617.

It is said that when a person neglects his private communion with God, he tends to pray longer in public to compensate for his personal failure in piety. “Christ impressed upon His disciples the idea that their prayers should be short, expressing just what they wanted, and no more. . . . One or two minutes is long enough for any ordinary prayer.”— *Ibid.*, p. 581. In private prayer, one can pray as long as desired.

Often, the one selected to offer the main prayer is called upon just before the service. This allows little time for thought and contemplation. The person in charge says, “Brother So-and-so, will you give the prayer?” Ten or fifteen minutes later this brother offers to God a sincere but slipshod jumbled prayer that can reduce the spirit of the divine service to irreverence. It has been written, “When public prayer is undisciplined, corporate public worship decays.”

It is the custom in many Seventh-day Adventist churches for the minister or speaker to give the invocation at the beginning of the worship service while some well meaning lay elder is asked to take the pastoral prayer with a few minutes notice. Therefore, the highest part of the worship is often given in an ill-prepared manner.

Reason suggests the order be reversed. Who better knows the needs of the congregation and the emphasis of the Sabbath day than the minister? True, there are dedicated laymen who can give a most acceptable prayer; but should not the minister give the main prayer more often as the worship and needs of the congregation are presented to God?

The public prayer should meet the needs of the worshipers in assembly. Who would know the struggles and desires of the people better than the minister? It was Joseph Fort Newton who said, “The minister must live with the people if he is to know their problems, and he must live

*“Educate and train the mind
that you may in simplicity tell
the Lord what you need. . . .”*

close to God if he is to solve them.” The pastor would do well to spend some time each week planning for the main prayer of the worship service. Not that he would read it on Sabbath morning, for such is not our tradition; but he should be prepared to pray to the eternal God of heaven in the best possible manner. This is the time when the congregation is in direct communion with their God. “O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come” (Ps. 65:2).

Prayer in the church worship service is the respectful and receptive opening of the heart to God with others of like attitudes and expectations. It is a togetherness in approaching God for His presence and mercies. How inspiring is the promise: “The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them” (Ps. 145:18, 19).

Just how does one prepare a pastoral prayer? There is a natural sequence to be followed in this art. This is true both when we are in private communion with our Lord and when we are praying before a congregation in the setting of a worship service. Let us together consider six aspects of an effective prayer:

Adoration and Reverence

All prayer begins with adoration and reverence for God and His holy name. To adore God is to love Him. This is the foundation of all true prayer. We address our prayers to God through the name of Jesus Christ.

In the Scriptures there are many illustrations of adoration. When the disciples said to Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray," He taught them to say, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" (Luke 11:1, 2). When the angel announced the birth of Jesus to the shepherds, they sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (chap. 2:14). In the prayer of Isaiah, preceding his vision of the glory of God, he exclaimed, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts" (Isa. 6:3).

Is it not significant that the remnant church, which heralds the "everlasting gospel," is admonished, "Fear God, and give glory to him" (Rev. 14:7)? This text in Phillips' translation reads: "Reverence God, and give glory to him." "Prayer is the most holy exercise of the soul. It should be sincere, humble, earnest, the desires of a renewed heart breathed in the presence of a holy God.

When the suppliant feels that he is in the divine presence, self will be forgotten. He will have no desire to display human talent; he will not seek to please the ear of men, but to obtain the blessing which the soul craves."—*Testimonies to the Church*, 5:201.

One of the great problems in most Seventh-day Adventist churches is lack of reverence. Only as worshipers sense that they are in the presence of God and that God, through the Holy Spirit, is in the house of worship can real prayer be experienced and real reverence felt.

To pray to God is to rejoice in Him, to turn our thoughts from self to God. Nothing that we possess is as important as knowing God and that we possess Him. It is at this point that real, effective prayer begins!

Praise and Thanksgiving

There is much in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy about joy and thanksgiving in prayer. "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5: 20). "We

need to praise God more 'for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men' (Ps. 107:8). Our devotional exercises should not consist wholly in asking and receiving. Let us not be always thinking of our wants, and never of the benefits we receive. We do not pray any too much, but we are too sparing of giving thanks. We are the constant recipients of God's mercies, and yet how little gratitude we express, how little we praise Him for what He has done for us."—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 102, 103.

In the prayer of adoration and reverence, we love God for Himself and what He is; in the prayer of thanksgiving and praise, we thank God for what He has done. It is to say, "God, I thank thee for . . ." As we thank God for His many blessings, our attention is directed away from ourselves and upward to Him. "No tongue can express, no finite mind can conceive, the blessing that results from appreciating the goodness and love of God."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 253.

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The Prayer of Confession

The two types of prayer previously mentioned, adoration and thanksgiving, are significant, for they direct us toward God. In the effective pastoral prayer, there is also a place for the expression of worshipers' needs. One of the basic problems of any congregation is the forgiveness of sin. Sin separates man from God.

The key to a reconciliation with God is to say, "Lord, we are sorry." "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). "True confession is always of a specific character, and acknowledges particular sins."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 38. Not only is it important to confess the sins that come to our minds, but we must also confess the underlying motives that lie deep in the heart. It was the psalmist who cried, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults" (Ps. 19:12).

How solemn and rousing are the words "Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, 'Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?' (Joel 2:17).

How painful to recognize our spiritual failures and yet how wonderful is our God's forgiveness! When we pray the prayer of confession, it is not to condemn the church, but to point to the mercies of a loving Father.

Intercession in Prayer

In the prayer of intercession we are praying, not for ourselves, but for others. True Christians who deeply love others cannot but pray for them. This is one of the great privileges in talking to God in behalf of a congregation.

There are persons whom we would remember in our private communion with God who would not be remembered in the pastoral prayer. Those for whom intercession is made should be the concern of the entire congregation. It is at this point in the pastoral prayer where our leaders, evangelists, teachers, colporteurs, sick, and discouraged should be mentioned. Little do we understand the heavy burdens and bewildering perplexities upon the hearts of the worshippers. To mention such in a general way might be the means of giving someone the lift he needs "It is when we come into difficult places that He reveals His power and wisdom in answer to humble prayer."— *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 199.

Petition in Prayer

Generally when people pray it is because they want something. The prayer of petition is for ourselves, our needs and desires. Jesus, when teaching His disciples how to pray, said, "Give us this day our daily bread." In asking for things, caution must be expressed, for it is in praying thus that our wills are often placed before the will of God. This is where our motives must be examined to make sure they are righteous and unselfish.

In our private communion with God our prayers should be simple as we ask for our temporal and spiritual needs. Although He knows these needs, He wants us to ask for them.

Our petitions may not always be answered in the way we would wish, but we can learn lessons from God's refusals and pray for the wisdom and strength that we need to reach His standards.

Committing Ourselves to God

The proper climax of prayer is for us to commit and dedicate ourselves to the service and keeping of God. Failure to align our lives to the revealed will of

God would debase prayer to empty and high sounding words. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps. 37:5).

Effective prayer can only be the result of total dedication. Thus it seems a fitting climax to commit ourselves to God near the conclusion of the pastoral prayer. "There are conditions to the fulfillment of God's promises, and prayer can never take the place of duty. "If ye love Me," Christ says, "Keep My commandments." E

C. M. Mellor was ministerial secretary of the Northern California Conference when he wrote this article.

Presenting the Truth as It Is in Jesus

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be called upon to stand before kings, princes, rulers, and great men of the earth, and they must know that they know what is truth."—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 119, pr. 1.

Doctrine is the verbal revelation of God's character in its essence and action, and as such may never be properly discussed without reference to its divine center—Jesus. Unfortunately, a dichotomy has developed in the interpretation of this principle, leading to the twin evils of antinomy and oracular sterility.

A sermon or presentation may be eloquent, interesting, and correct according to the Scriptures. But if it fails to make Christ the center, it is not in the proper form. If the doctrines are presented merely as the teachings of the church, there is no impelling incentive for decision for Christ. However advantageous it may be to know that one is "right," it is even more important that this include a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. "The truth as it is in Jesus will subdue the most powerful opponents, bringing them into captivity to Jesus Christ." — Ellen G. White, in *General Conference Bulletin*, Feb. 25, 1895.

Traditionalist religion in Christ's day made its boast in the oracles of God. The insensitive Pharisee was the result. Being "in the truth" avails little if one is "out of Christ." "Of truth," the Master said, "they are they which testify of me." There are no powerless pulpits where Christ is rightly preached. "I . . . will draw," said Jesus, and He did and does. E

Health Reform: A Balanced Program

Calvin H. Palmer

When King Solomon built his magnificent temple in Jerusalem, a variety of building materials such as cedar, marble, brass, gold, and silver, was used. Each had its place in the creation of a perfect edifice of strength and beauty for the worship and glory of God. Similarly, in the development and care of the body temple a variety of health factors is necessary. Neglect of even one of these requirements can mar the full stature of the perfect man. Some of these essentials to buoyant health are physical, others are mental, and still others are spiritual.

Let us consider, for example, the importance of exercise in maintaining body tone. In the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy we find more than two hundred references that emphasize the value and the necessity of exercise to promote physical, mental, and spiritual health. In spite of this admonition, few of us sense the importance of exercise as a vital part of health reform, or maybe we limit this doctrine, so much emphasized among us, to those aspects wherein we differ from the accepted practices of modern society, such as smoking, drinking, and errors in diet. For most of us, a brisk walk of three miles would work wonders.

Another contributing feature to sound health is correct posture. Here there is astounding ignorance. Recently there was an investigation of the effects of posture on health conducted at the University College Hospital. It was demonstrated that one of the most common causes of fatigue is failure to breathe deeply, and this, in turn, is associated with poor posture. Further, it was proved that faulty posture is a most common cause of backache. Could it be that many people who are swallowing patent kidney pills would be both better in health and in pocket by sitting straight and walking erect?

Our health is also directly influenced by the way we dress. Take, for example, footwear. At birth, only two per cent of babies have some abnormality of their feet. Yet at the age of sixteen, seventy per cent of young

people have defective feet. In many cases this can be traced to ill fitting or faulty footwear.

Diet Overemphasized?

No discussion on health would be complete without a reference to diet. Some might be inclined to feel that we rather overemphasize the role of diet, until it assumes a religious aspect. In reply to this, let us again consider the building of Solomon's temple. How careful were both architects and builders to assemble only the best materials the ancient world could provide. These were laboriously obtained from distant lands, for nothing of an inferior nature was to be built into a structure dedicated to the worship of Israel's God.

Likewise, the Christian, conscious that he himself is the handiwork of the Creator, will be just as particular as to what goes into the building of the body temple, in that it should be the best obtainable. Every cell and tissue of our bodies is built from the food we eat. Hence, a health giving diet is not just a fad; it is an essential part of Christian living.

When God said to Adam, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," He was really bestowing a wonderful blessing upon mankind. Work, with its attendant mental interest and bodily activity, is essential to health. When one dispenses with the privilege of work and neglects the interests and activities he has been accustomed to, he does so only at the expense of becoming prone to physical infirmities and mental deterioration. It is a blessing to rejoice in that God has given each one not only a lifework to accomplish but also gifts and skills to be developed and used as long as strength and intellect last.

Natural law reveals a balance between opposite forces. So, in the laws of health, there must be a balance between mental and physical work, between activity and rest, between concentration and relaxation, and between temporal necessities and spiritual interests.

Herein lies a challenge to reassess one's daily program, as to whether the physical, the mental, and the spiritual demands are realistically and evenly balanced.

The Unhappy Sick

One of the main causes of ill health is a troubled mind. Dr. Leslie Weatherhead, in his book *Religion, Psychology and Healing*, says, "More people are sick because they are unhappy than are unhappy because they are sick." This raises the question: How can one promote mental health? It is just as possible to promote mental health as it is to promote physical health.

In conversation, dwell on themes that are praiseworthy, rather than on those that are blameworthy. "Nothing tends more to promote health of body and of soul than does a spirit of gratitude and it is a positive duty to resist melancholy, discontented thoughts and feelings."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 251.

In your actions, take delight in doing something that will bring happiness to others. "When the mind is free and happy from a sense of duty well done and the satisfaction of giving happiness to others, the cheering, uplifting influence brings new life to the whole being."—*Ibid.*, p. 257.

In your worship thank God for daily blessings and truth in His love. John Wesley expressed this thought beautifully in these words: "The love of God creates

unspeakable joy, and perfect calm, serenity, and tranquillity of mind. It thus becomes the most powerful of all the means of health and long life."

Health is the harmonious adaptation of the world within us to the world without, and no person can attain perfect harmony with his environment except through the One who created both him and his environment. Hence, as we search deeper in our quest for health, that search will be fully rewarded only as it leads us back to God, the giver of all life and health.

James 2: 10 reads as follows: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." Is it not reasonable to apply this text both to God's commandments and also to the laws of health? It must be, for in *Counsels and Health*, pages 25-26, we read, "Our first duty . . . is to obey the laws of God. These include the laws of health."

Instead of condoning an unbalanced approach to health reform, how much greater blessings of health and of spirit we shall enter into by considering and observing all the laws of health. By doing this we shall be fitted to walk in the presence of the One who said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." **E**

Calvin H. Palmer wrote this article from Sydney, Australia.

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The Elders' Guardianship Program

Carl Coffman

One of the greatest assets of the local church is a capable board of local elders. The wise pastor utilizes all of his elders' talents and capabilities insofar as the responsibilities of their office involve them. To do less limits the effectiveness of the pastor and the strength that the elders can give to the church program.

One of the greatest needs of the local church is for the development and operation of a workable plan designed to meet the needs of the newly baptized and those whose hold on the church is slipping. These two groups need specialized care. Providing for their needs is usually far too big a job for the church pastor alone.

The newly baptized need spiritual guidance to develop Christian maturity as well as fellowship with seasoned church members. The backsliding group badly needs the warmth of friends in the church who have the genius to redirect while avoiding condemnation. How many potentially fine members of the church are being lost from these two groups. The real question is, How many could be kept in the church if we instituted some continually operating program in an attempt to accomplish the objectives outlined above?

Would not the most logical solution be to bring the greatest asset and greatest need together? The local elders are a very dedicated and qualified group. They can be trained to offer these two needy groups the necessary specialized care. For someone who sincerely loves the Lord and thus loves the people of the church, this skill is not difficult to acquire. But it cannot be done well by those whose tendency is to find fault.

Let us consider the newly baptized group first. What kind of "guardianship" program can the pastor and local elders follow to meet the normal frustrations and needs of one newly brought into the church?

First, what about the day they are baptized? It is true that they are "officially" welcomed to membership by the vote of the church body and the voice of the pastor. But they need personalized attention that day

as well. That afternoon or evening, whenever they return home, an elder of the church, with wife and children, if appropriate, needs to call on them and extend to them that warm welcome that comes when someone goes out of his or her way to do such a thoughtful act. Such a call must never be made merely from the standpoint of fulfilling an obligation of elected office. If it is done with this attitude in mind it is usually quite obvious.

This simple visiting program is best organized by the pastor and head elder, and then discussed with the entire board of elders. For example: People baptized on a given Sabbath from three homes, then three different elders should make a call to each home. In assigning these important visits, thought should be given to send elders whose background is similar to that of the individual or individuals baptized. For instance, older elders are assigned to visit an older couple, and elders with children to visit a newly baptized family with children.

What should the visiting elder discuss with these people? Obviously, they need to get acquainted. Where do they come from? Where is the daughter whose picture is on the stereo? Why were they attracted to study the Bible? They should be encouraged to tell you about themselves. Do not talk too much about yourself. Invite them to your home for dinner next Sabbath. Encourage them to call the pastor whenever necessary, or to call you. Remember that their hearts are warm. It is your pleasant work to help them mature in their first love experience.

What about the weeks and months to come, after the dinner date next Sabbath? If your backgrounds are similar, and in many cases even if they are not but you are compatible with them, become their spiritual guardians for at least a year. If for some reason this is not possible, help them to become acquainted with another church family in similar circumstances who understand the guardianship program and who will

become their guardian friends and keep track of their development.

Call the pastor immediately if you see negative signs developing. An elder could and probably would be senior guardian to several individuals or families continually, but what more rewarding work could he do for the Lord.

A brief suggestion needs to be made to the pastor on this matter. Dedicate one evening each month to a class for new believers, where they can ask questions, to discuss frustrations, to receive instruction that leads to their maturity. They need this personalized care from the pastor, which, in connection with the elder's guardianship program, can go far to keep the lambs from straying and being caught by the wolves. Let them suggest in writing the topics they want to study in future meetings. Leave time at every meeting for questions. It is a wonderful opportunity for the pastor truly to serve as faithful shepherd of the flock.

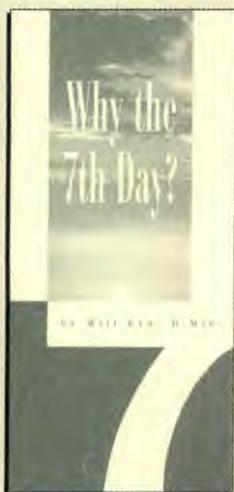
What about the elder's work on behalf of drifting members? "Guardianship" here takes on a different meaning. Drifters or backslidders usually have cold hearts. Many in the church have conveyed the idea that they have forgotten them. They probably have difficulties with church standards. They may have forgotten important Bible doctrines to a large degree. There may be some open sin, as a result of which the individual has mentally separated himself from fellowship with

the church, even though the church still wants him.

The local elders need to have specific assignments in this difficult area. Such assignments can become long term ones. These people need fellowship and love more than they need correction at first. Your relationship must be slowly and carefully fostered under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The elder involved must be one who knows how to love a sinner while hating the sin. You cannot push. You must draw. Sometimes your approach may be only a friendly greeting on the telephone or street corner. You must let the individual develop his own confidence in you, and at his own speed. Let him come to the place where he will open his heart to you. Even then, gently lead him to a new relationship with Jesus. Remember that lonely people do like a true friend. If you can become accepted by them as such, you can then reintroduce them to their lost Friend, Jesus Christ. It is a difficult work, but a soul rescued from sin is a real reward and such a work is part of the responsibility of both the pastor and the elder.

Talk to your pastor about the guardianship program. Start a solid program in your church for these two special groups. They're all around you. **E**

Carl Coffman wrote this article when he was a professor in the Religion Department at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan. He presently lives in Calestoga, California.



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Across the Table

Walter R. Scragg

My first appointment in the ministry was with the team of a leading evangelist in the city of Melbourne, Australia. I was to replace a young worker who had accepted a call to India. In my hands I found the names of more than three hundred interested persons.

"What will my work entail?" I asked the evangelist. "How can I help win these people?"

"You might think that I will win these people in my meetings," he said, "but I want to tell you that it is across the table in their homes that you win souls. Face-to-face decisions are the ones that count."

And every successful evangelistic worker would say Amen to that.

No danger is greater than that the minister will rely on methods or gimmicks to replace the time consuming but vital personal contact. Literature, Bible correspondence courses, self marking Bible guides, cannot do the work of the personal worker in the home or in the church office. The sermon will not do this work. True, some decisions are made as a result of preaching or reading or listening; but only personal work cements these decisions.

"It is not preaching that is the most important; it is house to house work, reasoning from the Word, explaining the Word. It is those workers who follow the methods that Christ followed who will win souls for their hire."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 468.

"All who can, should do personal labor. As they go from house to house, explaining the Scriptures to the people in a clear, simple manner, God makes the truth powerful to save. The Saviour blesses those who do this work."—*Evangelism*, p. 442.

Is it easy for a worker to do this personal work? Does it come naturally? Ellen G. White reminds us, "The personal labor must be done, even if there has to be less preaching done. . . . You must educate and train yourselves to visit every family that you can possibly get access to. . . . If he neglects this work, the visiting of the people in their homes, he is an unfaithful shepherd, and the rebuke of God is upon him. . . . No excuse will God accept for thus neglecting the most essential part

of the ministry."—*Ibid.*, pp. 439, 440.

Here are some of the pointers that come from divine wisdom to help us in our personal evangelism:

1. *Love for Souls.* A sense of priorities drives every true evangelist to love souls first. From a dedication and complete consecration to Christ stems the correct sense of values. "Christ has demonstrated to us the great value of souls in that He came to the world with the hoarded love of eternity in His heart, offering to make man heir to all His wealth."—*Testimonies to the Church*, 5:204.

With the same passion for lost souls we will not hesitate to accept difficult circumstances. I remember my work for a young man. Actually, I was not much older than he. Not knowing any difference I held Bible studies with him in the entrance hall of the boarding house where he lived, with other boarders passing by continually. His decision came in a flashlight study on the front veranda. Today he is a successful worker and never fails to remind me that my persistence and disregard for awkward circumstances helped him make his decision.

2. *Use of the Word and the Holy Spirit.* "A great work can be done by presenting to the people the Bible just as it reads. Carry the word of God to every man's door, . . . repeat to all the Saviour's command: 'Search the Scriptures.'"—*Ibid.*, p. 388. More than ever before, Adventist ministers need the Word of God. How else can we hope to pierce the confusion of mind, indifference and materialism of the age? Our philosophizing, our scant knowledge of psychology, can never take the place of a "Thus saith the Lord."

3. *Prayer.* Praying for the right things will help us in our soul saving work. "The disciples prayed with intense earnestness for a fitness to meet men and in their daily intercourse to speak words that would lead sinners to Christ."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 37.

"Personal effort for others should be preceded by much secret prayer; for it requires great wisdom to understand the science of saving souls. Before communicating with men, commune with Christ."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p.149.

4. *Hard Work.* What is the norm for a program of visitation? Three Bible studies a night is not an impossible task; seven or eight a day well within the realm of accomplishment. This on top of a church program? Yes. All too often we fall into the mistake of allowing our church members to fill our days and evenings with activities that are good but that they could easily do for us, leaving time for the vital work of personal visitation. "A person might as well expect a harvest where he has never sown, or knowledge where he has never sought for it, as to expect to be saved in indolence." —*Testimonies to the Church*, 4:286.

5. *Dress.* Listen to this: "The loss of some souls at last will be traced to the untidiness of the minister." —*Ibid.*, 2:613. A minister I know well always wore his suits till the cuffs frayed and his coat shone from constant wear. Even his shirt collars began to fray before he discarded them. Since reading this statement from the Spirit of Prophecy, I have wondered if perhaps a portion of his lack of success could be traced to this.

6. *Tone of Voice.* According to Arnold Bennett, "Ninety per cent of the friction of daily life is caused by the tone of voice." Mrs. White says, "With some souls the manner of the one delivering the message will determine its reception or rejection. Then let the word be so spoken that it will appeal to the understanding and impress the heart. Slowly, distinctly, and solemnly should it be spoken, yet with all the earnestness which its importance demands.

"We should accustom ourselves to speak in pleasant tones, to use pure and correct language, and words that are kind and courteous." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 336.

7. *Character.* Character and personality surround the message with an atmosphere that has a great influence on the attitude of souls to the truth. A life charged with faith, courage, and hope; a life full of the sweetness of the love of Christ will have a tremendous influence.

"Our words, our acts, our dress, our deportment, even the expression of the countenance, has an influence. . . . Every impulse thus imparted is seed sown which will produce its harvest. . . . Thus by our unconscious influence thousands may be blessed." —*Ibid.*, pp.

339, 340. Even our handshake can make a difference. "You can take hold of a person's hand in greeting in such a way as to gain his confidence at once." —*Gospel Workers*, p. 189.

8. *Effective Use of Literature.* I once heard a non Adventist define our people as having a "head full of texts and a pocket full of tracts." "Plans must be laid that at every meeting where the truth has been set before the people, it may be followed by the distribution of tracts and pamphlets. At the present time it may be found necessary to give these away, but they will be a power for good, and nothing will be lost." —*Evangelism*, p. 159.

9. *Enthusiasm.* Of all the things that affected me in my youth and led me to accept Christ, the key was the obvious enthusiasm of my evangelist father and his co-workers for the work they did. Be excited about the message. Believe in it. Convey your excitement and enthusiasm.

Avoid negative attitudes. One of our departmental leaders once commented on some Voice of Prophecy names as follows: "I sent them three invitations to my meetings and none of them came."

This for him seemed to mark the end of his responsibility. Enthusiasm for souls would have led to greater efforts, more intelligent approaches.

10. *Keep Positive.* By keeping to truths that are held in common, by speaking with certainty and authority, through simplicity and sincerity souls are influenced toward truth.

Around the world we need ministers and laymen who will have an organized, dedicated concern for souls. Our Bible correspondence school statistics alone reveal that fewer than half of these precious interested ones are faithfully visited. Even this percentage would be less if the casual attitude some take to visiting was taken into account.

Personal work for souls is the most important, the most delightful, the most precious work we can do. Here, the preacher does the work of Christ, for above all else our Lord was a personal worker. E

*It is not preaching that is the most important;
it is house to house work, reasoning from the
Word, explaining the Word.*

Walter R. L. Scragg writes from Maryland, where he worked until recently as senior pastor at Sligo Church.

Two Men Named Jesus

Warren C. Trenchard

Some may be puzzled by a striking reading of Matthew 27:16, 17 found in several contemporary translations of the New Testament. These verses form part of the narrative of Jesus' decisive appearance before the Roman Governor Pilate. In the course of his deliberation of the case, Pilate determined to release Jesus since he found him to be in no need of conviction. According to the Biblical accounts, the usual custom was to release a prisoner at this time of national festivity. It was Passover, and Pilate had an infamous criminal in prison. Matthew relates that Pilate thought he would secure Jesus' release by offering the mob a choice between Jesus and the prisoner.

Any intelligent citizen would see that to release the latter would be a grave menace to the city. Our text constitutes Pilate's introduction of these two individuals from whom the mob would choose one to be released. "There was then in custody a man of some notoriety, called Jesus Bar-Abbas. When they were assembled Pilate said to them, 'Which would you like me to release to you, Jesus Bar-Abbas or Jesus called Messiah?' (Matt. 27:16, 17, NEB).

Jesus Bar-Abbas! This is not a misprint. The New English Bible has chosen to translate this criminal's name from the readings of a particular group of Greek manuscripts and ancient versions. In its footnote to the passage, however, the New English Bible gives the wrong impression when it notes, "Some witnesses omit Jesus." It would have been more accurate to state that most witnesses omit the name Jesus as one of Barabbas' names. Yet, this fact itself does not militate against the reading that includes Jesus, since in textual studies the number of manuscripts supporting a given reading is not decisive.

Is it possible that Barabbas' name was really Jesus? We will not be able to answer this question ultimately,

but we can consider several textual perspectives that relate to the genuineness of the name Jesus Barabbas in Matthew. To treat the problem textually one must be conscious of his own overall philosophy of or approach to textual criticism. For one whose primary criterion for a preferred reading is the witness of the majority of the "great" uncial manuscripts and/or the testimony of the "best" text type, this question can be answered simply. Not only do the manuscripts Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, Vaticanus, and the unconventional Bezae support the reading Barabbas without Jesus, but so does the lauded Alexandrian text type, together with the Western and Byzantine text types. From this point of view, the Barabbas reading without the name Jesus is superior.

However, for one whose main principle is the maxim that the preferred reading is the one which best explains the existence of all other readings, the weighing

of manuscripts and text types is not sufficient.

In this case, one must ask if it is more likely for the name Jesus to be added to or to be deleted from the text. The only reason, apart from an unlikely mistake, why this name would be added to Barabbas

would be to provide a dramatic comparison in the narrative. Given the conscious attempt of Christian scribes to preserve the dignity and majesty of Jesus at the expense of textual accuracy, such an addition seems remote. On the other hand, if Matthew originally read Jesus Barabbas, later scribes would have every motivation to delete the name Jesus. It would seem particularly irreverent for an opposing character in the drama of the passion to himself bear the name Jesus. The reading Jesus Barabbas best explains the shorter reading Barabbas and, thus, is to be preferred. In our text Pilate introduces Jesus as the One "who is called Messiah." The wording suggests that this was Pilate's way of dis-

When Pilate presented the two men before the Jewish mob, both of them were named Jesus. One was a criminal, Jesus Barabbas; the other was Jesus called the Messiah.

tinguishing him from another Jesus in the same context. The reading of this description of Jesus is unchallenged in the witnesses to the text. In my opinion, this fact strongly supports the reading Jesus Barabbas for the criminal's name. Only with this reading would the text contain a sensible structure. Certainly the drama is intensified when the choice is between two men having the same name. Today the name Jesus is not used for naming children except in certain Spanish speaking areas. Therefore, it is difficult for most to consider the use of this name for anyone other than Christ. But in New Testament times this name was common among Greek speaking Jews. "Jesus" is the anglicized form of a Greek translation of the Hebrew name Joshua. It is used throughout the Septuagint and New Testament for the man who succeeded Moses as Israel's leader, as well as for others bearing the name Joshua. The New Testament mentions two others by the name Jesus. One is in Luke's genealogy of Christ (Luke 3:29); the other is a companion of Paul who sends greetings to the Colossians (Col. 4:11). The name Jesus is even better attested in extra Biblical sources. It is used for various persons in Josephus and in the Epistle of Aristean. The name Jesus regularly occurs in tomb inscriptions from Palestine and in Jewish commercial and legal documents from Egypt. This indicates that in New Testament times the name Jesus was employed both in Palestinian and Diasporic communities of Jews. Therefore, it would not be unusual, despite the coincidence, for Barabbas to have the name Joshua. His name rendered into Greek then would be Jesus. He may even have used the Greek form himself. It seems reasonable to conclude that, at least according to Matthew's account of the event, when Pilate presented the two men before the Jewish mob, both of them were named Jesus. One was a criminal, Jesus Barabbas; the other was Jesus called the Messiah. The mob was to choose which Jesus they wished to have released. They demanded Jesus Barabbas, and he faded into obscurity—he even lost part of his name in most accounts of the story. The other figure, Jesus Christ, was executed that day and became the most important Jesus in all history. **E**

Warren C. Trenchard was teaching at Atlantic Union College when he wrote this article. He now lives in Peacock, California.

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Learning from a Loved One's Illness

I. Introduction

"Why do good people suffer?" This question has baffled people for centuries. The problem of a loving God and human illness was raised long ago in the book of Job. One man struggled with this question when his wife became ill with arthritis. She suffered greatly. At times, the husband resented the limitations caused by his wife's illness and confinement. There were moments when he even questioned God's ways. Sometimes friends and members of the family were not only unsympathetic, they were openly critical. All of this speaks of the mystery which surrounds suffering. However, there are positive lessons.

II. One learns that trouble, sickness, and grief come to all

We think subconsciously that if we do God's will, tithe our income, and serve people that nothing tragic will happen to us. Jesus promised, "In the world ye shall have tribulation" (John 16:33). There are some things all of us have to bear. Good and bad experiences come to all. They usually balance out in the long run; but if not, one day God will reveal the reason and reward the faithful.

III. One learns something about patience

The Bible says, "Glory in tribulations . . . tribulation worketh patience" (Rom. 5:3). Patience means the power to hold out, to refuse to quit, and keep on keeping on. It is the ability to go on when you feel like giving up.

IV. One learns to be more compassionate toward the sick

Many people think of sickness as weakness. It is hard to be sympathetic with people who are ill. People whose diseases leave them bedridden and in constant pain often feel guilty, for sickness was a part of the curse on mankind in the fall. Paul called his thorn "the messenger of Satan" (2 Cor.

12:7). Healing and good health are the will of God for His people. However, trials can minister to our spiritual growth (James 1:2-4). Christ went about healing the sick and showing compassion. Caring is Christlike.

V. One learns the reality of God's love

There is healing power in love; but in working with emotions, there is a process. Fear, guilt, frustration, and depression do not come all at once. Neither does healing from grief come all at once. It can be a painful experience. We wonder "If God loves me, why did this happen?"

If you have struggled—really struggled down in the depths of your soul—with the word "why," you're in good company. Job did (Job 3:11); the psalmist did too (Ps. 73:3-14). When Jesus was hanging on the cross, He asked, "My God, why?" (Mark 15:34).

After a minister and his son had laid their wife and mother to rest in a distant place, they made the long ride back home in the funeral coach. Being very tired they went to bed early, going to their separate rooms. In a little while, the son came into his father's room crying. He asked if he could sleep in his mother's bed. He tried to go to sleep, but was still suffering an awful sense of loneliness and desolation. In the darkness he asked, "Daddy, is your face turned toward me?" The time came in the days ahead when the minister said there was not a star in the sky of his life. He came to the place where he said, "Father, it is so dark, I cannot see You. Is Your face turned toward me?"

VI. Conclusion

At the heart of the baffling mystery of disease, pain, and grief, we can be sure of God's unchanging love.

VII. Illustration

Paul doesn't just say, "We rejoice in the midst of suffering," period. He says, "We rejoice in the midst of suffering because it produces something." What does it produce? Look at the next phrase in your study Bibles. "We rejoice in

the midst of our suffering, knowing that suffering produces endurance. Endurance produces character." Character is the blockbuster term here in Romans chapter 5. That's the Greek term "dokimas," and it literally means "someone or something that has been put to the test and has measured up." If you have ever traveled to the Middle East, you may have visited a potter and seen a vessel which has been through the furnace, through the fire, yet hasn't cracked. It hasn't broken; it comes out whole. It comes out complete. When you turn that vessel over, on the bottom you see stamped "DOKIAMAS" meaning "approved." This is a vessel of character. It has withstood the test of the furnace where it has been refined, and it hasn't broken; it is whole, complete. That's character.—*Ron Lee Davis*. See: Rom .5:1-5; Isa. 48:10; 1 Peter 1:7.



Helping Mothers to Be Good Mothers

I. Introduction

It is altogether proper that the Bible should contain a classic description of the great woman who is also a good mother. These words could be the words which came from the mother of a king as she gave him guidelines concerning his future wife (Prov. 31:1). The good wife who is to be a good mother is declared to be the most precious possession a man can have (Prov. 31:10).

II. The great woman, the good woman, the good mother does something more than give birth to a baby

- A. She is described as being trustworthy (Prov. 31:11). She is reliable and responsible.
- B. She is described as being benevolent (Prov. 31:12). The good mother is good to her husband and good to her children. She knows how to spell the word "love" with the letters G-I-V-E. She knows how to spell the word "love" with the letters H-E-L-P.
- C. She is described as being industrious (Prov. 31:31). The wise man describes the great

woman and the good mother as one who was not completely domesticated and confined to the household (cf. 31:16,18,24). She is described as one whose work continues from sun till sun (Prov. 31:27).

- D. She is described as having a good self image (Prov. 31:25). The woman who holds herself in low esteem will not be able to relate herself positively and constructively to others. (Prov. 31:25). The role of beauty in our society contributes to the average woman holding herself in low esteem. Our modern education system prepares girls not for motherhood but for a secular career. These factors combine, giving the modern mother a low evaluation of her role, and this contributes to an attitude of low self esteem. To overcome this peril, the modern mother needs to evaluate herself and be recognized and appreciated by her husband.
- E. She is described as being compassionate (Prov. 31:20).
 - 1. Toward her husband.
 - 2. Toward her children.
 - 3. Attitude which extends beyond the family circle.
- F. She makes constructive use of her tongue (Prov. 3 1:26).
 - 1. Proverbs has much to say about the use of the tongue.
 - 2. Can be used as a knife to destroy.
 - 3. Can be used as a soothing oil to heal our injuries.
 - 4. Can be used to bolster and to encourage the spirit like the notes of a trumpet arouse to action.

III. Helping mothers to be better mothers

- A. The wife must begin by helping herself to be a good mother.
 - 1. Consider yourself and make certain that you are the good gift of God to your husband. The wise man said the gifts of God are always good. God wants to help you be one of His best gifts to your husband (see Prov. 18:22).
 - 2. Be the real gift of God to your children. Every child deserves the right to be

wanted, accepted, and appreciated. You can begin the process of becoming a good and great mother if you will accept your child as a gift and as a trust and as a responsibility given to you by God.

B. The husband has much to contribute toward helping his wife become a good and great mother.

1. Accept your wife as a precious gift from God. She needs your help, your support, your encouragement, your partnership.
2. Love your wife as Christ loved the church so sacrificially that He was willing to give Himself for it upon the cross (Eph. 5:25-27). There must be sacrificial love toward each other if they are both to be the good parents their children need and deserve.
3. Love your wife as you love your own body (Eph. 5:28-33). The biblical concept of marriage is a unity or a one flesh relationship. The husband and wife are seen as a union of two personalities into a union of completion.
4. Treat your wife with reverence, respect, and courtesy (I Peter 3:7). Peter declares that a man is responsible to God for the manner in which he relates himself to his wife. If he mistreats her, he will disrupt his fellowship with God and will be unable to have his prayers answered. The apostle declares that a man is responsible for helping his wife be a good wife and a good mother.
5. Be grateful for your wife (Prov. 31:28). We have a healthy and wholesome opinion of ourselves when we see respect in the eyes of others and hear words of appreciation from their lips.
6. Pray for your wife. She needs your help. She needs the Lord's help. Lift her up before God's throne of grace and ask Him to help her with all her problems and with all her needs.

C. The children have much to contribute toward helping their mother become a good and great mother.

1. Be thoughtful toward your mother. Do not take her for granted.
2. Become someone that your mother can be proud of and grateful for. Guard against ever conducting yourself in such a manner as to embarrass your mother.
3. Be grateful for your mother. Do not hesitate to express appreciation and praise to your mother.
4. Be helpful to your mother. She has many responsibilities and duties, and you can be helpful to her by doing all you can to take care of yourself and your own things.

IV. Conclusion

God wants to help mothers be better mothers. Jesus Christ came to be the Savior of mothers because mothers are sinners like the rest of us. If you are a young girl, you need Christ in your heart if you would be the best possible wife and the best possible mother of your children that someday will be born.

If you are already a mother and do not have Christ in your heart, then let me encourage you to invite Him to come in today. He wants to be your Savior, your teacher, and your helper.

Be assured that whatever your problems are and whatever your needs may be, Jesus Christ wants to minister to you and to minister through you to your children. Choose this day to cooperate with Him.

V. Illustration

Not until I became a mother did I understand how much my mother had sacrificed for me. Not until I became a mother did I feel how hurt my mother was when I disobeyed. Not until I became a mother did I know how proud my mother was when I achieved. Not until I became a mother did I realize how much my mother loves me.—*Victoria Farnsworth*

Bene Augusto dos Anjos is from the Central Brazil Union.

Leadership and Adventist Objectives

W. J. Hackett

I wish to spend a few lines writing to the elders about our most important work. We are all leaders in God's cause. Leadership in this day and time demands something different from anything we have given before. First, leadership demands intrinsic value.

Note the words of Isaiah in Isaiah 55:4: "Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people." This was speaking primarily of David, and secondarily of Jesus Christ Himself. He was given for a witness to the people.

The Greek word "witness" comes from the same root word as "martyr" and means "a willingness to die for the truth." He was not only a witness but also a leader, and commanded the people as one having authority. Before one can be a leader something must take place inwardly.

Someone has said: "Great men are those who find that what they ought to do and want to do are the same thing."—*Country Parson*, in the *Register Tribune*. When one can do the thing he ought to do because he wants to do it, he has gained an inner strength that has come from long hours of discipline, prayer, practice. A leader must be dedicated to the cause he has given his life to. Dedication means extra hours, extra thought, extra effort, and a will to succeed.

Leaders are those who must stand for the great objectives of Adventism in a world that is striking out against the old. Marchers and demonstrators and lobbyists all try to influence the President to do what they would want done. Everyone wants him to listen, to shape his policies by the petitioner's ideas. There are the pressures of capital, labor, black, white, rich, and poor. Certainly our President of our country needs our prayers today. Leadership cannot listen to every voice that is sounded. Charles L. Lapp and John W. Bowyer in their article, "Oral Hygiene" say: "Determined men working together make conditions. . . . They do not become victims of them."

There was a time when leaders were on a pedestal; they were respected because they held an office. Today a leader is someone to shoot down, to question, to differ with, to be against. Leadership represents the establishment in our day. Youth today are trying to shoot down the establishment. Leadership requires men of high caliber.

Note the words of inspiration: "God's cause at this time is in special need of men and women who possess Christ-like qualifications for service, executive ability, and a large capacity for work; who have kind, warm, sympathetic hearts, sound common sense, and unbiased judgment; who will carefully weigh matters before they approve or condemn, and who can fearlessly say No, or Yes and Amen; who because they are sanctified by the Spirit of God, practice the word, 'all ye are brethren,' striving constantly to uplift and restore fallen humanity."—Ellen G. White, *Manuscript 74*, 1902.

A leader must be dedicated to the cause he has given his life to. Natural endowments for leadership are not enough. Mark W. Lee, in the *Wesleyan Methodist*, said: "Leadership is usually thought of as resulting from natural endowments and traits of personality. These may be helpful, but they are incidental. The real qualities of leadership are to be found in those who are willing to suffer for the sake of the objectives great enough to demand their wholehearted allegiance."

You elders are leaders who must stand for the great objectives of Adventism in a world that is striking against the old. True, we must be willing to yield to new methods and new ways and new opportunities for service, but we must ever cling to the fundamentals, the framework, that has made Seventh-day Adventism great, and the tenets that have been given to us by inspiration from God. To be respected leaders we must hold on to these fundamental truths that God has given to us. We cannot really lead unless we do demand respect. Someone has said: "Leadership will be reestab-

lished only if that leadership commands respect. We all know that respect for leadership can't be forced, it has to be earned."—Albert Spendlove, *Publication Management*, September, 1962.

Leadership that is respected need not be concerned about loyalty. In our work we need loyal men and women. Our elders must not only be loyal to one another but loyal to the principles we hold dear, loyal to the message, and loyal to God.

Isaiah 55:6, 7 says, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Today God is demanding loyalty of His leaders. We must seek the Lord as never before. We are to be His witnesses, His leaders, His commanders of the people. We cannot do so without the authority that comes from serving God with the whole heart. While leadership is a difficult role to play in our present world, we must recognize "that loyalty is no longer to be equated with blind obedience. The most loyal person

may well be the most fervid member of the loyal opposition. The person who raises questions about how things are done, what assumptions are made, what changes have to take place, what is coming in the future, what things anger and discourage people, is the man who helps the organization survive. Provisions should be made for hearing his voice. Yea-sayers are agreeable, nay-sayers the yeast of growth.

"The fundamental conditions for loyalty, then, are simple: freedom for ideas to be examined, freedom to define the problems to be solved, and freedom for all in the enterprise to direct their energy to solving them. When those conditions are met, a manager will never have to ask where loyalty went."—*Think*, January-February, 1966, p. 12.

Let us pray that we will be the kind of leaders that men and women can respect, the kind that can merit the loyalty of our followers. If we can be this kind of leader, God can use us in this demanding hour. **E**

W. J. Hackett was general Vice-President of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists when he wrote this article.

CHILDREN



Children in the Church

Selected by Margarida F. Sarli

Before Jesus entrusted the feeding of the lambs to Peter, He asked him, "Lovest thou Me?" It was not until He had received a satisfactory answer that He bid Peter, "Feed my lambs." Every leader and teacher must be a true and genuine Christian.

Choosing leaders and teachers is a heavy responsibility for the church. The church which realizes a child can be taught all the fundamental principles of Christianity by the time the child reaches the teenage years is

awake. A well-taught child can also be removed from all Christian surroundings, and those principles which were firmly instilled into his or her life by a genuine Christian leader or teacher will keep him true and faithful to God. "The eyes of our brethren and sisters should be anointed with the heavenly eyesalve, that they may discern the necessities of this time. The lambs of the flock must be fed, and the Lord of heaven is looking on to see who is doing the work He desires to have done

for the children and youth. The church is asleep and does not realize the magnitude of this matter.”—*Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, pp. 196, 197.*

There are four fundamental principles that every child attending our church must be taught: (1) the fear of God; (2) the folly of sin and idolatry; (3) the love of truth and justice; and (4) how to worship the living God.

By selecting leaders and teachers who can fill the minds of our children to the fullest with these four principles the church will care for the lambs of the flock. The Holy Spirit can then call to remembrance those spiritual lessons taught by such a devoted, godly leader or teacher that in later years it will continue to be possible for God to speak to the heart and be heard.—*W. M. Abbott, former Secretary, Sabbath School Department, Alabama-Mississippi Conference.*

Begin early

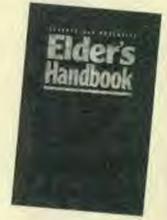
“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6. A child is a child from the day he is born, and his training should begin immediately. The importance of the task in its relation to the future of our children demands the very best that is in all of us—parents, teachers, and ministers. All must have total commitment to this God-given task of caring for the boys and girls God has entrusted to our homes and to our churches. We need a complete reliance on the Master Teacher in all of our dealings with them, constantly bearing in mind that “a mind is not a garner to be filled, but a garden to be tilled.”

In all of our churches we have boys and girls assembled each Sabbath morning, eager and willing to learn and participate in the activities planned by their department leaders. However, the determining factor of what these lambs of the flock will actually absorb is based largely on the preparation and attitude of the leaders and teachers in each department. These leaders and teachers must show a personal interest in each youngster. Punctuality cannot be overestimated, as it teaches dependability, as well as reverence for God, in meeting our appointments on time. These basic factors combined with cheerful surroundings will contribute greatly to the attitude the child will have toward his church and his God.

All these areas are important and are listed among the “musts” for a successful church programs especially

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among the children. But being what we are and who we are, we still appreciate someone recognizing our efforts—so how can we as elders help our leaders and teachers in the church achieve some of these goals?

It is appropriate for the elder in charge to visit every Sabbath all departments, if it can be worked into his program. He can spend just a few minutes in each one observing what is going on, what needs be accomplished, and commend any new and progressive ideas which may be in use. He should be quick to commend and slow to make suggestions. (If they are made, let them be made in private, at an appropriate time and place). Those visits will encourage the folk who are working with and for the children. The Master himself made the statement, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.” We need never hesitate to follow the pattern He set when we recognize that some leader or teacher has put forth a lot of time and effort to teach a lesson more effectively.

Not only are we helping to train our children for abundant living in this life, but for the Kingdom of heaven. What greater joy can be experienced than seeing homes cemented together in this earth preparing for eternal homes above?

Yes, a good place for every elder to begin his “visitation program” is in his own departments! 

S. L. Dombrosky served as pastor at the Orlando Central Church, Florida.

Margarida F. Sarli writes from Silver Spring where she works for the Ministerial Association as a researcher and assistant for Shepherdess International.

Accepted in Christ

Ellen G. White

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). This message is for the world, for "whosoever" means that any and all who comply with the condition may share the blessing. All who look to Jesus, believing in Him as their personal Saviour, shall "not perish, but have everlasting life." Every provision has been made that we may have the everlasting reward. Christ is our sacrifice, our substitute, our surety, our divine intercessor; He is made unto us righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24).

The intercession of Christ in our behalf is that of presenting His divine merits in the offering of Himself to the Father as our substitute and surety; for He ascended up on high to make an atonement for our transgressions. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (I John 2:1). "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (chap. 4:10). "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25).

From these scriptures it is evident that it is not God's will that you should be distrustful, and torture your soul with the fear that God will not accept you because

you are sinful and unworthy. "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." Present your case before him, pleading the merits of the blood shed for you upon Calvary's cross. Satan will accuse you of being a great sinner, and you must admit this, but you can say: "I know I am a sinner, and that is the reason I need a Saviour. Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin' (I John 1:7). 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness' (verse 9). I have no merit or goodness whereby I may claim salvation, but I present before

God the all atoning blood of the spotless Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is my only plea. The name of Jesus gives me access to the Father. His ear, His heart, is open to my faintest pleading, and He supplies my deepest necessities."

It is the righteousness of Christ that makes the penitent sinner acceptable to God and works his justification. How ever sinful has been his life, if he believes in Jesus as his personal Saviour, he stands before God in the spotless robes of Christ's imputed righteousness.

The sinner so recently dead in trespasses and sins is quickened by faith in Christ. He sees by faith that Jesus is his Saviour, and alive forevermore, able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. In the atonement made for him the believer sees such breadth, and length, and height, and depth of efficiency, sees such completeness of salvation, purchased at such infinite cost, that his soul is filled with praise and thanksgiving. He sees as in a glass the glory of the Lord,

*Every provision has been made that we
may have the everlasting reward.*

*Christ is our sacrifice, our substitute,
our surety, our divine intercessor; He is
made unto us righteousness,
sanctification, and redemption.*

and is changed into the same image as by the Spirit of the Lord. He sees the robe of Christ's righteousness, woven in the loom of heaven, wrought by His obedience, and imputed to the repenting soul through faith in His name. When the sinner has a view of the matchless charms of Jesus, sin no longer looks attractive to him; for he beholds the Chiefest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely. He realizes by a personal experience the power of the gospel, whose vastness of design is equaled only by its preciousness of purpose.

We have a living Saviour. He is not in Joseph' new tomb; He is risen from the dead, and has ascended on high as a substitute and surety for every believing soul. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). The sinner is justified through the merits of Jesus, and this is God's acknowledgment of the perfection of the ransom paid for man. That Christ was obedient even unto the death of the cross is a pledge of the repenting sinner's acceptance with the Father. Then shall we permit ourselves to have a vacillating experience of doubting and

believing, believing and doubting? Jesus is the pledge of our acceptance with God. We stand in favor before God, not because of any merit in ourselves, but because of our faith in "the Lord our righteousness."

Jesus stands in the holy of holies, now to appear in the presence of God for us. There He ceases not to present His people moment by moment, complete in Himself. But because we are thus represented before the Father, we are not to imagine that we are to presume upon His mercy, and become careless, indifferent and self-indulgent. Christ is not the minister of sin. We are complete in Him, accepted in the Beloved, only as we abide in Him by faith.

Perfection through our own good works we can never attain. The soul who sees Jesus by faith, repudiates his own righteousness. He sees himself as incomplete, his repentance insufficient, his strongest faith but feebleness, his most costly sacrifice as meager, and he sinks in humility at the foot of the cross. But a voice speaks to him from the oracles of God's word. In amazement he hears the message, "Ye are complete in

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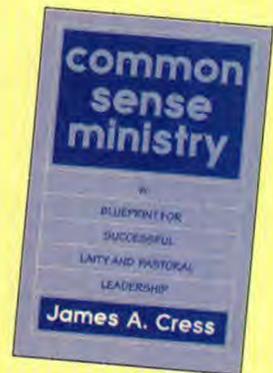
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him. "Now all is at rest in his soul. No longer must he strive to find some worthiness in himself, some meritorious deed by which to gain the favor of God.

Beholding the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, he finds the peace of Christ; for pardon is written against his name, and he accepts the word of God, "Ye are complete in him." How hard is it for humanity, long accustomed to cherish doubt, to grasp this great truth! But what peace it brings to the soul, what vital life! In looking to ourselves for righteousness, by which to find acceptance with God, we look to the wrong place, "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (chap. 3:23). We are to look to Jesus; "for we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory" (2 Cor. 3:18). You are to find your completeness by beholding the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Standing before the broken law of God, the sinner cannot cleanse himself; but, believing in Christ, he is the object of His infinite love and clothed in His spotless righteousness. For those who believe in Christ, Jesus prayed: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. . . . That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one" (John 17:17-22). "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them" (verses 25, 26).

Who can comprehend the nature of that righteousness which makes living sinners whole, presenting him to God without spot or wrinkle? We have the pledged word of God that Christ is made unto us righteousness, sanctification, and God grant that we may rely up that word with implicit trust, and enjoy the richest blessing. "For the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved me and have believed that I came forth from God" (chap. 16:27).— Reprinted from *The Signs of the Times*, July 1892. E

Ellen G. White, the Lord's messenger to the Remnant Church, church leader, lecturer, preacher and counselor.

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Waiting is an essential part of spiritual life in which we discover new and healing rhythms of grace and gratitude. **Marguerite Shuster**, an associate professor of preaching at Fuller Theological Seminary, embraces the task of waiting in God's presence from experience as a woman, a pastor, and a teacher.



Proclaiming in the Presence of the Holy

As the pastor of large African-American congregations in Los Angeles and New York City, **Ron Smith** learned that God is both the subject and the audience of the sermon. Sermons communicate what God has said *and* what the proclaimer and congregation have to say to Him. He now serves as editor of *Message* magazine.



Laying in the Presence of the Holy

Only those who are secure can play, for only they believe that good will triumph over evil. **Calvin Miller**, professor of preaching and pastoral studies at Beeson Divinity School is uniquely equipped to help ministry professionals experience personal and corporate spontaneity in the presence of God.



Rejoicing in the Presence of the Holy

Grace is only given to sinners, and only they can know the height and breadth of holy joy. **Morris Venden's** four decades of preaching about grace have helped tens of thousands rediscover the gladness of being children of God. He now is associate speaker for the Voice of Prophecy, the international radio broadcast of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



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Slices of Life

Henry Feyerabend

God—Creator—Nobody Made It?

Many years ago Sir Isaac Newton had an exact replica of our solar system made in miniature. At its center was a large golden ball representing the sun, and revolving around it were small spheres attached at the ends of rods of varying lengths. They represented Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, and the other planets. These were all geared together by cogs and belts to make them move around the sun in perfect harmony.

One day as Newton was studying the model, a friend who did not believe in the biblical account of creation stopped by for a visit. Marveling at the device and watching as the scientist made the heavenly bodies move on their orbits, the man exclaimed, "My, Newton, what an exquisite thing! Who made it for you?" Without looking up, Sir Isaac replied, "Nobody."

"Nobody?" his friend asked.

"That's right! I said nobody! All of these balls and cogs and belts and gears just happened to come together, and wonder of wonders, by chance they began revolving in their set orbits and with perfect timing."

The unbeliever got the message! It was foolish to suppose that the model merely happened. But it was even more senseless to accept the theory that the earth and the vast universe came into being by chance.

How much more logical to believe what the Bible says, "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth." The Word also declares, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." (Ps. 14:1)

God —Creator—It Works!

The body is a masterpiece of exquisite design. Beautifully "engineered," it is governed by several hundred systems of control each interacting with and affecting the other.

The brain has 10 billion nerve cells to record what one sees and hears.

The skin has more than 2 million tiny sweat glands—about 3,000 per square inch—all part of the intricate system which keeps one's body at an even temperature.

A pump in one's chest makes the blood travel 168 million miles a day, the equivalent of 6720 times around the world!

The lining of the stomach contains 35 million glands secreting juices which aid the process of digestion.

And these are but a few of the involved processes and chemical wonders which operate to sustain life.

A young student had been impressed with the fact that most new products have some glitches that must be ironed out before they can operate efficiently. As he stood gazing at a chart showing the organs, nerves, arteries, and glands in the human body, he suddenly exclaimed, "Just think, the first time God put it together, it worked!"

Smarter but Not Wiser

"Human life today isn't becoming easier, in spite of prosperity and opportunity. We may have more but we enjoy less; we may be smarter, but not wiser; we may gain more knowledge, but less discernment. Why? Because we have too many distractions, too many contradictions, too many choices, too many opportunities, a fullness that keeps us jumping and empty, a variety that leaves us suspended, half-fulfilled."—*Haim Kemelman, How to Live in the Present Tense*

A Recipe for Christian Living

Measure the following ingredients in the bowl of eternity. All your talents, life, health, strength, and means, the leaven of a fully yielded heart, the oil of gladness, the milk of human kindness.

Add the life of Christ, completely submerging all ingredients. Stir in thoroughly with a consecrated will the graces of the Spirit. Thicken with the flour of an undivided purpose, enrich with the vitamins of good works. Strain out all selfishness, criticism, and indifference. Purify in the cleansing blood of Christ. Season distinctively with the love of the brethren.

Pour out and evenly distribute with a fine sense of balance on the plane of human experience, guarding against extreme positions of fanaticism on the one

hand, and a treacherous attitude of self-righteous all-sufficiency on the other.

Bake in the furnace of trial with a spirit ready to learn all of life's lessons.

Cut with the Sword of the Spirit into squares of daily living and influence.

Await with eager intensity the soon coming of "him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."—*Donald F. Haynes*

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Nations rise and fall, yet it lives.

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Doubted, suspected, criticized, yet it lives.

Condemned by atheists, yet it lives.

Scoffed at by scorners, yet it lives.

Exaggerated by fanatics, yet it lives.

Misconstrued and misstated, yet it lives.

Ranted and raved about, yet it lives.

Its inspiration denied, yet it lives.

Yet it lives as a lamp to our feet.

Yet it lives as a light to our paths.

Yet it lives as a gate to heaven

Yet it lives as a standard for childhood.

Yet it lives as a guide for youth.

Yet it lives as an inspiration for the mature.

Yet it lives as a comfort for the aged.

Yet it lives as food for the hungry.

Yet it lives as water for the thirsty.

Yet it lives as rest for the weary.

Yet it lives as light for the heathen.

Yet it lives as salvation for the sinner.

Yet it lives as grace for the Christian.

To know it is to love it.

To love it is to accept it.

To accept it means life eternal. —*Willard J. Johnson*

Two Ways of Meeting Needs

"There are two ways of adapting one's ministry to the times. One is falling in with the requirements of the times, and the other is going dead against them, and both of these methods have to be pursued.

"Paul felt that if he were to give the Corinthians what they needed, he must refuse to give them what they wanted, and that while he crossed their wishes he was consulting their necessities . . . for what the Jew

needs most is not a sign, and what the Greek needs most is not wisdom, but what they both need most is deliverance from the guilt and power of sin. . . . Therefore, any man that comes with a sign, and does not deal with the sin of the human heart, and any man that comes with a philosophical system of wisdom, and does not deal with sin, does not bring a gospel that will meet the necessities even of the people to whose cravings he has been aiming to adapt his message."—*Alexander McClaren Comments, on 1 Corinthians 2:2, p. 27.*

Claims Christ Made for Himself

1. He claimed to be God (John 10:28-30).
2. He claimed pre-existence (John 8:58; 6:38; 17:5).
3. He claimed to be the long-awaited Messiah (John 4:26).
4. He claimed omnipotence (Matt. 28:18; John 3:35).
5. He claimed infallibility (Matt. 24:35).
6. He claimed to be the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6).
7. He claimed to be the light of the world (John 8:12).
8. He claimed to be the resurrection and the life (John 11:25).
9. He claimed to be without sin (John 8:46).
10. He claimed to be omnipresent (Matt. 28:20).
11. He claimed to have foreknowledge (John 13:19).
12. He claimed to forgive sins (Matt. 9:2).
13. He claimed to know the hearts of men (John 2:25).
14. He claimed He would never forsake us (Matt. 28:20).—*Phyllis Bailey*

Henry Feyerabend is speaker for It Is Written, a telecast program in Canada.

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Fanaticism, Revival, and Reformation

An elder writes to inquire how the great work of revival can be carried out by earnest church members without their being accused of fanaticism. He lists a number of specific ways in which he understands that the church needs reviving and reforming. After mentioning the matter of health reform, for example, he asks, "Why is it that I am considered a fanatic for trying to live out these principles of health reform?"

It is quite impossible for me to give you a specific answer to your questions. If I were the pastor of your church, who had opportunity to talk with you frequently and to see you in relation to others in the church, I might attempt an answer as to why some think you fanatical. In the absence of such personal knowledge I must confine myself to discussing the broad principles underlying the question of fanaticism versus healthy fervor.

There is a fine line that separates holy, healthy spiritual fervor on the one hand, and fanaticism on the other. Time and circumstances may change the position of the line a little, but not a great deal.

The following are seven marks of a fanatic:

Fanatics generally first reveal themselves by their inability to keep a sense of proportion in their beliefs and practices. Not only are they impressed with some important truth; their minds soon become filled up with it. They talk it to everyone. They see everything else in terms of it, and thus their spiritual vision and sense of proportion are lost. The situation is worse when they focus on a minor point, as is often the case, until it looms up so large that it quite obscures all the major features of the faith.

Fanatics seek to make all others around them in the church conform to their views. It is natural that they should do this, because if they believe that their particular view or views are of tremendous im-

portance, why should they not seek to have all others think as they do? The trouble here is not so much with their ardor as with the reasons that prompt this ardor.

Fanatics almost invariably proceed to condemn others when they refuse to accept their line of thinking. When ardor thus deteriorates into intolerance, the most dangerous effects of fanaticism become evident. Fanatics, in most instances, are unable to believe that those who refuse to go along with them might base their refusal on common sense and intellectual and spiritual honesty.

As church members around fanatics refuse, in general, to accept their views, fanatics usually begin to become critical of the church and of the whole Advent Movement. As the mood of criticism develops, fanatics may feel that the church is so far from salvation and so hopelessly set in its wrong ways that they must withdraw from it. More than one fanatic has finally left the church.

Fanatics, despite their fervor and zeal, rarely accomplish any great constructive good. There have been great men of God who, for a time, were thought fanatical because of the emphasis they gave to some tenet or feature of the faith. But time has proved that they were wrongly judged, because some constructive results followed their fervent emphasis. Fanatics, when examined in terms of years, are those who show little or nothing for their ardor except a spirit of division, criticism, and doubt in the circle in which they have moved. This is true, whether they stay in the church or whether they leave it.

Most fanatics seem to be tainted with that most subtle heresy; namely, that by the works of the law men can be justified. It is so easy for all of us to begin

to think that if we but follow a certain program and do certain things, we shall thereby become holy and just in the sight of God. This heresy often displays itself in the emphasis that some give to the doctrine of health reform. We cannot ensure holiness by what we eat or do not eat, though one would well conclude that from listening to the way some have promoted the doctrine. But, let me hasten to add, obedience to the laws of our physical being is vitally related to good religion.

Fanatics are generally distinguished by spiritual pride. Pride has a thousand ways of displaying itself, and a thousand ways of concealing itself. It may appear in the guise of fervor for God, yes, even in the guise of humility. What is it but spiritual pride when finite individuals, with no better natural gifts or acquired training than others, begin to sit in judgment on all the church members around about them because they do not agree with their particular ideas of holy living, or their particular sense of relative value of certain beliefs?

Now, I do not know whether any of these distinguishing marks of a fanatic apply to you. I hope not, and leave you to be the judge.

Let me now offer a few suggestions on how one may be zealous in the right sense of the word. Christ could declare, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." No one can doubt His zeal and ardor and the greatness of the work He accomplished. Yet He had no taint of fanaticism. He displayed, first of all, an ardor in living the holy life. His life was a constant rebuke to sin and a stimulus to holiness to everyone who came in contact with Him.

May God give to each of us in all our churches an ever increasing ardor and zeal, and may He give to us, along with those fervent graces, the equally important gifts of sanctified common sense, good judgment, humility, and tolerance for others who do not see eye to eye with us. E

The answer is given under the supervision of the Editor.

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Greeters are VIPs in the Church

Sildete Lopes

Being a greeter, or a host and hostess as some churches call them, involves more than just standing at the door and shaking people's hands as they enter the church. It is a ministry. First Corinthians 12:28 calls it the ministry of helps. You are helping the pastors fulfill the vision God has given them by making those who come through the doors of the church feel at home. You help people feel joy. You help people feel love. You help people feel needed. You help people feel wanted. You help people feel sincerity. You help people feel important. You help people feel peace and comfort. You help people feel, most of all, welcomed.

Visitors

As a greeter in your church, it is your primary responsibility to let visitors know they are welcome. As a visitor, they are a guest of your church. When they pass through the church doors, it is your responsibility to see that they are served and that their needs and concerns are met. It is your responsibility to see that they are comfortable and treated hospitably.

"But how do you know if someone is a visitor?" That is what I asked the Holy Spirit one day. Do you know what He said? He said, "Visitors aren't hard to spot. Ninety-nine percent of them will step into the building, take six or seven steps, then stop to look around." So, when you see someone go through this routine, you can feel confident in going over to them and saying, "I bet you're a visitor, aren't you?" Of course, they'll say something like, "Well, how did you know?" Then you tell them, "Well, I've been doing this for years" and smile. Then, take them by the arm and show them around the building. While you are walking with them down the hall, you can carry on a conversation with them about the church and tell them about what God is doing in the church. Tell them stories about how the church began. Such as how the pastor was in his bedroom when God woke him up in the

middle of the night and told him, "I'm going to make you a pastor. I'm going to raise up a great work there, and I'm going to send people from everywhere—north, south, east, and west to become a part of the vision I have given to you."

As you walk along give them an opportunity to talk about themselves and their family. Listen carefully to all they say. If you ask them a question, make sure it isn't imposing. In doing this, you will help them feel valued.

Helping Mothers with Baby

Another way to locate visitors is to scan the back of the church just before the service begins. If you see a mother standing up with a baby in her arms, she is most probably a visitor. So walk over to her and let her know that you are a greeter at the church. Talk with her a little while to put her at ease, then tell her about the nursery that is available and encourage her to take her child there. Hopefully, by then, she will feel comfortable enough to follow you to the nursery and leave her baby in the care of the nursery workers so that she can enjoy the service.

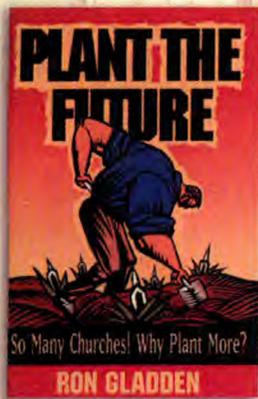
At the end of the service, pay close attention, if they announce the visitors or have them stand up. If you see someone stand up who slipped through the door that you didn't know was a first time visitor, then make it a point to go up to that person after the service is over and tell them how good it was to have them here. Ask them if they have any questions then answer them as best as you can. By doing this, you will make them feel at home, and they will want to come back the next week.

Remember, as a greeter, you have been chosen to welcome all those enter into His court. You are a VIP (very important person) in the Body of Christ. 

Sildete Lopes writes from Brasilia, Brazil.

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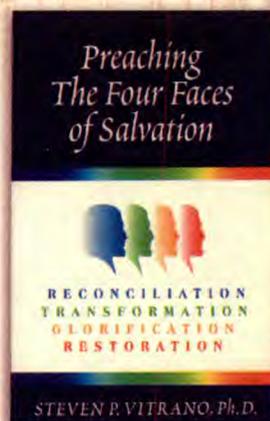
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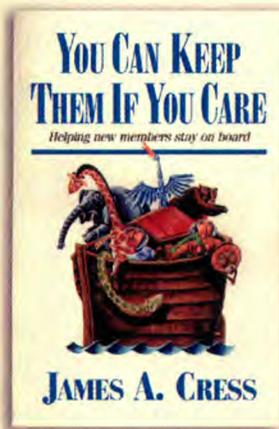
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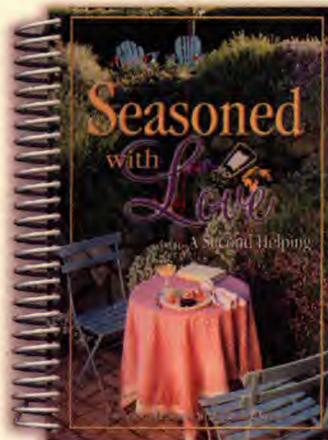
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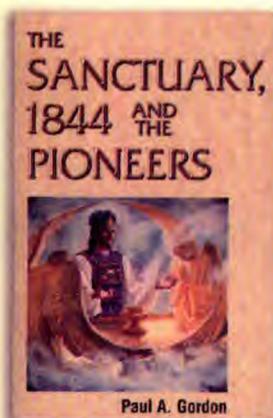
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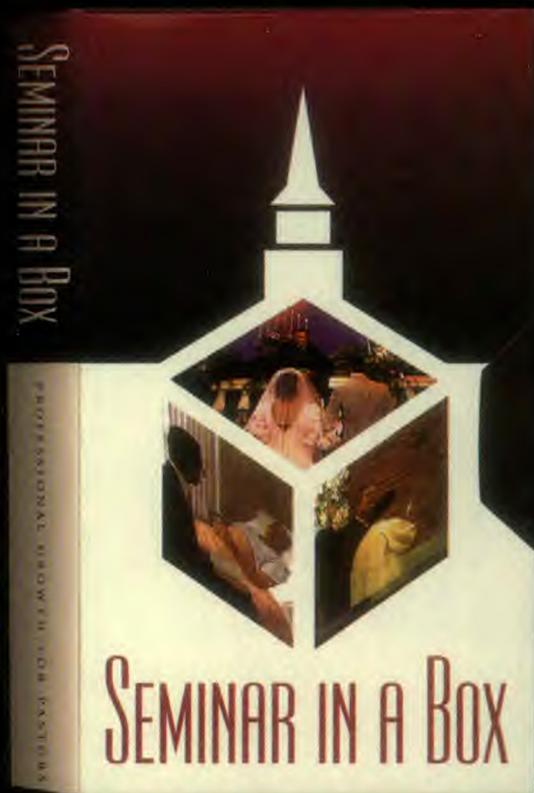


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